*Clergy Role Description*

**Diocese of Durham**

*Role description signed off by:* Archdeacon of Auckland Date: 07.04.22

To be reviewed 6 months after commencement of the appointment, and at Ministerial Development

Review, alongside the setting of objectives.

**Details of Post**

*Role Title:* Change Rector (Interim Minister, Priest-in-Charge)

*Name of benefice:* Billingham Team Parish

*Deanery:* Stockton

*Archdeaconry:* Auckland

*Initial point of contact on terms of service:* Diocesan Secretary

1. **Role Purpose**

**The vision of the Diocese is 'Blessing our communities in Jesus' name for the transformation of us all'. Within this the four core priorities are to:**

* **Energise Growth**
* **Engage with Children, Youth and Young People,**
* **Challenge Poverty and**
* **Care for God’s Creation.**

**These are outlined and expressed in the Diocesan Mission Strategy, 'Renewing Pilgrimage'.**

**General**

* To share with the Bishop in the cure of souls in these parishes, in line with the Diocesan Vision, Priorities and Strategy described above.
* To be the parish priest of this parish, having regard to the calling and responsibilities of the clergy of the Church of England as described in the Ordinal, the Canons, national safeguarding policies, and all other relevant legislation, and in accordance with the *Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy 2015.*Specifically, the parish priest must give due regard to safeguarding policy and practice.
* To work with the PCCs towards the development of the local churches (both the people and their buildings) so that the churches are sustainable and effective in mission.
* To ensure that a high standard of worship, preaching and pastoral care is provided so that people are enabled to live as disciples of Christ.
* To nurture discipleship and develop the ministry of all God's people, through training, cooperation, delegation, support and example, so that they take more responsibility for the mission and ministry of the parishes; to seek to identify potential future leaders and ministers. Where there is a Shared Ministry Development Team, to work with it as described in the SMDT agreement.
* To encourage all church members to participate in generous giving for the mutual support of one another across the diocese, and the wider Church of England.
* To collaborate within the deanery in mission and ministry and, through the Deanery Plan, participate in the shaping of ministry as resources and opportunities may require.(See further under “Role Context below.)
* To be proactive and persistent in seeking the fullest degree of ecumenical cooperation wherever possible.

**Specific**

* To help the PCC and the congregations to continue develop their vision and their approaches to mission and ministry, showing leadership in this area while working collaboratively.
* To continue to help the churches and their congregations to work well together, developing their relationships with one another, and growing and thriving.
* To enable people to grow as disciples, nurturing new and established Christians and helping the churches to become better at discipleship-development in and through their worship and other activities.
* To encourage and enable lay ministry, recognising the vocation of all God’s people, identifying and developing the gifts that God has given his people.
* To develop in particular ministry among children, young people and families.
* To work well with local schools and colleges.
* To be creative and innovative in leading worship, including further development of all-age worship, whilst also being mindful of the needs of those who value existing, traditional forms of worship.
* To provide real leadership in the Parish, but to do so collaboratively, and in a way that further develops local leadership, discipleship and lay ministry.
* To provide spiritual leadership in all churches and be a member of all Congregation Liaison Groups.
* To work alongside the PCC in reviewing their buildings and the usage of them and to support, encourage and enable any consequent reordering of those buildings and support the search for any funding necessary for this work.
* To establish an effective town centre ministry to the civic, political, institutional, commercial and social life of the town, making the most of the opportunities to do this provided by the location and historic role of St Aidan’s and St Cuthbert’s.
* To actively seek partnerships and collaboration with local people and organisations in pursuing the mission of the churches, with regard particularly to the desire of all to reconnect positively with their neighbourhood.
* To encourage and support those engaged in ministry in support of refugees, and to demonstrate love and compassion to those seeking asylum.
* To work consciously to enable the churches in their recovery process from the Covid-19 pandemic, and to enable them to resource and support their communities in doing so.

**3. Key Contacts**

* The Churchwardens and members of the PCC
* The Team Vicar (Richard Radley), three Readers and one retired clergy with PTO (Paul Johnson)
* The Congregational Liaison Groupss of all five churches
* All Billingham Town Councillors, the Borough Councillors for the five Billingham Wards and the Northern Parishes Ward covering Wolviston
* The Local MP
* Civic leaders – Chief Executive of Borough Council, Mayor, Council Leader, Deputy Lord Lieutenant.
* The Head Teachers of local schools, including Bewley, Billingham South, High Clarence, Oakdene, Pentland, Prior’s Mill, Roseberry and Wolviston Primary Schools and Bede College, Billingham Campus and Northfields Secondary Schools
* Ecumenical colleagues in the Churches Together in Billingham forum bringing together the Baptist, Methodist, Roman Catholic, United Reformed and Anglican churches in Billingham.
* Clergy of the Deanery, the Area Dean of Stockton and the Archdeacon of Auckland

**4. Role Context**

Stockton Deanery has a Deanery Plan, through which the allocation of available stipends for the deanery has been agreed – (including the use of one of those stipends for this post). It has a supportive and welcoming clergy Chapter, and all clergy – including the holder of this post – are expected to have a commitment to working collaboratively and supportively with other clergy in the Deanery for mutual support.

Billingham Team Parish was created in 2013 and brings together five church buildings and congregations, varied in their age, heritage, traditions and worship, serving the whole town. However, the work of uniting into a single church family has met with difficulties and governance challenges which the Parish has so far been unable fully to address.

This has led to some loss of confidence and hope within the congregations, which are ageing and reducing in most of the churches. However, the Parish has a committed ministry team, and laypeople with a variety of skills and gifts, all of whom have a passion for the church and a heart for mission.

The Parish recognises that its church buildings are placing a strain on its resources of time, energy and finance. With reducing congregation sizes, some are getting close to becoming unsustainable. However, they are also an important strength, giving the Parish a physical presence and a cultural connection to its communities, which is why it is committed to trying to keep them open and renew all five.

The *Church Partners in Mission* process has enabled the Parish to think and pray together about mission, and it wants to become a place that encourages, enables and equips its laypeople in their vocations and mission. It is now considering whether to pursue this by joining the *Partnership for Missional Church* process.

The Parish is looking to increase giving, and revenue from hall hire as part of its plan to overcome the projected deficit on its income and expenditure account. It also has over £300k in reserves and assets, which it proposes to invest over the next 3 years in a special *Mission and Growth* budget to move towards a sustainable and growing missional and financial future.

Work is being done through the Parish Plan to address the challenges identified in its governance and relationships. The PCC meets more often, with a Lay Chair and its Standing Committee and Coordinators now have active roles. The Congregation Liaison Groups are also meeting more regularly, while the Parish Plan is strengthening financial accountability.

The Parish wishes to welcome and support a new minister who will enable God’s love and ministry once again to be widely known in the town. It recognises that it needs a leader to help it turn from looking inwards to become a beacon shining out into the town. It recognises the need also for a leader who can quickly recognise our strengths and weaknesses and who, with love and honesty, can advise and guide us on changes in direction and, by example, show how the Team Parish can better develop and progress its mission and its future.

However, because of the historic background and current circumstances, this is initially a time-limited post (three years) with the long-term future depending on some radical change. The legal basis of this role is that of Interim Minster, Priest-in-Charge. (At the point of interview, for legal reasons, the post will be offered as “Assistant Curate”; however, by the time of licensing we expect Presentation to the Parish will have been suspended, so the successful candidate can be licensed as Priest-in-Charge. The post will be known informally as “Change Rector”, and the Change Rector will have overall responsibility for the parish). Although this post is time-limited, there is a long-term commitment to there being a Team Rector, with a subsequent, permanent appointment following after the initial period, once it is clear that the changes necessary for the sustainability and growth of the Parish have taken place. The informal title “Change Rector” is being used to signal as clearly as possible that there is a mandate in this post to discern vision with the people of God in this place and enable significant change and development in terms of leadership, governance, sustainability (in terms of finance and fabric), and mission and ministry.

The new minister will need to work well relationally and be thoroughly collaborative in order to win the confidence and trust of both the PCC and congregations, and help them develop their plans. If those plans progress successfully there is great potential for this to be a very rich and rewarding post for the right candidate.