*Clergy Role Description*

**Diocese of Durham**

*Role description signed off by:* Archdeacon of Auckland Date: June 2025

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:* Priest-in-Charge

*Name of benefice:* Stockton on Tees Christchurch

*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:**

* **Energising Growth**
* **Engaging with Children, Youth and Young People**
* **Challenging Poverty**
* **Caring for God’s Creation**

The Diocese of Durham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment.

In addition to the priorities, the Diocese is working to a Transformation strategy, and the expectation is that all our clergy will participate in this. Diocesan Transformation is designed to enable a future that leads to missional growth and financial sustainability for our churches and diocese**.**

**General**

* To share with the Bishop in the cure of souls in this parish, in line with the Diocesan Vision, Priorities and Plan described above.
* To be Priest-in-Charge 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 Priest-in-Charge must give due regard to safeguarding policy and practice.
* To work with the PCC towards the development of the church (both the people and their buildings) so that the church is 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.
* 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.
* To be proactive and persistent in seeking the fullest degree of ecumenical cooperation wherever possible.

**Specific**

* To enable people to grow as disciples, nurturing new and established Christians and helping the church as a whole to become better at discipleship-development in and through its worship and activities.
* To encourage and enable lay ministry, recognising the vocation of all God’s people and identifying and celebrating the gifts that God has given his people.
* To develop a strong and flexible ministry team in the parish, built on good, positive relationships and genuine collaboration.
* To enable people to begin a journey of Christian faith, and be nurtured in that faith. Specifically, to work with the PCC and congregation (with the support of the Diocesan team) to shape a vision and form a plan, targeted at reaching people in our community who are not yet part of the regular congregation to begin a journey of faith and grow in discipleship. (To resource this, up to £180,000 of the “Called to Fruitfulness” / Transformation grant funding will be available over five years, conditional upon the approval of the plan created).
* To work with the PCC towards the growth and development of the parish so that it is sustainable and effective in mission.
* To develop in particular ministry among children, young people and families.
* To work intentionally with St John the Baptist CofE school, supporting its work overall, sustaining its Christian ethos, and offering opportunities for worship and learning about the Christian, in cooperation with Headteacher.
* To be creative and innovative in leading worship, whilst also being mindful of the needs of those who value existing, traditional forms of worship.
* To work ecumenically in community engagement and mission, including in schools work.
* To actively seek partnerships and collaboration with local people and organisations in pursuing the mission of the church.

**2. Key Contacts**

* Churchwardens and members of the PCC.
* Licensed Lay Ministers / Funeral Ministers.
* Other teams in the church, e.g. Baptism Preparation Team.
* Clergy of the deanery, and the Area Dean.
* The Archdeacon of Auckland.
* Ecumenical colleagues.
* Headteachers of the three local schools, especially St John the Baptist C of E Primary.
* Local elected members and community leaders.

**3. Role Context**

In 2015, the three parishes of St Chad’s, Roseworth, and St James, Hardwick, in plurality with St John the Baptist, Ragworth, became the new united parish and parish of Christchurch, Stockton. This has two church buildings; St Chad’s, Roseworth and St John the Baptist, Ragworth.

The new Priest-in-Charge will come to a church which has built a strong sense of unity and purpose, and excellent collaboration between the minister and PCC/congregation. There is a great deal to be celebrated in this: the closure of church buildings and unification of parishes is rarely simple or painless. Ten years on from significant changes, Christchurch has become one church body, marked by a huge, loving heart for its community, great faithfulness, and an excellent sense of humour!

The parish population is just over 20,000, and this is a parish which includes some areas of the highest deprivation in the country.

The church has developed a loving mission of presence, prayer and action – Chad’s Pantry, for example, makes a difference in many people’s lives.

The dedication and positive DNA of the church and PCC has contributed to the decision to make significant funding available to them (up to £180,000) from the Diocesan “Called to Fruitfulness”/“Transformation” programme. This is grant funding secured by the Diocese, and only available for specific missional purposes. Funding of the scale can only be offered to a relatively small proportion of churches in the diocese. Christchurch PCC have been offered the opportunity to develop the church’s mission specifically in the area of finding a way to enable parishioners who are not yet on a journey of faith to embark on one. The church has earned credibility and respect in its community through its ongoing loving service, and this will of course continue. As is the case in many churches, however, enabling people in the community to start a journey themselves into the Christian faith which motivates this loving mission is proving more difficult. The Transformation funding available to Christchurch is for work which will be primarily focussed on sharing faith and enabling people in the community to encounter Christian faith for themselves and grow into it. Partnership with the school in this could be particularly important and fruitful. Given this exciting opportunity, it is a key task for the new minister to work with the PCC and congregation – with the full support of the diocesan Mission and Ministry Team – to develop a missional plan which can benefit from this resourcing.

**4. Person Specification**

We are looking for a minister who:

* is both **collaborative** and able to bring inspiring **leadership**;
* is **enabling and encouraging** and who will discern and develop the vocation and gifts of others, affirming and supporting all in their discipleship and ministry;
* will be a **loving pastor**;
* has the ability to develop a **mission plan** with the congregation;
* is able to work with and line-manage a **colleague** well;
* has the skills and knowledge to **prepare and lead worship** in a range of styles, valuing tradition and enabling experiment and innovation;
* has the **resilience** to work in a context of significant social need;
* will support the shared ethos of **welcome and inclusion** of all;
* has a heart for engaging with **families, children and young people**, encouraging them to grow in faith, and who will build on our relationships with and opportunities to minister in **schools.**

*CC Stockton PiC RD*

*2025.06 v01*