**Diocese of Durham**

*Role description signed off by:* Archdeacon of Durham Date: August 2025

To be reviewed 6 months after commencement of the appointment, and at Ministerial Development Review, alongside the setting of objectives.

1. **Details of Post**

*Role Title:* Priest in Charge

*Name of benefice:* St John’s Birtley and St Andrew’s Lamesley

*Deanery:* Gateshead

*Archdeaconry:* Sunderland

*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**

**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 these parishes, in line with the Diocesan Vision, Priorities and Transformation Strategy described above.
* To be the Parish Priest to this parishes, 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*.
* To work with the PCCs towards the development of the local churches (both people and building) so that they are sustainable, and effective, in mission.
* To ensure that a high standard of worship, preaching and pastoral care is provided so that people are more able 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 parish; and seeking 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, and to participate in the shaping of ministry as resources and opportunities may require.
* To be proactive and persistent in seeking ecumenical cooperation wherever possible.

**Specific**

* To discern and develop a clear vision and strategy for mission, evangelism and ministry in the parishes
* To enable that vision to be communicated and implemented across the parishes, supporting the congregations in making that vision a reality, being resilient to challenge.
* To develop a clear shared vision of how the parishes work together.
* To work on Transformation Delivery with the Diocesan Mission, Discipleship and Ministry Team and the congregations – shaping a framework for mission in the parishes.
* To build lay leadership in the parishes, enabling a focus on mission and evangelism.
* To be a leader, an enabler, a teacher and encourager in the Spirit who will grow the worshipping community of the churches, helping them to engage with children, teenagers and young adults and create opportunities to involve them in new church and discipleship activities.
* To build and encourage relationships with local schools and encourage engagement between the churches and local schools.
* To value, encourage and develop the worship traditions of the churches
* To enable church members to grow as disciples, encouraging lay ministry, recognising the vocation of all God’s people, identifying and developing the gifts that God has given his people.
* To increase engagement between the church and local community around particular concerns, including the diocesan priorities.
* To work collaboratively with Churchwardens and the PCCs, encouraging lay participation and good governance.

**3. Key Contacts**

* Churchwardens and PCCs
* Area Dean, Lay Chair, deanery colleagues (including retired clergy)
* Archdeacon of Sunderland
* Mission, Discipleship and Ministry Team
* Heads of local schools
* Civic leaders, including local councillors

**4. Role Context**

Birtley and Lamesley sharing a Priest in Charge is a new arrangement for both churches, who are both keen to work together for the mutual thrivingof the parishes.

Birtley is situated in the Borough of Gateshead and is a moderate-sized town of 14,000 people which has recently seen an expansion of housing, attracting families and young people. Lamesley is a village on the outskirts of Gateshead with a population of around 6,500, consisting a mixture of housing, an industrial estate, and a nature reserve. The parishes have good transport links, both lying on the A1, with Birtley lying on a busy bus route. Like many places in the North East, both Birtley and Lamesley are areas that see income and employment deprivation, which also impacts heavily on some children.

Across the two parishes there are six primary schools and two secondary schools. Both churches have positive relations with the local schools and both are keen to build on these links.

Both St John’s and St Andrew’s have a real passion for music, which is a central aspect to the worshipping life of the churches.

There is a real desire in both churches to grow in mission and see their churches grow in faith and number.

**5. Person Specification**

Mission:

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| * A person of mature faith, prayer and spiritual vision with a passion to communicate the Gospel.
* A person with a vision to see people come to know Christ and equipping the whole church body to share in Christ’s commission to make disciples.
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| * An ability to articulate and co-ordinate mission and enable others to be missional.

Ministerial Experience:* Open to, and comfortable with, leading both traditional and more contemporary styles of worship.
* Proven pastoral skills across ages and personalities – especially with children and young people.
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Leadership:

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| * Able to manage change and grow churches, with a proven track record.
* Able to prepare for new missional investment, with all the possibilities that may accrue.
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| * Able to encourage and motivate others.
* Able to carry responsibility and pursue vision.
* Able to manage challenge and maintain focus on vision

Skills, Knowledge and Aptitude:* Excellent written and verbal communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to listen and respond sensitively.
* A person who is generous of spirit, sociable, with a sense of humour.
* A good manager of their own time; discerning about the best strategic use of that time within the development, mission and ministry of the church
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