**Diocese of Durham**

*Role description signed off by:* Ven Rick Simpson, Archdeacon of Auckland Date: 21.2.25

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

1. **Details of Post**

*Role Title:* **Associate** **Interim Minister**

(to be known locally as Team Vicar)

*Name of benefice:* **Great Aycliffe Team Ministry**

*Deanery:* **Bishop Auckland**

*Archdeaconry:* **Auckland**

*Initial point of contact on terms of service:* **Archdeacon of Auckland**

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 and Interim Change Minister Priest-in-Charge (ICM) in the cure of souls in this team parish, in line with the Diocesan Vision, Priorities and Transformation Strategy described above.
* To serve as a member of clergy in this team, 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 ICM and PCC towards the development of the local church (the worship and fellowship of the church, its mission, governance and buildings) so that the parish is 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 leader 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 work closely with the ICM and in the ongoing work of developing the life, health and mission of the team parish (see Role Context below for further detail).
* Sharing in (and at times taking the larger share of) the leading of occasional offices. (Current annual average: 25 funerals, 30 baptisms and 8 weddings).
* Leading and preaching at Sunday service across the three churches of the team in collaboration with and at the direction of the ICM.
* Developing ministry particularly in the Horndale part of the parish. This includes St Francis C of E (Aided) school which is in the process of becoming a years 3-11 church school. The role includes being ex-officio foundation governor, co-ordinating collective worship alongside a lay team, and actively exploring the possibility of a church plant within the school (focused in the chapel within the school).

* Chairing the DCC at St Elizabeth’s Woodham and developing the worshipping life of this small, friendly congregation, looking to develop outreach opportunities in this part of the parish.
* Overseeing and co-ordinating pastoral work across the whole parish. There is a team of lay people involved in pastoral care to the six nursing homes and those confined to their own homes. The role would include training and co-ordinating this work, possibly based on the National Anna Chaplaincy model, providing spiritual care to the many elderly within the parish. One example of this is the Thursday morning Café Church informal communion offered in St Clare’s Church Hall; the TV will give time to growing this congregation and developing its life, worship and ministry.
* To undertake further pastoral, liturgical, missional and governance work as needed in collaboration with and at the direction of the ICM.

1. **Key contacts**

* ICM (Rev John Musson)
* Church Wardens
* The PCC & DCCs
* Lay Ministers (including licensed lay reader; commissioned children’s worker who leads a 60-strong children’s choir, Messy Church and youth work; and lay people who have completed the diocesan Wings for Worship course who assist in worship leading and preaching)
* Area Dean
* Deanery clergy
* Archdeacon of Auckland

1. **Role context and other relevant information**

The role covers the entire Great Aycliffe Team Parish, including:

* St Clare, Newton Aycliffe (parish church)
* St Andrew, Aycliffe Village (parish church)
* St Elizabeth of Hungary, Woodham (parish centre of worship)
* St Francis, Newton Aycliffe (chapel within school)

This is an Interim Ministry role for a period of three years. It is possible that it may be extended for up to three years, or offered as a Team Vicar role (Common Tenure). Decisions about this depend upon the progress of development work within the parish under the leadership of the ICM and the needs and opportunities that are discerned as this time of interim leadership concludes. This is expected to be roughly two years.

All parishes in Durham that enter vacancy currently undertake the diocesan Vacancy Audit Process (VAP), in which mission, finance, church health (governance and relationships) and buildings are reviewed. The Newton Aycliffe VAP showed a number of areas that need real attention. Congregational numbers had reduced markedly; finances were down; it was hard to fill all necessary governance roles, and there had clearly been some very real tensions in relationships. It was good that it was possible to recognise and he honest about this after the VAP, but there was clearly a need to work hard at vision, mission, relationships and sustainability.

An ICM has therefore been appointed to work with the PCC and DCCs. The task includes a review of structural relationships across the DCC/PCCs, development of better stewardship, financial management and accountability, the resolution of residual conflicts, and oversight of a major reordering project at St Andrew’s has proper oversight. Rev John Musson was licensed as ICM in November 2024. The Interim Team Vicar roles is essential for adding capacity for parish work, supporting the leadership of the ICM and releasing him to attend to the change / development work which he has been appointed to enable.

**5. Person Specification**

It will be clear from the information above that some specific skills are needed for this role. The successful candidate will:

* be a **team-player**, able to work well with the ICM and lay leaders.
* be **able to both work under the authority of the ICM and take initiative** in leading on the areas specified above, and any others agreed over the course of the post.
* be an experienced and **competent leader of worship and a preacher of ability**, able to bring scripture to life to encourage the discipleship of church members and enable others to begin a faith journey.
* have not only an appreciation of the pastoral value of the **occasional offices**, but also a vision for their missional potential.
* recognise the strategic, intentional work which is being undertaken in the parish at this time, and be ready and able to support the ICM in this. While the TV will at times take on much of what looks like regular parish work, they will understand that doing this is key to **enabling the strategic leadership of the ICM**, and fully support the aims of that work.
* be a minister who believes that healthy parish churches can thrive and grow through a combination of **prayerful dependence on God and good practice in ministry**.

*GATM IMTV v 9.3.25*

*RS*