

THE DIOCESE OF BLACKBURN

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN LANCASHIRE



ARCHDEACON OF BLACKBURN

Recruitment Pack

May 2025

A Message from Bishop of Blackburn

The Rt Rev'd Philip North



Dear Friend,

These are fascinating times for the Diocese of Blackburn. In 2026 we will be celebrating our Centenary with a year of activities and a major Diocesan Conference. Vision 2026, our Diocesan strategy for growth, expires that same year and we are in the midst of a huge consultation process as we discern the will of God in what should come next. We have recently been awarded £25.5 million by the Diocesan Investment Programme which will result in unprecedented investment in our urban areas and in ministry to children and young people. We have a committed and diverse leadership team who are a delight to work with.

As a Diocese we are strongly committed to the renewal of Parish life and to making new and deeper followers for Jesus Christ. That is why we have maintained clergy numbers and introduced a huge range of resources and interventions to enable parishes to flourish. These include the growth of over 200 new local congregations, an increasing number of church plants and revitalisations, our nationally pioneering Diocesan Renewal Programme and the M:Power Course to form urban leaders. This is all backed up by prayer, and 2025 is a Year of Prayer for Growth and Renewal in which churches are being encouraged to pray with ambition for growth.

The next Archdeacon of Blackburn will need to bring together two areas of ministry. First, they will spend the majority of their time carrying out the work of an Archdeacon and doing so in a way that renews and strengthens the life of the Parish Church and supports clergy and lay leaders. Second, they will oversee the 'Making Disciples' strand of Vision 2026 and assist in transition into the new diocesan vision post 2026, working with a committed team to help people grow in faith, in generosity and in love for the Lord and his people.

I hope that you find all the information that you need in this pack. If you would like a conversation to learn more, please get in touch with Bishop's House.

This comes with my prayers as you discern God's call.

+Philip Blackburn

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The Diocese of Blackburn



The Diocese of Blackburn is approaching its 100th anniversary, having been founded on the 12th December 1926. It serves almost the whole of the county of Lancashire, covering an area of 878 square miles, with a population of 1.3 million. It is divided into 14 Deaneries and two Archdeaconries (Blackburn and Lancaster).

The Diocese covers an area of extraordinary variety, from the stunning countryside of the Trough of Bowland to the former mill towns of East Lancashire; from the University cities of Preston and Lancaster, to the seaside towns of Blackpool and Morecambe; from elegant villages, to Presence and Engagement Parishes. We have Parishes of all traditions and are strongly committed to the principle of mutual flourishing.

As a Diocese we have a unique church school portfolio. The diocese has 191 Church schools in total, including 10 secondary schools (of which 126 primary and six secondary schools are located in the Blackburn Archdeaconry), making it one of the biggest dioceses for church school education in the country.



The Diocesan team has strong partnership with local authorities, MPs and decision makers and it is an area where the Church plays a big role in local and civic life. Its beautiful countryside and settled communities make it a delightful place to live and anyone who ministers here must learn to love the county and its people.

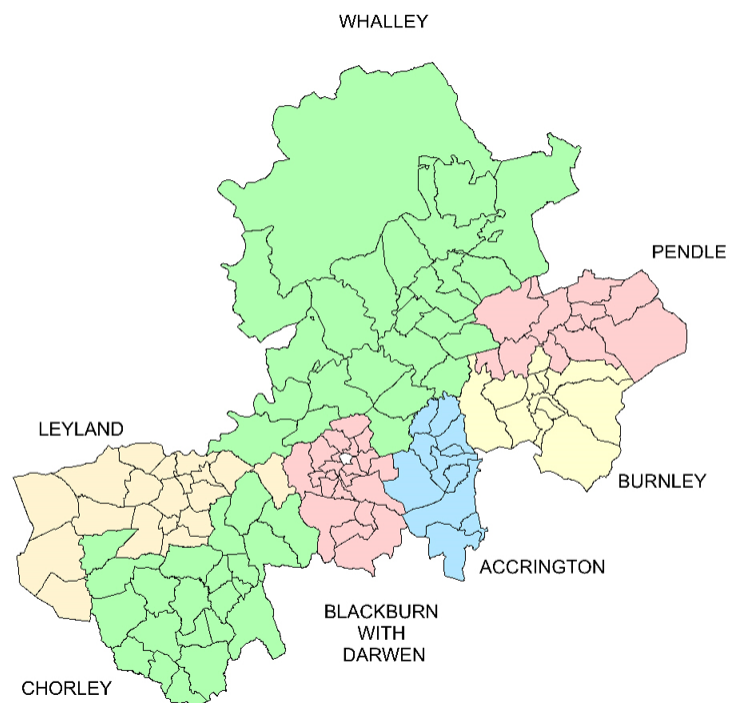
The Archdeaconry of Blackburn

The Blackburn Archdeaconry covers the seven Deaneries south of the River Ribble (Pendle, Whalley, Burnley, Blackburn with Darwen, Accrington, Leyland and Chorley). The population is 685,600 and the area 456 square miles. The Regular Weekly Attendance is 8,979.

The area represents well the diversity of the county. Parts of the Whalley and Leyland Deaneries are stable and reasonably wealthy areas, indeed Ribble Valley constantly comes out in surveys as one of the happiest places to live in the country.

Other parts of the Archdeaconry are much more urban and deprived.

Deprivation rates in parts of Burnley and Accrington are amongst the highest in the country. The Presence and Engagement parishes of North Blackburn can represent a particular pastoral challenge. Some of the other former mill towns also contain areas of significant deprivation, and recruiting clergy to these areas is at times hard. Though the Diocese currently has one of the lowest vacancy rates in the country, the majority of vacancies are in East Lancashire.



The Archdeaconry benefits from clergy who are outstanding in their faithfulness, love and dedication to their work and there is an excellent team of Area Deans who play an important role in the formation of diocesan strategy. Clergy wellbeing is a major priority (one of our Assistant Archdeacons advises in this area) and the Diocesan Investment Programme grant will enable us to launch a new programme of clergy support that will involve regular retreat and sabbatical and access to learning resources from Emmanuel Theological College.

Our Vision

In the Diocese of Blackburn we are inspired by confidence in the Gospel and are ambitious in our desire to make new disciples for Jesus Christ. We are committed to mutual flourishing, to maintaining clergy numbers and to investing in training for new curates.

Vision 2026 is an agenda for growth and change agreed by the Blackburn Diocesan Synod in 2015. It challenges our parishes to be healthy churches that transform their communities as we look ahead to our diocesan centenary in 2026.

It has four strands:

1. *Making Disciples of Jesus Christ*

- Knowing the scriptures better and equipping confident Christian disciples.
- Praying with greater depth and urgency for the Kingdom of God to come.
- Offering worship in spirit and truth through the ministry of Word and Sacrament.
- Giving generously of our time, talents and money to the cause of Christ.

2. *Being Witnesses to Jesus Christ*

- Sharing the Gospel with confidence
- Enabling human flourishing through social action
- Planting 10 strategic church plants and 200 new local congregations
- Caring for God's creation

3. *Growing Leaders for Jesus Christ*

- Developing a diocesan-wide culture of vocational discernment so that all may hear God's call and use their gifts in the service of the Gospel
- Discerning and forming theologically literate lay and ordained leaders, rooted in prayer and with a deep love of the Lord Jesus
- Nurturing healthy partnerships between clergy and laity by fully implementing the Lay Majority Ministry Framework Generating a pipeline of highly motivated deacons and priests in order to enable the Diocese's clergy deployment strategy

4. Inspiring Children and Young People

- Nurturing children and young people in their faith and supporting them as disciples of Jesus Christ
- Holding regular worship that is accessible and appealing to children, young people and their families.
- Enabling growth in the numbers of leaders of children and young people
- Pursuing a step-change in work with those aged 11-16

Facilitating Effective Partnerships between Churches and Local Schools



Through prayer we see the grace and power of God who can alone bring renewal and growth.

Our Vision Prayer

***Heavenly Father, we embrace Your call for us to make disciples,
to be witnesses, to grow leaders and inspire children and young people.
Give us eyes to see Your vision, ears to hear the prompting of Your Spirit
and courage to follow in the footsteps of your Son,
our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.***

Amen



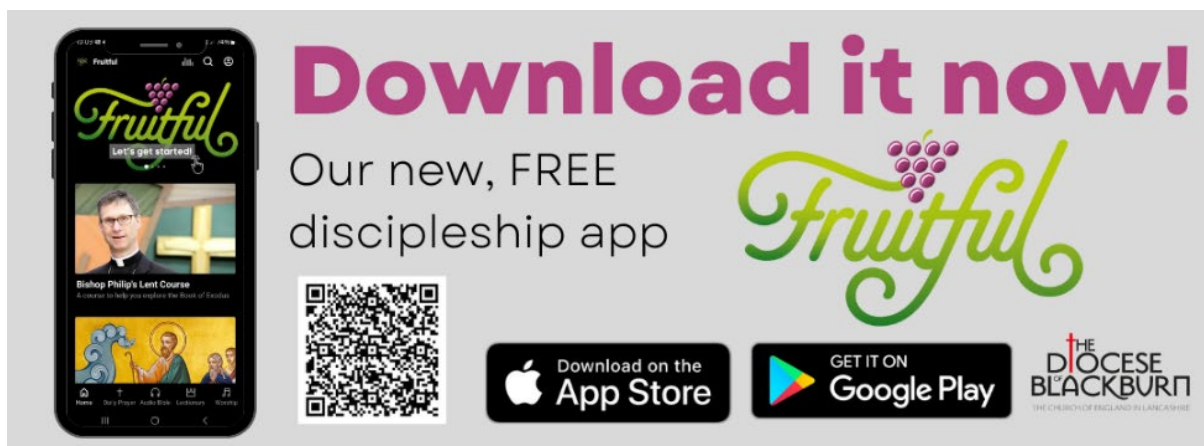
As we look to 2026 and the completion of the current Vision, the Diocese has embarked on a major programme of listening to God and our communities as we discern when he is leading us next, work led by Carolyn Barton, our Director of Vision Delivery. This is being underpinned by prayer as we celebrate a **Year of Prayer for Growth and Renewal in 2025**.

Making disciples

Each strand of the Vision is overseen by a member of the Vision and Strategy Team and the Archdeacon of Blackburn currently carries the portfolio for making disciples. This small and energetic team have demonstrated extraordinary vision and imagination in recent years resulting in:

- The Fruitful app, the first Diocesan discipleship app in the country
- Published devotionals (also available on the App) with Bible studies for Lent and Advent, 10,000 of which are circulated to parishes twice a year
- Roadshows and a vast range of resources to grow 'Joyful, Generous Stewards.'
- The relaunch of Whalley Abbey as a centre for Christian Prayer and Discipleship with a full retreat programme
- A team of Spiritual Directors overseen by our Warden of Spiritual Direction

The new Archdeacon of Blackburn will have oversight of this work, setting direction, tone and strategy and reporting on the work to the Vision and Strategy Team



Download it now!

Our new, FREE
discipleship app

Fruitful

Download on the
App Store

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Google Play

THE
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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Leadership Teams

The Archdeacon of Blackburn is a key member of two teams.

The **Vision and Strategy Team** is the Bishop's Leadership Team and includes senior clergy and lay leaders including the advisor on women's ministry. The team meets once a month to oversee the work of Vision 2026 and to offer leadership across the Diocese. There is an annual residential meeting which takes place in May.

The **Bishop's Appointments Team** oversees clergy appointments and matters involving individual clergy. It is a smaller team that also meets once a month. It is supported by Susan Stewart, our Clergy Appointments Officer

The Role

The Archdeacon of Blackburn will have the task of supporting parishes and chaplaincies as they seek to develop their lives in response to Vision 2026 and whatever succeeds it. They will need to be committed to the evangelistic dimension of archidiaconal work around clergy deployment, pastoral reorganisation and finance and buildings so that the local church can be better equipped for mission. The Archdeacon will play a full role in nurturing the ethnic, theological and social diversity of the Diocese. They will lead on the Making Disciples strand of the Vision until the new Diocesan vision has been discerned and comes into effect.

Main responsibilities

To play a full role in the leadership of the diocese by:

- Having a key role as part of the Vision and Strategy Team so that we can achieve our Vision to be '*Healthy Churches Transforming Communities*'
- Sharing the mission, pastoral oversight and administration of the Diocese
- Holding the portfolio for Making Disciples
- Sharing the task of monitoring and overseeing the income and expenditure of the diocese in its mission and ministry. This will include a role in monitoring the stipends budget
- Regular attendance at a range of meetings, including:

- Vision & Strategy
- The Bishop's Appointment Team
- Diocesan Board of Education Ltd
- Relevant Diocesan and local communities and boards, including the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Committee, Diocesan Advisory Committee and the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee
- The Bishop's Council, Board of Finance, Property Committee, Finance Committee and Budget Committee as well as the Diocesan Synod
- The Grant Making Body associated with the Diocesan Investment Programme

To carry out the legal and administrative responsibilities of an archdeacon:

- In the Faculty Jurisdiction Measure, where the Archdeacon has jurisdiction
- Through the presentation of candidates for ordination and the induction of clergy (when asked by the Bishop)
- In the Articles of Enquiry, Inspection of Churches and annual Visitations (unless the Bishop holds his own), admitting churchwardens to office and supporting them in this role
- In the Clergy Discipline Measure 2006, as a person with proper interest
- In the Clergy Terms of Service Measure 2009, including the role in Capability Proceedings and Grievance procedure
- Being fully committed to mutual flourishing, supportive of the Five Guiding Principles and able to live them and implement them with sensitivity and confidence
- To actively contribute to the Diocesan Board of Finance budget setting process as part of the Bishop's Budget Team
- Working with the DBF Directors, to help parishes contribute their full parish share

To lead on the Making Disciples strand of Vision 2026 by:

- Having a strong vision for the role of discipleship in the mission and ministry of the Church
- Overseeing and setting the direction for the Making Disciples team
- Calling and chairing meetings of the Making Disciples team

- Playing a full part in the discernment of a new Diocesan strategy with particular reference to the role of discipleship within it

To work with parishes and deaneries by:

- Overseeing the work of the Area Deans and co-ordinating regular meetings
- With the Archdeacon of Lancaster, overseeing the work of the volunteer Assistant Archdeacons
- Working towards the implementation of Vision 2026 and helping Parishes to interpret this vision in imaginative and innovative ways
- Visiting and sharing in the life of local churches, including (together with colleagues) leading parish mission weekends
- Encouraging Parishes and the DAC to be imaginative in the evangelistic and missional use of buildings
- Encouraging a diversity of acknowledged and authorised ministries
- Working in partnership with the Area Deans to strengthen the life and energy of the Deaneries and Deanery Chapters. Convening regular bi-monthly meetings of the Archdeaconry's Area Deans which the Bishop of Burnley will sometimes attend

To ensure that we make the best possible appointments by:

- Acting swiftly when vacancies occur and applying the Diocesan policy on appointments through close working with the Clergy Appointments Officer
- Advising the appointing Bishop throughout the appointments process
- Overseeing pastoral re-organisation and configuring posts in consultation with the relevant Bishop, such that we can create exciting, challenging and sustainable ministry opportunities
- Working with Parishes to ensure that vacancies become a time of creative development when PCCs can reflect realistically on future ministry
- Teaching and equipping PCCs and Representatives in order to prepare high quality paperwork and interview appropriately
- Maintaining good relationships with patrons, community leaders and other denominations
- Ensuring that the principles of safer recruitment are understood and applied

To encourage and support clergy & lay leaders by:

- Being aware of issues around clergy wellbeing and working in partnership with the Assistant Archdeacon who advises in this area
- Undertaking Annual Conversations (MDR) with clergy
- Offering close support to clergy in order that they may feel valued in the ministries they perform and have the space and permission to innovate and implement change
- Working closely with the Bishops and Area Deans to ensure that clergy, churchwardens and lay leaders are receiving appropriate levels of pastoral care
- Care and support of Churchwardens and Treasurers
- Advising on training, recreational and sabbatical needs
- Building and maintaining good working relationships with clergy and lay leaders
- At times of difficulty, ensuring that issues are dealt with professionally and sensitively and that conflicts are resolved
- Investigating complaints as requested by the Bishops and within the guidelines of the Clergy Discipline Measure, with the help of the Area Deans as appropriate

To lead in setting a culture in which excellence in safeguarding is the norm by:

- Modelling a style of leadership that is transparent, accountable and attentive to the use and abuse of power
- Keeping their own safeguarding training up to date and being well informed about new developments in safeguarding
- Encouraging good safeguarding practice in parishes in the Archdeaconry and intervening (for example through visitation) where there is poor practice
- Working closely with the DSA/DSO and their team
- Attending or chairing Core Groups as required

To take responsibility for:

- Maintaining a robust and transformative discipline of prayer, worship and the study of the Scripture
- Their own professional growth, spiritual direction, self-care and Continuing Professional Development

- And in common with all diocesan clergy and staff they are responsible for ensuring
 - That priority is given to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults and that all that are vulnerable are protected to the highest standards
 - That all health and safety instructions are followed and that care is taken to ensure safety for self and colleagues, reporting concerns immediately
 - That all Diocesan policies and procedures are complied with

Working Relationships

The Archdeacon will be accountable to the Bishop of Blackburn.

In the day-by-day ministry they will work in close co-operation with the Bishop of Burnley, the Archdeacon of Lancaster and the Diocesan Secretary.

The Archdeacon will oversee the work of the Assistant Archdeacons (together with the Archdeacon of Lancaster) and Blackburn Area Deans.

The Archdeacon will have access to and will line manage their PA .

Training and Support

Transition into an archidiaconal role is not always easy for parochial clergy, chaplains or sector ministers, and care must be taken to manage this change realistically.

The two archdeacons in the diocese will meet regularly to discuss diocesan matters and they provide mutual support for each other at other times. They meet regularly and frequently with the Bishops. They also attend meetings with archdeacons from other dioceses and attend the bi-annual Northern and National Archdeacons Conferences.

Archdeacons are expected to participate in Continuing Ministerial Education and to have regular Annual Reviews with the Bishop of Blackburn. It is important that the Archdeacon is prepared to adjust and adapt, in a flexible way, as Diocesan strategy emerges and develops in the years ahead.

Personal Attributes

We are looking for the next Archdeacon of Blackburn to be:

- Committed to the gospel of Jesus Christ, with an ability to present the Good News attractively and persuasively
- Committed to the renewal of Parish life and the growth of the Church
- An outstanding team player who in turn has the ability to lead a team and delegate appropriately
- Encouraging, positive and confident
- Approachable with good pastoral and listening skills
- Emotionally intelligent and self-aware
- Skilled in managing conflict and conflict mediation
- Able to think strategically
- A person of prayer with prophetic discernment
- A person with natural organisational ability and good time management skills
- Able to use initiative and imagination to solve complex problems
- Committed to the pastoral care of clergy and lay leaders
- Able to review, appraise and give feedback appropriately
- Able to inspire new vocations
- Able to communicate well in a wide range of contexts
- Able to be robust in grasping nettles, and to offer pastoral firmness
- A priest who promotes and models healthy well-being, including regular sabbaths, holidays and hobbies

Other Requirements

- A full and operational driving licence

Practical Arrangements

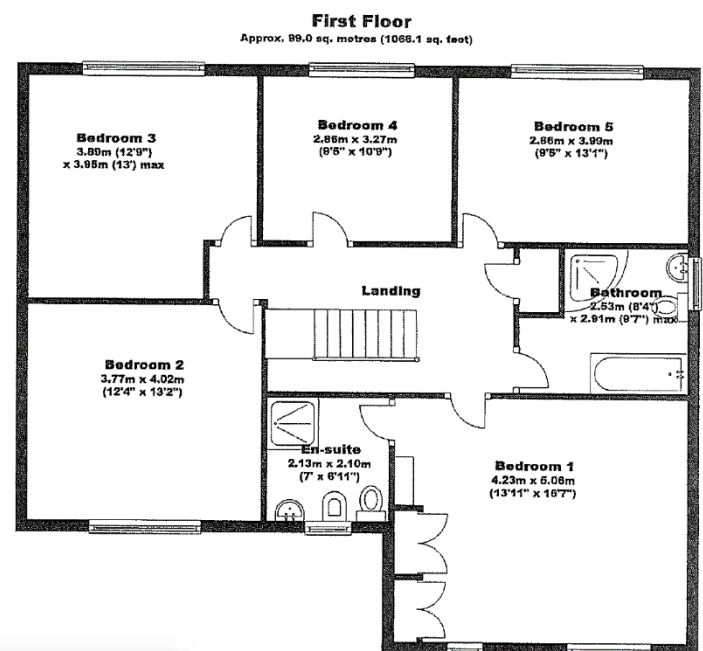
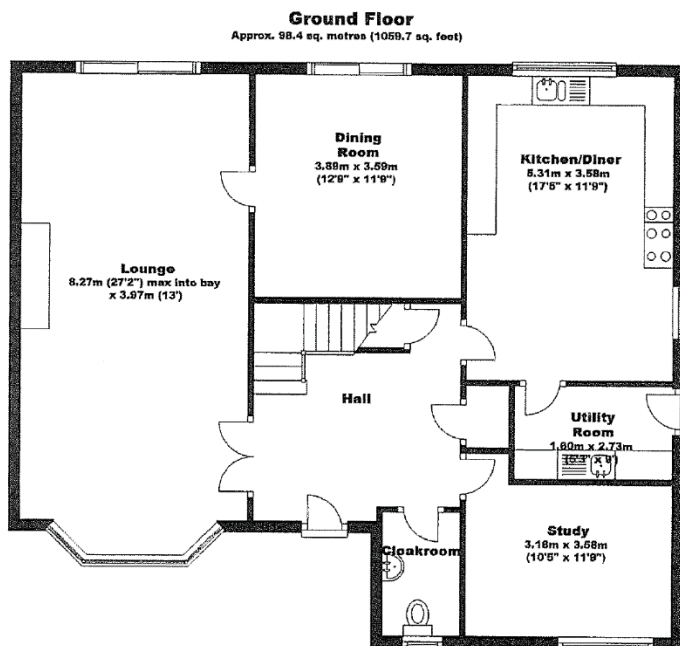
The post will be held under Common Tenure, as specified in the Ecclesiastical Offices (Terms of Service) Measure 2009, with a stipend set in accordance with the Church of England's national scale for Archdeacons.

A resettlement grant will be paid at the current rate.

Full working expenses will be met and there is confidential PA/administrative support at the Diocesan Offices where both Archdeacons also have desks. This is an open plan office, well-equipped with meeting rooms and on-site parking at Clayton House, Walker Office Park, Blackburn, BB1 2QE

Housing

The new Archdeacon of Blackburn will be housed at 19 Clarence Park, Blackburn. The property is a detached house built in 1996 on a modern estate. Located on a sloping site, with steep drive and detached garage. Garden is mainly to the rear of the property.



Eligibility and pre-employment enquiries

The nominated candidates will need to have the right to live and work in the United Kingdom. They will need to complete an Enhanced DBS check and a pre-appointment occupational health clearance.

Safer Recruitment

Experience of your competence in managing safeguarding forms a key part of the discernment process, as well as enquiries to reassure the appointing panel that you are not a safeguarding risk.

You will be asked to complete a confidential declaration and your bishop will provide a Clergy Current Status Letter (CCSL), prior to interview, having examined your blue file. Your referees are also asked to comment on your approach to managing safeguarding.

You will also be expected to be up to date with all relevant safeguarding training or be committed to attending courses before taking up the post.

How to apply

Applications via the Church of England's Pathways website are invited from clergy of all backgrounds and church traditions, especially those which are currently under-represented on the senior team. We are particularly keen to encourage applications from female priests and those of global majority heritage.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to arrange a telephone conversation with the Bishop of Blackburn as part of their discernment.

Please contact appointments@bishopofblackburn.org.uk to arrange an appointment.

Closing date: **Sunday 22nd June**

Interviews are planned for **Friday 18th July 2025**

Person Specification

Criteria for Archdeacon of Blackburn			Criteria Assessed by		
			App	Int	Refs
Experience: Theological / Ecclesiological					
a	<p>An Archdeacon will be in priest's orders and have been at least 6 years in Priest's orders (Canon C 22.1)</p> <p>Deeply loyal to the Church of England</p> <p>A robust and well-articulated theology</p> <p>Substantial experience of leadership in parochial ministry</p> <p>Commitment to the ministry of the whole people of God</p> <p>Commitment to mutual flourishing and modelling the Five Guiding Principles</p>	Essential	✓	✓	
Experience: Spiritual					
b	<p>Faithful in prayer with an ability to relate to a broad spectrum of traditions</p> <p>A person of vision and integrity</p>	Essential	✓	✓	
c	<p>Prophetic discernment & ability to listen to God in situations</p> <p>Working experience of deliverance & healing</p>	Essential			
		Desirable			
Experience: Evangelistic					
d	<p>A passion for mission & evangelism</p> <p>Experience of leading a Church into growth</p> <p>Capacity to see the evangelistic dimension of all areas of ministry, even the legal and administrative</p> <p>A good and effective preacher of the Gospel</p> <p>An understanding of the role that church buildings can play in the mission of the Church</p> <p>Experience of the challenges that face the urban church</p>	Essential	✓		
		Desirable			
		Desirable			

e	Experience of offering training and support in church growth	Desirable	✓	✓	
Leadership:					
f	<p>Highly developed pastoral skills</p> <p>The ability to lead, inspire and gain trust</p> <p>The ability to work with others to cast a vision</p> <p>A robust understanding of the importance of safeguarding</p> <p>Experience of implementing safeguarding policies and procedures and responding well to disclosures</p> <p>The ability to manage conflict</p> <p>Evidence of leading and working collaboratively</p> <p>An understanding of committee procedures and skills in chairing</p> <p>Ability to encourage others to shine and exceed oneself</p>	Essential	✓	✓	
Making Disciples					
g	<p>Experience of making disciples in a parish or chaplaincy context</p> <p>A well-articulated vision of the role of discipleship in the mission of God's church</p> <p>An ability to articulate clearly the key principles of Christian stewardship</p>	Essential			
Community:					
h	<p>A person who understands the differing contextual challenges to ministry across a diverse Archdeaconry</p> <p>Ability to form good relations with architectural heritage groups, amenity societies and community group</p> <p>Passion for & experience of rural ministry</p> <p>A basic understanding of Islam and a willingness to engage with other faith communities</p>	Desirable	✓	✓	

Managerial:					
i	<p>The ability to develop, nurture and encourage others</p> <p>The ability to work with a range of people with strong, passionate and sometimes incompatible views</p> <p>Gifts in helping people along a change journey</p> <p>Experience of management of people, resources and buildings</p> <p>Administrative competence & computer literacy to respond in a timely manner to emails, to use Microsoft office and the ability to contribute to the Diocesan Website using the appropriate tools</p>	Essential		✓	
Financial:					
j	<p>A person who has financial acumen and can contribute to discussions relating to finances</p> <p>Awareness of the critical relationship between finance and mission</p> <p>An ability to understand the challenges the parishes face at the present time in raising parish share</p> <p>Experience as a Charity Trustee, Company Director or School Governor</p>	Highly Desirable		✓	