

House for Duty Assistant Curate Role Description



“Our prayer is simply this: that we become an ever more hopeful, confident church that seeks the mind, heart and will of God for Cornwall, for the communities he calls us to serve, and for the wider world beyond these shores.”

The Saints Way, the vision for the Diocese of Truro

BACKGROUND

Cornwall

Cornwall is both one of the most beautiful parts of the UK, with its glorious coastlands and empty moors, and one of the most deprived. The population is 572,000, with the majority of people living in the towns of the central spine of the county running from Launceston, Liskeard, St Austell, Truro, Camborne, Redruth, Hayle and Penzance. These areas have higher levels of deprivation than the coastal villages, where second home ownership and holiday lets are popular.

The Diocese of Truro

The Diocese of Truro is made up of 320 churches in more than 200 parishes across Cornwall, the Isles of Scilly and two parishes in Devon, covering an area of 1,370 square miles.

The Diocese is divided into 12 deaneries, each of them small by national standards. There are two Archdeaconries; Cornwall, which covers the 6 deaneries in the West, and Bodmin, covering the 6 in the East. Bishop Hugh is currently the Acting Diocesan Bishop. A new Bishop of Truro is likely to be installed in spring 2025.

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Although we are a 'young' diocese, formed in 1876 out of the Diocese of Exeter, the Christian faith has been alive here since at least the 4th century, and that history is visible wherever you go across the county, especially in the stone crosses that mark the roadsides, and in the many churches and communities that carry the names of the great saints, especially those of the early Celtic church.

Diocesan Plan for Change and Renewal

In 2021, in the face of the challenges associated with the changing place of organised religion in society, and the impact of Covid, the Diocese set out to pray and plan for a fruitful and sustainable future. An innovative approach called *On the Way* gave local churches, gathered together in the Deaneries, a process with which to pray and discern a clear plan for the future. These 12 deanery plans were approved locally and by Episcopal College (the Diocesan Senior Leadership team) and are now being implemented.

Once these 12 plans were in place the Diocesan Plan for Change and Renewal (available [here](#)) builds on their priorities. It describes our overall diocesan goals, how we will achieve those goals and how diocesan resources will be used for that work.

The plan describes our key outcomes as; *'More Christians of every age and background, worshipping God and serving the people of Cornwall, especially the poorest.'* and *'Church communities in Cornwall of every size, tradition, character and style that are confident in their calling to worship, witness and service.'*

To achieve this, the three key priorities of the diocesan plan for change and renewal are:

1. To change patterns of ministry to meet the aims of deanery and diocesan plans;
2. To increase by a factor of 10 the number of active young disciples; 400- 4000
3. To focus resources on communities with most economic, social and spiritual need.

THE ROLE OF ASSISTANT CURATE (known locally as Associate Priest)

Each deanery has its own Strategic Rural Dean who is instrumental in leading their deanery in the implementation of their plans towards the fruitful and sustainable future discerned in each place.

The SRD carries a responsibility to:

- 1) lead and enable the changes described in deanery plans, practically and culturally;
- 2) lead and enable, at deanery level, the objectives of the Diocesan Plan for Change and Renewal;
- 4) fulfil the traditional responsibilities of a Rural Dean.

It is usual for the SRD is also an incumbent in the deanery. Recognising that the role is demanding we are seeking to appoint to each 'pair' of deaneries, an **Assistant Curate** who will support and enable the work of the SRD by exercising a ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care in the benefice where the SRD is incumbent and beyond in the wider deanery at the request of the SRD and invitation of other incumbents.

While each role will be locally shaped for their context, the following elements are core:

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Reporting to: The Strategic Rural Dean for the deaneries in which you are licensed.

Location: Home based, but with travel across two deaneries.

Overall purpose of the role:

Working cooperatively with the Strategic Rural Deans of a pair of deaneries, to exercise a ministry of Word, Sacrament and Pastoral Care in the benefice where the SRD is incumbent and across the wider deanery at the instigation of the SRD and the invitation of incumbents..

Working Pattern:

The equivalent of two days plus Sunday each week, equating to one day per week plus alternate Sundays in each deanery.

Key responsibilities:

To work collaboratively with the SRDs to offer ministry in the benefices where the SRDs are incumbent:

- a) to operate as part of the ministry team of the benefices and where possible to participate in deanery Chapters;
- b) to offer pastoral care in the benefices, assisting with visiting, pastoral offices, Home Communion, etc.
- c) to participate in Sunday services, leading, presiding, preaching, assisting as requested by the SRD/incumbent;
- d) to minister alongside colleagues (lay and ordained), contributing to healthy and sustainable patterns of local ministry and seeking to support the further embedding of oversight and local ministry;
- e) to seek to support the implementation of the deanery plan by modelling and promoting a culture of collaborative ministry and enabling the SRD in their work;
- f) to fully support and adhere to the Diocese's safeguarding policy and procedure as well as any other related laws and to do all that is reasonable to promote care and safety in the fulfilment of the role and in daily working life for all who may be vulnerable, reporting any concerns on the relevant diocesan forms. This includes a responsibility to remain up to date with your own safeguarding training at the level appropriate to the role, and apply for an Enhanced DBS check every 3 years.

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PERSON SPECIFICATION

	Essential	Desirable
Experience	Priest (either incumbent or assistant status)	Ministering in rural and town situations
	Pastoral care, having both oversight and engagement, within congregations and communities.	Developing and supervising a pastoral team.
	Working collaboratively with others (lay and ordained) and comfortable as a team player.	
Knowledge and Skills	A commitment to excellent safeguarding practice which seeks to protect the most vulnerable in our communities.*	
	An understanding and commitment to valuing equity, diversity and inclusion within our communities.*	
	Able to engage with and honour the distinctive styles of worship and traditions across the churches.	Openness to learning from, and sharing with people from diverse backgrounds and church traditions
	An understanding of the role of health and safety in ministry.*	
	A good communicator and listener, caring and discerning	
Personal qualities	Committed to personal prayer and spiritual growth. *	
	Competent at maintaining good boundaries and giving time to personal wellbeing.	
	Understanding of and commitment to the deanery plan and the objectives of the Diocesan Plan for Change and Renewal.	
	Willingness and ability to travel across the benefice and deanery.*	Full UK driving licence and access to own transport.