

Appendix 1

ROLE DESCRIPTION

SECTION ONE: DETAILS OF POST

Role title:	Vicar of the Benefice of Ruscombe and Twyford
Type of Role:	Full Time Stipendiary
Name of benefice:	Benefice of Ruscombe and Twyford
Episcopal area:	Diocese of Oxford
Deanery:	Sonning
Archdeaconry:	Berkshire
Conditions of Service:	Please refer to Statements of Particulars document issued in conjunction with this role description
Key contact for Clergy Terms of Service:	Archdeacon of Berkshire
Accountability:	This role falls within the Clergy Terms of Service formally known as Common Tenure. The Archdeacon of Berkshire is the designated person by the Bishop of Oxford to issue the Statement of Particulars for the post holder. Priests share with the Bishop in the oversight of the Church. Whilst, as an office holder, the individual is expected to lead and prioritise work in line with the purpose of the role, they are encouraged to inform the Archdeacon and Churchwardens about any issues exceptional or otherwise that have the potential to affect ongoing delivery of ministry
Additional Responsibility:	N/A

SECTION TWO: CONTEXT

Wider Context

The Diocese of Oxford and the Archdeaconry of Berkshire

The Diocese of Oxford serves the mission of the Church in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire. The Diocese comprises more than 600 parishes, with over 800 churches, serving a diverse population of more than 2 million people located in all types of settings.

Working alongside the Bishop of Oxford we have three Area Bishops who exercise considerable strategic and pastoral oversight for their areas. The Bishop of Reading is the Rt Revd Olivia Graham who has been the Area Bishop since 2019. Stephen Pullin is the Berkshire archdeacon, Liz Jackson is the Associate Archdeacon, and they make up your area team with Kathryn Aboud, Discipleship Enabler (youth specialism), Nicholas Cheeseman, ADO and Rhodri Bowen, Parish Development Adviser.

In the last few years a common vision has emerged for the Diocese of Oxford. The vision is based on the qualities described in The Beatitudes and addresses what kind of church we are called to be: a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world; contemplative, compassionate, courageous.

Together we have identified five focus areas:

- Christian formation and discipleship
- Growing new congregations
- Serving our schools, children and young people
- Environmental Action

- Addressing poverty and inequality

These are not a description of everything that we do and will not all be reflected in the vision for each parish church, but these priorities are being supported centrally by resources and training.

The diocese is inviting benefices and their clergy to share a vision rather than demanding a response. It wants all its clergy to be motivated by hope rather than being driven by anxiety, and thereby to flourish in their ministry.

It is hoped that clergy appointed into the Archdeaconry of Berkshire will want to commit to this vision and encourage their benefices to share in becoming a more Christ-like church for the sake of God's world.

Local Context (including deanery information)

About the Parish

The **Parish of Ruscombe & Twyford** is a vibrant and inclusive congregation committed to fostering a welcoming and diverse community that embraces people of all backgrounds, abilities, identities, and orientations. We are dedicated to growing spiritually as followers of Christ and to spreading God's message of love, compassion and the need for social justice in our local community and beyond.

This is a wonderful opportunity to lead and guide this Parish to bigger and better things. Ruscombe and Twyford are beautiful villages that have a common identity, sharing great schools, transport links, restaurants, and strong sense of community. All the ingredients are here with two stunning churches, a growing population, a strong local ecumenical partnership with Twyford URC and an engaged and collaborative congregation looking to be encouraged and even sometimes challenged.

Vision Statement:

Our mission and vision was adopted in 2021 after a period of strategic thinking and collaboration across the parish led by a representative team.

Our Agreed Mission Statement:

- "Our Mission is to **support** and **encourage** one another in **growing our faith** and **sharing God's Love.**"

Our strap line to summarize our intention

- "**Shaped, trusting, growing in Christ and inspired by the Holy Spirit**"

Our adopted aims are to:

- **Be followers** of Christ journeying together
- **Build up** our church Community
- **Build out** into our local community and the world beyond
- **Be inclusive** sharing God's Love with all.
- **Be creative** in responding to our Mission
- **Be a welcoming** Church

Our aspirations for the future

- We seek to be a **vibrant, supportive, growing** community of believers.
- We **aspire to be an inclusive church** but recognise that we have further to go to fully comprehend what inclusivity means and ensure everyone feels they belong to a church family.
- We have a real desire to strengthen personal faith through **engaging sermons** and through learning together and fellowship in **small groups**.
- We are **passionate about children and young people** and would like to have provision to support and grow their numbers within the church and their influence in the local community.

- We have a **heart for the local community** and believe there are both new activities we can undertake and former activities we can resume to bring more people to know the Love of God.
- We **want to be more outward looking** to the wider world and to have closer relationships with our Mission Partners.

About the Deanery

Our vision is to be a Deanery that encourages and enhances parish mission and ministry as we seek to be a Christ-like Church

Sonning Deanery has 13 benefices and covers the area between Reading and Bracknell, from Wargrave through Wokingham to Sandhurst. We border Buckingham Area to the north and the Dioceses of Guildford and Winchester to the south. As a Deanery we are currently going through an exciting time of transition - a number of incumbents who had been in post for over 20 years have recently retired and we will have appointed half of the Deanery's incumbents within two years of each other, so there is a real sense of possibility and new energy in that.

Our Deanery plan reflects that reality, with a focus on lay training, relationships and deliberately planning for the future in the one area of the Deanery which is not viable in its current form. The Diocese has invited every Deanery to create a plan for work with Children and Young People in 2024 and we are currently gathering information on that from parishes.

Chapter meet monthly in Wokingham on a Tuesday and that gathering is well attended- people find it relaxing, supportive and interesting and enjoy getting to know each other. Deanery Synod is similarly well-supported and most of the meetings are open meetings so as many people as possible can come and hear the speakers.

We are a Deanery which has agreed to disagree well on the question of Living in Love and Faith- we hold a range of different views but don't let that single issue define our relationship. There are no plans for a wide reorganisation. The Deanery is looking forward to a time of overall stability and developing vision as those new in post settle in and start to dream dreams together.

SECTION THREE: ROLE PURPOSE AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

General:

- A. To exercise the cure of souls shared with the bishop in this benefice in collaboration with colleagues, including the praying of the Daily Office, the administration of the sacraments and preaching
- B. To have regard to the calling and responsibilities of the clergy (as described in the Canons, the Ordinal, the Code of Professional Conduct for the Clergy) and other relevant legislation including
 - bringing the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and making him known to those in your care
 - instructing the parishioners in the Christian faith
 - preparing candidates for baptism and confirmation
 - diligently visiting the parishioners of the benefice, particularly those who are sick and infirm
 - providing spiritual counsel and advice
 - consulting with the Parochial Church Council on matters of general concern and importance to the benefice
 - bringing the needs of the world before God in intercession
 - calling your hearers to repentance and declaring in Christ's name the absolution and forgiveness of their sins
 - blessing people in God's name
 - preparing people for their death
 - discerning and fostering the gifts of all God's people

- being faithful in prayer, expectant and watchful for the signs of God's presence, as he reveals his kingdom among us
- C. To share in the wider work of the deanery and diocese as appropriate, for the building up of the whole Body of Christ

Key responsibilities specific to the local situation

You will play a vital role in leading our congregation and embodying our commitment to the Christian community, spirituality and community engagement. We are seeking a passionate, energetic and empathetic individual, with a good sense of humour, who can serve as a spiritual guide and foster a sense of belonging among all members of our congregation with their own distinct style of worship and share the gospel in our villages beyond the church walls.

Your responsibilities include:

- Lead worship services, including Holy Communion and other regular services, special services, and other liturgical events.
- Develop and deliver sermons, workshops, and educational programs that promote biblical knowledge, spiritual growth, discipleship, and inclusivity.
- Provide spiritual counselling, pastoral care, and support to individuals and families within the congregation.
- Offer support and guidance to families during significant life events such as baptisms, weddings, and funerals.
- Engage with the wider community through outreach initiatives and partnerships with local organizations
- Foster a nurturing and inclusive spiritual environment that welcomes people of all backgrounds, abilities and identities.
- Be actively involved in both primary schools and the pre-school and be keen to develop the ministry to children and young people.
- Collaborate with church committees, volunteers and staff to ensure the smooth operation of church programs and activities.
- Have a creative approach to services, encouraging innovation whilst being mindful of the good already happening.
- To promote and build a sense of family and cooperation amongst the churches and congregations of the benefice.
- To be responsible for line management of staff and lay volunteers where appropriate.
- To plan, promote and coordinate the development of lay leadership and ministry throughout the parish, including providing support for ordinands in training who belong to the parish.
- To work with the Churchwardens and the PCC for the good stewardship of our buildings.
- To attend and if required chair meetings as needed for the smooth running of the parish and Local Ecumenical Partnership.
- Maintain the collaborative partnership we have with the leadership of Twyford URC to support and enhance our local ecumenical partnership (LEP).

The key responsibilities listed above may be supported by long and short term objectives to be agreed between the post holder and the incumbent (in the case of an assistant priest) or the Archdeacon and Church Wardens (in the case of incumbents).

Other responsibilities

- Participate in the Bishop's Ministerial Development Review scheme and engage in Continuing Ministerial Development
- Carry out any other duties and responsibilities as required in line with the benefice needs.
- Take care for their wellbeing including health and safety and building a good repertoire of spiritual and psychological strategies

SECTION FOUR: BENEFICE SUMMARY

The Benefice of Ruscombe & Twyford

Benefice: Ruscombe and Twyford

Patron(s): Bishop of Oxford

PCCs: Ruscombe and Twyford Parochial Church Council (3 wardens, 3 deanery synod representatives, 11 members)

Churchwardens: Lucy Bowley, Simon Farrar, John Porter

Ministers: n/a

Benefice paid staff: Parish Administrator, Children and Families Worker, Cleaner

Benefice unpaid staff/ volunteers (numbers): 50+

Buildings: St James' Church Ruscombe, St Mary's Church Twyford, Parish Centre (Twyford)

Churchyard(s): St James' (Application for closure to new burials in progress) & St Mary's (Closed)

Resolution A,B,C: No

Church Tradition: Open Evangelical, informal/ CW mix, Mixed Economy (St Mary's). CW based (St James')

Pastoral Reorganisation proposals: None (For reference, the benefice of Ruscombe and Twyford with Hurst was reorganised into two benefices: The Benefice of Ruscombe and Twyford, and the Benefice of Hurst. Reorganisation was in effect as of April 1st 2024)

For more detailed information, please refer to the Parish Profile.

KEY CONTACTS FOR THE ROLE

Generic and specific to the role

Groups & committees

- The PCC - Lucy Bowley (Lay Vice Chair), Hope Lawrence (PCC Secretary)
- Deanery Chapter Revd Canon Richard Lamey, John Sutton (Lay Chair)
- Deanery Synod Rachel Leitch-Devlin, Linda Jackson, Alan Gwynn
- LEP Standing Committee: Gordon Connell (URC Minister) – Chair; Alan Gwynn (Secretary)

In the benefice

- Churchwardens: Lucy Bowley, Simon Farrar, John Porter
- Ministerial Colleagues: Helen Charlton, Gordon Connell, Graham Theobald
- Head teacher(s) of local school(s): Polehampton CE Schools: Mrs Castell/Mrs Medcalf; Colleton Primary School: Michelle Law; The Piggott School: Mr D Gray, Mrs R Alexander

Support structures

- Area Dean Richard Lamey
- Area Bishop Olivia Graham
- Archdeacon Stephen Pullin
- Staff at The Diocesan Office with key responsibilities for various aspects of supporting the role.

SECTION FIVE: OTHER

This role description is issued alongside and should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- The Ordinal
- The Canons of the Church of England
- Guidance for the Professional Conduct of Clergy
- Bishop's Licence
- Statement of Particulars issued to the office-holder on successful appointment
- Diocesan Clergy Handbook
- Parish Profile
- Parish Development Plan or Mission Action Plan

Role description signed off by: The Venerable Stephen Pullin Archdeacon of Berkshire

Date: *XX.2024*

To be reviewed next on: *XX.20XX*

Appendix 2

PERSON SPECIFICATION

Qualifications/Training

Essential

- Ordained priest within the Church of England, or a Church in communion with it, or a Church whose orders it recognises
- Have satisfactorily completed Initial Ministerial Education

Experience

Essential

- Experience of engaging with, and providing pastoral support for, people of all ages both within the church and beyond
- Strong leadership skills, with ability to implement vision and strategic development
- Track record of delivery of church growth by engaging across age groups, developing lay leaders and releasing skills and talents of others

Desirable

- Experience of leading worship services across a range of liturgical traditions
- Active engagement with local schools
- Be able to identify, enable and deploy lay ministry

Knowledge/Skills and Competencies

Essential

- Ability to work with, and provide leadership to, existing motivated ministry teams
- An effective communicator, able to deliver engaging sermons in a variety of styles and formats to a broad range of listeners with varying outlooks, ages and understanding
- Approachable and able to relate to a diverse church membership
- Willingness to work with the PCC and other church members in developing growth within and growth of the Church community.

General Attributes

Essential

- A belief that following Jesus Christ is more about spiritual values than spiritual rules
- An inclusive attitude that celebrates and affirms every person without discrimination
- Desire and willingness to contribute to the parish's journey towards becoming a truly inclusive church, in all its forms
- You are energised by the idea of working in a Parish with more than one church and part of a really positive Local Ecumenical Partnership.
- Evidence of a deep prayer life and ability to draw on a wide range of spiritual resources
- Rooted in the Bible and seek to continue to learn and grow

Desirable

- Willingness to collaborate with others and adapt to changing needs within the congregation and community
- Flexibility and relaxed attitude about diverse styles of worship, valuing them all for what they bring to God's work
- Passion for stewardship of God's world and its resources.

Other

Essential

- The ability to work to a Safeguarding Policy.