

ROLE DESCRIPTION – JANUARY 2025

SECTION ONE: DETAILS OF POST

Role title:

Associate Priest, Benefice of The Cookhams

Type of Role:

Full-Time Stipendiary

Name of Benefice:

The Cookhams

Diocese:

Oxford

Episcopal Area:

Reading

Deanery:

Maidenhead and Windsor

Archdeaconry:

Berkshire

Patron:

Mr Charles Rogers

Conditions of Service:

Please refer to the Statements of Particulars document issued in conjunction with this role description.

Key contact for Clergy Terms of Service:

Archdeacon of Berkshire

This role falls within the Clergy Terms of Service, formally known as Common Tenure. The Archdeacon of Berkshire is the person designated by the Bishop of Oxford to issue the Statement of Particulars for the post holder.

Accountability:

The Associate Priest is responsible to the Vicar of the Benefice of The Cookhams for the implementation of strategies set by the Vicar and PCCs. Although accountable to the Vicar, the role requires the Associate Priest to lead and prioritise their work, keeping the Vicar and Churchwardens informed of any exceptional issues that may affect ministry delivery.

Additional Responsibility:

N/A

SECTION TWO: CONTEXT

Wider Context

The **Diocese of Oxford** encompasses Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, and Oxfordshire, serving a population of over 2 million. It supports 600+ parishes, 800 churches, and prioritises becoming a more Christ-like Church: contemplative, compassionate, and courageous. Focus areas include:

- Christian formation and discipleship
- Growing new congregations
- Serving schools, children, and young people
- Environmental action
- Addressing poverty and inequality

Clergy in the Archdeaconry of Berkshire are encouraged to embrace this vision, promoting hope and flourishing in their ministry.

Local Context

Vision Statement:

“To enable all in our community to encounter God through warm hospitality and inspired worship.”

Key priorities:

- **Welcome:** Enhancing accessibility through planned improvements to facilities.
- **Children and Young People:** Building on successful initiatives such as Families@4, Open the Book, and engagement with schools.
- **Families:** Strengthening connections with 25-55-year-olds through new outreach and engagement strategies.
- **Music:** Supporting diverse worship styles, from traditional choirs to community musical events.
- **Community Engagement:** Expanding the reach of Fellowship Lunches, Men’s Breakfast, and other initiatives, alongside strong partnerships with local organisations like Foodshare.

The Benefice encompasses two churches—Holy Trinity and St John the Baptist—serving Cookham, Cookham Rise, and Cookham Dean. The community is vibrant, inclusive, and deeply committed to mission and growth.

SECTION THREE: ROLE PURPOSE AND KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

General Purpose

The Associate Priest will:

- Innovate and lead in mission, outreach, and worship, focusing on **families, children, and young people**.
- Build strong connections with the community, fostering cohesion between the church and local organisations.
- Act as a **sacramental and Eucharistic priest**, delivering engaging worship and preaching.
- Expand the church's online and social media presence.

Key Responsibilities

Outreach and Nurture:

- Re-establish the Toddlers' Group at Holy Trinity.
- Support and further develop Families@4.
- Lead Open the Book initiatives in schools.
- Develop discipleship courses for all ages.
- Create opportunities for all-age worship.

Worship and Congregational Life:

- Introduce creative worship formats to engage new members.
- Lead Sunday and midweek services, including occasional offices.
- Encourage vibrant congregational activities and diverse spiritual practices.
- Develop engaging community events.

Community Relationships and Partnerships:

- Forge strong partnerships with local organisations.
- Engage with community leaders and participate in local events.
- Facilitate projects that serve the wider community.

Mission and Engagement:

- Lead mission-focused outreach, engaging non-churchgoers.
- Foster community involvement through creative programmes.
- Build on multifaith opportunities presented by initiatives like the **Cookham Archaeological Dig**.

Digital Presence:

- Enhance the benefice's social media presence, focusing on families and young people.
- Share inspirational and educational content online.

Pastoral Care and Inclusivity:

- Provide spiritual guidance and support to individuals and families.
 - Visit and minister to the sick and housebound.
 - Promote inclusivity, encouraging diverse perspectives and leadership within the church.
-

SECTION FOUR: BENEFICE SUMMARY

Benefice:

The Cookhams

Patron:

Mr Charles Rogers

PCCs:

- Holy Trinity: 14 members
- St John the Baptist: 17 members

Churchwardens:

- Holy Trinity: Mark Stockdale and Bernadette Clark
- St John the Baptist: David Hazeldine and Lorna Sykes

Ministers:

- Rev'd Stephen Mills (Vicar)
- Richard Simmonds (LLM)

Staff:

- Parish Administrator
- Director of Music at Holy Trinity
- Caretaker of Parish Centre at Holy Trinity
- Assistant Book-keeper at Holy Trinity

Buildings:

- Holy Trinity Parish Church and Parish Centre (including three residential flats)
- St John the Baptist Parish Church

- The Vicarage, Cookham
- St John's House, Cookham Dean

Churchyards:

- Holy Trinity: Closed (interment only)
- St John the Baptist: Open

Church Tradition:

Liberal, Anglo-Catholic, with Common Worship liturgy and a strong music tradition, alongside innovative non-Eucharistic worship styles.

SECTION FIVE: OTHER

This role description should be read alongside:

- The Ordinal
- The Canons of the Church of England
- Guidance for the Professional Conduct of Clergy
- The Bishop's License
- Parish Profile and Development Plan
- Agreed objectives with the supervising minister

Role description signed off by:

The Venerable Stephen Pullin, Archdeacon of Berkshire

Person Specification

Associate Priest – Benefice of The Cookhams

Qualifications and Training

Essential:

- Ordained priest within the Church of England, or a Church in communion with it, or a Church whose orders it recognises.
 - Successful completion of Initial Ministerial Education.
 - Commitment to continued professional development, particularly in areas enhancing mission, community engagement, and leadership.
-

Experience

Essential:

- Proven ability to lead **sacramental and Eucharistic worship**, maintaining reverence and accessibility.
- Experience in **community-focused outreach**, especially with children, families, and young people.
- Demonstrated success in building and sustaining **community partnerships**.

Desirable:

- Experience developing and leading **all-age and creative worship formats**.
 - Leadership in ministry to children, families, or schools, such as assemblies or discipleship programmes.
 - Involvement in initiatives that balance traditional worship with innovative approaches to engage new audiences.
-

Knowledge, Skills, and Competencies

Essential:

- The ability to **preach effectively** across diverse congregations, inspiring and challenging listeners of all ages.
- Strong interpersonal skills, with a demonstrated ability to **build relationships** with individuals, community organisations, and schools.

- Understanding of **liberal-Catholic liturgy** combined with a willingness to explore new expressions of worship.
- Competence in **digital engagement**, including managing and creating content for social media to enhance outreach.

Desirable:

- A passion for the choral tradition as a means to draw people into worship.
- Knowledge of discipleship models to create opportunities for spiritual growth across all age groups.
- Collaborative leadership skills, fostering teamwork among clergy, lay leaders, and volunteers.

General Attributes/Character

Essential:

- A **creative approach** to ministry, with enthusiasm for outreach and mission.
- A **warm and approachable personality**, with the ability to connect naturally with children, families, and the wider community.
- Energetic, innovative, and adaptable, with a sense of humour and an ability to inspire trust and confidence.
- A sacramental and Eucharistic priest who values both **traditional liturgy** and creative innovation in worship.
- A commitment to fostering inclusivity and creating a welcoming church environment for all.

This person specification outlines the qualities and skills sought for an **Associate Priest** to help the Benefice of The Cookhams grow in mission, community engagement, and worship. This role provides a unique opportunity to make a lasting impact in a vibrant and supportive benefice.