

South Holderness Deanery

A Profile for the posts of House for Duty Priest (or a 0.2 stipended post in lieu of housing)



WELCOME TO SOUTH HOLDERNESS!

We are delighted that you are reading this profile for the two Deanery House for Duty posts (or we could pay a 0.2 stipend if preferred) to work as part of a ministry team in the rural parishes of this deanery. These are unusual posts and we hope that, after reading more about it, you will be enthused and inspired to find out more. You are warmly invited to have an informal conversation with the Archdeacon of the East Riding, the Venerable Andy Broom, who can be contacted on 01482 881659, or the Area Dean, Rev'd Alisdair Laird, on 01964 630327.

We are praying for the success of this process as part of our commitment to our new Deanery Plan, more of which in the following pages. May God be with us as we strengthen our fellowship and endeavour to find new ways of doing ministry and mission in South Holderness.

Greetings in Christ's name!



Thank you for prayerfully discerning God's calling to the Deanery of South Holderness and to the East Riding Archdeaconry in the Diocese of York. We trust this profile will begin to give you an understanding of the churches and communities in these posts, but, above all, we welcome you to come and meet us here!

These posts have become available at a very significant time in the life of the Diocese. We have committed together in *Living Christ's Story* to being people who tell the story of Jesus' life, death

and resurrection, and people who tell the continuing story of what Jesus has done through his church, which includes what Jesus has done and continues to do through each of our own lives. These are times that require us to be simple, humble and bold.

To make the vision of *Living Christ's Story* a reality, our diocesan goals are:

- Becoming more like Christ
- Reaching people we currently don't
- Growing churches of missionary disciples
- Transforming our finances and structures

We encourage you to explore this vision and our commitment to this journey more on our Diocesan website.

As their part in this journey, the Deanery of South Holderness have created a bold and creative plan which is very exciting. Building on a deep commitment to collaboration that already exists they are seeking to encourage growth in their two towns whilst also experimenting with a new way of serving their village churches and seeking from God new ways to encourage health and growth within them. They are recognising that the current model of Church is struggling and they are stepping out in faith to explore something new. To enable this to happen, a Ministry Team of both lay and ordained Ministers will serve their village churches. We are seeking two House for Duty Priests to join this team and bring their own creative ministry to it.

As a Diocese we pray together the prayer of Teresa of Avila, "Lord, what do you want from me?" This is our prayer for *Living Christ's Story*. We pray this prayer particularly for you in this time of discernment. We hope that you will hear Christ's call clearly and we look forward to prayerfully sharing this journey with you. Please do take up the invitation to have a phone call with Archdeacon Andy Broom (01482 881659) as you explore this role further.

With our prayers,

+Eleanor (Bishop of Hull)

THE DEANERY OF SOUTH HOLDERNESS

Deanery Profile

This is a special place. Jostling on one side with the 2017 City of Culture, the Deanery narrows between the River Humber and the North Sea until the remoteness of Spurn Point brings the land to an end. Here, in Larkin's words, is "unfenced existence", a fertile land under big and eternally changing skies. A land of vibrant and self-reliant communities, their 22 churches witnessing to a strong seam of faith and belief.



Spurn Point



Hull Marina

In the nearby city of Kingston upon Hull there are cinemas, theatres, concert venues, museums, marina, sporting facilities, shops, an ice arena, historic buildings, and The Deep. Hull is also renowned for the universities and medical school. The rolling hills of the Yorkshire Wolds or the historic City of York can be reached in just over an hour. The Humber Bridge and M62 motorway are a short distance away.

The 22 churches of the deanery are currently grouped into four benefices. Under our innovative Deanery Plan launched out of the Diocese of York's Living Christ's Story consultation, whilst those benefice boundaries will remain in place for the time being, in practice, the deanery will operate under three groupings. The population centres in the towns of Withernsea and Hedon will each have their own priest, enabling them to focus and grow the churches there, whilst the remaining 20 rural parishes will be under the care of a Ministry Team, comprising ideally, one full-time priest and two House for Duty Deanery priests. In addition, we currently have a further House for Duty priest who works across the whole deanery, two Distinctive Deacons, Authorised Lay Ministers and a few retired clergy with PTO. There is also a widespread understanding that lay people in churches will be responsible for not only leading worship, but overseeing much of the day-to-day life of the parishes. The Ministry Team is to be led by Revd. Alisdair Laird who is Area Dean and has also become the Interim Priest in Charge for all 20 parishes. The 20 village parishes range from sizeable commuter villages to tiny, mainly agricultural, settlements. Each has its own identity and challenges, but each enjoys the support and encouragement of its neighbours, and the deanery as a whole.

The coastal town of Withernsea has a population of around 7,000, a figure which is expanded in the summer months by visiting holidaymakers. The other town in the deanery is Hedon which has a population of just over 8,000 and continues to expand. Hedon is a historic market town, in close proximity to the city of Hull. There is a good bus service running right through Hedon from Hull to Withernsea, serving all the villages en route along the A1033. Each of the towns offers good amenities and a variety of shops. The church in Hedon is the magnificent Grade I listed St Augustine's Church which has recently attained Major Parish Church status.

There are good ecumenical links with other denominations in the deanery, with a number of churches actively involved in Churches Together networks. There are usually a series of Lenten Lunches each year and a fundraising event for Christian Aid.

This is a Deanery that prays together, worships together, studies together and plays together; we need someone to whom that is an attractive environment to come and join us. You, for example.



Deanery Plan (incorporating the HfD roles on offer)

The revised 'Deanery Plan', prompted by the Diocesan review 'Living Christ's Story', is intended to enable two related goals:

1. to encourage and enable Christian ministry and life that is lively, welcoming, accessible, collaborative and open to God's Spirit.
2. to make the most effective use of reduced financial and 'clergy' resources;

The initial framework to enable the above has been to give the two major centres of population (Hedon and Withernsea) a period of time (up to six years) with a full-time member of clergy specifically assigned to give their attention to a single parish. The aim is to allow both centres an opportunity for growth and development without having clergy resources diverted by other responsibilities. It is envisaged that, in due course, these two centres will have the vitality and resilience to contribute to Christian ministry and life across the whole deanery.

In the meantime, the other 20, largely rural, parishes of the deanery will be served by a third full-time post, with the assistance of two/three 'House for Duty' posts (alongside other part-time clergy and 'Authorised Lay Ministers'). Here the intention is to build up the sense of community, shared responsibility, and mission. Some of the congregations and parish communities are very small. Rather than 'cutting our losses' and closing them, the aim is to enable all the congregations to support each other, allowing the very small ones to at least be sustainable through belonging to a greater whole, and enable energy, experience, and gifts to be shared.

A proactive 'Lay ministry' is seen as an essential element of the plan to ensure that an effective ministry of worship, mission and pastoral care is enabled, drawing on the abilities of the whole church community.

To ensure proper and equitable cover for those occasional offices and services where an ordained minister is required, a pattern of mutual assistance and support will be necessary across the group of rural parishes, and from time to time, with additional support from across the whole deanery. Further information regarding occasional offices can be found on page 10.



The Deanery comes together for Easter Story

There is no question that in order to build deeper community and collaboration, to reduce the pressures experienced by parish office holders, and unnecessary duplication of effort, the concept of 'deanery' is being given a greater prominence, alongside the parishes. To that extent we are drawing on traditions and practices within 'the Church' that reach beyond the traditional 'parish' system, and, with God's grace and Spirit, hoping to enable our faith and Christian family to grow in the light of that bigger vision.

Vision/Mission statement

Part of the purpose of the new 'deanery plan' is to strengthen fragile and often relatively isolated congregations through enabling them to genuinely belong to something bigger, better resourced, and more creative than they are able to be by carrying on alone.

There is definitely an element of pragmatism in our vision: we have to make the best of the resources we have, and see what can happen through faithfulness, determination and love.

Person specification

It is tempting to want to put together a list of qualities and skills which may ultimately be discouraging, and even distracting from what really matters.

What we need is the 'right' people in God's sight. We are certainly doing something that is a bit outside the 'Church of England's' 'Standard Operating Procedures' (at least in York Diocese), so we do need colleagues who are comfortable working in uncharted territory and happy to share responsibility and to allow others to experiment and take a lead.

We also need people for whom 'spirituality' and 'prayer' are living parts of their personal lives, and something to be shared and developed in others, both personally and in public worship.

We do not need a 'workaholic' or a 'micro-manager'. We expect anyone taking on a 'House for Duty' role to have a hinterland, and to be enjoying taking proper time for those other parts of life that are beyond 'work' and are precious in God's sight.

We need Ministers with a love and care for people, and a willingness to work alongside them in challenging times, where old certainties and ways of doing are having to change or be let go.

'The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit'.

We need someone who is listening to Christ's call: *"Follow me"*.

The Village Parishes



Benefice Walk ending at Paull Church

The Village Parishes is the name we have given to the group of 20 rural parishes for which we are now recruiting to the ministry team. Our Area Dean will occupy the full-time priest role for this team and we would like to have two House for Duty priests to work alongside him in looking after these parishes. Whilst there may be times when a particular minister is required to focus on specific churches, individuals or projects, we envisage that for most of the time, each member of the team will work across the group, so enhancing and enabling relationships within the group.

As stated elsewhere, the parishes differ in size and demography, each has its own challenges and

opportunities. Social deprivation is a significant aspect of life in South Holderness, but it tends to occur in localised pockets rather than being generally apparent. Most parishes are supported by willing lay people who love their churches and wish to be a part of this exciting venture. We have included here an overview of the parishes included in this group.

Of the 20 churches, most of which are Grade I listed, just over half serve very small communities, a small number of which return population figures of fewer than 100. These parishes are predominantly agricultural; some cover large areas but are sparsely populated. As part of our plan, we hope to avoid any sense of spiritual isolation in these places; rather we want to embrace them and help them to recognise the vital role that they play in our communal life and worship.



It's a good day for harvesting!

The remaining churches are in larger villages, some of which serve as dormitory villages to the city of Hull, particularly those on the western and southern boundaries of the group. The largest of these, the newly combined parish of Keyingham with Burstwick, has a population around 4,500. There are five other parishes with populations of between 1,000 and 4,000, and total population of The Village Parishes is around the 20,000 mark. There is a genuine sense of fellowship here between our churches and we expect that our new Deanery Plan will only enhance this further. Whilst most churches have active and committed PCCs, it is also the case that some of our parishes struggle to fill the officer roles and rely on the goodwill of a committed few. By working in collaboration with each other under the new plan, we believe that we can help all of our churches to play an active role in the deanery and in the life of their communities.



St Swithin's Weekend, Sproutley

Although not a major tourist hotspot South Holderness is not without its charms and amenities; one of them being that it is not a major tourist hotspot! Big skies and lonely spaces are definitely a feature. The beautiful Burton Constable House and Estate lie just outside the northern edge of the deanery, and attract many visitors to the area in the Summer, especially to its award-winning holiday park. The area has a number of other holiday parks, comprising caravans and lodges which swell the population in the warmer months.



Deanery Pilgrimage



'Christmas Live' Nativity at Easington

At the south eastern tip of the area included in The Village Parishes group is the wild and iconic Spurn Point, a wonderful nature reserve and SSSI; a migration site for a variety of birds and visited by 'twitchers' from far afield. Yorkshire Wildlife Trust has opened a visitor centre here. Work is underway to include the Humber Estuary and the East Yorkshire Coast in the Round England Coast Path. This is likely to bring more visitors to our area to appreciate the beautiful sea and landscapes, and the tranquillity of the area. Moreover, there are lots of field paths and rail trails which are ideal for exploring this little-known region.

Agriculture is the main industry in the area covered by the group, mainly arable and pig farming. With that come associated trades and skills including engineering.



*Remembrance Day
poppies at Keyingham*

Some parishes now included in this group have previously been (and legally, still are) incorporated into the Coast Benefice, of which St Matthew's Withernsea is the larger church. Under the current Deanery Plan, Withernsea will now have its own full-time priest and the surrounding parishes will come under the care of the Village Parishes group. Similarly, three of the group parishes have been part of the Hedon Benefice and will now also form part of the group. Part of the new group of parishes has been in interregnum for over two years.

It would be fair to say that congregations in all of these places are smaller than we would like them to be! And those congregations tend to be mainly on the 'mature' side. We need your help in bringing God's word to the younger people in our group and making our churches places they feel drawn to. Many of our churches are well supported by their communities, even if those communities don't fill the pews on a Sunday!

Like the towns of Withernsea and Hedon, the Village Parishes group of churches has been selected for inclusion in the Diocese of York's Revitalise project. Our aim is to Grow Healthy Churches and we would like you to help us achieve this.



*Spring lambs on Mothering
Sunday at Welwick*

We are fortunate to have a number of Recognised Parish Assistants (RPAs) in the Deanery and it is hoped that most of these will seize the opportunity to migrate to the role of Authorised Lay Minister (ALM) under the Lay Ministries Renewal Scheme, which the Diocese is rolling out. It is acknowledged and appreciated that Lay Ministry will have an even greater role to play under our new Deanery Plan, not only in supporting the ordained clergy in Sunday and weekday worship, but also in leading study groups, prayer meetings, pastoral care etc.

More information regarding the individual parishes will be available if you progress your application

Church buildings and halls

Twenty of the twenty-two deanery church buildings are Grade 1 Listed. Most are 700-800 years old; many do not have toilets or running water, let alone kitchen facilities. Whilst candles continue to be used to very atmospheric effect in at least one of the

churches, there are other reminders of the past that are not so inspiring. These are old buildings and some still lack even the basic facilities that people expect to find in a place that welcomes the public.

In many cases, congregations are not large enough to cover the costs of long term maintenance requirements. There is, in some places more than others, a real need to re-connect local communities with the reality of their responsibilities towards the upkeep of 'their church', but even then, in some cases, the long term costs are unsupportable. Having said that, the church buildings are widely held dear, and are expected to be available for rites of passage and 'high days and holy days'.

Strengths and Weaknesses

As you will see elsewhere in this profile the Deanery of South Holderness is principally rural, and (by English standards) is relatively isolated: road journeys are often slow, the deanery is bounded by water on three sides, and there is a psychological feeling of being 'on the edge'. Bus services in the rural patch are variable, and absent altogether in a small number of parishes. Nonetheless, this is an area that draws people and, once tasted, it is hard to keep away. People are warm and friendly—it is often easy to start a meaningful conversation with a total stranger.

"Them in York" (or even in Hull) can feel a long way away, and not always spoken of warmly. For many years the Deanery has not been able/willing to fully pay its share of deanery and diocesan costs. The last thirty years have seen a drastic decrease in available clergy, and significant changes attempting to cater for that reality.

Instead of wallowing in self-pity, people have largely chosen to get on with the changes and to try and make the best of them. There is a resilience and openness that has enabled church members to tackle the need to change, once again, with creativity and courage. Many recognise (and are even glad) that things cannot stay as they are, and are looking for ways to enable 'the church' to be more welcoming, more outgoing, and more visibly and faithfully 'the people of Christ'. The enthusiastic support we have had from the Bishop, the Archdeacon and the wider diocese for our current Deanery Plan will only serve to encourage us in these objectives!

Church Services

Until recently there has been a general expectation of weekly Communion services, if not in the local church, then at least at several venues within the local benefice. Since the COVID pandemic and the vacancy of two of four full-time posts this expectation has adapted to reality. Holy Communion is currently offered in each village parish at least monthly, with other services being led by either lay members or clergy (some retired and holding Permission to Officiate).

The age profile of worshippers is relatively elderly, which probably accounts for the preference for morning services. Until recently non-Eucharistic services have been largely on an *ad hoc* basis, according to availability of leaders and the requirements of the local congregation. Covid-19 brought about the introduction of some online services which helped many to stay connected at a time when in person worship was not possible or continued to feel too risky to those particularly vulnerable. Some such provision is continuing.

Current worship patterns include a wide variety of formats. Some of our churches are not afraid to try new things to see what works. So, you will find 'café church', tea party services, Messy Church, as well as the more traditional Morning Prayer, Evensong and Eucharistic services. Part of the intention of the new plan is to encourage a wider range of services beyond Holy Communion in more of our churches, supported by more consistent and available leadership (lay and ordained).

We are also fortunate to have a well-established Deanery Choir and a Christian Folk Group supporting our worship at various times and on varying occasions.

Occasional Offices

Baptisms, weddings, and funerals held in church remain a significant feature of local life, despite the small numbers who regularly attend worship services. These are important occasions and often involve, and enable, ongoing relationships between officiating clergy, church officers, and the participating families.

Assisting with occasional offices, alongside helping with worship services, would be one of the key responsibilities for anyone undertaking a 'house for duty' role. The numbers of occasional offices taking place in the Village Parishes group are not such that excessive demands are placed on the ministers who fulfil these duties.

Approximate figures are:

Baptisms: ~ 15 per year (mostly between April and September)

Weddings: ~ 17 to 20 per year (mostly between April and September)

Funerals: ~ 40 per year

Colleagues and Accommodation

The deanery has a number of RPAs with varying degrees of engagement, but this role is being translated across the Diocese into 'Authorised Lay Ministers', with the intention of providing a role that is more supported and integrated into the local 'leadership' of the church.

There are currently three retired clergy holding 'Permission to Officiate' (PTO), two Distinctive Deacons, a 'House for Duty' priest (with a particular licence to encourage mission and spirituality across the whole deanery), alongside two (soon to be three) full-time clergy. 'Chapter' meetings have been occurring about every three months (the pattern has taken some time to re-establish after the pandemic).

It is expected that accommodation for one of the two new house for duty priests will be in a newly purchased property in Burton Pidsea (at the time of writing purchase not yet completed but is expected shortly).

This is a very attractive property in the central part of the deanery. It has two reception rooms plus study, four good bedrooms, two bathrooms and a garage.



Proposed Burton Pidsea house with floor plan



The second property is the existing vicarage at Thorngumbald. This is a spacious, well-appointed, four bedroomed property on the A1033 close to shops and other amenities. It has well established and fairly extensive grounds, with ample parking space and a double garage.



The Vicarage, Thorngumbald

Parish Organisations and Schools

There are a number of organisations with a faith connection across the group, including Mothers' Union, Methodist Ladies, and the uniformed organisations. Easington Church runs a weekly Fareshare operation. In the summer months there is a coffee shop on Sunday afternoons at Paull Church. The number of secular groups which meet in the area is many and varied, including:

Coffee and chat groups	Young Farmers' Clubs	Kick boxing
Dance	Performing Arts	Sewing and crafts
Film shows	Vintage Machinery	Health walks
Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme	Art classes	Conservation groups
Chess	Photography	<i>and more ...</i>

There are primary schools or academies in most parishes in the group, including four Church of England primary schools or academies i.e. at Easington, Patrington, Roos and Sproatley. There are active Open the Book teams involved with three of these schools and the schools regularly use the churches for part of their routine worship. Other schools have in the past, or still do, receive regular ministry through lay and ordained persons.

There are two large comprehensive schools serving the deanery, one of which is in the parish of Withersea, outside the group, and the other being the Holderness Academy and Sixth Form College at Preston, which currently has 1,100+ students on its roll.

Finances

It is fair to say that finances have played more than a small part in giving rise to the innovative plan for ministry we are now working towards. The deanery includes some of the most socially deprived parishes of the East Riding and many more people are now struggling with the rising cost of living, which makes appealing for generous giving a fine balancing act. At 31 December 2022, the deanery had paid just less

than 82% of the Free Will Offer pledged for the year. Hence, finances have been a challenge for this deanery for some time and remain so.

Nonetheless, some parishes do have interest and support for our church buildings from the wider communities. We very much hope to find a way of developing and transforming that support for our buildings into a broader interest in matters of faith and in the church as a family. We believe that a significant improvement in our finances would be a secondary, but vital effect, of growing our churches across the group. We pray that our new plan for ministry will help us achieve this growth.

And finally....

We hope that after reading about our plans for this group of parishes you will discern a desire in us to move forward, to grow and to do God's will in our communities. We hope that what you have read has prompted a calling for you to come here and join us in ministry and mission.

We recognise that working in an enlarged group of parishes has its challenges, but it also presents opportunities for growth in different directions, by varying means, and with greater support. There is a real desire to spread the Word of God in our communities, and for us to work together in love and fellowship in that purpose. We pray that you will trust God to lead you wherever you can serve Him best; if that brings you to this Deanery, then we look forward to working with you and serving God together to the glory of His name.