

 THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Diocese of Leeds



**Interim Estates Church Planter for North East
Bradford (0.5) and Interim priest for St John's
Thorpe Edge (0.5)**

Sharing life and discovering Jesus
together in NE Bradford

Bishop's Statement

Interim Estates Church Planter for NE Bradford (0.5) and Interim Priest for Thorpe Edge (0.5)

Our vision as the Diocese is about confident clergy equipping confident Christians to live and tell the good news of Jesus Christ. For this post, we are seeking an enabling leader with a track record of church growth, both numerically and spiritually, who has a joyful and confident faith. We want to appoint someone who loves Jesus and loves people, who can work with the congregations to reimagine ministry in the light of new opportunities, grow the churches, develop confident discipleship, and sustain and develop engagement with the local communities.

Following a series of retirements, we had the opportunity at the start of 2023 to reimagine our approach to mission and ministry in the North East of Bradford. This area includes the parishes of Holy Trinity Idle, St John's Greengates, St John's Thorpe Edge, St Luke's Eccleshill and St Cuthbert's Wrose. The five parishes share strong similarities in terms of context and demographics. In particular, these similarities include new-build housing developments and social housing estates. Over the past two years relationships have been strengthening considerably between the congregations, not least through sharing a week of prayer, Lent meetings and an Alpha course. There is a strong desire to work more closely together, recognising that there are significant unreached communities in the area. There is also a growing appetite to reorganise the parishes to find new structures which will reflect and support the patterns of mission, ministry and worship that develop in this next season. The new post-holder is expected to contribute to this process.

Building on the closer relationships that have been developing between these five parishes, we were able to seek three new clergy, who would work collaboratively with each other, and with the Resourcing Church of Holy Trinity Idle to take forward mission across the whole area. The new roles were designed to help take forward this spirit of collaboration and a shared approach to meeting the current and emerging mission and ministry needs across these parishes. We have now recruited to two of the roles (a full-time Associate Vicar of Idle, Greengates and Wrose, and a part-time Priest-in-charge at St Luke's, Eccleshill). This post is the final one to fill, and combines a proper focus on the needs of an individual parish with offering and receiving particular skills to and from neighbouring parishes. The priorities sit within a framework formed by four goals for the wider area of North-East Bradford.

1. Develop and implement a plan to engage with people living in the less well-reached social housing in North-East Bradford;
2. Develop and implement a plan for mission amongst the people living and moving into the new housing developments in North-East Bradford;
3. See the clergy, PCCs and church congregations in North-East Bradford working ever more closely in taking forward the above two tasks, and to develop appropriate possible structural changes, including pastoral re-organisation, which will support this better;
4. Strengthen relationships with the rest of the Outer Bradford Deanery, as well as the wider Episcopal Area and Diocese.

Estates Church Planting

Social housing estates and owner-occupied new build housing are ministry contexts common to the parishes in North-East Bradford. Over the past two years we have taken the opportunity to look at the current and emerging mission and ministry needs across these parishes and consider the area as a whole. Holy Trinity Idle, designated a Resourcing Church in 2019 is receiving funding to support revitalisation work in North-East Bradford. It is therefore well-placed to offer support across this wider geography. Furthermore, a Bishop's Mission Order exists across North-East Bradford for Sorted, a youth church started 20 years ago aimed at unchurched young people from harder to reach backgrounds. Sorted's office base is at St John's Thorpe Edge.

This part of the role means we need an enabling priest with an entrepreneurial spirit. While they may well be involved in leading a new worshipping community themselves, their role will involve modelling a leadership approach. (S)he will need to focus on creating and overseeing a mission plan for the unreached estates and new housing of the whole area. To implement this plan, (s)he will need to grow new lay leaders and leadership teams, encouraging and coaching them as they plant new worshipping communities to realise our ambition to establish a worshipping and missional presence in every significant community and estate of North-East Bradford.

St John's Thorpe Edge

St John's Thorpe Edge is an urban parish of just over 5000 people in North-East Bradford, and is in the top 2% nationally in terms of overall deprivation. It comprises a large social housing estate, with the church buildings at its heart, as well as some new-build housing. It forms a benefice with the parish of St John's Greengates, but for the latter part of the former priest's ministry she became part-time and relinquished her role at Greengates.

St John's has a long-standing and deep commitment to its local community. For example, its buildings include a day centre which hosts two groups, as well as a Community Café which provides very low-cost warm meals. The Community Hall is well used by local community groups. The church has also run a bedding bank to help local families in need. There are good relationships with other key community groups, including the Rockwell and Springfield Community Centres.

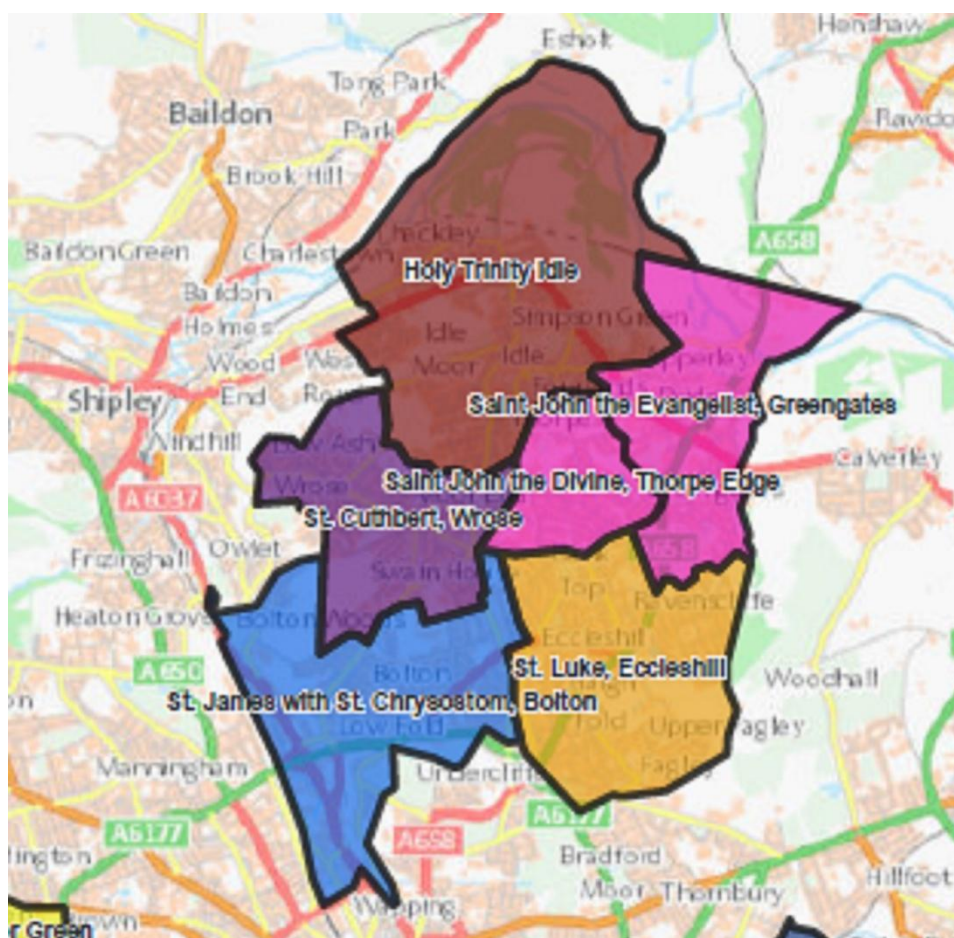
The post combines two part-time roles. We are seeking one person to fulfil both roles, making the most of the synergies offered between them. Nevertheless, we are prepared to consider applicants for either one of the roles on its own. If taken separately, they come with a half-stipend and housing, for which the post-holder will work Sundays and three other days a week. In both roles, the post-holder will need to focus their available time strategically to inspire and develop others into ministry and leadership alongside themselves.

+Toby

February 2025

North East Bradford

Following a series of retirements, we had the opportunity 18 months ago to reimagine our approach to mission and ministry in the North East area of the Bradford Episcopal Area. This area includes the parishes of Holy Trinity Idle, St John's Greengates, St John's Thorpe Edge, St Luke's Eccleshill and St Cuthbert's Wrose. The five parishes share strong similarities in terms of context and demographics. In particular, these similarities include new-



build housing developments and social housing estates. Relationships have been strengthening considerably between the congregations, not least through sharing a week of prayer, Lent meetings and an Alpha course. Much credit for this goes to the vicar of Holy Trinity Idle and the Area Dean. As relationships and collaboration have deepened, so has the appetite to reorganise the parishes to find new structures which will reflect and support the patterns of mission, ministry and worship that develop in this next season.

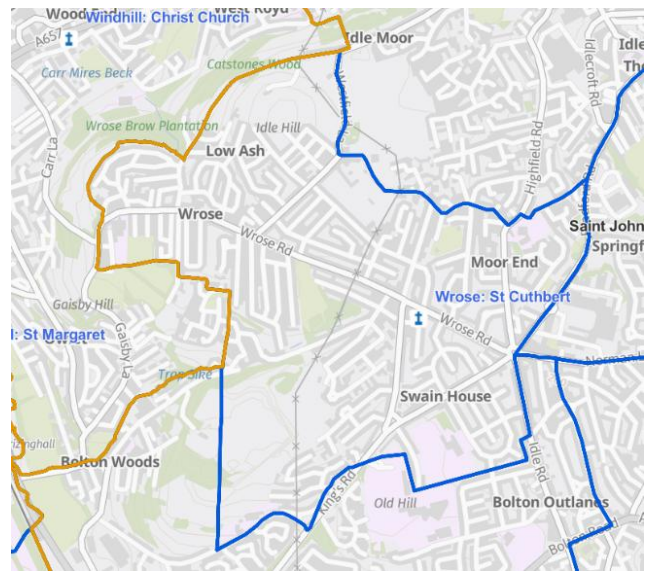
As part of fulfilling the Church of England's vision of being a Christian presence in every community, we want to reach the social housing estates and new housing developments of North East Bradford where we currently have little presence or impact. The estates church planter part of this role is to oversee the planting of new worshipping communities in these places, meeting at times and locations that make them accessible to local people.

The maps on the next page show the main housing estates of North-East Bradford, together with where our church buildings are and the main roads dividing up the area. It is evident that there is no shortage of places to reach! The large Ravenscliffe estate is probable the most obvious place to begin, but a process of discernment through prayer and conversation may lead to other opportunities coming to the fore first. The long term aim is for multiple

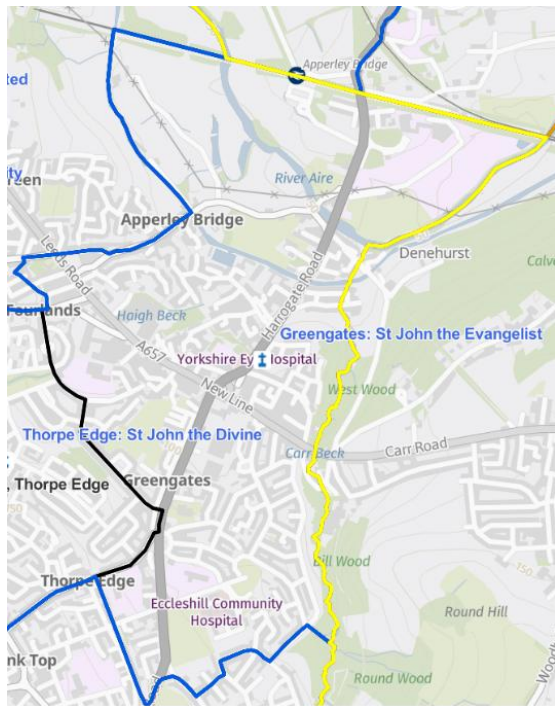
new worshipping communities, some or many of which will need to be lay-led. Growing lay leaders is therefore an essential part of this role.



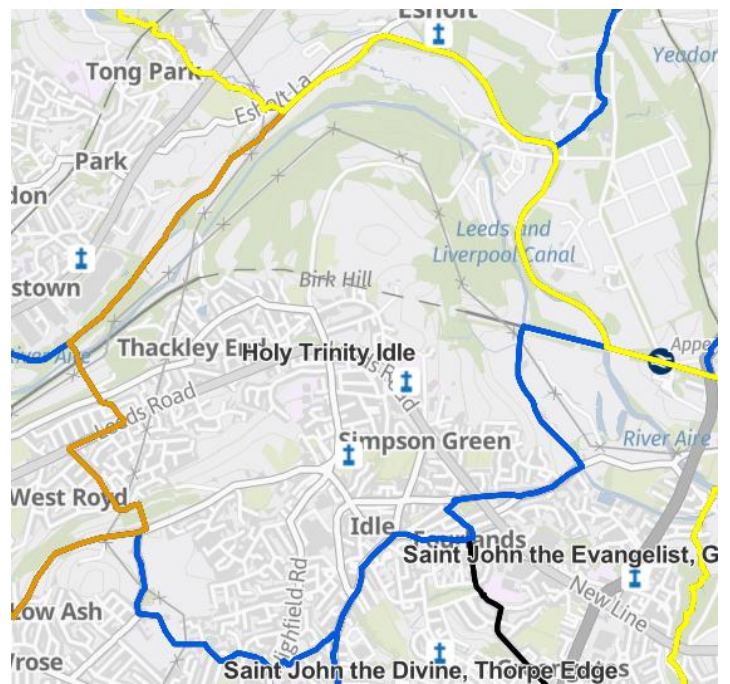
St Luke's Eccleshill



St Cuthbert's Wrose



St John's Greengates



Holy Trinity Idle

Thorpe Edge

Back in 1874, the Vicar and people of Idle established a Mission in the Thorpe Edge area of the old Parish of Idle, and erected a building containing a School, a Schoolmaster's house, and a Mission Church. By 1908 the outreach of the Church had grown and permission was sought to establish St John's as a parish in its own right. Once the Diocese of Bradford was created in 1919, plans went ahead and in 1922 the Bishop of Bradford consecrated St John's Church in Cavendish Road, as the Parish Church of St John the Divine, Idle.

In 1953, the Local Authority began building Thorpe Edge housing estate, to cater for about 8,000 people. This post-war development included five large 8 storey tower blocks which were completed in 1957. The Diocese then altered the boundaries of the Parish, as the Estate would have been in three different parishes. Bishop Donald Coggan decided that St John's should cater for the whole Estate as well as a few older developments on the periphery. This move required a new church at the heart of the estate and the present St John's Church was built between 1960 and 1962 .

The estate is an Urban Priority Area and has gone through a period of when it was a challenging place to live. The local authority decided to introduce a mix of housing and some of the tower blocks were demolished, and modern housing was built. Now there is a different feel to the estate and the people who choose to live there.

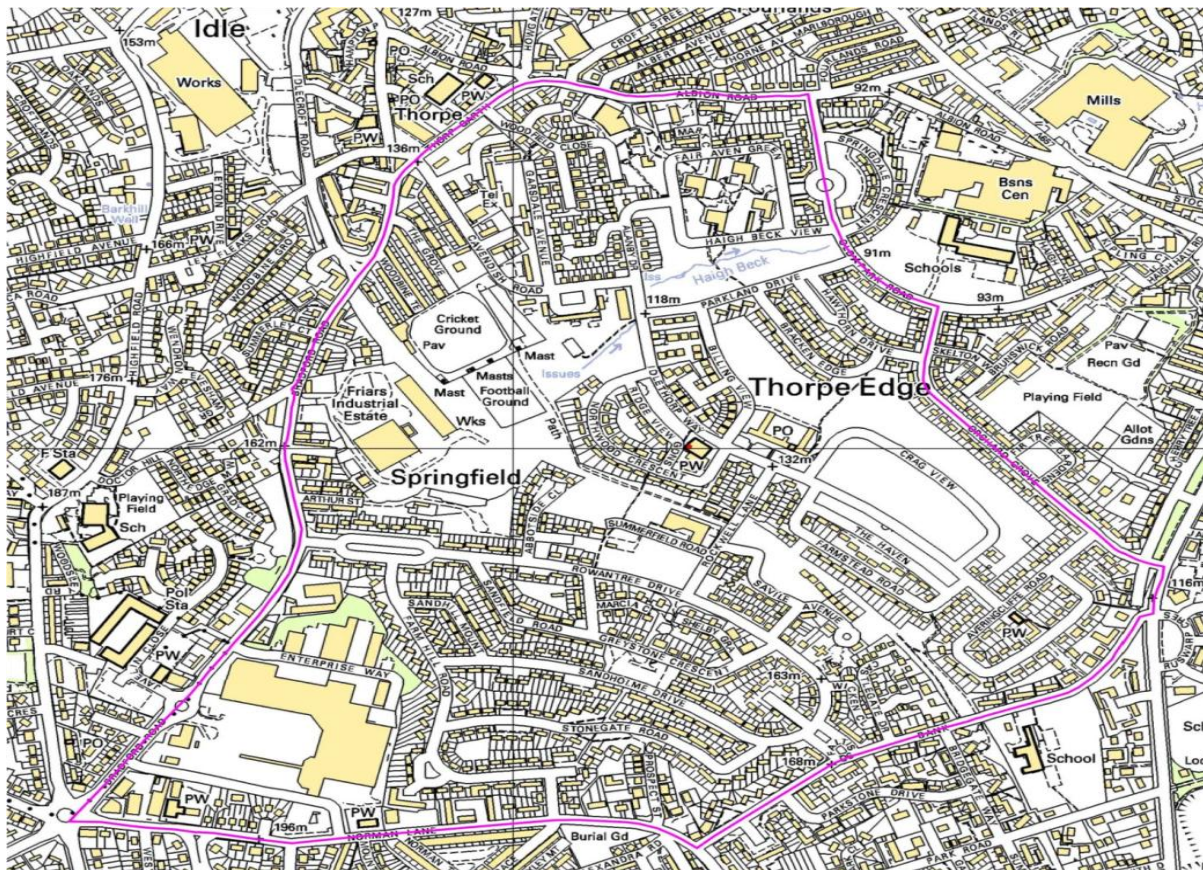
In 2003 the Newlands Community Association opened the Rockwell Centre on Thorpe Edge Estate. Newlands is a community association which covered a large part of North East Bradford.



Sadly the centre closed in Oct 2022 due to lack of funding after many years of being a real rock on the estate. The story doesn't end there though, the centre opened its doors again in 2022 and is now known as 'The Rockwell Centre and Blooming Buds Theatre Company'. It is a busy and thriving centre and its website shows the range of activities on offer.

The estate is well provided for in regard to community resources; besides the Rockwell Centre, there are the Springfield and Springdale community centres, a medical centre, chemist and our own Day centres and café.

Thorpe Edge doesn't have any schools; the nearest school is Coop Academy Parkland which is just outside the parish. It is a small primary with 216 children. However, St Johns has really good links with it through assemblies and events and some of the families attend our Messy Church.



In the 2021 Census, the population of Thorpe Edge comprised 88% white British and the social rented housing proportion has decreased to 39%. This welcome development has brought in people with more energy. Nevertheless, the Church Urban Fund analysis reveals that the parish has much higher levels of poverty than usual CUF ranks the parish in the poorest 202 parishes in the whole of the country.

However, a major high-rise block (York House) with approx. 80 family size flats and 10 bed sits has recently been demolished and the families relocated not always within the estate.

St John the Divine Church

The church was designed by Norman Outhwaite, a local architect. The old church was initially used as a church hall and was eventually demolished in 1974. The new St. John's opened in April 1963.



On our 50th anniversary, we held an exhibition of stories and pictures from our first 50 years in Thorpe Edge and held a thanksgiving service offering thanks to God for the witness of St John's down the years.



The church interior is an attractive, warm and welcoming place, ready to invite what God has instore for us, it is also the largest community space on the estate so there is potential for developing further community links.

We have architect's plans to renovate the community part of the building.

The Worshipping Life at St. Johns

Our congregation is a friendly group of people who love to welcome new people into its community. A strong sense of fellowship has blossomed over the last few years to establish a supportive network within the Church family.

The age range of the congregation lies between 0 – 80 years. We have a mix of retired, employed with a very small number of unemployed. The ethnicity of the church has shifted significantly recently as we have welcomed people from Nigeria and Iran.



Our worship tends to be informal using a range of liturgy. There is freedom within worship to use flags, share stories and be open to the spirit.

Services include morning worship and Communion. The second Saturday of every month we have a Messy Church Service which is well attended and has its own regular congregation. Lay participation is encouraged within the services.

Messy Church

We have a fantastic team of people who run Messy Church on the 2nd Saturday of each month with a theme where families come and learn more about Jesus through worship, crafts, songs, prayers, fun and a shared lunch together too.

Our numbers are continuing to grow as we meet new families each month and we feel truly blessed providing them a safe environment to come along and have fun where they feel comfortable and enjoy the fellowship of each other. We've also had baptisms within the service.



It is a place for families to be creative and we have all ages ranging from 0 - 80 and we give them a space to be creative through bible storytelling, music and a meal.

The encouraging, non-threatening atmosphere has enabled us to grow leaders within the church in a variety of ministries including leading worship, prayer ministry, hospitality, pastoral care and creativity.

We see Messy Church as integral to our church life. It is Christ – centred and we aim to provide activities for the families and inspire them with worship where they hopefully take a message away with them.

There's a real sense that this great, once a month, Saturday service is of God, it surely can't be anything else, and so many people hear the good news of Jesus who wouldn't otherwise hear it.



What our families had to say ...

Our kids love the crafts and the food!

Welcoming and friendly .

It's a place where we learn about Jesus.

A great friendly team of people.

There is a family feel and a place I consider being my church.

It's a great place to chat with others making friends.

St John's Community café

St John's Community Cafe is what it says it is. It is a cafe in the church for the community run by the church with paid employees and volunteers from the church and is a place where the local community can access fare share food.



We are so blessed to be able to reach out to our neighbours with gifts of food and other everyday essentials.

The cafe is a place where we offer cooked breakfast and lunch at a very minimal cost. It is a place where all are welcome and since it opened it has become a beacon of light in the community that has helped many people who are struggling. We are now producing over ninety meals a week for the local community.

It is a real opportunity for mission as we get to chat to all who come through the doors. There are opportunities to listen to their stories, many of whom are in difficult situations because of financial hardship, broken relationships and loneliness.

Many have been helped by simply having someone to chat to. This has resulted in new people coming to church and other's returning who haven't been for a while. We have been blessed with the baptism of two people through their contact with the church via the Cafe.



In addition, we now have an afternoon drop in called 'Kettles On' open on a Tuesday afternoon. It's a place of welcome, open to anyone who wishes to come along. This works alongside our cafe offering refreshments and a warm pleasant place to meet friends and chat with members of the church team.

Moving forward, there is potential to begin a basic exploration course called Start as some people have expressed an interest.

Plans for future ministry might include a men's mental health group as well as a toddler group. We want to be seen as a community church that meets the needs of the people we serve.

Our purpose is to follow Christ, encouraging others to join with us as we do that by following the example that Jesus set for us, sharing God's love both practically and spiritually.

Our Day Centre's - Safe Space and Good Companions



We have two-day centers for the elderly at St Johns Thorpe Edge, Safe Space and Good Companions these are run by paid staff together with several volunteers some of which are from our church. The two-day centers are completely different; Safe Space is for the benefit of individuals with dementia and is held on a Friday and Good Companions which runs on a Wednesday is more for the lonely and isolated and some with complex needs.

At these sessions we play games and talk with the clients about their family and childhood as this helps stimulate their memories. They enjoy fitness sessions, art and craft, bingo, quizzes, entertainment and trips out. It is an amazing service and privilege to be run these sessions, they are vital to their well-being giving them a more enriched and fulfilled life. These day centers are also used by members of our own church.



What our Day Centre members had to say ...

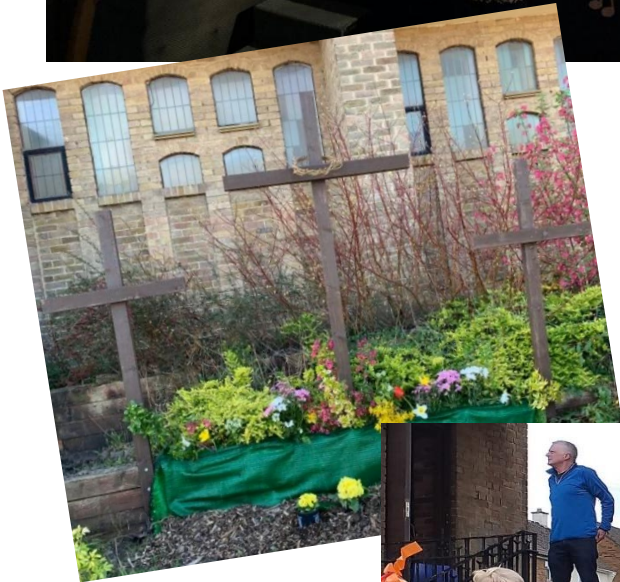
It's a safe place to come and I love it!

I don't know what I would do without it, and the staff are lovely.

The day centre is invaluable to me, I bring my husband Jim, he loves it, and it means I get some much-needed respite.

I get a chance to socialise twice a week, without it I would be quite isolated.

Our community life together





Accommodation

The vicarage is located just behind and a little above St John's, Thorpe Edge. The house is an original design which deliberately evokes the high single pitch roof of the church (which is seen behind it in the picture).

The 4 bedroomed vicarage was erected when the church was built in 1963. Since then, the house has been double glazed and had upgraded central heating installed.

Three new composite doors have been fitted along with a new alarm system and CCTV. There is a large front garden and a smaller rear garden.



What kind of Priest are we seeking for this combined role?

You will:

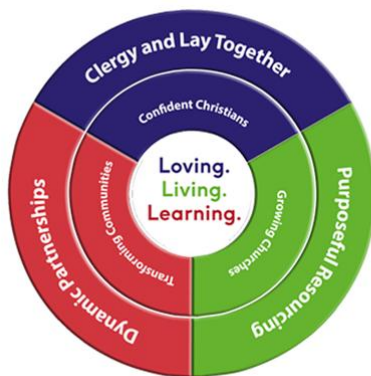
- Have a heart for estates ministry and fruitful experience of pioneering mission and / or church planting on social housing estates or new housing developments;
- Be able to provide strong spiritual leadership rooted in prayer;
- Be a strong team player, who works well with others and can delegate well;
- Be committed to developing lay disciples and leaders as part of every member ministry, encouraging, discerning and developing skills in new and existing leaders;
- Be a nurturer who engages and values people who are on the edge spiritually;
- Relate well to families and value the contribution of children as fellow disciples;
- Have get up and go, meeting people where they are both physically and spiritually;
- Be flexible, creative and imaginative, willing to try new things to breathe new life into St John's as well as new worshipping communities;
- Someone who can create bridges between worshipping communities and other community organisations and projects;
- Be a great communicator.

Above all, we want someone who feels called to work in the communities of North-East Bradford, who will love its places people.

The Diocese of Leeds

The Diocese of Leeds was formed at Easter 2014. It is one of the largest dioceses in the country covering an area of around 2425 square miles and a population of around 2642400 people. The diocese comprises five Episcopal areas, each served by a suffragan Bishop. Each Episcopal Area is coterminous with an Archdeaconry.

The Diocesan Vision is 'confident Christians, growing churches, transforming communities and so helping share the Good News of Jesus Christ across our Diocese'. This Vision is embedded into the Diocesan Strategy and Goals.



Our goals

- ① Thriving as a distinctive diocese whose culture is shaped by a shared vision and values
- ② Re-Imagining ministry
- ③ Nurturing lay discipleship
- ④ Building leadership pathways
- ⑤ Growing young people as Christians

The Diocese is a mix of urban and rural. The area includes the major cities of Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield; the large industrial and post-industrial towns of Halifax, Huddersfield and Dewsbury; the market towns of Harrogate, Skipton, Ripon, Richmond and Wetherby; and the deeply rural area of the Yorkshire Dales.

The Diocese is unique in having three cathedrals; Bradford, Ripon and Wakefield. The Deans of the Cathedrals work together to provide key diocesan services.

Terms of Appointment and Accommodation

This is a full time interim post (initially for 3 years) under Common Tenure. Provision of the house includes water rates and Council Tax. All expenses are paid. Removal costs and a resettlement grant are available.

The appointment is subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure from the DBS. There are six weeks holiday per annum plus Bank Holidays (or time in lieu) Participation in an annual Ministerial Development Review and in-service training is required and an annual retreat is strongly encouraged

Is God calling you to this post?

To arrange a visit or conversation, contact:

Archdeacon of Bradford, Ven Dr Andy Jolley, andy.jolley@leeds.anglican.org , 07973 458403 or Carmel Dylak: carmel.dylak@leeds.anglican.org (0113 353 0290)