**Parish Profile for:**

**St John the Baptist Church representing the Parish of Lowick and Kyloe, Lowick, Northumberland TD15 2UD**

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**Lowick & Kyloe Parochial Church Council is seeking a Priest in Charge based in Lowick to work flexibly with colleagues in the Deanery. The successful candidate will be a team player who is able to demonstrate a good understanding of the particular needs and nuances of rural communities.**

**The new Priest in Charge will enjoy being a member of a highly supportive lay and clergy team.**

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**Appendix 1. Role and Responsibilities**

1. **Parish Overview**
2. The church of St John the Baptist, Lowick is situated in North Northumberland, some

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| nine miles south of Berwick-Upon-Tweed and the Scottish border and some six miles west of Holy Island. Covering an area of 40 square miles and abutting the coast at the Holy Island Causeway, the ecclesiastical parish of Lowick & Kyloe encompasses three civil parishes – Lowick, Bowsden and Kyloe. Although distinctly rural in nature and in the far north of England, the parish is surprisingly well located for access, by road rail and air to other parts of the British Isles. | ***The Parish of Lowick & Kyloe*** |

**1.2** The community is made up of the village of Lowick with some 550 on the electoral role in 2012, the smaller village of Bowsden (148) and the hamlets of Kyloe, Fenwick and Holburn as well as numerous outlying farmsteads. Many people have chosen to live here, often from other areas of the country, to enjoy the particular advantages and quality of life the area provides. Most persons of working age travel to Berwick-upon Tweed, Wooler or Alnwick. A smaller number commute to Edinburgh and Newcastle. Perhaps reflecting both the limited job opportunities and attractiveness of the local countryside the average age of residents of the parish is considerably higher than the national average. This fact is also reflected in the demographic of churchgoers.

**1.3** Northumberland operates a three tier education system although this is currently under review. At present there is a CofE Voluntary Aided First School in Lowick, a Middle School in Berwick and Secondary Schools at Berwick and Alnwick. The secondary school system is non-selective.

**1.4** The new Priest in Charge will reside in asix bedroom Vicarage in Lowick, located some 200m from the church of St John the Baptist.

1. **About Us**

**2.1** Our parish has a commitment to growth and offer good potential. We welcome constructive change and have a strong desire to work collaboratively and not to accept the status quo.

**2.2** In particular:

* We currently enjoy strong lay involvement in our services and we recognise the need to grow more leaders to help turn our vision into reality; and
* We currently offer good pastoral care and look for guidance and leadership to further develop this ministry.

**2.3** In addition we offer:

* An excellent quality of life in North Northumberland;
* A friendly congregation (our friendliness is frequently commented upon by visitors to St John the Baptist) with highly supportive Churchwardens, waiting to welcome, support and work alongside you; and
* Clergy colleagues in the wider Norham Deanery who enjoy working together and who are able to offer a variety of experience.

1. **The Person We Seek (see Appendix 1 for Key Responsibilities)**

**3.1** In order to get as wide an opinion as possible, a questionnaire was circulated amongst parishioners and their views are reflected below.

**3.2** We are looking for someone who has a deep rooted spirituality, values the Bible as a source of inspiration, teaching and preaching, is an effective communicator and preacher andhas an ability to make and build on links with individuals and community organisations whose involvement with the Church is currently limited.

**3.3** In addition we would like someone who:

* Has leadership gifts shown in a personal, pastoral and supportive way;
* Is a person of vision who can help us shape and fulfil our aspirations for the church;
* Is a team player;
* Understands the needs of families and young people;
* Has strong relational skills, a people person;
* Has skills in chairing committee meetings;
* The ability to adapt and respond to the nuances of rural life;
* Has energy and resilience to cope with the demands of the job;
* Has interests and activities beyond church life;
* Is willing to work actively with local churches of all denominations (St John the Baptist has always been open to use by other faiths);
* Able to work to a Safeguarding Policy;
* Owns a car and a current driving licence; and
* Be prepared to work with teaching staff to promote religious education in Lowick CofE First School. The previous incumbent was a member of the school’s governing body.

**3.4** The reality is that parishioners want their “own” Church for weddings and funerals etc and strongly support Church social activities yet fail to attend Church services, except perhaps on special occasions such as Christmas. The challenge for the Priest in Charge is to try and solve this problem by building a strong relationship with the community.

1. **Parish Organisation**
   1. The parish of Lowick & Kyloe, in the Diocese of Newcastle is one of the twelve parishes of the Norham Deanery which covers North Northumberland within the Archdeanery of Lindisfarne.
   2. For many years Lowick parish has been linked to the two adjacent parishes of Ancroft and Ford and Etal with the previous incumbent being responsible for all three parishes. Formerly the Benefice of Lowick & Kyloe and Ancroft was joined in plurality with Ford and Etal under the joint patronage of Durham and Newcastle. The Bishop, subsequent to the retirement of our incumbent, has issued a notice of suspension of presentation so that any appointment would be as a half-time Priest in Charge responsible for the three parishes.

**4.3** At the 2018 APCM there were 36 parishioners on the electoral role. There are two Churchwardens and nine others on the Parochial Church Council which meets every two months. The Annual report and accounts for the year to December 31st 2018 are available on the church website.

1. **The Church of St John the Baptist**

**5a Service Pattern**

**5.1** Our regular services are:

* Each Sunday, 9.00am Holy communion with a typical size of congregation between 15 and 25; and
* Each Wednesday, (except in August) 9.30am said Holy Communion with a average congregation of 6 in 2018.

**5.2** This pattern of services has been largely determined by the previous incumbent’s responsibilities. The nature of our services tends towards middle to high church and the PCC is happy with female clergy. Other services include Weddings, Funerals and extra special services at Christmas, Easter and at Harvest time. There is a CofE First School in the village and, since the appointment of a new Headteacher, children’s services have been held in the church with the active participation of the pupils.

**5.3** During the interregnum we have had a number of visiting clergy enabling us to continue to receive regular communion with lay led services as circumstances dictate.

**5b History**

**5.4** The church of St John the Baptist (Grade II listed) stands in an elevated position at the west end of the village of Lowick. The present building dates largely from 1794 (the Nave) but there has been a church on the site since the earlier part of the twelfth century, probably since the time village began to develop at the intersection of the former Roman road known as the Devil’s Causeway and the pilgrim’s route to Holy Island. It was subject to alteration some 40 years later in the gothic style with the Chancel and Vestry being added in 1887.

**5c Interior Features**

**5.5** The entrance porch is at the base of the tower in which there are three bells which at present cannot be rung. From the porch a door leads to the toilet. Just inside the main part of the Church is the stone font gifted to the church in the late 19th century. At the back of the Nave on the left is a kitchen facility which facilitates the provision of

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| refreshments after each service. On the right are displayed various church information documents including detailed grave maps. The wooden pews were arranged in their present form during the 1880’s and vary in quality as evidenced by the width of the seats. The Nave has an open hammer-beam roof. |  |

**5.6** The Stone pulpit and the wooden Lectern at the entrance to the Chancel still have 19th century oil lamps, as does the entrance porch. On the left of the chancel is the Organ, which was built by James Jepsom Binns of Leeds and installed in 1926. This has recently been partly restored, with funds already in place to complete the restoration in early 2019.

**5.7** The Altar is at the east end of the Chancel, to the right of which is a seat built into the

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| wall (the Sedalia) for the priest to sit during the bible readings. To the left of the chancel is a small stone sink (the Piscina) for washing the chalice after communion and in front of the Altar are the communion rails. Behind the altar there is carved oak reredos which was installed in 1903 by the Sitwell family given in thanksgiving for the safe return of two sons from the Boer wars. A door on the left of the Chancel leads to the Vestry. |  |

**5.8** All the stained glass is comparatively modern, most having been installed in memory of members of two families who were significant benefactors to the church during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

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**5.9** A recent addition to the walls is the war memorial from the former Kyloe church and more latterly Fenwick Village Hall, remembering the fallen from Kyloe and Fenwick villages

**5.10** The present heating system, in common with that of many older churches, is less than ideal. Heating is currently provided by 8 storage heaters and a series of under pew heaters, all electric and linked to a timer to provide heating as and when required. The PCC has frequently discussed improving the system but the design of the church makes it a particularly problematic issue.

**5d Fabric Condition**

**5.11** A Quinquennial Inspection was carried out in October 2017. The Condition Survey summarised the church as being “generally in good condition”. Structurally, there are only minor signs of movement or settlement with the cracks which are apparent being considered to be historic and now stable. A number of recommendations were made which do need to be addressed by the PCC.

**5e The Churchyard**

**5.12** There is a large Churchyard surrounding the Church, enclosed by a stone wall with entrances to the front and rear. The Churchyard was closed in 1993 with Northumberland County Council now being responsible for its upkeep. However significant volunteer effort is also required to ensure that it is kept in reasonable condition. All burials now take place in Kyloe Churchyard, some two and a half miles to the east of St John the Baptist and lying immediately to the west of the former Kyloe church. The upkeep here is the responsibility of the PCC. On the eastern side of Kyloe church (now a private dwelling) lies the older part of the churchyard which is open to view with the permission of the present owners.

**5f Parish Finance**

**5.13** The Church is on a stable financial footing, fulfilling its Parish Share and other running expenses. A need to increase the level of planned giving has been recognised by PCC members.

**5g Social Events**

**5.14** With our church not being suitable for large events, Lowick Village Hall has all the necessary facilities. We use it for our fund raising events including a monthly “Souper Saturday”. This provides a further facility for the community and a beginning has been made to provide support for those in the community feeling lonely and isolated - a particular factor in this rural community where elderly people moving here from other parts of the country may find themselves alone and without family support. Our Quiz nights and the Harvest Supper are widely supported by non-churchgoers. It is also our base for the start of our fundraising walk, “Beating the Bounds” held on the May Bank Holiday Monday. This is a 12 mile walk around a small portion of the Parish boundary. The Priest in Charge needs to support the existing church congregation in using these social events to increase Church attendance.

1. **The Parish Community**

**6a Economic Background**

* 1. In economic terms, the parish is an agricultural community. The village of Lowick has a number of facilities including two flourishing pubs with significant accommodation, the recently renovated Black Bull and the White Swan; Lowick Village Store; and Bookless Motors, operating as a garage and as agricultural engineers for the local farming community. Throughout the parish there are a number of small businesses and also a large amount of bed and breakfast and holiday letting accommodation to serve this

**6b Social Activities**

* 1. Lowick CofE Voluntary Controlled First School is in a federation with Holy Island First School. The children study together at Lowick with the children who live on the island coming to Lowick when the tide allows. There are currently thirty five children coming from the surrounding villages and Holy Island.

**6.3** Throughout the parish there are thriving social groups many of which take full advantage of the excellent facilities available at Lowick and Bowsden Village Halls. There is a thriving football club fielding both men and women's teams (Lowick United); a Leek Club; an Over-Sixties group; a Film Club; a Photography Club; a Bowls Group; Fitness groups; and Quilting and Knitting groups. In Bowsden, a monthly soup and sandwich lunch is provided sponsored by Bell View of Belford (a community based charity supporting older people**.** There are also well attended History and Heritage Croups meeting in both villages with a very active Archaeology Group operating under the aegis of the Lowick Heritage Group.

**6cLocal Developments**

* 1. There are a number of new building development proposals for Lowick Village which are likely to increase the local population, improving the viability of the different local enterprises and also possibly increasing the number of children attending the local school.
  2. St John the Baptist often welcomes holidaymakers to its regular Sunday services, with a growing feature being the number of pilgrims walking St Cuthbert's Way who choose to stay in the village. Whilst Lowick isn't on the present pilgrim route, it is recommended in the guidebook as a place to stay. St John the Baptist Church is an important part of the

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| attraction of Lowick to pilgrims, a place where they can gather to hold a service prior to continuing their journey to Holy Island. This pilgrim element is likely to be of increasing importance to the parish in the future and its interesting history. Also, it is intended to re-establish the probable pilgrim route from the village providing direct access from Lowick to Holy Island. |  |

1. **The Vicarage**

**7.1** The current vicarage is a Grade ll listed building completed in 1879. Recently refurbished to a high standard, the facilities include three reception rooms and six bedrooms with outbuildings and large grounds.

**8. Norham Deanery**

**8.1** The Anglican Churches of Norham Deanery are part of the Diocese of Newcastle and consists of the following parishes: Ancroft, Branxton, Berwick-upon-Tweed, Carham, Cornhill, Ford and Etal, Holy Island, Lowick, Norham, Scremerston, Spittal and Tweedmouth.

**8.2** The Synod draws together clergy and lay representatives from all the Anglican Churches in the Norham Deanery to discuss matters of mutual concern and interest. Given the nature of North Northumberland, both urban and rural communities can gain support from others facing similar issues: and resources can be shared to mutual benefit.

**8.3** The Deanery Chapter meets four times a year with three additional meetings of the Deanery Synod. The Deanery also arranges Open Meetings and lay ministry training courses.

**9. The Diocese of Newcastle**

**9.1** The Diocese of Newcastle consists of 236 churches in 172 parishes in [12 deaneries](http://www.newcastle.anglican.org/people-and-places/deaneries.aspx). Framed by the rivers Tyne and Tweed, it is the Church of England's most northerly diocese. The 12 deaneries within 2 archdeaconries serve a population of 800,000 people across a variety of communities ranging from sparse rural to large inner city areas of deprivation.

**9.2** It covers an area of 2,110 square miles, encompassing the local authorities of

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| Northumberland, Newcastle, North Tyneside and small parts of County Durham and Cumbria. A cohort of 115 stipendiary and 50 self-supporting clergy under the episcopal leadership of a diocesan bishop, the Rt Revd Christine Hardman, and the suffragan Bishop of Berwick, the Rt Revd Mark Tanner are resourced by a team of lay and ordained supporting ministers, 25 active local ministry development groups and 120 readers. | **C:\Users\Guest\Desktop\New folder (2)\Capture.JPG** |

* 1. The Diocesan Vision, is summed up in four words:

http://www.newcastle.anglican.org/userfiles/file/gcbh/Email_signature_logo.jpg

Bishop Hardman’s view of this vision is that it is *“for the whole of the Diocese of Newcastle, for each parish, community and chaplaincy, and I hope and pray that we will allow the vision to shape the whole of our life together, and our lives as followers of Christ. It is, I hope, an exciting vision, one that will engage and encourage as many of us as possible. It is an ambitious vision, but we also need to be realistic. We cannot do everything at once, and if we try, we are bound to fail. That is why we have been working hard at developing five strands of work with very specific actions. Those five strands can be summed up as follows: deepening our spirituality; equipping teams of lay and ordained to lead their churches into growth; re-imagining ministry in rural areas; focusing on**enabling their attendance; and a focused piece of work in Newcastle city centre to engage with students, city workers and the vulnerable.”*

**Appendix 1 – Key Responsibilities of the Role**

**General**

The new Priest in Charge for Lowick & Kyloe will be expected to operate in accordance with the calling and responsibilities of the clergy (as described in the Canons, the Ordinal, and the Code of Professional Conduct for the Clergy) and other relevant legislation.

**Mission and Outreach**

The church in Lowick plays an important role within the communities making up the parish. The new Priest in Charge will be expected to support and promote activities within the villages, which serve to raise the profile of spirituality and God’s word in the communities.

**Leadership and Working Collaboratively**

The Priest in Charge will have the potential to empower our congregations to implement constructive change to promote spirituality within our Church and Community through discipleship, teaching, prayer and pro-active involvement in the promotion of God’s Mission in our communities. Additionally, he or she will be asked to chair and lead the Church Council. He or she will also oversee fund-raising activities that support the mission of the Church. In so doing, he or she will be supported by experienced churchwardens, the Parochial Church Council and other members of the congregation. ,

**Worship and Preaching**

The Sunday and Weekday services at Lowick as described in Section 5 above are conducted in the Anglican tradition. The Priest in Charge may be asked to consider an alternative pattern of Services if such a need is identified.

**Pastoral Care**

The ups and downs of village life undoubtedly have their challenges. The Priest in Charge will be thoroughly integrated in the daily life of the Community; he or she will be expected to know his or her parishioners well and to identify with them as individuals and offer support in times of need.