

## Appendix 1 - Housing Situation

I have the great honour of being married to another member of the clergy; my wife (the Rev'd Dr Christie Gilfeather) has been the vicar of Codicote since Summer 2024. When she was licensed to that post we moved into the vicarage in Codicote.

In discussion with the Bishop of Hertford, the current plan is that during parish hours I will reside in the parish of St Mary Magdalene, Hatfield Hyde, but the family home, where I sleep, will continue to be in Codicote. I appreciate that this current thinking may not be what the parish has in mind. Consequently, the purpose of this document is to describe how I will ensure that I am very accessible and available to parishioners as well as well embedded in, known by and connected to the wider parish. The headline is that I will seek to be as present in the parish and as much a part of the community as I would be if I lived in the vicarage. I will commit to working very hard to achieve this goal.

### Building Relationships

My very first goal after arriving would be to get to know the regular members of the church and its PCC. I would plan to visit every member of the electoral roll in the first few months.

It is always good to provide hospitality for members of the parish. I would be able to prepare food and host meals using the facilities of either the church or the parish centre.

If appropriate, for example a supper with church wardens, I would also be able to host people for meals at the vicarage in Codicote, only a 15 minute drive away.

### Accessible and Available Working Patterns

The parish of Hatfield Hyde is blessed with excellent facilities. In both the parish centre and the church there are spaces for an office as well as catering facilities. My thought is that I will set up an office in either the church or the parish centre, and base myself there in parish hours.

In that office, I will have pastoral conversations (if not visiting somebody in their home) and other small meetings, and will do all of my desk work there (administration and sermon writing). When I am meeting with a bigger group, I will use space in either the church or the parish centre.

So that I can remain there or elsewhere in the parish during parish hours, I will bring breakfast and lunch with me. I am aware that sometimes there will be early morning starts and late night finishes. When that happens I will use the facilities to cook myself supper.

Crucially, by basing myself out of this office, I will be very accessible and available to parishioners because if someone wants to find me, they will be able to come to the office.

I will also have a work mobile phone with a publicly advertised number, so that if I am elsewhere in the parish they can reach me on it. Furthermore, if I am needed in an emergency late at night, they will be able to reach me on the phone and I will only be a 15 minute drive away from the parish.

### Building Relationships with the Wider Community

It is absolutely essential that I become embedded in, known by and connected to the wider parish, not least because solid connections with the community can help build up the life of the church. This task is especially important at a time when people have so many other things to do on a Sunday and also when the parish is increasingly populated with people commuting for work.

It is, first, worth emphasising that I am friendly, able to put people at ease, and find it easy to connect with people I have only just met from all walks of life. Building on this prior disposition I would use a number of strategies for creating the opportunity to meet people in the community and build relationships. I've included a few below but would seek to discover more.

First of all, I would make it an immediate priority to meet one on one with everyone on the electoral roll and local community leaders that I am aware of. In those meetings I will ask who else are the community leaders I should meet, and I will then set up meetings with those key figures.

Second, I will straightaway seek to build relationships with key local institutions. I will approach the schools to offer support to students and staff, as well as assemblies. I will look to be present at school events through which I can build relationships with parents. I will likewise offer to drop in to the Welwyn Garden City amateur boxing club and the Sea Cadets, to be a friendly Christian presence and offer pastoral support. Further to this, I will attend parish council meetings and get to know the local counsellors.

Third, I will transfer lots of key aspects of my life to the parish and local area. For example, I regularly play tennis and go to the gym, which have helped me to become part of my local community. I will join Orchard Lawn tennis club, which is just a couple of hundred meters outside the parish, or Delcott, if it turns out more people from the parish go there. Similarly, I will join a gym in the parish (e.g. Nortons or Maverick) and go in my lunchtime. I look forward to walking my dog around the King George V playing fields, getting my hair cut, doing my shopping, and popping into pubs in the parish. In all of these endeavours I will make a real effort to be visible in my dog collar and speak with the people I come across.

### Costs

In discerning if I feel called to be the vicar of Hatfield Hyde, I have thought through the various options relating to housing, including running the vicarage and basing myself out of it during parish hours. Unfortunately, maintaining the vicarage would incur significant expense and time

for me. Given that I believe that I can be just as available and present in the community through basing myself out of the church or parish centre during parish hours, as if I were based in the vicarage, I would prefer not to take on the running of it.

Crucially, I will ensure that no costs are passed on to the parish. I won't be claiming fuel expenses to get to the parish. And, if there are any additional costs of heating the office space in the parish centre or church, I would be open to a conversation about how to meet those.

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In this appendix I have included an account of how I would ensure that I am accessible and available, as well as very well embedded in the wider community, whilst having the family home in Codicote. I will, however, continue to consult with the members of St Mary Magdalene, to make sure that I am meeting these goals. Furthermore, I will seek advice from colleagues in a similar situation on the best way to do this, including Revd Ysmena Pentelow who was the vicar of St Paul's Langleybury whilst her family home was in the parish of Hatfield Hyde. To summarise all these points, I am committed to serving this parish to the best of my ability, and I will seek to be as present in the parish and as much a part of the community as I would be if I lived in the vicarage.