WE ARE RECRUITING:
PARISH OF COWLEY ST JOHN, EAST OXFORD

Parish Nurse

We seek a compassionate, experienced person to support adults experiencing mental health difficulties, loneliness and social isolation.

Hours: Approximately 8 hours per week
Contract: Fixed term
Salary: Dependent on experience
Apply: Send your CV and covering letter to vicar@cowleystjohn.co.uk by **7 January 2027**.
Interviews: week commencing 14 January 2027.
Start date: 1 February 2027
Enquiries: 0747 29090 11 or vicar@cowleystjohn.co.uk

Job Description

Job Title: Parish Nurse
Location: St Mary and St John Church and Wider Parish in East Oxford
Responsible to: The Vicar of Cowley St John
Hours: Part-time, to be agreed
Salary: Dependent on qualifications, experience and available funding
Contract: Fixed-term appointment for which funding has been secured.
Application Deadline: 7 January 2027
Interview Date: Week of 14 January 2027
Application Process: Please submit your CV and a covering letter outlining your relevant experience and suitability for the role to vicar@cowleystjohn.co.uk
Anticipated Start Date: 1February 2027

Safeguarding: Appropriate DBS check and safeguarding training required

1. Purpose of the Role
The Parish of Cowley St John seeks to appoint a compassionate, experienced and approachable Parish Nurse to provide holistic, community-based support to adults experiencing mental health difficulties, emotional distress, social isolation and other forms of vulnerability.

The role will particularly support people experiencing anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), depression, autism-related support needs, loneliness, homelessness and challenges associated with mental health recovery.

Rooted in the values of compassion, dignity, inclusion and service, the postholder will help individuals develop confidence, resilience, independence and a greater sense of belonging. This role is not intended to replace or duplicate the work of community psychiatric nurses, NHS mental health teams, hospitals or other statutory healthcare services. Rather, it will complement these services by offering accessible, compassionate and ongoing support within the community, helping individuals navigate their recovery journeys and access appropriate professional care.

The postholder will work alongside clergy, pastoral volunteers, healthcare professionals and community organisations to create a welcoming and supportive environment for people of all faiths and none.

2. Key Responsibilities

A. Mental Health Recovery and Emotional Wellbeing

- Provide compassionate, non-judgemental listening and practical emotional support to adults experiencing mental health difficulties.
- Support individuals living with anxiety, OCD, depression and other mental health conditions.
- Offer person-centred, neurodiversity-affirming support to autistic adults.
- Help individuals identify personal goals and develop confidence, independence and coping strategies.
- Encourage recovery-focused approaches that recognise individual strengths, abilities and aspirations.
- Support people experiencing loneliness, bereavement, emotional distress or social exclusion.
- Help individuals access appropriate mental health services, counselling and community support (signposting).
- Recognise when specialist intervention is required and signpost.
- Promote hope, dignity and meaningful social connection as important aspects of recovery.

B. Community-Based Support

- Establish a regular, accessible presence within the parish's community activities.
- Provide informal wellbeing conversations and appropriate one-to-one support.
- Support individuals experiencing homelessness, poverty or insecure housing.
- Encourage participation in community activities to reduce isolation.
- Help individuals build supportive relationships and reconnect with their communities.
- Offer practical guidance in accessing healthcare and relevant support services.
- Promote unity in the church.

C. Integration with Parish Activities

The postholder will contribute to existing parish outreach, including:

Parish Activity	Contribution
Wednesday Café and Warm Space	Emotional support, wellbeing conversations and signposting
Monthly Community Lunch	Building relationships and supporting isolated or vulnerable adults
Homelessness Outreach	Helping individuals access mental health and healthcare services
Older People's Ministry	Supporting emotional wellbeing and reducing loneliness
Care Home Ministry	Complementing pastoral support and encouraging wellbeing
Refugee and Community Outreach	Supporting adults experiencing emotional distress or isolation
Pastoral Visiting	Appropriate support for adults unable to participate in community activities

D. Working Alongside NHS and Mental Health Services

The postholder will:

- Complement, rather than replace, the work of community psychiatric nurses, NHS mental health teams, GPs and hospitals.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and recognise the limits of the role.
- Help individuals engage with existing healthcare and mental health services.
- Support continuity of care through appropriate communication and referrals, with consent.
- Encourage individuals to remain engaged with their clinical care and recovery plans.
- Work collaboratively with mental health professionals and community organisations.
- Recognise signs of deterioration or crisis and follow established referral and escalation procedures.

The postholder will not be expected to provide psychiatric diagnosis, specialist psychological treatment or clinical interventions outside their professional qualifications and agreed responsibilities.

E. Pastoral and Spiritual Wellbeing

- Work alongside the clergy and pastoral team to support adults experiencing distress, illness, loneliness or bereavement.
- Recognise the importance of spirituality, faith and personal beliefs in individual wellbeing.
- Offer prayer or spiritual support where requested and appropriate.
- Respect the beliefs and choices of all individuals.
- Maintain appropriate boundaries between emotional support, pastoral care and clinical responsibilities.

F. Partnerships and Community Engagement

Develop constructive working relationships with:

- Local GP practices and NHS community mental health teams.
- Community psychiatric nursing services.
- Oxfordshire mental health and recovery organisations.
- The Porch Day Centre.
- Oxford Mutual Aid.
- Asylum Welcome.
- Local homelessness and housing support services.
- Other voluntary and community organisations.

G. Safeguarding and Professional Practice

- Comply with Church of England safeguarding policies and relevant statutory requirements.
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality, data protection and professional boundaries.
- Recognise and respond appropriately to safeguarding concerns and mental health crises.
- Maintain accurate and confidential records.
- Participate in regular supervision and relevant professional development.
- Follow agreed referral, risk assessment and lone-working procedures.
- Work within professional competence and any applicable registration requirements.

Where the postholder is employed as a registered nurse, they must maintain current NMC registration, appropriate professional indemnity and clinical supervision.

3. Person Specification

Essential Criteria

- Experience supporting adults experiencing mental health difficulties, emotional distress or vulnerability.
- A compassionate, patient and non-judgemental approach.
- Strong listening, communication and interpersonal skills.
- Understanding of mental health recovery, person-centred support and the importance of individual choice.
- Awareness of anxiety, depression, OCD, autism and the barriers people may experience in accessing support.
- Understanding of safeguarding, confidentiality and professional boundaries.
- Ability to work independently and collaboratively with clergy, volunteers and healthcare professionals.
- Commitment to equality, diversity, inclusion and the dignity of every individual.
- Willingness to work within the Christian ethos of the parish while supporting people of all faiths and none.

Strongly Preferred Experience

Substantial experience in mental health recovery work or community mental health support is strongly preferred.
In particular, we would welcome candidates who have:

- Worked in mental health recovery services, community mental health teams or mental health charities.
- Supported adults living with anxiety, OCD, depression or other mental health conditions.
- Experience of supporting autistic adults through a neurodiversity-affirming approach.
- Experience helping individuals develop recovery goals, resilience and independent living skills.
- Worked with adults experiencing social isolation or multiple disadvantages.
- Experience of collaborating with NHS professionals and community-based support services.

Desirable Qualifications and Experience

- Qualification in mental health nursing, nursing, counselling, social care, occupational therapy or a related field.
- Training in mental health recovery, trauma-informed practice or mental health first aid.
- Experience working within a faith-based or charitable organisation.
- Knowledge of mental health services and community resources in Oxford.
- Experience of community outreach, pastoral care or social prescribing.

Professional registration as a nurse is required only if the appointment includes registered nursing duties. Applicants from other relevant mental health recovery or wellbeing backgrounds are welcome, provided their qualifications and experience match the agreed scope of the post.

4. Personal Qualities

The successful candidate will be warm, compassionate, approachable and emotionally mature.

They will demonstrate patience, sensitivity and respect for individuals who may be experiencing significant difficulties.

They will be able to build trusting relationships, encourage hope and independence, and work constructively with people from diverse cultural, social and religious backgrounds.

They will recognise that recovery is a personal journey and that each individual should be supported with dignity, choice and understanding.

5. Working Arrangements

The postholder will be based primarily at St Mary and St John Church, with opportunities to support activities at St Alban's and elsewhere within the parish.

They will work collaboratively with the Vicar, clergy, pastoral team, Parish Safeguarding Officer and community volunteers.

The role may initially be offered on a part-time basis, approximately 8 hours per week, subject to agreement.

The appointment is funded for an initial period of 12 months. The parish hopes to develop a sustainable, long-term ministry, but any continuation beyond the initial contract will depend on securing additional funding (initial probation in 3 months).

Where clinical nursing duties form part of the role, appropriate independent clinical supervision and governance arrangements will be provided.

6. Expected Outcomes

The role will contribute towards:

1. Improved emotional wellbeing and reduced isolation among vulnerable adults.
2. Greater confidence and independence among individuals experiencing mental health difficulties.
3. Better access to appropriate NHS, mental health and community services.
4. Increased understanding and inclusion of adults experiencing anxiety, OCD, depression and autism-related support needs.
5. Stronger partnerships between the parish, healthcare professionals and community organisations.
6. A sustainable, compassionate and accessible community-based recovery and wellbeing ministry.

7. Our Vision

The Parish of Cowley St John is committed to being a place of welcome, healing, sanctuary, recovery, hope and belonging in the heart of East Oxford.

Through this role, we seek to offer a compassionate and consistent presence for adults experiencing mental health difficulties, emotional distress, homelessness, loneliness or social exclusion.

We recognise that recovery is not always straightforward and that many people benefit from ongoing encouragement, meaningful relationships and a supportive community alongside professional healthcare.

Our aim is to help individuals feel heard, valued and supported, enabling them to develop confidence, experience greater wellbeing and participate more fully in community life. Above all, this ministry will complement existing NHS and specialist mental health services, offering practical support, companionship and hope without duplicating clinical care.