



Not catching a bus though: at the age of 22 she took the extraordinary decision to spend her savings buying a double decker bus and transforming it into a youth and community centre.

A church youth worker, Emily drove the bus around the York and later the Scarborough coastal areas. She hosted sessions for young people on board the bus, with the opportunity to pray afterwards, as well as drop-ins for families and youth work training to churches.

When she left to move to Newcastle in 2018, its work had touched the lives of 5,000 young people and [the Bus Stop charity](#) had been established. She remains a trustee of the charity and it is still going strong on the North Yorkshire coast.

Now she is embarking on a new journey – of training to become a distinctive deacon in the Church of England.

“The young people I met through working on the bus called it their ‘second home’ and a place where they felt that they really belonged,” she said.

“They described the bus as their church and they challenged preconceptions of what church is. I started exploring ordination four or five years ago. It was when I was on the bus that I felt that God was maybe calling me.

“But I was confused at that time as I thought then that a vicar was very much inside the church. My passion is for reaching out to people who don’t come to church.

“Then I found out about the diaconate – I am going to be trained as a distinctive deacon and my focus as a distinctive deacon can be described as being at the door of the church, welcoming people in and also encouraging the church to go out into the world.”

**More information:**

- Emily Emmerson-Finch is a church youth worker in Newcastle.
- She starts training for ordination as a distinctive deacon in September at Lindisfarne College of Theology.
- More can be read about distinctive deacons online.

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