

LEICESTER DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR THE ROLE OF:

**Church and Community Support Officer (fixed term)**



**PURPOSE:**

This post forms part of the Church Buildings Team. The primary aim is to encourage and develop the capacity of communities to actively participate in improving the long-term sustainability of historic church buildings in the Diocese of Leicester, connecting people with places of worship, and thereby contributing to making places thrive.

The Church & Community Support Officer will provide targeted support to Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) to build volunteer capacity through engagement with their community to enable each church to be better cared for and be sustainable.

The primary focus will be 'on the ground' community engagement, supporting PCCs to explore and establish new volunteer groups or organisations (such as Friends Groups) and encouraging partnerships and wider uses of churches. Where appropriate, this will also include supporting PCCs to explore becoming Festival Churches.

**MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:**

*Community engagement: on-the-ground support*

- To enable a targeted number of churches on the Heritage at Risk Register to develop and implement an action plan to increase local support in order to build capacity for ongoing maintenance and repair as well as major projects, to enable good outcomes for these churches
- To support participating PCCs and their congregations to engage, survey, and consult their local communities to identify relevant and pressing needs with regard for community outreach and support. Where appropriate, this will also include local schools.
- Help participating PCCs and congregations to identify and maximise the potential of their buildings including potential revenue and funding sources.
- Help participating PCCs develop projects in parishes or at diocesan level that will enhance community use of church buildings and meet local needs; and to generate revenue
- Develop volunteering opportunities and support PCCs to explore and establish relevant voluntary organisations such as Friends Groups, action groups. Develop mentoring and training schemes for volunteers (including Churchwardens, PCC Treasurers and Secretaries).
- Build relationships with local authorities, local businesses, charities, influential groups and individuals and other partners or organisations who might play a role in projects or events for mixed use of church buildings.
- Provide wider general training and guidance for incumbents, churchwardens, PCCs and volunteers on topics related to this role

Festival Churches is one model of 'doing' church. The CCSO will

- support PCCs to explore the Festival Churches model by following key steps on our established process known as 'The Pathway to Festival Churches'
- build knowledge & facilitate learning between individual Festival Churches, across groups of churches, across our whole diocese and nationally through training events, by creating local support networks and collaboration with The Association of Festival Churches

#### *Funding*

- Develop an awareness of current grant funding available to churches and be able to signpost to further information and relevant colleagues
- Contribute to ensuring the Minor Repairs and Improvements Fund is utilized effectively

#### *General*

- Work with the Church Buildings Team to directly support selected parishes with the management, repair and use of church buildings to help parishes keep their churches open and sustainable
- Contribute to the development & delivery of strategic approaches for the long-term care and best practice management of churches and churchyards
- Develop an awareness of the resources available to PCCs to support them to care for the buildings and churchyards (e.g. maintenance, conservation, accessibility and ecology) and be able to signpost to further information, relevant colleagues and training opportunities as appropriate.
- Develop an awareness of the Net Zero Carbon (NZN) Route Map for Churches and signpost resources and NZC officers.
- Where applicable, signpost the Church Buildings Team and the DAC on consent procedures and legal requirements relating to church buildings.

#### *General Responsibilities for all DBF employees:*

- To welcome visitors and/or receive incoming enquiries and telephone calls, dealing promptly and courteously with enquiries and ensuring high quality collegiality at all times
- To ensure that all health and safety instructions are followed and that care is taken to ensure safety for self and colleagues, reporting concerns immediately
- To understand and respect Safeguarding policy and procedures as they relate to the role
- To ensure compliance with data protection requirements
- To undertake other duties as may reasonably be expected

**Management & relationships:**

The Church and Community Support Officer Post will be part of the Church Buildings Team. The team is led by the Buildings Development Enabler and includes the Historic Churches Support Officer and the DAC Secretary.

The Church and Community Support Officer will also need to liaise closely with the Archdeacons, and other diocesan officers, as appropriate for the needs and objectives of a given project.

The substantial part of the Church and Community Support Officer role will require developing working relationships outside of the office, on-site at various churches. As such, there will be frequent contact with clergy, churchwardens and members of the PCC and congregation with responsibility for church buildings.

The Church and Community Support Officer will be expected to develop working relationships with external stakeholders such as local authorities, funders and community organisations.

The Church and Community Support Officer will be part of a National network of Church Building Support Officers which offers advice, learning and training opportunities

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### **Essential**

A good general standard of education

Experience of the following:

- managing community-led projects.
- project management
- Working with volunteers

Skills in building relationships and working with people including volunteers of different capacities

Excellent interpersonal and negotiating skills

Excellent written and verbal communication skills

Self-confidence and enthusiasm

A self-starter who can make a difference

Ability to work independently and also as part of a team

Ability to identify appropriate advice and information

Ability to prioritise effectively and work to deadlines

Ability to analyse data and solve problems

Project management skills including monitoring and evaluation

Good administrative skills

Ability to develop and implement strategic plans and drive income generation.

Competent using the Microsoft suite of programs including cloud-based applications.

Competent using generic and bespoke databases.

Ability to arrange own transport to travel regularly, widely, and flexibly in both the rural and the urban parts of the diocese.

Ability to work flexibly including some evenings and weekends on a "time off in lieu" basis.

Sympathy with the values and purposes of the Church of England and with the values and priorities of the Diocese of Leicester and a desire to see the work flourish.

### **Desirable**

Experience of NLHF funded projects and funding sources for listed places of worship.

Understanding of the Church of England, its practical system and the wider organisation of the Diocese

An existing relevant qualification or a desire to undertake, or have started, private study to obtain a historic building qualification

## General information

Job title: Church and Community Support Officer

Reporting to: Buildings Development Enabler

**Place of work:** Hybrid working with an office based in St Martins House, Leicester, the post holder will work and travel throughout Leicestershire

The Diocese of Leicester will work with the post holder to encourage a programme of appropriate Continuing Professional Development

Employment status This is a full time (35 hours per week) fixed-term employed post for up to 3 years depending on the start date. The Church and Community Support Officer will be an employee of the Leicester Diocesan Board of Finance. The post is funded from a Church Commissioners Strategic Development Funding grant.

Annual Salary £37,000 per annum

Pension Defined Contribution pension of 10% of salary, paid by employer, with 0.5% going towards death in service benefits.

Annual leave 25 days, plus Bank Holidays

Probationary period 3 months

Anticipated start date Autumn 2026

The Diocese of Leicester, part of the Church of England, is committed to the safeguarding, care and nurture of everyone within our church community. We follow the Church of England's Safeguarding Policies and the relevant statutory legislation and guidance. We believe that safeguarding is everybody's business.

We particularly welcome applications from UK Minority Ethnic / Global Majority Heritage candidates, especially those of Black descent, who are currently underrepresented in our organisation.

This post is subject to a Basic DBS disclosure. The Diocese is not able to offer a Certificate of Sponsorship for candidates who do not have the right to work in the UK and therefore the successful applicant will need to provide proof of right to work before taking up post.