



# Church Buildings Support Officer – Community Engagement and Maintenance

## Operational Support Team

£36,195pa, Full-Time (35h/w)

Fixed term for 3 years in the first instance

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The Church of England, with its network of parishes, is deeply woven into national life, enriching communities with a Christian presence. Geographically structured into 42 dioceses, each led by a Bishop, it reaches every corner of England.

The Diocese of York spans North and East Yorkshire, embracing York, Hull, Middlesbrough, Selby, two National Parks, and the stunning Yorkshire coast. We are a family of nearly 600 churches, 125 schools, and 442 parishes, guided by Archbishop Stephen Cottrell, with York Minster as our principal church.

### The Operational Support Team

The Diocese of York is a large diocese covering an area of over 2,600 square miles, and with three archdeaconries organised into 442 parishes. The Operational Support team is the umbrella group for those areas which are outward-facing and exist to support and enable parishes to strengthen and deepen their ministries in their local contexts. The team includes Church Buildings, Generous Giving, Net Zero Carbon, HR & Synodical Governance, Mission & Pastoral work, and the DAC for the Care of Churches. Based at Clifton Moor, York, the team is led by the Director of Operational Support. This role will sit within the Church Building and DAC team but will work closely with other areas including the wider Mission & Ministry team.

### The Opportunity

We have an opportunity through external grant funding for someone build parish and community capacity to value, use and care for church buildings. The role will strengthen local engagement, support inclusion and participation outcomes for heritage projects, support the delivery of accessible maintenance training, and assist parishes with small grant opportunities.

In line with the Buildings for Mission programme, this role provides frontline support and capacity building for parishes in the stewardship and management of church buildings. This includes advice and guidance on maintenance, conservation, sustainable use, community engagement, and access to funding. The postholder's work will help ensure that church buildings are effectively managed, resilient, and able to support mission and public benefit.

We aim to strengthen the long-term sustainability of church buildings by increasing community involvement, improving volunteer skills in building care, and supporting parishes to meet engagement and participation expectations linked to heritage and mission-driven projects.

Unlike project-management or fabric-repair advisory roles, this post focuses on people, participation, skills development and confidence-building, helping parishes become more self-sufficient.

You will be based at our modern, open-plan office in York (free parking available), and we now offer a range of flexible working and hybrid working options. We provide a good salary, holiday and pension package, together with other benefits including an Employee Assistance Programme and a Cycle to Work scheme. Most importantly, we offer the opportunity to play a part in an organisation at the heart of spiritual and community life in the region.

## Job Description

### 1. Community Engagement (70%)

- Help parishes build relationships with local groups, schools, heritage organisations, and volunteers.
- Support planning and delivery of engagement activities that interpret the building's history, stories, and significance.
- Assist parishes in achieving NLHF and other funder outcomes linked to inclusion, accessibility, participation and audience development.
- Equip PCCs and volunteers to design and run community events, consultations and engagement pathways.
- Provide light-touch support for 'activities plans' but not lead full NLHF project management.
- Encourage new volunteers and broaden community representation in parish building stewardship.
- Build relationships with local authority departments, other dioceses and other charities and partners e.g. tourism, sustainability, conservation officers, to broaden the scope of partnership working.
- Meet with every deanery within the first year to understand local needs, challenges and opportunities relating to church buildings and community engagement.
- Identify opportunities for enhanced community use of church buildings, including where re-ordering or adaptation could support greater participation and engagement.
- Identify and support clusters of parishes—particularly those in areas of deprivation or with twentieth-century buildings—where capacity, skills or confidence are limited.

### 2. Maintenance Training & Capacity Building (20%)

- Design and deliver simple, practical training sessions for congregations and volunteers on routine maintenance and early issue-spotting.
- Promote regular maintenance cycles, simple checklists, low-cost prevention tasks and safe volunteer practice.
- Provide basic signposting on working with architects, contractors and diocesan systems (without duplicating professional advisers).
- Develop practical resources such as short guides, templates, and seasonal maintenance checklists.
- Encourage better record keeping and long-term, community-supported care.

- Develop and maintain a database of diocesan church buildings to support strategic planning, evidence-based decision making, and targeted engagement with parishes in line with sustainability and missional objectives.
- Work with and alongside other colleagues in the diocesan team, including those involved with the DAC, Archdeacons and the Net Zero Carbon workstream as well as the wider Operational Support Team to ensure consistent and aligned advice and support to parishes.
- Collect and maintain an evidence base to inform the development of a diocesan church buildings strategy, including data on building condition, community use, capacity and sustainability.
- Analyse patterns and trends across parishes and deaneries to identify priorities for support and resource allocation.

### **3. Small Grants Guidance (10%)**

- Provide introductory advice on relevant small grant programmes e.g., community engagement, small repairs, and heritage interpretation.
- Manage the process for the assessment and distribution of grant funding at diocesan level.
- Support parishes to frame strong, realistic applications linked to engagement, capacity-building and simple maintenance tasks.
- Signpost parishes to larger or more complex funding support where appropriate.
- Offer guidance on evidence-gathering, demonstrating need, and speaking to funders' outcomes.

### **4. Additional Strategic Contribution**

- Contribute to the development and delivery of diocesan strategy for church buildings, including helping to prioritise support and identify areas of greatest need and opportunity.

#### *Key Relationships and Boundaries*

This role *does*

- support by preparing parishes for community-facing aspects
- focus on widening participation, developing volunteers, and increasing parish confidence
- work alongside Church Buildings, Mission/Ministry, Generous Giving and DAC teams

This role *does not*

- manage large capital repair projects
- lead or write major NLHF development or delivery bids
- carry out technical building surveys or oversee fabric repair schemes
- take on PCC client responsibility

The job description provides an outline of the key responsibilities of the post and is not intended to be an exhaustive list. The post holder may be asked to undertake any other relevant duties appropriate to the post. The job description may be amended over time, in consultation with the post holder to meet the needs of the Diocese.

## Person Specification

### *Essential*

1. Educated to A level or equivalent including C or 5 (or above) in English and Maths at GCSE level or equivalent.
2. Experience in community engagement, heritage learning, rural/urban regeneration and/or volunteer development (Please state clearly in your application in which of these elements you have direct experience.)
3. Understanding of historic buildings and the role of churches in community life.
4. Ability to engage sensitively with church communities of varied capacity.
5. Experience delivering training or workshops.
6. Strong organisational and partnership-building skills.
7. Empathy with the Christian faith, and able to work effectively within a Church of England context in support of its mission and ministry.

### *Desirable*

1. Experience in the use of data and databases to identify strategic priorities and account for impact.
2. Knowledge of NLHF outcomes (especially Inclusion, Access & Participation).
3. Understanding of basic building maintenance principles (non-technical).
4. Experience preparing or advising on small grant applications.
5. Awareness of CofE structures and parish life.

The post includes a requirement to be able to travel independently throughout, and sometimes beyond, the Diocese when required, and to work flexibly outside of office hours as the needs of the post dictate.

## Summary of Terms and Conditions

Employer	The York Diocesan Board of Finance (YDBF).
Line Manager	Church Buildings Officer
DBS Disclosure	A DBS check may be required for this post.
Probationary Period	Appointments are subject to a 6-month probationary period.
Location	The post is based at the diocesan office at Clifton Moor, York (flexible/ hybrid working options are available).
Hours	<p>The post is full-time, 35 hours per week.</p> <p>The post holder will be required from time to time to attend meetings outside normal working hours subject to time in lieu. Many of the duties require travel within the Diocese of York, and on occasions, elsewhere in England.</p>
Salary	Starting salary will be £36,195.
Pension	The YDBF offers a contributory pension scheme organised by the Church of England Pensions Board. For each 1% of contribution paid by the employee, up to a maximum of 7%, the employer will pay a contribution equivalent to double the amount (which includes a small payment to provide the life assurance element of the scheme).
Holidays	In addition to Bank and Public Holidays, DBF employees are entitled to 5 weeks annual leave in any year.
Mileage	A mileage allowance will be paid in respect of journeys undertaken in connection with the duties of the post. This is remunerated as the <i>lesser</i> of the two distances to the destination as measured from the postholder's home and from the Diocesan Office (currently 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles). The full policy is available on request.
<i>Non-contractual Benefits</i>	
Employee Benefits	We provide free parking, and non-contractual benefits currently offered include eye care vouchers, pension salary sacrifice, and a cycle to work scheme.
Flexible Working	We offer staff a range of options for working flexibly, including regular homeworking.
Wellbeing	We provide a comprehensive Employee Assistance Programme and access to the CSSC. Our Diocesan Adviser and Coordinator of Pastoral Care offers the space to talk through pastoral, professional or personal matters and can provide or arrange counselling and/or mediation if required.