

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Candidate Information Pack

June 2024

WELCOME

Welcome and thank you for your interest in the role of Director of Communications for the Diocese of Oxford.

Communicating the good news of Jesus Christ and His work in the world sits at the heart of what we, as a Diocese, are here to do. That takes many different forms and functions as we support transformational impact of ministry and mission in churches, chaplaincies and schools across the three counties of Berkshire. and Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire. Through all of these, communications are critical to the work we do.



Our committed and talented communications team produces a range of high quality publications to support this work – from our website and regular communications across the diocese; to our Annual Review which tells the stories of how we steward our resources to support God's work across the diocese; to our Come and See lent devotionals which have been used by churches and communities across the country; to our new Learning Hub which enables people to invest in their ongoing learning and discipleship; to our Pathways magazine which highlights the contemplative, compassionate and courageous work of those who work and worship in the diocese; to our research and data insight; our social media feeds; and through the local and national coverage received as our Bishops and clergy speak out on key issues in society.

As our Director of Communications, you will be tasked with leading this work and directing and releasing the creativity of the team and colleagues to ensure that we are reaching our audiences effectively and innovatively. Your own skill and gifts as a communications professional will enable excellent two-way communications as a Diocese and support our Bishops in their roles both locally and nationally. Alongside planning and shaping our regular pattern of communications, you will also take a lead in reacting and responding to emerging issues as they arise across the diocese, often attracting the interest of the media and other key interest groups.

This role promises involvement with a huge variety of different issues, engaging with colleagues and partners at all levels to spearhead the look and feel of our communications and enable others to be effective communicators. We are a dynamic, confident and agile organisation, active in shaping national policy, where you will find genuine opportunities to drive innovation.

We hope the information found in this pack will serve you well as you consider an application for this post, and look forward to receiving your application if you feel that you are the right person to continue building on the communications work we do.

The Rt Revd Dr Steven Croft, Bishop of Oxford Canon Mark Humphriss, Diocesan Secretary

ABOUT US

The Diocese of Oxford is the Church of England in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes. Together, we are the Church, called and sent by God as disciples of Jesus Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit. We are a living, growing network of more than a thousand congregations, chaplaincies and schools. Together, we are called to be more Christ-like; to be the Church of the Beatitudes: contemplative, compassionate and courageous for the sake of God's world. Together, we work with God and with others for the common good in every place in one of the great crossroads of the world. Together, we are called to proclaim the Christian faith afresh in this generation with joy and hope and love. Together, we are called to dream dreams and see visions of what could be and see those visions come to birth.

It sits between the Cotswolds in the west and London to the east. It extends from tiny rural communities to the vastly different cities of Oxford and Milton Keynes. From Chipping Norton to Slough, from west Berkshire to Newport Pagnell, there are villages and market towns, suburbs and urban areas, organised into 626 parishes. More than 50,000 people worship in 808 parish churches each week and make a significant impact across villages, towns, cities and the world in their daily discipleship and witness. This is more than any other diocese in the Church of England.

Our church schools educate more than 58,000 children for life in all its fullness. Our chaplains serve Universities and schools, prisons, hospitals and the armed forces. Our churches support more than 1,700 social action projects, working in partnership with other agencies to serve the most needy in our region.

FURTHER READING

https://www.oxford.anglican.org/ Vision and Values 2024 Diocesan Annual Review Diocesan Finance

Bishops and Senior Staff



OUR VISION

A more Christ-like Church

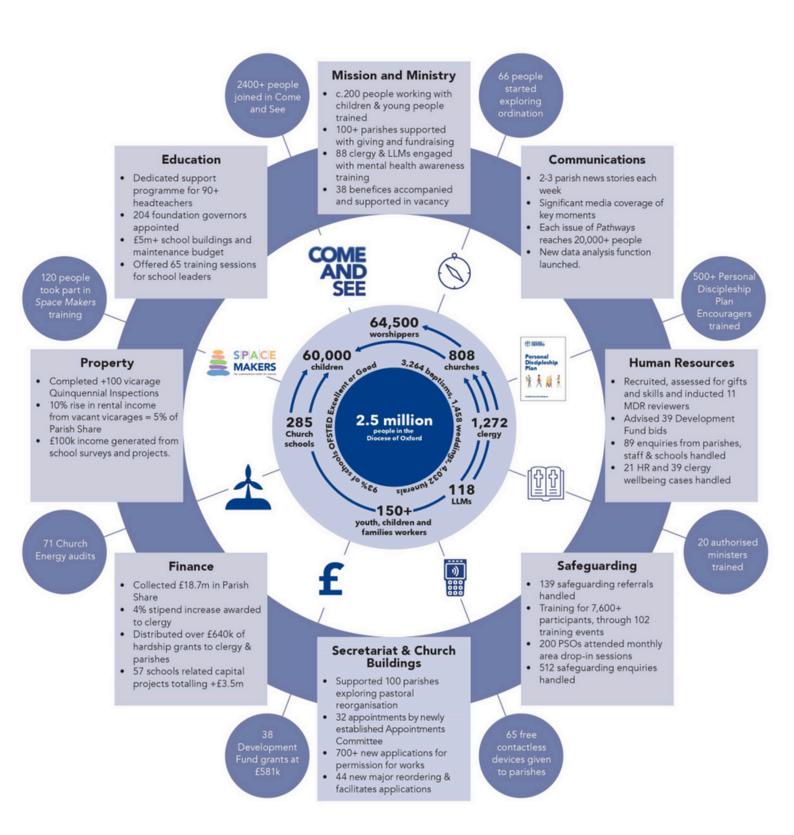
Contemplative, compassionate and courageous for the sake of God's world

Our world is changing in unprecedented ways; we must think afresh about inequality, our communities and human identity. We need to be the best Church we can be in this time: a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world. We are not the society for the preservation of old buildings (important though our heritage assets are); a church is the community of God's people. We believe that becoming more Christ-like is about who we are called to be, not what we're called to do.

We are at the forefront of work on environmental action. We are addressing poverty and inequality through community organising, cost of living crisis help and provided significant Ukrainian refugee support. New congregations are being established in churches of all size and type. Our work with children, young people and schools has attracted national support and forms the subject of a major national bid currently under preparation. A new learning hub started in September 2023 and annual digital programmes reach over 2,000 people. We are actively pursuing social housing solutions to meet the shortage of provision.



THE DIFFERENCE WE MAKE



This diagram gives a sense of the reach and impact of the teams based at Church House Oxford, alongside the work of our Archdeacons and other area office colleagues. The diagram also shows a small selection of the many resources Church House teams provide for our clergy, parishes and schools.

COMMUNICATIONS

The department supports all that we say and do. The work ranges from handling media enquiries to producing Pathways, our website, data analysis and finding new ways to share the good news. The team is on hand with help and advice for parishes every day of the week.

Key moments

The launch of the new Learning Hub in September involved the creation of 30 pieces of technical content. Internal and external training for the use of the hub has been completed, and the team is now putting in place the capacity and processes to support the addition of future courses.

Come and See preparation meant recording videos, preparing promotional posters, and building web pages and emails for participants ready for launch in February. We promoted and took part in an information session encouraging sign-ups to this year's course. An accompanying booklet 'Pilgrim Journeys: The Way of Love' has been published and is available to buy on our online shop.

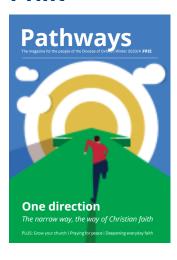
We provided photography and communications support for key diocesan events, including the Oxford Interfaith Vigil, Diocesan Safeguarding Sunday service, National Disability Conference and Licensed Lay Ministry service.





We supported colleagues in producing two short films; one about what it's like to work for the diocese, and another encouraging people to consider whether they are being called to ordained ministry.

Print



We initiated a new benefice distribution model for Pathways, enabling churches to order copies more precisely. Two special editions of the magazine are planned for 2024, the first of which marked the 30th anniversary of the ordination of women.

The latest edition of the Oxford Journal for Intercultural Mission was published in February, taking a closer look at Black History Month and what more we can do to focus on racial issues throughout the year.

"I was delighted to pick up Pathways from St Matthew's Church yesterday. Congrats to all concerned. It's streets ahead of previous diocesan newsletters."

Pat Alexander, St Matthew's Church, Oxford

Media activity

Bishop Steven's involvement in discussions around Artificial Intelligence has generated increasing interest from media outlets, including BBC Radio 4's Beyond Belief programme in May. Our bishops featured on local radio stations and news outlets with their Christmas and New Year messages, and our interfaith work during this year of conflict has received positive coverage in local press.

As ever, the department was on hand for parishes looking to share their stories across and beyond the diocese. Local media interest remains high, particularly in the work our churches are doing to respond to the cost-of-living crisis. We secured radio interviews with churches sharing their experience of delivering warm spaces, welcoming refugees, and running food projects and community hubs.

Data analysis

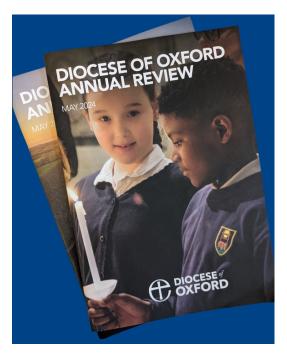
Timely data analysis from October and Christmas attendance figures has significantly enhanced the ability of the diocese, deaneries and parishes to recognise emerging missional trends and plan ahead on an informed basis. We are now working on data from the 2021 census, and by linking data from different sources, we can provide richer datasets while also reducing the burden of collection on parishes.



The Oxford Diocesan Learning Hub hosts a growing library of bite-sized courses available throughout the year. You can work through each session at your own pace and at a time that suits you - each session includes a film, interactive questions and something to reflect on.



Learn more here

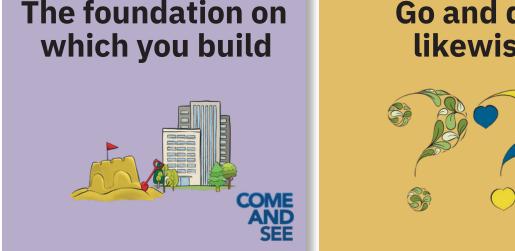


Our recently public annual review showcases all that has been going on in our Diocese over the last twelve months and our ambitions for the year ahead.

We describe how we have been stewarding our resources to support mission and ministry throughout the diocese and highlight some of the achievements of our Church House and area office staff, committees, and councils. They work for every congregation, church, church school, parish and benefice.

A full copy can be accessed here.





Come and See runs every Lent and has covered everything from the Lord's Prayer to the Beatitudes. It's also available online on our Learning Hub to work through in your own time, or with a small group at your church.

THE ROLE

Job title: Director of Communications

Employer Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance (ODBF)

Department: Communications

Location: Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington, OX5 1GF

Line Manager: Diocesan Secretary

Accountable to: The Diocesan Secretary and the Bishop of Oxford

Communications Officers (x3), Communications Assistant,

Responsible for:

Data Analyst , plus several specialist freelancers. One other

Communications Officer 0.2FTE (short-term).



ROLE SUMMARY

The Diocese of Oxford is a living, growing network of more than a thousand churches, chaplaincies and schools across the three counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. More than 2.5 million people live in the diocese, and this number is set to rise by up to half a million over the next decade.

The pace of change for communications in every organisation is high. It is a pace driven by changes in society, the exponential growth of digital technologies and a very different media landscape to just ten years ago... and the Church is not immune. Societal attitudes to religion, secular brand loyalty and belief in charities has changed dramatically. The challenge to successfully engage in all aspects of church life and mission in a noisy world has never been greater.

Our bishops, senior clergy, staff and parishes must be able to communicate well and be supported in delivering clear and effective communications that cut through. For this reason, the diocese is served by a close-knit and energetic communications department that works in partnership with a roster of specialist freelancers to deliver exceptional communications and public relations work in support of our common vision to become a more Christ-like Church for the sake of God's world.

The Director of Communications works closely with other Heads of Department and reports to the Diocesan Secretary. The postholder is a member of Bishop's staff and the heads of department group. The nature of the role means that there is a requirement for the postholder to attend evening and weekend events. The Director of Communications also oversees and participates in the on-call rota, which provides out of hours advice and support for bishops, senior clergy and parishes.

We are looking for someone who is able to maintain the high levels of professional advice and output, further develop the team and see excellence in communication skills grow and extend right across the diocese through support staff and clergy and volunteers in parishes. We need help to navigate the opportunities and challenges of social media and to enable our communication to reach beyond the parishes and schools of the diocese to the wider community.



JOB PURPOSE

Strategic coordination of diocesan communications output is a significant part of this role. The postholder carries overall responsibility for all aspects of our communications, including brand, publications, stakeholder relations, media profile, internal communications and digital experience. An important part of the work of the department is also to amplify and celebrate the work of our parishes and schools, and to support them where needed.

Working with and through others, the Director of Communications ensures that we engage with the right audience with the right message in the right place for maximum impact. When things go wrong, the postholder leads the communications response. The postholder has overall departmental responsibility with direct line responsibility for five members of staff. They work to ensure consistently high standards of performance and creativity from suppliers and specialist freelancers contracted by the department.

The Director of Communications also ensures that we make optimum use of data at diocesan level, considering what is proportionate to collect and how data can optimise decisions about mission at diocesan, deanery and parish level.

The Director of Communications is accountable to both the Diocesan Secretary and the Bishop of Oxford. The Director of Communications prepares and manages an overall departmental budget per the procedures established by the ODBF. The postholder also exercises stewardship of all communications related expenditure by the diocese and ensures that proper expenditure controls are in place, seeking efficiencies wherever possible.



PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

Shares responsibility with the Diocesan Secretary and the other Heads of Department for the delivery of the corporate strategic plan of the ODBF, as approved by Bishop's Council.

Strategic communications, brand strategy and marketing aligned with and supporting our common vision, mission and values. Achieved by carrying out the following principal accountabilities:

1.	Support to Bishop of Oxford Acts as the press officer for the Bishop and provides media advice, crisis communications, and campaign management.	20%
2.	Strategic leadership Advises area bishops, senior clergy, and other department heads on all matters relating to internal and external communications and data analysis.	20%
3.	Creative leadership Helps others to achieve their goals and supports creative solutions that challenge the status quo/encourage fresh thinking.	35%
4.	People leadership Supports and develops a mature and agile communications function capable of meeting the demands of a large diocese.	15%
5.	Organisational leadership As a member of the Bishop's Staff Meeting (BSM) and the Heads of Department group (HoDs), to work collaboratively and contribute to the groups with effective and creative ideas to find solutions for organisational challenges.	10%



1. Support to the Bishop of Oxford

Acts as the press officer for the Bishop of Oxford and provides media advice, crisis communications, and campaign management.

- Works to support a high profile for the Bishop across the Church and in the public square, across various religious and societal issues.
- Acts as the Bishop of Oxford's press officer, responding quickly to media requests and proactively pitching stories to local, regional and national journalists.
- Where appropriate, crafts statements and other public-facing communications on behalf of the Bishop and diocese.
- Assists and supports each Area Bishop to develop a distinctive voice in local media across the three counties
- Develops and delivers integrated communication campaigns supporting episcopal initiatives, including teaching materials, advocacy, parish and partnership projects.
- Ensures appropriate crisis communications plans are in place as required and coordinates media response.
- Works closely with the Bishop's office in delivering all of the above.

2. Strategic leadership

Advises area bishops, senior clergy, Diocesan Secretary, ODBF department heads on all matters relating to internal and external communications, ensuring good two-way communications between Church House and parishes, and advises the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education (ODBE) on communications matters as required.

- As a member of BSM, regularly contributes to debates and policy development. Together with other Heads of Department ensures that decisions are followed through.
- Leads the diocesan crisis management response in the event of bad news, working closely with Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance, Oxford Diocesan Board of Education (the ODBE largely resources itself on communications, but the Communications department provides oversight and support of the ODBE website and the Director of Education will work closely with the Director of Communications when significant issues arise and is likely to lead on media handling of an occasional major issue) or National Church Institutions colleagues and external stakeholders. Handles sensitive information with care, compassion and confidentiality, and builds on existing best practice.
- Through the Data Analyst, optimises our collection and use of data at diocesan, deanery and parish level.
- Acts as spokesperson for the diocese where appropriate and, together with the nominated communications officer, provides media advice for area bishops, senior clergy, and parishes, ensuring colleagues are well briefed and prepared before engaging with the media. This includes the provision of out-of-hours support (currently 7am to 10pm, daily).
- Works to ensure that senior staff voices are marshalled into strategic media spaces, developing thought leadership opportunities and building bridges between church and wider society.
- Ensures that responses to media requests that relate to the work of area bishops, senior clergy, and strategic diocesan initiatives (including the Oxford Diocesan Board of Education) are accurate, timely and to agreed lines.
- Develops, provides, or commissions communications training and coaching for senior staff and other spokespeople to improve their awareness of and effective performance in media interviews.

3. Creative leadership

Helps others to achieve their goals, supporting colleagues across the diocese to deliver creative solutions that challenge the status quo and encourage fresh thinking, and normally exercising the lead communications role on diocesan projects.

- Leads by example, driving creativity and innovation across all that we do, and creatively contributes to projects where required. The Director of Communications is hands on when needed and willing to support all endeavours.
- Actively leads on brand and the development and implementation of integrated communications and marketing plans, ensuring that the public and internal character of the diocese is consistent with our common vision and the needs of our parishes.
- Oversees prioritisation and delivery of diocesan communications and marketing across all channels, including press and PR activity, to ensure initiatives achieve their intended impact, are professionally produced, effective and consistent.
- Works with others across Church House to develop an agreed annual programme of well-planned, multi-channel, key communications products with a clear focus of 'equipping the saints', with sufficient capacity and space so that churches are not overwhelmed by messages from Church House and there is an appropriate balance of strategic communications and operational.
- Enabling and assisting relevant staff and others to take responsibility for being the principal communicator in their area of work, under the strategic oversight of the Director of Communications
- Seeks to increase the profile and reputation of the diocese, our bishops and senior clergy through earned and paid-for media.
- Contributes at a senior level to national campaigns and initiatives where appropriate.
- Uses and contributes to emerging tools and approaches to evaluate the impact and profile of diocesan initiatives. Helps to foster a culture of learning and insight by parish-facing teams.

4. People leadership

Supports and develops a mature and agile communications function capable of meeting the demands of a large diocese.

- Ensures that the department has strong, effective working relationships with colleagues in Church House and parishes across the diocese so that there is a thriving culture of cross-organisational working and collaboration.
- Shapes and models a culture of working that enables colleagues to thrive professionally and actively contribute to both the work of the diocese and our common vision to become a more Christ-like Church.
- Nurtures and inspires communications staff so that they feel equipped to innovate and be creative in all that they do, embedding our values in the culture and the working practices of the communications department.
- Monitors performance within the department and across major projects to ensure that deadlines and best practice approaches are met.
- Supports the work of the department and the professional development of line reports including by covering for colleagues during absences and periods of high demand.

5. Organisational leadership

As a member of the Bishop of Oxford's senior staff and of the Heads of Department group, work collaboratively and contribute to these groups and more widely to find solutions for organisational challenges and undertake such other duties as are required.

- Contribute fully to the Bishop's staff meeting and the heads of department group. Participates fully in the corporate life of the diocese, offering support and expertise to project and programme boards as required.
- Oversee the diocesan contact managements system (CMS) including engaging with the national user group and ensuring appropriate usage and development of it throughout the diocese.
- Maintains current awareness and knowledge of communications best practice, taking a proactive approach to continuous professional and personal development.
- Carries out any other duties and responsibilities as required, in line with operational requirements

PLANNING & ORGANISATION

- Prioritises own work across the range of principal accountabilities.
- Works closely with senior staff in the development of diocesan communications strategy and implementation.
- Oversees the communications plan (aka communications grid) and plans for/anticipates pressure points in the workload of the department.
- Takes account of the wider and longer-term consequences of own and other ideas, recommendations and decisions, ensuring appropriate balance of risk assessment and innovation.





DECISIONS

- Makes appropriate media relations decisions in consultation with senior colleagues where required.
- Responsible for the quality of advice on and the efficient production of communications and marketing across all channels and to consistently high standards. Advises Bishop's Staff and Heads of Department on these issues.
- Responsible for the deployment of budgets for communications activity originating across the organisation.
- Appoints staff in consultation with the Diocesan Secretary and HR Department.
- Selects suppliers and freelance providers for the department, ensuring appropriate contracts and terms of engagement are in place.

CONTACT WITH OTHERS

Internal:

- The Diocesan Bishop and Diocesan Secretary
- Area Bishops, Archdeacons and Associate Archdeacons
- The Communications team, which comprises five members of staff totalling 3.7 FTE, all of whom report to this post, plus the Director. This team includes three Communications Officer (one of whom acts as the deputy to this post), a Communications Assistant, and the Data Analyst
- Other Heads of Department including the Director of Education
- Colleagues in Area Offices and across Church House Oxford
- Members of: Bishop's Council; Diocesan Synod; synodical boards and councils.





External:

- Journalists and other members of the media
- Clergy, Laity, and members of the Church of England.
- Cathedral colleagues, in particular the Dean, Sub-Dean and communications staff
- Contacts with peers in other dioceses, Lambeth Palace and National Church Institutions
- Freelancers and suppliers contracted by the Communications Department.



PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL:

- A committed member of a Church recognised by the National Council of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and in sympathy with the aims and approach of the Church of England.*
- Confident promoting the Church of England and faith in Jesus Christ in our communications, and able to blend trust in God with human endeavour.
- Demonstrable leadership experience of communications functions within complex, multi-faceted and changing environments that are public facing.
- Extensive experience of managing interactions with the media, the development and management of active communications offices, corporate communication initiatives, public engagement campaigns, productisation and marketing initiatives for products or public engagement initiatives.
- Significant experience of co-creation, collaboration and influencing others within and outside a complex organisation. Able to build consensus and positive relationships within and across teams and suppliers.
- Able to lead, develop and inspire communications staff across all disciplines coupled with relevant experience in brand management, strategic communications, media relations and crisis communications.
- A sound understanding of design, photography and video principles. Confident in leveraging a wide range of digital and other communications channels.
- Can demonstrate risk tolerance and an entrepreneurial mindset. Highly organised and able to be detail oriented. Self-motivated and able to work to a high standard when under pressure.
- Knowledge of, or the ability to quickly learn, the key issues, structure and challenges of the Church of England
- Advanced IT skills, including Microsoft Office, website content management systems and industrystandard software. Understanding of GDPR compliance and regulations
- Ability to travel across the diocese.

DESIRABLE:

- Experience of working in a church communications environment.
- Analytical skills in data management, research and reporting.
- Post graduate management, marketing or media related qualification (or equivalent experience) and evidence of training, expertise and leadership at senior management level.
- Experience of marketing automation and audience segmentation techniques.
- Experience working in a public sector, charitable or statutory organisation.
- Experience working with volunteers.
- A flexible approach to office life (particularly over the structure of working day).

^{*}This post is exempt under paragraph 3 of Schedule 9 of the Equality Act 2010. The Diocese of Oxford supports and promotes the aims of the Church of England. This post has a senior representational role on behalf of the Diocese of Oxford.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Band: Senior Staff

Remuneration: Salary - approx £70,000 per annum

A cost of living increase is applied each September (next increase in September 2025).

37 hours per week with regular agreed hours and days.

Hours of work: It is recognised that this role requires the ability to work flexibly, and with that occasional

evening and weekend work may be required for which time off in lieu may be taken on

agreement with your line manager and out of hours cover.

Place of work Church House Oxford with flexibility for home working (up to 40% of working hours).

Holidays: Your annual leave entitlement is broken down as follows:

• During the first year of your employment with us you are entitled to 25 days' annual leave per annum.

• During the second year, up to and including the 5th year of employment, you will be entitled to 1 days extra annual leave per consecutive year.

• In the six year and thereafter, you will be entitled to 30 days' annual leave per annum.

The above annual leave entitlement is calculated on pro rata basis for part time employees.

In addition, you are entitled to the usual United Kingdom public holidays.

Furthermore, the Board gives three discretionary holiday days to its employees, namely: Ascension Day, Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve. It is recognised that the post holder

may be required to work on these days as and when the Board requires it.

Pension Provision:

It is a statutory requirement for ODBF to automatically enrol employees into an appropriate Pension scheme of our choice. In our case, this is the Church of England Pensions Board Pension Builder 2014 scheme. Information can be sought from the Church

of England website:

https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/2017-pb-2014-booklet-v-

<u>11.pdf</u>

Probation period: Six months, during which time progress is regularly reviewed and the period may be

extended.

Notice period: 3 months from either side, or the statutory minimum (whichever is greater).

Circumstances: The role involves occasional regional and national travel for work purposes.

GENERAL INFORMATION

NOTE: The current main duties and responsibilities of this post are outlined in this job description. The list is not meant to be exhaustive. The need for flexibility, shared accountability and team working is required. The postholder is expected to carry out any other related duties that are within the employee's skills and abilities, commensurate with the post's banding and whenever reasonably instructed.

It is the practice of the ODBF to review job descriptions annually to ensure that they relate to the role as then being performed or to incorporate whatever reasonable changes that have occurred over time or are being proposed. This review will be carried out by the line manager in consultation with the postholder before any changes are implemented. The postholder is expected to participate fully in such discussions and implementation.

Review Date: May 2024



For more information on what it is like to work at Church House Oxford, please visit the following:

https://www.oxford.anglican.org/vacancies/



RECRUITMENT TIMETABLE

Please make a note of the dates below and inform GatenbySanderson as soon as possible if any listed will present significant issues for you. Whilst we cannot promise any flexibility, there is more chance of this being offered if a good degree of notice is given.

Closing Date for applications:

9am on Monday 8 July

Candidates informed of outcome of shortlisting:

Wednesday 17 July

Shortlisted candidates 1:1s with Diocesan Secretary and Bishop of Oxford (separately and online):

Monday 22 & Tuesday 23 July

Interviews with the Diocese:

Thursday 25 July - this will include an opportunity to meet with members of the team and a panel interview



HOW TO APPLY

There are two parts to the application process:

Part 1

Please submit your CV along with a Supporting Statement (each document should be no more than 3 pages) that provides clear evidence addressing the criteria set out in the person specification. Your supporting statement should explain your motivation for applying for the role and provided clear examples drawn from your experience that demonstrate your ability to meet the criteria.

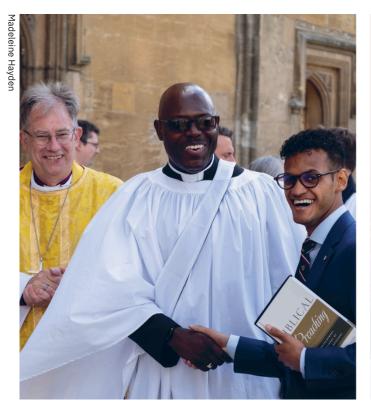
Part 2

Once you have submitted your CV and supporting statement, you will receive an email inviting you to submit a 3 minute video response to the following question:

What excites you about the opportunity to be the Director of Communications for the Diocese of Oxford?

Please submit your application via www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe110034.

You will be asked to provide your contact details, complete an equality monitoring form and let us know of any dates when you are not available for interview or where you may have difficulty with the indicative timetable. You must also provide details for two referees, one of whom should be your current or most recent employer. These referees will not be approached until the final interview stage and not without your prior permission.





teven Buckley



For an informal conversation about the role and your suitability, please contact:

Matt Malone of GatenbySanderson on matt.malone@gatenbysanderson.com

Applications must be received by 09:00 on Monday 8 July 2024.

