

JOB TITLE: Director of Secretariat
SALARY: Spot salary approx. £75,000 per annum
EMPLOYER: Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance (ODBF)
DEPARTMENT: Secretariat
LINE MANAGER: Diocesan Secretary
ACCOUNTABLE TO: Diocesan Secretary
RESPONSIBLE FOR: Head of Church Buildings (team of 10)
Development Fund Administrator/ Data Protection Coordinator (0.8 fte)
Governance Officer (0.8 fte)
PCC Governance Officer (0.2 fte)
LOCATION: Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington, OX5 1GF
JOB TERM: Permanent

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THE CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THIS ROLE

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.

Our common vision for a more Christ-like Church, contemplative, compassionate and courageous for the sake of God's world is set out at [Our vision and values - Diocese of Oxford](#). We are a dynamic organisation that seeks always to be responsive to the needs of parishes and that we carry out the mission and ministry to which the diocese is called.

Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance (ODBF) has assets of over £500m (primarily in the form of clergy housing), annual expenditure of around £30m and around 100 staff.

There are four key aspects to this new role, which takes the place of a different role, whose postholder is retiring in September 2025.

The first is to be part of the senior staff of the diocese as a member of the Bishop's senior staff team and heads of department group to provide additional bandwidth to the diocese; and to deputise as required for the Diocesan Secretary on matters that do not fall directly within the portfolio of one of the other Directors. This will over time include leading and contributing to projects/ reviews.

The second is to be head of the Secretariat department, which is of a scale that is no longer capable of being led directly by the Diocesan Secretary alongside their many other responsibilities. This includes our church buildings team and the Development Fund. The church buildings team provides a range of service to support the management and approval of work to our 808 churches (around 1300 requests for approval or advice each year at present) and supports our mission and pastoral and closed churches committees and processes. The Development Fund makes and monitors

awards of up to £1m p.a. to missionally-creative parish projects (over 250 awards so far), and was subject to a very positive external evaluation in 2024.

The third is to take on the oversight of our governance and compliance, supported by the Governance Officer, the PCC Governance Officer and the Data Protection Coordinator and, from time to time, the PA to the Diocesan Secretary. This includes running diocesan elections and acting as data protection officer for the diocese and leading on business continuity and risk.

The fourth is to oversee external grant funding. This will include writing applications, negotiating funding internally and externally, and ensuring appropriate implementation and accountability. This will primarily relate to funding from the national Church (other than the very large funding bids, which ODBF will resource differently) such as for environmental and racial justice work but will also include keeping an eye open for any other funding streams that could benefit either the diocese or individual parishes.

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTABILITIES

1.	Organisational leadership including membership of the Bishop's senior staff and Heads of Department groups, deputising as required for the Diocesan Secretary including on projects and reviews	20-25%
2.	Governance and compliance including oversight of elections, risk, data protection and business continuity	25-30%
3.	Head of the Secretariat department, including the oversight of the operation of the Development Fund, and the provision of visible leadership that motivates, engages and develops direct reports	20%
4.	Oversee external grant funding streams including their identification, application, implementation and accountability requirements	20-25%
5.	To support own development and undertake other work as required	5-10%

As this is a new role in this form, the percentages above are approximate and will be subject to review and may change over time but is our best estimate. The Diocesan Secretary will also seek to take account of the interests, gifts and experience of the postholder.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Organisational leadership

- Participate fully as a member of the Bishop's Senior Staff (meets monthly, chaired by the Bishop of Oxford) and the Heads of Department (chaired by the Diocesan Secretary), working collaboratively and contributing to the groups with effective and creative ideas to find solutions for organisational challenges.
- Deputise for the Diocesan Secretary on any matters not covered by other Directors
- Lead or contribute to projects and reviews on behalf of or with the Diocesan Secretary

- As with all members of the Bishop's Staff, champion the highest level of safeguarding policy, practice and culture development, adhering to diocesan and national provisions/requirements.
- Be a role model for equality, diversity and inclusion across the diocese and champion diocesan efforts to welcome under-represented and minoritised groups.

2. Governance and compliance

- Ensure that the organisation and administration of the Diocesan Synod and Bishop's Council are carried out to a high standard and attend meetings of each
- Oversee governance of the various committees across the diocese, including periodic reviews
- Ensure the smooth running of the appointments committee, including the maintenance of the skills register and our appointment mechanisms such that committees are populated with an appropriate span of diversity, skills, experience and geographical representation
- Oversee elections of diocesan representatives to the General Synod (if agreed as manageable – previously carried out by the Registry), Diocesan Synod and diocesan committees and the maintenance of records of electoral roll numbers for each parish
- Ensure we give appropriate advice to PCC Secretaries and others in their governance responsibilities through workshops, website and other information
- As Data Protection Officer for ODBF, ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act including data breaches, subject access requests and proactive work such as training
- Oversee risk management, including the annual updating of risk registers and establish and maintain a proactive but proportionate approach to risk management
- Ensure appropriate business continuity plans are in place, and periodically tested

3. Head of the Secretariat department

- Provide leadership to direct reports, through giving clear direction and setting of performance expectations. Meet regularly with direct reports to discuss work and manage performance. Timely completion of ODBF performance management and other HR related tasks for all direct reports.
- Lead department meetings
- Be responsible for departmental workplans and reports to each Bishop's Council meeting (which form part of the Diocesan Secretary's report)
- Ensure the integrity of the Development Fund and associated applicant data through all stages of the lifecycle, including learning and monitoring, giving guidance as required to the Development Fund Administrator and handling complex issues as required; attend meetings of the Development Fund Panel
- Attend, at least from time to time (as agreed with the Diocesan Secretary and in discussion with direct reports) meetings of the Diocesan Advisory Committee, Closed Churches Committee and occasionally meetings of Mission and Pastoral Committees

4. Oversee external grant funding streams

- Lead the compilation and review of funding bids for projects, include working on draft strategic bids for national funding.

- Manage the end-to-end grant process including submission for proposals ensuring all proposals are thoroughly analysed, developed, costed and reviewed with the appropriate stakeholders.
- Liaise with the Finance department to ensure appropriate financial coordination and that claims are made in a timely way.
- Ensure appropriate requirements for accountability to grant-funders are fulfilled in an effective and timely way.
- To research appropriate grant funding sources to support core diocese work (e.g. Benefact Trust, national strategic funding etc.).

5. To undertake wider agreed tasks that support the developing strategy and their own professional development.

- To carry out any other related duties commensurate with the grade and level of responsibility of this post, for which the post holder has the necessary experience and/or training, as agreed by the line manager.
- To participate in the ODBF performance management processes.
- To be proactive about their own learning and professional development.
- To familiarise themselves with, comply and fully cooperate with the diocesan health and safety policy at all times.

DIMENSIONS

- Work patterns will not be overly defined and will require self-motivation and judgment from the post holder.
- Engagement with diverse church traditions and a range of partners across the Diocese of Oxford.
- Grant Applications likely to range from below £100k to more substantial multi-year projects in excess of £1m
- Development Fund portfolio is currently approximately over 50 new applications each year / £1m per year fund, with many multi-year projects requiring careful monitoring, and giving opportunities for learning and development.

People

- Line Management of 13 staff (4 are direct reports) and head of a department of 15 staff (the other two being the postholder and the PA to the Diocesan Secretary, who will continue to be line managed by the Diocesan Secretary)
- The role requires the post holder to work collaboratively and confidently with a variety of stakeholders including senior clergy, Officers of the diocese, other directors, staff of the national Church institutions and of grant-making trusts, and many others across the diocese (many of whom are volunteers)

Financial resources

- Maintains an overview of and ensures reporting on Development Fund and other grants awarded and payments made.
- Oversees the resources and budget allocated for the Secretariat department

PLANNING & ORGANISATION

- Determine annual work plans for the Secretariat, in line with diocesan and departmental strategic objectives.
- Manage multiple priorities and projects anticipating pressure points and projects with competing deadlines.
- Leads the discernment, development and submission of a number of grant proposals
- Manages the governance functions (Diocesan Synod, Bishop's Council, Diocesan Trustees (Oxford) Limited (which has custodian trustee responsibility for over 350m of parish assets) and related committees, PCC support)
- Leads specific projects as resources and skills allow
- Prioritise own work across a range of principal accountabilities.
- Supports and directs the planning and organisation of the work of direct reports contributing to the smooth running of the Secretariat.
- Work closely with senior staff in the development of Secretariat strategy and implementation.
- 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

- Responsible for the quality and timeliness of work across portfolio (whilst recognising separate professional accountability of Head of Church Buildings for church building issues)
- Prioritises own work across the range of principal accountabilities
- Influences the development of new areas of work, in consultation with the Diocesan Secretary
- Appoints staff in consultation with the Diocesan Secretary and HR
- Assesses and responds to requests and queries with confidence and in a timely way

CONTACT WITH OTHERS

Internal

- The Diocesan Secretary
- Other senior staff of the diocese (Bishops, other Directors, Archdeacons and Associate Archdeacons)
- Colleagues in Area Offices and across Church House Oxford
- Members of: Bishop's Council; Diocesan Synod; and diocesan committees.

External

- Officers of the diocese (Chairs of House of Clergy and Laity, DBF Chair, Diocesan Registrar)
- Chairs of the Development Fund, Diocesan Advisory Committee and Closed Churches Committees

- Parishes and Deaneries
- Grant Funders (such as Benefact Trust)
- Partner organisations or individuals
- National church staff, and staff of other dioceses
- ICO and other relevant regulatory and professional organisations

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS - KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE

Essential

A committed member of the 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. This constitutes a Genuine Occupational Requirement under Schedule 9 of the Equality Act 2010.

- Educated to degree level, or equivalent experience obtained over a number of years.
- A qualification in or a minimum of five years' experience of administration, including governance and programme/project management.
- 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.
- An excellent communicator both in writing and orally to a variety of audiences, including report writing skills at board level
- Organised and able to be detail oriented. Self-motivated and able to work to a high standard when under pressure.
- Knowledge of the Church of England, its issues, structure and challenges and interest in and commitment to the mission and ministry of the diocese of Oxford
- Ability to find ways of solving or pre-empting problems and risks that arise
- Experience of the leadership, development and line management of a number of staff
- Previous experience working in a public sector, charitable or statutory organisation.
- Good working knowledge of Microsoft Office including Outlook, PowerPoint, Excel, Word, TEAMS, SharePoint and databases
- Resilient, with an ability to inspire and motivate others, as well as make difficult decisions.
- Personal commitment to maximising equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Personal commitment to developing and embedding a culture of safeguarding.
- Committed to own professional development.
- Able to travel throughout the diocese.
- Able to work outside normal working hours, including evenings and weekends.

Desirable

- Experience of writing project proposals and funding applications
- Analytical skills in data management, research and reporting.
- Experience in change management
- Experience of risk management
- Experience of managing elections

- Experience of working effectively with a variety of stakeholders including volunteers to facilitate engagement with the diocesan vision and strategy
- Experience of monitoring and evaluation procedures, including assessing impact
- Experience working with volunteers.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Band	Spot salary
Remuneration	Approx £75,000 per annum
Type of Contract	Permanent
Hours of work	Full-time. This position requires flexibility to include some evening and weekend commitments (particularly Bishop's staff residential meetings, Diocesan Synod, and Bishop's Council meetings).
Place of work	Church House Oxford, Langford Locks, Kidlington, Oxford, OX5 1GF. We are happy for staff to work from home for up to 40% of working hours, subject to being in the office when required.
Holidays	<p>Your annual leave entitlement is broken down as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 fifth year of employment, this will increase by 1 day each year to a maximum of 30 days leave per annum. <p>In addition, you are entitled to the usual United Kingdom public holidays.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Board gives three discretionary holiday days to its employees, namely: Ascension Day, Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve.</p>
Pension provision	<p>It is a statutory requirement for ODBF to automatically enrol employees into an appropriate Pension scheme of our choice. Our scheme is the Church of England 'Pension Builder 2014' (PB 2014). Information can be sought from the Church of England website:</p> <p>https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2024-04/my-membership-april-2024_1.pdf</p> <p>We operate our auto-enrolment pension scheme as a Pension Salary Exchange (PSE) scheme. This means you will exchange your 5% annual salary pension contributions for additional employer contributions reducing your tax and national insurance payments.</p>

Probation Period	Six months, during which time progress is regularly reviewed and the period may be extended.
Notice Period	During probation, 1 month and thereafter, 3 months from either side
DBS	A basic DBS check will be required for this role.

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 post-holder 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 post-holder before any changes are implemented. The post-holder is expected to participate fully in such discussions and implementation.

Review Date: End of probationary period