



Living Christ's Story

Pastoral and Closed Churches Officer

Full time: 35 hours per week
Salary: £38,213

With its network of parishes covering the country, the Church of England plays an active role in national life, bringing an important Christian dimension to the nation, as well as strengthening community life. The Church of England is arranged geographically into 41 areas, each under the care of a Bishop, and covers every part of England.

The Diocese of York takes in much of North and East Yorkshire, an area which includes the cities of York and Hull, as well as Middlesbrough and Selby, the Yorkshire Moors National Park, and the incomparable Yorkshire coast. We are a family of clergy, churches, parishes and schools, led and guided by the Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell.

Together, we are striving to be a people who are “Living Christ’s Story”. We are developing and delivering strategic programmes focused on our aims: *Becoming* more like Christ; *Reaching* those we currently don’t; *Growing* churches of missionary disciples that are younger and more diverse; and *Transforming* our finances and structures. We want to be a simpler, bolder, humbler church, which in its diversity reflects the communities it serves.

Our diocesan teams, mostly based at our main office at Clifton Moor in York, provide a wide range of support services. This includes teams who support the development of our mission and ministry; our Education team working closely with Church schools; and our support functions such as Safeguarding, Property, Finance, and Human Resources. All are employed by the York Diocesan Board of Finance, a charitable company limited by guarantee with assets of over £100m and an annual turnover of around £15m, which manages the shared resources of the diocese in order to deliver its mission.

Supporting Parishes and the wider Diocese

Under the oversight of the Deputy Diocesan Secretary, a number of teams and specialists provide support for parishes and the wider diocese in areas including HR, GDPR, governance, patronage and pastoral re-organisation matters, the care of churches and churchyards and the maintenance and disposal of church buildings no longer required for regular worship.

These are specialist areas, requiring good working knowledge of secular and ecclesiastical legislation, in which attention to detail and sensitivity are essential. Our work is undertaken in support of, and seeking to reduce the burden on, clergy and lay volunteers who are often time poor, working with constrained finances, and seeking to respond to the challenges associated with changing populations, declining worshipping congregations and the responsibility for significant parts of the nation's built heritage.

Pastoral and Closed Churches Officer

The focus of this role is to advise parishes and colleagues on options around the arrangement and structure of benefices and parishes, managing and finding alternative uses for closed churches, and supporting the processes which enable matters to be dealt with in accordance with relevant legislation and regulations. The role will involve visiting parishes and closed churches and occasional evening meetings.

You will be expected to develop your expertise and to work independently as required, showing initiative and decision-making skills. The post requires someone with vision, energy, creativity and determination – as well as an interest in, and aptitude for, working with legal documents – to advise on the ways of achieving the structures to support the delivery of mission and ministry in parishes. You will be encouraged to work closely with colleagues in the national church and our own legal advisors to build up your own expertise in this specialist area.

To be successful in the post, you will be a highly organised individual, able to combine administrative/secretarial and IT skills with excellent written and verbal communication skills. Educated to degree level or equivalent experience, you will be comfortable working with complex information, developing alternative options and making decisions. You will also have empathy with the Christian faith and a desire to support the mission of the Church.

Job Description

Policy Framework

- To implement the Diocese's policy and procedures on pastoral reorganisation, closed church disposals, patronage and appointment matters and to assist with communicating these.

Legislative Framework

- To be, or to become, well versed in the legislation governing the areas of work and to work within them.

Financial Framework

- To operate diligently within the annual budget and within the financial procedures and limits set by the Diocesan Board of Finance.

Pastoral Reorganisation

- To be responsible for consultation procedures and processes and relating to pastoral reorganisation under the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011 and to advise and support interested parties, including parishes, bishops, archdeacons, patrons, office colleagues, as appropriate
- To carry out consultation procedures in relation to Bishop's Mission Orders.
- To maintain registers of suspensions of presentation, interim posts created and inhabited, Bishops' Mission Orders (BMOs) and any other time-limited matters and advise when they are approaching end-of-life
- To carry out procedures under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure during the appointment of an incumbent, including responsibility for the circulation of accurate and appropriate letters and forms, collation of responses, maintenance of database and diary schedules, liaising with Archdeacons, Bishops, the Registrar and, when necessary, Bishopthorpe Palace. To advise PCCs and patrons as appropriate.

Closed Churches

- To undertake tasks to progress the identification of alternative uses and disposal of closed churches in liaison with the Church Commissioners' Closed Churches Case Office.
- To take responsibility from the PCC for churches vested in the DBF on closure, for their insurance and utility contracts (in liaison with the Finance team), ongoing maintenance (in liaison with the Property team) and their contents (in consultation with the Church Buildings Officer).
- To liaise with the tenants of leased churches and with the Property Team in relation to the preparation of heads of terms, leases and licenses for closed churches.
- To undertake appropriate preparation of applications for Faculties, Planning and Listed Building Consent for closed churches.
- To administer the closed churches budget, including the production and maintenance of accurate records for each case, and to be responsible for applications to the Church Commissioners' Closed Churches Buildings Support Account and the Listed Places of Worship Scheme.
- To prepare Archbishop's Directions for contents in consultation with the Furnishing Officer.
- To maintain full and accurate database records for closed churches.

Risk Management

- To maintain the Pastoral and Closed Churches Risk Register, highlight any emerging areas of risk and monitor and improve those areas where risks have already been defined.

General

- To prepare maps as required using ArcGIS online
- To be responsible for the development of relevant areas of the Diocesan website and to add material as appropriate
- To undertake any other duties as may be required within the context of the wider team and to provide cover for other team members as appropriate during absences or holiday periods
- To participate in an annual review and appropriate continuing professional development
- Contribute to the wider work of the Diocese, as appropriate.

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. Strong track record in detailed administrative work, including developing and maintaining office systems and minute taking.
2. Proven ability to carry out research and interpretation work relating to complex documents.
3. Educated to degree level or equivalent.
4. Strong IT skills, including Microsoft Office applications.
5. Strong written and verbal communications skills, including the ability to provide advice with clarity and precision.
6. Enthusiastic, approachable and professional; able to relate well to a range of people, listen carefully to parishes and enable good consultation processes, maintain confidentiality and handle pastoral matters with tact and sensitivity.
7. Methodical approach; able to work to a high standard with minimum supervision within the context of the requirements of relevant legislation,
8. Self-motivated and well-organised; able to work efficiently and effectively in meeting deadlines.
9. Flexible approach; able to assimilate new tasks and work as a co-operative member of a team.
10. Empathy with the Christian faith, and a desire to serve the church in the Diocese of York.

Desirable

11. Experience of working with legal documents.
12. Understanding of the structure, organisation and culture of the Church of England.

The post includes a requirement to travel to meetings throughout the Diocese when required.

Summary of Terms and Conditions

Employer	The York Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd (YDBF)
Line Manager	To be confirmed
DBS Disclosure	DBS Disclosure is not required for this post
Probationary Period	Appointments are subject to a 6 month probationary period
Location	The post is based at the diocesan offices at Clifton Moor, York. Hybrid-working is negotiable
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. Some duties require travel within the Diocese of York, and on occasions, elsewhere in England</p>
Salary	The post is grade 4. Starting salary is £38,213.
Pension	The YDBF offers a contributory pension scheme (“the Scheme”) organised by the Church of England (the “Church”) 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
Holidays	In addition to the eight Bank and Public Holidays, DBF employees are entitled to 5 weeks (25 days) 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 (currently 45p per mile for the first 10,000 miles) in accordance with the Diocesan Travel Claims policy
Employee Benefits	We provide free parking at our York office, and our other non-contractual benefits currently include eye care vouchers and a cycle to work scheme.
Pastoral Care	We have an Employee Assistance Programme, and our Diocesan Adviser and Coordinator of Pastoral Care offers space to talk through pastoral, professional or personal matter, providing or arranging counselling and / or mediation if required.