

ST EDMUNDSBURY & IPSWICH DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE

Job description and person specification:

Assistant to DAC Secretary

PURPOSE

We are seeking a full-time Assistant to the DAC Secretary to fill one of two full-time statutory posts in the DAC office. The Secretary to the DAC (Diocesan Advisory Committee) and his assistant are the point of liaison between parishes and a body of experts who provide guidance for PCC (parish church council) officers, clergy and other interested parties on care of and works to church buildings and churchyards. The latter can include anything from routine fabric repairs to commemoration of the dead, from new artworks to major development projects. The Committee operates the faculty jurisdiction, the legal system for granting permission for repairs and alterations to them. It advises the Chancellor, the chief legal official of the Diocese, on whether a faculty – the legal document giving that permission - should be granted. This includes exercising listed building consent for the medieval buildings listed at Grade I or II* that constitute the majority of the Diocese's 476 churches. The DAC office also oversees the system for undertaking condition reports on churches at five-yearly intervals. An interest in historic buildings is welcomed, but please note that this is primarily a desk-based administrative role.

The main tasks of the postholder are as follows:

- To assist the DAC Secretary in operating the Faculty Jurisdiction and Inspection of Churches Measure.
- To act as the first point of contact for queries relating to church buildings in the absence of the DAC Secretary.
- To act as a first point of call for support, guidance and advice to PCC officers, clergy and architects on church buildings and churchyards in the Diocese, as well as on procedural matters relating to faculty and List B applications.
- To attend and minute meetings of the full and architects' committees of the DAC, report on faculty casework and to communicate the outcome of discussions to applicants.
- To liaise promptly and efficiently between the parishes, staff at Diocesan House and the Bishop's Office, the Registry, representatives of local authorities and statutory consultees to further all the aims listed above.
- To provide general administrative support in running the DAC office.

REPORTING TO

- The DAC Secretary

KEY CONNECTIONS

- The Chair of the DAC
- Members of the DAC and its specialist advisers
- Diocesan Registry
- Archdeacons
- Incumbents and other parish clergy
- Churchwardens
- Statutory consultees (Historic England, the national amenity societies and the Church Buildings Council)
- Inspecting and project architects
- Contractors
- Church Buildings Support Officer
- Historic Church Buildings Support Officer
- Director of Development

KEY TASKS

- Answer by phone and e-mail incoming queries about the care of churches and faculty casework, forwarding and redirecting them to sources of expert advice as necessary;
- Provide clear, accurate and well informed guidance to all stakeholders;
- Process faculty and List B applications:
- Scrutinise incoming applications, ensuring that they contain the requisite level of detail to allow a decision to be taken;
- Liaise with the appropriate DAC adviser(s), Archdeacon and other relevant decision-makers;
- Compile slideshows with photographs and drawings for cases to be presented to DAC meetings;
- Report back in writing to applications with the outcome of any discussion and advice on the next steps;
- Assist applicants in using the Online Faculty System (OFS), providing basic technical support (registering new users, uploading documents, filling out application forms, etc) and provide guidance on the new on-line faculty system, to be launched in October 2025;
- Help service DAC meetings (10 per year), assisting with producing agendas and minutes, setting up the meeting room, welcoming and liaising with committee members and the Chair;
- Attend and report on site visits as required;
- Maintain records of churches and casework;
- Engage in one-off/occasional projects as required;
- Filing and record-keeping, including maintenance of database of church buildings;
- General administrative support for the office, including (but not limited to) booking dates for committee meetings, booking venues, organising DAC site visits and other diary management.

Faculty casework to be handled by the Assistant to the DAC Secretary will include but not be limited to:

- Work in churchyards (paths, new Gardens of Remembrance, felling trees, noticeboards, etc)
- Installation of or alterations to building services
- Commemorative plaques
- All casework relating to unlisted churches

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
Qualifications	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full driving licence • A levels or equivalent level qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University degree in art history or related discipline • Postgraduate degree in building conservation
Knowledge and experience	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handling large volumes of incoming information • Familiarity with the county • Dealing with the general public • Working with volunteers • Working with committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the Church of England's legal and governance processes, including the Faculty Jurisdiction and Inspection of Churches Measure • Knowledge of secular planning systems and their interaction with the ecclesiastical system • An interest in heritage and conservation • The role of Historic England, the national amenity societies and other statutory consultees in the care and change management of historic buildings • Building services, especially low-carbon technology
Skills and abilities / aptitudes	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good, clear communicator with first-class written and spoken English • A self-starter, content to work independently • Well organised, able to manage a wide-ranging and demanding casework load and to prioritise as necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to read and interpret architectural drawings, specifications and schedules of works

- Meticulous at record-keeping and competent with data management systems
- Able to work to deadlines
- Attentive to detail and confidentiality
- Good IT skills

Work-related personal qualities

- Efficient and responsible attitude to work
- Methodical thinker and problem-solver
- Able to understand importance of role in a larger structure and its interdependence with other parties and organisations
- Able to form quickly effective working relationships with people from a wide range of different backgrounds
- Sympathy for the values of the Church of England and commitment to the aims of the Diocese
- Sensitive to pastoral matters and able to recognise situations where tact and diplomacy are essential, but also when it is necessary to be resolute
- Good service ethic - team-player with ability to understand role in achieving collaborative aim

GENERAL INFORMATION

Salary	The post is at Band A of the St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocesan Board of Finance Salary Scales £27,000 per annum.
Pension provision	Membership of the Church of England Pensions Board Pension Builder 2014 Scheme following completion of probation period.
Hours of work	Full-time 35 hours per week Monday to Friday with some flexibility required and offered. TOIL (time off in lieu) is applicable for evening and weekend working, to be agreed with the line manager.
Holidays	25 days' pro rata paid leave in addition to the usual public holidays plus discretionary days at Easter and Christmas
Probation period	Six months during which time progress is regularly reviewed and the period may be extended.
Notice period	During probation two weeks, thereafter one month
Place of work	Diocesan Office, St Nicholas Centre, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich IP1 1UQ Flexible working is possible.

NOTES: The current main duties and responsibilities of this post are outlined in the job description. The list is not meant to be exhaustive and the post-holder is expected to carry out other related duties that are within the employee's skills and abilities and commensurate with the post's banding whenever reasonably instructed.

The DBF is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment.

All appointments are subject to acceptable pre-appointment checks, including a satisfactory DBS check where required.

For an informal conversation please contact Edmund Harris by email on edmund.harris@cofesuffolk.org to arrange a suitable time.

Application packs available from: Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Website
<https://www.cofesuffolk.org/about-us/vacancies>

Applications marked 'Confidential Application' to be sent to: HR at HR@cofesuffolk.org or by post to Diocesan Office, St Nicholas Centre, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich IP1 1UQ.

Please note: Applications will only be accepted on our DBF application forms. Please do not apply directly from online jobsites or send CVs.

Closing date for applications: 23rd April 2025. However, please note, we will be reviewing and assessing applications on an ongoing basis prior to the closing date so you are advised to apply ASAP.