



## **Church Buildings Support Officer**

### **Job Description**

#### **DIOCESAN VISION & MISSION**

The Diocese's four mission priorities are to grow in depth and influence, so as to enable an increase in number and become younger; in achieving the vision of 'Growing in God' by being 'Flourishing congregations, making a difference'.

#### **DEPARTMENT DESCRIPTION**

The DAC office is the department of the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) that has oversight of the Diocese's 477 church buildings, the majority of which are medieval and listed at Grade I or II\*. It is the first point of contact for clergy, architects and laypeople in parishes who need guidance on the care, maintenance and development of their churches and churchyards. The office operates the faculty jurisdiction, the legal system for granting permission for repairs and alterations to them. It oversees the system for undertaking condition reports on churches at five-yearly intervals and maintains records of church buildings. The office is the point of liaison between parishes and the Diocesan Advisory Committee, which meets six times annually and provides specialist advice on the care of and works to church buildings and churchyards. Approaching that body, which discharges listed building consent under the terms of the Ecclesiastical Exemption, is the preliminary to obtaining a faculty.

#### **PURPOSE**

Suffolk boasts an internationally significant legacy of historic church buildings. Along with that of Norfolk, they reputedly constitute the greatest concentration of medieval churches anywhere in northern Europe. But they are not a museum, they are living places of worship at the service of the communities that they serve. Ensuring that this remains the case is the surest guarantee that they will remain in good repair and sustainable in the long term. The successful candidate will provide in-depth support and guidance to our parishes so that they can unlock the potential of their buildings by making them more versatile. He/she will also operate a grant scheme for minor fabric repairs and improvements. This role is part-supported by the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust. The Trust, which celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary last year, provides grant aid for a wide range of projects at the county's historic places of worship to support vital fabric repairs, the conservation of historic artefacts and work to make them fit for purpose for 21<sup>st</sup> century congregations.

## **REPORTING TO**

- The DAC Secretary

## **KEY CONNECTIONS**

- Archdeacons
- Incumbents and other clergy
- Churchwardens
- Architects and contractors
- Suffolk Historic Churches Trust
- Grant-giving organisations
- Parish and district councils
- The Church Buildings Council
- The Diocese's Carbon Net Zero officer
- The Diocese's Giving Adviser

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **General**

1. Act as an advocate for church buildings, collecting information about successful repair, conservation and development projects within and beyond the Diocese to promote best practice, including from beneficiaries of this scheme.
2. Maintain awareness of local needs and external factors, identifying opportunities in the priorities of partner organisations and the local community which are complementary to those of the Diocese.
3. Provide advice on conserving and managing the historic environment, putting parishes in contact with colleagues at the DBF, national and regional organisations where necessary.
4. Keeping abreast of relevant opportunities, changes and developments with grant-funding for heritage and community projects, as well as related legislation, forwarding authoritative guidance and information as required.
5. Liaise with the DAC Secretary on any proposals brought about through work with parishes which require formal permissions.
6. Promote the importance of equal access to churches, providing initial guidance on appropriate measures and adaptations.
7. Assist the team tasked with establishing and operating a Community Interest Company delivering insurance, repairs and maintenance for historic church buildings.

### **Maintenance and repair**

8. Liaise with the DAC Secretary over incoming quinquennial inspection reports (QIRs), identifying beneficiaries for the repair grants programme and ongoing support.
9. Follow up urgent recommendations in QIRs with the parishes and inspecting architect, formulating action plans.

## **Community engagement**

10. Identify untapped local demand for community facilities and accommodation for outreach projects that could be met through church buildings, work with relevant colleagues and PCC officers to facilitate dialogue.
11. Build relationships with local authorities, local businesses, charities, community groups, nature conservation groups and other partners which are already or might at a future date be stakeholders for initiatives involving church buildings.
12. Identify the needs of partner organisations and investigate how these could be accommodated alongside the continuing worship and activity of the parish.
13. Support the establishment and development of relevant voluntary organisations such as Friends' groups.
14. Provide advice by speaking at in-person and on-line training events to incumbents, churchwardens and PCCs on relevant topics, including the importance of community engagement and diversified use of church buildings.
15. Assist parishes with compiling Statements of Significance and Needs for faculty applications for development projects.

## **Fundraising**

16. Working with the Parish Giving Advisors, provide guidance to churches on fundraising for repair and development projects, including identifying potential funding sources, helping with preparing applications and carrying out project development.
17. Attend the quarterly meetings of the grants committee of the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust at Haughley Park Barn.
18. Administer a grants fund for minor repairs and improvements.

The role will involve desk-based work in the Diocesan offices and regular catch-ups will be held there with the DAC Secretary and Archdeacons to provide guidance and discuss progress, although home working will be possible in due course. It is envisaged that the role will involve a high degree of independent working, including frequent travel around the diocese and, on occasions, outside it. In time the successful candidate will be expected to be master of his/her own diary, taking the initiative in organising meetings with PCC officers, architects, stakeholder organisations and so on. By nature, the role will be unpredictable and the routine will change from week to week.

Please note that this list of responsibilities is not exhaustive and may be subject to change. From time to time, the postholder may be required to take on other duties of a similar nature. It is the practice of the DBF via the line manager to review and amend job descriptions annually, in consultation with the post-holder.

## PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL	DESIRABLE
<b>Education and professional qualifications</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undergraduate degree in history / history of art and architecture/archaeology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master's degree in conservation or related discipline (e.g. heritage management)</li> <li>• Membership of relevant professional body (e.g. IHBC)</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge and Experience</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proven track record of repair and development projects involving listed buildings.</li> <li>• Experience of devising plans for addressing the repair and maintenance priorities identified by condition surveys.</li> <li>• Able to read and interpret technical drawings, specifications and schedules of work.</li> <li>• Successful track record of working with grant-giving organisations.</li> <li>• Experience of providing in-person training and written advice to volunteer and community groups.</li> <li>• Experience of managing volunteer-led projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An understanding of the Church of England's legal and governance processes, including the faculty system</li> <li>• Knowledge of secular planning system</li> <li>• Familiarity with the county</li> <li>• Prior involvement in developing community projects at places of worship.</li> <li>• Knowledge of heritage and community grant-funding resources, understanding of their priorities and experience of writing applications.</li> </ul>
<b>Skills and Abilities /Aptitudes</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent written and spoken English</li> <li>• Ability to design, present and deliver training events.</li> <li>• A self-starter, content to work independently and able to manage flexibly a range of tasks being handled simultaneously</li> <li>• Good IT skills</li> <li>• Full driving licence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competent photographer</li> </ul>
<b>Work-Related Personal Qualities</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to understand importance of role in a larger structure and its interdependence with other parties and organisations</li> </ul>	

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Able to form quickly effective working relationships with people from a wide range of different backgrounds</li><li>• Good problem-solver and diplomat</li><li>• Sympathy for the values of the Church of England and commitment to the aims of the Diocese</li></ul> |  |
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## GENERAL INFORMATION

### About Us

The Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich has 445 parishes in 112 benefices and serves approximately 660,000 people living in a geographical area of more than 1,400 square miles.

The Diocesan Board of Finance serves and supports our parishes and schools offering the people of Suffolk the opportunity to encounter God and grow in Christian faith. We strive to do this in providing service and support in line with our values of Respect, Transparency, Quality and Well-being.

### Terms and conditions – general information

Salary	The salary range for this post is £33,000 per annum dependent upon experience. Band B of the DBF Salary Scale.
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 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 2 weeks and thereafter 1 month
Place of work	Diocesan Office, St Nicholas Centre, 4 Cutler Street, Ipswich IP1 1UQ However, these offices are currently up for sale, and we are planning a potential move away from this location to new offices within a reasonable distance (either within Ipswich or on the outskirts of Ipswich) which will become the main place of work.
DBS requirement	<i>The appointment is subject to an unblemished enhanced DBS check in relation to the requirements of this role.</i>
Transport	<i>The postholder will require use of own personal transport and provide evidence of insurance cover for business use. Expenses for mileage will be met.</i>

**Application packs available from:** Diocese of St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Website [Vacancies - Diocese of St Edmundsbury and Ipswich \(cofesuffolk.org\)](https://www.cofesuffolk.org/vacancies)

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

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

**Closing Date for Applications:** Monday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2024

**Interview Date:** w/c 6<sup>th</sup> May, probably 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> May