# Diocese of Derby
## Head of Communications

**Candidate Pack**

**October 2026**

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Diocese of Derby
THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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# 1 Introduction

Thank you for your interest in becoming our new Head of Communications.

The success of our work in the Parish Support Team depends on how well we communicate. We may have the good news of the gospel, a wealth of resources to support our churches and church schools, insightful bishops and senior leaders to guide us, and a deeply committed team - but if we do not communicate well, all of this will have less impact than it should.

Over recent years, we have sought to deepen our understanding of the rich tapestry of individuals, churches, schools, and communities that make up the diocese. By communicating with parishes rather than to them, we aim to build trust, encourage collaboration and strengthen local ministry across Derbyshire.

As Head of Communications, you will play a central role in bringing to life our vision of "The Kingdom of God, good news for all". You will help shape how we listen to the people we serve, tell stories of faith and transformation, communicate the support and resources available to churches, and facilitate conversations with a wide range of audiences both within and beyond the Church.

This is a particularly exciting time to join us. Over the coming years, we will be engaging churches, schools, clergy and communities in some significant conversations and opportunities. From celebrating our Centenary Year in 2027 and telling stories of impact, to engaging churches to explore how they flourish in a changing environment, communications will play a vital role in helping people understand, participate, and contribute.

Alongside this, you will lead and mature our Communications Team, strengthen how communications supports organisational decision-making, and help us become more deliberate and effective in the way we engage with churches, communities, and beyond.

The likely expectation is that following probation, the Head of Communications will join the Senior Leadership Team.

If you are a strategic communications leader who combines creativity with good judgement, enjoys building relationships, and isn't afraid to work in a small organisation where everyone needs to roll their sleeves up and get hands-on occasionally, we would love to hear from you.

**Sam Frith**
**Director of Strategy & Engagement**
**Parish Support Team for the Diocese of Derby**

# 2
# About us

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# 2 About us

## Who are we?

The Diocese of Derby is one of 42 dioceses that make up the Church of England. The diocese isn't just the central office or the area we cover – it is the whole Church of England ecosystem in this region, led and cared for by the Bishop of Derby. It's the rich patchwork of local churches, schools, chaplaincies, senior leaders, clergy, lay leaders, volunteers, PCCs, synods, and so on.

Geographically, our diocese takes in all of Derbyshire and small parts of Staffordshire and South Yorkshire. We sit between Sheffield, Nottingham, Stoke-on-Trent, and Manchester, in the heart of the country. The M1 motorway runs the length of the diocese.

Think of Derbyshire and you're probably picturing idyllic, quintessentially English villages, local pubs serving local drinks to refresh the weary hiker (canoeist, rock climber, potholer, etc) after they've had a day in the beautiful Peak District National Park. That's true, we have all that, but we are not just a tourist destination.

We're an incredibly diverse diocese of 1.1 million people, with busy urban centres, bustling market towns, agricultural communities, fields and farms and factories. Our three main ministry contexts in the diocese can be described as 'urban', 'rural', and 'emerging industrial', and the structure of our three archdeaconries roughly mirrors these main contexts.

The Parish Support Team carries shared responsibilities on behalf of the whole diocese, including safeguarding, finance, housing, governance, legal processes, church buildings support, mission support, and communications. This includes equipping and supporting our bishop and other senior clergy as they carry out their roles.

We are based at Derby Church House, our office which is a short walk from Derby Cathedral and the centre of the city.

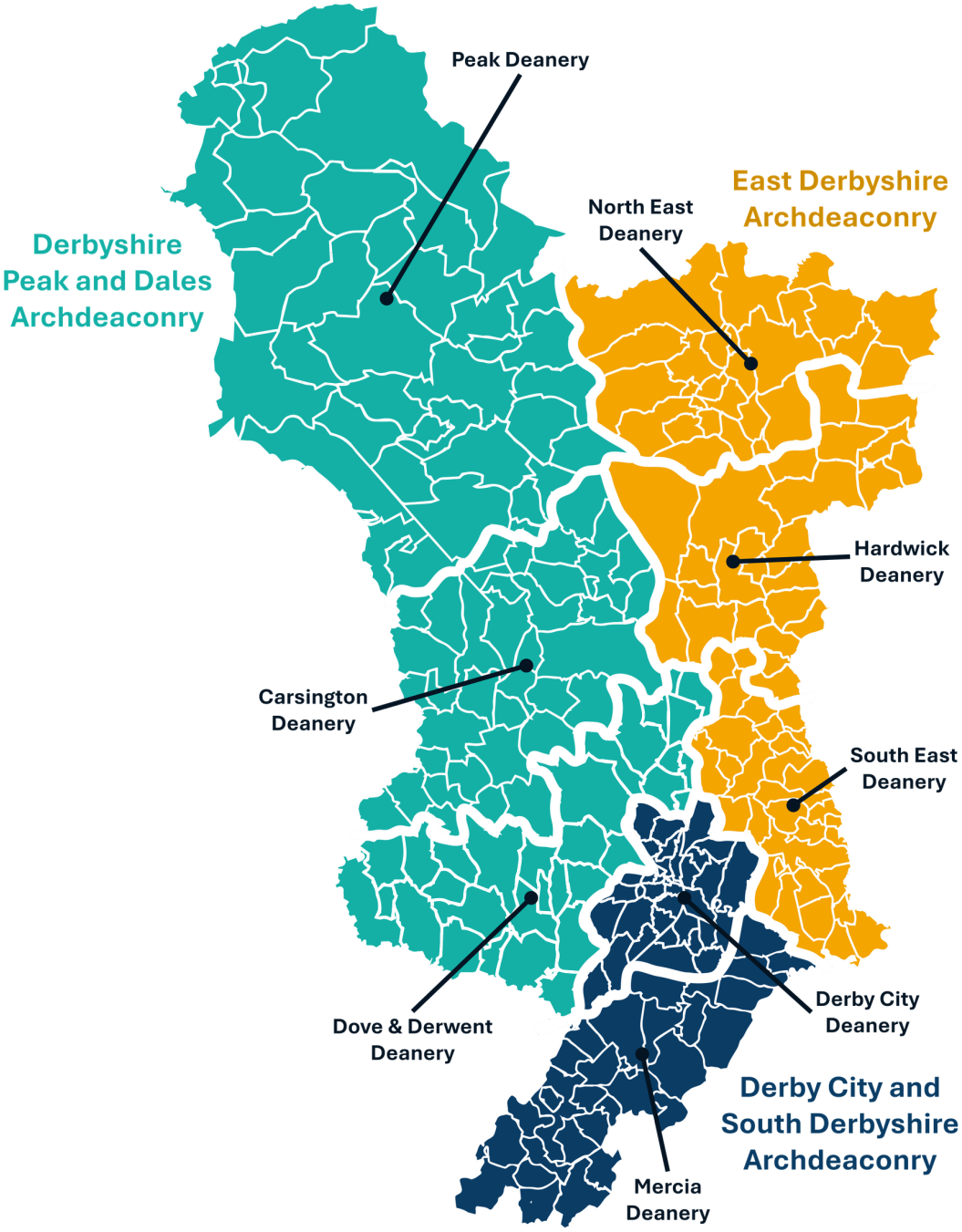
## About our Diocese

### In numbers:

- 257 parishes, each with its own unique character and mission
- 326 church buildings serving local villages, towns and cities
- 90+ vicars offering dedicated and faithful ministry in parishes
- 150+ Licensed Lay Ministers [Readers] serving across the diocese
- 10,000+ members of our worshipping communities.
- 137+ New Worshipping Communities/Congregations, Fresh Expressions
- 111 church schools spread throughout the diocese
- 15,000+ young people being educated in church schools

# 2
# About us

## Diocese Map



# 2 About us

## Diversity statement

As an equal opportunities' employer, we particularly welcome applications from UK Minority Ethnic/Global Majority Heritage (UKME/GMH) candidates who are currently underrepresented in our organisation. All appointments will be made on merit of skill and experience relative to the role. We are a Disability Confident Employer. If you have a disability or neurodivergent condition that otherwise prevents you from meeting any of the essential criteria, please contact us to discuss reasonable adjustments. We are also able to provide additional support during the application process

disability confident COMMITTED

*Being part of the Derby Parish Support Team is both rewarding and fulfilling. The role provides the opportunity to support dedicated volunteers who generously give their time to sustain and strengthen their church communities. It is a privilege to contribute to their important work and witness the positive impact they make. With no two days the same, the role offers a varied and engaging working environment, where new challenges and exciting opportunities regularly arise.*

**Naomi Sturman, Finance Manager**

# 2 About us

## What we do and why

### Part A - What we do

Everything we do as a Parish Support Team connects to what we call our "strategic framework", which guides our activities and helps to keep us focused on why we're here.

**What we do ourselves and enable others to do**

The first part of our framework describes what we're here to do ourselves, and to enable those in our parishes to do. There are three levels to how we think about this.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | **We pursue the Diocesan Vision**: The Kingdom of God, good news for all – transformed lives through growing church and building community | | | |
| 2 | **We work towards the Outcomes**, which are the fruit of pursuing the Kingdom of God that will be seen mainly in local congregations and communities: | | | |
| | ***Deepening our relationships with God*** *– Growing our faith so that we are freed by God's love to live out our calling every day of the week.* | ***Challenging injustice*** *– God's Kingdom is about justice and joy, and we are called to speak out and act when people are harmed by injustice.* | ***Serving our local contexts*** *– Serving our communities practically, so they can see and experience the good news of God's Kingdom.* | ***Making new disciples*** *– We are called to share the hope and love of Jesus, inviting others to grow in faith and follow him in their own lives.* |
| 3 | **We take care of the Pillars**, which are the key responsibilities of the Parish Support Team and Diocesan Leadership, and which make all the Outcomes possible: | | | |
| | ***Equipping our people*** *– Giving trustees, staff, clergy, licenced lay ministers, and volunteers the tools and support to thrive in their roles.* | ***Sustaining our resources*** *– Working diligently towards the long-term financial sustainability of the Church of England's ministry in our region.* | ***Shaping our structures and culture*** *– Encouraging good governance at all levels and building a healthy, Kingdom-focused and values-driven culture.* | |

The Pillars make the Outcomes possible, and the Outcomes point us towards the Diocesan Vision. Every department creates plans for their workstreams that each link clearly to at least one Pillar or Outcome. This helps each role and each team see how their work connects to the bigger vision we share.

We are also using this framework in church-facing processes. This includes Ministry Development Reviews for clergy and Licenced Lay Ministers, and the Mission Action Planning process that churches are encouraged to work through to plan their activities

# 2 About us

## What we do and why

### Part B - How we do it

**How we go about doing the things that we do**

Part of the Christian faith is the responsibility to plan well and be good stewards of all that has been entrusted to us. But we believe that how we do our work is just as important, if not more so, than what we do. This is reflected in the second part of our framework.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | **We act according to the Values and *Behaviours***, which are some of the hallmarks that should characterise the way we work and set us apart as the Church: | | |
| | **Generous faith**<br>• *We act with **integrity***<br>• *We **collaborate** often and well*<br>• *We hold ourselves and each other **accountable*** | **Courageous hope**<br>• *We are **bold and ambitious***<br>• *We **embrace change***<br>• *We **challenge respectfully*** | **Life-giving love**<br>• *We are **appreciative***<br>• *We work to make people feel **included***<br>• *We **welcome** difference* |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | **We pay attention to the Priorities**, thoughtfully and deliberately considering the implications for our named priority areas in every plan we put together: | | | |
| | **Growing younger**<br>*e.g. How have we invited the voices of children and young people into this plan?* | **Growing more diverse**<br>*e.g. What aspects of diversity could this plan help us to grow in?* | **Being greener**<br>*e.g. What parts of this plan might have an environmental impact?* | **Social & economic deprivation**<br>*e.g. How might the dynamics of economic inequality and different social classes impact this plan?* |

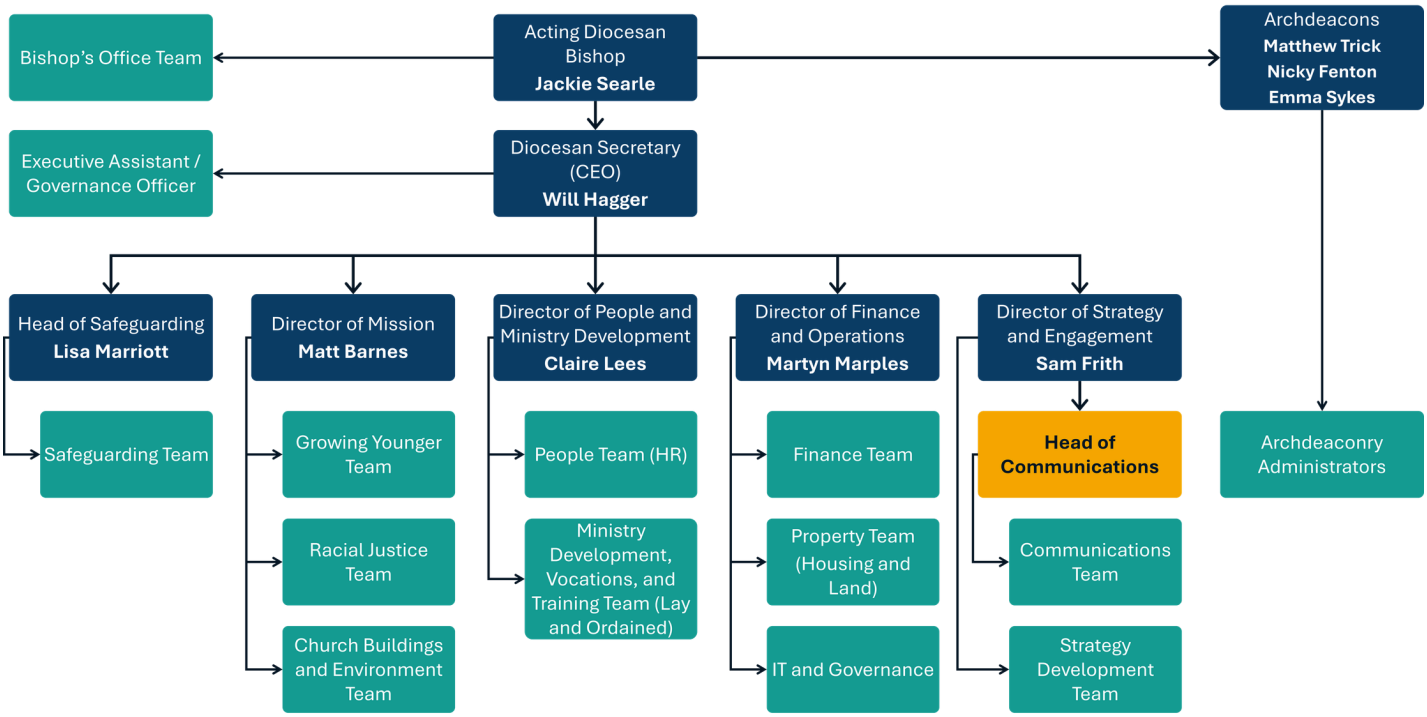
So, whatever we're working on – whether we are innovating the way we manage our data, creating a plan to manage our finances well, offering a new training opportunity to volunteers, or something else – we want to act according to the Values and Behaviours and ask ourselves honest questions about the Priorities as we do it.

This means slowing down sometimes to do things deliberately. It means working together with others who hold expertise in different Priorities, be they colleagues in the Parish Support Team, clergy or lay leaders in parishes, or National Church team members.

# 2 About us

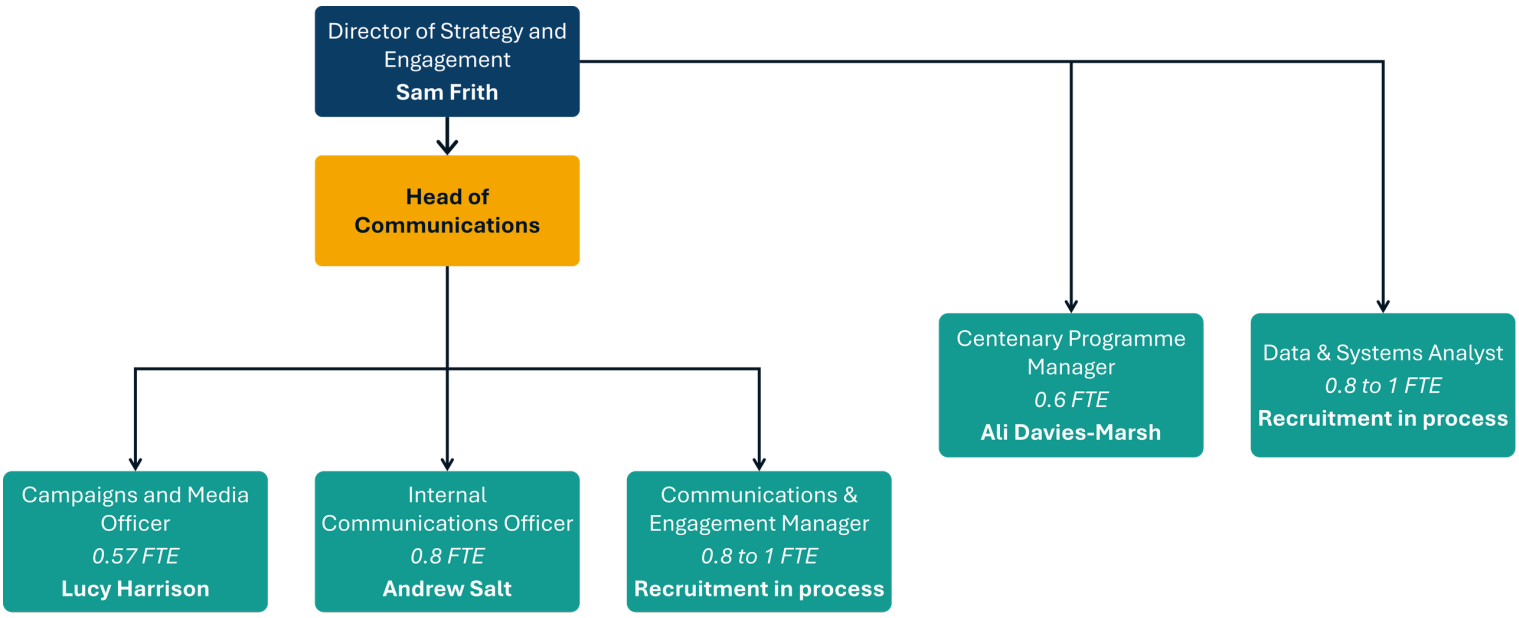
## Organisation chart

### Current organisational structure



# 2 About us

## Communications Team




*I've worked for the Diocese of Derby for nearly thirty years, never the same day twice! It's a really exciting time to be a part of an organisation that is so open to change. Working as part of the Parish Support Team is where innovation meets collaboration, you're at the heart of decision-making, surrounded by inspiring colleagues and endless opportunities – I wouldn't be anywhere else right now.*

**Matt Barnes**

**Director of Mission, Evangelism and Parish Revitalisation**

# 3
# Job description

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# 3 Job description

## Our Offer to You

**Job title:** Head of Communications

**Accountable to:** Director of Strategy & Engagement (Line Manager)

**Accountable for: (Direct reports)**
Internal Communications Officer
Media and Campaigns Officer
Communications & Engagement Manager

**Workplace:** Hybrid/Derby DE1 3DR (min 2 days per week onsite)

**Salary:** £58,000 - £62,000 per annum (the higher end of the salary band is dependent on stronger crisis management experience)

**Contract / Hours:** Permanent / 35 hours per week. Occasional out-of-hours work may be required, with time off in lieu provided. Based on previous years, this has typically been attending a handful of events and responding to out-of-hours issues needing urgent responses around four or five times each year.

**Holidays:** 30 days annual leave (including 5 set discretionary days) for full-time employees plus bank holidays, plus the option to buy up to 5 more days.

**Pension:** Non-contributory pension scheme, worth up to 10% of salary (or the option to remain in the clergy pension scheme and sacrifice salary proportionately)

**Other benefits:**

- Life assurance 2x annual salary life assurance (subject to pension enrolment)
- Simply Health Cash Plan, offering 24/7 GP access, reimbursement for health treatment and an Employee Assistance Programme (subject to terms of the scheme), as well as Specsavers eye test vouchers and glasses discounts
- An Employee Assistance Programme, providing immediate mental health support and counselling for you and your dependents aged 16–24
- Additional leave options including spiritual retreat days, volunteer days, carers' leave, parental leave, bereavement, and more. Plus supportive sick pay

# 3 Job description

- Reimbursement of reasonable travel and subsistence expenses, support with professional membership fees required for roles, and budget allocated toward personal development and training needs
- Free city centre parking (non-contractual), and tea/coffee in Derby Church House

**Other benefits continued:**

- One fully funded module per year through our Deepening Discipleship Training (CTMM), helping you grow in your Christian formation and leadership
- Staff can borrow a free corporate pass to Chatsworth House, courtesy of the Bishop of Derby, to enjoy one of the region's most beautiful heritage sites
- Access to the Electric Vehicle Leasing Scheme, where new or used electric cars can be leased through the DDBF and paid via salary sacrifice. Mileage and the cost of charging can be claimed back through salary sacrifice also, leading to potentially significant tax savings

*Working for the Parish Support Team in the Diocese of Derby has allowed me to develop my career into areas that are hugely rewarding for both myself, and for those whom I serve. Giving and generosity is a fundamental element of our Christian faith, and to be able to work with volunteers in the churches enabling all forms of generosity is a liberating experience, giving hope and creating new ways for people to give to the church. In creating these opportunities, we are supporting Kingdom growth through the Diocese of Derby. Working alongside a fantastic team across all departments has enabled me to focus on my work and get results. I believe we have a team that understands one another, is willing to offer support to each other when needed, and the focus is always, always on supporting our parish network*

**Steve Johnson, Living Generously Advisor**

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# Job description

## Job purpose

The Head of Communications provides strategic leadership for communications across the Diocese of Derby. Through strong editorial judgement, creative leadership, and communications expertise, the role ensures that the organisation communicates with clarity, consistency, and confidence.

Working closely with the Director of Strategy and Engagement, the postholder translates the vision of "The Kingdom of God, good news for all" into compelling stories, campaigns, and communications that engage a range of audiences. The role leads the Communications Team, develops the organisation's communications frameworks, and ensures that communications activity is planned, creative, effective, and aligned with organisational priorities. While this is a highly strategic role, there will be the opportunity to get hands-on occasionally given the small size of the organisation.

The Head of Communications is a trusted communications adviser and strategic partner to the Bishop of Derby, as well as other senior leaders. The role provides proactive and reactive guidance on reputation, media, public affairs, and emerging issues. Working closely with the Bishop, the postholder helps shape and communicate episcopal priorities, ministry, services, events, and public engagement, ensuring leadership in mission is visible, accessible, and well communicated.

The role equips leaders, staff, and parishes to communicate confidently and authentically. By strengthening the voice, profile, and reputation of the Parish Support Team and senior clergy, the Head of Communications helps ensure that the organisation remains visible, relevant, and trusted across church, community, and public settings, while safeguarding and enhancing the reputation of the wider Church of England.

# 3 Job description

## Key responsibilities

### Communications Leadership and Team Management

- Provide leadership, direction and support to the Communications Team, ensuring clarity of roles, priorities, and expectations.
- Line manage and develop team members, building capability and confidence across internal communications, campaigns, and parish support.
- Coordinate activity across the team to ensure communications are aligned, timely, and consistent, avoiding duplication or fragmentation.
- Foster a collaborative and supportive team culture that reflects the wider values and behaviours of the Parish Support Team.

### Communications Strategy and Planning

- Shape and develop the organisation's communications strategy in partnership with the Director of Strategy and Engagement.
- Translate organisational priorities into coordinated communications plans, campaigns, and activity.
- Lead communications planning, performance measurement and reporting across the Communications Team.
- Provide strategic advice to senior leaders on communications trends, risks, opportunities, and emerging issues.

### Tone of Voice, Messaging, and Content Frameworks

- Own and develop the organisation's tone of voice, messaging, and content frameworks, ensuring communications are clear, consistent, and flexible for our range of audiences.
- Support colleagues, senior leaders, and parishes to communicate effectively through advice, guidance, resources, and practical support.
- Oversee the development of high-quality communications on behalf of bishops and other senior leaders, including content with theological and pastoral themes.
- Lead a proactive storytelling approach to share stories of faith, ministry, growth, and transformation in ways that communicate "The Kingdom of God, good news for all".

# 3 Job description

## Brand, Visual Identity, and Digital Channels

- Support the Campaigns & Media Officer in developing the organisation's approach to media relations ensuring enquiries are handled professionally, accurately, and in a timely manner.
- Play a key role in the launch, adoption, and continuous improvement of the organisation's new website and digital presence, ensuring they remain effective, engaging, and aligned with organisational priorities.
- Contribute to the strategic development of digital platforms, channels, and communications infrastructure in partnership with the Director of Strategy and Engagement.
- Strengthen the organisation's employer brand, articulating a compelling vision for ministry and service across Derbyshire.
- Lead the stewardship, embedding and ongoing development of the organisation's brand and visual identity, ensuring consistent application across all communications.

## Content Systems, Tools, and Asset Management

- Develop and steward the organisation's visual content assets, ensuring high-quality and accessible resources are available across the organisation.
- Build and maintain a network of photographers and content creators to support organisational priorities and key events.
- Establish consistent standards for photography, videography, graphic imagery, and visual storytelling.
- Oversee the development and effective use of communications tools, platforms, and systems that enable high-quality content creation, distribution, and management.

## Media, Reputation, and Crisis Communications

- Lead and coordinate the organisation's approach to media relations, ensuring enquiries are handled professionally, accurately, and in a timely manner.
- Support the Bishop of Derby and other senior leaders in responding to local, national, and international issues, providing advice on media engagement, messaging, and public communications.
- Develop and implement crisis and reputation management approaches for senior leaders and parishes, including attending Safeguarding Case Management Groups and advising on safeguarding-related communications.
- Build the relationships, systems, and resilience needed to respond effectively to sensitive, high-risk, and fast-moving situations while protecting and strengthening organisational reputation.

# 3 Job description

## Advising and Supporting Senior Leaders

- Provide expert communications advice to the Director of Strategy and Engagement, the Bishop of Derby, the Diocesan Secretary (CEO), and senior colleagues, contributing insight and recommendations that inform decision-making.
- Work closely with the bishops to plan and communicate episcopal priorities, services, events, and public engagement, supporting the development of authentic and consistent public profiles that make leadership in mission visible and accessible.
- Advise and coach senior leaders on effective communication in complex, sensitive, and high-profile situations.
- Translate theological, pastoral, and missional priorities into accessible communications that engage a wide range of audiences.

## Governance and Wider Contribution

- Support effective communication with governance bodies, including Diocesan Synod and Bishop's Council, ensuring clarity and coherence.
- Build and maintain relationships with communications colleagues across the Church of England, sharing learning and good practice.
- Contribute to wider departmental and organisational priorities, bringing a communications perspective to planning and delivery.
- Developing appropriate systems to handle out-of-hours Communications issues.

> *Having been a member of the Parish Support Team for over 2 years now, I have found it an incredibly supportive and friendly environment in which to work. Being able to provide real and meaningful support to those in the parishes gives such a sense of purpose to the day-today, which in itself is incredibly varied. It helps that I work alongside a fantastic team, within which I have been able to sharpen my existing skills and learn plenty of new ones!*
> **Ben Martin, Lay Ministries Officer**

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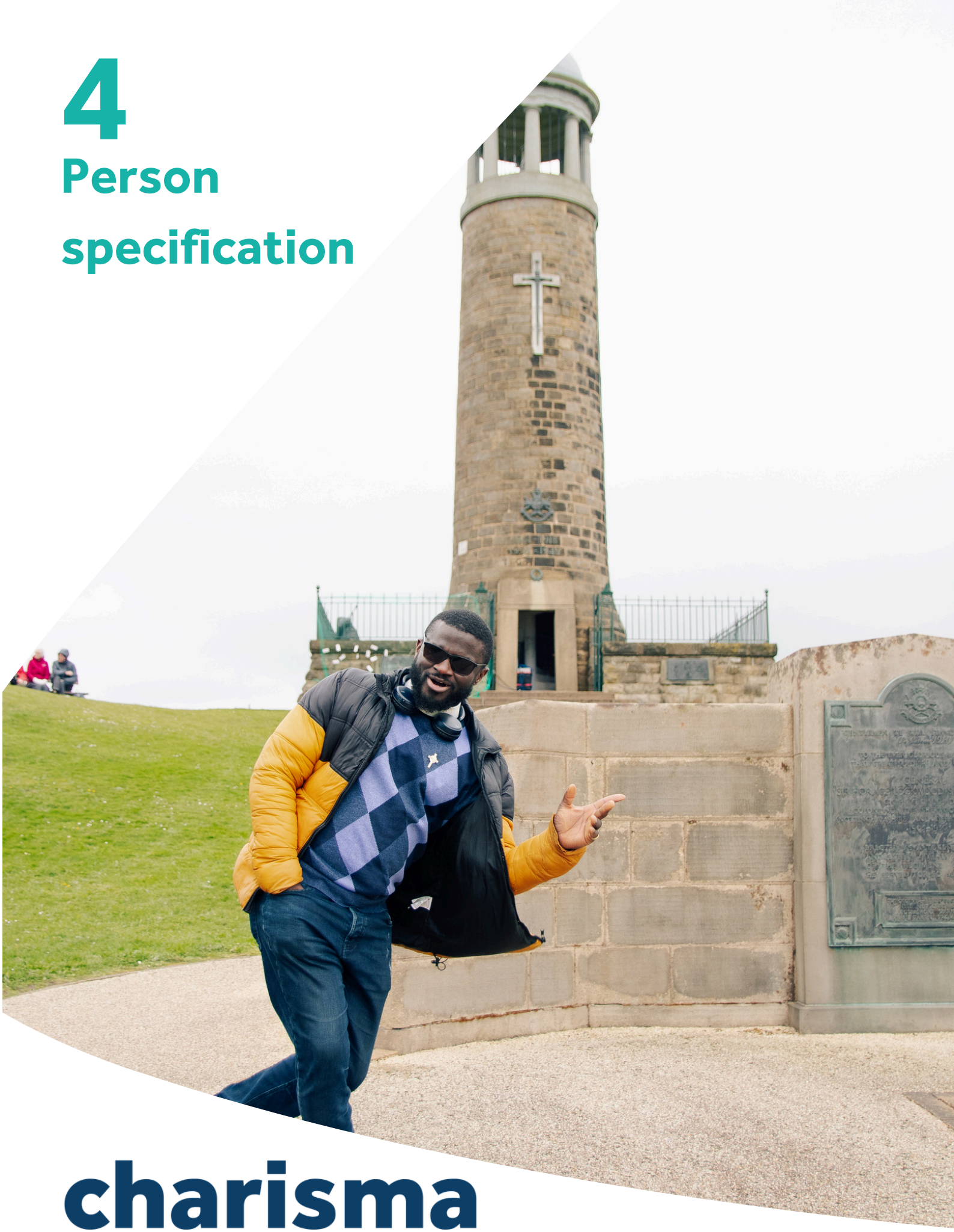
# Job description

## Main priorities for the first 12 months

In the first 12 months, the successful candidate will play a critical role in work which has a massive strategic impact on Church of England mission and ministry across Derbyshire:

- Support the successful development, launch, and embedding of the organisation's new website and refreshed brand (expected late 2026), helping colleagues across the organisation adopt them consistently and effectively.
- Develop and deliver a communications approach that strengthens understanding of Common Fund, helping parishes engage with how ministry is resourced across Derbyshire and the shared responsibility of supporting the wider Church.
- Lead the development and publication of the 2026 Impact Report, building on the organisation's first report and strengthening how we communicate impact, value, learning, and outcomes.
- Work alongside the Centenary Programme Manager and senior leaders to engage churches, clergy, and stakeholders in preparations for the diocese's centenary year, while helping facilitate the wider conversation about how the Church can flourish in a changing social, cultural, and financial environment.
- Establish clear and effective ways of working for the Communications Team, strengthening collaboration with senior leaders and the wider Parish Support Team and embedding processes that support high-quality, strategic communications.

# 4
# Person specification



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# 4 Person specification

| Criteria | Essential | Desirable |
|---|---|---|
| Knowledge | • Strong understanding of communications, journalism, marketing, and content creation across a range of channels.<br>• Understanding of how communication supports organisational strategy, culture, and engagement.<br>• Strong understanding of brand management and visual identity, including how brand is applied across different contexts.<br>• Understanding of digital communication channels including websites, social media, and content management systems. | • Deeper understanding of Church governance, culture, and parish life<br>• Knowledge of crisis communications and reputational management<br>• Familiarity with communications tools and platforms such as design software, content management systems, email platforms, and digital asset libraries |
| Experience | • Experience leading or managing a communications function or team<br>• Editorial experience in the field of journalism, marketing, or PR<br>• Experience developing and delivering communications plans, campaigns, or strategies<br>• Experience advising senior leaders on communications, messaging, or reputation<br>• Experience drafting high-quality content for a range of audiences and adapting tone and voice appropriately<br>• Experience overseeing brand, visual identity, digital channels, or content systems | • Experience working in a church, charity, or public sector context<br>• Experience leading or contributing to brand development or visual identity projects<br>• Experience commissioning and managing external suppliers such as designers, photographers, or agencies |

# 4 Person specification

| Criteria | Essential | Desirable |
|---|---|---|
| Qualifications | • Educated to degree level or able to demonstrate equivalent knowledge through professional experience | • Professional qualification in journalism, communications, marketing, copywriting, PR, or a related field<br>• Clean UK driving licence and ability to travel across the diocese |
| Skills | • Excellent written communication skills, able to write clearly, accurately, and in a range of voices<br>• Ability to provide clear and confident advice to senior leaders<br>• Strong organisational and leadership skills, able to prioritise and manage multiple areas of work<br>• Confidence working with digital tools, content systems, and communication platforms<br>• Ability to maintain discretion and handle sensitive or confidential information appropriately | • Ability to interpret and use performance data to improve communication effectiveness<br>• Strong understanding of design, photography, videography, and visual content principles<br>• Demonstrable experience of dealing with breaking news situations or high-profile PR campaigns |

# 4 Person specification

| Criteria | Essential | Desirable |
|---|---|---|
| Other | • Active Christian faith<br>• Able to work from the office in Derby at least 2 days per week<br>• Able and willing to travel across the diocese when necessary<br>• Able to work flexibly, including occasional evenings and weekends, with Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) offered in return | |

The Christian vision, ethos and principles of the Church of England underpin all aspects of the way the Derby Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd operates.

There is a Genuine Occupational Requirement that the post-holder be a practicing Christian, able to integrate Christian faith, scripture, and prayer into communication practice in a way that supports mission and discipleship. Applicants from denominations outside the Church of England are welcome.

**This role requires an enhanced DBS and Safeguarding check.**

## Right to Vary Job Description

This Job Description may be reviewed and is subject to variance. If any amendments constitute a material change in the level of your responsibilities or the skills and competencies required, the salary level will be re-evaluated. You will be consulted with on any contractual changes.

- In order for you to fulfil the requirements of the post you may be required to undertake training leading to recognised qualifications from time to time.
- You may be required to undertake other tasks that are assigned to you that the DBF might reasonably expect to be within your competence and grade.

# 5
# How to apply

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# 5 How to apply

The Diocese of Derby is working exclusively with Charisma Charity Recruitment.

Expressions of interest should be submitted through the Charisma website, and include:

- A comprehensive CV
- A supporting statement, explaining how you believe you match the requirements of the role, including the genuine occupational requirement to be a practicing Christian. Please also describe any potential conflicts of interest.

For an informal and confidential discussion about the role, please contact Nick Thomas, Senior Consultant, Charisma Charity Recruitment: 01962 813300 or email info@charismarecruitment.co.uk.

We welcome and encourage expressions of interest from people of all backgrounds. We do not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, colour, ethnicity, gender, religion*, sexual orientation, age, veteran status or other category protected by law.

*In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, Part 1, Schedule 9, it is a genuine occupational requirement that the post holder is a practicing Christian.

Charisma is committed to inclusive and accessible recruitment processes. If you have any reasonable adjustments or wish to apply for this role under the Disability Confident Scheme, please contact our Operations Teams on info@charismarecruitment.co.uk. Charisma will ensure all candidates who disclose that they wish to apply under the Disability Confident Scheme and that meet the minimum criteria for the role will receive an opportunity to interview with the Charisma Consultant representing the vacancy.

**Key dates**

- Closing date: Tuesday 3rd November 2026
- Charisma vetting interviews will be held on a rolling basis and must be completed by Thursday 5th November
- Interviews with Diocese of Derby will be held in person on Thursday 19th November

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