

Church Buildings Officer

Purpose of the Role

To provide professional advice, strategic leadership and specialist support on the care, conservation and development of church buildings across the Diocese, helping parishes to steward their buildings effectively in support of mission, community engagement and sustainability.

The postholder is a qualified buildings or heritage professional, ensuring that decisions are well-informed, compliant, and aligned with best practice in conservation and ecclesiastical law.

Key Responsibilities

Specialist Advisory Leadership

- Act as the Diocese's lead professional advisor on church buildings
- Support parishes in understanding the opportunities and challenges associated with the care, adaptation and development of church buildings.
- Provide practical professional advice that enables parishes to make informed decisions about their buildings in support of local mission and ministry.
- Provide expert advice on architecture, conservation, and heritage significance
- Handle complex, sensitive, or high-risk cases including projects with significant National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) funding
- Lead and line manage the 'Church Buildings Team' including the DAC Secretary and Church Buildings Support Officer (CBSO)

Faculty & Legislative Expertise

- Alongside the Archdeacons, provide authoritative guidance on faculty jurisdiction and ecclesiastical legislation
- Support DAC processes, including reviewing cases and attending meetings
- Advise on planning, statutory requirements, and regulatory compliance

Strategic Oversight

- Contribute to the development and delivery of the Church Buildings Strategy
- Identify risks, trends, and priorities across the diocesan estate and respond accordingly
- Work closely with Archdeacons to review and assess churches across the diocese, identifying opportunities to strengthen sustainability, heritage stewardship and missional use.

Governance & Professional Standards

- Provide guidance on governance requirements relating to building projects
- Advise on appropriate use of contracts, procurement, and employment arrangements
- Ensure professional standards are upheld across diocesan projects

External & Professional Engagement

- Maintain relationships with Historic England, local authorities, and amenity societies
- Represent the Diocese in professional forums
- Keep up to date with conservation practice and legislation

Strategic Training & Guidance

- Provide high-level training and guidance for clergy and parish officers, playing a key role in continuing professional development
- Promote understanding of heritage, theology of buildings, and stewardship

Key Outputs

- High-quality, defensible professional advice
- Strong and consistent faculty applications
- Improved conservation standards across the estate
- Improved experience of Faculty process for parishes.

Person Specification

Essential

- Sympathetic to the mission of the Church of England
- Ability to engage and work with and gain the trust of a wide range of stakeholders including parishes across a wide range of traditions, demographics and contexts, DAC advisers and the Chancellor
- Professional qualification or equivalent experience in architecture, surveying, or heritage
- Strong knowledge of conservation practice and historic buildings
- Understanding of faculty system and ecclesiastical legislation
- Proficiency with emerging technologies and platforms
- Ability to act as a credible professional authority
- The ability to independently travel the length and breadth of the diocese in a geography which is often not accessible by public transport.

Desirable

- Accreditation (e.g. RIBA, RICS, IHBC)
- Experience in the Church of England context

Terms and Conditions

- This is a three-year full-time-time post (35 hours per week) with an annual salary of £49,000. Work may be required on evenings or at weekends, for which compensatory time off in lieu is available
- Membership of the Church Workers Pension scheme with employer contributions
- Holidays five weeks per year plus three Diocesan Discretionary Days plus pro-rata Public Holidays
- Location: Saint Mary's House, The Close, Lichfield and other locations across the diocese with opportunity for hybrid working
- The post holder will report to the Chief Executive
- The employer is the LDBF (Lichfield Diocesan Board of Finance)
- There will be a probationary period of 6 months

Closing Date: Tuesday 18th August 2026

Interviews to be held in Lichfield on: Tuesday 1st September 2026

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