

PERSONAL ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP OF COVENTRY

Job Description and Person Specification

JOB TITLE:	Personal Assistant to the Bishop of Coventry
GRADE:	Episcopal scale band 5
LOCATION:	The Bishop's House, 23 Davenport Road, Coventry CV5 6QA
ACCOUNTABLE TO:	The Bishop of Coventry, who is the employer in her corporate capacity
KEY RELATIONSHIPS:	The Bishop of Coventry, the Bishop's Chaplain, Administrative Assistant and the Senior Staff of the Diocese and Cathedral
BACKGROUND:	This pivotal post supporting the Bishop provides an excellent opportunity to work in a small, friendly, busy office in a pleasant and beautiful environment.
JOB SUMMARY:	To act as Personal Assistant to the Bishop of Coventry by managing the Bishop's Office, including her diary and correspondence (paper and email) and to offer general assistance to the Bishop in the exercising of her ministry.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Diocese of Coventry

The Diocese of Coventry represents the Church of England in Coventry, Warwickshire and parts of Solihull. With our network of over 200 parishes, we have a Christian presence in every local community. We have a rich variety of people, traditions and organisations united by our shared purpose of worshipping God, making new disciples and transforming communities. The story of our cathedral and the work of reconciliation has shaped us for many years and we see this as the heart of the ministry to which God has called us. ***For further information about the Diocese see: <https://coventry.anglican.org/>***

The Bishop of Coventry

The Bishop of Coventry oversees and leads the life of the Diocese and has a significant civic role in the City and region. In addition, the Bishop has major national responsibilities in the Church of England.

The Bishop is assisted in the Diocese by two Archdeacons, the Diocesan Secretary and a team of core staff and diocesan officers both lay and ordained.

She works from her official residence, The Bishop's House and assisted by her personal staff comprising an Executive Assistant, the Bishop's Chaplain, and an Administrative Assistant.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. PROVIDING EFFICIENT PA SUPPORT TO THE BISHOP OF COVENTRY

- Using digital tools for the Bishop's diary and appointment management, reducing reliance on manual scheduling. Organising all appointments and providing practical briefings about the arrangements made for all visits and meetings.
- Preparing the Bishop's documents (digital preferred) for all meetings and maintaining an efficient digital system for tracking decisions and follow-up actions.
- Planning and organising the Bishop's travel arrangements in the UK and abroad
- Dealing promptly with all incoming correspondence and drafting replies
- Receiving and dealing with all emails in the EA's inbox and that of the Bishop
- Opening and allocating incoming post and dealing with letters where appropriate
- Handling a wide range of telephone enquiries with confidence, diplomacy, and tact – answering questions directly or passing them on to the Bishop or Chaplain or other appropriate source of information
- Utilising collaboration tools such as Microsoft Teams, OneNote, and SharePoint to streamline document sharing and communication.

2. GENERAL OVERSIGHT AND RUNNING OF THE BISHOP'S OFFICE

- Being a focus of welcome for all visitors and colleagues
- Ensuring that the office is kept tidy and that all necessary digital and physical equipment is purchased and maintained. Overseeing the digitisation and management of all filing systems, reducing reliance on paper records. Organising the archiving / retention and destruction of physical and digital information papers in line with UK GDPR and Diocesan / CofE retention policies.
- Ensuring that the office database is kept up to date and assessing its capability to integrate with modern email communication tools and digital workflows to improve efficiency and accessibility.
- To be present at some meetings and at the Bishop's direction to take notes
- Delegation of work to the Administrative Assistant
- Leading the transition to a digital workflow by introducing and maintaining electronic document management and communication systems.
- Supporting the adoption of cloud-based solutions for improved document accessibility, security, and collaboration.

3. FINANCE

- Managing a budget in excess of £100K and dealing with all day-to-day financial matters including the Bishop's expenses
- Managing the day to day running of all bank accounts held by the bishop in her corporate capacity
- Transferring money, making payments and keeping records as required
- Administering the Bishop's Official Expenses account
- Administering the Bishop's Discretionary account
- Applying for grants from various funds, by preparing applications, organising and recording all monies received and providing reports to the charities on how the monies was used
- With the advice of the bishop and her Senior Staff, allocate holiday grants and prepare payments
- Encouraging digital expense tracking, budgeting, and reporting tools to improve financial management efficiency.
- Implementing digital banking solutions for easier tracking of payments, transfers, and reconciliations.

4. MANAGEMENT OF BISHOPS HOUSE

- Payment of all household bills including regular review of Utility Providers
- Liaison with Church Commissioners' Agent concerning all upkeep and repairs
- Make arrangements for convenient appointments for servicing and any work required
- Maintaining the house inventory
- Introducing digital systems to track household expenses, manage inventories, and schedule maintenance efficiently.

5. HOSPITALITY

- Planning and organising catering support as required, for a range of social events.

6. SUPPORTING THE WORK OF THE DIOCESE

- Organising the recruitment process for all senior appointments in the Diocese, working with HR in the advertising of posts and the logistics of all meetings and interviews
- Distributing information and organising arrangements for Deanery/ Parish Days across the Diocese
- Encouraging the use of digital platforms for recruitment logistics, meeting coordination, and communication across the Diocese
- Working with the Dean and cathedral staff to ensure collaboration when planning for key feast days and events including Christmas, Easter and Ordinations etc

7. CIVIC VISITS

- Planning and organising a programme of visits to individuals, institutions, workplaces and events across the region with a focus on extending the reach and mission of the Church
- Responding to all invitations for the bishop to attend civic events and meetings outside the Church

8. NATIONAL CHURCH

- Collating all papers and making the logistical arrangements for the Bishop's work related to General Synod, the House of Bishops, College of Bishops, the Ministry Development Board, Archbishops' Council and any other national and regional meetings
- Digitising meeting preparation processes by centralising documents and communications in an easily accessible online format.

9. HOUSE OF LORDS (when and if appropriate)

- Managing all papers relating to the Bishop's role in the House of Lords
- Liaising with the Parliamentary Office on the Bishop's role in the House of Lords

10. LINE MANAGEMENT and development of the Administrative Assistant

- Carrying out other duties as and when required

As the Bishop of Coventry's ministry expands with time, there will likely be a further Administrative Assistant role formed, reporting into the role of Personal Assistant. This may result in development or expansion of the Personal Assistant role, depending on the Bishops' vision and capacity for the work.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

ESSENTIAL

Qualifications / Education / Experience

- Educated to degree standard or with relevant secretarial qualifications and equivalent work experience
- Previous PA and administrative experience reporting to a senior manager
- Finance management and book keeping
- Must be able to handle confidential information
- Experienced in dealing with people at all levels
- Ability to prioritise effectively

Knowledge, Skills, Attributes

- In sympathy with the vision, aims and objectives of the Church of England and the Diocese of Coventry
- The ability to understand and apply the priorities of the Bishop's ministry when allocating diary appointments
- Well-presented work with a meticulous eye for detail
- Ability to show initiative and work with minimal or no supervision
- Excellent communication skills both oral and written, including a competent and friendly telephone manner
- Good interpersonal and diplomatic skills with the ability to deal with people from all walks of life with courtesy and on occasion appropriate firmness
- Ability to maintain a high degree of confidentiality and handle sensitive issues with discretion
- Well organised, methodical and the ability to manage competing priorities
- Ability to work calmly under pressure and meet deadlines
- Ability to work independently and as a member of a team and the wider household
- Proficient in using the Microsoft 365 suite (e.g. Outlook, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Teams) with a digital-first mindset for collaboration, communication, and task management.
- Experience in using document management systems (e.g. SharePoint, OneDrive, or similar) to streamline office workflows. Good literacy and numeracy skills
- Strong digital literacy skills with a proactive approach to identifying and implementing technology to enhance office efficiency.
- Ability to introduce and manage paperless workflows for correspondence, record-keeping, and financial management.
- Knowledge of workflow automation tools (e.g. Microsoft Power Automate, Trello, Asana, or similar) to improve administrative efficiency.
- Great collaboration with other colleagues in the Bishop's Office ensuring a positive working environment for all who work in and visit the Office.

DESIRABLE REQUIREMENTS:

- Detailed knowledge of the Church of England, its structures and practices. The Bishop is keen to ensure the necessary support for the successful applicant especially in learning about the nature, structure and work of the Church of England.
- Understanding and interest in the Bishop of Coventry's ministry & the flourishing of the Diocese

GENERAL CONDITIONS

Health and Safety Responsibilities

All staff are required to ensure that they understand and accept the legal duties placed on them by the Health And Safety at Work Act not to endanger themselves or others and by the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations to co-operative with colleagues and management in the control of health and safety at work. And therefore:

- to read and understand and abide by the health and safety policy;
- to make themselves familiar with accident and emergency procedures on their site;
- to make themselves familiar with the findings of any risk assessments which might affect them;
- to inform their manager immediately of any health or safety deficiencies or dangerous situations or near misses;
- to set a good personal example in respect of health and safety

TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Salary

The salary for this post is £30,307 up to 33,790 per annum, depending on experience which will be determined at interview.

Pension scheme

Non-clergy staff will be admitted to the Church Administrators Pension Fund (CAPF, DC Section) unless they choose to opt out.

There is no contracting – out certificate under the Pensions Schemes Act 1993 in force for this employment in relation to the CAPF. CAPF members are contracted-in to the State Second Pension.

The Church Commissioners on behalf of the Bishop have an income protection insurance arrangement. To be eligible for cover under this policy an employee must be a member of the CAPF DC section. Please note that insurance cover is not necessarily automatic and that underwriting may be required by the schemes in some instances. Cover will be subject to any terms and conditions laid down by the insurance company.

Hours of work:

Your hours of work will be 35 hours per week with an hour's unpaid break for lunch.

Annual Leave

You are entitled to 25 days paid annual leave per leave year. This is exclusive of public and additional holidays. The leave year runs from 1 January to 31 December.

Notice

During the probationary period your employment may be terminated by two weeks written notice on either side or pay in lieu of notice by the Bishop.

Following the successful completion of your probationary period, the notice period will be extended to one month on either side. The Bishop must give you the following period of notice, or pay in lieu of notice, if she wants to end this employment:

- one month if your period of continuous employment is longer than one month but shorter than four years or
- after four years, one week for each year of continuous employment up to a maximum of 12 weeks
- should you be dismissed on the grounds of gross misconduct, your employment may be terminated without notice

Probationary Period

There will be a probationary period of six months.

Contract

The post is offered an open-ended contract, subject to a six month probationary period.

To apply, please complete your application via Pathways, Church of England Careers webpage.

Closing date for receipt of applications: Sunday 16 March 2025.