Job Description: Parish and Public Affairs Officer (Bishops’ Comms)

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| **JOB SUMMARY:** | This External Relations role is responsible for writing statements, press releases, and media materials for the Bishops of Bristol and Swindon. The role supports communications related to clergy appointments and media engagements involving clergy and parishes and communications that reflect our ‘[Transforming Church. Together’ strategic goals](https://www.bristol.anglican.org/visionandpriorities/transforming-church/).  Additionally, the officer will provide crisis communications support to the bishops, ensuring alignment with best practices as guided by the Director and Deputy Director of External Relations. |
| **REPORTS TO:** | Deputy Director of External Relations (Line Manager) and the Bishops of Bristol and Swindon (via Bishop’s Chaplain) |
| **TERMS:**  **LOCATION:**  **SAFEGUARDING:** | Full time, Permanent  Salary £32,288 per annum   * Hillside House, Diocesan Office * Travel to the Bishops’ Offices in Winterbourne and Swindon and to parishes across the Diocese will also be necessary as part of this role.   The Diocese of Bristol is committed to safeguarding, safer recruiting practice and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. |
| **KEY RELATIONSHIPS:** | * Colleagues within the External Relations Team * Diocesan Secretary/CEO * Bishops of Bristol and Swindon (and their offices) * Colleagues across the Diocese |

**Main Responsibilities**

* **Media and public statements**
  + Draft official statements, quotes and press releases for the Bishops of Bristol and Swindon.
  + Craft planned media opportunities for the Bishops to keep their public image strong across the Diocese, ensuring they are prepared for media appearances on TV and Radio.
  + Keep up to date with news concerning the Church of England, Diocese of Bristol and its communities, keeping the Bishops informed on local and national news of relevance.
  + Prepare media materials and website articles related to clergy appointments and parish media engagements.
  + Ensure all public communications reflect the mission and values of the Diocese.
* **Crisis communications**
  + Provide timely and reassuring support to the Bishops and other clergy during crisis situations.
  + Collaborate with the Director and Deputy Director of External Relations to develop and implement effective response strategies.
* **Clergy and parish media support**
  + Offer guidance and support to clergy and parishes for media interactions.
  + Develop materials that enhance public understanding of church-related matters.
* **Collaboration and best practice**
  + Maintain strong relationships with the External Relations team to ensure consistent messaging.
  + Attend weekly Communications Team meetings at Hillside House (Tuesdays).
  + Feed into the wider communications team planning and processes, to ensure the avoidance of siloed working and ensure the most appropriate support is provided to the Bishops’ Offices and parishes.
* **General Team Duties**
* Support the team by working collaboratively to reach goals, including covering for absence of team members to ensure services can continue to run smoothly.
* Participate in relevant project groups.

**Person Specification**

To enable us to shortlist in a fair, unbiased way it’s helpful if you provide us with sufficient information to demonstrate how you meet or exceed the criteria in the vacancy description.

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| **Experience** | |
| **Essential**   * Proven experience in communications, journalism, or public relations. * Strong writing and editing skills, capable of producing clear and engaging content. * Experience in media relations, including drafting press releases and managing media inquiries. * Ability to handle sensitive and complex issues with discretion and professionalism. | **Desirable**   * Experience in crisis communications. * Familiarity with church structures and an understanding of the Diocese’s mission. * Previous experience in a faith-based or not-for-profit organisation. |
| **Education and Qualifications** | |
| **Essential**   * Demonstrate education or workplace experience within a relevant communications or related subject area. * Numerate and computer literate. * Passion for life-long learning and development of skills to maintain knowledge of industry best practices. | **Desirable**   * Related qualification or membership. |
| **Skills / Ability** | |
| **Essential**   * The ability to work collaboratively as part of a team sharing learning and ideas. * Effective communicator; able to listen, converse, and influence in a range of situations. * Ability to write clearly and concisely for a range of audiences, for both print and online purposes. * Proficient in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Outlook, PowerPoint, MS Teams). * Ability to stay calm and focused under pressure. * Ability to work autonomously, prioritise, and meet deadlines. | **Desirable**   * Experience of presenting information to others. * Ability to create structure from information of various sources. * Use of Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system or similar tools. * Use of website content management system (CMS) * Understanding of search engine optimisation (SEO) |
| **Personal** | |
| **Essential**   * Strongly proactive personality, with the ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously. * Professional manner and positive attitude * Respectful and comfortable with the Christian ethos and objectives that underpin our work. | **Desirable**   * Willingness to travel to meetings and appointments with prospective and existing partners and parishes. |