

A welcome from Bishop Michael

Thank you for considering applying for the role of Vocations Officer in Lichfield Diocese.

Enabling every person to discern and fulfil the call that God places on their lives is essential if the Church is to flourish and the Kingdom of God to be brought closer. The Vocations Officer, working with the Diocesan Bishop, the Sponsoring Bishop and the Director of Ministry, needs to be prayerful, imaginative and courageous in helping individuals to navigate their discernment and overcome any barriers that might threaten to frustrate their vocation. Like Saint Chad, the Vocations Officer will find joy in travelling alongside others.

Lichfield Diocese has recently set out an exciting and ambitious diocesan strategy – Seeking the Kingdom – which shapes our life and will help us to achieve significant growth in the number of disciples of Jesus Christ, a closer involvement with our schools and communities, and ever greater diversity in our churches and governance structures. Developing and maintaining a strong and growing pipeline of lay and ordained leaders underpins all this work.

We are looking to appoint a Vocations Officer who is committed to diversity, inclusion and racial justice, and who will work generously across the traditions of the Church of England. We especially welcome female candidates and candidates of Global Majority Heritage (GMH).

We look forward to welcoming the new Vocations Officer who will join our Vocations and Training Team based in St Mary's House in the Cathedral Close.

An introduction to Lichfield Diocese

Lichfield is one of the most diverse dioceses in the country. Rolling countryside and vibrant inner-city life nestle together in a region that takes in Staffordshire, the Potteries of Stoke-on-Trent, most of Shropshire and bustling Black Country centres including Walsall and Wolverhampton.

We serve a population of over 2.2 million people living across 1,736 square miles. The diocese is divided into three areas, each with its own Area Bishop, and four archdeaconries. There are 27 deaneries and over 540 churches in 424 parishes with around 500 clergy and a worshipping community of more than 34,000. We also have more than 200 Church schools and academies with more than 45,000 children and young people being educated every day.

The legal entity that performs the work of the Diocese and employs its staff is the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Finance. It performs many functions on behalf of the Bishop of Lichfield and his team. Its staff provide a great deal of support to the parishes, church schools, chaplaincies, fresh expressions and new worshipping communities. The DBF is based at St Mary's House.

Role Description

Overview

The Vocations Officer (incorporating the role of Diocesan Director of Ordinands) will take the lead in ensuring that vocations to lay and ordained ministry are encouraged throughout the diocese and in developing a discernment process that aligns with the future needs of the diocese as well as the national discernment frameworks. This includes giving attention to the Church of England's vision to become younger and more diverse.

In particular, the Vocations Officer will:

- develop an approach to vocations work that is people-focussed whilst at the same time ensuring compliance with safeguarding and statutory requirements and following national processes
- grow the leadership pipeline in the diocese by enabling all God's people to discern and follow their calling, whatever their age, ethnicity, gender or social background
- align the leadership pipeline with the Strategic Framework – for example by ensuring that we have the right leaders for our New Worshipping Communities
- contribute to the development of diocesan strategy (in particular around the areas of focus identified above)
- fulfil the statutory role of a Diocesan Director of Ordinands

Accountability and Key Relationships

The Vocations Officer will be line managed by the Director of Ministry and be a member of the Vocations and Training Team. The team structure is:

Director of Ministry Oversight of the team and responsibility for MDR, CMD and Wellbeing		
Local Ministry and Learning Platform Officer	Vocations Officer	Initial Ministerial Development Officer
Responsible for supporting non-licenced lay ministry	Responsible for developing lay and ordained vocations	Responsible for Reader training and IME2

Administrative support is provided for the role.

Other key partners are the Bishop of Lichfield, the Bishop of Shrewsbury who is the Sponsoring Bishop for the diocese, the Bishop of Stafford, the Bishop of Wolverhampton, the Bishop of Oswestry and the Strategy Programme Director.

There is close working with the Archdeacons and the Area Deans, other members of the Mission and Education teams and Finance and Property.

Key Tasks

In addition to the specific items outlined above the work of the Vocations Officer will focus on:

Strategy

- develop and lead on the Vocations strategy in the diocese with particular attention to lay ministry, which is critical to the success of our strategy
- engage with underrepresented communities and congregations to encourage and support vocations of individuals from GMH and working-class communities and those who identify as neurodivergent and/or disabled.
- work alongside the communications team to promote the work of the Vocations Team across the diocese
- develop and lead a dedicated vocations team including Vocation Advisers and Assistant Directors of Ordinands

Lay Ministry

- discern and develop pathways to support lay ministry including chaplaincy, and pioneering
- Liaise appropriately with the Local Ministry and Learning Platform Officer to develop support for non-licenced lay ministry and to develop training pathways and support for those who have limited experience of formal education
- oversee the selection of candidates for licensed lay ministry and work with the Initial Ministerial Development Officer and Warden of Readers to promote and develop licensed lay ministry

Director of Ordinands

- prepare candidates for and support them through the national Shared Discernment Process
- prepare candidates for and support them through national and diocesan Candidates Panels.
- be responsible for identifying appropriate training routes for Ordinands and overseeing the required budgetary work around course costs and maintenance
- engage with the National Ministry Team, Theological Education Institutions and other relevant bodies
- work with the Initial Ministerial Development Officer and others to develop pathways for curates to ensure good retention rates at the end of curacy

Person Specification

Due to this role accompanying the discernment process for those called to licenced lay and ordained ministry to be able to carry this out effectively the role carries a genuine occupational requirement for the postholder to be a Clerk in Holy Orders within the Anglican communion and have been assessed by their Bishop as meeting the requirements for moving to a post of independent responsibility. The postholder will need to be able to be licensed by the Bishop of Lichfield in order to exercise this ministry.

Requirements

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| Faith | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prayerful with a mature and robust faith• Comfortable working across the traditions of the Church of England |
| Qualifications | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experienced Clerk in Holy Orders within the Anglican Communion |
| Gifts | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finds joy in working with others and helping them achieve their potential• Able to assess risk, and to see the risk of inaction as well as the risk of action• Resilient and able to make difficult decisions• Team player who enjoys developing partnerships and networks |
| Ministry and Experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Experience of discerning and supporting vocations to lay and ordained ministry• Experience of balancing formal and administrative processes with the need to focus on individuals• Able to cast vision and to develop, articulate and implement strategy• Committed to diversity, inclusion and racial justice• Knowledge of safeguarding best practice and an advocate for developing a strong and embedded culture of safeguarding throughout the diocese• Actively supporting and modelling self-development, lifelong learning and wellbeing |
| Work Related | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Competent IT Skills• Flexibility to work outside of core hours• Willing to travel within the Diocese and further afield |

Practical Details

It is a condition of any offer of employment we make to you that you have, or gain, permission to work in the UK. By law, you will not be able to start working for us until you are able to provide evidence that this permission has been granted.

For an informal discussion with the Director of Ministry please contact jeanette.hartwell@lichfield.anglican.org

Closing date for applications: 17 April 2026

Interviews: 27 April 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. The post is subject to enhanced DBS check with Barred List check, satisfactory references (including commendation from present bishop) and completion of relevant Safeguarding Training.

The role is full-time with an annual salary of £49,000. This is an employed role as opposed to an officeholder and therefore no housing is provided.

Membership of the Church of England Clergy Pension Scheme.

Holiday of 5 weeks per year, 3 discretionary days, and bank holidays.

Location: St Mary's House, The Close, Lichfield (with opportunity for hybrid working).

The role may require weekend and evening availability with accompanying Time Off In Lieu.

It is envisaged that the role will be line managed by the Director of Ministry.