



**Senior Communications Officer
(Part-time post)
Dioceses of Newcastle and Durham**



Diocese of Newcastle

www.newcastle.anglican.org

Newcastle Diocesan Board of Finance. A Company Limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity.

Registered in England number 650977. Registered office: Church House, St John's Terrace, North Shields NE296HS.

Diocese of Durham

www.durhamdiocese.org

Durham Diocesan Board of Finance. A Company Limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity.

Registered in England number 248287. Registered office: Cuthbert House, Stonebridge, Durham DH1 3RY.

Senior Communications Officer (part-time)

Background to the Posts

This is an exciting opportunity to join us as Senior Communications Officer as we enhance the way we communicate with audiences across the North East of England. The communications teams in the Dioceses of Newcastle and Durham have recently merged, creating a larger team better equipped to promote the work of the Church of England in sustaining a Christian presence in every community.

With 381 parishes in a geographical area of 3,080 square miles and a combined population of 2.3 million people, there are many stories to tell about how the Church is positively impacting the lives of so many people across the region. Whether it is in our towns and cities, such as Durham, Sunderland, Newcastle or Berwick, or in our wonderful rural communities in the Durham Dales or Cheviot Hills, telling those stories in an engaging and creative way is crucial to ensure the Church continues to promote its mission and relevance in modern day life.

The Senior Communications Officer will help promote the work, life and mission of the Church of England by helping share our stories in new and creative ways through our various online and printed publications, and through other communications activities. Reporting to the Director of Communications, he or she will lead the team responsible for the effective delivery of informative, engaging and inspiring communications to all our audiences, while supporting the visions of both Dioceses.

Background to the Diocese of Newcastle

Framed by the Rivers Tyne and Tweed the Diocese of Newcastle is the Church of England's most northerly diocese. This Diocese in the 'land of the Northern Saints' was formed in 1882 and comprises **172** parishes across **2,110** square miles. The Diocese covers the local authorities of Northumberland, Newcastle, North Tyneside and also small parts of County Durham and Cumbria. The **12** deaneries within **2** archdeaconries serve a population of some **800,000** people across a variety of communities ranging from sparse rural to large inner city areas of deprivation.

As we await the appointment of a new Bishop of Newcastle, the diocese is led by the Bishop of Berwick, the Rt Revd Mark Wroe. A cohort of stipendiary and self-supporting clergy are resourced by a team of lay and ordained supporting ministers, active local ministry development

groups and Readers. A small administration team is based at Church House, North Shields which also houses the Joint Education Team (this Team also serves the Diocese of Durham), the Lindisfarne College of Theology and a Religious Resources Centre.

The Diocese of Newcastle is committed to flourishing churches and communities and has developed a vision for **growing church bringing hope** as part of a response to the challenges faced by the church in our rural, urban and suburban settings. From the following three values:

- **Open** to God's transforming love
- **Generous** with God's transforming gifts
- **Engaged** in God's transforming work in the word

We have developed three priorities for our Next Steps for growing church bringing hope:

- **Bringing Good News:** *'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.'* (Luke 4.18)
- **Growing in Christ:** *'As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith...'* (Colossians 2.6-7)
- **Living Faith Fully:** *'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.'* (John 10.10)

Background to the Diocese of Durham

The Diocese of Durham is the Church of England from the River Tyne in the North to the River Tees in the South; the Durham Dales in the West to the Sea in the East. It is centred in historic Durham City and County Durham, the City of Sunderland, the Metropolitan Districts of Gateshead and South Tyneside and the boroughs of Darlington, Hartlepool, and Stockton-on-Tees. The Diocese has **209** parishes covering an area of **2,530** square kilometres and serves a population of nearly **1.5 million**. It is organised into **14** deaneries grouped into **3** Archdeaconries (Sunderland, Durham & Auckland).

The mission of the Diocese of Durham is to bless our communities in Jesus' name for the transformation of us all. Our four priorities are:

- Engaging with Children and Young People;
- Challenging Poverty;
- Energising Growth; and
- Caring for Creation.

The Diocese is led by the Bishop of Durham, the Right Reverend Paul Butler and the suffragan Bishop of Jarrow, the Right Reverend Sarah Clark.

Employment

The successful candidates will be jointly employed by the Newcastle Diocesan Board of Finance (NDBF) and the Durham Diocesan Board of Finance (DDBF). The NDBF will be the managing employer for the joint arrangement.

Location

The post will be located at Church House, St John's Terrace, North Shields NE29 6HS and Cuthbert House, Stonebridge Durham, DH1 3RY. The post holders will be required to travel within Newcastle and Durham Dioceses.

Accountability and key relationships

Line Manager: **Director of Communications**

Reporting to the Senior Communications Officer: The Senior Communications Officer line manages the Communications Officer, the Digital Media Officer and Communications Assistant.

Key relationships include the Bishops and other senior clergy, the Diocesan Secretaries, the Diocesan Synods in Newcastle and Durham, Bishop's Councils, Parochial Parish Councils, the national Church of England communications team and the communications teams at Newcastle and Durham Cathedrals.

Key Responsibilities

Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support the Director of Communications in the development and implementation of communications strategies for both Newcastle and Durham Dioceses and, in particular, helping to design and deliver a programme of events, initiatives and campaigns aligned to the strategic visions of each Diocese.• Under the guidance of the Director of Communications, support the Bishops' staff teams and work collaboratively across each Diocese to help deliver diocesan priority work streams.
Internal communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide advice, guidance and direction to ensure all communications support and add value to the visions of both Newcastle and Durham.• Provide communications advice to the Diocesan Boards, Councils, Committees and Task Groups as required.• Assist in the management of mailing/bulletins to clergy and other parish officials.• Provide advice and guidance on branding and design, ensuring our communications are visible, welcoming and accessible.• Continually develop and manage diocesan style guides and ensure effective use of it in diocesan communications.
Public Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help to ensure a range of 'good news' stories and actively promote these through a range of public relations routes, including newsletters and ebulletins.
Press and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Under the guidance of the Director of Communications, manage media relations for both Dioceses, proactively and reactively co-ordinating responses to media enquiries and providing support to other senior officers as appropriate.• When required and appropriate, act as press officer for the Bishops and official spokesperson for the Diocese.• Provide advice, guidance and support to help respond to and manage urgent/crisis situations.• Ensure the timely preparation and release of media statements.• Work collaboratively across both Dioceses to identify and secure storytelling opportunities, and proactively identify opportunities to engage with the wider community to explain and express the mission of the church in the north east of England, in particular its activities in some of the most deprived parts of our region.

Digital

- Under the direction of the Director of Communications, implement a digital strategy and operational plan for the delivery of digital communications activity for both Dioceses.
- Develop and promote the use of video as a key messaging tool at diocesan and parish level.
- Manage the websites for both Newcastle and Durham, recognising them as key communications tools.

Relationships

- Maintain a high degree of personal visibility, specifically within Church House in North Shields and Cuthbert House, Durham to ensure that the combined communications team is seen to be properly serving both dioceses.
- Provide worshipping communities with training, if appropriate, on aspects of communications.

General

- Deputise for the Director of Communications
- Flexible with working hours and contactable on a rota basis for media, senior clergy and diocesan officers.

Person Specification - Key Criteria

Essential criteria	
Qualifications & Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educated to degree level or with a relevant qualification in communications/public relations
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A proven track record working in a professional communications role with experience of supervising a team, including delegation of tasks, identification of training and development needs and ability to motivate and provide support. • Experience of developing as well as implementing strategy. • Evidence of good track record of dealing with both positive and negative news stories including advising on and co-ordinating the response to media. • Experience of website and social media management
Knowledge & Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the press and broadcasting media practice • Excellent writing skills • High level of computer skills with ability to use IT packages and office systems • Ability to build and maintain good professional networks • Able to gather, analyse and interpret data and information • The ability to understand complex information and make it easy to understand
Personal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visible team player, confident and able to influence • Able to motivate and support others. • A creative person with strong initiative • An excellent communicator with experience of working with and advising senior personnel • Flexible with working hours, working occasional weekends when required, and contactable on a rota basis for media, senior clergy and diocesan officers • The successful candidate does not have to be a practicing Christian, but must have an understanding of the Church of England and be sympathetic to its values
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to travel to parishes in all parts of both Dioceses
Desirable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving licence and access to a car

General Conditions

Diversity

We understand the benefits of employing individuals from a range of backgrounds, with diverse cultures and talents. We aim to create a workforce that:

- values difference in others and respects the dignity and worth of each individual;
- reflects the diversity of the nation that the Church of England exists to serve;
- fosters a climate of creativity, tolerance and diversity that will help all staff to develop to their full potential.

We are committed to being an equal opportunities employer and ensuring that all employees, job applicants, customers and other persons with whom we deal are treated fairly and are not subjected to discrimination. We want to ensure that we not only observe the relevant legislation but also do whatever is necessary to provide genuine equality of opportunity. We expect all of our employees to be treated and to treat others with respect. Our aim is to provide a working environment free from harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in any form which may affect the dignity of the individual.

Standards of Behaviour and Conduct

Employees are expected to act at all times with due consideration for others and in a manner befitting their position as employees of the Church and as professionals, whatever their job.

Health and Safety Responsibilities

The Newcastle Diocesan Board of Finance takes Health and Safety at work very seriously and require their employees to familiarise themselves with, and follow, their policy.

Salary	Salary: Grade 4 Probationary period £19,804 pa (£33,007 pa full-time equivalent); on completion of probationary period £20,847 pa (£34,744 pa full time equivalent).
Pension Contributions	Employees will be automatically enrolled into the Church Workers Pension Fund (CWPF) Pension Builder Classic Scheme The Newcastle Diocesan Board of Finance contributes 10% of pensionable salary as an employer contribution to the Scheme. This is a non-contributory Scheme but staff may voluntarily contribute to the Scheme if they wish to do so. Employees have a right to opt out of the Scheme after enrolment.
Hours of Work	The post is offered on a part-time basis working 22.5 hours per week over three days. The normal office hours are 08:30 to 16:30 Monday to Friday with an unpaid lunch break of 30 minutes. The posts may require availability and attendance at evening and weekend meetings and events. Overtime is not paid but time off in lieu is provided.
Annual Leave	The leave year runs from 1st January to 31st December. Full-time staff receive 25 days paid leave per leave year exclusive of 8 public holidays and 4 additional holidays (2 at Easter and 2 at Christmas) approved by the Board. Holiday entitlement is pro rata for part time members of staff.
Contract	The employers are the Newcastle Diocesan Board of Finance and the Durham Diocesan Board of Finance. The Newcastle Diocesan Board of Finance will act as managing employer on behalf of both dioceses The post is subject to a 6 month probationary period.

Application and Selection Process

For more information and to apply, please contact Stephanie Relph, Senior Recruitment Consultant, Concept Personnel