

Communications Manager

APPLICANT BRIEFING PACK

March 2025



ABOUT THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PORTSMOUTH

Our Diocese

We are the Diocese of Portsmouth, governed by the Bishop of Portsmouth, Bishop Philip Egan. We belong to the One, Holy, Catholic Church, which is led by the Bishop of Rome, Pope Francis.

The Diocese of Portsmouth

Our Diocese is spread across five counties on England's South Coast, and the Channel Islands. We are the local Church for the whole of Hampshire, Berkshire, the Isle of Wight, Jersey, and the Bailiwick of Guernsey as well as the Southern Part of Oxfordshire and the Eastern part of Dorset.

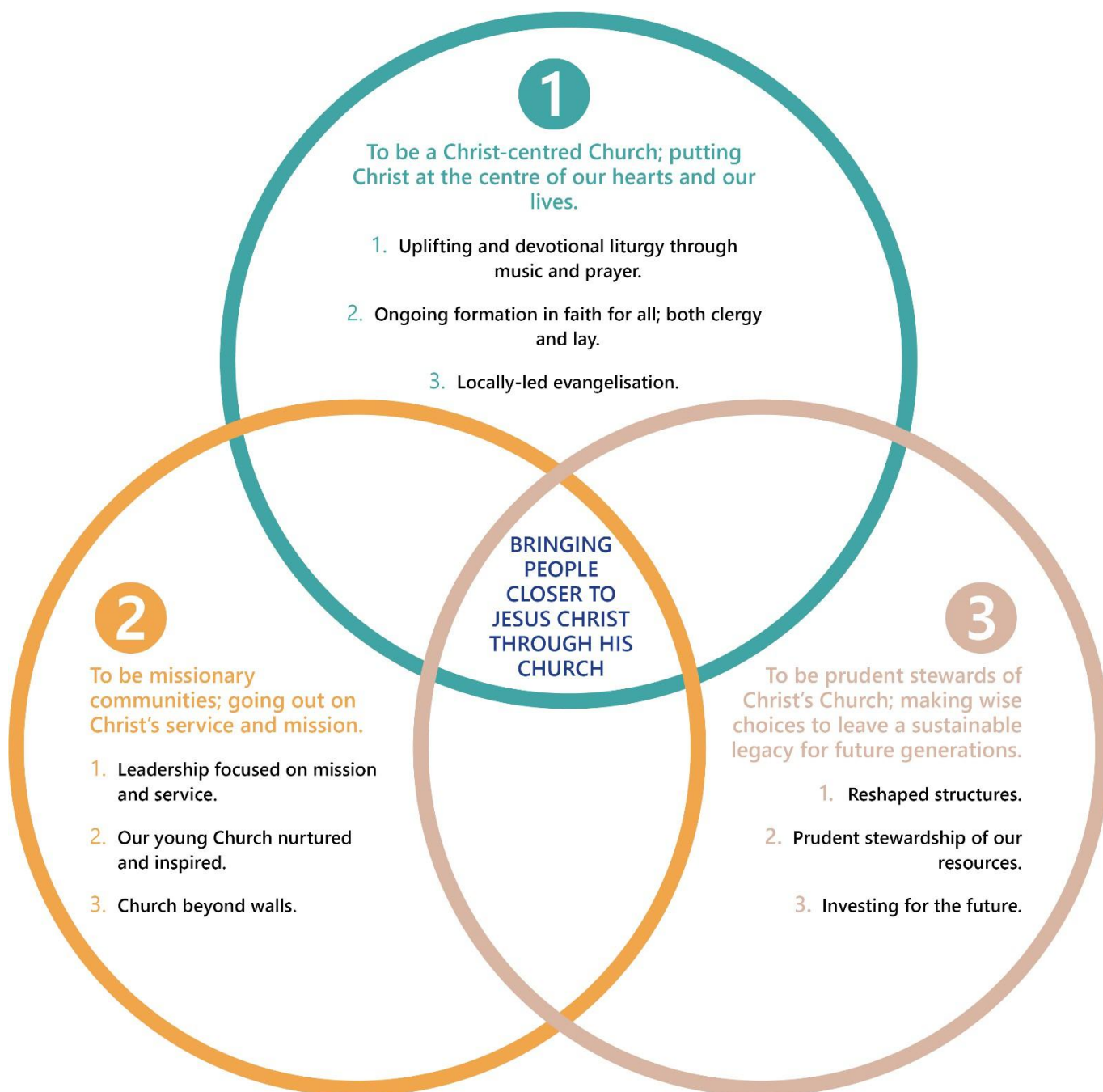
We are made up of 87 Parishes in 24 Pastoral Areas, for a total of 136 Churches. We have 115 priests, 40 Deacons, 35 houses of religious brothers and sisters, and a Catholic population of more than a quarter of a million.

We belong to the province of Southwark, which covers the whole south coast from Kent to Cornwall. Our Metropolitan is the Archbishop of Southwark. Our province also includes the Archdiocese of Southwark, the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, and the Diocese of Plymouth.



Ten-Year Mission Plan

You Will Be My Witnesses in summary



Role Purpose

The Communications Manager is responsible for developing and implementing effective professional internal and external communications strategies for the Diocese to support the Diocesan Bishop and senior leaders as part of the Mission of the Church. This includes representing the Catholic church teaching positively, optimising multi-channel communications to reach a wide constituency, supporting key departments, managing media relations, and leading on crisis communication planning and response.

Providing high quality written management reports about the communications function using key performance indicators is part of the postholder's responsibility.

The role ensures consistency and professionalism in all communications, promoting the Diocesan vision of bringing people closer to Jesus Christ through His Church.

The Postholder will work closely with the Chief Operating Officer and the Diocesan Bishop to support the delivery of the Diocesan 10-year Mission Plan "*You will be My Witnesses*" and to provide an excellent operational day to day communications function.

Key Responsibilities

Communications Strategy

- Design, develop, and implement the Diocese's Communications Strategy which is fully aligned with the Diocese ten-year Mission plan.
- Research and identify appropriate methods and channels including secular and religious media to raise the Diocese's profile and in turn that of the Catholic church.
- Collaborate with partners, such as the Bishops Conference of England and Wales to help shape and influence public policy aligned with Diocesan objectives.

External Communications

- Proactively identify opportunities for promoting positive news about the work of the diocese and enabling the Diocesan Bishop to contribute to thought leadership and public debate on relevant policies.
- Drafting material appropriate for publication.
- Arranging video to support key diocesan publications such as Bishops Pastoral Letters.

- Build and develop the Diocese's links with press and media to support strategic objectives.
- Act as the point of contact for sensitive news, advising the Bishop and senior staff about media handling.
- Act as the Diocesan spokesperson when required, providing a positive and supportive representation of the Catholic Church and the Diocese.
- Develop and implement a Crisis Communications Plan, crafting media statements and briefing senior colleagues on media lines to take.
- Organise media training for senior clergy and lay leaders as required.
- Work with Bishops Office to deliver the weekly E-News, being responsible for editorial control and compliance with relevant regulations, e.g. copyright law
- Work with parishes to support our stewardship journey, including developing compelling good news stories about the work of the Catholic Church.

Internal Communications

- Work closely with HR to Oversee and improve the management of internal communications to foster transparency and engagement.
- Take overall responsibility for organising monthly team briefings for the department of Administration and for other ad hoc events involving parish employee's clergy and volunteers.
- Manage communication channels such as the intranet, regular newsletters, and staff briefings to ensure alignment with Diocesan values and goals.
- Work with Bishops office on key publications such as the annual directory.

Website and Digital Presence

- Oversee the ongoing improvements in the functionality of the Diocesan website, ensuring it is engaging, user-friendly, up to date and supports the Bishop's vision.
- Introduce interactive and video content to enhance user experience.
- Support parishes in developing and maintaining their local websites.

Support to Key Departments

- Collaborate with key departments to design and implement tailored communication strategies. For example, Safeguarding.
- Provide tools, templates, and guidance to ensure consistent and effective messaging across departments.

- Act as 'brand champion', developing, overseeing and implementing brand guidelines to professionalise and standardise all external communications output, whether it emanates from within or outside the Communications department.
- Build and maintain strong positive working relationships across the DSAS and wider Diocese to support the successful delivery of the communications strategy'

Meeting Attendance and Reporting

- Attend meetings of the Finance Audit and Risk Committee and any other meetings required, to provide briefings, regular written reports and seek approvals as needed from the Board of Trustees about Communication related matters.
- Support the work of Multidisciplinary meetings that may be called from time to time to deal with extraordinary events.
- Attend in-person meetings in parishes across the Diocese where sensitive matters indicate that an in-person meeting is preferable.
- Professional approach to Online meetings.

Communications Manager – Person Specification

Competence, Expertise and Knowledge:	
Essential	• Bachelor's degree in journalism, strategic communications, or equivalent. • Minimum 5 years' experience in communications at a senior level, ideally in a mission-focused, charity or public sector organisation. • Demonstrate excellent levels of written and verbal communication, with the ability to explain complicated issues fluently and persuasively. • Capable of Analysing complex situations and provide advice to senior managers. • Contributing to resolving the problem with the ability to anticipate and resolve problems before they arise. • Demonstrable experience developing, managing and motivating teams/individuals to ensure success • Proven experience in developing and implementing communication strategies. • Comprehensive understanding of the modern media landscape. • Experience in crisis communication planning and response. • Advanced proficiency in Microsoft Office and CRM platforms. • Numerate and Excellent writing and presentation skills. • Understanding of relevant legislation including data protection and copyright. • Knowledge of and commitment to the teachings of the Catholic Church, and a positive approach to work. • Experience in budget management. • Some out-of-office hours may be required on an ad hoc basis. • Must be able to travel across the Diocese, including the Channel Islands. • Full Clean Driving Licence and own transport.
Desirable	• Membership of relevant professional bodies such as Chartered Institute of Public Relations, Chartered Institute of Journalists. • Experience in working with and managing volunteers. • Experience in Charity sector communications.

Salary, Benefits & Location

Salary: £45,000 - £48,000 depending on experience

Contract: Full Time 37.5 hours per week

Location: This role is based at St. Edmund House, Bishop Crispian Way, Portsmouth, PO1 3QA

Reports to: Chief Operating Officer

Direct Reports: 2 (Creative and Digital Communications Officer, and Webmaster)

Travel Requirement: Travel across the Diocese including the Channel Islands, some out-of-office hours may be required on an ad hoc basis.

Essential Requirement: Full clean driving licence and access to own transport.

Benefits

25 days holiday plus bank holidays

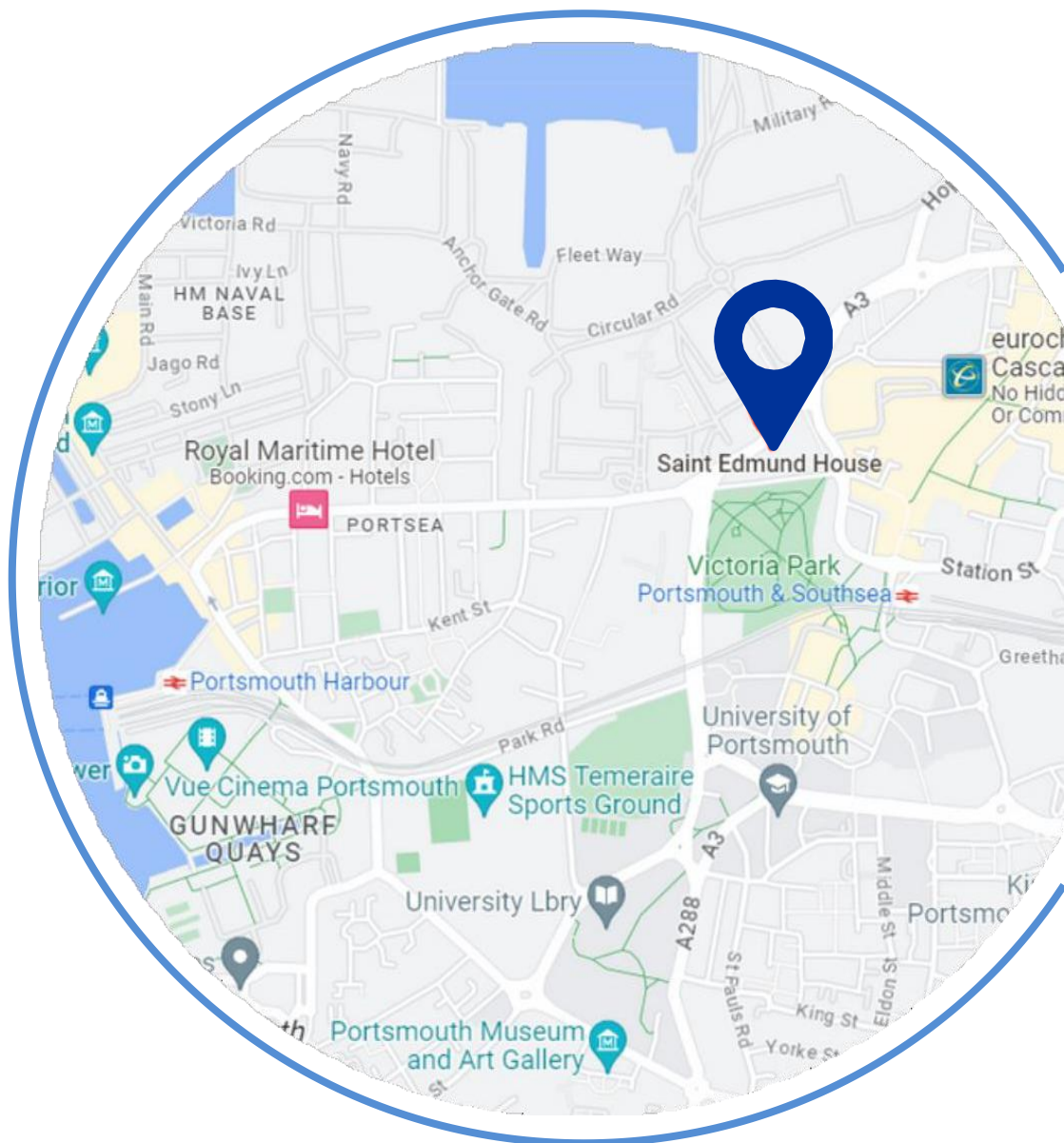
Life Assurance and Employee Wellbeing

Contributory pension scheme with Scottish Widows

Free on-site parking

Head Office

St. Edmund House,
Bishop Crispian Way,
Portsmouth,
PO1 3QA



How to Apply

Please send a comprehensive and up to date Curriculum Vitae along with a covering letter setting out your suitability for the role and motivation in applying (no more than 2 sides A4) to recruitment@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk Please state 'Communications Manager' in the subject line of your email.

The Diocese of Portsmouth is an equal opportunity employer and welcomes applications from all who support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church.

The closing date for applications is Saturday 3rd May 2025, at 6.00pm.

Interview Information

You will be notified shortly after the closing date, should we wish to progress your application and invite you to an interview.

Appointment

Any offer of employment to work at the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth is conditional upon receipt of two satisfactory employment references, provision of relevant certification of qualifications held, and completion of pre-employment checks.

You must have a valid UK Right to Work, as the Catholic Diocese of Portsmouth does not offer UK Visa Sponsorship.

This position is subject to the completion of an initial probationary period of six months.

