

## **Bishop's Liaison Officer for the LGBTQIA+ Community<sup>1</sup>**

### **Purpose**

The overall purpose of this post is to articulate, and advocate for, the pastoral needs of the LGBTQIA+ community, including those who identify as same-sex attracted, across the Diocese. It is also to represent the church in this community, to build bridges and enable pastoral support for a substantial group of lay and ordained who may have various experiences of exclusion or hostility within the church. This is a pastoral position, not a campaigning role, which exists to assist the Bishop's desire and responsibility to offer a pastoral presence and a place of inclusion for all.

### **Key working relationships**

As the Bishop's Liaison Officer, the key working relationships are with the Diocesan Bishop, and the Associate Archdeacon for Diversity and Inclusion, as well as with the LGBTQIA+ community. Other key relationships will be with the Bishop of Lewes as Chair of the Council for the Promotion of the Common Good, as well as with members of the council. It is also expected that good relationships will be established and maintained with relevant public bodies, with the Sussex Police LGBT+ Community Engagement Advisors (CEAs) across the force, and with church leaders of other denominations.

### **Areas of work**

#### **1. Pastoral**

- (i) Understanding the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community both inside and outside the church.
- (ii) Listening to and engaging with local church realities.
- (iii) Supporting and listening to incumbents and clergy individually in whose parishes there is a significant LGBTQIA+ community.
- (iv) Relating to local clergy.
- (v) Providing 1-to-1 input as appropriate.

#### **2. Educational**

- (i) Signposting appropriate training for churches.
- (ii) Enabling training and connection with others from beyond the Diocese.
- (iii) Connecting with charities offering training and support for the LGBTQIA+ community.
- (iv) Reporting to the Associate Archdeacon on the needs of the LGBTQIA+ community.
- (iv) Offering feedback to deaneries on any issues encountered and the experience gained.

#### **3. Public relations**

- (i) Developing relationships with leaders of LGBTQIA+ groups, including by organising forums or social events where the Bishop(s) and others can attend and have dialogue with members of the LGBTQIA+ community.

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<sup>1</sup> The LGBTQIA+ acronym is used following consultation with individuals identifying as part of this community (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and others, including those identifying as same-sex attracted) within the Diocese of Chichester.

- (ii) Organising LGBTQIA+ only events for the nurture of wellbeing in the LGBTQIA+ community.
- (iii) Taking a lead in supporting the presence of the church at LGBTQIA+ public events such as Pride.
- (iv) Learning from and working with those fulfilling similar roles in other Dioceses, as well as with ecumenical partners such as the LGBT+ Catholics Westminster Pastoral Council.

**4. Personal liaison**

- (i) Appraising the Diocesan Bishop of issues in the LGBTQIA+ community.
- (ii) Promoting an understanding of LGBTQIA+ issues within the Bishop’s Staff.
- (iii) Disseminating support and listening to concerns across the Diocese.

**Person Specification**

<b>Essential</b>	<b>Desirable</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the Church of England and ability to relate across church traditions</li> <li>• A person of prayer</li> <li>• A capacity to keep appropriate confidentiality and boundaries</li> <li>• A strong support network</li> <li>• Safeguarding leadership experience</li> <li>• Experience of handling situations of possible conflict and ability to facilitate safe spaces for conversation</li> <li>• Ability to communicate clearly and effectively with traditional and contemporary media</li> <li>• Ability to be an empathetic listener</li> <li>• A non-judgemental personality</li> <li>• A self-starter with high levels of personal motivation</li> <li>• A good team player</li> <li>• Experience of networking</li> <li>• A sound administrator</li> <li>• Experience of working with volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to work in a trauma-informed way within the context of conflict resolution</li> <li>• Ability and experience of delivering training</li> <li>• Relevant theological training</li> <li>• Proven track record of delivering projects</li> </ul>

**Terms**

This is a part-time post, equating to 1 day per week, the time to be worked flexibly across the week. It could be a standalone 0.2 FTE employment, or be carried out within an existing parish role (i.e. a full-time incumbent/priest-in-charge would not necessarily need to be separately employed).

Expressions of interest are welcome from both lay and ordained candidates.