

Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance Ltd

Job Description

Job Title:	Personal Assistant to the Area Dean of Blackburn with Darwen
Salary:	£9,172.80 per annum
Hours:	14 per week
Location:	St James Lower Darwen
Responsible to:	Area Dean of Blackburn with Darwen

1. Background

This is a varied role to support the Area Dean of Blackburn with Darwen in her parish, deanery and diocesan roles, by providing personal administrative and secretarial support so that the Area Dean can maximise her capacity.

In this role, no day will be the same. If you thrive on communicating, organising and attention to detail, this could be the perfect role for you. The new Personal Assistant will work closely with the Area Dean, but will also have a team of colleagues based in the parish and the M:Power teams.

This is a new role to support the recently appointed Area Dean. She holds this role in addition to being the Vicar of St James Lower Darwen, Priest in Charge of St James Over Darwen, and Urban Ministry (M: Power) Lead in the diocese.

With a wide and varied workload, she is looking for a Personal Assistant with significant administrative support experience, ideally in another Personal Assistant role.

The working pattern is to be negotiated with the Area Dean. It is hoped the new Personal Assistant can work the twelve hours of this role over three days, between Monday to Thursday, but we are open to other options too. Occasional evening working will be required. This will be agreed in advance and time in lieu will be offered.

2. Responsibilities

Communication

- Email triage – answering, forwarding and signposting where possible, and flagging up emails requiring a reply from the Area Dean.

- Draft emails, letters and other correspondence on behalf of the Area Dean.
- Prompt the Area Dean to send cards and respond in other ways to pastoral situations and life events.

Diary support

- Diary management – book meetings, schedule tasks and plan travel time.
- Ensure actions from emails and minutes are diarised and actioned.
- Book meetings for the Area Dean and ensure the appropriate people are invited and rooms are booked.
- Oversee a schedule of team meetings for the different roles the Area Dean holds.

Ministry support

- Preparation of documents, with a high standard of accuracy and presentation, using Microsoft 365 apps, Google apps, Canva and PDF editors.
- Create and update presentations for worship services, events and training, and where applicable use the template designs.
- Complete research tasks to support the Area Dean in preparing for worship services, teaching and written documents.
- Prepare monthly expense claims for the different roles held by the Area Dean.

Deanery support

- Act as Lay Secretary for the Deanery Synod.
- Work with the Deanery Lay Chair to book Deanery Synod and Standing Committee meetings, and communicate details of meetings to Synod members.
- Minute and keep accurate records of Deanery Synod meetings.
- Work with the Chapter Clerk to book Deanery Chapter meetings, and book visiting speakers and venues.
- Set up meetings, when required, between the Area Dean, parishes, clergy and laity within the deanery.
- Support Churchwardens and laity in vacant parishes within the deanery to find cover for services.
- Work with the Clergy Appointments Officer to set dates for pre-Section 11, Section 12 & interview panels for vacant parishes.

Systems

- Set up, improve and maintain storage systems, both cloud based and physical, for the Area Dean's work across the different roles she holds.
- Work alongside the Parish Administrator and M:Power Administrator to ensure correct and accurate information is shared between colleagues and the Area Dean
- Work alongside the Parish Administrator to set up systems that allow information to be efficiently shared across the parish and M:Power teams e.g. migration to shared electronic diaries.
- Ensure good GDPR practices are applied to all areas of the Area Dean's work.

Team working

- Support other team members to develop their skills in the use of IT.
- Attend the fortnightly parish team meeting.
- Attend M:Power meetings on occasion.

Other

- Any other duties as required.

Key relationships

Blackburn with Darwen Deanery

1. Parish Clergy
2. Clergy with Permission to Officiate (PTO)
3. Assistant Area Dean
4. Deanery Lay Chair
5. Churchwardens of vacant parishes

St James Lower Darwen & St James Over Darwen

1. Urban Leadership Enabler
2. Curate
3. Parish Administrator
4. Churchwardens
5. Leadership and ministry teams
6. Parishioners
7. Over Darwen building project consultants

M:Power team

1. M:Power Administrator
2. Urban Ministry (M:Power) Enabler
3. M:Power Hub Leaders (Trainers)
4. Urban Leadership Enabler

Central diocesan staff

1. Archdeacon's Personal Assistant
2. Clergy Appointments Officer

3. What we are looking for:

Person Specification

Criteria			Criteria Assessed by:		
			App	Int	
Experience, knowledge, training and qualifications					
a	Qualification in administration at level 3 or above.	Desirable	✓		

b	GCSE grade C or 4, or above, in English and Maths (or equivalent).	Essential	✓		
c	Minimum of two years' experience in an administrative role.	Essential	✓	✓	
d	Previous successful experience in a Personal Assistant role.	Desirable	✓	✓	
e	Highly competent in the use of Microsoft 365 apps, Google apps, Canva and PDF editors.	Essential	✓	✓	
f	Experience of managing cloud based storage (Microsoft and Google).	Essential	✓	✓	
g	Knowledge of Church of England structures and processes.	Desirable	✓	✓	
h	Experience of working in a context requiring a high degree of confidentiality.	Essential	✓	✓	
i	Experience of working with a wide range of people from different backgrounds.	Essential	✓	✓	
Personal attributes					
a	A good communicator in written and oral capacities, able to adapt communication effectively for a wide variety of audiences.	Essential	✓	✓	
b	Highly organised and able to work independently and collaboratively in handling a diverse workload.	Essential	✓	✓	
c	A thorough attention to detail.	Essential	✓	✓	
d	Able to work to tight deadlines, and support others to meet deadlines.	Essential	✓	✓	
e	Ability to solve problems and a willingness to adapt to changing needs and priorities.	Essential	✓	✓	
f	Able to work with discretion and confidentiality, and manage appropriate boundaries.	Essential	✓	✓	
g	Someone who takes real delight in supporting and encouraging others.	Essential		✓	
h	A team player, able to work with a diverse group of colleagues and stakeholders.	Essential	✓	✓	

i	A hopeful character, who is able to encourage, build-up, and promote a can-do attitude amongst colleagues and stakeholders.	Essential		✓	
j	Comfortable to use language of the Christian faith in documents and correspondence.	Essential	✓	✓	
k	Sympathy with the aims and practices of the Church of England	Essential	✓	✓	
l	A commitment to safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, and ensuring the application of Church of England safeguarding policy is integral to all projects.	Essential	✓	✓	

4. Outline of Terms and Conditions

Employer: You will be employed by the Blackburn Diocesan Board of Finance

Salary: £9,172.80 per annum

Term of Appointment: Fixed term – 2 years. With opportunity to renew contract subject to funding.

Hours: 14 hours per week. The post holder may be required to work additional hours as to meet the reasonable requirements of the role. They will be entitled to time off in lieu for attending meetings outside normal office hours which may include evening and weekends.

Location: The post holder will be based at St James Church, Stopes Brow, Lower Darwen, BB3 0QP.

Following the completion of a successful probationary period, home working (for a proportion of hours) may be agreed with the line manager suiting the needs of the organisation.

Pension: Member of the Royal London Pension Scheme, 10% Employer contribution 2% minimum employee contribution.

Benefits: [Found here.](#)

Annual leave: Entitlement of 25 days (not including statutory bank holidays) in the first year of employment rising by 1 day per completed calendar year up to a maximum of 30 days per year. Pro rata for part time employees.

The holiday year runs from 1 January to 31 December. Additional discretionary days (non contractual) may be given between Christmas and New Year.

References: Appointment will be subject to the receipt of satisfactory references.

Probationary period: The appointment is subject to the satisfactory completion of a sixmonth probationary period.

Notice Period: During the six-month probationary period four weeks' notice is required on either party. Thereafter you will be required to give 12 weeks' notice should you wish to resign.

Housing: This role does not qualify for housing or allowances such as council tax, water or heating lighting and cleaning. No removal allowances are paid for the successful candidate.

Expenses: Working expenses are paid at the diocesan rates.

Employee Assistance Programme: is available

Right to work: The post-holder must have the right to reside and work in the UK.

Diversity - The Diocese of Blackburn believes that diversity enables us to thrive and develop and is committed to race equality, welcoming applications from UK Minority Ethnic/ Global Majority Heritage backgrounds

The Diocese of Blackburn is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment.

For an initial conversation about the role please contact Rev'd Rebecca Roberts, Area Dean at Rebecca.roberts@blackburn.anglican.org

Preparation of Job Description

Author of Job Description	Rebecca Roberts Area Dean Blackburn with Darwen	
Date signed off	10 th October 2025 (CO, AR)	Version 1