



St Mary's church, Sturminster Marshall: Project Welcome Outreach Co-ordinator vacancy

Role Description

Background

St Mary's Church, Sturminster Marshall, has been a place of worship for hundreds of years and we very much hope the Welcome Project will add to that experience for everyone, now and for the future: a sacred and social space for the village community.

The mission of Project Welcome is to add positive benefits to Sturminster Marshall village community life using St Mary's Church.

Project Welcome's vision is to widen the use of the church to provide our community with a flexible and accessible space.

Project Welcome will add to the amenities of St Mary's, providing a WC and a kitchen servery, together with a flexible space in one of aisles of the church. The WC will be comfortable for those who use a wheelchair and will have a baby-changing table, and the servery will mean that snacks and drinks may be provided within the building. With the new pathway from the road, this flexible community space will be fully accessible to all, including pushchairs and for those who have disabilities.

St Mary's Sturminster Marshall is one of six parishes that form the Red Post Benefice, serving the villages of Almer, Bloxworth, Morden, Winterborne Kingston and Winterborne Zelston, along with Sturminster Marshall. Project Welcome is the first step along the way to reinvigorate the use of all the churches within the Benefice and in this way to increase the benefits to our larger community.

St Mary's is a beautiful building, surrounded by greenery, where children may see and experience the wildlife areas. The church is open daily from 10am to 4pm, for everyone to use and to enjoy. At the same time different activities can take place, and it's a venue that may be used in the evenings for a variety of events. St Mary's church will be both a sacred and social space for the community, complementary to the other Sturminster Marshall venues (the Old School and the Memorial Hall).

Research undertaken within the parish shows that the community would like the following uses for the **community hub**, for small to medium-sized groups:

- pram-and-play group, a holiday club
- location for community-useful talks that could range from bereavement sessions, debt management to dementia awareness
- music classes for children or adults, a rehearsal place
- book club, a talk, a reading
- parent's club
- singing group, a concert, a masterclass (the organ is available to be used)
- exhibitions to celebrate an artist, a group, a season
- hobby or games group.

Job title: Outreach Co-ordinator

Salary:

Stage 1: for the initial planning period (April and May), the role cannot be remunerated, it will be voluntary.

Stage 2: once the community hub building work is completed (probably June 2026) the PCC will engage the Outreach Co-ordinator as a self-employed contractor and an hourly rate will be agreed together with a minimum and maximum number of hours per week.

Length of appointment: no fixed time limit, but there will be a probationary period of three months from the start of the contractor being engaged, with one month's notice on each side.

Reports to: the Outreach Co-ordinator will report to the Outreach Committee which will include the Vicar, the Reverend Jane Williams.

Hours: part-time and flexible; likely to be 10-15 hours a week.

Purpose of the role

The volunteer Outreach Co-ordinator will spend the period April-June 2026 planning, in conjunction with the Outreach Committee, the development, coordination and day-to-day management of the community hub and how it will be run once the building work and fitting-out are completed.

The Co-ordinator will:

- consider and plan how to build and nurture strong relationships with the local community, volunteers, community groups and service providers
- identify local needs through consultation and develop appropriate responses, programmes and partnerships
- consider how best the new community hub may be used
- research, contact and engage local charities that may be able to provide the services needed by the community in the new community hub
- consider the day-to-day running of the hub to ensure it operates smoothly and safely in line with safeguarding and health and safety standards
- consider the possible costs involved
- plan how the hub should be promoted to the local communities within the Red Post Benefice, and how bookings, events, drop-ins etc would be managed
- draft the job plan for running the hub once the building and outfitting has been completed.

Person Specification

Essential

- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, with the ability to engage a wide range of people.
- Experience in community work, project coordination, or similar roles.
- Experience of fostering digital communities and using social media to proactively engage with hard-to-reach groups as part of a wider outreach initiative.
- Good organisational and administrative skills and experience of running a budget.
- Self-motivated and able to work independently.
- An understanding of and sympathy with the Christian ethos and the mission of the Church of England.

Desirable:

- The Outreach Co-ordinator is likely to live within the Red Post Benefice.
- Experience of working in a rural community context.
- Knowledge of safeguarding, GDPR, and volunteer management.
- Experience of running a small venue.
- Understanding and preferably experience of running financial spreadsheets.

Additional Information

An enhanced DBS check will be required.

Whilst no directly comparable prior experience is necessary; St Mary's welcomes applications from people who have experience of similar aspects to the role described, and who have a 'can do' mindset, who would find satisfaction and reward in helping groups of local people to use St Mary's community hub.

St Mary's church supports the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion, and will assist applicants who may wish to have some training and development.

Qualities

Applicants should be able to demonstrate

- a willingness to devote the necessary time and effort
- a commitment to the vision and mission of Project Welcome
- good, independent judgement and integrity
- willingness to report to a committee and work closely as part of a team
- an ability to think creatively
- organised and self-motivated
- general competence using IT

IT requirements

Applicants must provide their own computer and be confident in the use of email, standard programmes, such as Word and Excel (or similar) and the internet. A reliable internet connection is essential as the role is primarily conducted remotely. Access to a printer is useful.
