DIOCESE OF ST ALBANS

Living God's Love

Property and Trusts Advisor



Appointment Pack

June 2026

DIOCESE OF ST ALBANS
Living God's Love



Thank you for your interest in the role of Property and Trusts Advisor.

We are looking for someone to join the small professional team who manage our property portfolio. This person will be a qualified legal professional (ideally a solicitor) with experience in property, and good IT and interpersonal skills. The team will help to introduce you to the world of glebe and other church property and explain how you can use your skills and experience to support them.

If this could be you, we would be delighted to receive your application.

This is a full time role within our property team. If you would like an informal conversation to help you in considering your application please contact the Property Director – Charlotte Kirby.

We look forward to hearing from you!

David White
Diocesan Secretary

Property Team

Property Team

The Property Team of the Diocesan Board of Finance supports the mission of the diocese across our parishes and schools in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Barnet (there is more information about the diocese later in this pack and on our website). We are a busy team working in a complex and unusual area of property. There are three main areas of property work that we deal with:

A. **Housing:** Providing comfortable and suitable housing for clergy and office space for diocesan staff. We manage almost 300 homes and the diocesan office building for operational use through maintenance, improvements, letting during vacancy, and stock turnover including occasional new build projects.

B. **Investments:** Managing, developing and maximising returns from the real estate investments of the diocese. These investments comprise primarily rural land (glebe) within the diocese's geography and the income funds clergy stipends. We are supported by external managing agents in this portfolio.

C. **Trusts:** Supporting parishes with property matters and withdrawals from trust funds. The Diocesan Board of Finance is the custodian trustee for approximately 1,000 local parish trusts that hold parish property and funds. (Churches and churchyards are outside our scope – for these, parishes are supported by the Diocesan Pastoral & Advisory team.)

The team is managed by the Property Director and the whole team are supported by two team administrators, as well as various external professional advisors and contractors. Clergy housing and the office (A) are managed by the Building Surveyor and Facilities Manager (supported by a dedicated administrator) and the Clergy Housing Manager. The Asset & Development Manager leads on asset maximisation for housing and investments (B). The Property & Trusts Advisor is responsible for trusts and also supports with legal work arising for housing and investments (C).

All of this seems to be a lot of work for a small staff team! The reality is a much larger team of professionals: preferred contractors for maintenance and improvements; surveyors, agents and lawyers for development initiatives – many of whom the Property and Trusts Advisor will deal with in the course of their work.

Job Description

Job Title:	Property and Trusts Advisor
Department:	Property
Line Manager:	Property Director
Reviewed By:	Property Director
Date:	May 2026

Job Profile

Purpose of the Role

The Property and Trusts Advisor takes end-to-end responsibility for legal and regulatory matters affecting the Board's investment land (glebe), property assets, custodian and other trusts, and other property interests.

The role includes:

- Management of financial and property trusts issues including the Board's own trusts and PCC and Vicar/Churchwarden trusts
- Managing legal matters including conveyancing in the diocesan housing portfolio, through external solicitors
- Assisting with legal matters across the diocesan glebe portfolio in conjunction with the managing agent Bidwells
- Responsibility for financial and property trusts issues as they relate to the Diocesan Board of Education
- Supporting other diocesan trustees

The role plays an important part in the Property Team and the post-holder works closely with the Property Director who leads the team, the Asset and Development Manager who leads on glebe matters, the Clergy Housing Manager on housing matters, and the Property Team Administrators for both housing and trust matters.

Decision Making and Authority

The role holder has flexibility in managing the trusts and housing matters within statutory and legal frameworks and the overall diocesan strategy. The role is line-managed by the Property Director and works closely with them to implement the departmental strategy. The role is key to the management of schools trusts and the post-holder works closely with and advises the Diocesan Board of Education.

Guidance and Direction

The role is a senior one within the Property Team and the post-holder works closely with the Property Director as well as other members of the team to provide guidance on property and trust matters. The post-holder also works with departmental heads, archdeacons and the Diocesan Secretary.

Key Relationships and Context

Within the diocese the role holder has regular contact with bishops, archdeacons, the Diocesan Secretary, committee members and other diocesan staff. The role holder is a direct contact for clergy and PCCs within the Diocese and with the Board's appointed professionals, including surveyors, the Diocesan Registrar and other legal advisors.

Pressure and Working Environment

The role is desk-based and is hybrid with time split between home and the Diocesan Office at Holywell Lodge.

- This is a busy full-time role within a busy department.
- There is frequent daily contact with PCC members and with the Diocesan legal advisers and surveyors, as well as with Diocesan staff members on work matters.
- Property and trust transactions are often time-critical and the post holder must be able to respond to developing work quickly and accurately.
- The Property and Trusts Advisor is accountable to the Property Director and the Diocesan Secretary, and the Property and Glebe Committees.
- Property and trust matters are often complex and the post-holder requires a critical understanding, an ability to analyse complicated and contradictory documents and evidence and present conclusions and recommendations in a way that can be understood.
- The post requires an ability to work closely with, advise and communicate well to clergy, volunteers, trustees and professional advisers.

Duties and Key Responsibilities

Overall:

- Interpret legal title and trusts documents and give guidance to PCCs, diocesan staff and other trustees on them
- Evaluate and approve trust withdrawal requests from PCCs and other trustees
- Advise the Diocesan Board of Education on title and trusts matters relating to schools
- Manage the legal process for sales and purchases within the housing portfolio
- Advise the Property Team on title and other legal matters relating to the housing portfolio
- Instruct the Board's land agents, solicitors and surveyors
- Maintain property and trusts records in the departmental property database and other systems and liaising with the Board's agents
- Contribute significantly to the work of the department
- Prepare committee briefing papers as requested by the Property Director
- Manage the register of Trust Deeds

PCC/vicar/churchwarden trusts:

- Manage those trusts in which the DBF is the custodian trustee and providing guidance to clergy, PCCs and churchwardens
- Review terms of trusts and real estate title matters and advising trustees on the terms of trusts
- Provide advice to the DAC and Pastoral Team regarding pastoral reorganisations
- Evaluate requests for withdrawals of trust money
- Instruct solicitors and surveyors as matters progress as required on real estate title and trusts matters including sales, purchases, development agreements and leases
- Manage the Property Team Administrator in the three-yearly inspection of grave trusts

School trusts:

- Advise the Diocesan Board of Education on financial and property trusts issues
- Advise schools on requests to withdraw school trust money in consultation with the DBE
- Be alert to possible trusts and title issues such as reverters
- Instruct solicitors and surveyors on sales, purchases and leases of school property
- Provide advice on complex legal arrangements (e.g. restrictive covenants, reverter clauses) relating to school premises

Other trusts:

- Management of Diocesan Trusts on behalf of the Diocesan Secretary
- Advise other diocesan trustees on their financial and property trusts issues, including reviewing trust and title documents, and where appropriate liaising on the appointment of solicitors or surveyors
- Management of trusts where the St Albans Diocesan Board of Finance is sole site trustee

Housing:

- Advise on legal and title matters related to parsonage houses and other corporate properties, such as boundaries, easements and historic covenants
- Coordinate the legal process for sales and purchases of parsonage houses and other corporate properties including instructing solicitors

Glebe:

- Assist with sales and purchases of glebe, including Option Agreements, liaising with legal and surveying advisers
- Liaison with the Board's legal advisers and responsibility for providing instructions to legal and other professional advisers on complex legal issues
- Implementation of initiatives to reduce the Diocese's overall carbon emissions through the effective management of the glebe and trusts

Diocesan Policies

- To be aware of and adhere to diocesan policies and protocols including, but not limited to, the areas of
    - Safeguarding
    - Data Protection and GDPR
    - Net Zero Carbon
    - Racial Justice
    - Sexual Harassment Awareness and Prevention

- To commit to undertake training and engage with information and instruction in respect of the diocesan policies and protocols referred to above.

Person Specification

Experience and Skills

- Must be an English law qualified property solicitor (preferred), chartered surveyor or other qualified property professional such as legal executive
- Significant experience in that role, including negotiating development agreements conditional upon planning permission, and general conveyancing matters
- Experience in ecclesiastical law or charity law
- Knowledge of Church of England organisational structures, or the ability to rapidly acquire this
- Organised and details-oriented with an ability to prioritise a busy workload
- Able to manage a large portfolio of property and trusts
- Ability to work collaboratively and establish and maintain excellent working relationships with internal and external stakeholders at all levels.
- Organised and administratively able with good and effective working knowledge of IT with the ability to rapidly learn and adapt to new systems/processes
- Understanding of and sympathy with the life and work of the Church of England in St Albans Diocese
- Able and willing to travel occasionally throughout the Diocese and for meetings in London and elsewhere, possibly outside office hours

The Diocese of St Albans

The Diocese of St Albans consists of the counties of Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire and part of the London Borough of Barnet. The population is approximately 1.8 million, and the total electoral roll number is approximately 22,000. The Bishop of St Albans has overall responsibility for the Diocese and is assisted by two suffragan bishops, the Bishop of Bedford and the Bishop of Hertford, who in turn are assisted by the Archdeacons of St Albans, Bedford and Hertford. There are twenty deaneries, and the Diocese has 340 parishes, of which about one third are rural, 380 churches and more than 300 clergy (of whom more than 250 are stipendiary). There are 136 Church Schools and Academies in the Diocese.

The Diocesan Synod is the elected decision-making body of the Diocese and the Bishop's Council as the Standing Committee of the Synod has a key role in formulating diocesan policy.

The Diocese of St Albans has a clear vision of Living God's Love with three priorities: Going Deeper into God; Transforming Communities and Making New Disciples, and doing so with: creativity, joy imagination and courage. The vision flows from God's love for us and is expressed in our love for God and our neighbours. Through *Living God's Love* we are seeking spiritual and numerical growth across our parishes, benefices, schools and chaplaincies.

The statutory work of the Church and support to the parishes is provided by the staff of the Diocesan office, located in Holywell Lodge in St Albans. There is a strong Christian ethos within the office, but there is no expectation that all staff will necessarily be practising Christians.

The work of the staff is overseen by three Boards:

The **Board of Finance** is responsible for formulating the diocesan budget, which is currently about £17m, and for managing clergy housing, investments and overseeing parochial trusts, the combined value of which is about £200m. The lead officer of the Board, who has overall responsibility for the staff of the Diocesan Office, is the Diocesan Secretary.

The **Board of Education** is responsible for the 136 church schools and academies in the diocese. Most of these schools and academies are in Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, with one in Luton and two in the London Borough of Barnet. The education team is led by the Director of Education.

The **Board for Mission and Ministry** is responsible for the development and learning of ministry teams within the Diocese and the mission of the Church in wider society. This work is led by the Director of Mission and Ministry.

Terms and Conditions of Employment

Salary: In the range £55,000 - £60,000 per annum.

Pension: Enrolment with the Church of England Pensions Board with a competitive employer contribution.

Hours: This is a full time role. Full time hours are 35 hours per week and normal Diocesan Office working hours are Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm with an hour for lunch. There is a requirement to work flexibly with occasional out of hours and evening/ weekend commitments, for which time off in lieu is given.

Holidays: The annual leave entitlement is 26 days per year plus the statutory Bank Holidays and the working days falling between Christmas Eve and the New Year bank holiday.

Term: This is a permanent, full time role. Following a four months' probationary period, the notice period will be three months.

Place of Work: The post is based primarily at the Diocesan Office, with some home working. Attendance at the Diocesan Office is expected for a minimum of two days per week.

Ongoing Development: We are committed to staff development based on an annual review which helps highlight learning and training requirements.

Status: The successful applicant will need to provide proof of right to work in the UK before taking up the post.

To apply for this post, please complete the Application Form and send this, together with the Recruitment Monitoring Form (both available on our website at www.stalbansdiocese.org/Vacancies) to the Diocesan Secretary (details below):

Closing date: **Please contact HR@stalbansdiocese.org for more information**
Interviews: **To be confirmed**

Submit via email: HR@stalbansdiocese.org

or by post to: David White, Diocesan Secretary, Diocese of St Albans, Holywell Lodge, 41 Holywell Hill, St Albans, AL1 1HE

References may be taken up before interview. Please indicate clearly if anyone may not be approached at this stage.