

Walton-on-Thames  
**St Mary's and St John's**

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## Community Engagement Officer

We have an exciting opportunity for someone who has a passion for community outreach work, connecting the church and the community to meet people's needs in tackling poverty, isolation and mental health.

St Mary's and St John's have a varied offering of outreach activities from youth groups to senior groups, toddler groups and a community cafe. The successful candidate will oversee outreach projects based at St John's church whilst also developing relationships with and connecting other agencies to meet the needs of those whom we serve.

Three main projects that are up and running at the moment are:

### Play and Chat

Play and Chat is our parent/carer and toddler group for preschool children. This is a popular group with up to 60 people (children and adults) attending each week, on a Tuesday morning during term time. We provide free breakfast to ensure that everyone who comes has the opportunity to eat.

### Community Cafe

Community Cafe runs on Thursday mornings throughout the year, alongside Walton and Hersham foodbank, which operates out of St John's room. The cafe offers free hot/cold drinks and a range of snacks, although people can make a donation if they wish to. The cafe was set up to tackle poverty and isolation and has a number of agents from other organisations to speak to the local residents or offer further help, beyond that which the foodbank can provide. This has a mixture of people including the elderly who take the opportunity to meet other people, those who use the foodbank, and families, particularly in the holidays.

### The Art Hour

Created from listening to the needs of the community, particularly parents who were wanting something in the second half of the week, The Art Hour runs on a Thursday afternoon and offers a free art session to all ages, with materials and creative ideas being provided. This is particularly popular in the school holidays and may need reconsidering for term times.

As well as these projects, we have just started a trial to be a **Stripey Stork** delivery hub and are wanting to develop support for those seeking employment.

This role is dependent on grant funding of which 12 months is secured. Applying for grants will be a part of this role.

## **Job Description and Person Specification**

### **Duties of the role**

- Working as part of a team to
  - deliver and develop the existing community outreach and engagement activities that run out of the St John's Church Community Hub.
  - support and sustain community-led action around issues related to health and wellbeing, as identified by them
  - organise and hold events that draw in and involve local residents and partners;
- Developing and sustaining positive relationships with a range of people, including residents, community leaders, local groups and organisations, and local authorities;
- Recruiting and supporting local people to become volunteers and active leaders in their community, and ensuring that they remain engaged and involved;
- Engaging with residents, local groups and organisations;
- Leading events / regular activities within the community to provide training, information and courses (including referrals) when the need is identified.
- Supporting other community events with face-to-face and/or online activities;
- Supporting the delivery and analysis of community-based action research;
- Working in different environments (both office-based and on the ground), at times best suited to the community (including some evenings and weekends)
- Attending meetings and working in line with the Church's vision and mission for outreach and community involvement
- Engaging the community to help them start / rediscover their Christian journey.

### **Person Specification – Knowledge, skills and attributes.**

#### Essential:

- Hard-working, reliable and professional,
- Able to manage a varied and challenging workload and work well both as part of a team and alone.
- Willing and able to work in different environments, including being office based and spending a large amount of time on the ground within communities.
- Able to relate effectively to children and their parents
- Ability to effectively relate to and show care for older people
- Ability to relate to people who are highly educated and professional, to present needs and engage them in projects
- Have a commitment to tackling inequality and putting people at the heart of social change, particularly in relation to health and wellbeing

#### Desirable:

- Experience working in community outreach and engagement, particularly with disadvantaged groups.

- Experience of facilitating and leading creative and engaging community-based workshops and activities.
- Experience of recruiting and supporting people from diverse backgrounds to take part in community-led projects.
- Experience of working with a variety of different groups, including residents, local groups, and organisations across the voluntary and public sectors.
- Experience of recruiting, supporting, and mentoring volunteers within a community project.
- Experience of organising creative and successful events which engage and involve people from a range of different backgrounds.
- Strong communication skills including presenting, facilitation, and relationship building.

Hours 22.5 hours a week (0.6 FTE)  
Rate of Pay £30,125 (pro rata based on a 37.5 hour week)  
Start Date ASAP

Application deadline: Midday on Mon 30th Dec 2024

Shortlisting will be done thereafter and interviews will be held by arrangement.

**Although it is not an occupational requirement for the successful candidate to be a practising Christian, it is essential they understand and agree with the vision and mission of the church.**

St. Mary's and St. John's are committed to safeguarding and we expect all of our staff and volunteers to share this commitment and undertake required safeguarding training

This post is subject to enhanced DBS clearance.

For more information, please contact Rev Dave Bixby [dave@waltonparish.org.uk](mailto:dave@waltonparish.org.uk)