

Job Description – Temporary Maternity Cover Communications Assistant

Introduction

The Communications Assistant reports to the Development Manager and will be responsible, with them, for the publicity of Launde Abbey retreats and other products, for maintaining Launde Abbey's social media platforms and its presence in national and regional forums. The Abbey is seeking the right individual to take on the temporary Communications Assistant role as maternity cover for 15 hours per week for up to 12 months.

Launde Abbey is a Christian Retreat House situated in the beautiful parkland on the Leicestershire/Rutland border. Aware of our history both as an Augustinian priory and as a Tudor manor house, our vision is centred around four keywords that characterise who we are and what we offer; 'prayer', 'hospitality', 'community' and 'sanctuary'. Through these the Abbey Community 'serve those who serve others', and in doing so our focus is first towards the Church and church-linked organisations and charities. The Abbey is owned and run by a charitable trust and in 2025 our turnover was over £1.3m.

As a Community the Abbey comprises a team of Clergy with the Warden and Resident Chaplain as permanent onsite residents and our Deputy Warden living close by. These are supported by our volunteer College of Chaplains. Together they administer the spiritual heart of the Abbey. There is then 40 or so members of the staff team fulfilling a range of administrative and practical functions across our bookings, reception, kitchen, dining and housekeeping teams. About 23 volunteers support the staff team in the life and work of the Abbey mainly in tending to the grounds and managed gardens. Beyond this our community expands and contracts as the Abbey guests arrive and depart throughout the week. Our network of dispersed supporters, the Companions, is another vital part of our community, supporting us in prayer, practically with skills and expertise but also financially too.

Between the Tudor manor house and the C17th stables, Launde Abbey has 39 bedrooms, a selection of meeting and conference rooms, a dining room and café open to the public, a library, prayer rooms and various seating areas for guests. Outdoors there is a walled garden under near-complete cultivation, wider gardens largely managed by the volunteers, a 'way of the cross' walk and a grass labyrinth. At the heart of the site and its activity is the Chapel – incorporating the remains of the 900-year-old priory church – in which today a pattern of daily prayer is observed by the Clergy and the College of Chaplains.

Purpose of Role

Reporting to the Development Manager, the Communications Assistant will have responsibility for the publicity of Launde Abbey retreats and other products, for maintaining Launde Abbey's presence in national, regional and local forums, online and offline, and for providing communications support for the development of wider communities and networks. This is a maternity cover post starting on Wednesday 12th August, or as soon as possible thereafter, and lasting for up to 12 months. We would be open to discussing an earlier start date if possible.

Responsibilities

The Communications Assistant has the following responsibilities:

- Creating a range of media resources including print, audio, webpage, video and image as commissioned
- Developing and maintaining Launde Abbey's social media presence in accordance with our ethos and aims in collaboration with the Development Manager and other internal stakeholders
- Maintaining our email database – currently in Constant Contact - including appropriate integration with our bookings system, Guestline's 'Rezlynx'
- Producing and sending regular e-mailings to develop relationships and publicise our programme
- Working with the Warden and Development Manager to produce and circulate the Launde Abbey Companions newsletter 'Life At Launde Abbey'
- Working with the Development Manager to maintain regular communication with retreat leaders, group organisers and other communities and networks important to Launde Abbey
- Tracking the effectiveness of different forms of communication and publicity

Reporting to:

The Development Manager

Person spec

In addition to demonstrating that they have the skills to fulfil the Job Description, we are looking for someone who can show that they:

- Can work in sympathy with Launde Abbey's vision and ethos; is comfortable with a context in which prayer, Christian faith and ministry play a prominent part; and shows understanding of the nature of retreats and a retreat house
- Are community minded, motivated by working for the good and wellbeing of others, and by supporting others who do this
- Work well in a team, playing their part in a greater whole without grandstanding and prepared to muck in when needed
- Are motivated by contributing and sharing ideas, and working with others to develop them
- Have significant experience and skills in communications, publicity and media work
- Have practical skills in design and editing photographic, audio and video resources
- Have experience of developing and sustaining an effective social media presence and profile
- Have good IT skills already and are a self-starter when it comes to learning how to do something new
- Have good administrative and task organising skills

Employment information

Working pattern and hours of work

- 15 hours a week (with the possibility of occasional additional hours)
- Basic working pattern negotiable, preferably over 3 days per week with flexible working hours
- Occasional weekends and evenings in support of networking or fundraising events

Place of work

As a hospitality business with a strong sense of place, working onsite with the team at Launde Abbey is essential. You will need your own transport to reach Launde Abbey.

Salary and remuneration

- £13.75 per hour
- Holiday (including bank holidays): 21.5 days including up to 5 days to be taken at the discretion of Launde Abbey, typically taken at Christmas