



Homes
England



Assistant Director, Communications & External Affairs

Department	Greater Cambridge Development Corporation
Reports To	Deputy CEO / COO
Grade	Assistant Director
Job Level	19-20
Location	Cambridge
Team Size / Direct Reports	C2-4 Direct Reports

Our Role and Mission

Greater Cambridge is one of the UK's most important innovation hubs. The area's concentration of science and technology companies, and research-intensive clusters in life sciences, AI, biotech and advanced manufacturing means it's one of the country's strongest drivers of future economic growth.

However, the pressures facing the area are real and structural. Water scarcity, grid capacity, significant transport congestion and housing affordability constraints are all holding growth back. Removing the barriers to growth could generate significant national economic benefits. The magnitude of the challenges means they cannot be overcome through incremental change. A bold, long-term approach, and a genuine step change in how infrastructure is planned, coordinated and delivered is required, which is why the government has established the Greater Cambridge Development Corporation

The **Greater Cambridge Development Corporation** is a statutory body set up as a new local-national partnership. Steered by our Board, chaired by Peter Freeman, and comprising the mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, the leaders from the City and South Cambridgeshire District and the County Council, and leaders from industry, innovation and the health sectors, we are responsible for aligning the investment for, and overseeing the delivery of, significant infrastructure and homes that will underpin long-term, ambitious sustainable and inclusive growth across Greater Cambridge.

Working with local, regional and national partners, our core mission is to secure Greater Cambridge's success as Europe's most innovative city ensuring that growth transforms the quality of life of our communities and becomes the best place in Europe to live, work and innovate. By coordinating infrastructure, unlocking investment and accelerating the delivery of jobs, homes and great places, together we will help create a more liveable, better connected and more inclusive Greater Cambridge. We will demonstrate how coordinated, infrastructure-led development can improve quality of

life and support sustainable, more equal economic growth for the benefit of existing and future communities.

All our actions will be guided by six core objectives: achieving **transformational economic growth**; delivering **Infrastructure-led development**; enabling **innovative investment**; enhancing the **environment and climate resilient communities**; furthering **inclusion and opportunity**; all enabled by **local representation, participation and transparency**.

This role is being recruited by Homes England to support the establishment and operation of the Greater Cambridge Development Corporation. The successful candidate will initially be employed by Homes England and will work predominantly on matters relating to the Greater Cambridge Development Corporation and its activities.

Job Purpose

The Assistant Director, Communications and External Affairs is a key member of the leadership team, responsible for developing and leading the organisation's strategic communications, stakeholder engagement, reputation management and external influencing activities.

This role will shape and protect the Greater Cambridge Development Corporation's reputation, build support and consensus for an ambitious programme of sustainable growth and ensure that communications and engagement are embedded at the heart of organisational decision making and programme delivery.

Working closely with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Chair and Board, the postholder will provide strategic counsel on politically sensitive and varied issues, helping the organisation navigate a dynamic political, stakeholder and media environment.

The role will work closely with leaders and directors to shape effective engagement across local, regional and national government, communities, investors, partners, businesses and strategic stakeholders to support the successful delivery of the Development Corporation's vision for Greater Cambridge.

Key Relationships

The role will require working collaboratively with a wide range of partners. Principal partners include:

- Greater Cambridgeshire Local Authorities and their constituent bodies, the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.
- Local MPs, the Mayor, council Leaders, members and officers of Cambridgeshire LAs (District/Unitaries/ ward and parish), The Greater Cambridgeshire Shared Planning Service (GCSPS)
- Local stakeholders, including business, representative organisations and universities, Community groups and residents' associations.

- GCDC leadership, board and committees
- Colleagues across the Development Corporation and Homes England including local project delivery teams, consultants and communications and engagement teams.
- MHCLG and other cross-Whitehall Government bodies and groups (e.g.Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor) as required
- Neighbouring local authorities and/or national agencies to support

Key Accountabilities & Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

- Develop and deliver an integrated communications, external affairs and stakeholder engagement strategy that supports the organisation's vision, objectives and long-term ambitions.
- Work with the Chair and Board to develop public vision statements/strategies.
- Serve as the Development Corporation's lead adviser on reputation, communications, internal and external engagement, ensuring these disciplines are fully integrated into organisational strategy and programme delivery.
- Work with SLT colleagues to anticipate, identify and assess the implications of national policy changes, local political priorities and emerging issues, providing strategic advice on communications and reputation risks, opportunities and stakeholder impacts to ensure that communications strategies remain relevant, effective and forward-looking.
- Promote a culture in which strategic communications and engagement are considered from the earliest stages of strategy, programme and project development.

Corporate Affairs and Stakeholder Engagement

- Develop and lead the Corporation's external affairs function, building trusted relationships with elected representatives, local authorities, business leaders, community stakeholders, delivery partners and influential advocates.
- Develop and implement strategies to build understanding, confidence and support for the Corporation's growth agenda among local, regional, national and international audiences.
- Lead the development and delivery of an internal communications strategy, supporting senior leaders, line managers and colleagues to engage effectively, be empowered to actively shape and align to the Development Corporation's mission, vision and values.
- Act as a senior ambassador for the organisation, representing the Corporation in high-profile stakeholder forums and public engagements.
- Build and maintain a strong network of strategic relationships to advance organisational priorities and secure positive outcomes.
- Support the development of advocacy and influencing strategies that strengthen the Corporation's profile and impact at regional and national levels.
- Develop productive relationships with the Sponsor Department and wider government communications networks, providing professional communications assurance to government stakeholders.

Communications and Brand Leadership

- Develop and implement a long-term corporate brand and positioning strategy that clearly articulates the Corporation's mission, purpose and impact.
- Ensure the Corporation maintains a strong and consistent voice across all communications channels, audiences and platforms.
- Lead the development of integrated communications campaigns that support corporate priorities, major projects and programmes.
- Oversee editorial standards, messaging, content development and narrative management to ensure quality, consistency and alignment with organisational objectives.
- Apply audience insight, research and evaluation to drive communications effectiveness and maximise impact.

Media Relations and Reputation Management

- Develop the Corporation's media and public relations strategy, ensuring proactive, confident and influential engagement with local, regional, national and trade media.
- Maintain strong relationships with journalists, editors and key commentators to support positive coverage and informed public debate.
- Act as the senior lead for crisis communications, issues management and reputation protection.
- Develop and maintain crisis communication plans and ensure preparedness across the organisation for reputational or operational incidents.

Leadership and People Management

- Lead, develop and inspire a new, growing high-performing communications and external affairs team, fostering a culture of collaboration, inclusion and continuous improvement.
- Build a modern, insight-led and focused communications function that delivers excellent professional standards and measurable outcomes.
- Ensure effective workforce planning, capability development and succession planning across the team.
- Promote the highest standards of professional practice, governance and ethical communications.

Performance, Insight and Evaluation

- Ensure effective management and delivery of allocated functional budget
- Establish a robust framework to inform communications-decision making, and for evaluating communications, engagement and external affairs activity.
- Monitor organisational reputation and stakeholder sentiment, identifying emerging risks and opportunities.
- Ensure lessons learned and industry best practice are integrated into future communications and engagement activity.
- Regularly report to the Chief Executive, SLT, Board and senior stakeholders on communications performance, reputation and strategic risks.

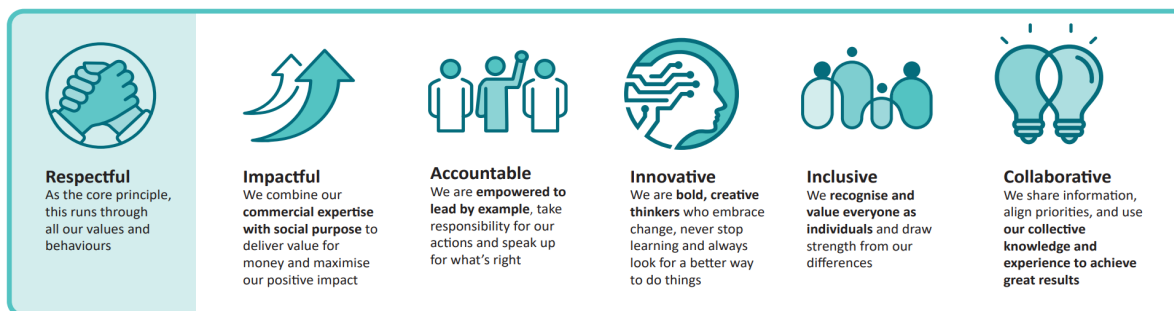
Supporting Corporate / Strategic Initiatives

- Contribute to business planning, playing an active role in the development of annual and longer-term business plans and taking ownership for the delivery of key communications objectives and leading multi-disciplinary teams as required.
- Contribute towards the delivery of corporate objectives through taking leadership of allocated activities and workstreams and reporting progress to relevant Boards and forums accordingly.

Key Skills, Knowledge & Experience

1. Significant senior leadership experience in communications, corporate affairs, public affairs, media relations or stakeholder engagement within a complex, high-profile environment.
2. Proven success in developing and implementing strategic communications and external affairs programmes that support organisational transformation, growth or major capital programmes.
3. Experience advising Boards, Chief Executives and senior leaders on reputation, political risk, stakeholder management and media strategy,
4. Strong understanding of government, political, regulatory and public policy environments.
5. Demonstrable experience of leading crisis communications and managing complex reputational issues.
6. Track record of building influential relationships with senior stakeholders across government, business, media and community sectors.
7. Experience leading and developing multidisciplinary communications and engagement teams.
8. Strong strategic thinking, political judgement and influencing skills.
9. Excellent written, verbal and presentation skills, with the ability to communicate complex and sensitive issues effectively.
10. Extensive knowledge of media, digital communications, audience insight and campaign evaluation techniques.
11. An accomplished leader able to demonstrate the ability to navigate through complex environments in periods of uncertainty and circumstances of ambiguity to find creative, responsive and agile ways forward.
12. Strong skills in convening and managing an extensive network of partners internally and externally, including leadership of relationships and contracts with external consultants.
13. Desirable – Knowledge of, and experience of working with, strategic stakeholders in Greater Cambridge

Values and Behaviours



Additional leadership behaviours

- Strategic and future-focused.
- Politically astute and highly credible.
- Influential and collaborative.
- Resilient and calm under pressure.
- Commercially aware and outcome-driven.
- Inclusive, empowering and values-led.
- Committed to transparency, public value and stakeholder trust.

Further information about the Greater Cambridge Development Corporation

Click [here](#) to learn more about the GCDC and its mission.