



## Cathedral Head Verger

### Vacancy Information & Job Description Details



Peterborough Cathedral is one of the finest Norman cathedrals in England. Founded as a monastic community in 654 AD, it became one of the most significant medieval abbeys in the country, the burial place of two queens and the scene of Civil War upheavals. The wider estate includes the Cathedral Precincts and a number of additional buildings and properties, many of them listed, that surround the Cathedral.

Today the Cathedral is the most significant building in a diverse and growing city, a tourist destination and a venue for exhibitions, cultural events, meetings and receptions. But at its heart it remains, what it has always been, a place of Christian prayer and worship, of ministry and mission; the 'Mother Church' of the Diocese of Peterborough and the seat of the Bishop of Peterborough and all its other activities contribute to or are part of that wider purpose that is spelt out most fully in the Cathedral's vision and values document published in 2019. (A copy of which is attached to this Job description)

## The Role

The role of the Head Verger is to lead the Verging Team in the daily running of the Cathedral, ensuring the highest standards are met for all services and events, presentation, welcome and safety and maintaining the dignity of the Cathedral as a place of worship.

This is a complex, demanding and rewarding role which requires flexibility, initiative and excellent people skills. The duties set out in this job description are representative of the broad nature of the role and are not the sum total of tasks. The post-holder will be expected to recognise this and respond to the challenge of what is a dynamic role. They will lead by example, creating, inspiring and overseeing a high performing, hard-working team. It should be noted that there is a significant amount of physical work to be undertaken as Head Verger, it is therefore a requirement that the successful candidate will be physically fit.

**The Head Verger is responsible to the Head of Operations, but also works to the Canon Precentor in liturgical matters**

## Head Verger Responsibilities:

### 1. Liturgical and Ceremonial Duties, including Special Services

- To support all the Cathedral clergy and other key personnel with all preparations needed to provide beautiful and prayerful services for all who join the Cathedral's worship, within the building or streamed on line.
- With the Canon Precentor, plan and supervise the necessary preparations for each of the services in the Cathedral, including seating plans and furniture arrangements, and ensuring that appropriate arrangements are put in place for both routine and special services including returning the space to its previous state.
- Playing a key role in the logistical management of special services, liaising with other stakeholders as appropriate to ensure that these occasions are planned and delivered to a high standard.
- To attend (or arrange for a deputy to do so) all planning meetings for services held in the Cathedral by internal and external bodies.
- Together with the Precentor to brief all stewards and volunteers for these services, particularly in relation to health and safety considerations.
- To attend rehearsals for services, as necessary, or arrange for a deputy, and take responsibility for briefing the rest of the team, including written notes as required.
- To participate in Cathedral services in accordance with the Cathedral's traditions under the direction of the Precentor; distributing rubric and service sheets to participants. To carry out all the ceremonial and practical roles of the Head Verger, verging ceremonial occasions, processions and services and to ensure that the verging team work to the high standards expected.
- To oversee the operation of all technical equipment used for the recording, production or enhancement of audio and visual, either collaborating with contractors, operating the equipment personally or supervising other verging team.
- To oversee the routine care of service and hymnbooks, vessels, altars and vestments, advise the Precentor when repairs or replacements are required.
- Support all the Cathedral clergy and other key personnel with all preparations needed to provide beautiful and prayerful services for all who join the Cathedral's worship, within the building or streamed on-line.

## **2. Events**

- To collaborate with multiple stakeholders in order to ensure the effective use of the Cathedral; responding to the decisions of the Diary Meeting and liaising with the Events Manager, Music Department, Education Team, Welcomers, Tour Guides and Retail Shop Team.
- In liaison with the Events Manager, take responsibility for staging and seating requirements for events, ensuring health and safety issues are addressed and ensure that vergers carry out the agreed arrangements in an appropriate way. This will include the moving of chairs, tables and other furniture.
- Attending (or arrange for a deputy to do so) all planning meetings for events that require input of the Cathedral team, ensuring that the 'day book' is completed to a high level of accuracy and the verging team is fully briefed.
- Liaise with staff and volunteers and external organisations, over all detailed arrangements for concerts and secular events in the Cathedral as directed by the Head of Operations.
- Attend at concerts, exhibitions or similar functions in the evening or at other times when on duty as Duty Verger.

## **3. Welcome and Reputation**

- To play a full part in the maintenance of good public relations and treat visitors in a friendly, tactful and helpful manner.
- To act as the 'first port of call' to visitors to the Cathedral who may be in need or distress, signposting them to appropriate sources of support where necessary, including responding to emergencies in a calm and efficient manner.
- To have an in-depth understanding and appreciation of, the Cathedral's safeguarding policies and practices, especially as they relate to the choir, Junior Church and Sacristy, as well as to the wider community. To ensure that they are implemented, and that particular responsibilities falling to the Sacristy in this area are carried out.
- To ensure their own and their team's safeguarding training is up to date.
- To foster a strong relationship between the Cathedral and parishes and structures of the Diocese, and with local organisations and partners who work with us.
- To welcome and assist visiting choirs, in liaison with other members of the music department.
- To 'hold the space' for all those who hire the Cathedral as an event venue, affording them a warm hearted courteous and respectful welcome.
- To liaise with the Education Team, Welcomers and Tour Guides, co-ordinating the use of the Cathedral by these groups.
- To liaise with the all other Cathedral volunteers and volunteer group, such as the gardeners, embroiderers, flower arrangers, Cathedral guides and Duty Chaplains.
- Attend the National Vergers Conference

## **4. Team Leadership**

- To line-manage the Verging team, directing and supervising its members, whether staff or volunteers, so as to maintain and develop standards of liturgical excellence.
- To arrange and facilitate regular meetings with the vergers.
- To show leadership and positively motivate the team, championing their development as individuals and as a team, helping them to develop new skills and drawing out their strengths. To provide a positive and pleasant environment for all, engendering a sense of teamwork at all times.
- With the Head of Operations, to be responsible for the recruitment of new vergers, ensuring that there is an appropriate programme of induction and training for them.

- To undertake annual appraisals of direct reports, and to provide them with regular feedback, formal and informal, and opportunities for professional development.
- To delegate to colleagues appropriate duties and responsibilities.
- To agree and then manage the budget for the Sacristy, in collaboration with the Head of Operations and supported by the Cathedral Finance team.

## **5. Administration, Meetings and Communication**

- To ensure that the collection of data is maintained to the agreed standard of accuracy and that registers are kept in good order and that necessary returns are made to the Archbishops' Council and other official bodies in a timely manner.
- To organise duty rotas, ensuring that the necessary number of vergers is available for all services and events, in order to carry out all agreed duties and allowing a fair distribution of time off, overtime and annual leave, approving leave requests.
- To manage and keep a correct record of all overtime worked or TOIL owed and to cascade this information as instructed by the Head of Operations.
- To oversee the ordering and stock control of candles, candle oil, communion wafers, wine, other liturgical requirements within the agreed budget and maintain the on-line stock record. Ensure that invoices are sent to the Accounts Department for payment.
- To attend the required agenda of meetings to the satisfaction of the Head of Operations, cascading the relevant information to the team.
- Make and maintain strong working relationships within and beyond the Cathedral community.

## **6. Health and Safety**

- To supervise and ensure the safety of visitors, in conjunction with other relevant Cathedral staff on duty.
- To work in conjunction with those responsible for all Health and Safety and Fire matters, undertaking relevant training in health and safety procedures as required.
- Be a member of the Health and Safety Committee.
- Operate cleaning equipment, fire, security and alarm systems as required and be responsible for the weekly fire alarm test.
- Keep appropriate records especially the Cathedral accident register.

## **7. Security**

- To ensure that the Cathedral is staffed at all times
- To take custody of the Cathedral key cupboard and account for keys for all parts of the Cathedral; issuing keys to members of staff and tour guides, as appropriate, and keeping all necessary records.
- Responsible for the safe keeping of all items detailed on the Cathedral inventory and the regular auditing of its record.
- Responsible for the safe keeping of cash and cheques using established procedures for collection, recording and transfer to the finance team.
- To be part of the team who act as responsible key holders in the event of out of hours incidents such as fire, and intruder alarm activation.
- To ensure all significant incidents are reported, as appropriate, and security procedures relating to specific events or initiatives are regularly reviewed.
- Ensure the Sacristy door is locked when required.

## 8. Care of the Cathedral building

- To oversee the work of the Cathedral Cleaner to ensure that the cleanliness and order of the interior of the Cathedral and by liaising with the Gardening team, the overall appearance of the Cloisters, are presented to the highest standard at all times.
- Work with the Estates and Facilities Manager to co-ordinate and schedule maintenance work and contractors working in and around the building.
- Maintain the dignity of the Cathedral as a place of worship through ensuring the Verging team carry out all their duties with full care and attention and know how to operate various systems in place for interpretation and visitor welcome such as any touchscreens or art installations.
- Oversee the Cathedral flag flying protocols.
- Conduct regular observation of the equipment in use in the Cathedral, reporting malfunction, failure and breakage to the EFM.
- To keep the Sacristy in good order and all files, rota's and records up to date.



## The Ideal candidate:

Essential	Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Ability to act according to the Cathedral's core values of Joyfulness, Generosity, Inclusivity and Integrity.</b></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Knowledge and Experience</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of Church of England liturgy and its principles, and empathy with all aspects of its ethos</li> <li>• A sense of the value of well-ordered worship and its contribution to the Cathedral's wider ministry and mission</li> <li>• Ability to understand and carry out detailed liturgical and ceremonial duties</li> <li>• Be a communicant member of the Church of England or a denomination in communion with it.</li> <li>• Capable of contributing to the ordered conduct of the liturgy and the Cathedral's various events and activities through being part of the public face of the Cathedral when on duty</li> <li>• Previous management experience</li> <li>• Relevant, up to date Safeguarding training</li> <li>• Good understanding of security and health and safety</li> <li>• Current First Aid qualification or willingness to be trained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous experience of working as a verger in a Cathedral or large church environment</li> <li>• Experience of working in an environment where paid and voluntary staff work alongside one another</li> <li>• Experience of overseeing on-site contractors</li> <li>• Experience of working in a historic building</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent organisational skills, with an ability to plan, prioritise work and meet deadlines</li> <li>• Ability to work well under pressure</li> <li>• Ability to initiate, develop and implement good practice</li> <li>• Strong leadership and management skills, and experience of managing complex events/services</li> <li>• Understanding of safeguarding issues and practices</li> <li>• Good IT and administrative skills</li> <li>• Understanding of audio visual equipment and the principles of developing material for broadcasting on line.</li> <li>• Excellent communication skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The capacity to plan, implement and monitor an agreed budget (or willingness to acquire the financial skills necessary)</li> </ul>

**Personal attributes**

- Personal qualities necessary to supervise, motivate and enthuse other members of the Sacristy team
- Tact, diplomacy, courtesy, respect for others, and firmness in dealing with occasionally disruptive people
- Strong communication skills and ability to relate well to a variety of people, to staff, the congregation, volunteers and members of the general public
- Ability to work as a flexible and enthusiastic team member both within the Sacristy team and across the Cathedral, coupled with an ability to work independently and exercise individual initiative as required.
- Sufficient physical fitness and ability to lift and carry furniture, climb stairs, walk with dignity and stand unaided for significant periods of time.
- A good head for heights
- Understanding of, sympathy with and willingness to promote the aims and purposes of the Cathedral, its mission and ministry
- Ability to uphold and conform to the requirements of the Cathedral's Safeguarding policies

- Willing to learn new skills and undertake training

## What we can offer

As well as a beautiful working environment and the opportunity to work with a great team of people, we can offer:

### Contract

- Full time permanent contract.
- Three months probationary period.
- 40 hours per week, 8 hour working day on a rota basis / flexible working pattern including evenings, weekends and public holidays.
- 25 days holiday per year + 8 bank holidays.
- There are events which happen outside of the usual Cathedral opening hours and the post holder will be expected to be flexible and manage their hours along with other Verging team colleagues.

### Remuneration

- Salary £27,500 per annum.

### Pension

- The post-holder will be offered enrolment into the pension scheme.

## Further information and how to apply:

Please apply using the application form available on our website and ensure you attach a covering letter, outlining why you believe you would excel in this role. Please send them to the Dean's P.A by E. Mail to the following address: [dean.pa@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk](mailto:dean.pa@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk) to be received no later than **midnight Friday May 28<sup>th</sup> 2021**

Interviews are provisionally scheduled for **June 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> 2021 in Peterborough.**

- All employees are required to abide by the Safeguarding, Health & Safety, GDPR and other general Cathedral Policies.
- All Cathedral employees are required to undertake all appropriate training as and when it becomes available.
- You may be required to undertake other tasks as necessary for the smooth running of the Cathedral, as directed by the Chapter through the Dean.
- Peterborough Cathedral is an equal opportunities employer.
- Disclosure and Barring Service. This role will be conditional upon receipt of a satisfactory enhanced DBS check.

The Chapter of Peterborough Cathedral take the safety of everyone within the Cathedral very seriously and expects that everyone will work within the Cathedral safeguarding policy. In particular, the Cathedral expects anyone who becomes aware of a safeguarding risk or of actual abuse, to immediately raise this with the Cathedral Safeguarding Officer or the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) or Assistant DSA.