



# PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL



Application pack for  
Assistant Verger and  
Precinct Officer



# Introduction to the role and working at Portsmouth Cathedral

Thank you for your interest in the role of Temporary Assistant Verger and Precincts Officer.

The opportunity arises to provide cover while one of our Assistant Vergers and Precinct Officers provides maternity cover for our Head Verger and Precinct Manager.

Our Vision and Strategy sets out ambitious plans to continue to be a focus of Christian worship in the Diocese of Portsmouth while increasing our impact as a community hub and improving our financial sustainability through commercial events and an enhanced visitor experience. We are a small, but dedicated team who are committed to both honouring our history and building to be an even stronger and more vibrant cathedral for the community.

You will be joining a team comprised of the Acting Head Verger and Precincts Manager and the other Assistant Verger and Precincts Officer.

This is an exciting time to join the Portsmouth team. While the vergers continue to focus on supporting the Ministry Team to prepare and deliver divine worship, they also support commercial events held in the Cathedral alongside the work of the Visitor Experience Manager to ensure the Cathedral is open for all to visit.

In their role as Precincts Officers, they help care of the fabric of the Cathedral, Cathedral Green, and buildings such as Cathedral House and support the work of the Chief Operating Officer in relation to Health and Safety.

Malina, our Head Verger, writes 'I can honestly say that every day is different. Our role ranges from preparing the Cathedral for daily services, to resetting the Cathedral for concerts of 300-400 people and then back again. We are also the face of the Cathedral to visitors and working with our group of terrific volunteer Welcomers and Guides we ensure that everyone who comes into the Cathedral receives a warm welcome and finds this a safe place.'

It is a challenging and interesting multi-faceted role.

To give you a taste of what we do here is a video of them setting up the Cathedral at super speed - [watch on Facebook](#)

For an informal conversation about the post, please do not hesitate to contact Malina through [malina.green@portsmoutcathedral.org.uk](mailto:malina.green@portsmoutcathedral.org.uk)

## Benefits of working at Portsmouth Cathedral include...

- Generous annual leave entitlement of 27 days per annum plus public holidays from the first year of employment.
- Generous employer pension contributions of 7.5%.
- Flexible working arrangements considered including job shares.
- Commitment to professional development and training.
- Cash health plan

# Assistant Verger and Precinct Officer

## Job Description

<b>Reports to:</b>	Head Verger and Precinct Manager
<b>Direct Reports:</b>	None
<b>Indirect Reports:</b>	Cathedral volunteers, including the Head Guide and Volunteer Archivist, internal and external partners, agencies, and suppliers
<b>Location of Role:</b>	Under usual circumstances, the role is primarily based at Portsmouth Cathedral, but may require some travel. Some home working arrangements may be considered.
<b>Hours/Contract:</b>	Up to 40 hours per week. Contract – up to 11 months, subject to one month's notice

### Job purpose

Our Assistant Verger and Precinct Officers (AVPOs) have a wide range of duties which include: the careful setting up and delivery of all liturgical matters; ensuring a welcoming, clean, and safe environment for all working in, visiting, or using the Cathedral and Cathedral House; organising a well-supplied and well-ordered Sacristy; and close liaison with Cathedral staff as appropriate, to ensure the day-to-day smooth running of the Cathedral for all users.

The AVPOs are responsible, under the direction of the Head Verger and Precinct Manager, to help with the day-to-day management of the Cathedral, Cathedral House, and its environs.

Each AVPO will also liaise closely with the other AVPOs and volunteers to manage all services, events and activities safely and effectively in the Cathedral, Cathedral House, and precinct.

### Key internal relationships

- The Canon Precentor, the Chief Operating Officer, the Events Manager, the Office Manager and the Visitor Experience Manager.
- Other Cathedral staff and volunteers especially Welcomers and Guides.

### Key external relationships

- Diocese and parishes using the Cathedral for services and/or events.
- Organisations and businesses who hire Cathedral space.
- Visiting choirs and schools.





## Qualifications/Experience

The successful candidate will have appropriate basic education qualifications and some direct experience of verging or similar church support work. Sympathy with the Christian faith is expected together with experience of worship. An understanding of the Anglican tradition would be an advantage as would the delivery of events. Good social skills are essential as is the ability to work as part of a team as well as on your own initiative at times. You will be well organised and have general IT and administration skills. The ability to work closely with and relate well to all Cathedral staff, ministry team, congregation, volunteers, visitors, and members of the general public will also be required.

## Accountability

The Assistant Verger and Precinct Officers (AVPOs) are responsible to and under the direction of the Head Verger and Precinct Manager with regard to Sacristy, ceremonial, and liturgical matters; and in respect of all administrative and general matters, including all aspects of Health and Safety and assisting with the care and fabric of the Cathedral and Cathedral House.

The Verger team also work closely with the Ministry Team, Events Manager, Learning and Schools Officer, Visitor Experience Manager and Digital Marketing Manager to assist them in their work.

## Key responsibilities



## Worship and Liturgy

- Work closely under the supervision of the Head Verger and Precinct Manager to see that all services (including planning, set-up, execution including live-streaming and take down) are carried out to the highest standards.
- Prepare liturgical readings and set out daily, weekly, and seasonal service books, ensuring everything is prepared for proper delivery of daily, Sunday and special services and events well in advance. Assist in keeping up-to-date prayer lists.
- Support the Head Verger and Precinct Manager to maintain an efficient and well-stocked Sacristy, ordering altar requisites and keeping to an agreed budget.
- Undertake all usual ceremonial duties traditionally required of a Cathedral Verger including processional duties, sound, lighting, and Audio Visual/streaming and to be flexible in working times at and around major Christian festivals.
- Under the direction of the Head Verger and Precinct Manager help to ensure the security, care and repair of the plate, vestments, frontals, linen, etc.

## Learning and Engagement including Visitor Experience and Events

- Work closely with the Visitor Experience Manager and Learning and Schools Officer to support the visitor the programme of events for both visitors and schools. This will include the set-up of educational trails.
- Work with existing and future staff to help support the delivery of internal and external events, concerts and activities.

# Precincts' Management including Security and Health and Safety

- Work closely with the Head Verger and Precincts Manager to ensure the effective delivery of the Cathedral's Health and Safety Policy.
- Help to maintain the effective security of the Cathedral and Cathedral House as appropriate. Open and close the Cathedral and Cathedral House at the appointed times when on duty. Be responsible for the proper management of all keys, key safes, and any other security systems as appropriate.
- Understand the fire and security alarms and other firefighting equipment and assist with their testing (alarms weekly), checking and servicing as required under the Cathedral policy and maintain appropriate records.
- Understand the sound and lighting control systems and have a working knowledge of the operation of the heating systems, and any other appropriate plant and equipment.
- Liaise with appropriate clergy or lay minsters, Cathedral staff and/or external agents regarding seating plans, establishing specific set-up formats, and positioning for Cathedral furniture. Organising and directly executing its placing and storage both for services and for events managed by the Events Manager
- Be responsible for the cleanliness and safe environment of the Cathedral and Cathedral House as appropriate. Liaise with and direct the cleaners, and our volunteer cleaners to facilitate this.
- Work closely with the Head Verger and Precinct Manager and the Office Manager on all maintenance and minor repairs, to include daily and weekly inspections of the Cathedral and Cathedral House and to carry out and/or facilitate the repair by external contractors of repairs as required and directed by the Head Verger and Precinct Manager
- Undertake risk assessments for activities taking place in the Cathedral and Cathedral House as directed by the Head Verger and Precinct Manager, ensuring outside organisations have provided their own risk assessments where appropriate and that PAT testing of any electrical equipment brought in from outside has been undertaken.
- Work with the Head Verger and Precinct Manager to ensure evacuation and emergency procedures are kept up to date and assist with the organisation of physical and table-top exercises or actual fire drills as required.
- Be responsible, in the absence of, or as delegated by, the Head Verger, for First Aid provision within the Cathedral and Cathedral House and ensure that appropriate Accident and Incident forms are completed as necessary and delivered to the Chief Operating Officer as required.
- Ensure that the Cathedral clock and chimes sound correctly and liaise with Cathedral staff, Tower Captain, Steeple Keeper, and clock engineers as required.

## Related core responsibilities

- Work with the Head Verger and Precincts Manager to ensure effective communication within and from the department, so that colleagues are aware of their duties for each service, including liaison with other Cathedral staff, and volunteers including the Churchwardens.
- Attend planning meetings where required with those booking or using the Cathedral and Cathedral House for the better fulfilment of the responsibilities of the day-to-day management of the Cathedral and Cathedral House.

## General

- Be approachable and welcoming in providing effective support and contact for volunteers, visitors and groups who use the Cathedral and Cathedral House.
- Undertake any other work, within the exigencies of the post, and as directed by the Head Verger and Precincts Manager or their delegate as appropriate for the operational efficiency of the Cathedral.
- To assist with dealing with general enquiries to the Cathedral.

## Finance

- Record and monitor all financial transactions as appropriate, ensuring the safe keeping of property and money as required. Specifically collect and securely handle and store money from donation boxes and, collections from services in accordance with written procedures. This is undertaken in pairs, one of whom is normally a verger.

## Staff Meetings / Communications & Administration

- Attend Departmental, Staff and other meetings, including those with external organisations, as appropriate.
- Fill in the Cathedral Registers and carry out related and similar administrative duties. Oversee the Baptism, Banns of Marriage and Burial Registers and ensure all statutory paperwork and records are kept up to date.
- Ensure daily congregational numbers and communicants are entered in service registers and monitored for Annual Statistics for the Diocese and Church of England.
- Keep the Cathedral and Cathedral House notice boards (both physical and electronic) accurate, tidy, and up to date.

## Person specification

We welcome applicants from all backgrounds. You do not need to have worked for a cathedral or church before, and you do not need a degree to apply for this role.

### Essential experience and skills

- At least one year's experience as a church or cathedral verger or in a similar role.
- A flexible attitude and willingness to take on a range of duties including practical 'hands-on' work.
- Attention to detail and an ability to assess priorities including when under pressure.
- Understanding of liturgy or willingness to learn.
- Ability to be a good team player and work collaboratively with Ministry Team and Lay Staff.
- Good administrative and IT skills.
- Good communication and social skills.
- Good understanding of the importance of managing security and health and safety.
- Have an open and welcoming attitude to all including volunteers and members of the general public.
- A trained First Aider (or willing to be trained upon appointment to an appropriate level).
- Willing to learn new skills and undertake training.
- Willing to work alone.
- Ability to work flexibly over seven days and evenings including holiday periods.

### Desirable experience

- Be a communicant member of the Church of England.
- Previous experience in a liturgical capacity.
- Experience of working in an environment where paid and voluntary staff work side by side.
- Experience of delivering events.
- Experience of caretaking duties.

### Personal qualities

- Excellent interpersonal skills, in particular warmth, tact, diplomacy, discretion, and imagination.
- In sympathy with the ethos and aims of the Cathedral as a Christian organisation.
- Highly collaborative.
- Ability to lift and carry furniture, climb stairs, walk, and stand unaided for significant periods of time and work at height.
- Ability to work with senior level colleagues and with the general public.
- Committed to equal opportunities and inclusivity.
- Committed to upholding the highest standards of safeguarding practice.



# Terms and Conditions of Appointment

The role is normally worked over five days on a flexible rota including weekends. Work will regularly include evenings, weekends, and public holidays to fulfil operational requirements. Overtime will be paid for additional hours to cover externally funded events. If an internal event, the payment may be time off in lieu. This may be up to 2-4 hours per week but will vary.

- Hours. A temporary post of between 30 and 40 hours per week.
- Salary. The salary is based on £12.32 per hour.
- Pension. Staff are eligible to join the Church Workers Pension Fund (contributory: employer 7.5%, employee and 1% of gross salary).
- Safeguarding. The Cathedral takes the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults very seriously, and practises Safer Recruitment for all roles (both paid and voluntary), enhanced DBS for specific roles, and face-to-face or online training as required.
- The Cathedral records and manages the checks and courses taken by staff and volunteers to ensure that DBS renewals take place and training is refreshed as required by each role.
- This role will require an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.
- Data Protection. Ensuring that the Cathedral collects, stores, and deletes information in compliance with current data protection legislation and retention guidance is important to us and the sign of a healthy organisation.
- Staff and volunteers in certain roles will be required to complete GDPR/DPA on-line training to help ensure the Cathedral handles all personal and contractual data entrusted to it in a proper and legal manner.
- This role requires the post-holder to undertake GDPR Practitioner training which will be provided by Portsmouth Cathedral.
- First Aid Training and other training will also be provided as required.
- The post will be subject to a two-month probationary period, during which the appointment may be terminated by either party giving to the other one week's notice. Notice after the probationary period is one month by either side.
- The annual leave allowance is 25 days plus two 'given' days over Christmas to provide cover, and all statutory public holidays (which may need to be taken in lieu).
- The post is subject to informal and formal procedures for review and appraisal. Training and development are discussed as part of this process.

Other general terms and conditions of employment are set out in the Staff Handbook, which is issued to all Cathedral employees on appointment. A copy will be available for inspection at interview if requested.

# Application process and interview



**For an informal discussion about this role please contact:**

Malina Green,  
Head Verger and Precinct Manager  
[malina.green@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk](mailto:malina.green@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk)

**For any questions regarding the application process please contact:**

[vacancies@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk](mailto:vacancies@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk)

## Applications

To apply for this role, please send a completed application form, Recruitment Monitoring Form, and covering letter setting out what attracts you to the post and why you believe you are the right person for it, to Liz Snowball, Dean's EA and Cathedral Office Manager, via email:

[vacancies@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk](mailto:vacancies@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk)

**Applications must be received by 11.00pm on Monday 6 May 2024.**

Late applications will not be accepted. Portsmouth Cathedral is an Equal Opportunities Employer.

## Interviews

Interviews, in person, will be held week commencing 13 May 2024. Please let us know if that is not possible for you.

Reasonable travelling expenses will be paid.