

A photograph of Rochester Cathedral, showing its prominent spire with a blue clock face, a large Gothic window, and other towers against a cloudy sky.

Rochester CATHEDRAL

Growing in Christ since AD604

Recruitment Application Pack Assistant Verger

Information for Candidates

The Role

We are looking for a self-motivated person to join our busy team of Vergers. The work of a Verger is varied, it includes liturgical duties preparing for and supporting clergy conducting services; security of the Cathedral's buildings; and practical, day-to-day, support for all events in the Cathedral which is open 365 days a year. The Assistant Verger will work within a team of Vergers and will report to the Head Verger.

The Verger team is the first line of contact for most visitors, including visiting dignitaries, Diocesan office and event organisers.

Hours of work

The hours are full time 40 hours per week on a six-month fixed-term basis. The post-holder will be expected to work flexibly, including evenings, weekends and public holidays as required, in shifts.

Salary

The salary is £19,760 per annum, pro-rata.

Annual Leave

The annual holiday entitlement is 33 days which includes the 8 public holidays. The leave year begins on 1st September – 31st August. This is pro-rata for part time hours or fixed term contracts.

Pension

The post-holders will be eligible to join the Church of England Workers' Pension Scheme and will be automatically enrolled in the scheme from the commencement of employment, subject to meeting eligibility requirements. This is a contributory scheme. The current arrangement is that the Chapter pay 5.5% and the employee must pay a minimum contribution of 2.5%.

DBS Requirement

Not required.

Safeguarding

Rochester Cathedral is committed to attracting and recruiting to, training, managing and promoting a culture of safeguarding, especially for children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Cathedral has adopted Church of England policies and frameworks on Promoting a Safe Church (2017); Safeguarding Learning and Development (2021) and Safer Recruitment and People Management (2021). Every member of our team is recruited according to these policies and is required to complete safeguarding training at the appropriate level in order to create, develop and maintain a safe environment and culture for all.

Values

All Cathedral employees are expected to work as a team to ensure the Cathedral fulfils its mission – Growing in Christ since AD604.

Job Description

Job Title: Assistant Verger (six-month fixed term contract)

Line Manager: Head Verger

Job Purpose: The post-holder will contribute to the worship and mission of Rochester Cathedral by supporting the Head Verger and the Dean's Verger, and, under their direction to work as a supportive member of the Cathedral Vergers and Cleaning Team. Your line manager is the Head Verger; for matters relating to your liturgical duties, you report to the Dean's Verger.

Context: The Verger Team is responsible for the general care, security and presentation of the Cathedral building on a day-to-day basis as well as for the more traditional liturgical duties. As the full-time presence in the Cathedral, vergers have a front-line role in welcoming all visitors and users of the building and responding to their needs. This can also entail dealing (within agreed management guidelines) with those on the margins of society who can sometimes show difficult and challenging behaviour.

The vergers work closely with the Liturgy and Music Department, which is responsible for the majority of the services in the Cathedral, and with other staff or organisations arranging events in the Cathedral, with the intention being the efficient and coordinated management and delivery of these services and events.

A key role of the Verger is to unlock and lock the Cathedral on a rotational basis, covering the routine services at the beginning and end of each day, throughout the week. All Vergers are required to share in covering for all Services and Events throughout the year., whether within or outside normal working hours and the regular rota will include work at the weekends. All Vergers are expected to be available for major services such as ordinations, Easter and Christmas.

All Cathedral employees are expected to be in sympathy with the Christian faith and are required to work together to support Chapter in its stated aim of '*Growing in Christ since AD604*'.

DBS

Requirement: Not required

Safeguarding: Rochester Cathedral is committed to attracting and recruiting to, training, managing and promoting a culture of safeguarding, especially for children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Cathedral has adopted Church of England policies and frameworks on Promoting a Safe Church (2017);

Safeguarding Learning and Development (2021) and Safe Recruitment and People Management (2021). Every member of our team is recruited according to these policies and is required to complete safeguarding training at the appropriate level in order to create, develop and maintain a safe environment and culture for all.

The following is not an exhaustive list of the tasks but is indicative of the main responsibilities.

Operations

- Provide support to any individual or agency using the Cathedral for a religious or secular event.
- To assist in the movement and arrangement of furniture and equipment to prepare for different events.
- To be responsible for the removal of cash donations from the offertory boxes and for the security thereafter.
- To be responsible for the care of plate and Cathedral valuables.
- Liaise as necessary with visitors in terms of answering queries or dealing with those needing assistance.

Liturgy:

- Preparation for services and assistance to clergy and the congregation.
- Care of vestments and Communion vessels.
- Support to Services in the capacity of Verger including ceremonial duties.

Security & Safety

- To be responsible for the security of the Cathedral including the daily routine of unlocking and locking.
- To be responsible for the operation of the Cathedral's fire and intruder alarms.
- To be responsible for the safe evacuation of the Cathedral in the event of a fire alarm or other emergency.
- To be responsible for the safety of all visitors, volunteers and employees using the Cathedral in terms of the building fabric and specific activities (within guidelines produced by the Health and Safety Officer) and being available to help with difficult situations with individuals if they arise (within management guidelines).
- To act as a First Aider at Work (after receipt of suitable training).

Communication

- Attend verger team meetings and other Cathedral staff meetings as required.
- Develop good communication and positive working relationships with other members of the department, clergy and Cathedral staff and volunteers.

Other:

- Promote equal opportunities and diversity in the work of the vergers team.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation and statutory codes of practice, as advised.
- Ensure compliance with the Cathedral’s safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Participate in the arrangements for performance review and appraisal.
- Ensure that professional skills are regularly updated through participation in training and development activities.
- Any other reasonable duties and responsibilities as may be required by Chapter.

Person Specification

| | Essential / Desirable |
|--|------------------------------|
| Values | |
| Understanding of and enthusiasm for the Cathedral’s overall mission | Essential |
| In sympathy with the Christian faith | Essential |
| Education & Training | |
| Good general standard of attainment in English and Maths. | Essential |
| First Aider at Work qualification | Desirable |
| Knowledge & Experience | |
| Knowledge and experience of safeguarding procedures and protocols | Essential |
| Experience of working with the public | Essential |
| Experience of working with volunteers | Essential |
| Excellent interpersonal and communication skills | Essential |
| Experience of managing the logistics of events in a public building | Desirable |
| Knowledge of Health & Safety requirements in the workplace. | Essential |
| Competencies | |
| Understanding of the distinctive ethos of the Cathedral as a place of worship, a concert venue and a tourist attraction | Essential |
| Commitment to ensuring the Cathedral’s safeguarding policies and procedures are applied consistently and understood by all those involved in the Cathedral’s life. | Essential |
| Willingness to undergo relevant training as required | Essential |
| Excellent organisational and time management skills, as well as meticulous attention to detail | Essential |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Excellent interpersonal and communication skills and the ability to work collaboratively as part of a team in an approachable and constructive manner. | Essential |
| Ability to be patient, assertive and diplomatic as appropriate, exercising compassion and understanding with vulnerable or disadvantaged people who visit the Cathedral, without encouraging a dependency culture or being away from place of duty and thereby compromising security. | Essential |
| Ability to cope with a varied and demanding workload. | Essential |
| Willingness to work flexibly, including evenings, weekends and public holidays as required. | Essential |
| Physically fit for the work involved in configuring the Cathedral for different services, concerts and other events. | Essential |
| Understanding of the Christian year | Desirable |

Rochester

The Cathedral sits at the heart of historic Rochester, opposite the Norman Rochester Castle and only 200 metres from the River Medway. Rochester is a busy town with exceptional heritage, an independent high street, and a busy night-time economy. It has excellent transport links to London (35 minutes by train to St. Pancras) and the south coast.

The Cathedral is the seat of the Bishop of Rochester and the cathedral church of the Diocese of Rochester. The Diocese of Rochester includes 268 parishes in Medway, west Kent and in the London Boroughs of Bromley and Bexley.

Rochester lies in the Medway unitary authority area and is one of the five Medway towns, the others being Chatham, Strood, Gillingham and Rainham. Over half of the unitary authority area is rural in nature. Because of its strategic location by the major crossing of the River Medway, it has made a wide and significant contribution to Kent, and to England, dating back thousands of years, as evident in the siting of Watling Street by the Romans and by the Castle and Cathedral and the Chatham naval dockyard and its associated defences.

Medway is one of the boroughs included in the Thames Gateway development scheme. It is also the home of Universities at Medway, a tri-partite collaboration of the University of Greenwich, the University of Kent and Canterbury Christ Church University on a single campus in Chatham, together with the University for the Creative Arts, which has a campus in Rochester.

Our History

Rochester Cathedral was founded in AD604 and is the second oldest cathedral in England. Much of the current building is Norman and the earliest parts were built by Bishop Gundulf in the late 11th century (he was also responsible for the construction of Rochester Castle and the White Tower of London). After a serious fire in 1137, the Cathedral was rebuilt in the Romanesque style, and it is this part (from 1140-60) that is the Nave today. Further building began in the 1180's, when the Eastern end was remodelled in the Gothic style. In the 1340's Bishop Hamo de Hythe added a central tower

and spire and redecorated the Quire. He also added the Library doorway, with its superb carved surround. From this date, no further major building was added but there was substantial underpinning to the South Quire transept between 1825-1840, by Lewis Cottingham, which stabilised the building.

The Cathedral was established as a Benedictine foundation by Bishop Gundulf in 1083 and it remained as such until 1541. The ruins of the cloister and other monastic buildings form the backdrop to the Cathedral gardens. The Cathedral played an important part in the struggles of King John and the Barons, being used as a stable during the siege of the Castle. It was again used by the army during the Civil War and each of these invasions by secular forces left their mark, either through subsequent rebuilding or through loss of paintings and decorations.

The Cathedral's Crypt, Library and Vestry were extensively restored as part of a Heritage Lottery Funded Project, Hidden Treasures, Fresh Expressions. The £6.8 million development was completed in 2017. The newly restored Crypt provides generous new spaces for both internal and commercial exhibitions/events/activities and is where our excellent café is located serving a range of refreshments to visitors on a daily basis.

The Cathedral is home to *Textus Roffensis* (the Book of Rochester). Compiled in Rochester around 1123 *Textus* contains English laws going back to the 7th century, from the first Christian kingdom in Kent in the time after the mission of St Augustine in AD597. In the words of historian Michael Wood "it is the foundational document of English law, which along with our language and literature, is our greatest legacy to the world".

Governance

The Cathedral is governed by the Cathedrals Measure of 2021 and by its own Constitution, which conforms to that Measure. The care of the fabric of the Cathedral is governed by the Care of Cathedrals Measure of 2011.

The head of the Cathedral is the Dean. The Dean is supported by a Chapter, consisting currently of four members of clergy (two Residentiary Canons and two Canons) and four Lay Canons who were recruited for their skills and expertise in specific areas of Cathedral life. The senior lay member of staff is the Chapter Clerk-Executive Director who is also a member of Chapter. Chapter is responsible for leadership, strategy and policy for the Cathedral. Chapter is also responsible for all the statutory duties of corporate governance, including mission and worship within the Cathedral; good financial planning and control; health and safety; safeguarding; human resources; and care of the fabric. Chapter meets monthly.

The Cathedral Council is a statutory body that meets four times each year and acts as an advisory and consultative body that supports the work of Chapter and ensures accountability to the wider community and the Diocese. It receives the Annual Report and Accounts and ensures that the Cathedral fulfils its legal responsibilities. Council members are drawn from within the Cathedral community and from the local Council and Educational establishments in the Diocese, thus ensuring a wide range of high-quality advisors for the Cathedral.

The College of Canons is a statutory body of the ordained and lay canons of the Cathedral. It receives the Annual Report and Accounts and meets annually to review the year and offer advice and guidance to Chapter. The College offers informed opinions from across the Diocese to Chapter.

The Fabric Advisory Committee is a statutory body responsible for ensuring that the Cathedral's fabric is preserved in accordance with the rules set down in the Care of Cathedrals Measure 2011. The committee consists of experts in the conservation and repair of historic buildings and artefacts and is supported by the Cathedral architect and archaeologist. It meets quarterly.

The Finance Risk and Audit Committee advises Chapter on matters relating to finance, investments, property portfolio, and risk. It consists of three voluntary members, recruited for their financial expertise, the Dean and two other members of Chapter and the Chapter Clerk-Executive Director. The committee meets monthly.

The Cathedral Trust exists to support the Cathedral through raising funds to promote its work. Its current main purpose is to raise funds for the Cathedral to ensure that its missions can be sustained and to assist with the upkeep of the fabric and maintenance of its musical traditions. It meets quarterly to plan the fund-raising campaigns. The Trust's Patron is the Countess of Wessex and Jools Holland is Music Patron. The Trust members are high profile individuals from across the Diocese.

The Association of the Friends of Rochester Cathedral is a body dedicated to supporting the fabric of the Cathedral through fund raising and endowment income.

The Cathedral Forum is an informal body that meets quarterly as a congregational group to discuss matters relating to the Cathedral family and worship. Two members of the Forum are also Cathedral Council members, and this provides a useful link between the statutory body and the congregation.

Chapter is also supported by the Health and Safety committee, which includes volunteer members with specialist expertise. The committee meets quarterly to review all aspects of Health and Safety across the Cathedral and to make decisions as to training and any matters requiring attention.

Resources and Finance

Our Annual Report and Accounts are available on our website (www.rochester-cathedral.org) and these show that the Cathedral has a general income in excess of £1.3million. This relatively small income means that all resources must be carefully husbanded, and that use must be within mission and strategic guidelines.

As a free to enter Cathedral, our aim to encourage visitor giving and we have introduced more prominent offertory boxes and contactless donation boxes. This has increased the gift income by about 40%.

Music

Music is an integral part of the worship at the Cathedral. The top line of the Cathedral Choir is currently made up of 20 boy and girl choristers most of whom attend King's Rochester School.

The adult professional singers of the Cathedral Choir comprise six Principal Lay Clerks supported by a pool of Deputy Lay Clerks. There is also a Voluntary Choir (which lead the services on various occasions during the year) and a Children's Choir which offers opportunities for local young people to take part in choral singing, as part of the Cathedral's community music programme.

The Cathedral is committed to excellence in music and an Endowment Fund has been created with the intention to raise sufficient capital to support the cost of music in the future - the Endowment Fund currently stands at over £1.3 million.

Staff and Volunteers

The Cathedral staff team is small but dedicated. The team is led by the Chapter Clerk-Executive Director, with heads of each department reporting directly to him. The Cathedral is also supported by a team of over 370 volunteers, who offer a wide range of expertise, time and service to support Cathedral life and mission. They are led by a Volunteer Manager. The small team of volunteers who work in the café form an enthusiastic body dedicated to offering great customer service.

Equality Statement

The Cathedral's Chapter recognises the benefits of a diverse workforce and is committed to providing a working environment that is free from discrimination. The Chapter will seek to promote the principles of equality and diversity in all its dealings with employees, workers, job applicants, clients, customers, suppliers, contractors, recruitment agencies and the public. All employees and those who act on the Chapter's behalf are required to adhere to this policy when undertaking their duties or when representing the Chapter in any other guise.

Recruitment Process

Rochester Cathedral is committed to Safe Recruiting and Working Practice in line with the Church of England Policy of 2021.

The closing date for applications is: **5pm on Friday 26th November 2021.**

Applications should be made on the application form on the Cathedral website which can be found here: <https://www.rochestercathedral.org/work-with-us> the application form should be accompanied by a short letter outlining your suitability for the role. Completed applications should be returned, by email to: recruitment@rochestercathedral.org stating 'Assistant Verger job application' in the subject box. **We cannot accept CVs, no recruitment agencies please.**

Interviews – date to be confirmed. If you would like to have an informal discussion about the post, please email Simon Lace: simon.lace@rochestercathedral.org who will arrange a suitable time for a telephone conversation. The interview process will include a tour of the Garth House and the Cathedral along with a competency-based interview.

Appointment

Appointment will be subject to:

- Evidence of your right to work in the UK
- Proof of identity
- Two satisfactory references
- An appropriate health declaration
- Completion of the Church of England core safeguarding learning pathways training.

Accessibility

If you require any reasonable adjustments to be made for you to attend the interview, please let us know.

Covid-19

Considering the ongoing situation with regards to COVID 19 the Cathedral will follow all Government advice prevailing at the time of the planned interviews and will take all necessary actions to make a safe environment for candidates attending interviews. The Cathedral's preference is to hold face to face interviews but will reserve the right to change the structure of the interviews which could be utilising cloud platforms such as Zoom. Candidates will be advised one week in advance of the interviews if this form of media will be used. For those without access to such platforms alternative arrangement will be made.