



## ROLE PROFILE

# Head Virger

(Manager of the Virger Team)

# Canterbury Cathedral

# Welcome from the Dean

**Thank you for your interest in Canterbury Cathedral.**

It is an exciting time to join our Cathedral community. We recently became a formally registered charity with the Charity Commission; our new Strategic Plan to see the Cathedral's mission and ministry expand and develop over the next ten years has just launched; and we work with a new understanding of human connectedness and the need for kindness and care, particularly in the face of climate emergency and social and political instability.

We want Canterbury Cathedral to be a fully inclusive, accessible and safe place for all; offering a warm hospitality to everyone we encounter. We are committed to respectful pastoral ministry to all, and to the robust safeguarding and protection of children, young people, and vulnerable adults. Safeguarding is a core priority, and something that all of us are responsible for.

Today, our Cathedral community is drawn from local people and Christians from across the Diocese of Canterbury and the worldwide Anglican Communion, from visitors and tourists, from refugees and those cut off from society through exclusion, as well as thousands who join us online for worship. Here we are drawn together in faith and wonder. Like medieval pilgrims to Canterbury, we find the Cathedral to be a place of miracle and transformation where we encounter the presence of Jesus Christ.

It is a truly special opportunity and a rare privilege to be a part of our Cathedral community; sharing its history with others, supporting our ministry, and contributing to the ongoing story of this place. We hope that, like us, you will be inspired by both the heritage and the extraordinarily rich contemporary life of this place and will want to fully participate.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which reads 'David Monteith'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the bottom of the name.

*The Very Reverend Dr David Monteith,  
Dean of Canterbury*





## Job description

**Post:** Head Virger (Manager of the Virger Team)

**Responsible to:** Canon Precentor/Head of Worship and Events

**Responsibilities:** Line manager to Senior Virgers, Virgers and Casual Assistant Virgers, Manager to volunteer Chaplains, Stewards, Holy Stickers, Flower Arrangers and Linen Laundry Team.

**Summary of post:** The Head Virger is the team leader who sets the tone and standards on the floor of the cathedral and throughout services and events to display the Cathedral's values and deliver its strategic plan.

This includes responsibility for curating worship, supporting both Cathedral and external services in all their many forms; delivering and overseeing the provision of effective and seamless pastoral care in and around the Cathedral and its precincts; providing support, collaboration and seamless liaison in the delivery of events by other teams.

Supporting the General Lodge Manager and the constables in providing an out of hours operational response.

The postholder will be required to live onsite.

**Hours of Work:** 37.5 (including weekend and evening working)



## Principal tasks

The Virger team works 7 days a week, 365 days of the year, covering all services, activities and events taking place on the Cathedral Floor. It is a team that forms a focal point for our pastoral support and safeguarding for those we encounter who are vulnerable or in need, acting as a central hub in the daily running of the Cathedral and facilitating the work of all other teams inside the Cathedral.

The post will be the link between worship, events, visitors, fabric matters, ensuring the ethos of the Cathedral and the welcome the Cathedral provides is visible to all.

The Virgers Team is at the forefront of delivering on our vision; *‘as a holy place shaped by the rhythms of Christian community life and prayer we will be a sanctuary for all, where hope is nurtured and inspired.’* This post will play a pivotal role in creating our Cathedral of Sanctuary.

The Head Virger ensures that their team works alongside the Visitor Experience team in articulating the Cathedral’s mission and ministry to regular worshippers and casual visitors alike.

## Leading the Team

- Management and supervision of the Virgers team. This includes preparation of five-year Business Plans, annual appraisals, performance monitoring, allocation of tasks, recruiting, training and briefing to ensure that the team is run effectively.
- Oversight of all the services and events within the Cathedral working closely with the Senior Virgers to ensure each service or event has the correct preparation and support.
- Organisation of the staff rota to ensure correct staffing levels are maintained, the needs of the Cathedral diary are reflected, there is an appropriate allocation of duties and that there is senior cover throughout the week and at significant services.





- Working closely with the Canon Precentor, the Head of Events and Canon Missioner to implement and develop the Strategic Plan particularly as it relates to worship, welcome and providing a safe space for all.
- Ensure a visible and helpful Virger presence on the Cathedral Floor able to respond to the needs of clergy, staff and visitors including incidents and accidents.

### **Worship and Ceremonial**

- Participate in Cathedral services in keeping with the practices of the Church of England.
- Attend, or delegate to a Senior Virger planning meetings for all additional services and in collaboration with the Events Manager, supervise the necessary preparations and delivery for each of the services and events in the Cathedral.
- Be a proactive member of the Events Working Group contributing to the planning and review of both regular, seasonal and special services and events.

### **Ministry of Welcome**

- Support Canons and lead staff and volunteers in making the Cathedral a place of sanctuary for all.
- Manage the volunteer chaplaincy team and preparation of their rotas, ensure the team undertakes hourly prayers in the absence of a chaplain.
- Ensure consistency of a positive and supportive approach from all those working with the public including training and development of Virgers' welcoming skills.
- Work with clergy in maintaining and updating the Cathedral intercession list.



## Safeguarding

- Provide a pivotal role in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults working closely with the volunteer Chaplains and Cathedral Safeguarding Lead.
- Work with Chaplains to provide pastoral care for those in need and when required signpost to organisations able to assist.
- Actively participate in the Cathedral Safeguarding Executive Group and Welfare Working Group including any pastoral oversight groups that the Cathedral may establish.
- Actively promote a Safer Church for all and comply with the Cathedral's Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.
- Respond promptly to any concern suggesting harm to an adult, child, or young person and creating a culture of informed vigilance.

## Operational Leadership

- Attend monthly manager meetings, staff briefings and ensure representation of the Virger Team at the weekly operations meeting and other focused task groups as required and that information from such meetings is shared and cascaded to the team.
- Liaise with the Manager of the cleaning and portering team to ensure all operational needs are met for the set up and clear down of large services.
- Provide an on call operational management support service as required as part of the 24-hour security and risk management of the site.







- Be responsible as the 'Floor Manager' of the Cathedral during core operational opening hours, or delegate to a Senior Virger, dealing with emergencies, evacuations and incidents alongside the Constables.
- Ensure a working knowledge and compliance with the Cathedral's management and governance policies.

### **Care of Infrastructure and Fabric**

- Have oversight of the operation of the Cathedral's AV and live-streaming equipment.
- Work with the Archives team in the care and maintenance of Cathedral property and its loans.
- "Have pride in Place" by reducing clutter, maintaining the tidiness and condition of the Cathedral, furniture, vestments and linens.
- Undertake a regular inspection of the Cathedral and report issues relating to cleaning or the fabric to the relevant manager and ensure resolution.

### **General Administration**

- Keep all necessary registers and ensure they are completed: Service Registers, Loan Book, Inventory and Distinguished Visitors Book.
- Have oversight of all aspects of the Cathedral's sacristy needs, the management of the Cathedral plate and cash-handling in the Cathedral.
- Ensure any necessary supplies are available and in good condition for the Cathedral's needs.
- Effective budget setting and management of the budget for the Virgers.

## Health and Safety

- Ensure all Cathedral policies are adhered to and ensure the team has a well understood and working knowledge of them.
- Prepare appropriate risk assessments for the Cathedral ensuring that the building is safe for visitors, staff, worshippers and contractors.
- Attend the Health and Safety Working Group as required liaising with the Health and Safety Manager and Cathedral Constables regarding the security of the Cathedral and its contents.
- To be trained as a fire warden for the cathedral and assist with emergency evacuation of the cathedral when necessary.
- Ensure the Virgers are trained in emergency procedures and provide training updates to stewards and event volunteers as appropriate.
- Together with the Constables, act as a first point of contact for incidents and accidents and ensure all Virgers are trained and able to respond when First Aid is required.

## Additional Information

- The Cathedral has adapted a ten-year Strategic Plan which assumes ongoing reshaping and development so that aspects of this role may need to change over time following reflection and informal consultation.
- Undertake any other appropriate duties that the line manager, senior manager or Chapter may request from time to time.
- It is expected that the Head Virger will want to attend to their own ongoing professional development and will be part of the relevant networks of Cathedral Virgers, helping to develop best practice.
- Uniquely, the Archdeacon of Canterbury attends episcopal installations of diocesan bishops in the Southern Province, by mandate of the Archbishop of Canterbury. By tradition the Head Virger, or another Virger on their behalf from Canterbury, attends upon the Archdeacon at these services. The Head Virger may continue this tradition subject to the operational needs of the Cathedral being met.



## Person Specification

By embracing the Cathedral's Code of Conduct, demonstrate the commitment to creating a positive, inclusive and respectful community at Canterbury Cathedral, where everyone can flourish and contribute to making real in this place the gift of 'life in all its fullness'.

Integrity, Values and Behaviours	Essential/ Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sympathetic to the overall mission of the Cathedral, recognise the ambassadorial role for the Cathedral and have a willingness to work within the core values of the Cathedral.</li> <li>• A passion for the Christian message, heritage, and visitors.</li> <li>• Offer a hand of support and welcome to all with a genuine kindness and willingness to help.</li> <li>• Make time to listen and care for all, treating people with respect and courtesy.</li> <li>• Take responsibility for noticing those around us who are struggling.</li> </ul>	<p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p>
Knowledge, Experience, Skills and Aptitudes	Essential/ Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the Anglican Church, its liturgy, structure, practices and protocols, with an appreciation for different forms of worship and practice across the Church and in particular Cathedral ministry.</li> <li>• Excellent organisational skills with an ability to plan, prioritise and manage workloads under pressure and to handle last minute changes with a calm and positive attitude, coordinating approaches across the team.</li> <li>• Experience of working in large complex organisations, showing an ability to manage the complexity of demands posed by both a religious, conservation, tourist attraction and commercial environment.</li> <li>• Experience of leading and managing a team based on collaboration and motivation where difficulties and misunderstandings are dealt with responsibly.</li> <li>• Confident in working with a range of people from different backgrounds, showing strong and demonstrable leadership and people management skills.</li> <li>• A good clear and confident communicator not only with the team but with all staff, volunteers and visitors to the Cathedral, showing the aptitude to deliver excellent customer care and the ability to react positively to visitor feedback and to manage conflict effectively.</li> </ul>	<p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p>

Knowledge, Experience, Skills and Aptitudes (continued)	Essential/ Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to build strong effective relationships and positively influence stakeholders and so gain commitment of others to act and achieve outcomes.</li> <li>• Ability to deliver difficult messages constructively when required, putting in place measures to minimise the impact of actions and decisions on others.</li> <li>• Able to handle disruptive behaviour in an appropriate manner; able to separate out the person from the behaviour and to always show respect to the other person.</li> <li>• Experience of safeguarding within a Cathedral or Church context and providing pastoral care and support.</li> <li>• Focused thinker with the ability to think laterally and creatively find solutions.</li> <li>• Good IT skills and an interest in modern technology and innovation, with a commitment to incorporate technology where appropriate to manage the running of the team.</li> <li>• Financial competency and experience of budget management.</li> <li>• Demonstrable experience of providing clear concise reports tailored to the needs of the target audience.</li> <li>• First Aid Trained</li> <li>• Able to participate in a physically demanding job and an ability to work at height, climbing stairs and working in areas with uneven surfaces and challenging access.</li> <li>• Able to work flexibly including evenings and weekends and provide an on-call emergency operational management response.</li> </ul>	<p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>D</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p>



Personal Attributes	Essential/ Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An Anglican communicant or a communicant of a church in communion with the Church of England.</li> <li>• Able to show initiative and create, develop and lead a team towards a common vision as outlined in the strategic plan.</li> <li>• Mature, reliable and calm under pressure.</li> <li>• Able to work well in a multi-disciplinary team and keep an open mind to create a safe space in which to succeed and fail.</li> <li>• Professional and accountable approach to work with a high attention to detail and willingness to set high standards.</li> <li>• Caring and compassionate.</li> <li>• Positively and pro-actively support collective decision making and accept corporate decisions as binding, particularly when personal views may vary.</li> <li>• Recognise their own limitations and encourage others to build a community of compassion - support and encourage others so that they can thrive.</li> <li>• Seek to listen to all and encourage new and imaginative ideas and perspectives, and willingly explore different approaches for mutual benefit.</li> <li>• Loyal to colleagues and seek to follow through their words and deeds and delivering promises.</li> <li>• Flexible, being prepared to adapt and flex according to the needs of the cathedral at any given time.</li> <li>• Prepared to adapt and flex according to the needs of the cathedral at any given time.</li> </ul>	<p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>E</p>

Qualifications	Essential/ Desirable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Educated to senior school level or equivalent</li> <li>• Experience of working in a Cathedral environment or have equivalent skills that can translate to a Cathedral context.</li> <li>• First Aid Certificate</li> </ul>	<p>E</p> <p>E</p> <p>D</p>