



EGLWYS GADEIRIOL TYDDEWI ST DAVIDS CATHEDRAL

Croesawu ymwelwyr fel pererinion – Welcoming visitors as pilgrims

Appointment of Canons' Verger



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An Introduction from the Dean

Thank you for expressing an interest in the post of Canons' Verger – the second of our two full time Vergers – at St Davids Cathedral.

To come to St Davids is to know yourself on holy ground. Since the community formed by Wales' patron saint first settled here in the late sixth century, people coming to this beautiful valley a stone's throw from Pembrokeshire's stunning coast have found themselves able to draw near to God. Today pilgrims and visitors still come in their hundreds of thousands and continue to insist this is one of the 'thin places' of the world.

The present Cathedral was begun in 1181. Its glorious architecture, from transitional Norman to late Perpendicular with Victorian renovation, is the setting for a community grounded in the rhythm of daily worship, on which we build a broad ministry of hospitality. The Vergers play a vital role in enabling us to offer our best to all who come, whether for parish, cathedral and diocesan services, concerts, school activities, or other events, or as visitors from far and wide. Our aim is to 'welcome visitors as pilgrims' so each may have the chance to reflect on their life's journey and to respond to Jesus Christ's call, 'Follow me', that he extends to us all.



We are looking for someone who is committed to fitting into and working within our current team, in support of the Dean's Verger (Head Verger). We would expect this person to be:

- a person of faith, committed to serving the mission and ministry of God's church – perhaps with some prior verging experience, though this is not essential.
- a generous-hearted team player, able to work with a broad range of traditions
- well organised, attentive to detail, while flexible and practically constructive
- grounded in Anglican liturgy, and willing to learn about the Church in Wales (Welsh language is not required, but readiness to learn key phrases is expected).

With my prayers

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Sarah Rowland Jones'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

The Very Reverend Dr Sarah Rowland Jones
Dean of St Davids

St Davids Cathedral

St Davids Cathedral is one of Wales most significant religious, architectural, historic, and cultural sites, and attracts over 200,000 visitors annually. Today's cathedral stands on the site first occupied by St David's community, probably from the end of the 6th century. Surviving numerous raids from Vikings and others through subsequent centuries, in 1081 it was visited by William the Conqueror, who recognised its spiritual significance. Bernard, appointed Bishop in 1115, further put St Davids on the map and, in response to his lobbying, Pope Callixtus II around 1120 acknowledged David within the Calendar of Saints, and in 1123 decreed that two pilgrimages to St Davids equalled one to Rome.

Ensuring our many visitors experience St Davids as not merely a tourist venue, but as a place of living faith and worship, is at the heart of our vision for 'Welcoming visitors as pilgrims'. Today, many come to visit the Shrine of St David which was so beautifully restored and rededicated in 2012. We also have Wales' only still-working historic Cathedral library.

The Cathedral is a splendid setting for the worship which has been offered here for over fourteen centuries and continues daily with a minimum of twenty statutory services each week. St Davids has a strong musical tradition with two choral services on Sundays, and a traditional Choral Evensong at least three times a week during school term time. We run a largely music-based Festival annually and a summer concert season, and host concerts for the Fishguard Festival and many other visiting choirs and orchestras – some of which are broadcast live.

The Cathedral is surrounded by a large historic Close, which includes the extensive remains of the 14th century Bishop's Palace. This fell into ruin after the major disagreement during the Reformation between Bishop Barlow and his Cathedral clergy – since this time, the Bishop of St Davids has lived in Abergwili, on the outskirts of Carmarthen, as Bishop Dorrien does today.

Within the Close, the Cathedral has a number of historic buildings, including a range of delightful houses and cottages, most with enclosed, mature gardens, which are occupied by many of its staff. The Canons' Verger is housed among them.

Finally, many ask the question, "Why St Davids, and not St David's Cathedral?" Well, this is the Cathedral at St Davids, the city being named as St Albans, St Ives, St Neots and others. It is of course also the Cathedral Church of St Andrew and St David.

St Davids

St Davids is Britain's smallest city, lying at the westernmost point of Wales. Situated in the beautiful Pembrokeshire Coast National Park, it has a population of under 2000 which is swelled by tourists and other visitors each summer. City status, originally granted in the 16th century by virtue of its Cathedral, then lost in 1888, was restored by Royal Charter given by the Queen in 1994. The Letters Patent are displayed in the Cathedral's Treasury.

The nearest towns are Fishguard and Haverfordwest, each about fifteen miles away, with rail links from both, and there is a local bus service. St Davids has a new Church in Wales Voluntary Aided School for children from three to sixteen, Ysgol Penrhyn Dewi – St Davids Peninsula School. Sixth form provision is available in both towns.

This is a rural community and living here can present challenges, for example there is no bank or GP within St Davids and wi-fi connections can sometimes be slow or, especially for mobiles, patchy. Candidates should be

prepared to recognise that St Davids offers quite a different way of life to most urban and city centre cathedrals elsewhere in the UK.

The Diocese of St Davids and the Church in Wales

St Davids is one of Britain's oldest dioceses, and one of the original four Dioceses of the Church in Wales when it was disestablished in 1920. Following the creation of the Diocese of Swansea and Brecon in 1923, it now spans the three counties of Carmarthenshire, Ceredigion and Pembrokeshire. It is the largest geographical diocese in Wales, and the second largest in numbers of clergy and parishes. Our Bishop is Dorrien Davies, who was elected in 2023. Bishop Dorrien was previously a canon at the Cathedral and then Archdeacon of Carmarthen. He thus has strong experience of the Cathedral, its community and the Diocese.

The Diocese is currently undertaking a review of its parishes through its Pruning for Growth programme in order to sustain worship, ministry and mission, as widely as possible in current circumstances of reduced attendance and resources. A parallel review exercise for the Cathedral was undertaken through a Visitation in 2025. This has highlighted areas needing greater resourcing and further development - work on this has been underway since the beginning of the year with funding aspects at the heart of all planning.

The Church in Wales has its own bilingual liturgies, with the Book of Common Prayer of 1984, the Order for Holy Eucharist/Cymun Bendigaid of 2004, and Daily Prayer Book / Gweddi Ddyddiol of 2009 forming the basis of the Cathedral's worshipping life. Both Welsh and English are generally used in services.



Major Capital Works at the Cathedral

The Cathedral is planning for major repair and development programme over the next five to ten years. A large funding application has recently been made to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for a preparatory phase to enable robust planning for the substantive project. In the meantime, the building presents continuing challenges around maintenance and repair, exacerbated by climate change. A comprehensive QI completed in April 2026 provides careful guidance for the way forwards.

The Canons' Verger will be expected to support the Dean's Verger in keeping a close eye on the fabric, building up an understanding of how the building reacts to changes through the seasons and in extreme weather. The

Canons' Verger will also need to will also need to develop good working relations with the Project Manager and Clerk of Works, once appointed, and the various consultants and specialist contractors from lift engineers to the Cathedral Architect.

Appointment of a Canons' Verger

The Dean and Chapter of St Davids Cathedral are seeking to appoint a Canons' Verger for the Cathedral, to assist and support the Dean's Verger (Head Verger), Mr Christopher Crooks.

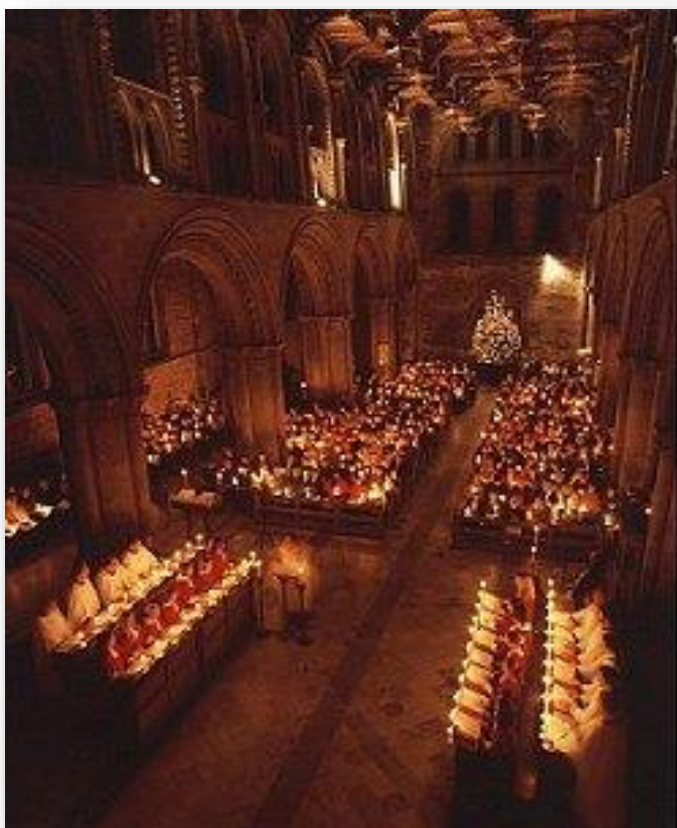
Role and Responsibilities

The Canons' Verger serves as part of a small team of vergers in the delivery to the highest standards of practical arrangements for Cathedral life, through its services, and in offering holy hospitality to its numerous visitors and across the range of events we host.

The Canons' Verger is appointed, and employed by, the Dean and Chapter, and works with, and under the direction of, the Dean's Verger (also known as the Head Verger), who is the line manager of the Canons' Verger.

The Dean's Verger is responsible for overseeing the work of and training the Canons' Verger as appropriate. These two full time members of the verging staff are generally assisted by two part-time Assistant Vergers, together with two part-time cleaners and a part-time caretaker/handyman.

On a day to day basis, the Canons' Verger will need to liaise with on-duty clergy and staff members of the Cathedral as appropriate.



Given the relatively small size of the Cathedral staff team, the ready capacity for harmonious working, and flexibility in undertaking a wide variety of tasks, are essential. So too is the ability to communicate well both with the Cathedral community and the wide range of visitors.

Verging duties require the ability to work methodically, often on repetitive tasks, while maintaining good attention to detail and being prepared for the unexpected!

The role and responsibilities of the Canons' Verger will include, but may not be limited to, the following:

Liturgy

The Cathedral's liturgical and wider life embraces the following roles:

- Cathedral church of the Diocese of St Davids
- Parish church for the Parish of St Davids
- Civic church to the City of St Davids
- The Shrine of St David, with its focus as a historic and continuing centre for pilgrimage

It is expected that vergers will be comfortable working with services and events that span a breadth of liturgical styles in Anglican and wider Christian tradition, and our musical heritage.

Within this context

- Vergers lead processions at the Daily Offices, at choral services on Sunday, and on other special occasions.
- Vergers ensure practical arrangements for ordering the building for services. Heavy items such as the nave choir-stalls, are moved jointly by more than one verger, with the assistance of others.
- Vergers prepare the quire, nave and chapels, for all services, including the altar, vessels, books, candles, votive lights, and scripture passages, and lay out vestments.
- Vergers will be expected to assist the Head Verger in the cleaning and laundry of altar linen, care, and make arrangements for the repair of altar and other silver and brass-ware, vestments, frontals and linen.
- Vergers always serve at the weekday celebrations of Holy Communion and often share in the reading of lessons at the Daily Office. It is customary for the Bishop to license the Canons' Verger to administer Holy Communion.
- Vergers operate the sound system and lighting at services and other events and are alert to deal discreetly with unforeseen occurrences.
- Vergers assist with the operation of the live-streaming equipment for the weekly and any special on-line broadcasts.



Other events

- The Canons' Verger assists the Dean's Verger in the practical delivery of concerts by the Cathedral Music Department and by choirs and other organisations making use of/hiring the Cathedral. This requires liaison with the Music Administrator & Concerts Manager and external concert organisers to agree all arrangements including; seating plans, rehearsal times, staging, and changing facilities.
- The Canons' Verger assists the Dean's Verger who is responsible for the design of demountable staging required for concerts and other events and for arranging its building and dismantling, often late at night after concerts.
- Vergers have special responsibilities during the annual St Davids Cathedral Festival, including, additionally, contact with an international spectrum of artistes. The Festival requires the commitment of considerable energy and time.

Visitors and pilgrims

St Davids Cathedral receives over 200,000 visitors annually, from near and far, with the summer months being particularly busy, with holidaying families and organised tour groups from the UK and around the world. Increasing numbers come as pilgrims, to visit the Shrine which was restored and rededicated in 2012.

Vergers, along with our team of Welcomers and guides (both paid and volunteers), are at the front line in offering a polite and helpful welcome at all times, and, where other duties permit, answer questions and offer information around the function, symbolism and ministry of the Cathedral as a living place of worship.

- Vergers liaise and work with the Welcome Desk staff.
- The vergers are responsible for ensuring reasonable conduct is maintained in the Cathedral, and should untoward circumstances arise, must judge when it is appropriate to act, using tact, sensitivity and when necessary, firmness.

Administration and Management

- The Canons' Verger works according to the rota drawn up by the Dean's Verger, who is responsible for ensuring a fair and balanced distribution of working hours across the department, including evening and holiday cover, overtime when necessary, and involvement with special services and events.
- The Canons' Verger is required to attend the Thursday morning weekly staff meeting in the absence of the Dean's Verger.
- The vergers' department is responsible for producing its own documentation, which may include detailed seating plans, generating posters and temporary signs etc. Computer skills are essential for this position.
- The Dean's Verger may choose to delegate specific admin tasks to the Canons' Verger (e.g. stock control, 'Daily Notices') as appropriate from time to time.

Health and Safety

The Canons' Verger works in accordance with the Cathedral's Health and Safety Policy and Fire Safety Policy. All vergers are trained in First Aid and certification kept up-to-date, under the oversight of the Dean's Verger.

The COO is the designated Health & Safety Manager for the whole of the Cathedral site and all buildings within the care of the Dean & Chapter. The Dean's Verger is the Cathedral's appointed Health & Safety Officer and the designated Fire Safety Officer for the Cathedral and its environs, including Porth y Tŵr. The Dean's Verger implements and contributes to the policies and procedures set by and agreed with the COO.

- All vergers must ensure appropriate action is taken, and subsequently recorded, whenever alarm activations, accidents or other incidents occur.
- The Canons' Verger may be delegated responsibility for maintaining up-to-date contents of First Aid boxes and liaising with the external suppliers and the Wales Ambulance Service for the Cathedral's defibrillator.

Care and Security of the Buildings and Contents

The Vergers, under the direction of the Dean's Verger, have responsibility for day to day upkeep of the fabric of the Cathedral building and its contents, ensuring they are clean and in good order.

- The duty verger opens the Cathedral daily at 7am and locks up and sets the alarm system after the Evening Office (or later as events require), and checks the public toilets in the Bishop's Palace complex have been opened / closed.
- One full-time verger is always on call outside normal hours in case of any emergency or unusual happening within the Cathedral, its annexed buildings or the Cathedral Close.

- The vergers are responsible for keys issued to them and for the use and care of other keys kept on the premises, following approved procedures set out by the Dean's Verger.
- Handling of cash from donation boxes, votive candle stands and service collections is currently under review, but it is likely that the Canons' Verger will be involved to some degree, together with another staff member, in collecting cash daily from the boxes, transferring it to the vestry safe, counting the total donations made and banking cash.



- Vergers maintain the Cathedral Bookshop, Domus Giftshop, and the Refectory tenant with adequate amounts of change, and ensure the security of these monies in transit to and from the shops.
- Although there are part-time cleaners, some cleaning duties will be expected of Vergers. Many areas of the building, though inaccessible to the public, still require a cycle of cleaning maintenance e.g. tower spiral staircases, triforium walkways.
- The Canons' Verger is involved in operation and maintenance of the sound reinforcement and hearing loop systems and the lighting system.
- The vergers are responsible for the weekly winding and regulation of the cathedral's turret clock, located at the top of the central tower and for liaising with the specialist maintenance company for regular services and faults.
- The vergers undertake routine maintenance such as changing light bulbs and bleeding radiators.
- Access and maintenance work at upper levels requires full-time Vergers to have a good head for heights and compliance with all health and safety requirements is essential, including the wearing of safety harnesses.

Other Duties

These will include other tasks as the Dean and Chapter may from time to time determine.

Safeguarding

St Davids Cathedral is committed to safeguarding and promoting the well-being of all people, and its staff and volunteers are required to uphold the safeguarding policies of the Church in Wales.

- Any offer of employment is made subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service Clearance in line with the Cathedral's policies on Safeguarding.

Vergers are required to undergo an enhanced DBS check at regular intervals. Failure to pass a check may result in the termination of your employment.

- Vergers are required to attend safeguarding training at regular intervals.
- Vergers should understand and be able to: implement the safeguarding policy in the event of a safeguarding incident; appropriately support other staff in a safeguarding incident; report all safeguarding incidents as defined in the policy.

Additional

This post requires the ability to work at a height (e.g. changing lightbulbs, raising the flag on the Tower roof), and a level of physical fitness sufficient for heavy lifting.

There is a genuine occupational requirement that the Canons' Verger is a communicant member of the Church in Wales or a Church in communion with it.

Terms and Conditions

Salary

The Dean & Chapter use the Church in Wales' salary scale where this is appropriate and achievable. This role is deemed to be Grade C, with a salary range of £27,474 to £31,402 per annum, according to experience.

Vergers receive fees for marriages and funerals at which they have assisted.

Overtime is not payable in the case of statutory activities e.g. Midnight Service at Christmas. Any expectation of overtime through the rota should be agreed in advance, and no-one should work more than the statutory maximum average of 48 hours a week, calculated over 17 weeks according to government norms. Overtime payments may be made for certain evening concerts. It may be possible to take time off in lieu, only if this does not hinder the Cathedral's working patterns and subject to the prior agreement of the Dean and Chapter.

Accommodation

The Dean and Chapter expect the postholder to live in a tied house in the Cathedral Close. Payment of rent by the postholder is under review, but would be charged at 50% of the rate set by the Parsonage Board of the Church in Wales. In 2026, 50% equates to £3,477 per annum.

The Dean and Chapter will pay for a landline and basic broadband connection associated with the property.

Working Hours

Hours of work are on a flexible rota, based on an average 40 hours in a 5-day week which includes weekend and evening working. One hour's break per working day is included in these hours.

Annual Holidays

Annual leave is 28 days, plus 8 bank / public holidays. Where these are worked, as is generally required, there is expectation a substitute day off will be taken when the diary allows. A maximum of one week's holiday may be taken during July-August due to the business of the Cathedral. Leave cannot be granted during late Advent and Christmas, Holy Week and Easter, other major Festivals, Ordinations, the Cathedral Festival, or the Annual Weekend of the Friends of St Davids Cathedral.

Pension Scheme

The Dean and Chapter contribute the equivalent of 7.5% of pensionable salary towards the Cathedral pension scheme. The postholder will be required to pay a minimum of 0.5% of the equivalent of pensionable salary towards the pension scheme.

Probationary Period and Notice

The first 3 months of employment will be a probationary period during which the employment may be terminated by either party on giving the other notice of one month. The probationary period can be extended if necessary. Thereafter notice is 3 months on either side.

How to Apply

Applications should be made on the Cathedral's Application Form which will have been given or emailed to you with this Job Description. Completed applications should be emailed to Miss Judith Leigh, Chief Operating Officer, St Davids Cathedral on judith@stdavidscathedral.org.uk

Any queries you may have on the role or Terms and Conditions should also be directed to Judith, who can be contacted by email as above or by phone on 01437 720202.

The deadline for applications is midday on 6th July 2026. Interviews will be held on 10th July and/or in the week beginning 20th July 2026.

Data Protection

The information you provide on this form will be used solely to process your application. We will not communicate any part of it to a third party (i.e. not a member or employee of the Dean & Chapter or the recruitment panel) except if required to do so under current legislation.

If your application is unsuccessful, your application form will be securely destroyed after three months.