

The image shows the interior of Portsmouth Cathedral, featuring a series of high Gothic arches supported by stone columns. A large, ornate chandelier hangs from the ceiling, and a golden statue is visible on a pedestal in the distance. The lighting is warm and ambient, highlighting the architectural details.

PORTSMOUTH CATHEDRAL

Assistant Verger and Precinct Officer Application Pack 2022

Introduction to the role and working at Portsmouth Cathedral

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

You would join us at an interesting time in our history as we approach the centenary of St Thomas's as a Cathedral in 2027.

Our new 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 of myself and one other full time Assistant Verger and Precincts Officer. 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 so working with our group of terrific volunteer Welcomers and Guides we ensure that everyone who comes into the Cathedral feels our warm welcome and finds this is a safe place.

This is an exciting time to join the Portsmouth team. While we continue to focus on supporting the Ministry Team to prepare and deliver divine worship, we also equally will support the work of the new Visitor Experience and Volunteer Manager and the new Events Manager to ensure the Cathedral is open for all to visit. In our role as Precincts Officers, we also help care of the fabric of the Cathedral, Cathedral Green, and buildings such as Cathedral House. It is a challenging and interesting multi-faceted role.

We are looking for those with the skills and enthusiasm to help deliver this exciting vision. I'm looking for up to two new members of the Verger team to help us to continue to transform our Cathedral Vision into a reality. Come and join us.

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

For an informal conversation about the post, please do not hesitate to contact me on malina.green@portsmoutcathedral.org.uk

Malina Green
Head Verger and Precincts Manager

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 (pro-rata for a part-time role)
- Generous employer pension contributions of 7.5%
- Flexible working arrangements considered including job shares.
- Commitment to professional development and training.

Assistant Verger and Precinct Officer

Job Description

Reports to:	Head Verger and Precinct Manager
Direct Reports:	None
Indirect Reports	Cathedral volunteers, including the Head Guide and Volunteer Archivist, internal and external partners, agencies, and suppliers
Location of Role:	Under usual circumstances, the role is primarily based at Portsmouth Cathedral, but may require some travel. Some home working arrangements may be considered.
Permanent post	30 hours per week
Maternity cover post	40 hours per week with a fixed-term nine month contract

Job purpose

Our Assistant Verger and Precincts Officers (AVPO) 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 Managers, 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 safely and effectively all services, events and activities occurring in the Cathedral, Cathedral House, and precinct.

Key relationships

Key internal relationships

- The Canon Precentor, the Chief Operating Officer, the Events 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

You will have appropriate basic education qualifications and some direct experience of verging or similar church support work. Sympathy with the Christian faith is expected and experience of worship, together with an understanding of the Anglican tradition, would be an advantage. Good social skills are essential and 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 Precincts Officers (AVPOs) are responsible to and under the direction of the Head Verger and Precincts 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 Officer, and Visitor Experience Manager to assist them in their work.

Key responsibilities

Worship and Liturgy

- Work closely under the supervision of the Head Verger and Precincts 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 Precincts 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

- The Cathedral is in the process of recruiting a new Visitor Experience Manager following the successful appointment of an Events Manager. A Volunteer Coordinator is also due to be recruited. The post of Learning (Education) Officer is currently vacant.
- The list of key responsibilities in this area will therefore, become more detailed once these post holders are in place and further develop these aspects of Cathedral activities, but these will be in line with what could be reasonably expected of this post.
- Work with existing and future staff and in particular to help support the work of the Events Manager in their role of leading these activities and working to ensure all internal and external events and activities are fully supported in their delivery.

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 boilers, 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 executing directly its placing and storage both for services and for events managed by the Events Manager

and reporting any damage to the Head Verger and Precinct Manager for both the Cathedral and Cathedral House.

- 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 Precincts 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 Precincts Manager
- Undertake risk assessments for activities taking place in the Cathedral and Cathedral House as directed by the Head Verger and Precincts 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 Precincts Manager to ensure evacuation 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 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 (Chapter Clerk) 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 vergers 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.
- Ability to work under pressure
- Good administrative skills
- Good understanding of the importance of managing security and health and safety
- Excellent communication skills
- Have IT and digital competencies
- 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 event

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 a 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

Both posts 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. There are two posts available:

- A permanent post based upon 30 hours per week
 - A nine month maternity cover post at 40 hours a week
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- Salary. A salary up to £21,840 per annum for the 40 hours contract (or a salary up to £16,380 per annum for the 30 hours contract) depending on skills and experience.
 - 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 three-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 two months 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

For any questions regarding the application process please contact:

Richard Abraham,
Chief Operating Officer
richard.abraham@portsmouthcathedral.org.uk

Applications

To apply for either or to be considered for with of these two roles, 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

Please clearly state which of the two posts that you wish to be considered or indeed indicate if you are interested in either of the two posts

Applications must be received by 11.00pm on Sunday 20th March 2022.

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

Interviews

Interviews will be held Thursday, 7th April 2022. Please let us know if that is not possible for you.

Interviews will be held in person at Portsmouth Cathedral, government regulations permitting.