



INFORMATION PACK

Virger

DECEMBER 2024



A view through the Scissor Arches and Grand Organ towards the glorious Jesse Window © Nick James LRPS ◀

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► The Quire and Grand Organ of Wells Cathedral © Nick James LRPS

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the post of Virger at Wells Cathedral.

Wells Cathedral is an iconic building, standing at the heart of—and serving a community of—the Diocese of Bath and Wells, the city of Wells, and the county of Somerset. It is a living, working building which welcomes upwards of 300,000 visitors each year who are drawn to its unique architecture, cultural and spiritual heritage, world-class music, and the daily pattern of worship, which is the primary purpose of the Cathedral.

The role of a Virger is a rich and varied one, which provides opportunities to be at the heart of the life of the Cathedral, and in which no two days are ever the same. Our Virgers are vital to creating a safe, welcoming environment for all who come to the Cathedral, as well as ensuring a smooth and seamless operation for services and events, where the Cathedral team works together to deliver a high-quality offer.

This application pack will tell you a little more about Wells, the work of the Cathedral, and the role and person specification of a Virger. I hope that as you read it, you will find the information helpful and that it will help you to discern whether you might be the person to serve in this role. If you have any questions which are not answered in this pack, please do feel free to be in touch with me to arrange an informal discussion.

If this is a role which appeals to you, then we would be delighted to receive your application.



The Reverend Canon Tim Stevens

Canon Precentor of Wells Cathedral



► Looking West across the Gardens of the Bishop's Palace to the Cathedral and the City of Wells beyond

About Us

The City of Wells

Situated on the edge of the Mendip Hills in the County of Somerset, Wells is one of England's most beautiful and compact cities, built around the beautiful Cathedral of St Andrew. Its picturesque surroundings include a charming market square and high street, the Bishop's Palace, and the magnificent Vicars' Close, Europe's oldest continuously inhabited street.

The Cathedral

Wells Cathedral deservedly has gained an enviable reputation for its lovingly maintained Gothic architecture, its world-class music, and its ministry of Welcome to some 300,000 visitors each year, as well as around 150,000 people who come to the Cathedral for services, concerts, and lectures.

Underpinning the life, worship and ministry of the Cathedral is a diverse organisation where a lot is achieved with modest resources. Our team of Virgers are central to this achievement, and take their part in overseeing and delivering a broad and diverse tapestry of missional activities in which they work alongside a world-class choir, a works and estates department, a library and archives, a programme of education, learning and outreach, finance, HR and administration functions, volunteer management and trading companies.

The Cathedral is also a regular host to a number of external organisations who provide concerts, events, private and public gatherings, furthering our links with the community, and our Virgers are again a key part in this relationship. A full organisation chart can be viewed via the website at www.wellscathedral.org.uk/organisation-chart

Following the implementation of the Cathedrals Measure 2021, Wells Cathedral has recently registered as a Charity, and is now dually regulated by the Charity Commission and the Church Commissioners. The Chapter is the governing body of the Cathedral and the Chapter members are Trustees of the Charity. The Chapter sets the strategic direction for the Cathedral and orders its worship and mission. It has responsibility for care and maintenance of the Cathedral and its estate, as well as ensuring the Cathedral has the resources it needs for a sustainable future.

Further details of the Cathedral's life may be found on the Cathedral's website: www.wellscathedral.org.uk



► A Virger leads the procession at the Cathedral Eucharist on Advent Sunday

Job Description

Post	Virger
Key Purpose of Post	<p>The role of a Virger is an important part of the Cathedral's mission, being the face of the Cathedral to visitors and worshippers on a daily basis. The purpose of a Virger is to maintain the effective functioning of the Cathedral space, offering a warm welcome to all who come, while preparing for services, leading processions, preparing staging and rooms for events, carrying out cleaning and some light maintenance, and often to be on hand to manage the first response in a crisis, while upholding with integrity the name and reputation of the Cathedral.</p>
Reporting to	Head Virger, and in their absence to a Senior Virger
Location	Wells Cathedral, Cathedral Green, Wells, BA5 2UE
Hours of Work	Full time, 40 hours a week
Main Duties and Responsibilities	<p><u>Duty rota</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support the duty rota as directed by the Head Virger <p><u>Opening and closing routine</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To open the Cathedral on days of early morning duty and to prepare for services To clear, secure and lock up the Cathedral buildings in the evening <p><u>On call</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be on-call and attend incidents as per the call-out schedule (N.B. not required if housing allowance is paid) <p><u>Security</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for the total security of the Cathedral and its contents whenever on duty To organise duty breaks so that there remains a Virger within the body of the Cathedral at all times To remain vigilant whilst discreet to all visitor activity at all times

Main Duties and Responsibilities (cont.)

To immediately report suspicious activity to the Head Virger.

Safeguarding

- Having successfully completed safeguarding training as part of induction, to be the first responder in the Cathedral, providing initial pastoral support to vulnerable adults and children, and overseeing welfare and security concerns and incident management

First Aid

- To be the duty first aider while the Cathedral is open to the public, as well as during specific events and services.
- After any incident, completing relevant accident report forms

Cathedral Services

- To prepare for services by ensuring all books, vessels and vestments are set out as required
- To clear, clean and reinstate all elements after the services.
- To support services, through the ringing of service bells, leading processions, attending to the needs of the clergy, management of microphones, remaining present, and responding to needs which come to light during services
- To assist with the keeping of registers and accurate statistics on attendance at services and takers of communion.

Concerts and Events

- To prepare the Cathedral and/or its precincts as necessary for concerts and any other events or activities as directed, paying particular attention to the setting-up instructions as detailed on the Planning Instructions agreed beforehand—this is likely to involve movement and lifting/handling of heavy items of furniture and staging in accordance with Health and Safety guidelines

Cleaning

- Routine cleaning and light maintenance of the Cathedral and its associated buildings in accordance with the cleaning and light maintenance plan formulated by the Head Virger. These duties will include but will not be limited to cleaning floors and toilets; some work at high levels from time to time and assisting in moving furniture.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

(cont.)

Visitors

- To direct and care for visitors and others whilst they are in the Cathedral building or its precincts, in conjunction with the Cathedral's Ministry of Welcome, and having a particular regard to Health and Safety

Communication

- Enable good communication by ensuring that the virger diary is up to date and the daily record sheet is completed and attendance at team meetings

Money

- To be responsible for upholding the process for the handling of cash and gift aid envelopes to ensure safety and security of our resources—Virgers will never be left alone with money, but are responsible for managing this process

Staff and Planning Meetings

- One of the Virgers to be present at the weekly staff meeting and all Planning meetings as they occur and will advise and record items discussed and agreed accordingly

General

- To undertake such other duties as the Head Virger or Senior Virger (in the Head Virger's absence) may reasonably require.

Dress Code/Uniform

- Virgers are required to wear shirt and tie/blouse, dark trousers, and black shoes, and are to present themselves for duty clean and smart—Virgers will be provided with: Industrial-quality safety shoes and work gloves; hard hat; cassock; gown; cloak; Virger's whites; and overalls.

Conduct

- Virgers are the public face of the Cathedral and often provide the most important interaction for visitors in need. Virgers therefore are required to conduct themselves professionally, to seek appropriate support where required, and to manage their conduct in a manner which brings pride to the Cathedral.

Person Specification

Qualifications, Knowledge and Experience

Essential

- Grade 4 or above in GCSE (or equivalent) English and Mathematics
- Appreciation of Cathedral or parish worship
- Experience of dealing with visitor-facing role
- Experience in setting up events and floor management

Desirable

- Experience in a comparable role
- Knowledge of Health and Safety issues
- Experience of undertaking a variety of cleaning duties
- An understanding of Safeguarding

Skills and Abilities

Essential

- Good communication skills
- Visitor facing skills
- Ability to work as part of a team as well as individually and to use own initiative
- Ability to multi-task
- Ability to work in an organised manner
- Ability to undertake physical work (moving furniture, pianos and trolleys, and cleaning)
- Ability to work at height and in confined spaces (N.B. Appropriate training will be given for working at height)

Work-related Personal qualities

Essential

- To be in sympathy with the aims and objectives of the Church of England
- Ability to work within the ethos and mission of Wells Cathedral as a Christian organisation
- Ability to work as part of a rota and outside of normal working hours with flexible duties
- To be confident and carry themselves as part of their ceremonial duties
- To be discreet and to maintain confidentiality
- Good attention to detail

**Work-related
Personal qualities**
(cont.)

**Additional
Specifications**

Desirable

- To be a committed Christian with a personal connection to the aims and objectives of the Church of England
- An enhanced Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) check will be required and the post will be subject to this clearance
- All appointments are subject to references and a medical declaration



Main Terms and Conditions

Employment Status	Permanent												
Hours of Work	Full Time, not less than 40 hours each week, normally 8 hours a day, 5 days per week. Days of the week and precise hours within each day to be agreed. Normal working hours are between 6.45am and 7.15pm, in shifts.												
Remuneration	Salary of £21,860 per annum, payable on the 24th of the month or the earliest and nearest working day thereto.												
Accommodation	Accommodation in Vicars' Close will be offered.												
Discount	A discount of 10% is available in the Cathedral Shop and Café.												
Pension	Defined Contribution Scheme. Contributions as % of salary: <table><tr><td><i>Age</i></td><td><i>Employee</i></td><td><i>Employer</i></td></tr><tr><td><50</td><td>3%</td><td>5%</td></tr><tr><td>50–55</td><td>4%</td><td>8%</td></tr><tr><td>>55</td><td>5%</td><td>10%</td></tr></table>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Employee</i>	<i>Employer</i>	<50	3%	5%	50–55	4%	8%	>55	5%	10%
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<50	3%	5%											
50–55	4%	8%											
>55	5%	10%											
Holiday	33 days per annum inclusive of bank holidays. Bank holidays may need to be worked as part of a regular working pattern. The holiday year runs from 1 January to 31 December.												
Location	Wells Cathedral, Wells, Somerset BA5 2UE												
Parking	Parking spaces are available in the Cathedral car park. Cars are parked at the risk of the owner.												
Expenses	All reasonable working expenses will be met in line with Cathedral policy.												
Probation	This post will be subject to a probationary period of 6 months.												
DBS check	This post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.												

How to Apply

Applications

Application must be received by **12.00 noon** on **Thursday 23 January 2025.**

Applicants should provide a completed [Application Form](#) and [Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form](#) (optional) to the Human Resources department by email: recruitment@wellscathedral.org.uk.

Shortlisting

Shortlisting will take place on **Friday 24 January 2025.**

To ensure the fairness of the selection process, shortlisting will be based upon the information which you provide in your application and assumptions will not be made about your experience or skills.

We will look for demonstrable evidence that you meet the criteria set out in the person specification. Information provided in your CV and covering letter will be viewed by HR, the recruiting manager, and interview panel. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of the shortlisting process.

Selection Process

Interview will take place on **Friday 31 January 2025.**

Further details will be communicated to shortlisted candidates nearer the time.

Further Information

We hope you find this pack provides all the information you need in order to consider your application for this post.

If you have any questions, or would like an informal conversation about the post, please contact the Canon Precentor, The Reverend Canon Tim Stevens, by email to precentor@wellscathedral.org.uk.



► The High Altar Cross

Safeguarding

We are committed to the safeguarding and protection of all children, young people, and adults, and the care and nurture of children within church communities. We will carefully select, train, and support all those with any responsibility within the Church, in line with Safer Recruitment principles.

This means that we will:

- Ensure that our recruitment and selection processes are inclusive, fair, consistent, and transparent;
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent those who might harm children or adults from taking up positions of respect, responsibility, or authority where they are trusted by others; and
- Adhere to safer recruitment legislation, guidance, and standards.

Further information can be found in our Safeguarding Policy available on the Cathedral website at www.wellscathedral.org.uk

The successful candidate will be required to complete a Confidential Declaration Form as part of our recruitment process when an offer of employment is made. This form is strictly confidential and, except under compulsion of law, will be seen only by those involved in the recruitment/appointment process. All forms will be kept securely in compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.



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 wellscathedral.eventbrite.co.uk

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