
Westminster Abbey



Estates Manager

Job description and person specification



Job description

JOB TITLE: Estates Manager

DEPARTMENT: Works

POST REPORTS TO: Clerk of the Works and Head of Estates

JOB SUMMARY: The Estates Manager shall be responsible for the effective management and execution of cyclical, statutory, and responsive maintenance activities across the Abbey's historic estate. This position requires a comprehensive background in Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) and Fire systems etc. A thorough understanding of statutory obligations. Responsibilities include ensuring all work is conducted to the highest standards, complies with legal and heritage regulations, and remains within the allocated budgets. The successful candidate will develop a comprehensive set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Service Level Agreements (SLAs). The post-holder will play a pivotal role in preserving the integrity of the Abbey's structures and facilities for future generations. Emphasising internal stakeholder engagement will be of paramount importance.

BACKGROUND: Westminster Abbey is both a place of daily worship, and is one of the UK's leading visitor attractions, welcoming over one million visitors each year. A diverse and lively community work at the Abbey, comprising approximately 360 employees and a greater number of volunteers.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Maintenance Strategies

- Drive continuous improvements in the processes of maintenance and the quality of the work undertaken by others.
- Create and maintain strategies for the proactive maintenance of the Abbey's assets and infrastructure.
- Demonstrated success in complex technical challenges and ensuring that staff and contractors achieve the highest standard of work.

2. Cyclical Maintenance

- Plan, schedule, and supervise all planned cyclical maintenance activities to preserve the Abbey's fabric and operational assets.
- Liaise with specialist contractors for heritage-sensitive works.
- Establish and maintain accurate maintenance records, certification and asset registers for all services.

3. Statutory Maintenance

- Ensure compliance with all statutory building, health & safety, and environmental requirements.
- Schedule and oversee inspections, testing, and certification (e.g., fire systems, electrical, gas safety) and maintain up-to-date statutory compliance documentation.

4. Responsive Maintenance

- Respond to and manage urgent repairs, minimising disruption to Abbey operations.
- Coordinate internal staff and external contractors to deliver timely and cost-effective solutions.
- Monitor and report on response times and quality of work.

5. Budget and Resource Management

- Prepare, monitor, and control maintenance budgets using appropriate spreadsheets and reporting tools.
- Manage procurement processes and ensure value for money is maximised.
- Approve and track expenditure against budget.

6. Team and Contractor Management

- Supervise Estates team members and manage relationships with contractors.
- Conduct regular performance reviews and contractor assessments.
- Ensure all works are carried out safely to the highest standards and in line with Abbey policies.

7. Communication and Reporting

- Produce regular reports for senior management on maintenance performance, budgets, risks and compliance.
- Liaise with clergy, staff, and stakeholders to coordinate maintenance activities.

Person specification

This section outlines the knowledge, skills and abilities the job holder needs in order to fulfil the requirements of the post. 'Essential' criteria are those that the job holder absolutely must have in order to do the job. 'Desirable' criteria are those qualities that would be either useful, or an advantage or those which the job holder can be trained to do.

Essential Skills & Experience

- Demonstrated experience in managing estates or facilities, particularly within heritage, historic, or complex building settings.
- Strong knowledge of cyclical, statutory, and responsive maintenance requirements.
- Competence in budget management, with the ability to create and manage detailed spreadsheets.
- Excellent organisational and scheduling skills.
- Ability to interpret technical reports, drawings, and compliance documents.
- Strong contractor management and negotiation skills.
- Knowledge of relevant health & safety legislation, including CDM Regulations.
- Membership or willingness to join IWFM or similar.

Desirable Skills & Experience

- Experience working in a Grade I listed ecclesiastical building or heritage site.
- A formal qualification in building services, facilities management, or a similar field.
- Familiarity with conservation techniques and heritage-specific maintenance practices.

Personal Attributes

- Attention to detail and high standards of workmanship.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills.
- Calm under pressure and able to prioritise effectively.
- Committed to the Abbey's values, history, and mission.
- Flexible and adaptable to operational needs.
- Strong commercial awareness, with a commitment to securing best value for money while maintaining high standards of service delivery.

This job profile will be kept under review and may be amended by the Dean & Chapter from time to time. Any proposed changes will be discussed with the post holder.

Safeguarding

Westminster Abbey is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk. To prevent them from harm, we undertake appropriate checks (including the relevant level of criminal record check) on staff and volunteers and require them to complete relevant safeguarding training. This post requires an enhanced level criminal record check.