



**Westminster
Abbey**

Application pack



**Volunteer Role:
Honorary Steward**

Permanent

Closing Date: 17 October 2025

Westminster Abbey

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About Westminster Abbey

Above all else, the Abbey is a church, a place of prayer and praise and holy ground at the heart of the nation. It is also a treasured part of Britain's heritage and a leading venue for tourism. The Abbey has occupied a central place in the celebration of great events for the nation and remains one of the most beautiful architectural masterpieces in Britain.

A living Church, Westminster Abbey is where the coronation of Kings and Queens has taken place since 1066, and where many of the Kings and Queens of England and of the United Kingdom are buried. Principal among them is St Edward the Confessor, King of England from 1042 to 1066, whose shrine is at the heart of the Abbey Church. Beside and around them are buried or commemorated many of the great women and men from almost every century of British history: statesmen and politicians, lawyers, warriors, clerics, writers, artists, musicians.

Neither a cathedral nor a parish church, Westminster Abbey (or the Collegiate Church of St Peter in Westminster to give it its correct title) is a Royal Peculiar under the jurisdiction of a Dean and Chapter and with direct accountability to the Sovereign. This relationship with the Sovereign dates back to the origins of the Abbey over a millennium ago, but its current form stems from the Charter granted to the Abbey by Elizabeth on 21st May 1560.

We are a welcoming community, but also complex and multi-faceted, with over 600 highly committed employees and volunteers. We have deep respect for the heritage of which we are the custodians, but we evolve continuously to meet the opportunities of the future. In recent times this has included the creation of new departments to focus on transforming our digital presence and delivering a significantly expanded programme of public and community engagement.

Westminster Abbey's mission is:

- To offer daily divine Worship to Almighty God and resource the Church in this vocation;
- To serve the Sovereign;
- To proclaim the Gospel to the nation and Commonwealth, celebrating the distinctive witness of the Christian faith and engaging with the public square;
- To provide a safe, welcoming and inspiring environment for all who come to the Abbey;
To care for the precious resources entrusted to us: our people, partnerships, buildings, heritage and money.

Following the State Funeral of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of Their Majesties The King and Queen, which were broadcast to national and international audiences in their millions, interest in the Abbey is very strong. We attract around 1.4 million visitors from around the world every year. As we receive no regular income from the State, the Church of England or the Crown, we rely almost entirely on income from visitors.

It is an exciting time to join the Abbey, and we look forward to receiving your application and if successful, welcoming your contribution to the Abbey's history.

Role Description

ROLE TITLE: **Honorary Steward**

ACCOUNTABLE TO: Directly: Chief Honorary Steward

Indirectly: Head of Ceremonial, Events and Marketing

KEY RELATIONSHIPS: **Head of Protocol, Receiver General**, Dean and Chapter, The Dean's Verger, Visitor Experience, Event Management and Marketing colleagues

JOB SUMMARY: To welcome, seat and bid farewell to diverse congregations at regular Sunday and other Special Services throughout the year, in a warm and dignified way that reflects the Dean and Chapter's desire that our visitors should always encounter the generous hospitality of God and easily prepare themselves to appreciate and join in our worship.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Duties

- Be available for duty at no fewer than 5 regular services each quarter (Matins, Eucharist, Evensong and Evening Eucharist at St Margaret's ; usually attending for at least 3 Sundays out of every 13.
- Be available for duty for up to 5 Special Services each quarter, irrespective of the day of the week. It should be noted that there are Special Services mid-week, at weekends and in the evenings.
- Be available for duty for as many services as possible at Eastertide, at Edwardtide (mid-October), and at Christmas when there are an increased number of Special Services
- Report for duty at least ten minutes before service briefings
- Attend briefings with an informed understanding of the ceremonial notes (running order) (these are sent a couple of days in advance of each Special Service)
- Assist vergers and marshals with papering of Orders of Service as required
- Bid farewell to the congregation at the end of each service and collect Orders of Service and items that have been left behind
- Manage entry of invited guests to post service receptions as required
- Assist the Events and Marketing department (which includes Protocol) with labelling seats as required
- Assist with the Collections of Alms as required.

General

- Be familiar with all areas of the Abbey and its history
- Be familiar with Abbey policies such as evacuation, health & safety, security, etc.
- Conduct themselves with dignity and treat all people with respect.
- Lead by example acting as a team member at all times

- Have up to date knowledge and be able to recognise members of the Cabinet and HM Opposition, in order to direct/conduct them to their seats at services with a timed arrival
- Have an up to date knowledge and be able to recognise civic representatives, in order to lead them to their seats at services with a timed arrival
- Attend training sessions when required
- Report to the Senior Steward in charge of a service upon arrival for duty and before leaving the Abbey
- Respond to requests for quarterly rotas as soon as possible upon receipt, and no later than the closing date indicated, stating availability
- Respond to requests for the Special services rotas as soon as possible upon receipt, and no later than the closing date indicated, stating availability
- Allow time in one's personal life to provide extra support as required at services at Eastertide, Edwardtide, and at Christmas
- Be personally responsible for finding a replacement steward in the event of not being able to attend a service, communicating the change to the Protocol department, to the Senior Steward in charge and to other colleagues on duty for those days, in a timely manner
- Notify Protocol and the Senior Steward in charge immediately of any sudden changes in circumstances which may mean non-attendance at a service
- Notify Protocol and the Senior Steward in charge of any service in the event of illness so that a replacement may be found

Person Specification

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

Essential

1. A commitment to support the Abbey's mission and values and a belief in or an understanding of and sympathy for the Christian faith.
2. Punctilious attitude.
3. Proven good communication skills including excellent spoken English.
4. Have the self confidence to engage with very diverse and international worshippers and tourists.
5. Proven ability to multi-task and follow instructions diligently.
6. Well-presented and to be an ambassador for the Abbey.
7. Proven ability to work under pressure and to be firm but kind in approach.
8. Proven ability to work with staff from different departments and be a good team player.
9. Proven ability to take the initiative when circumstances demand and to be self-motivated and "people aware".
10. Be of good character.

NB. Due to the security aspects of the role, as well as the health and safety requirements regarding dealing with fire alerts or other emergencies; Honorary Stewards must be able to move quickly, when necessary; be able to retrieve items from the floor; and be capable of being on duty without a break, for several hours at a time, at some of the special services. All Honorary Stewards are required to go through a full DBS check.

Desirable

1. Good all-round general knowledge, knowledge of current affairs, knowledge of key figures in Government, the Royal Family, and figures of eminence in senior Cultural, Arts, Educational and Civic positions.
2. To be aware of the rites of the Anglican Church.
3. Willingness to take on duties at short notice as required by the Head of Cermonial, Events and Marketing, and Protocol.
4. General aptitude for noting when duties need to be exercised even if they are not contained in the Ceremonial notes.

This Role Description is kept under review and may be amended by Westminster Abbey from time to time. Any proposed changes will be discussed with the role holder.

Regular assessments and/or interviews of all Stewards are carried out by the Chief Honorary Steward, aided by Senior Steward colleagues and the Head of Event Management and Marketing.

Next Steps and How to Apply

If selected for interview, the recruitment process is as follows, leading to an appointment as a probationary Honorary Steward:

Recruitment stages

1. The interview of about 45/60 minutes will be held at Westminster Abbey, 20 Dean's Yard SW1P 3PA, at a time and date that is mutually convenient to the candidate and relevant Abbey colleagues. It is chaired by the Chief Honorary Steward, accompanied by the Head of Event Management and Marketing.
2. After interview, the Head of Event Management and Marketing, and the Chief Honorary Steward, will make a recommendation to the Receiver General and the Dean of Westminster Abbey for ratification of the volunteer appointment.
3. Subject to ratification, the Head of Event Management and Marketing then appoints Honorary Stewards for service on the Active List, subject to receipt of satisfactory volunteer checks, including references, a basic level DBS criminal record check and completion of Safeguarding Training, which will need to be maintained in accordance with the Abbey's volunteer procedures.

Post appointment as a Probationer

New Honorary Stewards are issued with an extensive Handbook and are required to attend an Abbey Orientation session. Further Onboarding, will be provided by the Head of Protocol, who will explain relevant procedures, including dress code, training requirements, security, and the required volunteer checks.

Subject to satisfactory induction (depending on when in the calendar year the volunteer commences their volunteer role and Abbey duties, the new starter will be formally installed. This will involve the volunteer declaring his/her Undertaking, prior to formally being Admitted into the Fellowship of the Collegiate Church of St Peter at Westminster, at the annual Corporate Communion, held every year in late November or early December. The Service is usually held in the Lady (Henry VII) Chapel, immediately prior to the Honorary Stewards AGM and Reception in the Jerusalem Chamber.

Equality statement

Equality Statement

The Dean and Chapter aim at all times to recruit the person who is most suited to the job. Recruitment will be solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, skills and experience will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job.

We will ensure that our shortlisting, interviewing and selection procedures avoid discrimination in any way, including on grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status or civil partnership, race, nationality or ethnic origins, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Please complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form with your application. This will help us monitor our recruitment practice. The form will not be seen by the people making the selection decision.

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 on staff and volunteers and require them to complete relevant safeguarding training. Offers are subject to a basic level of criminal record check, receipt of references satisfactory to Westminster Abbey, right to work in the UK, proof of professional qualifications and medical clearance, which may include a medical assessment.