



**Westminster
Abbey**

Application pack



Head of Security

Salary £80,000 per annum

**Full-time - Permanent
40 hours per week**

Westminster Abbey

Contents

- Letter from Deputy Receiver General
- About Westminster Abbey
- Job description and Person Specification
- Working for us
- Equality statement
- Safeguarding
- How to apply

A letter from Deputy Receiver General

Thank you for considering becoming the Abbey's next Head of Security. This is an outstandingly interesting and challenging position, to lead the Security function at a world famous location at the heart of the nation and Commonwealth. The first challenge is keeping the Abbey both safe and accessible twenty-four hours every day. We also welcome very regularly the most senior figures in public life, both from this country and internationally. Leading the security team for such occasions requires the development of effective relationships at senior level with the police and other agencies.

It goes without saying that the Abbey therefore seeks someone who can lead a skilled, focused and nimble security team, and who can deal with emergencies and the burdens of great state occasions. The Abbey is, however, neither a place nor a fortress. It is, first and foremost, a working church. It is also a world heritage site attracting well over a million visitors a year. The security team are the first point of contact for those who come to our doors. As we work to adopt recently revised values we are looking for a Head of Security who knows how to keep the public and staff safe, but who also wants to lead them into a deeper understanding of their role as representatives of one of the great churches of nation and Commonwealth, a role of welcome and service. We look for a colleague who want not only to keep us safe but also wishes to be part of this community. The Head of Security is a member of the Senior Management Forum of the Abbey alongside other Abbey Heads of Department, and is therefore expected to contribute collaboratively to the wider agenda of the Abbey.

We think this will be an exciting opportunity for the right person. If you wish to discuss this informally, please contact the Abbey's recruitment advisers Capstone Recruitment.

John Neilson
Deputy Receiver General

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 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. The Abbey is formally known as the Collegiate Church of St Peter in Westminster, and Minor Canons are appointed by the Dean as members of the College.

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 approximately 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.

Job description

- JOB TITLE:** Head of Security
- ACCOUNTABLE TO:** Deputy Receiver General
- ACCOUNTABLE FOR:** Deputy Head of Security, and Security Office Manager & Operations Coordinator
- KEY RELATIONSHIPS:** Internal: Dean and Chapter, Receiver General, Clerk of the Works, Emergency Planning Manager, Head of Event Management and Marketing, Precentor, Head of Human Resources, Head of Visitor Experience, Abbey Safeguarding Officer, all Abbey staff and residents.
- External: Worshippers, visitors and members of the general public, Public services with relevant security responsibilities.

JOB SUMMARY: To advise the Dean and Chapter and the Abbey Board on all matters relating to security. To lead the Abbey's Security Department so that staff, residents and visitors, as well as the Abbey and its precincts, are effectively safeguarded, protected, and kept secure at all times.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Security

1. To keep under continuous strategic review the arrangements for maintaining security of the Abbey and its precincts, staff, residents and visitors. To provide advice on all security functions to the Dean & Chapter and Abbey Board. This includes:
 - monitoring developments in the national security infrastructure and recommending action as appropriate, based on guidance issued by the Metropolitan Police, National Counter Terrorism Security Office, the National Protective Security Authority, and the Security Services.
 - advising to enable the Abbey and the Receiver General, as the 'Responsible Person', to comply with legally enforceable requirements emanating from the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025. To action changes to those security requirements when agreed by the Receiver General (RG), Deputy Receiver General (DRG), and, when necessary, the Dean and Chapter and the Abbey Board.
2. To carry out the role of head of the Security department, instilling a culture for that department which reflects the Abbey's values, and leads members of that department into a deeper understanding of their role of providing welcome and service alongside security. This will include providing visible leadership to all members of the department and building community within the department and across the Abbey.
3. To advise the RG, DRG, Precentor and Head of Ceremonial, Events and Marketing on the security arrangements required for Special Services and events at the Abbey, including planned closures of parts of the precincts when required, and new building projects. To develop and implement agreed security programmes and procedures, including the policy on disruption to services and to visiting the Abbey.
4. To collaborate closely with the Emergency Planning Manager on their responsibilities to develop and maintain plans to manage significant incidents at the Abbey, including active participation by the Security Department in exercising of relevant plans.

5. To act as a key channel of liaison with the police and other external security agencies, keeping threat analyses up to date, and maintaining the security level operating at the Abbey consistent with the current national threat level.
6. To identify, and act as strategic lead and focus for any required security functions (including search and accreditation) conducted by other departments such as Marshals, other Abbey staff, and outside agencies operating within the Abbey precincts.
7. To hold overall responsibility for fire safety, liaising with the Clerk of the Works and the Health and Safety Management Group on all fire safety issues.
8. To work closely with the Head of Visitor Experience on all security aspects arising from management of the Abbey floor. In liaison with the Works and HR Departments, to assist and advise on related physical and/or personnel security matters.
9. To monitor and review all security-related incidents, and investigate where necessary. To share relevant incident reports with the Administration Officer, who will advise on any issues which may impact on the Abbey's insurance arrangements. To arrange that appropriate Counter Terrorism reviews are completed, so relevant discounts can be applied to the Abbey's insurance premium.
10. To report to the Abbey Safeguarding Officer incidents involving safeguarding which are known to the Security department, restricting the circulation of these reports in line with Safeguarding policy guidelines. To lead a wider collaboration of the Security department with the Safeguarding Officer in dealing with those individuals who present a risk to themselves or others.
11. To carry out generic and specific risk assessments relating to the Abbey's safety and security and keep these under regular review.
12. To oversee management of the Emergency Notification System and the building access control system, the dissemination of road closure/demonstration messages to staff and residents, and the determination of which loudspeaker applications in the vicinity can be permitted. To participate actively in regular meetings of Dean's Yard Forum, to maintain strong relationships with the Abbey's neighbours.

Leadership and Management

13. To line-manage the Deputy Head of Security, and the Security Office Manager and Operations Coordinator.
14. To take responsibility for the regular and ongoing review of the Security Risk Register, ensuring security plans reflect agreed priorities.
15. To provide leadership, management and support for the Security staff and Security Beadles.
16. To be a member of the Senior Management Forum (SMF), relevant groups, committees and forums, in order to contribute more widely to the leadership of the Abbey.
17. To oversee an effective training and development plan in place for all Security staff, and that appraisals in the department are carried out annually within the expected timetable. To advise, in collaboration with the Learning & Development Manager in HR, on appropriate training for all Abbey staff on counter terrorism.
18. To be responsible for recruiting and selecting new Security staff, and making sure that they have effective training and induction.

19. To manage the financial budget for Security, particularly for staffing and overtime costs but also including capital costs, projects, contracts and purchases, so that the department is staffed flexibly to cover specific events, but is also effective and operates within budget and within the Financial Standing Orders, through sound fiscal budgetary planning.
20. To undertake the function of Accountable Person for Health and Safety, and GDPR Champion, within the Security department. To respond effectively and on time to all complaints involving the Security department.
21. To carry out any other tasks commensurate with the nature of the role as may be required.

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/Aptitudes/Knowledge:

1. Recognised degree or equivalent experience.
2. Proven ability to influence and deliver key messages, with excellent written and verbal communication skills.
3. Capable of engaging and forming excellent collaborative working relationships with people at all levels
4. Proven leadership skills with the ability to lead by example, inspire and motivate others.
5. Able to use influencing skills to achieve results in sensitive situations.
6. Proactive and pragmatic approach to problem solving.
7. Able to take decisive action when required and with sensitivity, whilst under pressure. Able to manage own stress and emotional responses, and be aware of stress in others.
8. Able to prioritise work effectively and deal with unexpected issues as and when they occur.

Experience:

9. Proven track record of successful leadership in corporate security, military or law enforcement at a very senior level.
10. Relevant experience in counter-terrorism.
11. Experience of leading a medium to large team with several management and/or functional discipline levels.
12. Experience of managing budgets and managing financial plans.

Personal Attributes

13. Understanding of, and sympathy for, the nature and work of Westminster Abbey.
14. Aware of and sensitive to the issues relating to providing a security service within the ethos of a church environment.
15. Commitment to the Abbey values, particularly as they relate to staff management.

Circumstances:

Able to work evenings, weekends and bank holidays as required.

The responsibilities contained within this job description are not exhaustive, will be kept under review, and may be amended from time to time to reflect the changing needs of Westminster Abbey. Any proposed changes will be discussed with the postholder.

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.

Working for us

Employment Status

This post is permanent.

Salary

The salary is £80,000 per annum and is paid on the last Friday of each month. Salary is reviewed annually.

Working Hours

These are 40 hours per week. The normal arrangement of working hours is 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, however the postholder will be required to work hours that suits the needs of the organisation.

Annual Holidays

Full-time holiday entitlement of 36 days per annum, including recognised public holidays, from commencement of employment.

Training

On-site training will be provided in all aspects of the job. Any further training needs will be assessed through the probation period and in annual appraisals.

Pension Scheme and Life Assurance

All employees can join a Group Personal Pension plan, where the minimum employee contribution is 3% and the maximum employer contribution is 9% (as determined by the level of the employee contribution). You will be auto-enrolled into our qualifying workplace pension scheme after 3 months, if you meet the eligibility criteria.

All employees are covered by death-in-service life assurance, whether or not they choose to join the pension scheme.

Staff Discount

All employees receive a 20% discount on purchases from the Westminster Abbey shop and a 30% discount on purchases from the Benugo outlets, which serve refreshments.

Season Ticket Loan

A season ticket loan is offered after satisfactory completion of a probationary period, repayable over 10 months.

Medical Insurance

The Abbey will pay 50% of premiums to join a nominated medical insurance scheme after one year's employment.

Uniform

If a uniform and/or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is provided, this must be worn at all times.

Equality statement and How to apply

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.

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 an enhanced 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.

How to Apply

The recruitment process for this role will be managed by Sam Lee and Peter Dawson at Capstone Recruitment, who can be contacted at s.lee@capstone-recruitment.com for any questions.

Interviews are scheduled to take place on 5 May 2026.