



# Application Pack

**Ref: WA339**

**Head of Retail Operations**

**Salary £60,000 per annum**

**Full time – Maternity Cover  
40 hours per week**

**Closing date: 31 July 2024**

**WESTMINSTER ABBEY ENTERPRISES  
LIMITED**



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# A Letter from the Head of Retail

Dear Prospective Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in the Head of Retail Operations position.

I joined Westminster Abbey Enterprises Limited in April 2022 and am lucky enough to work with an exceptional group of colleagues, all of whom are passionate about the important role they play within Westminster Abbey. The retail team are a happy and dedicated group of individuals, who work tirelessly to support the Abbey's mission to provide a safe welcoming and inspiring environment for all who come to the Abbey and interact with the Abbey digitally.

We are looking for an outstanding Head of Retail Operations who is keen to fully embrace everything that working at Westminster Abbey can offer. This role will lead, support and motivate the high performing retail team to continue to optimise retail profitability to help maintain the ministry and fabric of Westminster Abbey.

If you have any questions about the role, I would be delighted to answer them and I can be contacted through HR.

Westminster Abbey is a truly extraordinary place to work. If appointed, I hope that you will be as excited by the opportunities of working here as I am!

Best wishes,  
Amy Parr

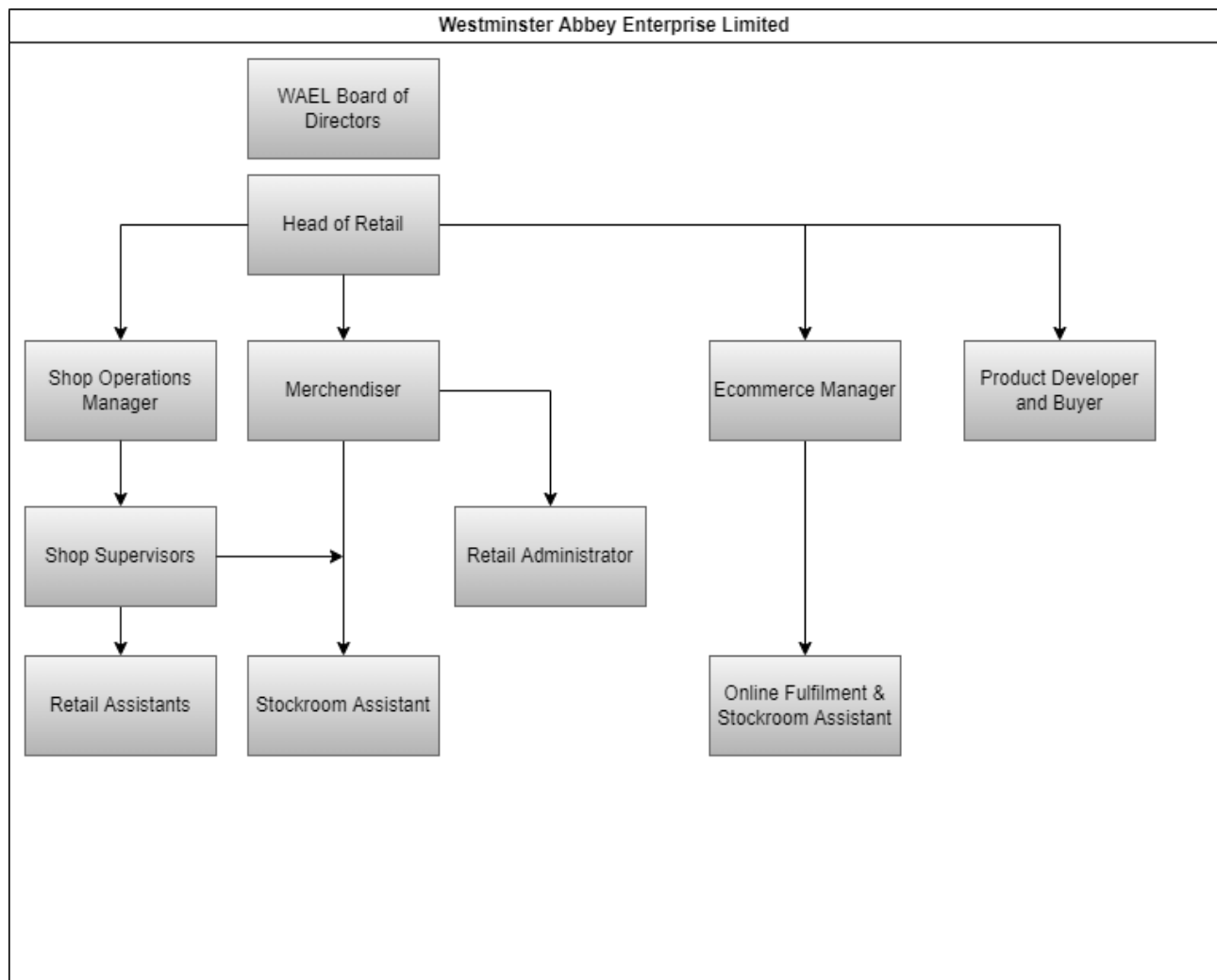
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# About Westminster Abbey Enterprises Ltd

Westminster Abbey Enterprises Limited (WAEL) is responsible for all retail activities at Westminster Abbey, and currently employs around 24 staff.

The main shop, situated at the exit to the Abbey (the Great West Door), sells a range of books and merchandise inspired by the life, history and architecture of the Abbey, and reflecting its location as a visitor attraction in central London. There is a further shop in the Cloisters (at the restaurant entrance/ exit) selling a selective range of gifts, guides and souvenirs. We also sell online, at [shop.westminster-abbey.org](http://shop.westminster-abbey.org).

The net profits from retail sales revenue are usually gift-aided to the Abbey, and WAEL's trading activities provide a valuable contribution to the income of the 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 21<sup>st</sup> May 1560.

We are a welcoming community, but also complex and multi-faceted, with nearly 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. In addition, our newly created Employee Engagement Forum and Social Engagement Statement is helping us to support and develop our staff and volunteers. We have also reshaped our governance arrangements, including a new Strategic Board to help us navigate the challenges and opportunities of the coming decades.

## **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 act as responsible stewards of God's gifts.

## **Our Values:**

As one we serve each other, our visitors and the wider world in all we do with:

- Truthfulness
- Integrity
- Empathy
- Excellence

Following the State Funeral of Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla, which were broadcast to national and international audiences in their millions, interest in the Abbey is very strong. We attract over a million visitors from around the world every year, and our summers and peak period are incredibly busy. However, we receive no regular income from the State, the Church of England or the Crown, and 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.**



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## Role Brief – Head of Retail Operations

### (Maternity cover)

- ORGANISATION:** Westminster Abbey Enterprises Limited (WAEL)
- ACCOUNTABLE TO:** Deputy Receiver General and the WAEL board.
- ACCOUNTABLE FOR:** Shop Operations Manager, eCommerce Manager, Merchandiser, Buyer and Product Developer (all direct reports)
- KEY RELATIONSHIPS:** **Internal:** Receiver General (Chair of WAEL Board), Deputy Receiver General, WAEL directors, Finance team, IT team.
- External:** Suppliers, service and systems providers, ad hoc consultants, non-executive WAEL board directors.
- JOB SUMMARY:**
- Recruit, lead, and inspire the retail team to deliver consistently excellent customer service and meet high standards of visual merchandising
  - Optimise retail profitability through decisive leadership, inspiration and experience
  - Monitor and report on agreed strategies and key performance indicators
  - Support those leading the development and sourcing of high-quality products appropriate to Westminster Abbey
  - Remain sensitive to, and consistent with, the mission and values of Westminster Abbey

### MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

#### Main duties and responsibilities:

The key responsibility is to provide interim leadership to a strongly performing retail team in a high profile environment.

#### Strategic and Financial

- Evaluate retail financial performance throughout the year
- Provide monthly effective reporting (including KPIs) to the WAEL board of directors.
- Communicate budgets and KPI targets to the team, so that all team members understand their roles in achieving and exceeding them
- Support and direct the priorities of the operations teams so that financial and accounting controls are strictly maintained, and WAEL cash handling and reconciliation procedures adhered to
- Support the team leading on delivery of an ecommerce, strategy and fulfilment

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### **Support the leadership of Retail Operations to:**

- Undertake continual evaluation of all retail operations with the team, to improve presentation, service standards, efficiency and cost control, with a view to improving KPIs, benchmarking against appropriate targets and competitors
- Maintain strong stock position, minimizing and monitoring stock losses
- Maintain strong visual merchandising, ensuring the shops are presented to meet the needs of the Abbey visitor, reflect the Westminster Abbey brand
- Oversee the merchandising, marketing and management of the online shop

### **Staff Leadership & Planning**

- Lead, develop, motivate and coach the retail team to achieve targets and budgets
- Lead focus on employee fulfillment
- Take overall responsibility for the recruitment and selection of a high performing retail team (if required) in conjunction with HR
- Maintain personnel standards in conjunction with HR when appropriate
- Be a constant personal and visible presence supporting the full retail and support teams

### **Support the leadership of Buying and Merchandising to**

- To ensure the Westminster Abbey retail outlets and online operations offer a wide range of appropriate, good quality, ethically sourced and profitable
- Oversee the stock control system, maintaining effective stock management processes and policies, and best practice through the use of standard measures and controls such as stock turn and gross margin.
- Lead the regular analysis of sales and stock data, to identify trends, prepare forecasts, manage margin, improve stock turn and ensure stock at optimum levels at all times.

### **Other**

- Promote a high level of health and safety awareness within the team.
- Undertake any other responsibilities that may reasonably be requested by the board of directors.

The responsibilities contained within this job description are not exhaustive and may be amended from time to time to reflect the changing needs of Westminster Abbey.

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## Person Specification

### **Essential**

- A successful track record at a senior management level in the high street or cultural retail sector
- Tenacity and a strong drive for results, achieved through leading, developing and empowering teams. Excellent interpersonal and communication skills - highly articulate with strong relationship-building skills
- Management experience gained across dual site, diverse retail teams. Ability to lead and focus a team around retail objectives
- Experience leading physical and online retail operations, with demonstrable competence in operational process and systems
- Strong organisational skills. Ability to work effectively under pressure, manage multiple responsibilities and deadlines, able to prioritise demanding work streams, taking decisions about individual and team priorities
- A thorough understanding of financial budgetary control and data management, Strong retail systems and Microsoft office skills.
- Ability to think critically, strategically and accumulate knowledge quickly
- Strong negotiation and influencing skills
- High quality report writing and presentation skills
- Sensitivity to the role that a retail operation has to play in representing and supporting the vision, mission and brand values of an institution such as Westminster Abbey.

### **Desirable**

- Experience working with a board of directors
- Specific knowledge in the heritage and culture trading environment
- Buying, merchandising, and inventory management skills.

### **Safeguarding**

Westminster Abbey Enterprises Limited 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 a basic level criminal record check.



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# Working for us

## **Employment Status**

This post is temporary to cover a period of maternity leave/parental/other leave of the postholder, who is expected to return to work within 12 months. The temporary employment is expected to end upon the return of the substantive postholder.

## **Salary**

The salary is £60,000 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**

The holiday entitlement is 31 days per annum including recognised public holidays, rising to 33 days per annum in the fifth year of service.

## **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**

WAEL 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, they must be worn at all times.

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# Equality Statement and How to apply

## Equality Statement

Westminster Abbey Enterprises Ltd (WAEL) aims 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 return 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

WAEL 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 relevant level of criminal record check, receipt of references satisfactory to WAEL, right to work in the UK, proof of professional qualifications and medical clearance, which may include a medical assessment.

## How to Apply

Please complete our application form as CVs will not be accepted.

Read the Job Description and Person Specification carefully and think about how your experience, skills and abilities help you to meet the requirements listed in the Person Specification. Use the 'Supporting Statement' section of the form to tell us how you meet each of the requirements.

As well as your previous work experience, tell us about other relevant experience such as community and voluntary experience, also leisure and other interests. Clear information on how you meet all the requirements of the job, with relevant examples, will help us with shortlisting, and we may not be able to shortlist you for interview if you do not provide this.

Please email your completed application to: [applications@westminster-abbey.org](mailto:applications@westminster-abbey.org)

We regret that, due to the large number of applications we normally receive, we are normally only able to contact or provide feedback if you have been shortlisted for interview. We appreciate your interest in our work at Westminster Abbey Enterprises Limited.