



Application Pack

Ref: WA378

Preventive Conservator

Salary £38,000 per annum

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

Advert Date: 21 January 2025

Closing Date: 21 February 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 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 care for the precious resources entrusted to us: our people, partnerships, buildings, heritage and money.

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.

Job Description

JOB TITLE: Preventive Conservator

ACCOUNTABLE TO: Head Conservator

DEPARTMENT: Works (Conservation Team)

KEY RELATIONSHIPS: **Internal:** Conservators, Conservation Housekeepers, Clerk of the Works, Collections Team

External: Conservation Consultants & Pest Contractor

JOB SUMMARY: To assist the Head Conservator with all aspects of preventive conservation. To develop and maintain the environmental monitoring system. To support the work of the Conservation Housekeeping team.

MAIN DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Undertake preventive conservation as agreed with the Head Conservator:

1. Maintain the Integrated Pest Management programme and respond to pest activity across the site. Answer staff & residents pest queries and regularly liaise with the WA pest contractor.
2. Support the work of the Conservation Housekeeping team and provide practical training for new recruits and regular training updates for the existing team. Undertake conservation housekeeping when necessary.
3. Support conservation colleagues with environmental management solutions for the long-term preservation of the historic site and collection. This work includes monitoring and reporting on the main agents of decay.
4. Support the Head Conservator in maintaining the Eltek environmental monitoring system and undertake regular data evaluation.
5. Maintenance and management of environmental conditions within display cases, both passive and active systems.
6. Support the Head Conservator in regularly reviewing the in-house conservation guidelines for the preservation of Westminster Abbey and its historic collection.

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7. Support the Head Conservator in promoting a collaborative preventive conservation approach across all departments. Outreach activities include advice, training sessions and short talks for staff and volunteers.
 8. Respond to and work flexibly within the busy schedule of services and events at Westminster Abbey and undertake any preventive conservation which may be required.
 9. Be an active member of the Salvage Team. Assist with in-house triage and salvage planning and training sessions.
 10. Assist in supervising the preventive conservation work undertaken by conservation students and interns.
 11. Maintain documentation and photography to the highest standards.
 12. Keep informed of current developments in the field of preventive conservation.
 13. Maintain the highest standards of Health and Safety. Ensure compliance with current legislation, COSHH and Health & Safety regulations.
 14. Assist the Head Conservator in sourcing equipment and materials and co-ordinate cyclical maintenance of housekeeping equipment.
 15. Use a range of access equipment, including ladders and mobile scaffolding.
 16. Play a full part in the work of the conservation team and the broader Abbey community. To act as an advocate for conservation in churches.
 17. The duties above are not intended to be an exhaustive list. The job description may be reviewed periodically in order to ensure that the duties meet evolving requirements of the role.

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:

- A recognized conservation qualification to degree level or equivalent
- Sound knowledge of contemporary principles and practices in preventive conservation
- Demonstrable preventive conservation skills and good working knowledge of all agents of decay
- Excellent written skills, with the ability to produce clear and accurate documentation
- Brilliant communications skills, with excellent spoken and written English
- Able to discuss preventive conservation techniques with colleagues and the wider non-conservation community
- Able to work effectively as a member of a small team and as part of a larger workplace
- IT and technical skills; using collections management databases and other technical specialist software relating to conservation
- Analytical skills; ability to view conservation issues holistically, interpret data and apply a high level of reasoned judgment.

Knowledge/Experience:

- Proven experience in preventive conservation
- Use of environmental monitoring systems and a clear understanding of data analysis
- Experience of producing clear reports on the environmental impact on objects and buildings, to a variety of stakeholders including non-conservators
- Practical experience of display case maintenance
- Practical experience of object handling

Personal Attributes & Circumstances:

- Enthusiastic and passionate about conservation
- Practical, dynamic, self-motivated with an organized, flexible approach to work
- Ability to work collaboratively, be diplomatic and build effective working relationships
- To be fit, energetic and confident working at height
- Ability to demonstrate a sensitivity to conservation issues in the context of a building which is first and foremost a church, but also a leading London tourist attraction and UNESCO World Heritage site

Desirable

- Experience of supporting and overseeing the work of others
- High level of numeracy for analysis of environmental data
- Experience of emergency response and salvage training

The responsibilities contained within this job description are not exhaustive and will be kept under review. The contents 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 £38,000 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 full-time 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

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.

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

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 relevant 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

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

You are also advised to 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 (including a **full** career history of all employment), tell us about other relevant experience such as community and voluntary experience. 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.

Applications should arrive no later than 12 noon on 21 February 2025. Interviews are scheduled to take place in the middle of March.

We regret that, due to the large number of applications we normally receive, we may only be able to contact or provide feedback if you have attended an interview. We appreciate your interest in our work at Westminster Abbey.