

Audit and Risk Committee Member

Role Profile





Introduction from The Dean

Thank you for your interest in becoming a member of the Audit and Risk Committee at Canterbury Cathedral. This is a voluntary position.

I was installed as Dean on 17 December 2022. It is a great joy and privilege to serve Canterbury Cathedral as Dean, but this also comes with challenges and hard work ahead of us. During 2024, the Chapter drew together a new Strategic Plan to see the Cathedral's mission and ministry expand and develop over the next ten years. 2024 also saw Canterbury Cathedral become a formally registered charity with the Charity Commission. This comes through implementation of the Cathedrals Measure of 2021, which sees all cathedrals adopting new governance models, including new Constitution and Statutes, and becoming registered charities.



The Cathedral has a team of nearly 800 volunteers, staff, and clergy as well as our worshipping congregations: local, regional, and international. You will play a part in ensuring the long-term sustainability not only of one of the truly great buildings of our nation, but also to a centre of Christian spirituality, worship, and heritage spanning over a thousand years.

With such an expansive vision, we also realise the need for sound and embedded practices open to critique to more external friends, and who also can help us shape our work further bringing to us insights from other contexts or experiences where safeguarding is also crucial. In particular Audit & Risk must be embedded in appropriate ways across the different groups, departments and swathes of cathedral activities. This must include the obvious areas of risk especially that of finance as well as the other obvious areas typical of many charities. However, given our profile in both the church and in society we also face significant potential reputational risk whilst having a Christian mission at our heart which calls for bold risk taking at times for the sake of God's kingdom. These are not straightforward issues and so we need people not only with good experience in these areas but with imagination and commitment to help us shape our audit and risk processes and reviews so that they support not only our need for compliance from regulators but also support our needs to further our Christian mission not least the delivery of our strategic plan.

This is a significant time for the Cathedral as we work with a new understanding of human connectedness and need for kindness and care, of digital opportunities, and of the pressing need for action in the face of climate emergency. We want Canterbury Cathedral to be fully inclusive, offering warm hospitality to all our visitors from across the world.

We hope that, like us, you will be inspired by both the extraordinarily rich contemporary life and the heritage of this place, and will want to join a great Cathedral team.

David Monteith, Dean of Canterbury

Introduction from our Audit and Risk Committee Chair

As Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, I am delighted to welcome your interest in joining our work at Canterbury Cathedral. As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the mother church of the worldwide Anglican Communion, Canterbury is a place of spiritual, cultural, and historical significance, where heritage and worship have been interwoven for over 1,400 years. This legacy brings with it a profound responsibility: to ensure that the governance structures supporting the Cathedral's ministry are robust, forward-looking, and trusted by the many communities we serve—local, national, and international.



The Audit and Risk Committee provides independent oversight of the Cathedral's systems of internal control, risk management, and financial reporting. We support the Chapter in discharging its responsibilities as a registered charity and steward of public trust, overseeing external and internal audit functions, and the mitigation of financial, reputational, operational and safeguarding risks.

This is meaningful work in a truly unique setting, and we are seeking committee members who combine professional expertise with a collaborative spirit and a commitment to the Cathedral's evolving mission. We value diverse perspectives and a forward-looking approach, ensuring our governance continues to be as enduring and inspiring as the building itself.

Helen Wiseman





About Canterbury Cathedral

Founded by St Augustine in 597 AD, Canterbury Cathedral is a unique place of worship, a major pilgrimage destination, a masterpiece of art and architecture, and one of the UK's most-visited historic sites.

It is the Mother Church of the worldwide Anglican Communion, seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury, UNESCO World Heritage Site, and resting place of royalty and saints.

Primarily this is a place of Christian community, worship and witness. We believe that God's saving love has been revealed to us in the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth.

Every stone and stained-glass window is shaped to give glory to Christ whose name is given to this metropolitan cathedral church. St Augustine was sent here by Pope Gregory the Great as a Christian missionary in 597. He discovered indigenous Christians and worked with them to establish a larger Christian community. In time this became the principal seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury who leads the Church of England and the worldwide Anglican Communion.

Here our stories of church and state intersect. This includes the martyrdom of Archbishop Thomas Becket on 29 December 1170. He was canonised as St Thomas of Canterbury. Canterbury was already a site of pilgrimage, but St Thomas' shrine elevated it to one of the most important in medieval Christendom. Subsequent centuries offer layer after layer making a rich story to discover. We sense this in the majesty of our crypt, and as our imagination is fired walking around our gardens, ruins and cloisters.

Today, our community is drawn from local people and Christians from across the Diocese of Canterbury and the Anglican Communion, from visitors and tourists, from refugees and those cut off from society through exclusion as well as thousands who join us online for worship. Here we are drawn together in a pilgrimage of faith. Like medieval pilgrims to Canterbury, we find it to be a place of miracle and transformation where we encounter the presence of Jesus Christ.

The Audit and Risk Committee

The purpose of the Audit and Risk Committee (the “Committee”) is to enable Chapter members to meet their responsibilities by providing independent oversight of the cathedral’s systems of internal control, risk management and financial reporting, and through supervision of the quality, independence, and effectiveness of both the internal auditor (if appointed) and external auditors.

The Committee must keep the activities and management of the Cathedral under review in relation to such matters as the Chapter has specified in these Terms of Reference.

The Committee is responsible for:

1. reviewing the annual report and financial statements, paying particular attention to accounting policies, areas involving significant judgement or estimation and compliance with financial reporting requirements and accounting standards, and recommending them to Chapter for approval;
2. reviewing the scope and results of internal and external audit work, including the adequacy of management responses;
3. reviewing the performance of internal and external auditors, including recommending the appointment and remuneration of internal external auditors to Chapter when required;
4. monitoring the processes for assessing, reporting, mitigating and owning business risks and their financial, operational and reputational implications, including financial, governance and safeguarding risks;
5. reviewing the risk register at least twice annually, and ensuring Chapter’s internal processes facilitate the prompt reporting of serious incidents, control failures and emerging risks;
6. reviewing the Annual Governance Statement assessing the effectiveness of the Cathedral’s governance arrangements.
7. reviewing annually the Gifts and Hospitality Register.
8. reviewing and recommending to Chapter the organisation’s policies for counter-fraud, anti-money laundering, whistle-blowing and cyber and information security; and
9. reviewing arrangements by which staff may, in confidence, raise concerns about possible improprieties relating to finance or other aspects of the Cathedral’s operations to ensure that arrangements are in place for the investigation of such matters and for appropriate follow-up action.

Person Specification

We are interested to hear from candidates who have an audit, risk, finance or governance background and are able to meet the following person specification.

	Essential	Desirable
Commitment to the Cathedral's mission, charitable objectives, and public service	X	
Understanding of audit, finance, risk and reputational risk management, and governance principles within a regulated or charitable context	X	
Experience of working with financial statements, risk registers, or assurance frameworks	X	
Relevant and up-to-date senior level experience in one or more of the following: charity/third sector/not for profit, audit, finance, investment, risk management, cyber fraud, health & safety, business continuity, governance, security, insurance, reputational protection, or delivery of projects or plans.	X	
Demonstrable strategic leadership and management skills and able to provide effective strategic guidance.	X	
Demonstrated sound judgment and possessing the highest levels of trust, integrity and ethical leadership	X	
An ability to identify, declare, and manage conflicts of interest	X	
Strong intellectual and analytical skills with a broad-based and long-term view of strategic and organisational goals	X	
Ability to grasp the bigger picture and avoid immersion in minute detail	X	
Ability to provide effective oversight, scrutiny, and challenge in a constructive and collegiate manner	X	
Ability to gain the trust, respect, and support of fellow members of the Audit and Risk Committee and the Cathedral Chapter.	X	
An ability to work collaboratively to shape, drive, scrutinise and monitor decisions.	X	
Able to show empathy and to engage diplomatically and authoritatively in dialogue and debate on critical issues.	X	
Willingness to undertake ongoing training and development about issues relevant to the Audit and Risk Committee and in understanding the broader operations of the Cathedral.	X	
Ability to contribute to more inclusive decision-making by offering fresh perspectives, embracing the core values and/or experience of diversity, inclusion, community and safeguarding of vulnerable people.		X

Familiarity with ecclesiastical governance		X
Experience in the oversight of heritage, conservation, or large estates. Insight into how cathedral operations are impacted by climate change and sustainability objectives.		X
Knowledge of cyber security, data protection, or digital transformation		X
	Essential	Desirable
Understanding of safeguarding oversight and reporting processes		X
Insight into investment and property management in a charity context		X
Experience of audit and risk committee oversight of cathedral funds and fundraising as well as different sources of income and revenue generating contracts.		X

Further information about the role

We ask that you:

- Attend committee meetings (at least two per year) in person, with facilities to attend the occasional meeting remotely
- Outside of Audit and Risk Committee meetings, Cathedral staff may seek to consult with the Audit and Risk Committee Members on specific matters, often via email.
- Serve a three-year term which can be extended for a maximum of two further terms (nine years).
- Be in sympathy with the aims and objectives of Canterbury Cathedral

Our Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Useful documents

The following documents are available on request:

- The Cathedral's Strategic Plan
- The Cathedral's Annual Report and Financial Statements to March 2025
- Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Policy on employing people with criminal records
- Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference

How to apply and timetable

If you are interested in this exciting opportunity, you are invited to apply in writing, enclosing an up-to-date CV and covering letter explaining your background, why you are interested in the role and what you feel you can contribute to the Cathedral at this time. You must also complete the Safer Recruitment Form attached to this role. Please send these to the Executive Support Team via executivesupportoffice@canterbury-cathedral.org

To arrange a conversation with Dean David or Helen Wiseman, please contact the Executive Support Team at executivesupportoffice@canterbury-cathedral.org. We will of course respect the privacy of any conversations or expressions of interest.

The closing date for applications is 30 June 2026.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to a selection event at Canterbury Cathedral.

Canterbury Cathedral is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. All post holders and volunteers are expected to share this commitment.

We are committed to increasing equality, diversity and inclusion within our committees. We welcome applications from anyone regardless of disability, ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexuality, social economic background or other difference.

We are committed to inclusive working practices; and during the application process we commit to:

- Paying for care and childcare whilst you are attending an interview.
- Paying for your travel costs to the office and back for interviews if they are held in person.
- Making any reasonable adjustments – for example ensuring we have sign language interpreters organised in advance if you would like them.
- Providing this document in a Word document format readily available to download.
- Offering a first stage interview to disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for the role.

If there is anything you are concerned about or think we could provide, please let us know.

The successful candidate for this role will be required to have a basic DBS check, Fit and Proper Persons Check, and appropriate Church of England safeguarding training. Your personal information will be processed in accordance with GDPR.

A detailed Induction Process will take place for the successful candidates.

Due Diligence

Given the nature of this role, it is important that those appointed to serve on the Committee maintain the confidence of Chapter and the public. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment, or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them

to the attention of the Chair of the Recruitment Panel and provide details of the issue(s) in your application. In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media.

Expenses

These are volunteer appointments and not remunerated, although all agreed travel costs and related expenses will be reimbursed in line with our Expenses Policy.



Canterbury Cathedral

Inspiring life in all its fullness

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