

**Priest / Residentiary Canon
Information Pack – February 2026**

Priest / Residentiary Canon

Thank you for reading this as you think about [Wakefield Cathedral](#). There are huge opportunities here to learn, grow, and make a difference for the gospel in our cathedral, district, and diocese. We're praying for a priest, colleague, and friend who will come and join our worshipping community and our staff team at the heart of wonderful West Yorkshire and in the lively and diverse Diocese of Leeds.

Wakefield Cathedral is full of possibility: it is a bright, light, and spacious place to pray, preach, and lead worship in; the congregations and staff are welcoming, willing, and faithful; we have an excellent and growing profile as a partner for community outreach and events; this part of West Yorkshire is well-connected by road and rail with wonderful heritage and culture. There are challenges too, though: a post-industrial community with worse health, education, and employment outcomes than the average; the cost of keeping the building open and lights on in a cathedral which is not a tourist attraction.

This role will have a particular focus on growing the congregation in numbers and nurturing their faith, on pastoral care and discipleship. But our new colleague will not have to do it all themselves and we're not expecting someone who is equally skilled in every aspect of the role! The load of services and pastoral care is shared by all the clergy team, and there will be chance for you to develop your own interests and projects both in the cathedral itself and in the community and diocese.

For a suitably qualified clergyperson, this would be a Residentiary Canon role with trustee and senior management responsibility; but we are also open to a cleric earlier in their ministry who would be appointed as an Associate Priest. I personally commit significant time and energy to caring for all our clergy and staff and developing their gifts.

Whether or not you've been considering cathedral ministry or this part of the world, please drop me a line on dean@wakefield-cathedral.org.uk and we will arrange a phone or video call – I'd love to hear about you and share something about the cathedral, the area, and the role.

Finally, I am aware personally of the emotional and spiritual cost for clergy considering a possible move, both for you and those you live and serve with. Thank you for reading, and be assured that we are praying for all those considering this role.

*with prayers & best wishes,
Philip Hobday*

About Wakefield Cathedral

Setting and buildings

Physically at the centre of the city of Wakefield, Yorkshire's tallest spire lifts up our eyes – to raise aspiration and celebration in communities which often feel forgotten and under-resourced; to see the possibilities which only come from trusting in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. There has been a church at the centre of Wakefield since at least 1086 and the oldest part of the cathedral dates from some time around 1100. All Saints' Church was substantially rebuilt in the mid-fifteenth century. It became a cathedral in 1888 when, having been first in the Diocese of York and then the Diocese of Ripon, a new Diocese of Wakefield was created. The cathedral was extended creating the peaceful and prayerful St Mark's Chapel as well as the Chapter House and vestries underneath in 1905. A substantial internal reordering was completed in 2014 which included the replacement of pews with chairs, new lighting, underfloor heating, and the installation of a labyrinth; this has given us a beautiful, clear, and bright space for prayer, worship, and events. With Bradford and Ripon Cathedrals, it is a seat of the Bishop of Leeds and now serves clergy, parishes, and schools across the large, diverse, and lively [Diocese of Leeds](#): a place of welcome, worship, and witness in the city, district, county, and region.

The pandemic stalled proposals for redevelopment on the north side of the cathedral, to create new and better toilet and accommodation facilities for our choirs and other groups which complies with contemporary health and safety / safeguarding needs; exploring possibilities is a key task for 2026. The cathedral also oversees the Chantry Chapel, a fascinating historic building in its own and one of just three surviving bridge chantries in the country: as well as a lively programme of events and open days organised by the Friends of the Chantry, cathedral clergy take a *Book of Common Prayer* communion service on a Sunday evening once a month.

Prayer and Worship

Wakefield has a strong grounding in the broadly Anglican Catholic tradition (incense is used at all sung eucharists, and vestments are worn); but clergy and worshippers come from a range of theological traditions, worship styles, and church backgrounds. Making the most of the catholic, choral tradition as a vehicle for worship and nurturing faith, alongside developing additional, fresh forms of worship and nurture, will be important in the next stage of our life.

Monday to Friday there is 0815 Morning Prayer and Holy Communion. Evening Prayer is said at 1530 or, during termtime, Choral Evensong is sung on Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 1730 and Thursdays at 1830. On Saturdays, Morning Prayer and Holy Communion are at 1000 and Evening Prayer at 1530. While clergy are expected to commit to daily Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer / Choral Evensong (unless it a rest day / annual leave or engaged elsewhere), on Saturdays services are usually covered by a single cleric. Midweek there is also a 1030 Holy Communion on Wednesdays using the *Book of Common Prayer* and a 1230 Eucharist with Prayers for Healing and Anointing on Thursdays.

On Sundays, there is an 0800 Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer); 0915 'Parish' Eucharist (at the nave altar, modern-language with a congregational communion setting; lay people serve, read the lesson, lead the prayers, and assist with the distribution of communion); 1100 Choral Eucharist (at the high altar, traditional-language with a choral setting). Sundays end with Choral Evensong or Evening Prayer at 1530. There are regular special services for the diocese and community groups, and a full pattern of seasonal special services which draw on music, movement, colour, and the liturgical space to celebrate the story of God's love and the Lord's life as it unfolds through scripture, worship, and the liturgical year.

Work with children and young people is a priority; we have a monthly 'Messy Cathedral' service which has recently moved to a Sunday teatime slot, and offer children's activities once a month during the 0915 service. Our Community Outreach Officer also does considerable work in hosting schools workshops for primary and secondary schools across the district, and in taking assemblies.

There are six choral groups from Byrd Song (aged 6) to our voluntary choir (people of all ages up to and above 60!), including choristers, a youth choir, adult lay clerks, and consort sopranos. Our choristers are increasingly drawn from a range of backgrounds and schools, but we aim to broaden their diversity further, and securing the continued flourishing of our choral tradition is a key financial and mission priority.

Safeguarding

Conscious of our responsibility to care for everyone and of the church's failures in this area, we are committed to being a safe and welcoming place for all. Details of our safeguarding policies are [available here](#); professional casework and advice is provided by the [Diocesan Safeguarding Team](#) through a Service Level Agreement. Along with the Diocese of Leeds and our sister cathedrals we expect to undergo an independent [INEQE audit](#) in 2028. We have recently advertised a shared Safeguarding role with another Cathedral; embedding the [National Safeguarding Standards](#) and developing more robust safeguarding administration are the key next steps.

Vision and Strategy

The cathedral is open for everyone, for free, for three hundred and sixty-five days a year. Our Strategic Vision, [Firm in Hope](#), frames our work up to 2030. It has four strands:

- *Building the body of Christ.* Our regular congregations are growing younger and more diverse, but we need to do better at communicating with congregations and volunteers, and in providing a wider range of opportunities to worship and grow in faith.
- *A partner for mission.* Rather than seeing ourselves primarily as a *provider* of services and projects, we are increasingly focussed on being a *convenor and connector* in the city and district, drawing on our unique web of connections to bring together people of goodwill in business, education, heritage, the arts, local government, and Christian projects and churches of all denominations to celebrate and enable the good work that already goes on.

- *Optimising our assets for mission.* It costs around £2,600 a day to run the cathedral and we receive about £1,200 a day in central church funding. So we are working hard to increase and diversify our income streams through a wider range of events and activities which bring new and more diverse groups into the building. A key task for 2026 will be discerning what a major redevelopment project might look like and how it might be funded. A project to install solar panels at the cathedral and chantry chapel is the next stage in our environmental sustainability work which is led by a dedicated eco-group.
- *A cathedral for the whole diocese.* We are developing our role as one of the three cathedrals in the diocese, working to be a place of welcome and refreshment for clergy and parishes of all traditions and in all parts of the diocese, so we can be a source of spiritual and theological support in their demanding work. Cathedral clergy teach on diocesan courses, serve on area and diocesan groups, and offer preaching and worship cover across the diocese (not just the Wakefield Episcopal Area).

Staff

We have one of the smallest [staff teams](#) of an English cathedral but they are hard-working, committed, willing to muck in, and proud of their work and workplace. We rely heavily on a faithful band of volunteers who assist with stewarding, events, education visits, welcoming, choir chaperoning, bellringers, singers, flower arrangers, readers/intercessors/communion assistants, and more. Care and development of staff and volunteers is a key part of the clergy's work. The Dean was a Residentiary Canon from 2022 overseeing outreach, pastoral care, learning, and safeguarding before being appointed Dean in autumn 2025. A Diocesan Residentiary Canon (from January 2025) is based half-time here and half-time as Lay Training Officer for the Diocese of Leeds. The Canon Precentor (from January 2024) oversees music, worship, and our relations with the Wakefield Grammar Schools Foundation. There is a newly-licensed lay minster, and around 12 FTE lay staff.

Governance

The [Cathedral Chapter](#) is our governance / trustee body which oversees finance, fabric, strategy, and compliance. The [Cathedrals Measure 2021](#) as well as our [Constitution](#) and [Statutes](#) set out the legal framework, which now means Chapter members are trustees in Charity law and cathedrals are co-regulated by the [Charity Commission](#) and the [Church Commissioners for England](#). As well as the Dean and residentiary canons, it has up to eight non-executive members. All are thoughtful, prayerful, and contribute to cathedral life in a range of ways. Chapter currently meets five times a year for a full morning on a Wednesday and has an annual away day.

About Wakefield

Wakefield as a city and district sometimes defines itself by what it is not or has been (for instance, post-industrial; post-mining; an area of relative deprivation and challenge). But there is a proud history, some fine buildings, a strong desire to work together for the good of our city and district, and above all great people (the population of the district, which covers the city and surrounding towns and

villages, is around 350,000). We have excellent relations with [Wakefield Council](#) and the business community as well as local charities. There are particularly good links with [Trinity Academy Cathedral](#), the [Wakefield Grammar Schools Foundation](#), and [Wakefield College](#).

Wakefield itself has a thriving local [theatre](#); for arts, the [Hepworth Gallery](#) and [Art House](#) are in the city, and [Yorkshire Sculpture Park](#) is a short bus or car ride away; for sports, Rugby League is big around here and [Wakefield Trinity RLFC](#) has recently celebrated a major anniversary at the cathedral, while there are several good gyms in the city and other sports (notably [football](#) and [cricket](#)) in Leeds. There are also good National Trust properties around the city and much more: there's something of everything within easy reach!

Wakefield is very well-connected, with the M1, M62, and A1(M) all very nearby (there are three M1 junctions around the city!). London is two hours away by regular fast train, and you can be in the beautiful and varied landscapes of the Yorkshire coast, the Dales, the Pennines, or the Peak District in about an hour by car. York, Leeds, and Sheffield, with their cultural and commercial life, are easily accessible in a short car, bus, or train journey.

We recognise and cherish the reality that clergy come with a range of domestic and social circumstances. There is a range of options for schools and there are employment opportunities in Wakefield or easy commuting distance. The connectedness of the city means it is relatively accessible for reaching family or friends. We are committed to finding patterns of life and ministry which help us flourish, whatever our circumstances.

About the Diocese of Leeds

On Easter Day 2014, the former dioceses of Wakefield, Ripon and Leeds, and Bradford were dissolved and a new Diocese of Leeds was created. The diocese is large both in people and scale, covering 2,425 square miles with a population of 2.6 million; there are 433 parishes, 236 schools, and around 270 stipendiary clergy. It is also very diverse, with something of everything except the sea! The Bishop of Leeds oversees the whole Diocese and we are currently praying for the next Bishop who we expected to welcome in late 2026 / early 2027; the recently-published [Statement of Needs](#) is a good overview of the diocese. There are five Episcopal Areas (Leeds, Wakefield, Ripon, Bradford, and Huddersfield) each with an Area Bishop and an Archdeacon. The three cathedrals work closely together, sharing diocesan events and special services equally; the Deans meet monthly and Residentiary Canons are encouraged to stay in touch to share challenges and ideas.

About the role

Our new priest colleague will be a key part of the cathedral clergy team with particular emphasis on growing the congregations in number and in faith, leading on pastoral care, and on outreach to children, young people, and younger adults. The clergy and staff team, as well as volunteers and congregations, are coming through a period of significant change so clergy need

to pay attention to their spiritual, physical, and emotional wellbeing, and be willing to be flexible as elements of the role will evolve to suit both the post-holder's skills and the cathedral's needs.

Safer Recruitment

Wakefield Cathedral takes its responsibility for the safeguarding of children, young people and vulnerable adults very seriously and their welfare is paramount in all areas of cathedral life. All clergy, lay staff, and volunteers are properly recruited, screened, trained, and supported. The post-holder will be required to undertake all relevant Church of England safeguarding training. Because the role involves regulated activity with children, young people, and vulnerable adults, an offer of appointment will be conditional on completing a Confidential Declaration and receiving Enhanced Disclosure with Barring Checks from the Disclosure and Barring Service. The panel interview will include questions on candidates' understanding of safeguarding processes and culture; referees will be asked to comment on candidates' approach to safeguarding.

Role Description

General

- Commit to, and be sustained by, the pattern of daily morning and evening prayer and Sunday worship in the cathedral (except when on annual leave, a rest day, or engaged elsewhere);
- play a full part in leading worship, assisting at services, and preaching as agreed on the rota;
- as part of the team contribute to study groups, other activities, and development / fundraising events;
- attend clergy meetings (roughly fortnightly), diary meetings (roughly five a year), and other meetings as needed.

Building the Body of Christ

- Lead, with the other clergy, on growing the congregations in depth of faith, diversity, and number;
- be the first port of call for pastoral care and nurture for the regular congregations, and for the care and oversight of key volunteers;
- oversee and develop the cathedral's work with children, young adults, and schools, potentially serving as a school governor;
- be the first port of call for baptism / confirmation / marriage / funeral queries and oversee necessary administration (preparation and taking of these services is shared across the team).

A partner for mission

- Work with the Precentor and the Diocesan Canon to develop new forms of worship and nurturing faith, particularly aimed at younger adults, and possibly a new worshipping community;
- with the Dean, share in building relationships across the city and district with charities, local government, and businesses;
- with the Diocesan Canon, review current work on areas such as young people, inclusion, and environmental sustainability and agree who will lead which strands / projects.

Optimising our assets for mission

- Lead on a review of the uses of the Chantry Chapel and its place in the cathedral's worship and mission;
- be prepared in due course (with appropriate training and support) to take on the role of Chapter Safeguarding Lead, to attend the Cathedral Safeguarding Panel and the Diocesan Safeguarding Operations Group, and line-manage the Safeguarding Support Officer.

A Cathedral for the whole diocese

- Serve the diocese in ways agreed with the Dean and which suit both the post-holder's abilities and interests and the cathedral's and diocese's needs – for instance, teaching on diocesan training courses or serving on diocesan or area bodies;
- preach and lead worship in parishes across the diocese as agreed in the clergy team;
- lead for the cathedral in local church relationships including deanery chapter / synod and ecumenical networks;
- work with counterparts in Ripon and Bradford Cathedrals to share experience, challenges, and learning from our different contexts.

Additionally, a residentiary canon will be

- an executive member of chapter, with trustee responsibility for overseeing the cathedral's fabric, finances, strategy, and compliance, and of chapter committees as agreed;
- a member of the senior management team which meets roughly fortnightly and oversees the cathedral's day-to-day operations.

Person Specification

The post-holder will be:

- a priest of the Church of England, of a member church of the Anglican Communion, or of a church in full communion with the Church of England;
- willing to commit to a pattern of prayer, worship, and meetings in the cathedral, working within its broadly Anglican Catholic tradition while bringing their own spirituality and insights to our shared life;
- committed to helping create a safer workplace and culture, including undertaking all necessary safeguarding training, following all safeguarding policies/procedures, and modelling good safeguarding practice in their own conduct;
- able to work with, and get the best out of, lay and clergy colleagues in a committed but small team;
- experienced at working with, and leading, staff and volunteers on tasks / projects;
- confident in the distinctive contribution they can make but sensitive to the different perspectives and opinions of others, able both to step back to support or step forward to lead as appropriate;
- calm, emotionally intelligent, resilient, and committed to the spiritual discipline of team-working within a praying community;
- capable of working in a busy, complex, outward-facing environment;

- *either* experienced (whether from the church or elsewhere) in line-management and senior leadership *or* able to demonstrate potential and willingness to develop those skills;
- trustworthy, prepared to challenge robustly in private while being loyal in public;
- IT-literate including Microsoft Office, sharing an electronic diary;
- committed to ongoing theological learning and their own training and development.

To be considered for appointment as a residentiary canon, candidates will also need to:

- have been in holy orders for at least 6 years;
- have exercised a significant leadership role in the Church, whether in a parish, diocese, theological education institution or cathedral, or equivalent outside the church;
- have experience of working with a governing body or trustee board;
- demonstrate an ability to line-manage colleagues and invest in their professional development;
- be numerate in trustee-level financial decision-making and competent in the management of a budget;
- be [eligible for appointment](#) as a charity trustee.

Terms and Conditions

- The post-holder will be appointed by the Acting Bishop of Leeds in consultation with the Dean of Wakefield under Common Tenure.
- The post-holder will be housed in Cathedral Close WF1 2DP in one of two properties to be discussed with the preferred candidate. The cathedral covers the cost of buildings insurance, council tax, and water rates.
- A residentiary canon's stipend will be at the agreed rate (2025: £32,327); for a priest who is not a residentiary canon, the stipend will be that of an incumbent in the Diocese of Leeds (2025: £31,093). In either case, removal expenses within the UK will be covered to the lowest of three quotes and an additional agreed resettlement allowance (subject to the legal tax-free maximum).
- As well as a thorough, structured induction programme, the post-holder will have regular catchups (roughly every six weeks) with the Dean and an annual review with him. They will also have an annual Ministry Development Review with the Bishop of Leeds or another member of the Bishop's Staff who is not part of the cathedral team.
- Cathedral clergy are provided with a laptop and mobile phone along with office space in Cathedral Centre, 8-10 Westmorland Street, WF1 1PJ and are expected to be visible in the office for a significant part of the working week.
- Cathedral clergy are entitled to a 24-hour rest period in each seven-day period; 44 days annual leave (including statutory Bank Holidays or days in lieu of them and up to six Sundays), in each calendar year. They should make an annual retreat and see a spiritual director or equivalent regularly. Cathedral clergy have access to the [Employee Assistance Programme](#) and continuing ministerial development opportunities through the Diocese of Leeds. Work coaching and other development opportunities are strongly encouraged and the Dean will work with the post-holder to identify what will best support them.

Referees

For shortlisted candidates, Wakefield Cathedral will take up references from three referees. Your Bishop will also be asked for a reference / Clergy Current Status Letter so you do not need to ask them.

Application Process

Please complete the application form on [Pathways](#) by **12 noon on Friday 27th March 2026**.

Candidates will be advised shortly after Easter whether they have been shortlisted. Summary feedback will be offered to candidates who are not shortlisted. Candidates who are interviewed but not appointed will be offered a follow-up conversation with the Dean.

Interviews will take place at Wakefield Cathedral on **Friday 24th April 2026**. Shortlisted candidates will be offered a tour of the cathedral, a chance to meet the other cathedral clergy, and to see the available houses. Reasonable travel expenses will be reimbursed and (if needed) overnight accommodation arranged. The interview process will include preaching a short homily on a biblical passage, a panel interview, and a short presentation to the panel on a topic to be advised.

This appointment is made by the Bishop in consultation with the Dean, and the interview panel will include:

Toby Howarth (Chair)

Philip Hobday

Wendy Dalrymple

Mandy Shepherd

Beatrix Calow

Bishop of Bradford and Acting Bishop of Leeds

Dean of Wakefield

Residentiary Canon, Ripon Cathedral

Chapter Member and regular worshipper

Ordinand at Mirfield and regular worshipper