

CHAPLAINCY OPPORTUNITY



The Gatehouse



Almshouses



The Chapel

St John, Northgate, Canterbury



Frater Cottages



Inside the Chapel



The Church

St Nicholas, Harbledown

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What will the role of the Chaplain look like?



The almshouses of St John and St Nicholas are ancient charitable foundations, dating from around 1084, established by Archbishop Lanfranc to provide for the vulnerable and elderly. Today, they remain faithful to that founding purpose, offering secure and peaceful accommodation to approximately 35–40 residents (known as Indwellers), most of whom are over 60 and of limited financial means.



At the heart of this community life is the Chaplain — a priest who provides not only regular worship and sacramental ministry but also a personal and pastoral presence among the residents. The Chaplain is visible, accessible, and compassionate, helping individuals navigate life's joys, challenges, and transitions with dignity and faith.



This is a unique opportunity to minister in a peaceful, heritage-rich setting, offering spiritual companionship and support in a role marked by flexibility, autonomy and a strong sense of calling.

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Key Responsibilities:



Worship & Services

The Chaplain leads rhythm of worship across both almshouse communities:



- Sunday Eucharist – 9:30 am at St John’s Chapel, Canterbury
- Thursday Eucharist – 11:00 am at St Nicholas’ Chapel, Harbledown
- Thursday Evensong – 2:30 pm at St John’s Chapel, Canterbury

In addition, the Chaplain plans and officiates at special services:

- Carol Service
- Harvest Thanksgiving
- St John’s Day and St Nicholas’ Day (often with guest preachers)
- Remembrance services
- May offer seasonal study groups, prayer meetings or reflections to enrich the spiritual life of the community.



Pastoral Care & Community Engagement:

- Regular visits to residents in their flats and in hospital
- Being available for confidential pastoral conversations, spiritual direction or prayer
- Offering bereavement support and conducting funerals
- Preparing individuals for sacraments, including Baptism or Confirmation, in collaboration with the Diocese
- Participating in welcoming and integrating new residents
- Attending and supporting admission ceremonies during chapel services
- Encouraging and facilitating fellowship, faith-sharing, and neighbourly kindness among residents

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Person Specification:

We are seeking a priest who is:

- Ordained Priest in the Church of England (or a Church in communion with it), in good standing
- Enhanced DBS Disclosure with Barred List check (Adult Workforce), or willingness to undergo one prior to appointment
- A commitment to the Church of England's Safer Recruitment and People Management guidance and safeguarding standards
- Proven pastoral experience, especially with older or vulnerable adults
- Demonstrable integrity and trustworthiness, with a mature and prayerful approach to confidential situations
- Ability to drive and own a vehicle – essential due to the location and lack of public transport between sites

Desirable

- Experience of residential or institutional chaplaincy (e.g. care homes, almshouses, hospital, or prison)
- A good working knowledge of safeguarding procedures, with up-to-date safeguarding training (or willingness to undertake it before starting)
- Skilled in pastoral listening, bereavement care, and informal spiritual support
- Comfortable leading traditional liturgy while also engaging informally with residents
- Able to work collaboratively and flexibly, managing their own time and ministry within an agreed framework

Terms of Appointment:

Accommodation: A generous, rent-free, ground floor flat at St John's, Canterbury. Includes two bedrooms, a private garden, garage with additional parking spaces for visitors and spacious reception rooms.

Remuneration: There is no salary for this role, but all reasonable expenses will be reimbursed including council tax and utility bills.

Time Commitment: This is a part-time, flexible role. The Chaplain determines their pattern of ministry in consultation with the Prior and General Manager.



Governance & Support:

The Chaplain reports informally to the Prior (a Trustee who chairs the resident admissions panel) and works closely with the General Manager and other staff based at St John's. Occasionally, ordained residents also offer support in worship or pastoral care.

There is space within the role for the Chaplain to bring their own gifts and shape the ministry in ways that suit both the needs of the community and the Chaplain's own rhythms.



A Unique Ministry of Gentle Presence:

This is not a parish role nor a chaplaincy with heavy demands. It is a ministry of gentle, faithful presence in a setting steeped in tradition and trust. The Chaplain offers continuity, care, and the companionship of Christ to those who have walked long roads and now call these almshouses home.

For someone with a heart for quiet service and mature pastoral care, this is a precious opportunity to make a lasting difference in a place of beauty and blessing.