ST OSWALD'S HOSPITAL

Christian Almshouses in Worcester



House-for-Duty Chaplain

A Unique Ministry of Gentle Presence

House-for-Duty Chaplain

A Unique Ministry of Gentle Presence



This is a rare and deeply rewarding opportunity to offer a ministry of quiet grace in one of Worcester's most charming Christian communities. Far from the demands of a busy parish or high-pressure chaplaincy, this role invites a steady, prayerful presence among residents who call these beautiful almshouses home.

The Chaplain will bring continuity, care and the companionship of Christ to a place rich in history, community and blessing. For someone drawn to mature pastoral ministry, gentle service and the joy of walking faithfully alongside others, this is a precious chance to make a lasting and meaningful difference.

About St Oswald's Hospital

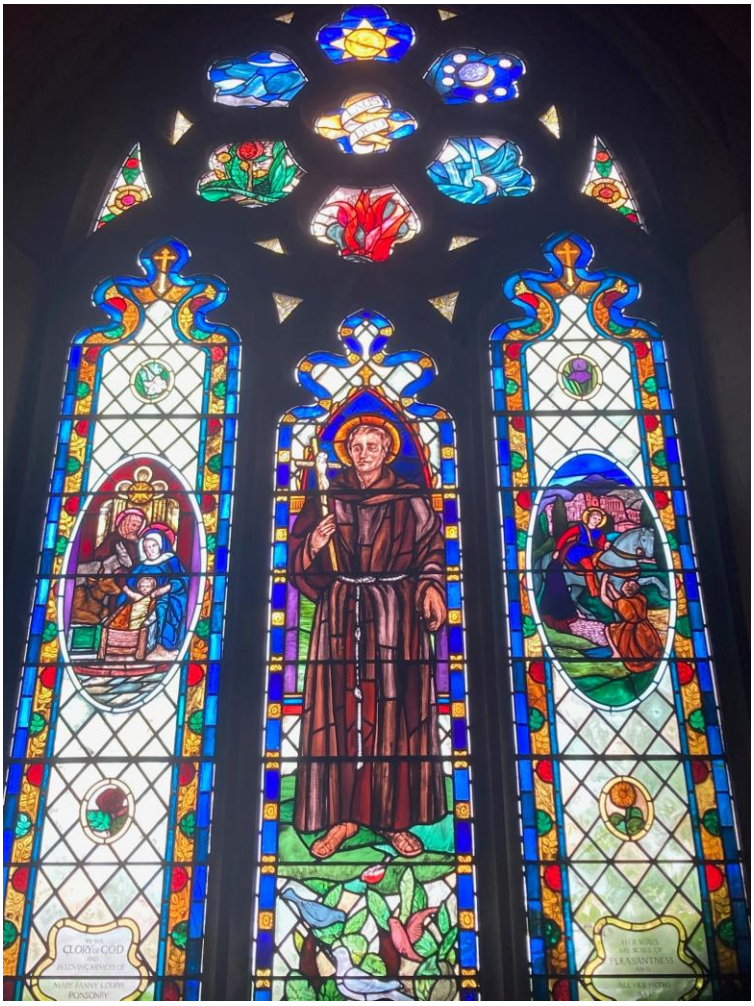
St Oswald's Hospital is an ancient foundation of almshouses, located at The Tything, Worcester, WR1 1HR. It is comprised of 21 Grade II listed almshouses; a chapel and gardens and St Oswald's Hospital is considered to be the oldest almshouses in the country. Tradition suggests that St Oswald, Bishop of Worcester, created a sanctuary and refuge for the sick in about 990 AD though the first documented reference is in the register of Bishop Giffard dated 1268. The current buildings date from 1873.

The aim of St Oswald's Hospital is to provide high quality homes in a safe, secure and friendly environment, with a strong sense of community. Places are available to those still capable of independent living and the Charity is not placed to provide residential care.

Each of the almshouses is self-contained and consists of a living room, a bedroom, a kitchen and a bathroom. Parking is available and almshouses are situated on both the ground floor and first floor of the current Victorian buildings.



The management of St Oswald's Hospital is closely linked to Worcester Cathedral, with the Cathedral's Chapter being the trustees of St Oswald's Hospital. The Dean of Worcester is the Master, and the Cathedral's Chief Operating Officer is the Steward. There are three members of staff: a support manager on site weekdays, a property maintenance provider, and a gardener.



Job Description

Role Title: House-for-Duty Chaplain

Location: St Oswald's Almshouses, Diocese of Worcester

Accountable to: The Master & Trustees of St Oswald's Almshouses and the Bishop of Worcester or delegated representative

Purpose of Role:
To provide spiritual, pastoral and liturgical leadership within St Oswald's Almshouses community, offering Christian ministry consistent with the traditions and teaching of the Church of England, and supporting the spiritual wellbeing of residents.

Key Responsibilities:

- Lead and conduct regular worship: Holy Communion (sung) at 9am on Sundays and (said) 9am on Wednesdays, and to lead seasonal services at Christmas, Holy Week, Easter and other times as appropriate.
- Provide pastoral care and spiritual support to residents, including visiting those who are unwell or housebound.
- Be a visible and approachable Christian presence within the Almshouse community.
- Encourage and nurture the spiritual life of residents, respecting individual backgrounds and levels of faith.
- Work collaboratively with the Trustees and staff to promote the wellbeing of the community.
- Offer occasional offices where appropriate (e.g. funerals, memorial services).
- Maintain appropriate safeguarding practices in line with Church of England and diocesan requirements.
- Participate in Cathedral and diocesan life as appropriate and maintain good standing with the Church of England.

Nature of Appointment:
This is a House-for-Duty role, offering accommodation in return for agreed ministerial duties. Specific expectations regarding time commitment will be agreed locally, typically equivalent to part-time ministry.

Person Specification

Essential Criteria:

- 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 deep commitment to Christian ministry, prayer and pastoral care.
- Proven experience of parish or chaplaincy ministry, particularly among older people or within residential communities.
- Demonstrable integrity and trustworthiness, with a mature and prayerful approach to confidential situations.
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills, with a warm and compassionate approach.
- Ability to keep clear boundaries while living in a small community.
- Ability to work collaboratively with staff, trustees and volunteers.
- Commitment to safeguarding and the wellbeing of vulnerable adults.
- Flexibility, reliability and a willingness to be present within the community.

Desirable Criteria:

- Previous experience of ministry in an almshouse or similar setting.
- Understanding of the needs of older people, including issues of loneliness, bereavement and health challenges.
- Comfortable leading traditional liturgy while also engaging informally with residents.
- A good working knowledge of safeguarding procedures, with up-to-date safeguarding training (or willingness to undertake it before starting).
- Experience of working within a multi-agency or community setting.
- A sense of humour, resilience and pastoral sensitivity.



Terms of Appointment



Accommodation: A generous, rent-free, house in the heart of the alms houses. Includes four bedrooms, an allocated parking space with additional parking spaces for visitors and spacious reception rooms.

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

Time Commitment: This is a part-time, flexible role. The Chaplain determines their pattern of ministry in consultation with the Master and Steward, but the expectation is Sundays, Wednesdays and one other day.

Governance & Support

The Chaplain reports informally to the Master (a Trustee) and works closely with the General Manager and other staff based at St Oswald'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. The Trustees (currently Worcester Cathedral Chapter members) are responsible for Governance and meet regularly to review operations and provide support.

Safeguarding

St Oswald's Hospital is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk who visit our premises and precinct. All Clergy, staff and volunteers are expected to actively demonstrate a commitment to a culture of safeguarding by:

- Understanding and adhering to St Oswald's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Maintaining professional boundaries and demonstrating behaviour that prioritises safety and wellbeing.
- Taking responsibility for identifying and promptly reporting and safeguarding concerns in line with the policy and procedures.
- Undertaking safeguarding training and fulfilling any specific safeguarding duties required in their role.
- Actively contributing to an environment where everyone feels safe, valued and empowered to raise concerns without fear of reprisal.

ID badges must be worn at all times while on duty. Badges are for use by the named individual only.



How to apply

Applications should be made using the application form.

Completed application forms and any queries about the application process can be directed to the EA to the Chief Operating Officer/Officer for HR and Governance on jodiebrookes-kavanagh@worcestercathedral.org.uk

Candidates should provide examples in their personal statement of how they meet the person specification.

Interviews will be arranged at a mutually convenient time.

Those interested in the post are welcome, if they wish, to contact thedeansoffice@worcestercathedral.org.uk for an informal discussion.

ST OSWALD'S HOSPITAL

www.worcestercathedral.org.uk/about-us/community/st-oswalds-hospital