

Southwell  
Minster

**Cathedral Architect**

**Briefing Pack**

**Southwell Minster, the Cathedral Church for the Diocese of Southwell and Nottingham, is seeking to appoint a new Cathedral Architect (CA). The CA supports and guides Southwell Cathedral Chapter (the governing body) in its care for, and development of, the fabric of the Cathedral Church, enabling it to fulfil its vision and support the Bishops and Diocese.**

**Our vision is to be a Living Well of Spiritual Refreshment:**

- ◆ **Extending welcome**
- ◆ **Exciting Faith**
- ◆ **Embracing Community**

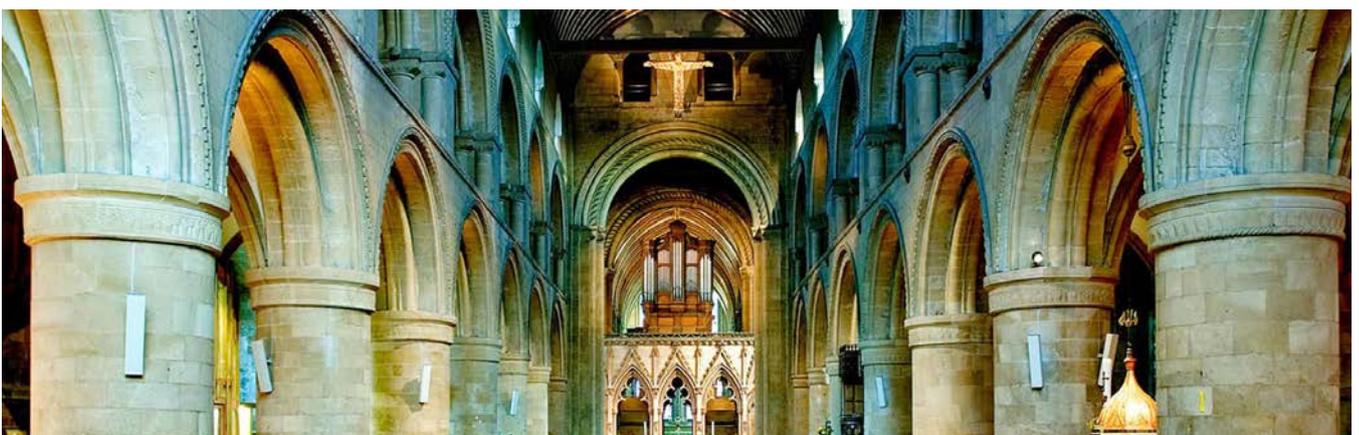


## Brief history

The present Romanesque building replaced an Anglo-Saxon minster church which in turn had been built on the site of an abandoned but significant Roman villa. St. Paulinus baptised nearby in the River Trent, evangelising this part of England in the early 7th century. Later, successive Archbishops of York developed the Palace near to the Minster, strategically positioned as the last stopping-off place in the York Province on the Great North Road (now the A1). Southwell became an important seat of ecclesiastical power and influence as a Collegiate Church. Since 1884 the Minster has been the Cathedral Church for Nottinghamshire (and, until 1927, East Derbyshire). It is arguably the most beautiful 12th-century building in England and perfect in its setting. It is one of only a dozen cathedrals mentioned in Lonely Planet's Ultimate UK Travelist.

Adjacent to the Minster is the Archbishop's Palace. The former Palace of the Archbishop of York as we see it today dates from the 14th century and was wrecked during the Civil War. The ruined part can be admired up-close from the Palace Gardens. The surviving built part of the Palace – the Great Hall – was restored in the Edwardian era. The Hall retains its original proportions and the beams of the magnificent vaulted ceiling of the State Chamber are mostly medieval originals. An NLHF-funded project was completed in 2018.

Surrounding the Minster and contiguous with it are several acres of gardens, including the Potwell Dyke grasslands which are a Site of Importance to Nature Conservation and include four varieties of orchid.



## A working Cathedral

Alongside the normal round of the daily office and Eucharist, the Minster is in demand for some 50 or so special services and events of many kinds including ordinations, confirmations, memorial services, County and Civic services, school and college services, and presentation and degree ceremonies. Our outward focused ministry with the County and external organisations is essential and we work hard to ensure that all who are hosted in the Minster are welcomed and involved in the planning and delivery of the event. We regularly host concerts, art exhibitions and theatre productions.

## The 'Leaves of Southwell'

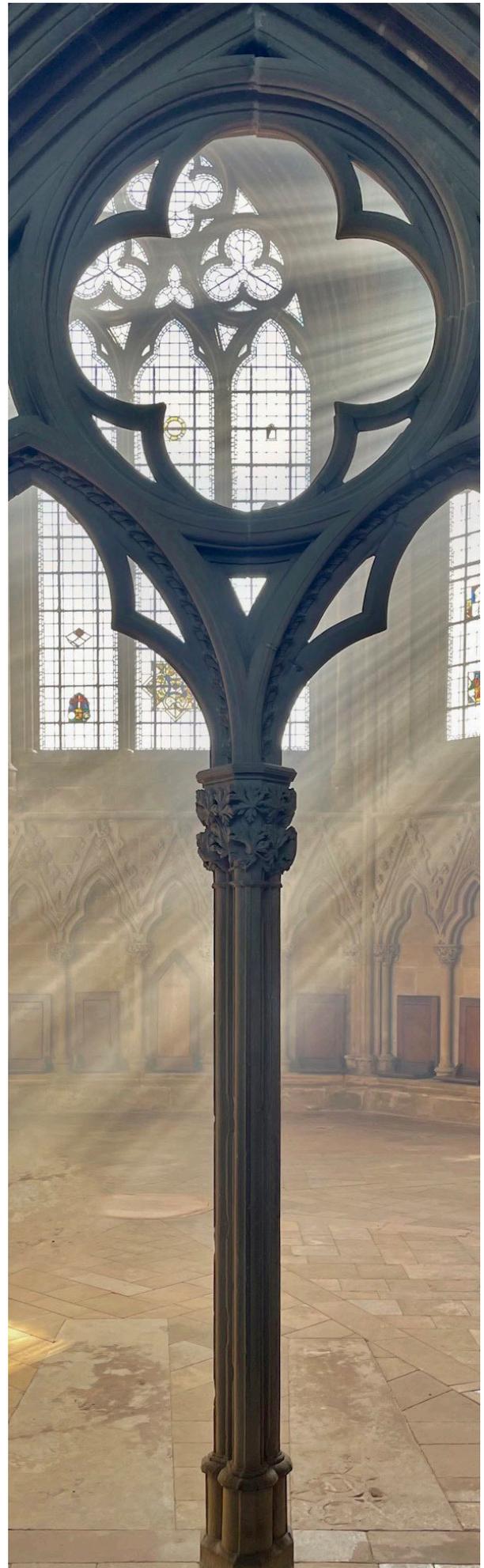
where medieval stone meets living nature

Winner in 2023 of the national Favourite Cathedral Treasure competition, run by the Association of English Cathedrals.

A £2.5m NLHF project completed in 2022, centred around the conservation and interpretation of the famous 'Leaves of Southwell' in the Chapter House. The fluid carvings of plants, animals and green men found within the Chapter House – known collectively as 'The Leaves of Southwell' – are of quite exceptional quality. Regarded as the best example of 13th-century naturalistic carving in the United Kingdom, and indeed Europe, they are of significant global importance.

The aims of the project were to:

- Undertake conservation and repair works to the carvings in the Chapter House and Slype and stabilise and monitor the micro-climate
- Renew the high roof and illuminate key features of the exterior of the Minster
- Improve accessibility across the site, which included installation of a cantilever lift for wheelchair users
- Extend and enhance the Palace Gardens, to include the Paddock, for visitors
- Install more efficient internal heating and external lighting systems



## The role

### Key responsibilities

- The building within the 'red line', specifically the Minster building.
- The Cathedral Architect's responsibilities are generally limited to the Minster building itself but we may seek advice on other matters within or adjacent to the 'green line'.
- Quinquennial inspection.
- The specific expectations of the role of Cathedral Architect, in accordance with the Care of Cathedrals Measure (2011), are listed in the 'The Role and Duties of the Cathedral Architect' (links to both documents can be found in the Appendices).

### Person specification

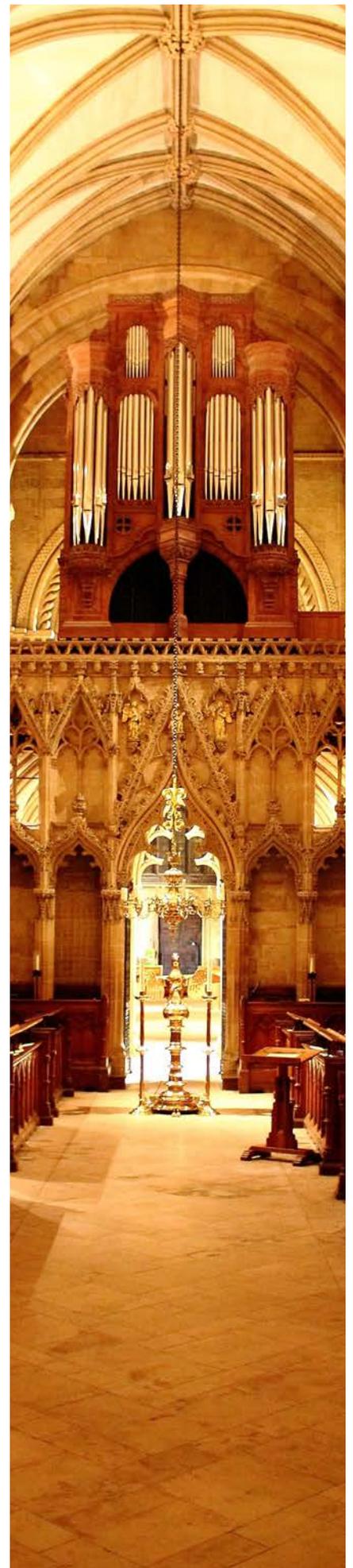
The person we are looking for will bring:

- Strong technical skill-set with experience in the conservation and repair of historic buildings.
- Experience of church repairs and re-orderings.
- Professional conservation accreditation.
- An understanding of the liturgical, mission, and other purposes of the Cathedral.
- Imagination and creativity to find workable and affordable solutions.

The Church of England is for everyone, and we want to reflect the diversity of the community the Church serves across the whole country. Therefore, while of course we welcome all applications from interested and suitably experienced people, we particularly welcome applicants from UK Minority Ethnic Backgrounds.

### Accountability

The Cathedral Architect reports to Chapter, and will be expected to do so formally once a year, providing a clear indication of what is to come as well as what has been delivered. The Cathedral Architect will also attend meetings of the Cathedral's Fabric Advisory Committee (FAC), four times per year, working closely with the FAC Chair. The primary working relationship will be with the Chief Officer. Close liaison will also be needed with the Dean (who takes the primary clergy interest in the building) and also with the Canon Precentor whose work focuses on the worship life of the Cathedral and is the Chapter member with responsibility for fabric.



## Cathedral team

Southwell Minster has a small staff team (approximately 30 people, most part-time). The Cathedral Architect will work most closely with the Dean, Chief Officer, Canon Precentor, Head Verger and Vergers. The Cathedral retains a Cathedral Archaeologist who advises prior to there being construction / digging on site. The candidate would be expected to be familiar with such work and to be supportive of it.

The Cathedral offices are located at the Minster Centre on the edge of the Minster grounds. Permanent office accommodation is not provided but a desk or private meeting room can always be made available.

## Partnerships

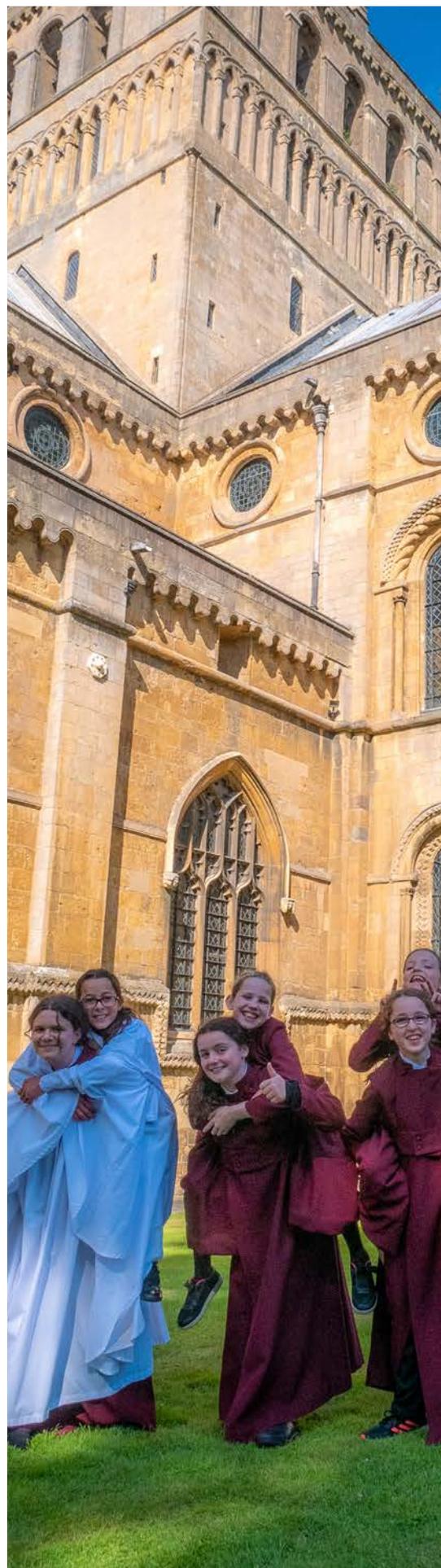
As well as working closely with Cathedral staff, the new Cathedral Architect will need to work with the CFCE, amenity societies, Historic England, local authority planning department and other stakeholders as required as part of the Cathedral team. These relationships should be based on an understanding of the respective roles and priorities, and a willingness to consult and discuss early in project lifespans.

## Upcoming projects

- Overhaul of Quire organ
- Renew the sound system
- Replace the internal lighting scheme
- Prepare for Net Zero by 2030
- Re-shape West Front apron and entrance
- Repair and replacement of Nave roof (5–10 years)

## Appointment

The new Cathedral Architect will be appointed on a retainer for an initial five-year term (including a 12-month probationary period). There will then be a year on year rolling contract.



## Fees

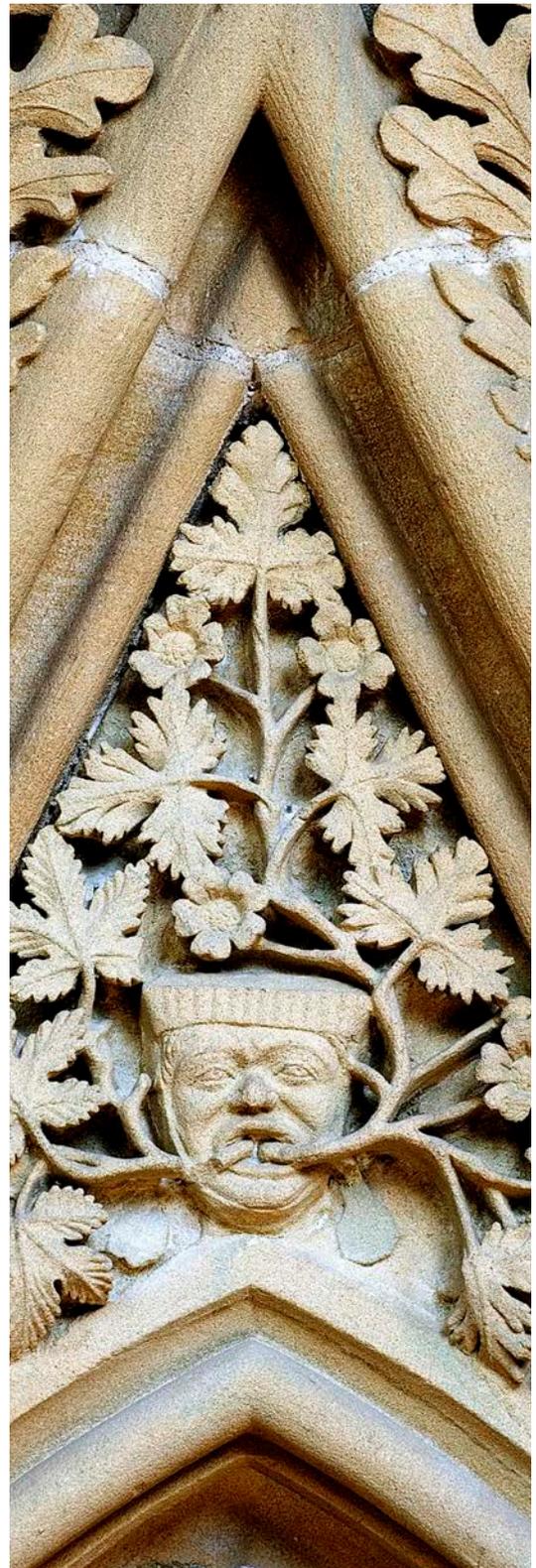
An annual retainer will be paid.

This is expected to cover:

- Attendance at the meetings identified above and the production of any related reports.
- Ad hoc support, enquiries, telephone conversations and support, as well as short papers and reports and the early-stage development of projects – some of which may not come to fruition. The retainer fee implies that work for Chapter is given priority and that Chapter and its officers may seek and receive advice without incurring fees.
- Expenses.

We anticipate the time commitment for the above to be an average of two days per month. This should be the amount of activity covered by the retainer in the fee proposal.

Some reports and studies, e.g. Quinquennial Inspection, or more substantial project scoping work, may fall beyond the retainer. Applicants are asked to indicate report(s) that might fall under this heading and provide indicative costs for them as well as an indicative rates for work outside the bounds of the retainer. If work is outside the retainer the Cathedral will welcome an approach where it is paid for on an hourly rate (following the approval of a fee proposal) where all parties are aware of costs. We will expect applicants to set out a schedule of fees for ad hoc additional work as described above (including time charge rates for all practice staff), along with a proposal as to their approach for bigger and more developed projects (e.g. percentage based fees). It will be useful for the selection panel to see example fees for different scale projects.



## Application process

The full application pack, including appendices listed, is available on request from [rachel.doe@southwellminster.org.uk](mailto:rachel.doe@southwellminster.org.uk).

To apply, applicants should write stating:

- why they are interested in the post of Cathedral Architect at Southwell Minster
- the skills and experience they can bring
- their philosophical approach to the care and conservation of ancient buildings and the task of Cathedral Architect, noting in particular the vision and context of Southwell Minster
- how they would fulfil the criteria set out in this specification
- a fee proposal to include the retainer costed for 2 days per month, your approach to additional reports, project work, ad hoc work and rates for others in the practice
- an example of a Quinquennial Inspection report undertaken (of a church or cathedral).

Please include:

- a CV
- information about your practice structure
- relevant portfolio information
- a case study of a project which involved intervention into a listed building
- name and contact details of a referee.

We encourage you to be as concise and focused as possible, ideally limited to 10 sides of A4 (excluding the example QI).

These should be emailed to: Rachel Doe, Executive PA and Office Manager, [rachel.doe@southwellminster.org.uk](mailto:rachel.doe@southwellminster.org.uk).

Should you wish to discuss the role, arrange a visit to the Cathedral or clarify any points in advance of applying, please contact Nigel Spraggins, Chief Officer, by email [nigel.spraggins@southwellminster.org.uk](mailto:nigel.spraggins@southwellminster.org.uk) or phone **01636 817285** or **07887 538682**.

## Key dates

The closing date is **9.00am, Monday 27th March 2023**.

Interviews, which will include a presentation, will take place in Southwell on **Friday 21 April**.

Please keep this day available as the panel will not re-convene.

Following interview, the successful candidate will be appointed to start as soon as possible. The appointment will be reviewed every five years, and is subject to a probationary period of 12 months.

# Appendices

1. Statutory Listing Description
2. Cathedral floor plan
3. Maps showing red and green lines
4. Quinquennial Inspection Report 2021

These are available on request from Rachel Doe [rachel.doe@southwellminster.org.uk](mailto:rachel.doe@southwellminster.org.uk)

Please also see:

[Care of Cathedrals Measure 2011](#)

[Cathedrals Measure 2021](#)

[CFCE document 'The Role and Duties of the Cathedral Architect'](#)



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