

Safe volunteering for St Thomas à Becket Church, Ramsey



<https://www.ramseysandupwood.org/>

Thank you for all you do in furthering the work of our Christian mission in church and in the wider community.

The Church takes the safety of everyone very seriously and expects you to

- read and follow the safeguarding policy [STaB Safeguarding Policy](#)
- report any concerns to the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO)
(Jane Cusworth 01487 814984
Email: safeguarding@ramseysandupwood.org)
- treat individuals with respect
- ensure their welfare and safety

Role: **Verger**

Responsible to: **Incumbent**

Key Responsibilities:

Your main role is to work with the Officiant to ensure the smooth running of weddings and funerals.

Key responsibilities:

- to set up the church before the congregation arrive.
- to welcome all sensitively. Remember that most who come for such services are visitors, many of whom may not be familiar with current church practices.
- to operate the sound system and be ready to assist with any eventuality during the service
- ensure appropriate registers and documents are completed.
- to clear up afterwards.

Support/Training:

- working with experienced verger if new to the role
- refer to officiant if uncertain
- undertake basic safeguarding training
- attend annual refresher course with sidespeople and welcomers

Review Date: February 2026

Specific duties:

Weddings:

- Attend wedding rehearsal if possible. Check if music is being provided by any other means than the organ. What? How? Who will operate?
- Open side door, vestry doors and kitchen. Check heating is on if needed. Switch on lights.
- Change altar frontal and pulpit fall to white/gold.
- Change wooden cross for brass one, put out and light altar candles.
- Place table and chairs in agreed place for 'signing of register'. Place cloth on table.
- Check register of marriage services and marriage document have been completed, then place those, along with register ink pen, on table.
- Check where bridesmaids will sit. If in chancel, put out sufficient chairs.
- Put Orders of Service on chairs for bride and groom and bridesmaids.
- Keep an Order of service for self and Organist on table at back and some for choir if required and sufficient are available.
- Give rest of Orders of Service to ushers and instruct them what to do (if necessary) ie hand out and point out bride and groom's sides - if required.
- Put out and check microphones for officiant and any readers (check whether needed and where the mic stand should be positioned.) All mics should show three bars on battery level before beginning of service. It's worth checking again five minutes later in case level has gone down.
- Close internal doors when bride arrives. When bridal party in porch and photographer is finished, press button to stop bells.
- When everyone is ready, give signal to Officiant and Organist, open both internal doors and let bridal party process.
- Attend to sound system.
- At end of service, when bridal party is leaving, open both internal doors and press button to start bells.
- Clear up.
- Place marriage document in safe ready for Administrator to take to Post Office on next working day.

Funerals:

- Unbolt both west and internal doors. Open side door, vestry doors and kitchen. Check heating is on if needed. Switch on lights.
- Change altar frontal and pulpit fall to purple.
- Change wooden cross for brass one, put out and light altar candles.
- Arrange trestles in chancel, unless it is a memorial service.
- Expect early delivery of Orders of Service, photo of deceased, envelopes for organist and verger, from funeral directors.
- Funeral directors will usually bring cd player or other equipment if music other than from organ is required.
- On the back table place photo of deceased, collection plate and information about where donations are going.
- Check hymns in Order of Service against same hymn in hymn books. Advise Officiant of any discrepancies (omitted verses for example). Put up hymn numbers in case insufficient number of service booklets mean hymn books have to be issued.
- Place one Order of Service on Officiant's desk and one on Organist's stool.
- Place three Orders of Service on each of the front three pews on the left and two on the right. Use reserve notices too if you think the congregation need extra direction not to sit there. The funeral directors may know roughly how many mourners will follow the coffin; if definitely a small number, reserve fewer pews.
- Set up and check microphone for the Officiant and any other which may be required. Ensure each mic has three bars of battery life: check again after five minutes as they can drop.
- Hand out service sheets to congregation as they arrive. Be prepared to ask them to share one between two and give hymn book in addition if numbers merit.
- as coffin arrives in porch, ensure Officiant's mic is on, then follow him or her down the aisle. Stand aside at front pew to allow coffin to pass. Direct mourners into seats.
- Check mourners who have followed the coffin in have Orders of Service.
- Return to back, close back doors if necessary and operate sound.
- Be ready to direct any latecomers to seats and respond to any eventuality.
- At end of service, ensure both doors are fully open for the coffin to leave.
- Take collection to vestry and count. If Swearers are funeral directors, take it to their office. Other funeral directors will collect it from church before they leave.
- Clear up.

- Ensure Burials book and register of services is filled in and signed by Officiant. (Sometimes it is easier to do this before the service, adding number of attendees after the service.)