

Visiting Choirs Handbook

Revised June 2025

Visiting Choirs Handbook

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Visiting Choirs Handbook

Introduction

The Chapter of York is most grateful to all who come and sing at services when the Choir of York Minster is on holiday or off-duty. We do hope that you will enjoy the experience of being at the Minster. Ben Morris, Assistant Director of Music, is responsible for organising visiting choirs and is your main point of contact before your visit. The whole process is overseen by the Precentor, Reverend Canon James Milne. When you are here, the clergy, Vergers and Minster Police will gladly assist you.

At present, the available times for visiting choirs to sing services in York Minster are as follows:

- Full weeks (including weekends) during the Minster Choir's summer vacation
- Weekends during the Minster Choir's Christmas and Easter vacations
- One weekend during each half term vacation (two during October half term)
- Monday Evensongs throughout the year are occasionally available for school or educational groups.

This handbook is intended to help you in preparation for your visit. We hope that it will answer any questions that you may have. Should you need any further information, please contact the Music Department:

Ben Morris
Assistant Director of Music

E-mail: visitingc@yorkminster.org
01904 559535

Max Elliott
Music and Liturgy Administrator
maximilliane@yorkminster.org

Should you need to contact the Vergers' Department, or the Minster Police:

Vergers
Telephone: 01904 557221
E-mail: vergers@yorkminster.org

Minster Police
Telephone: 01904 557222
E-mail: police@yorkminster.org

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General Information

Access to the Minster

The Chapter of York is continually assessing and updating security arrangements for the safety and security of all who use and visit York Minster. We would be very grateful if you could support us in this by adhering to current procedures.

There is an admission charge for sight-seeing entry to the Minster. You will be provided with visitor passes to identify you as belonging to the visiting choir and to enable you to come and go without paying the admission charge; you will need to have this with you at all times when you are in the building.

When you first arrive, please arrive as a group as far as possible (all members of the party, including non-singing members). Please enter at the West End and introduce yourself as the visiting choir; you will then be directed/shown to the Undercroft Desk in the South Transept (to the right of the Central Tower as you look from the West End) or the Camera Cantorum, where you will be given an induction/briefing on security, fire and safety procedures and collect your passes. We will ask at this point that each member provides a signature on a security briefing form to show your agreement with the arrangements in place. Passes must be returned at the end of your visit.

Entry is via the West End of the Minster during normal opening hours (9.30 am–4.00 pm), and your visitor passes will enable you to bypass the queue. If you require access before 9.30 am, arrangements must be made in advance – please contact Ben Morris or York Minster Police (YM Police). After Evensong, the South Transept door is used as the exit until c. 6.30 pm, when the Minster is closed to visitors; if you are staying beyond this for a rehearsal (which will need to be booked in advance), you will need to exit through the YM Police Control Room in the Chapter House Yard car park. Please note that this is usually the only time that visiting choirs will enter/exit through this entrance.

We are delighted to welcome you to our magnificent building and encourage choir members to have a look round. If you are here for a short visit (a weekend or shorter) and your group is arriving separately, it may be possible to arrange an extra briefing to enable earlier arrivals to have access to the building. This must be done in advance and it is dependent on availability of the Minster Police. If you would like to discuss arranging this, please get in touch with Ben Morris at least two weeks before your visit.

Visiting choirs are very welcome to have a free guided tour of the Minster as part of their stay. If you would like to do this, please contact our Booking Coordinators (bookings@yorkminster.org) to make arrangements. Please note that there is a separate charging system in place for the Tower.

We require at least four to six weeks' notice with details of group size and convenient time, so that tour guides can be arranged; guided tours during the summer holidays get booked up months ahead, so if your visit is during July or August we advise you organise a tour further in advance.

Security and safeguarding form

A few weeks ahead of your visit we will send you a security and safeguarding form to be completed and returned. This will include a list of all members of your group (singing and non-singing) which we need for security purposes, and which will give consent to be included in live-streamed services (singing members). It will also include some practical arrangements, and will ask for information about your safeguarding arrangements, including requesting some documents by return (see **Safeguarding** below).

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Transport and parking

York railway station is a 15-minute walk from the Minster.

On-site parking at the Minster is very limited, especially during the week and at service times, and any parking requests cannot be guaranteed. You will be able to request parking via the security form. Please note that we do not offer overnight parking.

Please note that large buses and coaches are prohibited from entering the city centre; if you are planning to arrive in your own bus and be dropped off near the Minster, you will need to apply for special permission from the council transport department (www.york.gov.uk/transport).

Accommodation

The Minster has no accommodation of its own available to choirs. A comprehensive list of accommodation in York can be found at <https://www.visitthecity.org.uk/business-directory/category/stay>. Some schools, including Bootham School and St Peter's York, and the two universities (York and York St John) may be able to offer accommodation.

Facilities

During your visit you will normally be able to access the rehearsal room situated above the Minster Shop called the Camera Cantorum. A key can be obtained from the Minster Police, or the Vergers will be able to give you access. Any key signed out from the Minster Police must be kept inside the building and returned to the Minster Police before leaving the building, or at the end of the day. You must ensure that the room is never left unlocked and unattended. The Dean and Chapter accepts no liability for loss or damage to items left in the camera. Choirs must also ensure that the camera is left tidy, and that any of the Minster Choir's music is left in place and undisturbed.

The Camera Cantorum is monitored by CCTV 24 hours a day by the Minster Police for security and safeguarding reasons.

Please note that the Camera Cantorum is accessed via a spiral staircase. If you have any access requirements please let us know in advance.

Public toilets are situated next to the YM Police Control Room, along the corridor running off the North Quire Aisle. There are also individual toilets in the Camera Cantorum, which will be used only by your choir.

Apart from the water cooler in the Camera Cantorum, there are no facilities available for getting drinks in the Minster. Choirs must not take food and drink (other than water) into the stalls in the Quire.

We regret that suitcases cannot be brought into the Minster. If you need to bring in large cases or other large objects (e.g. prams) please let us know in advance.

Size of Choir

Due to the size and layout of the choir stalls, it is possible to accommodate choirs up to 48 singers. Choirs larger than this will require additional seating, which we may not be able to provide, so please let us know at the time of booking if your choir exceeds this number to find out what is feasible.

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Services and Music

Services

The normal weekly schedule of services is as follows (sung services in **bold**). All sung services except the Sunday morning Sung Eucharist are held in the Quire.

Sunday	8.00	Holy Communion
	10.00	Matins (<i>Book of Common Prayer</i>) in the Quire
	11.00	Sung Eucharist live-streamed in the Nave (<i>Common Worship Order 1</i>)
	16.00	Evensong (<i>BCP</i>) live-streamed in the Quire*
Weekdays	07.30	Matins
	07.50	Holy Communion
	12.30	Holy Communion (12.00 on Saturday)
	17.30	†Evensong (<i>Book of Common Prayer</i>)

† On principal holy days, Choral Evensong is replaced by a Solemn Eucharist (*Common Worship*) in the Nave, with Evening Prayer said at 4.00. Please note that on these occasions it will not be possible to rehearse in the building until after 4.20 pm. The Solemn Eucharist is usually live-streamed.

Choirs should be assembled in the South Quire Aisle at least five minutes before each service is scheduled to begin.

For choirs singing a week's residency, Thursday will be kept as a "dumb day", with said Evening Prayer in place of Evensong. This is helpful both to the Minster staff and clergy, and to the choir, in order to have a break, especially in advance of the busy service schedule over the weekend. There is an organ recital on most Thursday evenings (7.00 pm) during the summer holidays.

In exceptional circumstances, including but not limited to a national emergency, Chapter reserves the right to stand down a visiting choir for some or all of their visit.

Running orders and details for services are given below. Please read these through carefully so that you are familiar with the Minster's procedures. One of the Vergers will be on hand to advise on procession arrangements, and will run a procession rehearsal during your first rehearsal in the choir stalls (usually at c. 5.05 pm, prior to Evensong). Orders of service will be produced for Sunday Eucharist (11.00 am) and Evensong (4.00 pm) and weekday Eucharists (5.30 pm).

Choir rehearsals

Choirs will normally be given use of the rehearsal room over the Minster Shop called the Camera Cantorum (see **Facilities in General Information**).

The Camera Cantorum is normally available for use throughout the day from the morning of your day of arrival, provided there is no sound during the lunchtime Holy Communion service (12.00 pm Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday). If you would like to leave things in the Camera after your final service, or if you would like to have access before the day of your first service, please make contact to arrange this in advance.

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Choirs may normally rehearse in the Nave or Quire choir stalls during the following times (these times may be subject to alteration):

Sunday	8.45–9.45 am (<i>Nave/Quire</i>) and 2.30–3.45 pm (<i>Quire</i>)
Monday–Saturday	3.45–5.15 pm (<i>Quire</i>) and 6.30–7.30 pm (<i>this later time is subject to booking ahead and diary restrictions</i>)

Choirs are advised to allocate some rehearsal time in the Nave choir stalls for the 11.00 am Sung Eucharist, either on Saturday evening or 8.45 am on Sunday.

In the instance of a weekday Solemn Eucharist, Evening Prayer will be said at 4.00 pm, so the building will not be available for rehearsal until c. 4.20 pm.

If you require any after-hours rehearsal times, please contact Ben Morris.

On your arrival in the Quire, the Vergers will liaise with you about a convenient time to rehearse the procession.

The organist may rehearse from 3.45 pm for weekday Evensong, and from 2.00 pm on Sundays. Usually the organ is available from 8.30–9.30 am. It may be possible to use the organ quietly during the day, but during this time please only play very softly (**Sw 1** maximum) and be prepared to stop for hourly prayers. It is often possible to rehearse after Evensong, but please be aware that during the summer holidays there are organ recitals on Thursday evenings (7.00 pm) with rehearsal on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. More detailed information about rehearsal for organists can be found on p. 17.

Repertoire

When choosing repertoire, please give precedence to the quality of the musical performance. Experience has shown us that the best results are achieved when choirs sing music well within their capabilities, rather than attempting overly ambitious repertoire that overstretches the musicians; pieces of a modest scale are always acceptable. Please take care to ensure that the music chosen is appropriate to the day and season. If the Music Department feels that any item is inappropriate, we will ask you to make an alternative choice. Please note that, in general, we are likely to turn down requests for the use of Responses that are unpublished or unique to the visiting choir. We ask that choirs sing one set of Responses for the duration of a residency. (Exceptions may be made in the case of services with different combinations of voice parts.)

The Minster is large and services can be attended by several hundred people at some weekday Evensongs, so we would ask you to keep this in mind when choosing music. During the summer months, because of the large number of visitors attending services, we would encourage you to draw your choices from the more popular and approachable liturgical repertoire.

The Minster Choir sings the service unaccompanied on Fridays (unless a Feast day). Visiting choirs are under no obligation to do so.

We will normally ask for visiting choir music details to be sent in two to three months before the date of the visit, to allow time for any necessary changes to be made. You will be provided with details of psalms and hymns. All visiting choirs singing during the summer months are asked to provide music details by **early May**. Please provide texts and translations for any non-standard repertoire anthems for Sunday Eucharist and Evensong.

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Lectionary and psalms

Sundays

The Minster follows the Common Worship calendar and uses the Common Worship lectionary for major services. The psalms at Sunday Matins and Evensong, and at Evensong on weekday Festivals and Holy Days, are normally chosen in accordance with the Common Worship Calendar and Lectionary.

Weekdays

Psalms at weekday Evensong on ordinary days follow the monthly course of evening psalms in the 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*. We will offer you a reduced selection from the day's provision.

All psalms are sung to Anglican chant using the version printed in the English 1662 *Book of Common Prayer*. (N.B. This is not the same as the *Book of Common Prayer* of the Episcopal Church of the USA). The complete BCP psalter can be found online at:

<http://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/book-of-common-prayer/the-psalter.aspx>

Please sing the *Gloria patri* at the end of each psalm when singing multiple psalms.

The principal hymn book used in the Minster is the *New English Hymnal*. Please note that it is not possible for us to make copies of music available to visiting choirs, nor to use the Minster's full music hymnbooks.

Hymns are always intended to be congregational. For that reason, complicated arrangements that would make it difficult for the congregation to join in must be avoided. Verses in congregational hymns must not be left unaccompanied, nor accompanied so lightly that the congregation is inhibited from singing.

Live-streaming

It is our practice for the Eucharist and Evensong on Sunday to be live-streamed. Sung Eucharist on major feasts which fall on weekdays will also usually be live-streamed. This helps to widen the mission of the Minster, and to provide access to worship for those who cannot easily attend the Minster. All performers are required to give their consent for inclusion in the audiovisual live-stream, and for the appropriate licensing of associated performance rights. The signatures provided on arrival on your choir's security form will constitute this consent, but please ensure that all your performing members are aware of this in advance. If there are individuals who would prefer not to appear on camera, please let us know in advance of your visit so that we can make appropriate arrangements.

In order for any children aged 16 or under in visiting choirs to sing in live-streamed services appropriate licences must be in place. York Minster has in place a Body of Persons Agreement (BOPA) which applies to all regular live-streamed services in the calendar year including visiting choirs, providing the relevant information is sent in advance. In order to do this, a Body of Persons group participants form (which will be provided by York Minster) must be filled in and returned to us in advance of the visit. You must hold full details for each child (name, date of birth, address, emergency contact information, any relevant medical or additional needs) and these must be accessible if necessary while you are in residence at the Minster.

We will submit the information from the form you send us to the City of York Council, who will then inform the relevant local authorities of each performer.

It can alternatively be possible to obtain licences directly from the local authority(/ies) of the children involved: if you would like to take this course of action, please let us know and get in touch with the relevant local authorities in good time before your visit, because it can take several weeks for applications to be processed.

More information can be found [here](#).

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Copyright

The Minster takes the issue of copyright seriously and you must ensure that any music you reproduce is done so with the permission of the publishers, or under existing copyright rules. In the Security and safeguarding form you will return before your visit you will be required to confirm that all musical scores you use are legal copies and that liability for any breach of copyright lies with your organisation/choir.

Recording

If you wish to record the choir during rehearsals or services, even for private use, you will need to complete a permission form. The document can be found at the end of this information pack (or a separate copy can be provided on request), and should be returned in advance of your visit.

Cantor

The Minster will usually provide a cantor. Please be prepared to provide a copy of the responses in advance, particularly if they are not in the mainstream repertoire.

Accompanists and use of the organ

The majority of choirs bring their own accompanist. The need for the accompanist to be competent and sensitive to the instrument and the building cannot be over-emphasised. A member of the Minster music staff will normally be available to play if preferred, although most directors may prefer an accompanist with whom they rehearse more regularly.

The balance of the organ and choir is difficult to gauge at the consoles, and conductors are advised to check balance away from the organ at rehearsal.

Clothing

Visiting choirs are invited to wear their normal attire, though choirs need not robe if they do not normally do so. 'Quiet' footwear is recommended, and heels which may damage the stonework must be not worn; flat and sensible shoes are required. Choristers should wear one medal only; academic hoods are not worn at the Eucharist.

The Camera Cantorum has CCTV recording, so other than in the private toilets, this is not a suitable space for changing clothes.

Ministering as a Liturgical Choir

Visiting Choirs enter into the ministry of a 'liturgical choir' during their residence. As well as leading the music, a liturgical choir also assists in leading other parts of the service. This means being attentive to the whole liturgy and helping lead congregational responses, creeds, and prayers during a service, which is always a coming together of music, word and action. If you have any questions about the liturgical life of the Minster or have any questions about the Christian faith we proclaim during our worship, through music, song and scripture, please speak to any of the clergy who will be happy to have a conversation.

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Further Information

Safeguarding

Information about Safeguarding at York Minster and a link to our Safeguarding Policy can be found [here](#).

Any visiting choir which includes children or vulnerable adults among its members must have in place a safeguarding policy and must have undertaken a risk assessment for the visit. We will ask for a copy of your risk assessment when you return your security form (which will be sent to you to complete a few weeks ahead of your visit), including details of any arrangements and consent you have in place for photography. We may ask to see a copy of your safeguarding policy.

Visiting choirs must comply with their own safeguarding policies to ensure the safety, protection and supervision of children and vulnerable adults at all times whilst in the Minster, as well as complying with York Minster's policy as far as it is relevant to them. Choirs must have parental consent for all children in their group. Choirs are responsible for making their own arrangements with regard to the supervision of children whilst they are in York Minster; children must be accompanied at all times that they are in the Minster.

Security, fire and safety

As part of your visit we require all choirs to be briefed on security, fire and safety procedures so you are aware of our arrangements in the unlikely event of an emergency. This will happen as an induction/briefing when you first arrive at the Minster.

YM Police are responsible for the safety and security of everyone using the Minster. Officers are on duty 24/7 and operate primarily from the YM Police Control Room situated in the North Quire Aisle (external access via Chapter House Yard car park). The Control Room is used for access only out of hours. Keys which you require during your visit should be collected from and returned to the Control Room.

The Minster's fire alarm is tested once a week on Thursdays. The fire alarm testing will be introduced by a message on the Tannoy system. If the fire alarm sounds outside the normal testing times, please assemble as a group and make your way to the nearest fire escape (see Appendix). Please inform a member of York Minster security/visitor staff that all members of the choir have been accounted for or that a member of the choir is not at the assembly point. Please note that the York Minster undercroft has a fire curtain system. Fire escapes and fire escape routes are marked by the green running person Picto program.

The Minster staff team has a number of trained first aiders. In the event of a member of the choir requiring first aid assistance please contact YM Police or the Visitor Experience Managers. The location of first aid equipment will be discussed further in induction to the building.

GDPR

We will collect personal details in advance of your visit in order to ensure the safety and security of everyone who uses the Minster, and to fulfil licencing requirements. All personal details will be held in accordance with our privacy policy, which can be found [here](#).

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Visiting choir receptions

The Chapter of York will normally provide a drinks reception for choirs who are in residence for a full week in the summer, as an expression of our thanks for their invaluable contribution to our ministry. This will usually be on a Wednesday evening following Evensong. Please be aware that due to the Minster's licence and 'Challenge 25' guidance, any members of your group who look younger than 25 may be asked to provide ID before being served alcohol. Anyone under 18 cannot be served alcohol.

Accompanying clergy

Authorised ministers accompanying visiting choirs are very welcome to robe and process with the clergy of York Minster. However, we do need to know that they will be coming well in advance so that we can confirm good standing. In the case of clergy from churches in communion with the Church of England coming from other countries, permission to officiate will need to be sought from the Archbishop of York under the terms of the Overseas and Other Clergy (Ministry and Ordination) Measure 1967 and we will be happy to advise how an application can be made.

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Sunday Matins at 10.00 am (Quire)

At 9.55 am, the choir and clergy assemble in the South Quire Aisle. The organ voluntary should end by 9.55 am after which the Canon in Residence welcomes the congregation. Aisle Prayers will be said by a member of clergy. A bell will then be rung, which is the cue for the organist to begin improvising.

The procession moves under the screen via the Tower during a quiet organ improvisation, entering the singing stalls from the west end.

The cantor will take his/her own note, but organists are asked to end their improvisation in the key of the first set of Responses.

- **Versicles and Responses**
- **Venite** (unannounced and following immediately on; Psalm 95, vv. 1–7 only and Gloria)
- **Psalm** (announced)
- First reading
- **Te Deum*** [*Benedicite* in Advent and Lent] (unannounced)
- Second reading
- **Jubilate*** or **Benedictus*** – ‘Blessed be the Lord God’ [*Benedictus* in Advent and Lent] (unannounced)
- Apostles’ Creed (said, facing east)
- **Versicles, Responses and Collects**
- **Anthem** (announced)
- State Prayers (ending with the Grace)
- **Organ voluntary** (begin after the Grace; this should be short to allow preparation time for the Eucharist)

Procession out, via the east end of the singing stalls, and then turning westwards under the Quire screen and left into the South Quire Aisle.

The following responses are said in the aisle, after which the choir bows to the Dean or Canon in Residence:

The Lord be with you:

And with thy Spirit.

Let us bless the Lord:

Thanks be to God.

(further prayers may be said)

**One of the canticles may be chanted if there is difficulty in preparing ‘composed’ settings.*

Some choirs may find it helpful to consider the following lesser-known options for Matins canticles, which provide a manageable and comparable alternative to popular settings such as Stanford in B flat:

- Ireland in F
- Stanford in C
- Boyce in C
- Purcell in B flat (in C)

Please wait until the organ voluntary has finished before returning to the choir stalls to tidy up.

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Sunday Sung Eucharist at 11.00 am (Nave, live-streamed)

Weekday Eucharists (in the Nave) broadly follow the same pattern but may be abbreviated. There will be an order of service to detail exactly what is included.

At 10.55 am, one of the clergy greets the congregation and makes announcements. Silence is kept. The choir and clergy assemble in the South Quire Aisle and prayers are said. A bell is rung, which is the cue for the organist to begin the first **hymn**, during which the procession enters. The procession ends with the censing of the Altar – the organist may need to continue playing after the hymn if this is not yet completed.

- Greeting, Preparation and Absolution
- **Gloria in excelsis** [*Kyrie eleison* replaces *Gloria* in Advent and Lent]
- Collect (said or sung – no note needed) and Old Testament Reading
- Lesson
- **Gradual hymn** (unannounced)
- Gospel, with **Alleluia**, **Gospel sentence** and **responses** (music in the order of service and full music below): after the Gradual hymn has finished the choir begins the Alleluia with a new note from the organ. An organ improvisation follows the Gospel, as the Gospel procession returns to the ministers' place.
- Sermon, followed by a reflective **organ improvisation** of 20–30 seconds
- Creed (said), Intercessions and Peace
- **Offertory hymn** (unannounced – begin the playover c. 5 secs after the Peace), including censing. The organist may need to improvise after the hymn, until the President is standing at the altar, ready to continue, and the censing is complete.
- The Eucharistic Prayer, beginning with the *Sursum corda*, which may be said or sung (please check before the service whether the President will need a note for this).
- **Sanctus*** is sung in the customary place. **Benedictus** is sung at this point if the setting is short, but a longer setting should be transferred to the administration of Communion or omitted. **Sung responses** for “Christ has died...” and “Amen” – music is in the order of service and full music below.
- The Lord's Prayer (said), Breaking of the Bread, Invitation to Communion
- Communion (The choir receives before the congregation, during which the organist plays). **Benedictus** may be sung here if it is a longer setting. **Agnus Dei** is sung. A short **motet** may be sung, but should be omitted if the administration has come to an end; the organist may play again if the President is not yet at the Altar.
- Post-communion prayer
- **Hymn** (unannounced)
- Blessing and **Dismissal** (see music below)
- **Concluding voluntary**

The servers, clergy and choir (in that order) process out to the South Quire Aisle for the dismissal, at the end of which all bow to the President.

**In English language settings, substitute a repeat of “most high” in place of “Amen” at the end of the Sanctus.*

[Please note that visiting choirs do not sing Psalm 150 as they process out; this is a custom specific to the Minster Choir.]

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Sunday Evensong at 4.00 pm (Quire, live-streamed)

From 3.45 pm, the congregation is admitted into the Quire. At 3.55 pm, the choir and clergy assemble in the South Quire Aisle. The organ voluntary should end by 3.55 pm after which the Canon in Residence welcomes the congregation. Aisle Prayers will be said by a member of clergy. A bell will then be rung, which is the cue for the organist to begin improvising.

The procession moves under the screen via the Tower during a quiet organ improvisation, entering the singing stalls from the west end. There is no sung introit.

The cantor will take his/her own note, but organists are asked to end their improvisation in the key of the first set of Responses.

There is no sung introit.

- **Versicles and Responses**
- **Psalm(s)** (announced)
- First reading
- **Magnificat** (unannounced)
- Second reading
- **Nunc dimittis** (unannounced)
- Apostles' Creed (said, facing east)
- **Versicles, Responses and Collects**
- **Anthem** (announced)
- Sermon (followed immediately by Hymn)
- **Hymn** (announced)
- Blessing
- **Organ voluntary** (begin after the Blessing)

Procession out, via the east end of the singing stalls, and then turning westwards under the Quire screen and left into the South Quire Aisle.

The following responses are said in the aisle, after which the choir bows to the Dean or Canon in Residence:

The Lord be with you:

And with thy Spirit.

Let us bless the Lord:

Thanks be to God.

(further prayers may be said)

Please wait until the organ voluntary has finished before returning to the choir stalls to tidy up.

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Weekday and Saturday Evensong at 5.30 pm: (Quire)

At 5.25 pm, the choir and clergy assemble in the South Quire Aisle. The organ voluntary should end by 5.25 pm after which the Canon in Residence welcomes the congregation. Aisle Prayers will be said by a member of clergy. A bell will then be rung, which is the cue for the organist to begin improvising.

The procession moves under the screen via the Tower during a quiet organ improvisation, entering the singing stalls from the west end. There is no sung introit.

The cantor will take his/her own note, but organists are asked to end their improvisation in the key of the first set of Responses.

There is a penitential opening, including the BCP confession, on Fridays (unless a Feast day)

- **Versicles and Responses**
- **Psalm(s)** (announced)
- First reading
- **Magnificat** (unannounced)
- Second reading
- **Nunc dimittis** (unannounced)
- Apostles' Creed (said, facing east)
- **Versicles, Responses and Collects**
- **Anthem** (announced)
- Prayers, concluding with the Grace
- *On Saturdays and certain Feast days:* **Hymn** (announced)
- *On Saturdays and certain Feast days:* Blessing
- **Organ voluntary** (begin after the Grace on weekdays, or Blessing on Saturdays or Feast days)

Procession out, via the east end of the singing stalls, and then turning westwards under the Quire screen and left into the South Quire Aisle.

The following responses are said in the aisle, after which the choir bows to the Dean or Canon in Residence:

The Lord be with you:

And with thy Spirit.

Let us bless the Lord:

Thanks be to God.

(further prayers may be said)

Please wait until the organ voluntary has finished before returning to the choir stalls to tidy up.

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NOTES FOR ORGANISTS

Please note that only your organist(s) and those with specific permission may play the Minster organ. If people wish to see the console, within reason, this is allowed.

Using the Organ

Blowers

The blowers are turned on by a pair of buttons, found at the bottom of the right-hand stop jambs. The upper pair of buttons turn the main blower off and on, and the lower pair do this for the heavy pressure blower; this second blower only provides wind for the tubas, and for the heavy pressure pedal reeds (Ophicleides, Posaune and Clarion) so you often may not need to turn on both blowers. There are red indicator lights for both blowers, which will come on when they are fully operating and ready for use. The LED display on the left will come on, then briefly go off before coming back on: when it comes back on it is ready for use.

To turn the organ off, you need only press the 'off' button for the main blower. It may take some time for the indicator lights to go out, but the piston display will turn off immediately. Pressing 'off' on the heavy pressure blower will only turn off that blower and leave the organ on.

When moving from one console to the other, you can leave the organ on and simply press 'on' at the console to which you are moving, which will deactivate the other console and turn on the new one.

Pistons

Please use general channels 501 to 600, as advised on the left-hand side of the console (channels are changed using the upper control panel). The divisional pistons have standard accompanimental settings on channel 1 (Quire), and channel 2 (Nave), and these must not be altered. If you need another level of divisional pistons, please use channel 14 or 15. The channels are shared across both consoles, so take care not to overwrite something set at the other console. General channel 500 has settings for congregational responses: please do not alter this channel (other than General 6 which is left free).

The stepper is operated using the '+' and '-' buttons, and continues from one channel into the next.

Screen (Quire) Console

Lights

The console light switch is to the right of the door frame as you enter the console area. It is a dimmer switch, so lighting levels can be adjusted if needs be.

TV Monitor

This is turned on/off with the rightmost button below the screen. There are two camera views: one of the Quire (input 1), and one of the Crossing and South Transept (input 2) which is useful for following processions – you can

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switch input using the grey Extron input box on the shelf at the far end of the loft (there is one button for each input with a green light next to the button indicating which one is selected).

The Quire camera can be adjusted using the joystick unit next to the grey box; zoom is adjusted by twisting the top of the joystick. Please do not press any buttons on the joystick panel, or adjust the settings on the TV monitor itself, and please do not try to move the Quire camera view too far to the left because it may get stuck.

Nave Console

There is a mirror on top of the Nave console to allow you to see the conductor. This may need to be adjusted to allow you the best sightline, but please do so cautiously, taking care that it does not fall over/off the top of the console.

Should you need the Nave console to be moved, please ask one of the Vergers – do not attempt to move it yourself.

When you have finished playing, please pull out the top cover, found above the music desk. This helps to protect the console from any falling dust/plaster from above, as sometimes happens during inclement weather.

Balances

Quire

Generally speaking the Choir division sounds louder in the Quire than at the console; the Solo sounds louder at the console, but is still very present from downstairs, so use the box with care. Much of the Great upperwork, especially the Octave 4', Superoctave 2', Harmonics and Mixture III, and the Great reeds will usually be too loud to accompany a choir. The Swell is more prominent from further east, so use the box with care. The Pedal Open Diapason 16', Principal 8' and Trombone are loud in the Quire and will usually be too loud for accompanying.

The following ranks are specifically designed for use in the Nave and should not be used under any circumstances in the Quire: Pedal heavy pressure reeds (Ophicleides, Posaune, Clarion), the Open Wood I and Octave Wood, the Great Open Diapason I and the Mixture V. The Great Trombas should not be used as chorus reeds but can be effective acting individually as a solo tuba.

Nave

At the Nave console, much of the organ will feel considerably more present, especially the Swell. There is a set of Swell shutters facing directly west which are activated when the stop 'West shutters On' is drawn; this makes a considerable difference to the Swell's projection in the Nave, and which we recommend you leave out.

Generally speaking you get a good sense of the balance at the Nave console, but the Swell is louder than it sounds further down the Nave and the Great, particularly the Trombas, sound more distant than they do in the body of the Nave. Whilst the Choir organ is too distant and quiet to be used for much more than as an 'effect', the Solo organ can be a useful substitute. The Pedal Open Wood is very useful in congregational accompaniment, but it is a lot louder further down the building and will be too loud to accompany a choir, even if it sounds like it balances at the console. You will generally need to use just a little more organ (especially Great and Pedal) for accompanying in the Nave than in the Quire.

The stops listed above which are not for use in the Quire can be used in the Nave (though not for choral accompaniments) but still require caution – especially the heavy pressure Pedal reeds. These are of considerable

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volume and are too loud for general use, but can be used effectively at climatic moments in solo repertoire in the Nave, though normally only for a few notes at a time.

The Tuba Mirabilis is of considerable volume, and is *en chamade* facing west, so designed specifically for the Nave at the most significant occasions and requires very careful use. We request visiting organists not to use this stop.

Hymns

For hymns in the Quire:

- The Choir is of great use, because of its presence downstairs, and should always be coupled through.
- The Great can be used effectively up to Octave 4' and Super Octave 2' when there is a reasonably sized congregation, and more for final verses with substantial congregations (e.g. Sunday Evensong).
- The Pedal Open Diapason 16' is useful in giving a good bass lead to a larger congregation.

For hymns in the Nave:

- It is necessary to use the Great up to Octave 4' as an absolute minimum, and up to (and including) both mixtures in louder verses.
- It is necessary to use considerable Pedal, including 32's and the 16' Open Wood much of the time.
- It is important to keep a regimented and steady pulse (at a slightly broader tempo than one might in the Quire, or elsewhere).

Choir accompaniments

The standard use generals will give a good sense of what can be used to accompany choirs, with up to **Great 4** generally usable and **Great 5** for climaxes.

General Information

The curtains behind the player at the Screen console may be opened to assist hearing during rehearsals. They must, however, be drawn closed for services.

Please do not write in the voluntary book, and please do not remove any music or service booklets from either of the consoles.

When you have finished, please

- OPEN the Swell boxes
- Switch off the main blower, console lights and TV monitor (you do not need to turn off the grey box or joystick controls)
- Lock both downstairs doors, and turn off the stair lights as you leave

The organ loft key must remain in the building, so please return it to the YM Police Control Room before leaving the building and after Evensong (or evening rehearsal) each day.

Copies of the Minster's main hymn books, *New English Hymnal* and *Ancient and Modern: Hymns & Songs for Refreshing Worship* and service books can be found on the Screen console; on the Nave console, these can be found in the cupboard built into the right of the console.

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Organ practice

The organist may rehearse from 3.45 pm for weekday and Saturday Evensongs, and from 2.00 pm on Sundays.

The organ is usually available from 8.30–9.30 am and there is a daily booking in the diary for this. It is often possible to rehearse after Evensong, but if you would like to guarantee this slot on a particular day, please book in advance. On Thursdays in the summer there are organ recitals at 7.00 pm, with rehearsals on Wednesday evenings and possibly also earlier in the week. While it might still be possible to use the organ on these evenings, it may be necessary to make arrangements around other rehearsal bookings. Evening organ rehearsal must end by 10.00 pm so that the building can be secured.

During the day (from 9.30 am until the pre-Evensong organ rehearsal time), please play only very softly: **Sw 1** maximum. Please check with the Vergers or the Visitor team if there are any clashes if you wish to play quietly during the day.

On most days, from 10.00 am until 3.00 pm, there are prayers said hourly on the hour (except at 1.00 pm); these last for about three minutes. Please stop playing a few minutes before the relevant hour and only resume after the prayers have ended. The Vergers can confirm the times at which these will go ahead. There is a daily lunchtime Communion, and there may additionally be other events taking place in the Minster, during which the organ must be silent. *If you are in doubt, please do not hesitate to consult one of the Vergers or the Minster Police.*

Practice time cannot always be guaranteed, so it is essential for organists to arrive as prepared as possible, and to make sure that any additional practice time necessary is booked in advance of the visit.

Voluntaries

Evensong and Matins

You may play as much or as little music before Evensong as you wish, but it must be finished by 5.25 pm (c. 3.55 pm on Sundays) to allow for the Canon in Residence's welcome. After the Aisle Prayers have been said in the South Quire Aisle a bell will be rung. After these, please play the choir in until about twenty seconds after the conductor has reached the stand. These directions also apply for Sunday Matins, for which the pre-service voluntary should be finished by c. 9.55 am.

Post-service voluntaries should begin straight after the Grace or Blessing, and should be of an appropriate scale and length to each service.

Sung Eucharist (Sunday mornings)

Pre-service music must finish by 10.55 am, so that the Canon in Residence can make the welcome and announcements. The concluding voluntary follows immediately after the dismissal.

Hymn playovers

Playovers should provide appropriate introductions to the hymns (usually the first one or two lines, sometimes the last one or two). Unless the melody is relatively short and likely to be unfamiliar to the congregation, it is not necessary to play over the whole verse.

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York Minster Organ Specification

PEDAL ORGAN

1. <i>a</i>	Double Open Wood	(from 4)	
2. <i>a</i>	Double Open Diapason		
3. <i>h</i>	Open Wood I		
4. <i>a/c</i>	Open Wood II		
5. <i>c</i>	Open Diapason		
6. <i>e</i>	Violone		
7. <i>c</i>	Sub Bass		
8. <i>c</i>	Gamba		
9. <i>h</i>	Octave Wood	(from 3)	
10. <i>d</i>	Principal		
11. <i>g</i>	Flute		
12. <i>g</i>	Fifteenth		
13. <i>f/h</i>	Mixture	12.17.19.22	
14. <i>h</i>	Double Ophicleide	(from 16)	
15. <i>c</i>	Double Trombone	(from 17)	
16. <i>e</i>	Ophicleide		
17. <i>c</i>	Trombone		
18. <i>g</i>	Fagotto		
19. <i>e</i>	Posaune	(from 16)	
20. <i>g</i>	Trumpet		
21. <i>h</i>	Clarion	(from 16)	

I Choir to Pedal *II* Great to Pedal *III* Swell to Pedal
IV Solo to Pedal *V* Pedal Divide

CHOIR ORGAN

22. <i>b/c</i>	Lieblich Bourdon	16	
23. <i>b</i>	Open Diapason	8	
24. <i>b/c</i>	Lieblich Gedackt	8	
25. <i>c</i>	Gamba	8	
26. <i>b</i>	Gemshorn	4	
27. <i>b</i>	Claribel Flute	4	
28. <i>b/f</i>	Nazard	2 ² / ₃	
29. <i>g</i>	Flautina	2	
30. <i>b/f</i>	Tierce	1 ³ / ₅	
31. <i>g/h</i>	Mixture	III	15.19.22

VI Tremulant
VII Octaves Alone *VIII* Solo to Choir
IX Swell to Choir *X* Choir and Great exchange

GREAT ORGAN

32. <i>b/c</i>	Double Open Diapason	16	
33. <i>b/c</i>	Double Stopped Diapason	16	
34. <i>h</i>	Open Diapason I	8	
35. <i>d</i>	Open Diapason II	8	
36. <i>c</i>	Open Diapason III	8	
37. <i>b</i>	Open Diapason IV	8	
38. <i>b</i>	Salicional	8	
39. <i>c</i>	Hohl Flute	8	
40. <i>b</i>	Stopped Diapason	8	
41. <i>d</i>	Octave	4	
42. <i>b</i>	Principal	4	
43. <i>c</i>	Harmonic Flute	4	
44. <i>c</i>	Octave Quint	2 ² / ₃	
45. <i>d</i>	Super Octave	2	
46. <i>h</i>	Harmonics	IV	17.19.21.22
47. <i>d</i>	Mixture	III	15.19.22
48. <i>h</i>	Mixture	V	15.19.22.26.29
49. <i>c</i>	Contra Posaune	16	
50. <i>c</i>	Posaune	8	
51. <i>h</i>	Clarion	4	
52. <i>c/d</i>	Tromba	8	
53. <i>c/d</i>	Octave Tromba	4	

XI Posaunes on Choir *XII* Posaunes on Pedal
XIII Trombas on Choir *XIV* Trombas on Solo
XV Choir to Great *XVI* Swell to Great
XVII Solo to Great

SWELL ORGAN

54. <i>b/c</i>	Bourdon	16	
55. <i>b</i>	Open Diapason	8	
56. <i>c</i>	Violin Diapason	8	
57. <i>b/c</i>	Rohr Flute	8	
58. <i>c</i>	Echo Gamba	8	
59. <i>c</i>	Voix Céleste	(low A)	8
60. <i>c</i>	Principal	4	
61. <i>c</i>	Wald Flute	4	
62. <i>b</i>	Fifteenth	2	
63. <i>c</i>	Mixture	15.19.22	III
64. <i>b/c</i>	Dulciana Mixture	19.22.26	III
65. <i>c</i>	Double Trumpet		16
66. <i>c</i>	Trumpet		8
67. <i>c</i>	Horn		8
68. <i>c</i>	Oboe		8
69. <i>b</i>	Clarion		4

XVIII Tremulant

XIX Octave *XX* Unison Off *XXI* Sub Octave
XXII Solo to Swell

SOLO ORGAN

(70-81 enclosed)

70. <i>c</i>	Echo Dulciana	8	
71. <i>e</i>	Viole d'Orchestre	8	
72. <i>g</i>	Viole Céleste	(low A)	8
73. <i>c/h</i>	Harmonic Flute	8	
74. <i>c</i>	Concert Flute	4	
75. <i>h</i>	Harmonic Piccolo	2	
76. <i>c</i>	Bassoon	16	
77. <i>h</i>	Clarinet	8	
78. <i>c</i>	Orchestral Oboe	8	
79. <i>c</i>	Vox Humana	8	

XXIII Tremulant

80. <i>c</i>	Contra Tuba	16	
81. <i>c</i>	Tuba	8	
82. <i>d</i>	Tuba Mirabilis	8	

XXIV Octave *XXV* Unison Off *XXVI* Sub Octave
XXVII Enclosed Solo on Swell

COMBINATION

COUPLERS

XXVIII Great & Pedal Combinations Coupled
XXIX Generals on Swell foot pistons
XXX West shutters On

ACCESSORIES

Eight foot pistons to the Pedal Organ
Eight foot pistons to the Swell Organ
Reversible foot pistons to *II*, *XXVII*; 15
Eight thumb pistons to the Choir Organ
Eight thumb pistons to the Great Organ
Eight thumb pistons to the Swell Organ
Eight thumb pistons to the Solo Organ
Reversible thumb pistons to *I-IV*, *VIII*,
IX, *XV-XXVII*, *XXII*, *XXVII*; 1
Eight general pistons and general cancel
Stepper, operating general pistons in sequence
16 divisional and 999 general memory levels
Balanced expression pedals to the Swell and
Solo Organs

ORIGINS OF PIPEWORK

<i>a</i> 1834 Elliot & Hill	<i>e</i> 1931 Harrison & Harrison
<i>b</i> 1859 William Hill & Son	<i>f</i> 1960 J W Walker & Sons
<i>c</i> 1903 J W Walker & Sons	<i>g</i> 1993 Principal Pipe Organs
<i>d</i> 1917 Harrison & Harrison	<i>h</i> 2021 Harrison & Harrison

The manual compass is 58 notes; the pedal 30 notes.

The key actions are electro-pneumatic

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Sung Eucharist Gospel Responses

1st Cantor/Choir
2nd Congregational

Intro

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia

Cantor/Choir
(the Gospel sentence
will be printed in the
order of service)

Congregational
(once only)

Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia, Al - le - lu - ia

Before the Gospel

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus
Christ according to N...

Organ

Glo - ry to you, O Lord.

After the Gospel

This is the Gospel of the Lord...

Organ

Praise to you, O Christ.

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Great is the mystery of faith...

Maestoso

Christ has died, Christ is ri - sen: Christ will come — a - gain.

Organ

(said) Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory are yours, O loving Father, for ever and ever...

A - men

Organ

Dismissal

(either all sung or all said: see individual order of service)

Go in the peace of Christ. Thanks_ be_ to God.

(Sw) (Gt) *f*

Ped

APPENDIX

AUDIO RECORDING PERMISSION FORM

Audio recording of the *[Insert name of performers]*

The Chapter of York has given its permission for *[name of person making the request]* of *[insert/address, location]*, to make an audio recording of a performance of the choir during its visit to York Minster on *[insert date/s and year]*. The audio will be shared with *[for example: members of the choir and their family]*.

This permission is subject to the following conditions:

- i) that the recording will be used solely in the above-mentioned format.
- ii) that the audio will not be used for commercial gain.
- iii) that the recording device used to make the audio is discreet and not visible during the recording
- iv) that, if requested, copies of the audio will be made available free of charge to the Chapter of York
- v) that if the audio is to be used for other purposes in the future, permission will be sought in advance from the Chapter of York and the relevant copyrights obtained.

Please sign this contract below by way of acceptance of the above conditions.

SIGNED

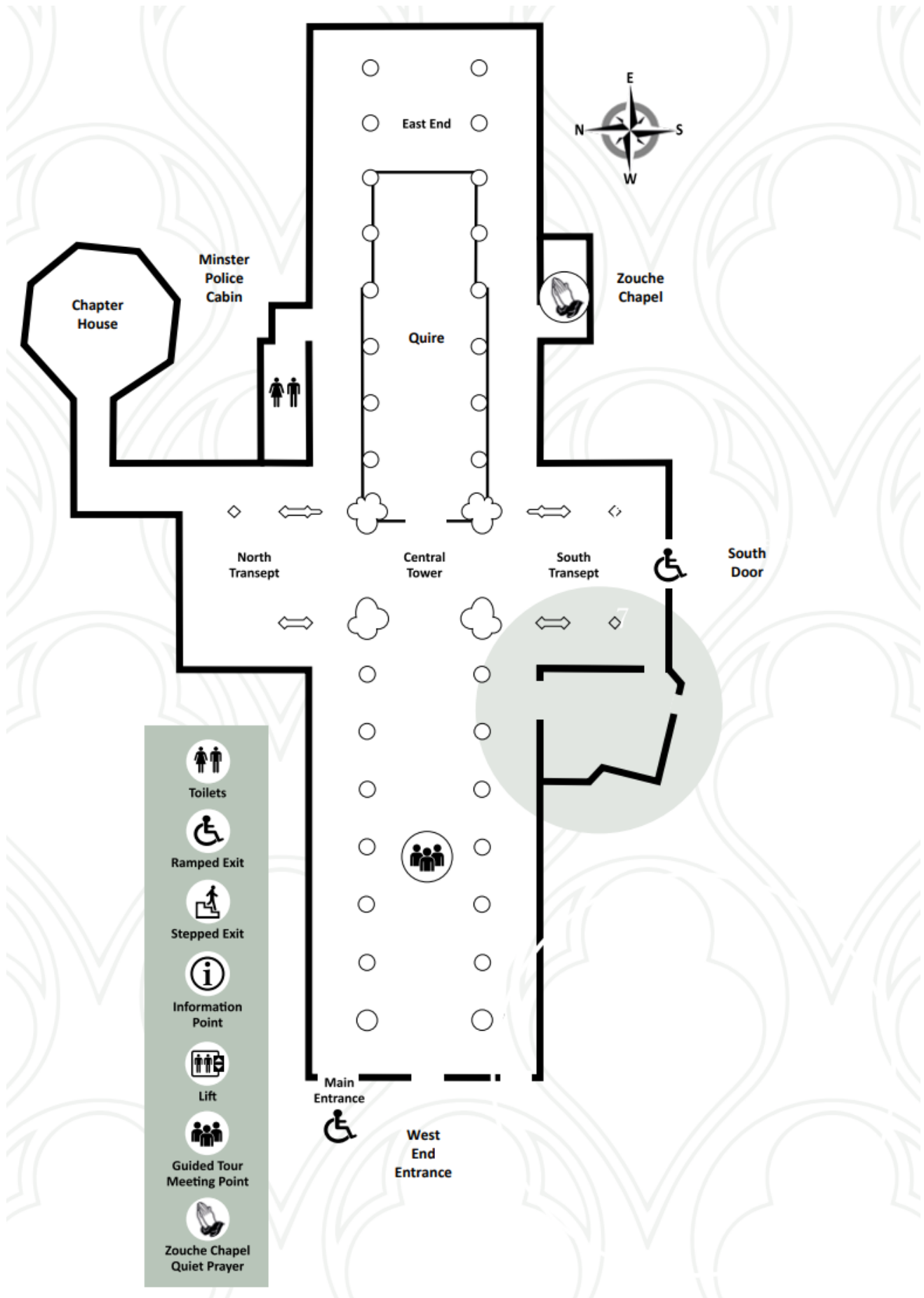
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by *[Client's name]*

.....

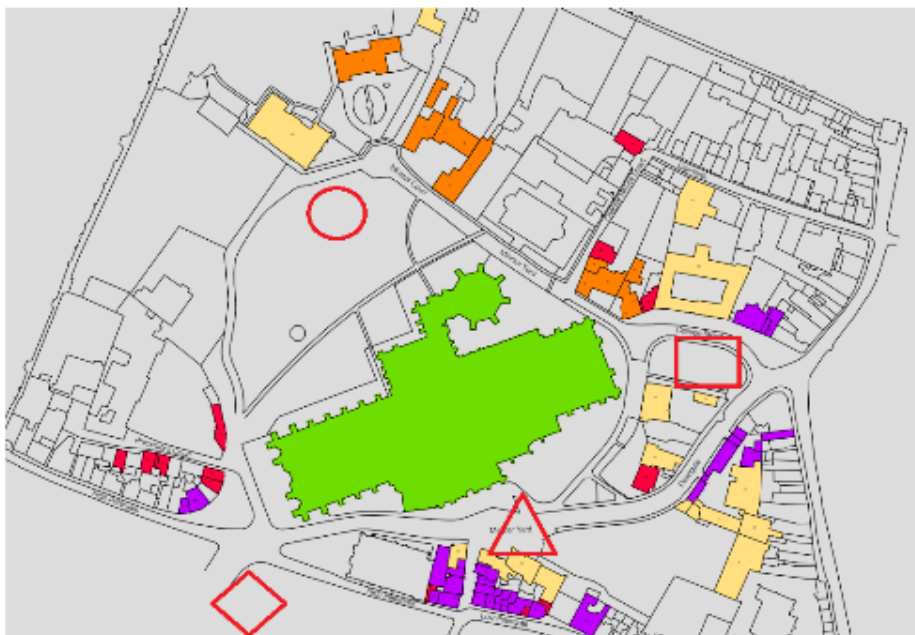
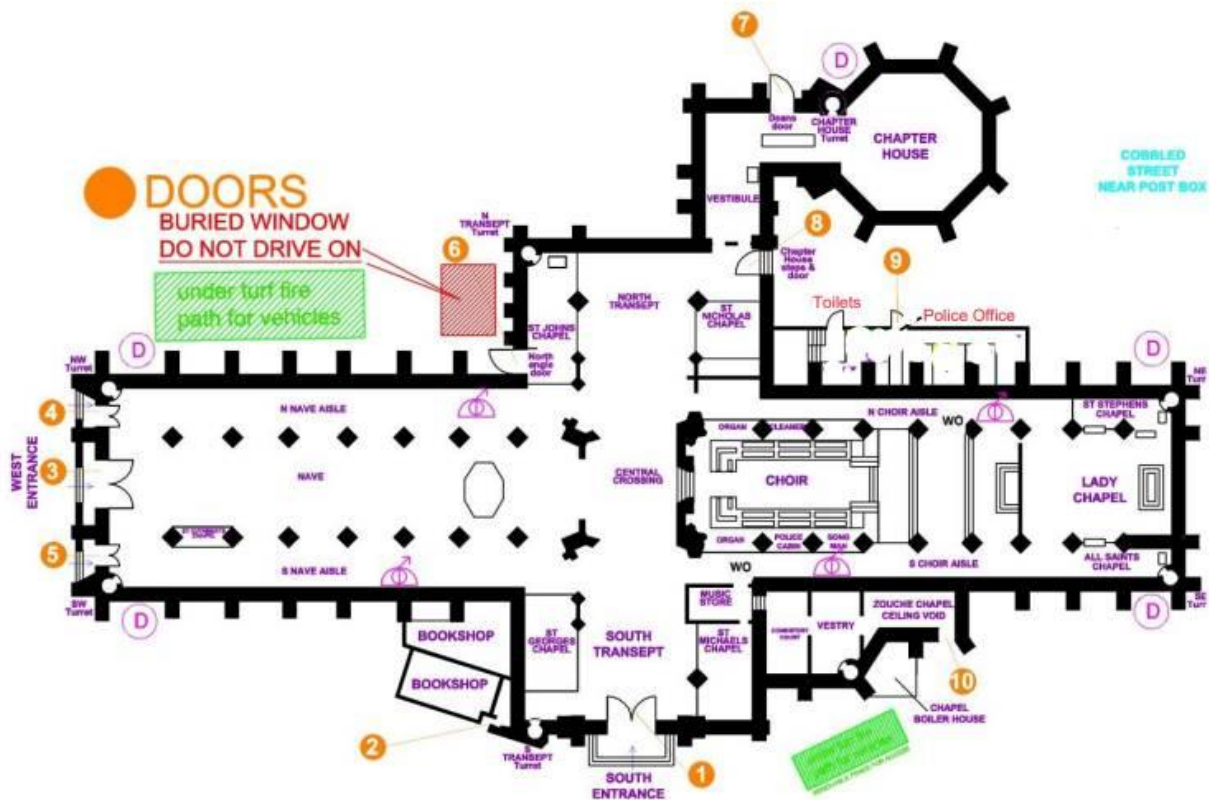
Date.....

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York Minster fire exits and external muster points



CIRCLE POINT (DEANS PARK) = OLD PALACE

SQUARE POINT (COLLEGE GREEN) = STONEYARD, 3 MINSTER COURT, ST WILLIAM COLLEGE

TRIANGLE POINT (CONSTANTINE) = 8-10 MINSTER YARD AND 10A MINSTER GATES

DIAMOND POINT (DUNCOMBE PLACE) = CATHEDRAL