



CHRIST CHURCH

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



Appointment of

Chief Financial Officer

March 2025

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Saxton Bampfylde

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Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the position of Chief Financial Officer at Christ Church in the University of Oxford. This role provides a fantastic opportunity to join one of Oxford's largest and oldest Colleges, and to play a key role at a significant juncture in our long history.

This is a very exciting time for Christ Church. We are currently working through the recommendations of a governance review which proposes changes in the working relationship between the College and Cathedral and in the ways that the College will govern itself in the future. These represent significant decisions for an organisation which was founded in 1546 and will lay the foundations for the next centuries.

Our charitable objects of advancing education, research and religion have priority in all that we do. Our commercial operations and endowment are crucial because they bring in revenue that enables us to fulfil these objects. We are extremely fortunate to have a large endowment, managed by our Chief Investment Officer, but we also have significant outgoings, including the costs of maintaining our buildings and the Cathedral and the upkeep of the Meadow. The successful candidate will play a key role in helping to ensure that we spend our money wisely and for the long term good of Christ Church and all those associated with us.

The Foundation has a large, diverse workforce, employing colleagues from all over the world. Specifically, in the Treasury team there are a number of long-standing, knowledgeable staff who will offer experience, support and information in the first weeks and months of the new appointment. The Chief Financial Officer will report to the Christ Church Governing Body, through the Finance Committee; they will be part of a team, including the Head of House and other college officers, that serves to ensure that all parts of Christ Church work harmoniously together.

We look forward to reading your application.

The Very Rev'd Professor Sarah Foot
Dean





Christ Church

Christ Church (Aedes Christi or simply 'the House') is a Royal Foundation dating from 1546. Its history goes back, however, not only to Wolsey's Cardinal College in the early sixteenth century but to an Augustinian Priory that preceded it, and further to the seventh-century figure of St Frideswide, whose restored shrine has become once again a place of pilgrimage in the Cathedral's Latin Chapel today. Cathedral and College together make up a complex and unique institution committed to education, learning and religion. The Dean is The Very Revd Professor Sarah Foot. The Visitor is His Majesty the King.

The CFO, along with four Canons, serves on the Board of Governors of Christ Church Cathedral School with the Headmaster, Richard Murray.

Christ Church is today made up of some 63 members of the Governing Body (the Dean, 5 Cathedral Canons and 57 Students - mostly Tutorial, Research or Professorial Fellows), 43 lecturers who help the tutors with teaching, up to 17 Junior Research Fellows, 420 undergraduates and 200 graduate students. It is a hard-working and co-operative community. Although it is one of the four or five wealthiest Oxford Colleges, its spending on its primary purposes of education, research and the Cathedral, including the maintenance of its many historic buildings, stretches its resources to the limit. It has recently built up a significant development capability and is engaged in a campaign to raise £80 million.

The Governing Body is sovereign. It consists of Canons and Students and is chaired by the Dean, who is the Head of House.

Academic matters are dealt with by the Senior Censor, assisted by the Junior Censor, the Tutor for Graduates and the Tutor for Admissions.

The CFO maintains an overall view of the finances, the general accounts, buildings and grounds, and reports to the Governing Body.

The "hotel" side of Christ Church, whether to do with the accommodation and feeding of members, tourism or the conference business, mainly in the vacations, is the responsibility of the Steward.



The role

Christ Church seeks an exceptional individual to become its first Chief Financial Officer (CFO). By statute the CFO currently has the working title Treasurer. The CFO will be a Member of the Governing Body of Christ Church. They will take the lead in the continued development of Christ Church's financial strategy and the management and care of its assets, in the context of a self-governing intellectual community. This is a pivotal role in the running of Christ Church and is a fantastic opportunity for the successful candidate to become part of life in the Oxford collegiate University.

The CFO is the Officer responsible to the Governing Body for:

- Oversight and management of the finances of Christ Church
- Provision of financial information and advice to colleagues across Christ Church
- The preparation and presentation of the annual accounts, including budgets
- Oversight of the maintenance and repair of buildings and houses and maintenance of the gardens and the Meadow
- Management of some commercial rental properties within Oxford
- Appropriate understanding of institutional investment policy, which is managed by the Chief Investment Officer

Working at, and representing, Christ Church

Christ Church is a unique institution, a Renaissance college and cathedral now looking forward to its sixth century. The CFO will be at the heart of a very diverse community, working with professionals and academic trustees from all disciplines. Central to the sense of community is the sharing of lunch daily during term time and, when desired or to entertain professional guests, dinner at high table in the famous Great Hall.

This is a particularly significant time to join us, with historic changes being made thanks to the Governance Review process. We have a series of major projects happening or in view: we have opened Oxford Edge, an entrepreneurship centre that will educate and inspire students from across the University; we plan to extend the college with a graduate centre offering accommodation and facilities adjacent to the main site; and we are also planning a sensitive but transformative extension of our historic eighteenth-century library, along with an extension to our picture gallery, allowing more access to our internationally significant collection of old master drawings. The CFO will play an important role in all of these exciting opportunities.

The CFO will also play a crucial role in representing Christ Church to the outside world. They will be a member of the Estate Bursars Committee, a committee of those with similar roles in the various colleges of the University of Oxford. It is expected that the period ahead will be an especially important one for Christ Church in its relationship with the University and with other Colleges. In particular there will be major issues about the distribution of financial burdens and assets between the University and colleges, and between the different colleges. The CFO can expect to play a vital role in debates about these issues, both within Christ Church and as its main financial representative.

Christ Church also has to maintain and build positive relations with Oxford City and County councils and other external partners, particularly in relation to issues which arise in the areas of property, finance and the use of Christ Church's main sites. The CFO is often involved in the management of these external relations, in conjunction with other representatives of Christ Church.



Financial Management

The CFO is responsible for the day-to-day management of Christ Church's finances, including the preparation of budgets, and ensuring that we have appropriate financial controls. It is the CFO's responsibility to take an overall view about income, expenditure and financial strategy, and to advise the Governing Body accordingly, providing timely and understandable financial information to trustees. A key part of this function will be the continued development of appropriate financial management information systems encompassing the entire range of activity within Christ Church.

Christ Church Buildings & Grounds

The CFO is responsible for capital building projects and for the repair and maintenance of the following:

- All the College and Cathedral buildings in the historic precincts;
- Boathouse, pavilion and squash courts;
- Landlord's repairs to the Choir School;
- Maintenance of the Meadow, the gardens and the grounds.

Some of the jobs are carried out by the Clerk of Works and their team, whilst other larger jobs are awarded to external contractors under the control of the Clerk of Works.

The CFO is also responsible for the general supervision of new Capital projects carried out through Christ Church's architects and surveyors.

Endowment Investments

The lead officer dealing with the endowment is the Chief Investment Officer, supported by advice from the Investment Committee, who will work closely with the CFO. The endowment valuation at 31 July 2024 was £786.5 million. Management of securities investments is handled by external managers and that of property investments is largely managed internally, with advice from external agents.

The CFO has responsibility for some operational estate outside the curtilage (such as buildings within Oxford let out on a commercial basis, in some cases to students or staff).

The Director of Planning and Housing supports both the CFO and the Head of Investment with regard to property investments, including commercial, residential, strategic and agricultural portfolios.

Governing Body Committees

Matters relating to the running of Christ Church are taken to the Governing Body through committees.

The CFO is responsible for chairing the following committees, presenting policy options to them, preparing their business and producing their reports for the Governing Body:

Finance Committee, which considers questions involving overall financial policy, plans and budgets, accounts and recommendations for major items of expenditure. In addition to members of the Governing Body, there are currently two external members of the Finance Committee.

Cathedral School Committee, which has oversight of the accounts and management of Christ Church Cathedral School.

Archdeacon's Committee, which administers charitable funds, distributing over £400,000 each year for the benefit of the incumbents of about 80 church appointments or livings for which Christ Church has sole or shared patronage.

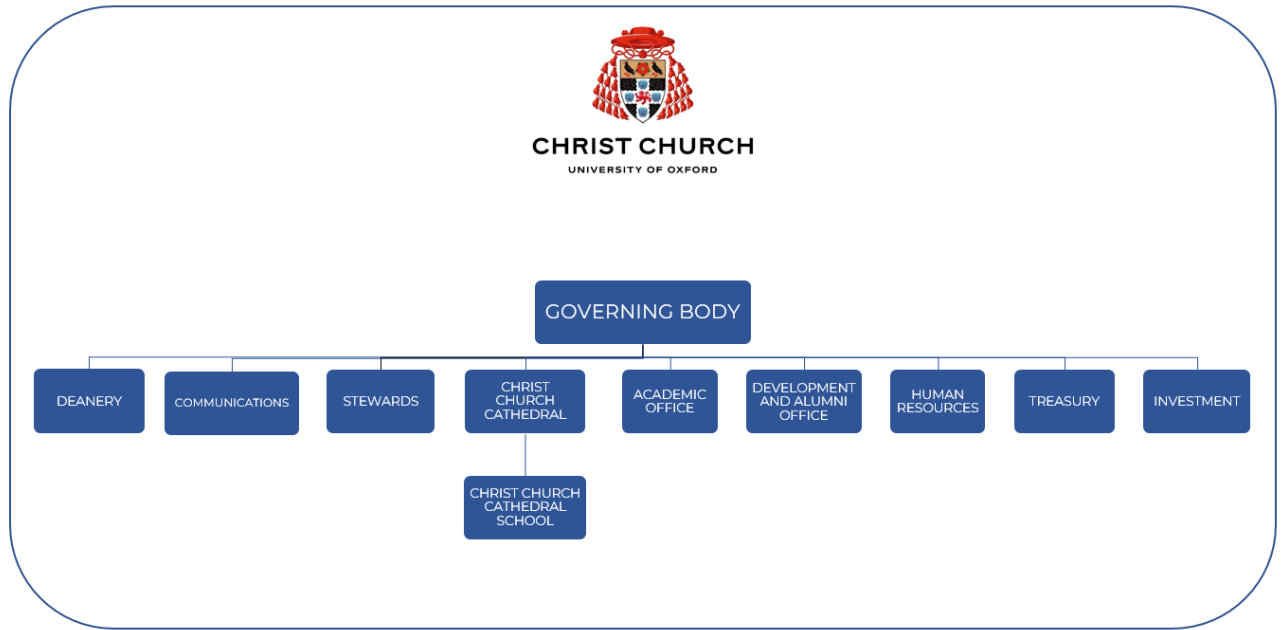
Gardens Committee, which deals with questions relating to planting and layout in the gardens and the Meadow.

Buildings Sub Committee, which deals with the repair, maintenance, alteration or improvement of buildings within the curtilage of Christ Church.

The CFO also attends other committees, notably the Audit and Risk Committee (which has an external convenor), Benefices Committee, IT Committee, Development Committee, House Committee, Investment Committee, Statutes and By-Laws Committee.



Christ Church structure



Your team

The Treasury team includes the Director of Planning and Housing, College Accountant, the CFO's Administrator, Assistant Accountant, Accounts Assistants and a clerical assistant.

The Clerk of Works and Gardens Department comprises the House Surveyor, the Clerk of Works, Clerical Assistant, two Meadow men, and a team working on in-house maintenance. There are also a Head Gardener, a team of Gardeners, a Head Groundsman and a Boatman.

The IT provision is outsourced but contract management of IT as it interacts with Christ Church falls within the remit of the CFO.



Person specification

We are looking for an individual with exceptional people-management skills, capable of building and sustaining high levels of commitment in the team for which they hold responsibility and delivering agile and efficient services for Christ Church. Highly financially literate, working alongside our Chief Investment Officer, you will support Christ Church in defining a sustainable vision for the effective use of our resources and optimal deployment of these over the medium and long term.

You will be comfortable working within the collegiate environment, developing close effective relationships with colleagues, demonstrating a high level of emotional intelligence, exceptional communication and engagement skills, and leading with kindness and respect. You will recognise the importance of consensus in decision-making and in engaging the Governing Body in operational matters.

You will possess a broad range of skills, experience and qualifications, including but not limited to: Excellent academic attainment (degree or equivalent qualification); Professional or post-graduate qualification e.g. Accountancy Body affiliation.

Additionally, Christ Church expects the CFO to have the following skills and experience:

Essential (Technical Skills)

- Extensive experience of senior financial leadership, ideally with some experience of a medium or large charitable or public sector environment
- A good understanding of the charity sector
- Excellent financial and numeracy skills. Experience of maintaining oversight of complex budgets and management of investments
- Experience of providing financial information and advice, including the preparation and presentation of budget and accounts to different audiences
- Demonstrable commercial acumen. Financially literate with a sound understanding of financial accounts, budgets and forecasts
- The ability to oversee and manage the Christ Church site in central Oxford and to have oversight of other building projects in order to bring them to completion to time and budget
- An understanding of the requirements of an IT strategy
- An accountancy qualification, ideally ACA, CIMA or CIPFA

Essential (People Skills)

- Significant leadership experience demonstrated through collaborative leadership with a proven record of success in the leadership of people and finance in a complex environment
- Strong demonstrable management ability, able to structure a team and drive performance to ensure delivery
- Excellent communication skills, including the ability to clearly present information, both orally and in writing
- Evidence of excellent influencing and persuasion skills, and a capacity to instill confidence and demonstrate gravitas amongst peers
- Experience of working collaboratively with a wide variety of people, internal and external stakeholders, such as trustees and alumni

Essential (Professional Skills)

- Strategic vision, with an eye for detail. Pro-active in approach, able to identify opportunities and pre-empt problems
- Adaptability and the ability to manage conflicting requirements whilst focusing on key priorities
- Strong analytical ability, able to evaluate risk and make evidence based recommendations and decisions
- Sound problem-solving skills, able to identify unique and creative options in response to challenges

Personal Qualities

- An understanding and broad sympathy with the aims and purposes of Christ Church as both an academic college in the University and the Cathedral Church of the Diocese of Oxford
- The highest standards of personal and professional integrity
- Resilience, with good judgment and the ability to stay calm under pressure
- Collaborative style coupled with a proven ability to deliver
- Energy and enthusiasm to drive positive change



Terms of appointment

Christ Church is keen to make an appointment as soon as possible. A handover will be possible.

A competitive salary will be offered.

The successful appointee may become a member of the Universities Superannuation Scheme, under which there is a deduction of 6.1% of salary, the College contributing 14.5% at present.

The post holder is eligible to participate in the private health scheme to which Christ Church subscribes.

There is also an entitlement to meals in College when the College kitchens are open.



How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Christ Church, Oxford on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **FBQFA1**. Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is noon on **Friday 11th April 2025**.

- The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.



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