



CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

FURTHER PARTICULARS

Job title	Director of the Cathedral Singers
Location	Christ Church Cathedral
Department	Cathedral
Hours	Part time, 0.4 FTE
Salary	£16,501.56 per annum
Contract type	Permanent
Responsible to	Organist
Application deadline	Noon on Monday 24 November 2025
Vacancy reference	DCS_MT25
Additional information	This is a part-time position that cannot be held concurrently with any other substantive post without the explicit permission of the Human Resources Director. This post is subject to a six-month probationary period.

Music at Christ Church

Music plays a major part in Cathedral worship and ministry, and the foundation supports four choirs.

The majority of the daily services are sung by the **Cathedral Choir**. Established by Cardinal Wolsey in 1526, the Cathedral Choir has a special and distinctive place within the great English choral tradition. Throughout its history it has attracted many distinguished composers, organists and singers, from its first director, John Taverner, appointed by Wolsey, to William Walton in the 20th century. Historically, the Choir is set apart from all other collegiate and cathedral choirs since it serves both an Oxford college and a diocese at once, as a unique and celebrated and dual foundation. It has become revered for the vibrancy of its collective sound and its artistic flexibility.

There are a total of forty-five choristers across the treble lines, with the adult singers including Lay, Stipendiary and Academical Clerks. The boys attend Christ Church Cathedral School, where they are boarders, while the girls are members of **Frideswide Voices**, the adoption of which in 2019 has enabled the Cathedral to provide an excellent musical education for girl choristers.

Outside term time the pattern of choral worship is chiefly sustained by the **Cathedral Singers**, a voluntary choir which has its own music staff and organising committee, with visiting choirs singing services during the month of August and occasionally throughout the year. During term the **College Choir**, made up of and directed by undergraduate and graduate students pursues its own programme of concerts and College services.

The Cathedral's music is under the overall direction of the Organist (Director of Music) Peter Holder. He is supported by the Sub-Organist, the Associate Choral Director and the Organ Scholars, together with a team of administrative staff and support staff.

The Cathedral Singers

The Cathedral Singers of Christ Church (CSCC) is the mixed-voice voluntary choir of Christ Church Cathedral, and one of the most active choirs of its type in the country. Its main role is to maintain the Cathedral's daily pattern of sung worship at times when the Cathedral Choir is away or on vacation, as reasonably directed by the Dean and Chapter.

An auditioned choir, its membership is drawn from across Oxford and beyond, with some members travelling some distance to come and sing. The choir operates a squad system, coordinated via online spreadsheet, to ensure a full choir sings for each service. There are around 70 singers on the books, of whom 20-25 will sing for a given service.

The choir's activities fall into two main strands. First, and primarily, is the maintenance of choral services at a high standard when the Cathedral Choir is absent. Services are normally but not exclusively either Choral Evensong or Choral Eucharist, and the choir sings the full range of liturgical music, from Renaissance polyphony to newly-composed works.

Secondarily, the choir undertakes concerts, visits to sing in other churches/cathedrals, and various non-Cathedral activities, as determined by the Director and Committee, with the permission of Dean and Chapter. Recently these have included a CD, recorded with Convivium Records, a tour to Brussels and Antwerp, and participation in Faculty of Music conducting examinations. These activities are an important part of the choir's identity and supplement its work in the Cathedral.

The choir is accompanied by the Organist to the Cathedral Singers. They play a key role, accompanying services and acting as deputy and assistant to the Director.

Role of Director of the Cathedral Singers

Christ Church seeks to appoint a Director of the Cathedral Singers from 1 February 2026 (or as soon as possible thereafter) to lead the Cathedral Singers as their musical director and principal conductor. The post-holder will contribute to the management of the choir and lead it in its range of performance activities.

Key relationships

The Director of the Cathedral Singers will report to the Organist and work closely with the Cathedral Singers Organist, the Committee of the Cathedral Singers and other Christ Church musicians. They will also have close working relationships with the liturgy team and Canons, and other employees of Christ Church.

Schedule

The Cathedral Singers sing the daily services in the Cathedral during designated Cathedral Singers Sessions, which generally run as follows:

- The three Cathedral School half terms (one week in October, February and May)
- either two or three weeks after Christmas, and after Easter (or before Easter, depending on when it falls)
- four or five weeks immediately after the Cathedral School breaks up in July
- one or two weeks at the beginning of September.

The usual weekly choral schedule during Cathedral Singers sessions (subject always to alteration) is as set out below.

Sunday	11:05am	Sung Eucharist (rehearsal 10am)
	6:05pm	Evensong (rehearsal 4.45pm)
Monday	6:05pm	No choral service
Tuesday	6:05pm	Evensong (rehearsal 5pm)
Wednesday	6:05pm	Evensong (rehearsal 5pm)
Thursday	6:05pm	Evensong (rehearsal 5pm)
Friday	6:05pm	Evensong (rehearsal 5pm)
Saturday	6:05pm	Evensong (rehearsal 4.45pm)

In addition, the choir is usually asked to sing a number of one-off services (such as the Diocesan Ordination services), for which reasonable notice is given.

The total number of CSCC services requested by Dean and Chapter will usually amount to between 100 and 110 in a calendar year January-December. Any service requests from Dean and Chapter beyond 110 services attract additional fees.

Principal Duties and Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the post include, but are not limited to:

Musical direction

- Directing the Cathedral Singers for all Cathedral services during Cathedral Singers Sessions, according to the schedule set out above.
- Selecting repertoire for all CSCC services and other performances.
- Line-managing the CSCC Organist.
- Liaising with the voluntary librarians to maintain the upkeep of the Cathedral Singers' music stock.
- Directing concerts given by CSCC and leading associated rehearsals.
- Directing the choir at additional services such as weddings, funerals, and memorials, as required from time to time (these duties attract additional fees).
- Directing other services and performances by the CSCC as required, such as on visits to other churches in the Diocese and cathedrals further afield, and on tours overseas, for which additional payment is made to the Director.

Planning & administration

- Taking responsibility for the recruitment and audition of new choir members and choral and organ scholars.
- Drawing up the annual music list in consultation with the Organist.
- Drawing up the CSCC programme of services and events, in consultation with the Committee.
- Assisting the Committee with the organisation of overseas tours and Cathedral visits.
- Attending meetings of the Cathedral Singers Committee, currently held once per session, i.e. six times a year.

General

- Contributing to the wider work of the Music Department and attending meetings as required.
- Consistently performing to and maintaining the highest musical standards, commensurate with the reputation of the Foundation and its tradition of musical excellence, including pursuing appropriate continuing professional development activity.
- Undertaking appropriate Safeguarding Training and adhering to all relevant Christ Church Safeguarding Policies.
- Adhering at all times to Christ Church's other policies, protocols and codes of conduct, and undertaking training as required.
- Undertaking any other duties which are within the scope, spirit and purpose of the job, as directed by the Organist.

Selection criteria

Your application will be judged only against the criteria which are set out below, and you should ensure that you show clearly how your skills and experience meet them.

The successful candidate will be:

- educated to degree level, preferably with a further relevant professional qualification
- an outstanding choral conductor with a successful track record as a choir trainer
- able to demonstrate significant relevant professional experience, preferably gained in a cathedral or collegiate setting
- experienced in working successfully with gifted non-professional musicians, both in groups and as individuals, inspiring them to high levels of achievement
- a knowledgeable liturgical musician, familiar with a wide range of repertoire
- able to lead a rehearsal from the keyboard and relate well to organ and piano accompanists (ideally a competent organist, to at least ARCO or equivalent standard)
- an effective communicator, both in person and in writing
- an efficient administrator
- competent in the use of IT (and ideally familiar with music notation software)
- a team player, collegial and capable of working alongside others
- able to relate positively to people from a wide range of backgrounds
- able to be flexible with working hours to fulfil the needs of the post
- in sympathy with the aims and objectives of Christ Church Cathedral.

Terms and Conditions

Hours of work

This position is offered on a part-time 0.4 FTE basis. The precise hours of work each week will largely be determined by the Cathedral Singers' schedule and will vary depending on whether the choir is in session or not.

Leave of absence

The standard holiday allocation for this role is 13.5 days (based on a full-time allocation of 33 days). Holiday must generally be taken during periods when the Cathedral Singers are not in session. During such out-of-session periods the post-holder will generally not be required to carry out regular scheduled duties; however, proper attention must be paid to planning, preparation, and administrative functions. Therefore it is expected that the post-holder will be available to undertake work and attend meetings etc as necessary (save for agreed periods of annual leave).

Other work

Whilst it is expected that the Director of the Cathedral Singers will give priority to all regular and scheduled events, it is recognised that the post will be held alongside a portfolio of other work. Occasional absence from regular duties may be granted in order to fulfil other professional commitments where there is good reason. Permission must always be sought from the Organist in good time. In considering such requests, the Organist will bear in mind the musical needs of the Cathedral, and whether the Director's duties can reasonably be borne by other members of the Cathedral's music team. In the event of absence, the CSCC Organist should direct, or a suitably competent deputy be engaged (subject to the approval of the Organist).

Safeguarding

Christ Church Cathedral places the utmost importance on the safety and wellbeing of all who come to worship, work and volunteer in the Cathedral, particularly children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Offers of employment are subject to satisfactory references and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. All employees are obliged to complete regular safeguarding training.

How to Apply

To apply for this position please complete provide the documentation listed below, no later than the deadline of **noon on Monday 24 November 2025**. Applications received after this time will not be considered.

Application documents should include:

- A letter of application addressed to the Organist stating your interest in the role and explaining how you meet the selection criteria for the post using examples of your skills and experience. This should be no longer than two A4 pages;
- a CV, including the names and contact details of three referees;
- The Equal Opportunities Monitoring form

Applications should be emailed to recruitment@chch.ox.ac.uk.

Applications will be judged only against the criteria which are set out in the job description, and applicants should ensure that their applications explain how they meet each of the selection criteria for the post using examples of their skills and experience. This may include experience gained in employment, education, or during career breaks (such as time out to care for dependants).

Christ Church is committed to fairness, consistency and transparency in selection decisions. Members of the selection panel will be aware of the principles of equality of opportunity, fair selection and the risks of bias. Applications are particularly welcome from black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented amongst the Cathedral staff.

Interviews will be held in person in Oxford on 8th December 2025.

If you need help or if you have any questions regarding the application process, please contact recruitment@chch.ox.ac.uk.

If you would like to discuss this post and find out more about joining the community at Christ Church, then please contact the Organist, Peter Holder (peter.holder@chch.ox.ac.uk).

All enquiries will be treated with strict confidence and will not form part of the selection decision.

For candidates of suitable experience, applications may be considered for the role of Director of the Cathedral Singers to be held concurrently with that of Associate Choral Director.