



FURTHER PARTICULARS

Job title	Organist of the Cathedral Singers
Location	Christ Church Cathedral
Department	Cathedral
Hours	Part-time
Salary	£10,806 per annum
Contract type	Permanent
Responsible to	Director of the Cathedral Singers
Application deadline	Noon on Monday 13 April 2026
Vacancy reference	OCS_HT26
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.

Christ Church Cathedral

Oxford's cathedral has a unique dual role in the Church of England. Christ Church Cathedral is the College Chapel as well as the cathedral church for the Diocese of Oxford, and welcomes worshippers from Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and beyond. The site has been a place of worship for more than a thousand years. A monastery was founded here early in the eighth century by St. Frideswide. Records show Henry I granted a charter to an Augustinian priory in 1122. Although no evidence of the earlier buildings remains, parts of the 12th-century structure are still visible in the Cathedral today. Wolsey suppressed the priory in 1524, and work began on the building of Cardinal's College – with part of the west end of the church removed to make space for Tom Quad. After Wolsey's fall, the college was re-designated as 'King Henry VIII's College'. In 1546, the priory church became both the cathedral for the newly formed Diocese of Oxford, and the chapel of the new college of Christ Church, a college of the University of Oxford. Today, the Cathedral is a tourist destination, with over half a million visitors every year, and it is a venue for worship, services, concerts, exhibitions, talks, and recordings.

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. The Cathedral Singers are directed by Susie Hill. 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 130 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. The choir will be touring to Padua in May 2026, and Winchester Cathedral in August 2027. 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. Two organ scholarships aimed at sixth formers and gap-year students are also offered: further information on the scholarship scheme can be found [here](#).

Role of Organist of the Cathedral Singers

Christ Church seeks to appoint an Organist of the Cathedral Singers from 1 May 2026 (or as soon as possible thereafter). The Organist plays a key role, accompanying the choir in its busy schedule of services and other performances, supporting the Director and mentoring the two organ scholars.

Key relationships

The Organist of the Cathedral Singers will report to the Director and work closely with the organ scholars, 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 two or three weeks around Easter (before and / or after, depending on when Easter 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 duties

- Playing the organ at the daily Cathedral services when the Cathedral Singers are in residence, according to the schedule set out above
- Providing training and guidance to the organ scholars of the Cathedral Singers
- Playing for concerts (maximum 2 per year) given by CSCC and associated rehearsals
- Playing at additional services such as weddings, funerals, and memorials, as required from time to time (these duties attract additional fees)
- Playing for 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 Organist
- Playing for auditions
- Directing sectional rehearsals and offering coaching on solo preparation
- For suitably experienced candidates, there may be opportunities to direct the Cathedral Singers in rehearsals and services

Planning & administration

- Planning organ music for services, and, when required, submitting details of proposed organ music to the Director for publication
- Assisting the Director with the annual recruitment of new organ scholars
- Coordinating organ practice arrangements for the organ scholars
- Engaging deputy organists for any agreed absences
- Assisting the Director with the general administration of the choir

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 determined by the Director

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:

- an outstanding organist who holds a Music degree and/or organ diploma (ARCO, FRCO or other equivalent)
- able to demonstrate significant relevant professional experience working with choirs in cathedral, collegiate or church settings
- a confident and fluent sight-reader
- skilled at improvisation and transposition
- a knowledgeable liturgical musician, familiar with a wide range of repertoire and experience of working successfully with gifted non-professional musicians, both in groups and as individuals, inspiring them to high levels of achievement
- an effective communicator, both in person and in writing
- an efficient administrator
- 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

Some experience of choral direction is desirable, but not essential.

How to Apply

To apply for this position please complete provide the documentation listed below, no later than the deadline of **noon on Monday 13 April 2026**. Applications received after this time will not be considered.

Application documents should include:

- A letter of application addressed to the Director of the Cathedral Singers 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 academic.recruitment@chch.ox.ac.uk.

Interviews will be held in person at Christ Church on **Wednesday 22 April 2026**.

If you need help

If you have any questions regarding the application process, including any reasonable adjustments that you may require for the interviewing process, please contact academic.recruitment@chch.ox.ac.uk. All enquiries will be treated in strict confidence and will not form part of the selection decision.

If you would like to discuss this post and find out more about joining the community at Christ Church, then please contact the Director of the Cathedral Singers, Susie Hill (susiehill@chch.ox.ac.uk). All enquiries will be treated with strict confidence and will not form part of the selection decision.

Terms and Conditions

Hours of work

This position is offered on a part-time 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

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 Organist 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 to fulfil other professional commitments where there is good reason. Permission must always be sought from the Director of the Cathedral Singers in good time. In considering such requests, the Director will bear in mind the musical needs of the Cathedral, and whether the Organist's duties can reasonably be borne by other members of the Cathedral's music team or external deputies. In the event of absence, a suitably competent deputy should be engaged (subject to the approval of the Director).

Important Information for Candidates

Applications will be judged only against the criteria which are set out in the Further Particulars, 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 dependents).

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 in College staff.

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.

Data Privacy

Please note that any personal data submitted to Christ Church as part of the job application process will be used only for the purposes of determining suitability for the post and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and related UK data protection legislation. For further information, please see the Christ Church Privacy Notice available at: <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/privacy-policy>.

Christ Church's policy on retirement

There is no normal or fixed age at which staff in non-academic posts have to retire. Staff at these grades may elect to retire in accordance with the rules of the applicable pension scheme, as may be amended from time to time.

Equality of opportunity

Christ Church is committed to equality of opportunity. It is our policy and practice that entry into employment and progression within employment will be determined only by criteria which are related to the duties of a particular post and the relevant salary scale. No applicant or member of staff will be treated less favorably than another because of their age, disability, ethnicity, marital or civil partnership status, parental status, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.