



APPLICATION PACK

CHORAL SCHOLARSHIPS (x2) 2025-2026

PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL



APPOINTMENT OF CHORAL SCHOLARS

The Chapter of Peterborough Cathedral is seeking to appoint two Choral Scholars (any voice from Alto, Tenor or Bass) to the Cathedral Choir from September 2025.

Choral Scholarships are awarded for an initial term of one year and present an ideal opportunity for a gap-year or graduate student to gain valuable musical and vocal experience. Peterborough Cathedral provides a dynamic and supportive environment in which a young musician can develop, responding to the challenges of daily choral liturgies sung to a high standard. Choral scholars will benefit from the mentoring of colleagues and the financial support of Chapter for singing lessons.

Chapter regards worship, ministry and mission as the key priorities of the Cathedral, and is therefore highly supportive of the Cathedral Choir, and of music within the Cathedral, which it sees as integral to its aims. It is committed to fostering a high standard of music-making within worship and ensuring that the choral music inspires worshippers. It recognises that projects such as concerts, tours, broadcasts and recordings are important opportunities to develop the professional standing and standards of the Cathedral Choir and to make a wider public aware of the Cathedral's worship, ministry and mission.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Peterborough is one of the new foundation cathedrals (together with Gloucester, Oxford, Chester and Bristol) created by Henry VIII as the monasteries were dissolved. There has been an Abbey on this site for over 1200 years, but the current building was begun in 1118. Three principal glories of the Cathedral building are its iconic West Front, the painted wooden Medieval Nave ceiling and the splendid fan-vaulted New Building, possibly created by the architect of King's College Chapel in nearby Cambridge; the spacious Precincts still contain a number of monastic buildings and ruins.

There is a lively Cathedral community including all age groups, and as well as regular worship led by the Choir, it supports children's and young people's groups, education programmes, and a theological society. It contributes time and resources to a local project for the homeless, educational and other outreach initiatives, and provides hospitality to a variety of groups and gatherings. The Cathedral is principally the seat of the Bishop of Peterborough, and hosts many of the larger Diocesan services and events; Music plays a significant role in the Cathedral's worship.

The Chapter of Peterborough Cathedral

Peterborough Cathedral is run by a Chapter of four clergy and up to five lay canons. The clergy team currently includes the Dean, Chris Dalliston (2018), Vice Dean Tim Alban Jones (2015) and the Canon Precentor, Dr Rowan Williams (2018), and Canon Missioner (Steve Benoy, May 2022). Lay members of Chapter represent specialisms from business, finance and property to HR, and also represent different aspects of the Cathedral community and Diocese.

The Cathedral Staff

Chapter has been working over several years to establish a strong staff team within the Cathedral capable of delivering a high level of service in different areas. Staffing works in a collaborative way, with some projects shared between departments. Harmony and respect are important to this way of working. Specialist help, whether through resident staff or contracted-out arrangements, exists in areas such as publicity, media, education and visitors, personnel, Health and Safety, IT, management, property and finance.

Music staff build successful relationships with other staff to enable them to fulfill areas of their work in which the skills of these staff are important. Key relationships will be with the other music staff, and verging, marketing, HR, and education teams. It is expected that the Choral Scholars will take a full part in music department events, and want to actively involve themselves within projects that benefit the music department and promote the Cathedral's vision and values.

Peterborough as a place to live and work

Peterborough is a city of just over 200,000 inhabitants, with good local facilities and excellent transport links. London is only 45 minutes away by the faster trains, and Cambridge is 45 minutes away by car. A number of other centres in Eastern England, such as Leicester and Northampton, are within an hour's drive of Peterborough, and almost anywhere in the Midlands can be reached easily by train; the East Coast line connects Peterborough with York, Durham and Edinburgh. Oakham, Oundle, Stamford, Uppingham and a number of other well-known public schools are within the immediate area. The city centre of Peterborough has benefitted from recent regeneration projects, and boasts a wide variety of cafés, restaurants and pubs/bars, in addition to a shopping in the Queensgate Centre. Peterborough is best described as a cross between a traditional Cathedral City and a New Town, enjoying the best features of both.

THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT – FURTHER INFORMATION

The Director of Music (Tansy Castledine, September 2018) is responsible for overseeing and leading all aspects of the Music Department. Within the music team there is also a Singing Teacher (Sarah Burston, 2018), an Organist (Chris Strange, September 2020), an Organ or Conducting Scholar appointed annually, a department Administrator, and Choir Chaperone. A number of parent volunteers also assist with chaperoning the choristers.

The Cathedral Choir comprises fifty-two boy and girl choristers who take an equal share in singing the daily services. There are six Lay Clerks and up to three Choral Scholars who normally sing eight choral services per week, and an additional three Assistant Lay Clerks who sing on Sunday, and at other major events. There is also a Reception and Junior Choir (for children ages 4 and 6 upwards respectively), a Youth Choir (ages 13-18) and Festival Chorus (adult volunteers).

The King's School and Cathedral Choristers

All choristers are educated at The King's School, Peterborough founded by Henry VIII in 1541, and currently a successful Church of England Academy (day school). King's is one of the highest performing state comprehensive schools of its type nationally, having received an Outstanding rating in the most recent Ofsted and denominational inspections, and places are in high demand locally. It selects some pupils based on academic and musical aptitude, as well as appointing choristers, and awarding Church of England and sibling places. The Director of Music is a member of the Governing Body as a Foundation Governor.

The School's admissions policy allows for nine chorister places (split between boys and girls) in each year group from Year 3 to Year 8. Since April 2013 the Cathedral Youth Choir has enabled both Boy and Girl former choristers to remain in contact with the Cathedral, and to develop their choral singing skills, in some cases toward university choral scholarships, alongside singers from other schools. The Youth Choir rehearses weekly, and currently sings every other week in the Cathedral, also singing on occasional Sundays, and with the Cathedral Choir for concerts.

Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars

The back row of the Cathedral Choir usually comprises six Lay Clerks and up to three Choral Scholars; there may also be up to three Assistant Lay Clerks who sing for Sunday services and some special services.

Pattern of choral services

The default weekly pattern is currently as follows:

Monday 1730 Evensong

Girls (Years 5-8) sing Evensong with Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars (boys rehearse)

Tuesday 1730 Evensong

Boys (Years 4-8), Lay Clerks, Choral Scholars

Wednesday 1730 Evensong

'Upper Voices' (Boys and Girls Years 6-8) or Youth Choir (alternating)

Thursday 1730 Evensong

Girls (Years 4-8), Lay Clerks, Choral Scholars

Friday 1730 Evensong

Boys (Years 4-8), Lay Clerks, Choral Scholars (girls rehearse)

Saturday - No regular duties

Sunday

Matins 0915

Eucharist 1030

Evensong 1530

(all with Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars; Boys and Girls alternate morning services and

Evensong on a week-by-week basis)

The Boy and Girl choristers thus share duties on an equal basis. Special services and other events are shared as equitably as possible between the two groups, who also combine from time to time for major services and concerts. Each chorister group rehearses before school on four weekday mornings.

A Choral Eucharist replaces weekday Evensong at 17:30 on some major feasts. On Sundays Matins is sung at 09:15, Eucharist at 10:30 and Evensong at 15:30. A full rehearsal of around 25 minutes is held (usually in the Cathedral) before each service. The six full-time Lay Clerks and three Choral Scholars rehearse with the choristers from 16:30 on a Friday.

There is no weekly Cathedral Choir duty on a Saturday, though there are several Saturdays throughout the year with duties for the Cathedral musicians (e.g. Ordinations, Old Choristers' services, occasional Evensongs, concerts and other events).

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the live-streaming of some services now takes place. This is currently approximately one service per week and it is anticipated that streaming in some form will continue in the future. This is an area under review but candidates should be aware of this and are advised that no extra payment is made for this.

Concerts and other musical events

The Cathedral Choir undertakes concerts, tours, broadcasts, recordings and other work from time to time. Some of this work attracts additional fees for those involved. Recent CD recordings include a disc of Christmas music produced in 2015, Cheryl Frances-Hoad's *Even You Song*, released in 2017, involving several schools within the Peterborough area, in 2019, *Jubilate Deo* and in 2021 *In his hands*. The Choir occasionally gives broadcasts on the BBC Choral Evensong programme and aims to tour every other year. Most recently the choirs have visited Belgium, Holland, and Spain, and the West Coast of America. The choir undertakes a programme of regular concerts, both in the Cathedral and in the Diocese, and has developed and maintained a broad, high quality repertoire from plainsong to contemporary music. Beyond that, our most recent partnership projects have involved participating in Gabrieli Roar, welcoming pupils from primary schools within the Diocese to enjoy an Annual Singing Afternoon, and mounting a production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*.

Peterborough Cathedral Music Association (PCMA)

Peterborough Cathedral Music Association, founded in 2009, seeks to bring orchestras, soloists and other professional music-makers to the Cathedral, to enable local amateur singers (such as the Cathedral's Festival Chorus) and musicians to access professional leadership, and to provide opportunities for the choristers to be involved in performances of major works with orchestra such. To date these have included Bach's *John and Matthew Passions*, Haydn's *Creation* and Mozart's *Requiem* and *Vespers*, Handel's *Dixit Dominus*, *Messiah*, and *Coronation Anthems* with groups such as Eboracum, His Majestys Sagbutts and Cornetts, the Saraband Consort and Charivari Agréable.

Repertoire

The Cathedral Choir has a broad, high quality repertoire from plainsong to contemporary music; the music lists are published on the Cathedral website and associated social media platforms.

Person specification – Choral Scholar

We are looking for the following qualities in a Choral Scholar:

- a talented musician who is supportive of the worship, ministry and ethos of Peterborough Cathedral
- a musician with a broad interest in music who will thrive from performing a wide choral repertoire
- a musician who is dedicated to achieving high standards and who is keen to learn and improve
- a hard-working person capable of setting and achieving goals in their own musical development
- a team player who will be a reliable member of the choir and on whom their colleagues can depend
- a person who can accept constructive critique and learn from colleagues

Choral Scholars will be mentored by Lay Clerks and members of the Music Department. They are expected to take responsibility for the preparation of repertoire, and in addition to private preparation and a weekly scholar repertoire session, extra rehearsal time with a Lay Clerk or member of the Music Department will be available as necessary. Choral Scholars attend rehearsals, services or other events required of them as requested by the Director of Music, as detailed on the choir schedule or in separate communications in advance, and assist with the music library and other departmental tasks according to their skill sets.

Choral Scholars are excellent ambassadors for the Cathedral. They are not required to be practising Christians, but are expected to work and behave in sympathy with the worship, ministry and mission of the Cathedral. They must uphold excellent standards of personal presentation and behaviour.

Safeguarding Policy

The Cathedral is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young persons, and all employees, students and volunteers must ensure that the highest priority is given to following guidance and regulations to safeguard children and young people. Choral Scholar appointments are subject to the usual safeguarding checks, which will be carried out after interview for the successful candidates. If you are shortlisted, as part of our safer recruitment, we need to see documents and photo ID such as a passport, driving licence and a utility bill such as a Council tax statement. These can be used for the DBS should the applicant be successful. These documents should be brought with you to your interview, if called.

Duties of a Choral Scholar

The duties allotted to Choral Scholars will depend on their particular skills and potential for development, but it is anticipated that they will undertake the following roles:

Choral singing

- to sing as part of the Cathedral Choir at services on weekdays and at weekends
- to sing as part of the Cathedral Youth Choir and Festival Chorus at rehearsals, services and other events as planned and notified in advance
- to sing in concerts, recordings and other extra events, at the discretion of the Director of Music, and as detailed on the termly choir schedule. Fees may be payable for certain extra commitments.

Administration

- to act as assistant Choir Librarians. Choral Scholars will assist the Organ Scholar in the day-to-day running of the library and in longer-term projects such as auditing the choir's repertoire and music processing using Sibelius software. No fees are paid for this work, however it would not ordinarily amount to more than approximately two to three hours per week.
- There are also opportunities to become involved in social media development for the choir, choir publications, and partnership work within the city to engage others in choral singing. Choral Scholars will be able to liaise with the Director of Music as to which of these areas is of interest to them.

Training will be provided in all duties asked of the Choral Scholars, and they are strongly encouraged to ask for extra assistance where necessary in any aspects of their work.

Terms and conditions

Choral Scholarships are offered initially for one year (in effect, 11 months) and is available to any suitable singer over the age of 18 on 1 September 2025, including both pre- and post-university candidates. It may be possible to renew the scholarship for a second year, upon discussion with the Director of Music. In September 2025 there are two scholarships available and applications are welcome from altos, tenors, and basses.

Accommodation will be provided in a newly created purpose-built Choral Scholar flat in Dean's Court which is situated within the Cathedral Precincts; Chapter cover the costs for rent, council tax, water rates and utilities bills (excluding broadband).

The value of the Choral Scholarship is £3,200, payable in monthly instalments over 11 months (the final payment is made at the end of July). Choral Scholars' singing lessons (up to one lesson per month) will be paid for by Chapter upon presentation of an invoice from a singing teacher approved by the Director of Music; travel costs to singing lessons will be covered by the Choral Scholar.

Choral Scholars are entitled to one day free of Cathedral commitments per week. Holidays must be taken outside choir term, and take account of any choir tour dates; the scholarship ends with the choir's summer term, usually at the mid-end of July.

How to apply

Making an application

If you have further questions about this post prior to application, please contact Tansy Castledine, Director of Music directly on 01733 355318 (Office) or via e-mail at: music@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk

Applications should be made via the Cathedral website

All applications will be acknowledged upon receipt. The closing date for applications is **Wednesday 23rd October at 0900** and interviews will take place in Peterborough after this by arrangement.

Please be sure to supply the following in your application:

- The standard completed application form
- A full CV detailing courses studied and qualifications gained, details of singing study past and present, details of any church music experience relevant to your application
- A covering letter stating how you meet the requirements for this post
- The names and contact details (including both telephone numbers and e-mail addresses) of **three** referees (see below)

Referees

One of your referees should be your current or most recent employer (if applicable; a referee from your educational establishment would be acceptable as a substitute), one should be a professional working in the field of church music, and one should be a member of the clergy with whom you are working or have recently worked. In some cases two of these three may overlap, but three referees are still required in total. In each case please state the referee's relationship to you.