



## **APPLICATION PACK**

### **ORGAN SCHOLAR, PETERBOROUGH CATHEDRAL (September 2025 – August 2026)**



# **APPOINTMENT OF ORGAN SCHOLAR**

The Chapter of Peterborough Cathedral is seeking to appoint an Organ Scholar from September 2025. This will be a full-time organ scholarship, tenable for one year. The Organ Scholarship is open to suitably qualified and experienced candidates of any age.

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 inspiring music-making within worship. It recognises that projects such as concerts, tours, broadcasts and recordings are important opportunities to develop the professional standing of the Cathedral Choir and to make the wider public aware of the Cathedral's worship, ministry and mission.

The Organ Scholarship provides an opportunity for a talented musician to build on their skills in a supportive environment, while contributing significantly to the musical life of Peterborough Cathedral as an integral part of the music team. The purpose of the scholarship is to equip such a musician with skills in cathedral music, which we hope will be useful in their future career.

## **I. 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.

### **The Chapter of Peterborough Cathedral**

Peterborough Cathedral is run by a Chapter of five clergy and up to five lay canons. The clergy team currently includes the Dean, Chris Dalliston (2018), Vice Dean Tim Alban Jones (2015) Canon Precentor, Rowan Williams (2018), and Canon Missioner, Steve Benoy (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 Organ Scholar will take a full part in music department events, and want to actively involve him/herself 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 centre. Peterborough is best described as a cross between a traditional Cathedral City and a New Town, enjoying the best features of both.

## **2. THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT – FURTHER INFORMATION**

The Director of Music (Tansy Castledine 2018) is responsible for overseeing and directing all aspects of the Music Department. There is also a full time Organist (Chris Strange, 2020), a Singing Teacher (Sarah Burston, 2018) an Organ or Conducting Scholar, Music Department Administrator, professional Chorister Chaperone, and a number of parent volunteers also assist by chaperoning the choristers. Since 2020 Daniel Moulton has been our International Visiting Organ Tutor, as part of the re-development of our Organ Scholar training programme.

The Cathedral Choir comprises approximately 51 boy and girl choristers who take an equal share in singing the daily services. There are six Lay Clerks, who normally sing seven choral services per week. In addition to the Lay Clerks there are up to three Choral Scholars, and occasional Assistant Lay Clerks who sing on Sunday, and at other major events. There is also a Reception and Junior Choir (children ages 4 upwards), a Youth Choir (ages 13-18) and a 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, and alongside young people from other schools. The Youth Choir rehearses each week, and sings a service 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 comprises six Lay Clerks and up to three Choral Scholars, who normally sing seven choral services per week. In addition to the Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars there are occasional extra singers for Sunday services and some special services (Assistant Lay Clerks).

The default weekly pattern is currently as follows:

Monday 1730 Evensong

Boys or Girls (Years 5-8) sing Evensong with Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars; trebles not singing Evensong 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

Thursday 1730 Evensong

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

Friday 1730 Evensong

Girls or Boys (Years 4-8), Lay Clerks, Choral Scholars; trebles not singing Evensong 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 and there are special separate sessions in the mornings and on some afternoons for the probationers, to enable them to develop and learn the necessary skills prior to becoming more involved with the full choir in year 4.

A choral Eucharist replaces weekday Evensong at 17:30 on some major feasts. On most 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 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).

### **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. The choristers have also performed regularly with The Sixteen.

### **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. It is hoped that the Organ Scholar will help to shape the repertoire further, holding in balance the needs of the liturgy, the diversity of the sacred choral music repertoire from many countries and denominational traditions, the specific heritage of the Anglican choral tradition, and the developing resources available at Peterborough. The Music Department has access to Sibelius music processing software and good photocopying facilities for any music that can legally be copied.

## The Organs

The Cathedral organ is one of the finest in the country. The organ, in its current location in the north nave triforium, was designed by William Hill & Sons in 1894, incorporating pipework from a previous Hill screen organ dating from 1868. It was rebuilt in 1930 by Hill, Norman and Beard, and then in 1981 by Harrison & Harrison. Following the fire of 2001 the organ was fully restored in 2005 with modern playing aids and a stepper. With around 80 speaking stops spread over four manuals and pedals, it is a sizeable instrument equally at home accompanying a choir or in solo repertoire.

In 2016 the work was completed to bring the instrument down to concert pitch from Old Philharmonic pitch. At the same time several small changes, such as new Swell box mechanisms and Tremulants and the provision of three new ranks of pipes, including a very dramatic *tuba mirabilis*, have been made.

There is also a five-stop chamber organ in the Cathedral (A=440) by Kenneth Tickell, which has recently been cleaned, renovated, and the pipes fitted with tuning slides to enable tuning in a variety of temperaments.

The Song School (within the Precincts) houses a Vincent Woodstock practice instrument (2011: 2 man, 9 stops) and a two-manual electronic practice instrument running the Peterborough Hauptwerk sample.

## **Person specification**

Chapter is looking for the following qualities in an Organ Scholar:

- a talented musician who is supportive of the worship, ministry and ethos of Peterborough Cathedral
- an organist capable of accompanying the full Cathedral Choir in a wide range of repertoire on several occasions each week
- a musician with a broad interest in music who will thrive from performing a wide choral and organ 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 department and on whom their colleagues can depend
- a person who can develop both in co-operation with colleagues and when working alone
- a person who can accept critical comment and learn from colleagues
- a person with good communication skills, who can empathise with others and can exercise pastoral responsibility with the choristers, which may occasionally include chorister supervision work
- a person with the confidence to act authoritatively with children and adults

The Organ Scholar must be a good ambassador for the Cathedral. They are not required to be a practising Christian 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. The Organ Scholar appointment is subject to the usual safeguarding checks, which will be carried out after interview for the successful candidate. 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 the Scholarship**

The duties allotted to the Organ Scholar will depend on their particular skills, aspirations, and areas for development. It is anticipated that they will undertake the following tasks, which include but are not limited to:

### **Organ playing and accompaniment**

- to play for Cathedral services in liaison with the Director of Music and Organist. Across the year there will be a broad range of opportunities provided at the appropriate level for the successful candidate, encompassing opportunities to play for the full Cathedral Choir, Lay Clerk, Youth Choir, and Upper Voice services. The organ scholar can expect to play for at least two services per week
- to play organ music before special services and Sunday services, as required
- to accompany rehearsals for Diocesan events, such as the Diocesan Choral Festival
- to play for family services (once per month) and occasional congregational services
- for the right candidate, to occasionally play for special services or events, for which extra fees may be payable

### **Choir training and directing**

- to assist in the training of the probationer choristers under the direction of the Director of Music. This may include practical and theory based sessions
- to assist in training the full choristers. This may include work such as helping prepare solos and rehearsing with groups of the boy or girl choristers
- occasionally to direct rehearsals and choral services
- to attend and observe / participate in (according to skills) chorister singing lessons with the Cathedral's singing teacher and rehearsals of the Youth Choir and Festival Chorus

An Organ Scholar who is able to fulfil these opportunities with distinction may be offered further work with the Cathedral Choir and/or with other local choirs.

### **Other**

- to be responsible for the Library in conjunction with the Choral Scholars and under the direction of the Director of Music.
- to assist the Director of Music in the general running and administration of the Music Department

The training and experience of Cathedral music that the successful candidate receives will embrace all aspects of a successful department, both practical, administrative, and project based. Training will be provided where required, relating to all the various duties asked of the Organ Scholar, and they will be given assistance where necessary in any aspects of their work. Fostering positive relations with music department colleagues and those across the Cathedral in the Operations, Verging, and Education teams in particular will be key to success, and it is expected that the Organ Scholar will take a full part in all aspects underpinning the successful running of the Music Department.



## Terms and conditions

The Organ Scholarship is offered for one year and is available to any suitable organist over the age of 18 on 1 September 2025.

Appropriate accommodation will be provided; this may be shared accommodation and Chapter will pay rent, council tax, water rates and utilities bills.

The value of the Organ Scholarship is £7,250, payable in 12 monthly instalments. Regular assistance and guidance will be provided by the Director of Music and Organist to enable the Organ Scholar to develop in accompanying, performing, improvising, conducting and other relevant skills. By working alongside these colleagues and the Cathedral's singing teachers, the Organ Scholar will also acquire training in, and experience of, vocal tuition (particularly relating to choristers) and individual singing lessons can also be arranged. A further budget is also available during the year for training purposes agreed in advance with the Director of Music (e.g. organ and/or conducting lessons, conferences and other educational events), and the Organ Scholar will have regular lessons with both the Organist and a visiting tutor of national repute.

The Organ Scholar may use the Cathedral organs for practice, and a computer and office desk space will be provided for the role (at number 28 Minster Precincts). A staff discount is available in the Cathedral shop.

This is a full-time scholarship, and the successful applicant will be expected to take part in departmental activities and their own development during six days of each week, usually playing for at least two services per week. They will have one day off every week and will additionally be entitled to 48 days (equivalent of 8 weeks) of annual leave, which will generally be required to be taken outside Choir terms. Leave will be co-ordinated between the music staff to ensure that the musical requirements at the Cathedral are covered where necessary, and the Organ Scholar will be expected to cover a specified part of the periods of non-choir term, agreed in advance.

Chapter will encourage the Organ Scholar to undertake musical work beyond their Cathedral duties in tandem with the scholarship. All absence for such work must be requested of the Director of Music in advance and will be dependent on the availability of colleagues to cover the appropriate day or period. Decisions made on granting leave of absence will include a consideration of whether the work proposed will advance aspects of the Organ Scholar's skills and experience. Scholars must also undertake any professional development and training requested of them for the better performance of any aspects of their duties.

## How to apply

### Making an application

If you have further questions about this post prior to application, please contact Chris Strange, Organist, directly on 01733 355318 (Office) or via e-mail at: [chris.strange@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk](mailto:chris.strange@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk)

Applications should be made via the form on the Cathedral website.

All applications will be acknowledged upon receipt. The closing date for applications is **Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October at 0900.**

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 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 and what you hope to achieve during the year
- 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.

### Interviews and auditions

Interviews and auditions will be held in person in Peterborough on **Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November** and applicants will be required to be available for the full day. Candidates will be required to undertake an organ audition, attend an interview, and work with a small group of choristers. Further specific information concerning requirements will be sent to short-listed candidates.