

2026

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL

Canon Precentor

Recruitment Pack



About us

The Cathedral is a living, working place of worship that has stood at the heart of Chichester for more than nine centuries.

Through inspiring worship, excellent music, long standing commitment to the visual arts, thoughtful teaching and generous hospitality, it seeks to be a place of transformation, where people encounter the unconditional love and compassion of God.

As the Mother Church of the Diocese of Chichester, serving East and West Sussex, the Cathedral is also a much loved visitor destination, a venue for music and the arts, and a vibrant hub at the centre of community life, welcoming around 250,000 visitors each year. Its ministry and mission are sustained by a committed worshipping congregation, alongside a dedicated team of staff and volunteers.

The Cathedral building itself, a Grade I listed landmark, brings together Norman and Gothic architecture in a striking blend of the ancient and the modern. Within its walls is a remarkable collection of 20th-century paintings, tapestry, sculpture and glass, adding further richness to its spiritual and cultural life.

The Cathedral receives no statutory or Church of England funding and is entirely self-supporting, relying on the generosity of donors, fundraising efforts and the income it generates through its work.





Dean of Chichester



Canon Chancellor

A message from the Dean

Thank you for your interest in the post of Canon Precentor of Chichester Cathedral. We are hoping to appoint a residentiary canon who will be able to play a full part in the Cathedral community, with a special responsibility for the day-to-day conduct of worship in the Cathedral, pastoral care of the congregation and oversight of safeguarding.*

As the other sections of this pack will indicate, the Cathedral has a strong liturgical ethos with very high standards of music. We are looking for somebody who will work comfortably and naturally within this, whilst also bringing fresh energy and insight.

Chichester Cathedral is an exciting and inspiring place in which to work: the new Precentor will have a supportive spiritual pattern of prayer and worship; a committed and able team of colleagues, both lay and ordained; a large worshipping congregation; and many links with the local community throughout East and West Sussex.

We hope that you will be interested in the details we have provided and, if you discern a possible vocation to this work, be prompted to apply for the post.

* There is a salaried Cathedral Safeguarding Officer who works two days per week.

About our liturgy

The central purpose of the Cathedral is the worship and praise of God, offered through Jesus his Son and in the power of the Holy Spirit. We are thus committed to the highest possible standards of liturgy and preaching as paramount among our many functions and activities.

We aim that the liturgy should always be dignified and reverent, but also relatively simple and accessible in style, so as to encourage the 'full, conscious and active' participation of all, and to draw everyone who celebrates it more deeply into the knowledge and love of God and the saving work of Jesus Christ.

The Cathedral choir is of an internationally recognised standard. It consists of six (adult) Lay Vicars and around 20 choristers. It is led by the Organist and Master of the Choristers assisted by the Assistant Organist and an Organ Scholar appointed each year. During term time, the choir sings eight services per week.



Core Services and Worship Pattern

Daily Prayer: The Cathedral maintains the rhythm of daily public worship, including Morning Prayer, Holy Communion, and Choral Evensong.

Choral Evensong: Sung daily by The Cathedral Choir, Evensong is a cornerstone of the Cathedral's musical and devotional life.

Sunday: The Sung Eucharist is the anchor of our Sunday worship, offered alongside a BCP Communion Service and a dedicated Eucharist service for children and young families. We are also one of the few cathedrals continuing to offer **weekly Choral Mattins**.

About our music

The Cathedral Choir consists of **18 choristers and probationers**, and **6 Lay Vicars**. The choristers are educated at The Prebendal School which, although it is now an independent school, has served as the Cathedral choir school since 1497.

Girls and boys work together as part of a single, mixed treble line, **singing 8 choral services** each week during term time. The choir features regularly on BBC Radio 3's Choral Evensong and undertakes tours that promote the choir's profile at international level and strengthen civic and ecumenical links. Recent recordings by the choir have included a disc of Christmas repertoire, a recording on the Signum label in commemoration of the Armistice of 1918, and a collection of works **by Thomas Weelkes** (sometime Master of the Choristers) which was acclaimed on BBC Radio 3's Record Review.

For over 60 years, the choir has enjoyed a partnership with Chichester's renowned **Festival Theatre**, performing at a series of concerts each December attended by a combined audience about 7,000.



Chichester has a proud tradition of commissioning new music. Works written for the Cathedral by composers such as **Leonard Bernstein, William Walton** and **Lennox Berkeley** have become part of the standard choral repertoire, with recent commissions from **Joanna Marsh, Judith Bingham** and **Christopher Hussey** continuing that tradition today.

About the role

Working together with the Dean, who has overall responsibility for the ordering of worship, the Precentor oversees the work of the Liturgy and Music Department, so as to ensure that the worship of the Cathedral glorifies God, draws together the worshipping community and meets the needs of individuals and groups who come to worship with us.

The Precentor is a residentiary canon and a member of the Chapter, who carries out duties in support of the mission and ministry of the cathedral which include:

- taking a full part in the Cathedral's daily and weekly round of worship;
- undertaking set days of 'residence', which means being especially visible and 'on call' (usually two per week);
- fully participating with trustee responsibility, in the governance of the Cathedral;
- leadership and management responsibilities.

Full role descriptors for each role are available on our website at: chichestercathedral.org.uk/jobs

The Canon Precentor oversees liturgy and music on behalf of the Chapter and in consultation with the Dean:

- **Liturgy and Music:** working with clerical, lay and executive colleagues to provide leadership and oversight of the Cathedral's liturgical and musical life, ensuring that worship, music and related programming are delivered to a high standard and support the Cathedral's mission, ministry and public engagement.
- **Pastoral Care:** working with clergy, staff and volunteers to foster a welcoming and caring Cathedral community, providing strategic oversight of pastoral provision for congregations and visitors.
- **Safeguarding:** working with lay, executive and clerical colleagues, including the Cathedral's Safeguarding Officer, to provide strategic oversight of safeguarding by ensuring it is embedded within governance, leadership, culture and decision-making.
- **Governance:** working with Chapter colleagues to contribute to the effective governance of the Cathedral through participation in Chapter, its committees and advisory groups, providing leadership, challenge and assurance as appropriate.
- **Fundraising and External Relations:** working with colleagues, donors and supporters to champion the Cathedral's musical life and ministry, supporting fundraising, advocacy and relationship-building activities, particularly in partnership with the Chichester Cathedral Restoration and Development Trust.

About you

The Canon Precentor will be:

- deeply rooted in the Christian tradition and in their own spirituality;
- committed to the English cathedral tradition, its liturgies, music, and opportunities for mission;
- a gifted singer who is able to sing to cathedral standard, and familiar with the choral tradition;
- in holy orders for at least six years;
- a graduate with theological qualifications;
- a skilled pastor with ability to lead and inspire others in pastoral work;
- a competent administrator who is able to manage a variety of daily commitments;
- An engaging preacher and speaker, able to communicate a living faith in Christ with generosity;
- a natural team player who is emotionally intelligent;
- experienced in engaging with diverse groups of people and encouraging their inclusion;
- able to take on the role of Chapter lead for safeguarding within a demonstrable commitment to effective safeguarding procedures;
- sufficiently resilient to manage a demanding and sometimes challenging schedule;
- able to work effectively at trustee level, including the ability to understand and cope with financial challenges.



2026

About the close & community

Chichester Cathedral is unusual in that it faces both on to the city (on the north side) and into the historic Cathedral Close (on the south side).

The Cathedral Close is largely located on and around Canon Lane. The Dean and Canons, Cathedral musicians, Head Verger and Organ Scholar all have their homes in the close. Other properties have long and short term tenants. The Bishop's Palace is situated at the far end. It is a supportive and friendly community within which to live and work.

The Precentor's home will be in Vicars' Close. It is a spacious four bedroom property with a large garden and set back from the main street. Water rates and council tax are paid by the Cathedral Chapter. The house will be presented in good decorative order.



Chichester is a small city, with many shops, restaurants and cafés within a few minutes walk of the Cathedral Close. It is within a short walking distance of Pallant House art gallery and the Chichester Festival Theatre.

Safeguarding

In accordance with Church of England's policy, Promoting a Safer Church, and the House of Bishops Safeguarding Policy and Practice Guidance, Chichester Cathedral is committed to the safeguarding of children, young people, and vulnerable adults who may be at risk.

The Cathedral works in partnership with the Diocese of Chichester to ensure that we operate in accordance with best practice at all times.

The care and protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults are the responsibility of the whole Cathedral community, whether clergy, staff, volunteers, contractors, or members of the congregations. Everyone who participates in the life of the Cathedral has a role to play in promoting a safe environment for all.

To learn more about Safeguarding at the Cathedral [please see our website](https://www.chichestercathedral.org.uk).



Equality & Diversity

At Chichester Cathedral we are committed to encouraging a supportive and inclusive workplace culture amongst our employee and volunteer workforce. It is our aim to ensure that if you work here or apply to work here, on either a paid or voluntary basis you will have an equal opportunity. We are also committed to working towards an organisation workforce that is diverse and as representative of our wider community as it can be.

We respect and value each of our employees and volunteers and are committed to enabling you to be able to perform to the best of your abilities and to be your authentic self in the workplace.

How to apply

Please send your **completed application form** to our Head of HR at:
hr@chichestercathedral.org.uk

If you would like to arrange an informal conversation with the Dean, please contact his PA:
Gabby.Justesen@chichestercathedral.org.uk

Key dates:

- The **closing date** for applications is:
9.00am on Monday 5 October 2026.
- **First Stage Interviews**, including vocal audition, will take place in person in Chichester, on:
Tuesday 27 or Thursday 29 October 2026.
- **Second Stage Interviews** with the Acting Bishop of Chichester on: **Wednesday 6 January 2027.**

