

CHICHESTER CATHEDRAL

LAY VICAR – JOB DESCRIPTION

The Dean and Chapter of Chichester Cathedral seeks to appoint a Tenor Lay Vicar. Combined salary and housing allowance £17,000.

The post is available from 1st January 2021, but we would welcome applications from candidates who are able to join us at an earlier or later date.

Chichester Cathedral Choir has earned a reputation for high standards of performance and musical detail, with a distinctive style that fits the intimate setting and lovely acoustics of our beautiful Norman Cathedral. One of the smaller cathedral choirs in Britain, it consists of 14 choristers and 6 Lay Vicars. We have a track record of appointing and developing exceptional musicians, many of whom continue to follow successful singing careers after their time at Chichester, and we offer an allowance towards the cost of singing lessons. Expectations are high, and our musicians benefit from a strong team spirit and a very supportive atmosphere. Former Lay Vicars have gone on to work with The Sixteen and The Gesualdo Six, and to sing frequently with the choirs of Westminster and St Paul's Cathedrals.

Regular rehearsals and services are at the heart of the Lay Vicar role (see the normal weekly schedule below). Candidates should be sympathetic to the worshipping life of the Cathedral, and ideally are communicant members of the Church of England or regular communicants of their own church. Versatility is essential: we are looking for excellent sight-singing skills, confidence with solo singing and the ability to blend within the small ensemble. Familiarity with liturgical repertoire and psalm-singing (plainsong and Anglican chant) is important, and the ability to work within a team which includes children is indispensable. Lay Vicars are expected to maintain a high level of vocal performance, and to show initiative in advancing their professional development.

Normal weekly schedule (NB – we are operating a slightly different schedule during the Covid-19 pandemic):

Monday	4.50pm	Rehearsal
	5.30pm	Lay Vicars Evensong
Tuesday	5.00pm	Rehearsal
	5.30pm	Evensong
Wednesday	Day off	
Thursday	5.00pm	Rehearsal
	5.30pm	Evensong
Friday	5pm	Rehearsal
	5.30pm	Evensong
	6.15pm	Full rehearsal (1hr)
Saturday	5.00pm	Rehearsal
	5.30pm	Evensong

Sunday 9.25am	Rehearsal
	10.00am Mattins
	11.00am Eucharist
	3.00pm Rehearsal
	3.30pm Evensong

For certain major festivals a Eucharist at 5.30pm is sung in place of Choral Evensong.

If the choir sings on a Wednesday, another free day is substituted.

As part of the Cathedral's mission to its diocese, the choir visits parish churches (typically once each term on a Sunday afternoon) to sing Evensong.

Other employment

We hope that the successful candidate will seek other employment in addition to their role as a Lay Vicar; there are opportunities in and around the city. The journey from Chichester to London Victoria by train takes approximately 1 hour and 35 minutes.

General information

The Choral Foundation comprises Charles Harrison (Organist & Master of the Choristers), Timothy Ravalde (Assistant Organist), 6 Lay Vicars, 14 choristers and 4 probationers. The choristers board and are educated at The Prebendal School, the Cathedral choir school adjacent to the Cathedral. An Organ Scholar is appointed annually.

Chichester Cathedral is committed to providing a safe working environment for all and has clear policies for the protection of young people and vulnerable adults. The successful applicant will be required to undertake safeguarding training and become familiar with our policies. An enhanced DBS disclosure is required for this appointment.

Forming part of the Cathedral's life of prayer and worship, the choir has a central role in its ministry to the congregation, the diocese and the wider world.

Chichester has a long and distinguished musical tradition. Thomas Weelkes served as Organist and Master of the Choristers during the early years of the seventeenth century. Under Dean Walter Hussey, the Cathedral commissioned many works of music: Leonard Bernstein, William Walton, Lennox Berkeley, James MacMillan, Philip Moore, Will Todd and Frederick Stocken have all composed works for the choir. The Cathedral houses a significant collection of artworks that includes pieces by Chagall, Sutherland, Piper and Feibusch.

Special events

In recent years the choir has visited Chartres, Bamberg, Bayreuth, Ravenna, Leiden and Haarlem.

Early in December, the choir participates in a run of concerts at the renowned Chichester Festival Theatre, to a combined audience of about 7,000. The Lay Vicars also perform as 'Close Company', singing secular, close-harmony repertoire. This group occasionally convenes for other paid engagements during the course of the year.

Each summer we join forces with our colleagues from Winchester and Salisbury for the Southern Cathedrals Festival, singing as a combined chorus and as individual choirs. The final concert usually includes a major work with orchestra.

The choir regularly broadcasts live on Radio 3 and records a carol service for BBC Sussex & Surrey each year.

In 2018, the choir made its first CD on the Signum label, and discussions are underway about future projects. Discs have also been released on the Priory and Herald labels, one of which was 'Critic's Choice' in *Gramophone* magazine.

Salary and accommodation

From September 2019, the annual salary will be £17,000 (comprising a basic salary of £9,268.98, plus a housing allowance of £7,731.02). In a typical year, extra fees for broadcasts, concerts, special services and the Southern Cathedrals Festival amount to about £1,500. Where possible, single accommodation in the Cathedral Close will be made available for Lay Vicars to rent.

Holidays & leave of absence

The Lay Vicar contract provides for at least 100 days holiday per annum including a minimum of 10 Sundays. Holidays, which are agreed at the beginning of each academic year, are timed to coordinate with school term dates. The high quality of the choir relies, in part, on the 6-man team of Lay Vicars being present for most services, but we recognise the value and importance of encouraging singers to develop other strands of their performing career, and making contacts outside Chichester. For a set number of absences, the cost of engaging deputies is met by the Chapter.

Applications

Applications should be in the form of a covering letter outlining your experience and suitability for the role and explaining why you are particularly interested in the position, together with a CV which includes the details of three referees.

Applications should be sent to:

Richard Paterson
Liturgy and Music Administrator
The Royal Chantry
Cathedral Cloisters
Chichester
West Sussex PO19 1PX
Email: liturgymusic@chichestercathedral.org.uk

The closing date for applications is **12.00noon on Friday 25 September 2020**.

If you wish to have an informal conversation with Charles Harrison (Organist and Master of the Choristers) in advance of your application please email organist@chichestercathedral.org.uk or call **07970 207314**.

Auditions

Interviews and auditions will be held on **Thursday 8 October 2020**.