Recruitment of a new Choir Director

About the choir

Sanderstead Singers is a Cathedral visiting choir which was established in 1991 to sing for a week at Salisbury Cathedral. The choir has continued to gather for a summer week most years, and has now sung at 24 cathedrals and abbeys. As well as the annual week, the choir also sings for one-day events during the year.

We are a friendly group who enjoy performing a wide range of music: every visit includes well-known 'standard' repertoire on top of some more challenging pieces. With over 50 singers on the books, there are normally around 35 singers for each event, many of whom have had strong connections with the choir for many years. Whilst it is predominantly an adult choir, there are a small number of children (all children of adult choir members).

The administration of the choir is led by two founding members, with support from the choir committee.

To get a better idea of what we can do, you might like to watch the YouTube videos of our week in Canterbury in 2025 (links below)! The choir website provides a full list of all Cathedral visits, along with the music lists: https://www.sandersteadsingers.org.uk.

About the vacancy

The choir was founded by Fred Irvine, who remained the choir's director for 28 years. In 2020, Dan Soper (who had been the choir's organist since 2002) took over as director. After 6 years, Dan has decided he would like to return to the organ console and has asked the choir committee to begin the search for a new director.

Choir schedule

There are no regular rehearsals, but:

- The main highlight for the choir is a week at a different Cathedral during August each year. This is normally preceded by 2 or 3 Saturday rehearsals in South London.
- The choir sometimes sings at St Paul's Cathedral, often on Easter Monday.

In 2027 we have provisional bookings for:

- Evensong at St Paul's Cathedral 29 March
- Residency at Lincoln Cathedral 23 – 29 August

The new director would be welcome to develop the schedule further: many of the choir have indicated a desire to add an additional weekend or two each year.

Who we are looking for

The ideal director might have these:

- Experience directing liturgical choirs, ideally having undertaken Cathedral visits.
- Knowledge of how to get the best out of a mixed-ability amateur choir.
- Keyboard skills.
- A love of the Anglican choral tradition.
- A willingness to get involved with choir social activities.

Duties

- Directing the choir for rehearsals and services, leading some rehearsals from the piano.
- Suitable preparation in advance of all rehearsals and services.
- Liaising with the choir committee regarding availability and future bookings.
- Choosing music for every visit, taking into consideration music the choir already owns, the budget available for new music, the requirements of the Cathedral, liturgical suitability, and choir attendance and capability.
- Creating or advising on psalms, hymns etc.

Recruitment process

Interested candidates are invited to send a brief application letter / CV to sandersteadsingers91@gmail.com.

As part of the application letter (and to give a glimpse into your musical preferences) please choose music for two evensongs:

- A Tuesday evensong (e.g. any Tuesday in August).
- A Saturday evensong on the feast of St Bartholomew.

Please contact us through the above email address if you have any questions or would like an informal chat before submitting an application.

We would ask for applications to be submitted by **Friday 8th January 2027**. The interview process is likely to involve taking a choir rehearsal in early 2027. Any appointment will begin with a trial period. Please note we will be following safer recruitment practices.

Terms and conditions

Whilst our previous directors have not charged fees, we recognise that we will need to pay our next director! We will agree a per-event fee, based on the number of days and services involved.

For example: a full week with 7 services, including advance rehearsals and planning, would likely be in the region of £650, with the potential for accommodation subsidy.

YouTube links

Here are the services from our 2025 week in Canterbury:

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Friday
- Saturday
- Sunday am
- Sunday pm