



Weaving Jesus into the rich fabric of the city and beyond

Section Lead & Lay Clerk (Alto)



The Dean's Introduction

Thank you very much for showing your interest in the post of Section Lead & Lay Clerk (Alto) at Bradford Cathedral.

Bradford is the UK City of Culture this year. As a Cathedral, our ambition (as outlined in the [2023 vision document](#)) is that our worship will be known for its beauty and diversity in the Anglican Diocese of Leeds: grounded in the English choral tradition, it will be an exemplar of Church of England worship that values and weaves together culturally rooted expressions of faith from across the Anglican Communion. We seek to bring people to the Christian faith through worship and music of the highest quality.

Bradford Cathedral has a thriving musical tradition. The ninety children and adults in our choirs come to the Cathedral to sing at four choral services each week. Our education programme gives over forty-five young people from different backgrounds free singing lessons and tuition in music theory. Our organ recitals draw some of the finest performers from the UK and abroad. From time to time, musicians from other Christian traditions are involved in our musical worship.

The Chapter of Bradford Cathedral seeks a musician of the highest calibre and commitment to contribute to the fulfilment of the Cathedral's vision through the activities of the Music Department. They will be an accomplished singer, who, together with our voluntary Lay Clerks, will form the stable core of the choir. They will also be collaborative people who are able to nurture the gift of singing in other members of the choir, offering vocal coaching and being a section lead. The Music Department's programme is ambitious, with projects including recording with the Black Dyke Band planned, and at least one choir tour each year.

These roles are particularly suited to singers who want to contribute to the flourishing of the choir of a diverse and busy cathedral, and committed to people as well as to performance. We expect our applicants to be hard-working and enthusiastic, and hope that they might be willing to be fully part of the life of Bradford Cathedral.

Should you wish to have a confidential discussion about this role, as our team will be taking annual leave in the weeks leading up to the application deadline, please email both the Director of Music, graham.thorpe@bradfordcathedral.org and the Minor Canon for Worship and Nurture, pete.gunstone@bradfordcathedral.org to arrange a conversation.

With my prayers and best wishes,

The Very Revd Andy Bowerman
Dean of Bradford



The Music Department and the Cathedral Choir

Personnel

Graham Thorpe, the Organist and Director of Music is responsible for leading the Cathedral's Music Department and the musical life of the cathedral. He is line managed by the Revd Pete Gunstone, Minor Canon for Worship & Nurture on behalf of the Senior Management Group.



Graham Thorpe
Organist & Director of Music



The Revd Pete Gunstone
Minor Canon for Worship and Nurture

The Music Department is supported by a part-time Choir Matron (Choristers' Pastoral Worker), who has responsibility for the pastoral care of the under-18s, their families and members of the choir as a whole.

The Cathedral Choir

The independent lines of boy and girl choristers sing for the majority of the Cathedral Choir services. The choristers are aged from 7 to 13, and have complete parity. There is no choir school, so the boys and girls are recruited from a number of different schools from across the local area. All choristers receive vocal coaching and theory tuition.

The back row of the choir is made up of three constituent parts:

- *Voluntary Adult Singers*: A pool of male and female volunteer singers from across the local area, who sign up to sing for services throughout choir term. The most regular of these are known as *Voluntary Lay Clerks*. Our aim is to grow our pool of singers, enable all of them to develop, and to establish a greater continuity of personnel.
- *Youth Choir*: When choristers retire from the front row, they may be invited to sing as sopranos, altos, tenors and basses with the Cathedral Consort.
- *Lay Clerks (Section Leads)*: These are new roles, consisting of three professional members of the choir, singing alto, tenor and bass. Duties include working with the Voluntary Adult Singers, Choristers and Youth Choir to assist in the development of the choral sound. To date, the alto and tenor posts have been filled.



The Cathedral Consort is made up of volunteer singers in all parts who sing Sunday Evensong and occasional other services. The Consort has a growing and ambitious identity and repertoire.

The Grace Notes is a non-auditioned, youth community choir that sings once or twice a term at the Cathedral Eucharist and sometimes on other occasions.

Music Department Weekly Timetable (2025)

Monday	15.45	Toast & Theory
	16.30	Girl Choristers' Rehearsal
	17.00	Full Rehearsal (16.45 if an ATB service, a few times a term)
	17.30	Choral Evensong (Girls and Adults)
	18.15	Finish
Tuesday	15.45	Toast & Theory
	16.30	Boy Choristers' Rehearsal
	17.00	Full Rehearsal (16.45 if an ATB service, a few times a term)
	17.30	Choral Evensong (Boys and Adults)
	18.15	Finish
Wednesday	12.30	Pre-Organ Recital Lunch
	13.00	Wednesday@One Organ Recital
	15.45	Toast & Theory
	16.30	Youth Choir Rehearsal
	18.15	Finish
Thursday	15.45	Toast & Theory
	16.30	Choristers' Rehearsal (Boys and Girls, separately)
	18.15	Chorister Service (Compline)
	18.30	Finish
Saturday		Vocal, musicianship, and theory tuition, by arrangement
Sunday	09.00	Choristers' Rehearsal
	09.45	Full Rehearsal
	10.30	Choral Eucharist
	11.45	Lunch, Faith Development & Choristers' Rehearsal
	13.15	End
	14.00	Full Rehearsal
	15.30	Choral Evensong (Consort [3x per month] or Youth Choir [1x per month])
	16.30	Rehearsal
	17.15	Finish

The Role of Section Lead & Lay Clerk

Purpose

To contribute to the work of the Cathedral Choir by:

- singing as the lead member of the alto section during the weekly pattern of sung services, additional liturgies throughout the church year and any other Cathedral Choir events;
- supporting the voluntary and junior members of the cathedral choir through mentoring and tuition;
- being a professional role model at all times

Duties

Duties will include, but will not be limited to:

- sing alto to the highest possible standard in the Cathedral Choir as the Section Lead for all choir commitments;
- be fully prepared to lead your musical part. Musical scores are available on the cathedral website for private preparation and physical scores may be borrowed. Assistance for the learning of repertoire and solos is available;
- support and encourage other members of the Cathedral Choir, acting as a role model of excellent preparation, singing and behaviour within the choir;
- inspire the children and young people with whom we work from a wide range of backgrounds to give of their best;
- lead sectional rehearsals and/or one-to-one singing tuition with volunteer choir members, teenagers and choristers;
- assist volunteer choir members in the preparation of solos;
- arrive punctually for all choir commitments, allowing time to find music and to robe;
- dress smartly when singing for services or concerts, including black shoes and, for gentlemen, a tie;
- be aware of and comply with safeguarding and all other policies and procedures of the Cathedral so that everyone is safe;
- know how to respond to and report any safeguarding concerns or allegations;
- attend meetings for support, guidance or supervision;
- sign in and out of the Cathedral on the register

Schedule

The standard weekly service and rehearsal schedule for each Section Lead & Lay Clerk will be agreed in advance, and is likely to be as follows during choir term:

Sunday Eucharist

0945 Rehearsal
1030 Eucharist
1145 Finish

Sunday Evensong

1400 Rehearsal
1500 Break
1530 Evensong
1630 Rehearsal and/or tuition
1715 Finish

Monday Evensong

1700 Rehearsal (1645 for ATB services)
1730 Evensong
1815 Finish

Tuesday Evensong

1700 Rehearsal (1645 for ATB services)
1730 Evensong
1815 Finish

In addition to the above weekly pattern, statutory commitments during the year will also include those listed in the terms and conditions, or alternatives in their place.

Sectional rehearsals, vocal coaching, and other duties will be arranged within the annualised hours.

Opportunities to engage with other aspects of the music department's work may be made available, for example assisting in the Cathedral's developing music outreach programme, supporting the musical tuition of the choristers, or singing at other services. Where this is the case, care is required to ensure that each responsibility is wholly fulfilled.

Person Specification

This role requires someone who:

- is a gifted singer and sensitive musician;
- has a secure and informed vocal technique;
- has been musically educated to a level commensurate with the expectations of the role, i.e. to diploma or degree level, or equivalent experience;

- is familiar with a broad genre of relevant church music;
- understands and is inspired by music and its role in the liturgy;
- is an educator, able to engage well with and nurture others is not daunted by the challenge of delivering music education to members of a diverse choir, and is able to adapt teaching styles to different demographics;
- is punctual, well prepared and willing to give of their best in all choir commitments;
- is willing to develop skills and to engage with training;
- builds good relationships with tact and sensitivity;
- is willing to play an active part in the choir community;
- is approachable and empathetic;
- is sympathetic to the aims, ethos and values of a Christian organisation;
- willing to be flexible and adaptable;
- treats everyone with respect and dignity;
- works well as part of a team;
- has a working knowledge of good safeguarding practice and is willing to learn.

Key Relationships

Reporting to

- Organist & Director of Music

Key Colleagues

- The Minor Canon for Worship and Nurture
- Sub-Organist and Assistant Director of Music
- Choir Matron
- Other Music Department Staff

Key lateral and other relationships

- The Choral Foundation
 - Choristers, Junior Choral Scholars, their parents, carers and families
 - Voluntary Adult Singers
- The Cathedral
 - Cathedral Clergy, Staff & Churchwardens

Terms and Conditions

This post is open to candidates who are in sympathy with the aims and objectives of the Christian Church and the Anglican tradition. The Cathedral treats all persons in accordance with its Equality and Diversity Policy. The person appointed will be employed by Bradford Cathedral Chapter at its offices, located at Stott Hill, Cathedral Close, Bradford, BD1 4EH.

Bradford Cathedral is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and all vulnerable people. This commitment is shared by our staff and volunteers.

Salary: £8,470 reviewable on an annual basis.

Hours: 423.5 hours per annum, to be worked according to the choir schedule. This will comprise 8.75 hours per week, plus an additional 50 hours over the course of the year for special services/concerts and the annual choir tour.

Place of work: The normal place of work will be Bradford Cathedral. Other working locations will be agreed in advance.

Work Pattern: These will be agreed in advance with the Organist and Director of Music. Although the work pattern will normally follow a regular timetable, there will be variations to accommodate the Church's year and choir commitments.

Statutory Services and Commitments: These will include the weekly pattern of Sunday 1030 Eucharists throughout the year, Sunday, Monday & Tuesday Choral Evensong during Choir Term, and : Advent Procession (Advent Sunday, evening, in place of Evensong), Nine Lessons and Carols (usually the Sunday before Christmas, evening, in place of Evensong) Annual Carol Recital (usually Christmas Eve, lunchtime), Midnight Eucharist, Christmas Day Eucharist, Ash Wednesday (evening), Maundy Thursday (evening), Good Friday (afternoon), Easter Vigil (evening), Ascension Day (evening), All Souls' Day (evening, or Sunday afternoon), plus two Diocesan/Episcopal Area/other services (e.g. Chrism and/or Ordination). From time to time, there may be some variation in these commitments which will be agreed in advance and fulfilled in accordance with these terms and conditions.

Use of the Cathedral's facilities: These will be made available by prior arrangement to enable the fulfilment of the duties of this role.

Holidays: 58.5 hours per year (including an allowance for Bank Holidays, which may be taken flexibly), to be taken when there are no choir commitments. Holiday may be taken on up to three choir commitment days during any year by prior arrangement, as long as a deputy singer from the approved list is engaged. Holiday may not be taken on Bank Holidays when the Lay Clerk and Section Lead will be required to perform their duties, such as Christmas Day and Good Friday.

Pension: The Cathedral participates in the Church Workers Pension Fund. The Cathedral will pay a 5% contribution towards your pension provided you pay a minimum of 3.5% of your salary into the scheme. You will be automatically enrolled unless you decide to opt out of the scheme.

Probationary period: 3 months

Notice period: During the probationary period, the notice period is one month from either party. After that, the notice period is three months on either side.

Referees: Names and contact details of two referees will be required.

Application checks: The completion of a Confidential Self Declaration Form is a requirement of the application process.

Pre-appointment checks: An offer of the position will be subject to employment checks, including the completion of an 'Enhanced with barred lists' DBS disclosure and the agreement to abide by Bradford Cathedral's safeguarding policy and protocols.

How to Apply

Please apply using the Church of England's Pathways website. Include a covering letter explaining why you are applying for this role and detailing the specific knowledge, experience and skills that you feel make you the right candidate along with a include a current CV.

Pathways link: <https://www.cofepathways.org/members/modules/job/detail.php?record=8081>

The deadline for applications is **Friday, 28th February**. Interviews, including an audition, will take place during the week of **Monday, 10th March**, in Bradford Cathedral, by mutual arrangement. Whilst a start date as soon as possible after then is desired, we are open to negotiation.

If you have any questions, please contact the Cathedral Office via 01274 777720 or info@bradfordcathedral.org