**DEAR APPLICANT**

Thank you for your interest in the position of Alto Lay Vicar at Salisbury Cathedral from September 2025.

This is a very important appointment for us. With only six singers in the back row, we need to find a singer with the right vocal qualities who will also fit well into the well-established team. We hope to find a person who has the appropriate balance of solo and ensemble skill and would find real satisfaction in being part of a choir that sings daily (except for Wednesdays) in the Cathedral’s worship. As well as the regular duties in the Cathedral, there is a greatly valued pattern of concerts out in the Diocese, recordings and overseas touring. Concerts recently have included Bach’s Mass in B minor with Florilegium and Messiah with City of London Sinfonia.

The Lay Vicars are part of a dedicated team who are committed to the Cathedral and to the excellence of its music. They are appointed and employed by the Cathedral Chapter and are responsible to the Director of Music. The basis of employment is part-time. Clearly, it would be necessary to develop other part-time work that would fit alongside the Cathedral duties.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an audition and interview on **Friday 21st March 2025**, with the selection panel: David Halls, Director of Music, John Challenger, Assistant Director of Music, Anna Macham, Canon Precentor and representatives of the Lay Vicars.

This is an important role and presents a real opportunity for the right candidate. If you would like more information about the position or have any questions, please contact me. I very much look forward to hearing from you.

Please note the closing date is **Friday 28th February at 12 noon.**



Yours sincerely,

David Halls

Director of Music

Email: d.halls@salcath.co.uk

**BACKGROUND**

The Choir of Salisbury Cathedral maintains a tradition of choral music stretching back over 800 years in the present Cathedral, and a further 200 years before that in the Cathedral at Old Sarum. In 1991, Salisbury Cathedral took the historic step of adding girl choristers to its choral foundation, and today the singing duties are divided equally between two sets of choristers (boys and girls), who attend Salisbury Cathedral School, and six adult Lay Vicars. Alongside the Cathedral Choir, other singing opportunities are offered through the Cathedral’s Junior, Youth and Chamber Choirs, as well as our expanding programme of music days for schoolchildren in the Diocese.

In recent years the Cathedral Choir has commissioned new musical works by Marco Galvani, Roxanna Panufnik, Owain Park, John Rutter and Errollyn Wallen, among others. In 2023, the Choir released its first album (Salisbury Christmas) on the Cathedral’s own record label. The Choir also undertakes tours and broadcasts, and performs a wide range of concert repertoire, often with world-renowned orchestras, to large and appreciative audiences.

Central to the daily musical life of the Cathedral is the celebrated organ built by Henry Willis in 1877, an instrument widely considered to be one of Willis’s finest and respected by musicians throughout the world.

**MY TIME AS AN ALTO LAY VICAR**

**By Stephen Abbott (our outgoing Alto Lay Vicar)**

To be part of a cathedral choir back row is both a privilege and a challenge. A privilege, because you have the opportunity, daily, of enhancing the congregation’s worship experience, to as high a level as you are able. And, as part of a 6-person back row, a challenge, as you have no neighbour to rely on: there is nowhere to hide. And as a daily discipline, I think this leads you to be a better singer: you can’t fudge/share the breathing, and you are solely responsible for the tone quality!

At Salisbury, we are lucky to enjoy the solid support of the Dean & Chapter in all that we do. Alongside the staple and imaginative musical repertoire of the major Church festivals, the choir is involved in Bach Cantata Evensongs, an annual sell-out *Messiah*, tours and recordings, regular visits further afield in the Diocese, and the annual Southern Cathedrals Festival.

This is chamber music-making of the best kind.

Stephen Abbott

**MAIN** **DUTIES** **FOR THE POST**

* Sing at all customary choral services as required by the Chapter. Wednesday is usually a day off for Lay Vicars.
* Sing at other customary services, special services and musical events, which take place on occasions during the year. If you are unable to carry out a Cathedral Choir duty you are to arrange for an approved deputy Lay Vicar, having first cleared the absence with the Director of Music.
* Attend practices as deemed necessary by the Director of Music, subject to reasonable notice.
* Become conversant with the repertoire of the Cathedral Choir in advance of any rehearsal or performance.
* Participate in two Diocesan visits by the Cathedral Choir per term.
* Take part in any recordings, broadcasts or photographs as far as availability allows as required by the Director of Music in order to enhance the reputation and standing of the Cathedral Choir.
* Participate in Cathedral Choir tours and the Southern Cathedrals Festival.

**PERSON SPECIFICATION**

* A singer of professional standard with vocal qualities that work well in both ensemble and solo situations.
* Sight-singing skills at a high level.
* Good all-round musical skills and awareness.
* Sufficient self-confidence and resilience to cope with the demands of the post.
* Capacity and desire to learn, develop and progress.
* Good communication and interpersonal skills.
* The ability to work interdependently as part of a team and under pressure.
* The desire to use musical skills in the context of Christian worship.
* Familiarity with and knowledge of standard cathedral repertoire.

**A high angle view of a church

Description automatically generatedWORKING FOR US**

1. The appointment is subject to satisfactory completion of a three-month probationary period, during which one week’s notice on either side may be given.
2. Total remuneration is £18,969 per annum which includes provision of a housing allowance and an annual allowance for live streaming fees.
3. One term’s notice (to be given before the end of the preceding term) is required following completion of the probationary period.
4. Every Lay Vicar is subject to an annual appraisal of satisfactory performance.
5. Membership of the contributory pension scheme and non-contributory group life assurance scheme is open to all members of staff subject to certain conditions.
6. Lay Vicars are entitled to take leave outside the periods of choir duty. Although the detailed arrangements will vary from year to year, there are normally at least twelve weeks of the year clear of choir commitments.
7. Chapter is responsible for authorising the travel and accommodation costs for any choir tour. In recent tours, the costs of the Lay Vicars have been covered and an inclusive honorarium has been paid, in addition.
8. Lay Vicars may pursue their own singing or other careers provided these do not interfere with the duties required by the Chapter. Any absence from practices or services must be authorised by the Director of Music. Lay Vicars are responsible for providing and paying for the services of an approved deputy from a list available in the Department of Liturgy and Music. If absent from practices or services through sickness or injury, deputies will be paid for by the Chapter. Normally, not more than one Lay Vicar from each voice part may be absent on any one occasion. Absence on Sundays during term time is only authorised in exceptional circumstances.
9. Additional payment for non-customary or additional services may be made by the Chapter at a rate to be reviewed annually. In other circumstances, additional services are sung in lieu of the customary pattern.
10. Any additional fees for broadcasts and recordings received by external organisations will be paid following receipt by the Chapter through the payroll in the usual way.
11. Currently two Sunday services are live streamed per week. This may vary depending on Salisbury Cathedral’s needs and commitments.
12. This post is subject to an enhanced DBS check.
13. Other terms and conditions are outlined in the Staff Handbook, a copy of which will be provided at the beginning of the employment.

**SAFEGUARDING**

Salisbury Cathedral is committed to safeguarding and safer recruitment practices and expects all at the Cathedral to share this commitment. The postholder is required to report any safeguarding concerns related to children, young people, or vulnerable adults in accordance with agreed policies and procedures.

All staff and volunteers are expected to demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding and the welfare of all who are involved with and/or visit the Cathedral and the Close. This will include adherence to policies and procedures and undertaking any safeguarding duties commensurate with their specific role. All staff are expected to successfully complete safeguarding training as part of their induction.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY**

|  |
| --- |
| Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, whilst at work, you must take reasonable care for your own health and safety and that of any other person who may be affected by your acts or omissions. In addition, you must co-operate with the organisation on health and safety and not interfere with, or misuse, anything provided for your health, safety or welfare. You must immediately raise any concerns with regards to your health, safety or welfare at work to an appropriate person. |
| **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**  The Cathedral is committed to the principle of equal opportunities in employment and in equal pay for work of the same or similar nature or work of equal value. This means that in line with the Equality Act 2010, all job applicants and employees will receive equal treatment regardless of sex, race or ethnic origin, religious belief, nationality, gender, marital or family status, sexual orientation, age or disability. Our intention is to ensure safe environments within which our welcome to everyone is supported by proper and effective safeguards. We will continue to implement the Church of England Safeguarding policies and procedures, working actively with the Diocese of Salisbury. |

**HOW TO APPLY AND IMPORTANT DATES**

**TO APPLY, PLEASE SUPPLY US WITH:**

* The completed Application Form
* The completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring form

Feel free to attach a supplementary CV, which need not duplicate the information you provide on the application form. Please note, we will be unable to consider candidates without a completed application form; a CV on its own will not suffice.

The closing date for completed applications is **12 noon on Friday 28th February 2025.**

The audition and interview date is **Friday 21st March 2025.**

Please email your completed application to Beth Clarke at [**recruitment@salcath.co.uk**](mailto:recruitment@salcath.co.uk)or post to:

**The HR Department**

**Salisbury Cathedral**

**6 The Close**

**Salisbury**

**Wiltshire**

**SP1 2EF**

If you are invited for interview, you will be asked to produce evidence of your eligibility to work in the UK.

Offers of employment are subject to satisfactory references, medical clearance and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check at enhanced level.

**THE AUDITION WILL CONSIST OF:**

* tests to establish vocal range and quality
* singing an aria or song (own choice)
* sight-reading a pointed psalm to Anglican chant
* sight-reading from the cathedral repertoire of different musical periods and styles
* singing alongside the Lay Vicars

