**Bath Abbey Assistant Organist**

**Job Title:** Bath AbbeyAssistant Organist

**Reports to:** Director of Music

**Salary:** £15,500 per annum – pro rata (based on £31k FTE)

In a normal year, additional fees may accrue for concerts and recordings at the Abbey supported by the Bath Abbey Musical Society (BAMS).

There will be other additional special services, graduations and carol services which attract professional fees.

This role could be combined with a Music Assistant role at Kingswood School, Bath. For this post single accommodation may be available.

**Hours:**

During term time (38 weeks) at 25 hours,

During academic holidays 6 weeks at 5 hours per week, plus 8 weeks holidays (to be taken during choir holidays)

**Contract**: Permanent Part-Time

**Holiday Entitlement:** 15.5 days / 124 hours (equivalent of 6.6 weeks) pro rata and includes bank holidays - to be taken during academic holidays

**Additional Benefits:** BUPA Health Care Plan, Pension scheme/Death in Service 4 x salary - subject to eligibility criteria

**Overall purpose of the role**

The Assistant Organist is a key member of the music department. She/he will accompany the choir for all services, broadcasts, recordings and concerts or direct the choir in the Director of Music’s absence. It is hoped the new Assistant will direct the Melody Makers, the Abbey’s youngest choir (aged 6-11) and the Chamber Choir. The Abbey choir has a first-class reputation and gives regular concerts including an annual performance of Messiah with historic instrumental group *Rejouissance* The choir has recently broadcast three times on the BBC in 2022 and its recent CD *Caritas* featured as a CD of the weekend on ClassicFM in November.

**Background**

Bath Abbey is a major centre for Christian worship, a leading venue for tourism and cultural events, and a treasured part of Britain’s heritage. It lies at the heart of Bath, occupying a central place in the celebration of worship, special events and the life of this unique and elegant World Heritage city.

The choristers in the Abbey choirs are drawn from around the city. There are currently 25 girls (aged 11-18) and 23 boys (aged 9-14) in the choir, and they meet 3-4 times per week after school. Recent highlights have included Rachmaninov’s All Night Vigil and Handel’s Coronation Anthems. In 2021 the choirs toured the Netherlands and Southwell. They have also made two highly acclaimed recordings *Gaudete* (released in October 2020) and *Caritas* (released in October 2022).

One of the key attractions of working at Bath Abbey will be playing the magnificent 4 manual organ. We are very proud of our world famous instrument which was built by Philipp Klais in 1997 under the guidance of Peter King, former Director of Music at Bath Abbey, and organ consultant Nicolas Kynaston. This wonderful organ makes use of some historic pipework, though was essentially a new organ in the old case in the north transept. This mechanical action organ, with electric stop action and coupling is a fine instrument.

Between January 2023 and March 2023 Philipp Klais and his team from Bonn will mastermind a comprehensive rebuild, cleaning the dust and restoring the pipework. The electronics and the action will be overhauled and there will be a few small tonal alternations, however in essence the instrument will be restored and updated and sound at its best again. There will be some additional work in the first two weeks of September, though the organ will be available to use in the spring and summer. Philipp and his team will be back in the autumn when the organ has settled to put the magic finishing touches – voicing the organ to sound its best.

We are committed to treating our whole community with dignity and respect. We desire to represent diverse identities within our community whether this be by race, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or social background of each person to ensure that they fulfil their potential within a proactive caring and loving environment.

**Job Description**

Scope of the Assistant Organist is:

Under the direction of the Director of Music you will be fully involved in the busy life of the Music Department.

**Key Responsibilities**

* Accompany the choirs and services at the Abbey
* Play for broadcasts, recordings, and Abbey choir tours
* There are duties which fall outside normal academic terms including Holy Week and Easter and during the Advent and Christmas season in particular
* Take choir rehearsals and/or direct the choir in Abbey services as required
* To train the junior choristers and probationers in theory and other rehearsals
* To assist with the choir library
* To assist with planning and organisation of the Organ Recital Series and other concerts
* To help with planning and maintenance of the Abbey’s musical instruments
* Attend regular meetings with Abbey staff, clergy, and music department
* Assist with planning visiting choirs on weekdays and during Abbey choir holidays
* The post holder will undertake other relevant duties as may be requested from time to time and commensurate with the role

**Person Specification**

The Abbey is looking to appoint a first-class organist and musician as its Assistant Organist in early 2023.

Essential

* Excellence as an organ player and accompanist (Music degree or equivalent)
* Ambition and energy to achieve the highest possible musical standards in performance
* Some experience and excellent potential in choir training. The successful candidate will be working with choristers aged 8 to 18, both boys and girls and will need to earn the respect of professional singers as a player and choir director
* Well organised and capable of meeting many musical demands

Desirable

* Good IT skills
* Experience with social media and concert and event promotion
* Organisational skills and flexibility. The Assistant Organist will work in a large team of staff and volunteers at the Abbey. She/he will need to appreciate the complexity and life and mission of the Abbey, and will be asked to support the Director of Music in planning of services, organising of concerts, workshops etc.
* Sensitivity to the Christian ethos and worship of the Church of England with a passion for church music
* Experience and some understanding of the issues in safeguarding children and an eagerness to adopt best practice
* It is expected that the successful candidate will be keen to pursue their professional musical interests. The work schedule will have some flexibility to accommodate this important dimension of a musician’s life
* A passion for developing and nurturing young singers
* A good team player
* Be a good ambassador for the choirs and music department within the Abbey community and the wider city and region
* You should have a car and full driving licence

**Assistant Organist hours**

The Assistant will work Sundays and on principal feast days (e.g. Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday etc) and on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays during term as follows:

Sunday 8.45-4.30 Sunday services

Tuesday 3.30-7.15

Wednesday 4.00-7.00

Thursday 3.30-9.15

Access to the Abbey organ for loud playing is restricted as the Abbey is a busy tourist destination. Thus, most practice times will be outside the main Abbey opening times. During the summer the Assistant will be required to assist with the running of the Tuesday Organ series (at 1.00pm between May and October)

Our Abbey Choirs and our Music Department are structured as follows:

**Abbey Choirs**

Abbey Boys’ choir – 23 boys drawn from around the city

Abbey Girls’ choir – 25 girls drawn from around the city

12 Lay Clerks – 4 altos, 4 tenors, 4 basses

Abbey Chamber Choir

Abbey Melody Makers

Contemporary music group run by volunteers (at the 9.30 family service once a month)

**Music Department Staff**

Huw Williams – Director of Music

Assistant Organist – vacancy

Mary Horner – Music Support

Delyth Cardy – Girls’ Choir Chaperone

Robert Burnet – Boys’ Choir Chaperone

**The Abbey Choir Schedules**

Monday Girls Choir rehearsal 4.30 - 6.00pm – arrive from 4.00

Tuesday Boys Choir rehearsal 4.30 - 6.00pm – arrive from 4.00

Wednesday Melody Makers rehearsal 5.30-6.45pm

Thursday 4.30 - 6.45pm Girls and Lay Clerks rehearsal (from 4.45) – arrive from 4.00

Evensong (5.30pm), followed by rehearsal until 6.45

Lay Clerks rehearsal 6.45-7.30

Chamber Choir rehearsal 7.45 – 9.15

Friday Boys Choir rehearsal 4.30-6.00 – arrive from 4.00pm

(Evensong at 5.30pm 1 x per month)

1 x per month 6.15-7.00 rehearsal

Sunday Rehearsal from 8.45am

Parish Eucharist 9.30am

(on a rota of boys choir, girls choir, chamber choir and music group every month)

Sung Eucharist 11.30am (rehearsal at 10.45)

Choral Evensong 3.30pm (rehearsal 2.15, Lay Clerks from 2.30)

Informal Evening Service 6.30pm

***Please note:*** *The Assistant Organist hours and Abbey Choir schedules may be subject to change to meet with the needs of the Music Department.*

**Kingswood**

Alongside this role there would be an opportunity for the successful candidate to take on a portfolio role as Music Assistant with Kingswood School.

Whilst the role at Kingswood can be tailored to fit the skills and aspirations of the postholder, it is likely to include working in support of the Music Department in all aspect of its work, including individual and classroom support, to promote organ playing and choral music throughout the School Foundation and to contribute to the co-curricular music programme.

For a combined role at the Abbey and School, single accommodation may be available (reviewable on an annual basis).  If accommodation is included, there would be the expectation of an evening duty in the Music School.

The role at the School would offer separate renumeration compatible with the role.

**Safeguarding**

The successful candidate will be subject to the completion of a confidential self-declaration form, an enhanced DBS clearance, and completion of the relevant Church of England Safeguarding training.

**The successful candidate must be in sympathy with the aims and ethos of the Church of England and, fully support the Mission and Values of Bath Abbey.**

**APPLICATION**

If you are interested in taking on a role with both Bath Abbey and Kingswood School, candidates should send their CV, a letter of application and fully completed Kingswood School Application Form to Huw Williams, Director of Music at the following email address: [hwilliams@bathabbey.org](mailto:hwilliams@bathabbey.org). Please include the details of three references: Professional Music reference, Current /Most recent employer, and Character reference. References will only be taken up once an offer has been made.

**Deadline for applications: Friday 3 February 2023, 5pm.**

**Candidates will be informed if they have been short listed by Friday 10 February 2023.**

**Interviews and auditions will take place on Monday 20 February 2023.**

**If you’d like to have an informal discussion about this role in advance of applying, please contact our Director of Music Huw Williams:** [**hwilliams@bathabbey.org**](mailto:hwilliams@bathabbey.org)