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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE

Virtual Voice Trials hit the right notes at Bradford Cathedral; now looking for more to audition for the boys' choir



Current members of the Bradford Cathedral choir at a recent online rehearsal, headed up by Bradford Cathedral Director of Music Alex Berry (top left).

Bradford Cathedral is looking to expand its boys' choir at the next round of virtual voice trials. This follows a successful start to their online auditions to find new members of the choir, where four new members of the girls' choir were recruited with more to follow.

The cathedral is looking to recruit boys in school years 2, 3 and 4 to sing in their choir.

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Graham Thorpe, Assistant Director of Music:

“Although the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the way we work, we are currently holding very successful online rehearsals, singing lessons and music theory tuition which all the children greatly enjoy. We are looking forward to when we can all sing together in the cathedral again.

“We have had big success so far with our Virtual Voice Trials, which are designed to be approachable and not in any way scary or daunting. We ask the children to sing a little, and we have a chat with their parents.”

Bradford Cathedral Choir

As a member of Bradford Cathedral Choir children receive a first-class education in music, regular free singing and theory tuition, the opportunity to meet their other peers who love music, and get the opportunity to sing at home and abroad.

Alex Berry, Director of Music at Bradford Cathedral:

“We know there are lots of children across Bradford who might be interested in singing and are particularly talented, and because we can't visit every school in the district every year, these voice trials are an excellent opportunity for more to audition to become part of our Cathedral Choir.

“The auditions are quite informal but they give us the opportunity to listen to each child and their voices.

“Anyone in years 2, 3 and 4 can apply, regardless of which school they come from. All they need to do is meet the full commitment expectations of the choir.”

Successful applicants will be offered a place in the Bradford Cathedral Choir, when Bradford Cathedral re-opens. New choir members will be invited along on Mondays (girls) or Tuesdays (boys) and Thursdays every week for after-school activities and to sing at Evensong, alongside alternate Saturdays where they'll receive theory and singing tuition, as well as information about the Christian faith.

“Being a cathedral chorister is an amazing opportunity. The choristers will work at a level that you can’t work at in many other disciplines as a child. We offer free lessons and pay for children to take the ABRSM exams. Choristers also have the opportunity to sing in collaboration with other choirs across Yorkshire.”

As well as singing with other cathedral choirs, there are six visits each year to sing at a range of churches across the Diocesan area, which covers much of West and North Yorkshire, from south of Darlington to Holmfirth, and across from Ingleton to the edge of York. The pastoral side of the choir is also filled with activity, from socials such as bowling and laser tag to biennial tours in the UK.

“Every alternate year we go abroad. In 2019 we went to Germany and next year we plan to go to Romania. The number of opportunities we offer to choristers is staggering. New choristers will also get the chance to make new friends from schools across the city.”

Choir membership continues until school year eight, when they will have enough experience to become young professional singers with potentially grade fives in singing and music theory.

“This could be the first stage for a professional career. I was a cathedral chorister and became the youngest Director of Music in the country.”

Many famous people were choristers in their youth across the UK including comedian and presenter Alexander Armstrong, who has released three classical-inspired albums; Halifax-born singer Ed Sheeran; politician David Lammy; and cricketer Alastair Cook, amongst many others.

“Being a member of a choir has helped many people get into really high-flying careers, and they look back on the choristership as the thing that really inspired them, and gave them the aspiration to aim for something so amazing. Some of our own choristers have gone on to join the Opera North Youth Chorus, and others have gone onto University music degrees and organ scholarships.”

You can find out more about the Chorister Voice Trials by visiting our website at bradfordcathedral.org/music/chorister-voice-trials. You can also get in touch with the

Bradford Cathedral music department on 07507 456 741.

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Notes for Editors

About Bradford Cathedral

Bradford Cathedral has been a place of worship in Bradford since the first millennium. It is the oldest building in the city and, alongside being a place of worship, hosts events, arts projects and much more.

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