HIS MAJESTY'S CHAPEL ROYAL

HAMPTON COURT PALACE

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

We are seeking to appoint an Assistant Director of Music at HM Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace. The successful candidate will be a superb organist, an inspiring accompanist with strong liturgical awareness, and a confident choral director. Experience of working with choristers or young singers is desirable.

Closing Date: 18 October 2026

Interviews and auditions: Friday 6 November

Duties to begin: December 2026 (or as soon as possible)

MUSIC AT HM CHAPEL ROYAL

HM Chapel Royal at Hampton Court Palace is part of the Ecclesiastical Establishment of the Royal Household. It is overseen jointly by Historic Royal Palaces and the Royal Household through the Lord Chamberlain's Office and the Sub Dean of HM Chapel Royal. Music in the Chapel is generously supported by the Choral Foundation, an independent charity founded in 2011. Services in the Chapel Royal are conducted according to the Book of Common Prayer. The Chapel has a committed congregation and welcomes many visitors for statutory and special services throughout the year. It is also the spiritual home of the Order of Companions of Honour.

The Music Department is led by the Director of Music, supported by the Assistant Director of Music, the Music Administrator, Organ Scholars and the Choir Chaperone. At present, the choir sings two services on Sundays and is made up of six professional adult singers and around 20 boy choristers aged 8-14. The choristers rehearse on two evenings each week and are recruited from a broad range of local schools, enabling us to provide an excellent musical education for children from all backgrounds. Recent ventures involve successful recording projects with several discs released on the Resonus label, filming for television documentaries, and performances at high-profile events. There are further ambitions to develop the choir's profile and activities, both within Hampton Court Palace and externally.

In 2026/2027, the Chapel will launch a new girl chorister programme, offering girls the opportunity to sing in the Chapel Choir for the first time. The girl choristers will be made up of girls aged 11-18 from a range of local schools. Upon the introduction of the girl choristers, evensong will be sung on Saturday afternoons during term-time.

In September 2026, Songstars, a choral education programme established by the Choral Foundation in 2022, will become fully integrated into the Chapel music department, with many opportunities open to the new Assistant Director for engaging in choral participation and education activities.

With the arrival of a new Chaplain in November, new administrative staff, and a new chorister singing teacher, the Assistant Director of Music will join the team at an exciting time of change and growth in the Chapel. We are looking for an Assistant Director of Music who wants to be part of this new chapter for the Chapel and its music.

The Chapel Organ, a three-manual instrument, owes its heritage to the one installed by Christopher Shrider in 1711–12. It was enlarged by William Hill during the 19th century who incorporated much of the

earlier pipework, and then substantially altered by others in the 20th century. It was overhauled by Harrison & Harrison Ltd in 2013. It is available for practice, though access may be affected by the hours of opening of the Chapel or the Palace.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The principal part of the Assistant Director of Music's duties lies in the provision of organ-playing for regular Chapel services on Sundays and other Holy Days, and the mentoring of the Organ Scholars. Choral services are sung from the second Sunday in September to the second Sunday in July, excluding the Sunday after Christmas Day. The Assistant Director of Music will be expected to attend some weekday chorister rehearsals as agreed (ideally one per week) and will direct the choir in the Director's absence as required.

The regular schedule for the week is as follows:

Wednesday evening (during term-time): Chorister rehearsal (Boys)
Thursday evening (during term-time, from after Easter 2027): Chorister rehearsal (Girls)
Friday evening (during term-time): Chorister rehearsal (Boys)
Saturday (during term-time, from after Easter 2027): Evensong (afternoon)
Sunday morning: Eucharist or Matins
Sunday afternoon: Choral Evensong

Feast days are often transferred to the nearest Sunday. In addition to regular Sundays, the Assistant Director will be required for the following Holy Days, additional services and events:

- Ash Wednesday (afternoon or evening)
- Maundy Thursday (evening)
- Good Friday (morning and evening)
- Holy Saturday (evening)
- Ascension Day (afternoon or evening)
- Chorister recruitment events (twice per year)
- The Sunday before Christmas (two Services of Nine Lessons and Carols)
- Christmas Eve (late evening)
- Christmas Day (morning only)

REMUNERATION

The remuneration offered is currently £12,800 per annum and is reviewed annually. Additional fees are payable for weddings, funerals, special services, concerts, and recordings. In the event of absence on a Sunday or other Holy Day because of illness or emergency, the Chapel will supply and pay a deputy. In the event of absence for any other reason, the Assistant Director pays for a deputy.

When the new pattern of rehearsals and services with the girl choristers takes effect in 2027, a proportionate uplift to the remuneration will be agreed, considering the additional duties. The remuneration at this point will be approximately £17,000 plus additional fees for special services. **We expect therefore the total remuneration offered to be £19,000-20,000 per annum.**

APPLICATION PROCESS

Letters of application, a full curriculum vitae, and the details of two referees should be addressed to the Director of Music, Mr Alexander Hamilton, and sent to alexander.hamilton@hrp.org.uk. One referee should be a musician of standing who has been a recent colleague or teacher, and the second referee should ideally be a member of the clergy. Enhanced DBS disclosure will be required for this role.

Interested candidates are encouraged to contact the Director of Music via email to arrange an informal conversation. We would be delighted to hear from you.