



## Brighton Choir Director (maternity cover – 9 months)

### Background

The Choir with No Name (CWNN) run choirs for people affected by homelessness across England and Wales. We were founded on the premise that singing with others makes you feel good; it distracts you from all the nonsense in life and helps you to build confidence, skills and genuine, long-lasting friendships. Each choir gets together to rehearse every week and share a meal together at the end of rehearsal, welcoming everyone, regardless of background, characteristics or idiosyncrasies. We want everyone involved in the Choir with No Name to feel they belong in our community.

Our Brighton Choir is an established choir run in partnership with BHT Sussex who provide housing and homelessness services across Brighton & Hove, Eastbourne and Hastings. We rehearse every Monday evening at 6pm at All Saints Church, Hove. Our rehearsals follow the usual Choir with No Name format of tea, biscuits and a chat before rehearsal, then 1 ½ hours of joyful singing (mostly pop and rock, arranged for mixed ability in 3- and 4-part harmony) followed by a free hot meal for members. Splendid!

We are committed to co-production. Co-production means that people with lived experience of homelessness work alongside others to deliver all aspects of our work. Our Brighton Choir Director (maternity cover) will be vital in helping us achieve this aim, working alongside choir members to develop the skills needed to steer their own choir projects and fully share the control and direction of the organisation.

### The role

We are looking for a Choir Director to cover our regular Director, Freya during a period of maternity leave. You will lead the choir on a weekly basis from our venue at All Saints Church, Hove. You will have experience and/or an understanding of coproduced projects and working alongside people who live with vulnerabilities in their lives. You will also be able to work from your own initiative and have confidence in leading alongside members. You will co-lead the choir alongside our Brighton Choir Manager, Charlie, who coordinates a range of non-musical aspects of choir and also lead on delivering approximately six gigs including our Christmas spectacular at the Dome. There are also opportunities to lead on community workshops in homelessness services and an ad-hoc bases in order to spread the Choir with No Name love.

**Hours:** One evening (currently Monday) approx.. 5.45 – 9.15 pm with some preparation, plus extra for gigs and workshops on an ad hoc basis. Average of six hours per week.

**Contract:** Freelance, 9 months, starting on 1 April 2024 or sooner if mutually agreed

**Fees:** Rehearsal - £160 per week (including preparation time and joining in with meals) - £30 on a depped out week to cover briefing the dep.

Gig - £105 - £265 (dependent on time commitment).

Workshops - dependent on time commitment and audience.

### Responsibilities

#### 1. Rehearsals

- a) Be responsible for all the musical aspects of weekly rehearsals (1 ½ hours of singing, with an additional 1 ½ hours necessary attendance for set up and dinner afterwards).
- b) Attend and contribute to a pre-rehearsal brief with the Choir Manager and brief volunteers. Attend and contribute to a post-rehearsal debrief with the Choir Managers and volunteers.



- c) Plan each season's repertoire and set rehearsal schedules, in consultation with choir members and in line with Choir with No Name musical ethos. Draw upon the Choir with No Name repertoire and/or make your own arrangements.
- d) Manage the accompanist, ensuring they have the necessary resources to fulfil their role well.
- e) Lead and help to develop musical aspirations of choir members, developing individuals' strengths as appropriate.
- f) Inspire any member who is willing to be a soloists and coach them in their parts.
- g) Understanding of Safeguarding legislation for vulnerable adults and work collectively with members and the choir manager to oversee the wellbeing of the group.
- h) Lead the music volunteers making best use of their skills to support the choir through anchoring parts, small group rehearsals, solo preparation and other activities.

## 2. Performances

- a) Conduct the choir, lead the accompanist and other musicians at all gigs.
- b) Lead or co-lead the annual Brighton Dome gig in December 2024.
- c) With choir manager and members, gain appropriate performance opportunities.
- d) Manage the musical side of gigs; book the band, ensure they have appropriate scores, ensure equipment is adequate, liaise with venue over technical specifications, prepare choir and other relevant activities to ensure the gig is a success.

## 3. Workshops

- a) Lead occasional outreach workshops across our target services (homeless services, mental health projects etc.), as led by the choir's annual plan.
- b) Lead corporate workshops as requested by the Choir with No Name national team.

## 4. Other

- a) Any administrative tasks associated with the role.
- b) Meet regularly and work closely with the Choir Manager to co-lead the choir community.
- c) Work closely with the Choir Manager, and CWNN National Team, for the ongoing development of co-production within the choir.
- d) Attend and co-lead quarterly peer-learning workshops with CWNN's other Choir Directors (additional fee paid for these).
- e) Offer signposting to appropriate support services for members, when necessary, in liaison with the Choir Manager.

## Person Specification

### Essential

- Passion for the organisation and its choir members' potential, and commitment to its vision, mission and values.
- Experience, skill, and demonstrable knowledge of leading a choir with mixed abilities.
- Able to collaborate with choir members who have a variety of vulnerabilities.
- Being able to work under your own initiative and with minimal in person management presence (although organisational presence is available throughout the week)
- Able to work closely with the Choir Manager to co-lead the choir community.
- Understanding of current safeguarding vulnerable adult legislation or a willingness to learn
- Inspiring, encouraging, and approachable personality alongside clear professional boundaries
- Excellent musical skills with the ability both to arrange music and to improvise and think on the spot.
- IT literate (Microsoft Office including Word and Excel)



## Desirable

- Knowledge of homeless sector and services in the Brighton area
- Keyboard skills
- Music education to degree level

## HOW TO APPLY

In the interest of a non-biased approach to recruitment, all applications will be anonymised before they reach the selection panel. We are not, at this stage, asking for information about your work experience or education, we are only seeking the answers to questions that will demonstrate the skills required to deliver the role.

Please follow these steps:

1. Copy and paste the questions on the final page of this document onto a separate Word document.
2. Answer the questions, trying not to use more than 300 words per question.
3. Don't put your name or any identifying information on the document.
4. Email the document as an attachment to [info@choirwithnoame.org](mailto:info@choirwithnoame.org), by **12pm on 9 February 2024**. Include your phone number in the email.
5. If you are shortlisted, you will be invited to an **interview and audition on 19 February or 4 March 2024**.

If you have access needs that make any aspect of the application process difficult, please contact us at [info@choirwithnoame.org](mailto:info@choirwithnoame.org) and we will make reasonable adjustments. You can also use this email address if you have any questions about the process.

Thank you so much for your interest in working with us at the Choir with No Name, and good luck with your application!

## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Why is the Choir with No Name where you want to be, and why now? If relevant, feel free to tell us how your experience makes you the perfect person to lead our Brighton choir.
2. Our Brighton choir encourages members to contribute to the running of rehearsals and gigs. Could you let us know what challenges you think this might bring, and what ideas you have to manage them and make the environment a wonderful positive one. Please also consider safeguarding and member welfare.
3. Tell us about two contrasting songs you would want to arrange for the Brighton choir, describing your approach to the arrangement. You don't have to write the full arrangement down but if you have a previous written example of an arrangement, you've written that you think would suit our Brighton choir, then feel free to include it.



4. Imagine you are bringing one of these excellent arrangements to rehearsal and trying it out for the first time. One of the choir members tells you they hate the song, and it reminds them of a very difficult time in their life. In addition, one of the parts you have written just isn't working and the altos can't pitch their harmony. What would you say and do?
5. Tell us your overall vision for the Brighton choir. Think about the Choir with No Name and who would be in the choir. What environment would you like to create within rehearsals and what would you do to make it feel that way? How would you prepare the members for gigs and tell us how you would build relationships with the members outside of leading rehearsals.