



About Batley Community Choir

Batley Community Choir began in 2014 after a conversation about forming a potential new social group in Batley. Lots of ideas were put forward so, instead of a choir, we may have been a book club or crochet group!

Our founder and Musical Director, Gary Skyrme, offered to take on the challenge, and with a little help preparations began to start the choir.

The choir's first rehearsal was on 22nd September 2014, with our first public performance that Christmas where we sang at the Batley Parish Christmas fair.

In September 2015 we performed our first staged event when we sang at the Batley Festival. We have since performed at the Batley Festival every year it has taken place.

2016 was a pivotal year for the choir. We booked Batley Town Hall for our first promoted concert in July and preparations were well advanced when Batley – and indeed the whole country – was rocked by the murder of our MP, Jo Cox. The day after that horrendous event, Gary was phoned at work by Channel 4. The Last Leg wanted a local choir to close their programme that night. Channel 4 sent a film crew to Batley, we corralled the choir together and we did indeed sing live on Channel 4 at 11pm. The song we chose was The Rose.

We have always been keen to collaborate on other projects to give our members the opportunities to try different things. These projects have included a folk project at Cleckheaton Town Hall, two 'Batley Does Opera' events and a Christmas production of 'O Little Town of Batleyhem'. In addition, we sing regularly at the Batley Christmas lights switch-on and the annual 'Run for Jo' at Oakwell Hall.

Since our formation, we have raised £6273.56 (and counting!) for local charities. Our ethos is that everyone is made to feel welcome, regardless of ability, confidence or experience – an enjoyment of singing is the only entry requirement. We are proud that our choir has become a community in its own right, with a real sense of belonging and camaraderie.

Our values

- Love of singing
- Personal commitment demonstrated by regular attendance at rehearsals and gigs, learning repertoire, supporting the leadership and enjoying the choir experience
- Mutual respect
- Democracy in our decision-making processes
- Honesty, demonstrated by open communication about issues and concerns
- Musical growth, demonstrated by the development of new repertoire, soloists, arrangements, conductors and performance opportunities

Musical Director – Responsibilities:

- To Provide artistic direction to the choir
- To conduct and lead the choir at rehearsals and concerts
- To encourage and motivate choir members to enjoy singing and improve their performance both personally and as a group
- To promote the choir, raising its profile, attracting new members and maintaining current members
- To work alongside the committee to ensure the choir maintains its values, community engagement, quality of performance and financial viability

Musical Director – Key Tasks

- Developing the music repertoire, sourcing and/or making arrangements, as appropriate, within the capabilities and wishes of the choir members
- Planning concerts and community events alongside the committee
- Leading rehearsals, concerts and community events
- Developing the vocal quality of the choir as a whole and enabling all members to develop their singing
- Liaising with community groups, other choirs and the committee to promote the choir and maintain its visibility within the community
- Working with the committee to develop the choir and ensure its smooth running.

Skills and experience required

- Ability to work with a wide range of musical abilities including untrained voices and non-music readers
- Commitment to the values of the choir
- Knowledge of suitable repertoire for a range of abilities
- Ability to work as part of a team and to contribute to meetings and discussions
- Willingness to plan rehearsals and concerts within the abilities of the members
- Confidence in communicating with a range of participants, audiences, the media and the wider community

Terms and conditions

- Rehearsals are on Mondays at the Community Room at Batley Parish Church, Stocks Lane, Batley between 715pm and 845pm.
- There are two main concerts each year and a number of community engagements which will be agreed between the MD and the Committee
- The Music Director is offered as a self-employed contract
- Remuneration is subject to negotiation having regard to the candidates skills and experience.
- The level of remuneration will be reviewed annually
- The contract will be subject to an agreed probationary period

Selection process

- Applications via email with a covering letter and CV to be submitted via email to Hello@batleysings.org.uk by Friday 20th June 2025
- Shortlisted applicants will be offered an opportunity to attend a rehearsal, meet the choir and lead a short session, followed by an interview with members of the committee