



2027

SINGERS' PLATFORM

at

St Andrew's Church,
Psalter Lane, Sheffield, S11 8YL

HANDBOOK AND ENTRY FORM

28, 29, 30 January 2027

Awards and Bursaries over £4,000

**CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES:
7 NOVEMBER 2026**

Registered Charity No. 1043131
www.davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk
email: dcfs@davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk

"The object is not to win a prize or defeat a rival but to pace one another on the road to excellence."

H. Walford Davies

Comments from previous participants:

"The atmosphere was very friendly and made it easier for me to perform. The festival pianists were a huge part of this and we communicated very well about the music"

"The people are lovely. The accompanists are wonderful"

"It works well having the whole competition in a church with a fantastic acoustic"

"Lovely helpers. Atmosphere backstage is really welcoming and the pianists so supportive"

"Well-structured, efficient scheduling"

"A wonderful performance opportunity and the only festival for this category"

"A really good opportunity to showcase new repertoire"

"Feedback from professionals was invaluable and super helpful"

"Internationally renowned adjudicators provide individual comment sheets"

The David Clover Festival of Singing Sheffield

Reg. Charity No. 1043131

Founded by *City of Sheffield Teachers' Choir*, now *Sheffield Music Makers*

THE SINGERS' PLATFORM

Thursday 28 January - Saturday 30 January 2027

St Andrew's Church
31 Psalter Lane, Sheffield S11 8YL

Adjudicators: Mark Wildman
Wilma MacDougall

Patron: Lesley Garrett CBE

President: Mark Wildman FRAM, FRSA

Vice-Presidents: Elizabeth Watts Hon.D.Mus
James Kirkwood LRAM, LTCL, ARCM
Ralph Green ARCM
David Durrant MA
David Heslop OBE

The David Clover Festival of Singing is affiliated to The British and International Federation of Festivals for Music, Dance and Speech.

The Festival is also a member of The Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire Regional Forum of The British and International Federation of Festivals of Music, Dance and Speech.



PERFORM | EDUCATE | INSPIRE

www.davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk

Enquiries not covered in this Handbook

DCFS, 269 Dobcroft Road, Sheffield S11 9LG

General enquiries: enquiries@davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk

Music enquiries: music@davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk

Enquiries about schedules for the Festival: secretary@davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk

Singers' Platform - Performer Information

This is an initiative in the David Clover Festival of Singing and is intended to provide the opportunity to post A level (or equivalent level education) singers studying at universities and conservatoires, and those having *advanced* private tuition, to continue development of their art with substantial awards. Winners from past Festivals have been offered paid engagements with choirs and opera companies both in this country and abroad.

Eligibility to this section of the David Clover Festival of Singing is for Soprano, Mezzo-soprano, Contralto, Counter tenor/Male Alto, Tenor, Baritone, Bass-baritone and Bass voices aged between 19 and 28 years on 28 January 2027*. Entrants in the Singers' Platform are eligible for classes in this part of the Festival only. Winners of the classes in 2026 Festival are not eligible to enter the SAME class in 2027.

**With the exception of Classes 6 and 8 which are open to singers aged Year 10 or above (see class 8 details on page 5 for further eligibility criteria)*

Singers will receive specific details of timetable, procedures etc. after the final date of the receipt of the Entry Form: 7 November 2026. Late entries and alterations will ONLY be accepted in exceptional circumstances and not after 1 December 2026. Those singers who are post conservatoire and who have already crossed the threshold of the music profession and are earning a significant portion of their income from operatic principal, chorus or concert contracts are ineligible to participate in the Singers' Platform.

Classes

Class 1: Recital

A recital of up to 20 minutes creatively chosen from the following:

A: an aria from a cantata, an opera or an oratorio of any period EXCLUDING Mozart

B: an art song (excluding A) written before the 19th Century, excluding Mozart

C: an art song (excluding A) written during the 19th Century

D: 1 or 2 art songs (excluding A) written during the 20th or 21st Centuries

E: an art song from any country in the world, sung in the original language and from any period. Your choice should exclude any song appropriate to other Recital categories e.g. arias, French Mélodie, German Lieder, British Song or an aria or song by Mozart.

All singers are asked to choose a programme varied in style, mood and language from the list of categories with a time limit of 20 minutes. The choice need not contain repertoire from each category. Any arias should be in the original language and key. Please note that the time limit includes any verbal introductions.

Class 2: Opera

All singers should prepare 2 arias, EXCLUDING those from Mozart Operas, at least one with recitative, in 2 different languages and by different composers with a time limit of 13 minutes. Arias in the Opera class should be in the original languages and keys.

Class 3: Oratorio or Sacred Aria

1 oratorio aria or sacred aria from a Cantata or Mass, EXCLUDING those by Mozart, in the original language and key, time limit 7 minutes. Music from the baroque period may be sung at baroque pitch. Copies for the accompanist must be in the key being sung and accompanists will not be expected to transpose.

Note: Local Choral Directors often invite singers from Recital and Oratorio classes to be paid soloists in future concerts.

Class 4: French Mélodie

1 song in the original language, EXCLUDING those by Mozart, time limit 5 minutes

Class 5: German Lieder

1 song in the original language, EXCLUDING those by Mozart, time limit 5 mins.

Class 6: British Song

Singers eligible for Class 8, The Elizabeth Hampshire Award for Young Singers may enter this class

1 Art song, time limit 5 minutes. The song should be in English and the composer from the United Kingdom or Ireland. Your choice can be from any period.

Class 7: Repertoire by Mozart

All singers should prepare 2 pieces: a Concert Aria OR an aria from an opera or oratorio by Mozart **AND** a Mozart song in the original language. Time limit 10 minutes.

Class 8: Elizabeth Hampshire Award for Young Singers

This class is for singers studying or having studied at a specialist Music School or a Conservatoire Junior Department and singers studying privately who have reached Grade 8 (Distinction) and above, *but have not yet arrived at Senior Conservatoire level* and are in Years 10 and above and under 19 on 28 January 2027. Singers should prepare a creatively chosen programme of 3 pieces, one at least in a language other than English. Time limit 12 minutes. Singers entering this class are also eligible to enter Class 6: British Song in the Singers' Platform, but are not eligible for the classes in the Festival Weekend.

A full adjudication of all singers in Class 8 will be given.

The entries will be programmed into sessions on Thursday and Friday morning, afternoon and evening, and Saturday morning and afternoon. The Finals and presentation of awards is at the Finals Evening on Saturday, 30 January 2027. In the event of an increase in entries, it may be necessary to restrict entry numbers if there is insufficient time, so early application is strongly advised.

The adjudicators will choose up to 4 performers from all the Recital and Opera classes, and 2 performers from the Mozart repertoire Class for the Finals on Saturday evening and finalists chosen from Thursday and Friday sessions will be informed on Friday evening at the latest.

The winners of all other classes will be announced at the final session of these classes. Winners will be expected to return for the Finals on Saturday evening to perform again and to receive their award. The winners in Class 8 will choose one piece from their programme to sing on the Finals evening. A travel bursary of £50.00 will be awarded to All Thursday and Friday finalists to help with the cost of returning to Sheffield on Saturday. Finalists who are **programmed** in sessions on Saturday morning and/or afternoon will not qualify for a bursary as they will already be in Sheffield. Multiple class winners will receive one travel bursary only.

Finals

- Recital Class finalists will choose a shorter programme of 3 songs from their Recital, varied in style, mood and language with a time limit of 12 minutes
- Opera Class finalists will choose 1 of their 2 arias from their preliminary programme for the Final with a time limit of 7 minutes
- Mozart Class finalists will choose 1 of their 2 pieces from their preliminary programme

Time limits: All performances must adhere to the time limits including verbal introductions. Any re-starts which are the fault of the singer are included in the performance time limit. Any re-starts which are not the fault of the singer will not be included in the performance time limit. Should a performer exceed the time limit, an adjudication will be given, but the Festival reserves the right to withhold a placing and the adjudicators reserve the right to stop a performance that is excessively over time. **N.B. Take great care with your timings!** A number of singers in past years have not reached the Finals because they exceeded the time limits.

Song Choices: A performer must NOT sing the same song in more than one class. Music by Mozart may only be sung in Class 7: Repertoire by Mozart.

Programme changes will only be permitted after 1 December 2026 and ONLY in exceptional circumstances.

Order of classes: Once the Entry Forms have been received, the order in which classes will take place will be determined and everyone will be duly informed by email. Therefore, please make sure your email address is accurate and clear on your application form.

Contact at the time of the Singers' Platform

The festival may be contacted on **07939 565 829 (Val)** or **07510 699 821 (Kathryn)**

Preparation for the Singers' Platform

- It is requested that performers dress appropriately for the occasion.
- An official accompanist will be available throughout the Festival, but performers may bring their own accompanist if they wish.
- Please adhere to all required deadlines detailed in this Handbook.

Photographs, Recording Equipment and Mobile Phones: Due to copyright law and the Festival's Safeguarding Policy, members of the audience, as well as performers and their supporters, are **not allowed** to take photographs or make audio or video recordings at the Festival. Therefore, the use of any kind of camera, recording equipment, mobile telephone or other computerised device is **strictly forbidden**. However, the festival may appoint a designated, authorised photographer/ videographer/ sound recordist ('authorised person') to take/ record official photographs ('images') and/ or video/ sound recordings ('recordings') for publicity purposes to promote the work and ethos of the Festival and for the benefit of the performers. **Performers should indicate on the Entry Form a) if they or their supporters have any objection to being included in any of the official images and/ or recordings taken by the authorised person and b) if they give permission for any such official images and/or recordings made to be used for Festival publicity purposes, etc., without further consultation from the Festival.**

Awards

Class 1: Recital	Winner £1,000	Runner-up £500
Class 2: Opera	Winner £750	Runner-up £250
Class 3: Oratorio	Winner £200	
Class 4: French Mélodie	Winner £100	
Class 5: German Lieder	Winner £100	
Class 6: British Song	Winner £100	
Class 7: Repertoire by Mozart	Winner £750	Runner up £250
Class 8: Elizabeth Hampshire Award for Young Singers	Winner £150	

Singers' Platform Entries (7 November 2026)

Entries to the Singers' Platform should be made using the PLAY and PERFORM link on the website: www.davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk

ADJUDICATORS' MUSIC: You will need to provide two copies of your music for the adjudicators. Where possible one should be an original. Music should be marked clearly with your name and the class name and number.

Entrants will be informed by email of their confirmed session times, therefore please ensure your email address is clear and readable.

Please write your song choices **very clearly** and **in order of the performance** giving the title, work and composer. Once the Entry Forms have been received, the order in which the classes will take place will be determined and everyone informed.

A submitted Entry Form will act as confirmation that you have read **all** the information in this Handbook and on the Entry Form.

Entry fees, are non-refundable* and payable through PLAY and PERFORM (accessed at www.davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk) at time of application:

Class 1: Recital	£35
Class 2: Opera	£25
Classes 3, 4, 5 and 6: Oratorio, French Mélodie, German Lieder and British Song	£20 each
Class 7: Repertoire by Mozart	£25
Class 8: Elizabeth Hampshire Award for Young Singers	£20

**entry fees will only be returned if a class is withdrawn*

We look forward to meeting, welcoming and hearing all the performers and wish you a happy, enjoyable and successful time at the Singers' Platform

Key Dates

7 November 2026 Last date for the receipt of the Entry Form, fees, and copies of music for the official accompanists. These should be sent to: The Entries Secretary, DCFS, 29 Kerwin Drive, Sheffield S17 3DG.

28 January 2027 Classes in the morning, afternoon and evening at St. Andrew's Church, Psalter Lane, Sheffield S11 8YL.

29 January 2027 Classes in the morning, afternoon and evening at St. Andrew's Church, Psalter Lane, Sheffield S11 8YL.

30 January 2027 Classes in the morning and afternoon at St. Andrew's Church, Psalter Lane, Sheffield S11 8YL.

Finals Evening at St Andrew's Church:

Finals of Recital and Opera Classes and performances by winners of the Oratorio or Sacred Aria, French Mélodie, German Lieder, British Song, Repertoire by Mozart, and Elizabeth Hampshire Award for Young Singers classes. Presentation of Awards.

For further information about the David Clover Festival of Singing and to enter on-line via PLAY and PERFORM please visit:

www.davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk

Singers' Platform - General Information

Adjudicators: all adjudicators are appointed by the David Clover Festival of Singing. No performer, teacher or member of the audience may approach the adjudicator in each class venue unless invited to do so, nor engage the adjudicator in conversation or discussion on any matter, before or after a session or whilst the session is in progress, otherwise disqualification may be incurred.

Singers always appreciate the opportunity to perform in front of an audience and we therefore, actively encourage family members, supporters and members of the public to stay and listen to the classes.

Audience admission charges

Charges are per person and per session and are payable in cash or by card at the door, and on-line via the David Clover Festival of Singing website:

www.davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk

Please also see about becoming a Festival Friend which offers reduced prices and, in some cases, free entrance. Please visit the website www.davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk for more information or ask at the front desk.

Sessions	Adults	Accompanied children under 12
All sessions on Thursday and Friday, and Saturday morning and afternoon sessions	£5 for a single session £8 for 2 sessions on the same day £10 for 3 sessions on the same day	£2
Saturday evening Finals	£10	£3

Cancellation of a class: In the event of a class being poorly subscribed, it may be withdrawn at the discretion of the Committee and the entry fees returned.

Car Parking: There is car parking in front of St. Andrew's Church or in the surrounding streets.

Entry and Exit: No person will be allowed to enter or leave the hall during any performance or adjudication as movement tends to distract the performer, accompanist, adjudicator and the rest of the audience.

Equal Opportunities Policy: No person shall receive less favourable treatment or consideration on the grounds of race, colour, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, gender-reassignment, age, disability or marital status, or be disadvantaged by any requirement or condition that cannot be justified. The opportunity for people to compete in the Festival is provided through a variety of classes. All sessions are open to a public audience and the Festival only uses venues that have made provision for people with physical disabilities. The festival will keep under review its policy, procedures and practices on equal opportunities. Please notify us of any special considerations of which we need to be aware.

Liability: The Festival does not hold itself responsible for any injuries sustained by any performer or member of the public whilst at Festival venues.

Lost Property: The festival will not be responsible for property lost or damaged during the Festival.

Queries: which are not covered on this Handbook may be made by email directed as follows:

General enquiries: enquiries@davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk

Music related enquiries: music@davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk

Refreshments: Light refreshments will be available at the venue for a small charge.

Safeguarding Policy: A copy of the Festival's Safeguarding Policy will be on display at the venue and is also available on the festival website www.davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk. This policy relates to children (under the age of 18) and to members of vulnerable groups of any age who are identified to the Festival before their arrival. Contact should be made by performers, parents and/or teachers to enquiries@davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk. Any subsequent reference to 'children' includes members of other vulnerable groups and children with disabilities. DCFS has Body Of Persons Authority for child licencing purposes.

Safety of Performers: Teachers and parents should be aware of their responsibilities in entering any performers with limited physical capabilities or special needs. They should pass any relevant information by email enquiries@davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk before the start of the festival.

Supervision of children: Please note that all children under 16 years of age must be accompanied and supervised effectively. Supervision may come from a parent, an adult acting on their behalf, a teacher or a group leader. The David Clover Festival of Singing cannot take responsibility for unsupervised children at the Festival venues. Any person acting in a supervisory capacity will be expected to pay the usual admission fee.

Withdrawals and Class Start Times: It is impossible to foresee the number of last-minute withdrawals from classes due to illness or for any other reason. The Festival will keep you updated of any changes that may take place.

Please make sure you arrive for your class in plenty of time.

2028 Festival Dates

Singers' Platform: 20, 21, 22 January

Festival Weekend: 4, 5, 6 February

2027 Adjudicators

Mark Wildman

Mark Wildman received his early formal musical education at The King's School, Gloucester and as a chorister in Gloucester Cathedral where he studied and sang under Dr Herbert Sumsion. Later, he studied at the Royal Academy of Music under the guidance of Henry Cummings, Rex Stephens and later with Rupert Bruce Lockhart. He was awarded the Westmorland Scholarship, the Recital Diploma and the Frederick Shinn Fellowship. His career began as a Choral Exhibitioner at St. George's Chapel, Windsor Castle, where he sang for three years which was followed by a similar period with the BBC Singers with whom he travelled and performed world-wide.

2013 marked Mark's fortieth and final season on the concert platform as a recitalist and soloist in Oratorio. His final public concert was in Huddersfield Town Hall with the Huddersfield Choral Society and the Royal Northern Sinfonia in Handel's Israel in Egypt, forty years after his debut in there. He performed throughout Europe, Scandinavia, the British Isles and the USA, with many of Britain's foremost orchestras and with several leading conductors of the day, among them Gennadi Rozhdestvensky, Sir Neville Marriner, Meredith Davies, Donald Hunt, Michael Gielen, Jane Glover, Iain Ledingham, Christopher Robinson John Sanders and Sir David Willcocks, he now devotes himself entirely to teaching and working with young singers at both the Royal Academy of Music in London, and at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester where he joined the staff of the School of Vocal and Opera Studies in September 2023.

In 1981 he was appointed as a professor of singing at the Royal Academy of Music and subsequently as Head of Vocal Studies in 1991, a position from which he retired in August 2017. He continues to teach undergraduate, postgraduate and operatic students at the RAM. He has taught prize winners in the most prominent British singing awards: Cardiff Singer of the World, the Jette Parker Young Artists' programme at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, the Kathleen Ferrier Memorial Awards, Royal Overseas League, National Mozart Competition, Kathleen Ferrier Bursary and others. Many of his current and former students are now singing principal roles with national and international opera companies including La Scala Milan, the Bolshoi, Moscow, St Petersburg, the Metropolitan Opera, New York, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Paris, English National Opera, Glyndebourne Festival Opera and at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. He is a much-travelled adjudicator and has served as a jury member at several international singing competitions. He has visited Holland, Germany, USA, Iceland, and France to give Masterclasses. He has been a visiting Professor at the Reykjavik Songskolinn, Iceland. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music in 1994 a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts in 1995, and a Professor in the University of London in 2013. He was twice elected President of the RAM Club and in August 2017, upon his retirement as Head of Vocal Studies at the Royal Academy of Music, the Principal conferred upon him the title of Henry Cummings Distinguished Professor of Singing. In 2021 he was honoured and proud to receive the Sir Charles Santley Award from the Worshipful Company of Musicians.

He is both proud and delighted to serve as President of the David Clover Festival of Singing and wishes all competitors a happy and successful 2027 Festival.

Wilma MacDougal

Born in Scotland, Wilma graduated BA (Hons) in Music followed by a PGCE in Music and Mathematics from the University of Cambridge. There she studied singing with Nigel Wickens and Laura Sarti, sang with Jesus College Chapel Choir and performed regularly as a soloist in oratorio and recital. She returned to Scotland to study singing with Patricia MacMahon at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama (now RCS). Winning a number of scholarships, awards and competitions, she graduated with a Masters of Music.

Wilma MacDougall has worked as a vocal lecturer at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland for seventeen years. Her students have sung at many of the top opera houses and concert halls. She is recognised for her technical expertise, extensive repertoire knowledge and dedication to her students.

A keen recitalist and concert performer, Wilma has performed across Europe and throughout the UK alongside conductors including Sir Charles Mackerras, Stephen Cleobury and Christopher Bell.

Wilma has worked regularly as a recitalist and soloist, performing with many orchestras and ensembles including the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Dunedin Consort, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Avison Ensemble, Edinburgh Quartet and Paragon Ensemble. She has recorded and broadcast on BBC radio and television in repertoire ranging from Bach's Cantata No.51 *Jauchzet Gott* through to contemporary repertoire. Operatic work has included Musetta *Las Boheme*, Michaela *Carmen*, Grainne *An Turus* (William Sweeney), Venus *Venus and Adonis* (John Blow) and Queen of the Night *Magic Flute*.

Alongside her work at RCS, Wilma leads vocal workshops and seminars, and teaches on singing courses throughout the UK and Europe. She previously taught at both Glasgow and Napier Universities. She was vocal tutor for the Royal Scottish National Orchestra Junior Chorus for sixteen years, as well as teaching at the National Youth Choir of Scotland, National Boys Choir and Ulster Youth Choir summer courses. For fifteen years Wilma directed the Vocal Inspiration Residential Singing Courses in UK and the south of France.

Wilma is delighted to be an adjudicator at the David Clover Festival of Singing and wishes all the singers the very best of luck.

The David Clover Festival of Singing

www.davidclover-festivalofsinging.org.uk

Dr. David Clover came to Sheffield in 1966 having been appointed as the Music Advisor to the city's Education Department. It was one of the earliest residential courses for music teachers and its daily choral sessions, organised by David, which brought the first members of The Sheffield Teachers' Choir (as it was then known) together at Buxton Conference Centre in the Autumn term of 1968.

Following David's untimely death in 1979, the choir committee at the time decided to create a lasting tribute and memorial to his work. The result was the establishment of the David Clover Competition for Singers, renamed the David Clover Festival of Singing in 2010. The original competition started in a small way with only 2 classes for singers of secondary school age, providing the opportunity for the singers to be helped and encouraged by experienced judges of singing, an ethos that is still as strong today. The Festival has grown into a competition of high standing, credibility and stature in Sheffield, nationally and now internationally and is open to all singers from the age of seven. One of David's greatest loves was singing, whether solo or choral and he believed that the voice deserved equal status with other musical instruments.

Over the years, internationally famed singers have adjudicated at the Festival: Constance Shacklock, Marjorie Thomas, Jean Allister, Mollie Petrie (first Patron) and Mark Wildman (President) and many previous winners, including Elizabeth Watts, Ella Taylor, Anna Harvey, and Jessica Greaves have joined the singing profession.

Once the annual Festival has ended, Sheffield Music Makers (formerly The City of Sheffield Teachers' Choir) is always delighted to invite singers from the Festival to share its concerts, in particular the Showcase Concert which takes place in September.

Festival Committee

Chairman: Chris Hudson

Treasurer: Georgia Hall

Music Co-ordinator: Vivien Pike

Venues: Valerie Littledyke

Marketing and Media: Ann Fooks

Class Sponsorship: David Heslop OBE

Secretary: Kathryn Wells

Entries Secretary: Eric Barraclough

Friends and sponsors: Geoff Littledyke

Publicity and Advertising: Anthony Trippett

General Administrator: Georgina Hulse

2028 Festival Dates

Singers' Platform: 20, 21, 22 January

Festival Weekend: 4, 5, 6 February