



Claremont Singers & Gospel Choir: Musical Director, Choir Leader, and Accompanist

Role Pack



About Us

The Claremont Project is a charity, arts & wellbeing centre for older adults aged 55+ in Angel, Islington, London. We are a very friendly, open, and welcoming community. We have a large programme of groups, classes and projects aimed at being creative and healthy in body and mind, and at helping to develop real and lasting friendships. Most of our activities are for people aged 55 and over. We also provide a low-cost psychotherapy service, as well as a couples/relationship counselling service, for Islington residents (18+).



Our classes and groups mostly meet in-person at our centre in Angel, Islington. We have more than 35 regular weekly classes, as well as special events, concerts, projects, and visits. We also have some hybrid and online classes for those unable to leave their homes. We aim to provide the best activity possible, from the best tutors we can find. We often do this in partnership with some of London's leading arts and cultural organisations. Recent partners include Sadlers Wells, Trinity Laban, Royal College of Music, London Symphony Orchestra, British Museum, and the Old Vic Theatre.



Our History

Claremont has been around since 1907 and pioneered many important developments in social care and development. These included programmes in the 1920's and 30's which became models for the Welfare State, one of the first childcare services for working women, and even free acting classes as a route out of poverty. The building was originally built as a Christian mission attached to the rear of the main church building (which is now The Crafts Council building on Pentonville Road). The Claremont United Reformed Church (URC), who own the freehold of the Claremont building, passed the baton of charitable work, and responsibility for the entire building in a generous lease, over to the charity in 1998 (Reg. Charity No.1070611). The charity's constitution sets out broad charitable aims in the service of the people of Islington and surrounding boroughs, as well as beyond. The charity is independent of the church. There is however provision for two church representatives to sit on the board.

Claremont's new vision started to emerge in 2002, in response and reaction to institutionalized services and day centres. Who would want to go to a "day centre", we asked, and what kinds of things would they feel about themselves if they did? With so many day centres and community centres, why were so many older people still sitting alone at home? We wanted Claremont to be a place that we ourselves would want to visit as customers/clients and to which we would like to invite our friends and acquaintances. We wanted to be different from places where staff members, in unequal relationships, create neediness, anxiety and dependence on the part of their clients by being the rescuer or "concerned sympathetic ear". Equally, we didn't want to be a place defined by rules and regulations and the unwritten dogma of small established cliques.



**The Role:
Musical Director, Choir Leader and Accompanist:
Claremont Singers and Gospel Choir**



We are currently seeking an energetic, experienced, and talented Musical Director, Choir Leader and Accompanist to take on our popular Gospel Choir and re-establish our longest-standing choir, the Claremont Singers.

Post-Covid 19, the Claremont Singers served as one of our most popular weekly sessions, attracting approximately 30 committed members, with a waiting list in constant use. Following the sad death of their brilliant Choir Leader, Gerald Willis, the group slowly dispersed. Whilst some of the older, longer-standing attendees passed away, others felt unable to continue without their beloved choir leader. Post-pandemic, a smaller group of approximately 10 Claremont members ('Claremonteers') persevered under the leadership of a deputy Choir Leader for one year. Despite a handful of successful performances in centre, the former traction, popularity, and success of the group was never quite achieved, resulting in a current pause of the offering.



Currently one of our most popular weekly classes, Gospel Choir was established in 2018, and has been running ever since under the leadership of standout Musical Director, Chris Huntley. He has led the group of approximately 15 committed attendees through various standout showcases in-centre, developing their vocal and performance skills, confidence, and comradery each week. Chris Huntley has recently decided that it is time for him to move on, as he takes on new opportunities teaching vocal technique to emerging musicians at London's leading music schools, in line with his aspirations and passions.

We are now looking to appoint a brilliant Musical Director, Choir Leader and Accompanist to lead our Gospel Choir, and restore Claremont Singers to its former glory!

The successful candidate will lead both groups through inspiring, engaging and accessible weekly sessions. Claremont Singers should cover a wide-ranging repertoire of classic songs, jazz standards and modern pop songs from throughout the decades. Gospel Choir should focus on classic and modern gospel songs, as well as 'gospel-style' arrangements of songs from different genres. The repertoire covered in both groups should always be decided in consultation with attendees.

You will advocate for the joy and freedom of choral and solo singing, vocal health and technique, and manageable yet challenging harmony work. Solos should be offered where appropriate. Approachable and personable, you will inspire confidence, bringing forth positivity and togetherness from each group. Your flexible teaching style should allow you to accommodate all levels of ability and experience.

You will prepare both groups for staple performances in centre to fellow members, friends, and family, including biannual, Spring and Winter concerts as part of our Friday Concerts programme, and participation in our annual Claremont Class Variety Showcase. There may also be opportunities for external performances. In time, we hope that this post holder will also help to provide external performance opportunities in cooperation with the Programme Manager.

Warm, welcoming, and encouraging, you will be experienced and adept at working with often under-served community groups with varying needs, always advocating for equality, diversity, and inclusion. A good understanding of safeguarding adults is required, and experience of working with vulnerable adults would be beneficial. It is of the utmost importance that a relational approach is always used with our members, and a fair and equal power structure is established and preserved across all attendees during sessions. We endeavour to be as inclusive and accessible as possible across age, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and socio-economic status. We never charge more than £5.00 for our activities.



Both groups are delivered in-person at our centre in Angel, Islington. Claremont Singers sessions have been delivered on Tuesdays from 12:15 – 1:45 pm in our New Hall: our largest space. Gospel Choir sessions have been delivered on Wednesdays, from 2:00 – 3:30 pm, in our slightly smaller, mirrored, Anya's Hall. We can offer some flexibility with the agreed day and time for the right candidate, subject to our hall availability between 10:00 am and 4:30 pm, Monday – Friday.

Both halls are fully accessible and include tuned, upright pianos and seating. Portable large TV's are also available for sharing lyrics. Although we are able to print physical copies of lyrics for participants in advance, we endeavour to limit this as much as possible, printing only for those with specific sight issues. We are an environmentally conscious organisation.

Due to the nature of our work, we are required to conduct an advanced DBS check. Our freelance Tutors must also hold their own suitable insurance to cover their work with our members. To ensure we are aligned with best practises, legally and ethically, whilst delivering the friendliest service possible, all our Tutors are asked to familiarise themselves with our range of policies, which will be provided.

This role is offered in a freelance capacity at a starting rate of £40 - £50 per hour via an annual but rolling agreement. This fee may be slightly flexible for the right candidate, dependent upon skills and experience.



We are a friendly, dedicated, and passionate community here at the Claremont Project. We hope you will consider joining us in our mission to help older adults live happier, healthier, more-connected lives!

To ask any questions about this role, please contact our Programme Manager, Kyri Chrisostomou at kyri@claremont-project.org. To apply, please send Kyri your CV and brief Cover Letter with the subject line 'Claremont Singers and Gospel Choir Application' by 10:00 am on Friday 15th March.

Applications will be reviewed as they are received. As a result, recruitment may be stopped prior to the deadline, so applying early is encouraged.

We look forward to hearing from you.