2026

Settle Orchestral Society

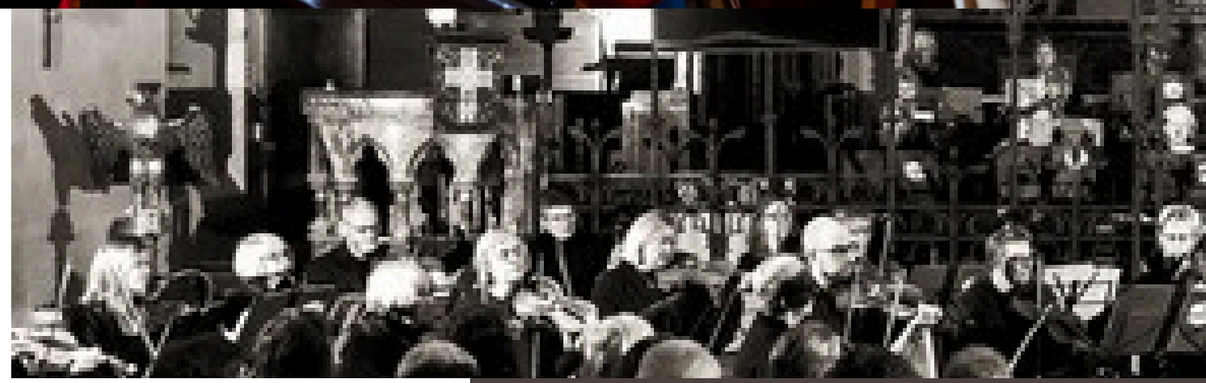
Recruitment Pack

Settle Orchestral Society

Job Description

Orchestra Leader

Role Profile & Terms of Appointment (2027–28 Season)



Background

History of Settle Orchestra

Settle Orchestra has been performing since 1967, currently presenting three concert programmes each season, with two performances in Settle and Skipton.

The orchestra is made up of approximately 40 regular members, complemented by professional players for concerts, and has a strong tradition of collaborating with local choral societies on large-scale works.

Since our founding, Settle Orchestra has been proud to nurture emerging artists at pivotal stages in their musical journeys. Many alumni have moved into careers as professional performers, educators, composers, and conductors, enriching concert halls, opera houses, and teaching studios across the UK and beyond in their home countries. Others continue to inspire through chamber ensembles, orchestral posts, and leadership in music organisations.

Work with emerging international conductors each year

Partnership with Royal Northern College of Music

Each year Settle Orchestra is proud to collaborate with a new conductor in their second year of conducting studies at the Royal Northern College of Music. This valued partnership was established in 2014 and has helped nurture young musical talent. These emerging talents bring fresh perspectives and a passion for music that invigorates the orchestra and enhances the concert experience.

Over three terms – Autumn, Spring, and Summer – the conductor works closely with our musicians, shaping each programme and adding their own artistic voice to every performance. It's also a unique and rare opportunity for audiences to observe a young conductor develop their skills over the course of the final year of study, gaining confidence, refining technique, and leaving their mark on the season. This annual tradition ensures every concert year is both dynamic and memorable.

Orchestra Leader

Repertoire Example

2025/2026 Season

Autumn:
The season opened with an atmospheric programme blending drama, lyricism and folk character. Bruckner's bold Overture in G and Sibelius' shimmering Spring Song set the tone, followed by Dvořák's charming Legends (Nos. 9 & 10). The centrepiece is Dvořák's deeply expressive Cello Concerto, performed by our own lead cellist and soloist Bob Buller.

Spring:
A grand collaboration with the Langcliffe Singers brings choral and orchestral forces together for a programme of depth and passion. Beethoven's Egmont Overture sets the dramatic stage, followed by Mendelssohn's poignant chorale O Haupt voll Blut and Beethoven's glorious Mass in C.

Summer:
A vibrant programme of French elegance and classical clarity closes the season. Debussy's Sarabande (arr. Ravel) opens with delicate impressionism, followed by Mozart's exuberant Paris Symphony. Ravel's Pavane and Poulenc's effervescent Sinfonietta round off a summer celebration of colour, charm, and wit.

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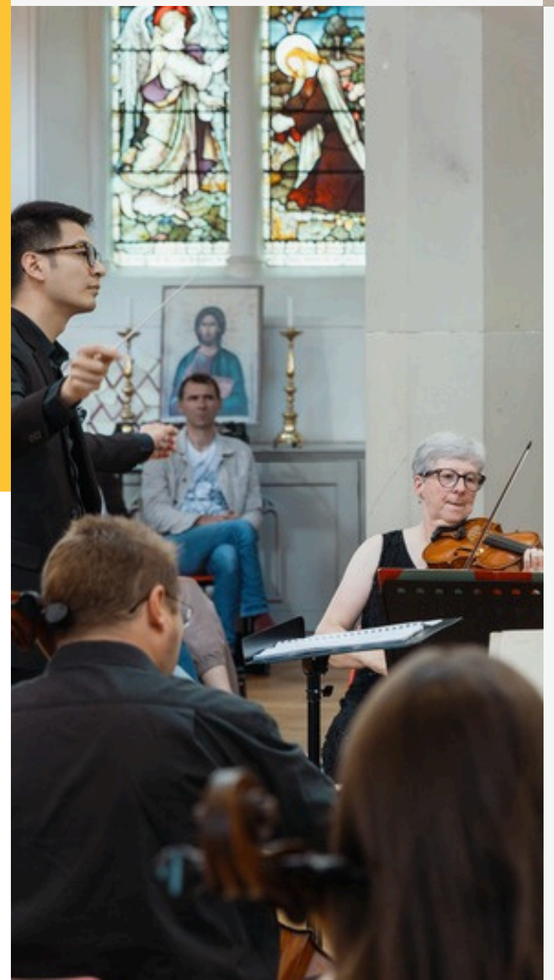


Orchestra Leader

Lead, inspire, and shape the sound of a thriving orchestra in the Yorkshire Dales.

Role Overview

Due to retirement of the current leader, a unique opportunity has arisen for an experienced violinist to combine musical leadership with community engagement, working with committed amateur musicians alongside professional players in a supportive and high-achieving environment.

The Leader of Settle Orchestra holds a central artistic position within one of North Yorkshire's most established and welcoming community orchestras.

Working in close collaboration with an annually appointed conductor from the Royal Northern College of Music, the Leader plays a key role in shaping each season—guiding the string section, supporting the wider ensemble, and helping to realise ambitious and engaging programmes.

Orchestra Leader

Role Requirements

Key Responsibilities

- Lead the Orchestra at all rehearsals and performances, including the performance of orchestral solos as required by the repertoire
- Collaborate with the appointed Conductor in advance of each season to advise on repertoire suitability, considering technical and ensemble requirements
- Support the Conductor in the musical development and training of the Orchestra
- Prepare and oversee bowings for the violin and viola sections, ensuring that parts are fully marked in a timely manner (ideally by the first rehearsal of each programme)
- Lead sectional rehearsals for the string section as required
- Ensure the Orchestra is tuned and prepared for the start of each rehearsal and performance
- Attend all scheduled rehearsals and concerts unless otherwise agreed in advance
- Arrange, subject to approval, a suitably qualified deputy in the event of absence, and assume responsibility for any associated costs
- Rehearse the Orchestra in the absence of the Conductor if requested by the Conductor or Chair
- Advise on orchestral seating and layout, with final decisions resting with the Conductor
- Attend committee meetings when requested in an advisory, non-voting capacity
- Support the ongoing development of the string section, including assisting with recruitment where appropriate

Orchestra Leader

About You

Person Specifications

PERSONAL QUALITIES

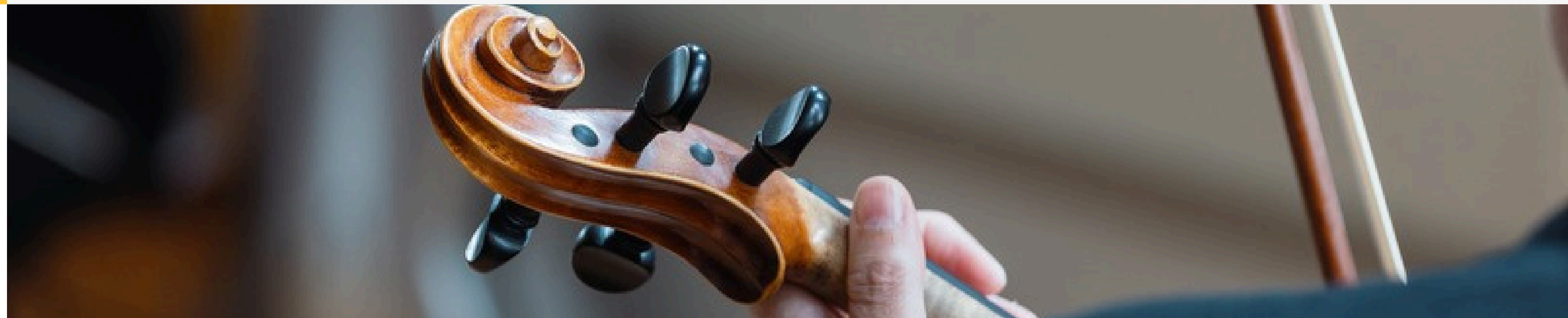
We are seeking a musician who combines artistic authority with warmth, encouragement and a sense of humour—someone who can raise standards while fostering confidence, enthusiasm and enjoyment across the orchestra.

ESSENTIAL

- Strong violin performance background (degree or equivalent professional experience)
- Significant experience of orchestral playing
- Ability to lead and inspire musicians of mixed ability
- Excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- A collaborative and supportive approach to music-making

DESIRABLE

- Experience as an orchestral leader
- Solo performance experience
- Experience working with amateur or community ensembles



Orchestra Leader

What It Entails

Time Commitment

Rehearsals:

- Friday evenings (19:40 – 21:40), typically 10 per term and one open rehearsal day per term.

Concerts:

- Three concert series per year (November, March, June), with performances in Settle and Skipton, six per season.

Attendance

- All rehearsals and concerts is expected, at our rehearsal venue in Settle.

Remuneration

This is a paid position. Fees for rehearsals and concerts will be agreed based on experience and reviewed annually. Additional rehearsals or performances will be remunerated on a pro rata basis.

Contract Period

The appointment will initially be for one year.
Thereafter, the contract will automatically renew for successive 12-month periods, subject to three months' (one term's) notice by either party.

Orchestra Leader

Timeline

Application Process

Shortlisted applicants will be invited to attend an interview in January 2027. As part of the selection process, candidates will be asked to perform a piece of their own choice; piano accompaniment can be provided. Candidates may also be invited to perform a selected orchestral excerpt.

The timeline for this appointment has been designed to enable the successful candidate to take part in repertoire planning discussions with the Conductor in March 2027, contributing to the programming of the 2027–28 season.

Process	Timeline
Applications Open	Closing date 31 October 2026
Interview	Shorlisted candidates: January 2027
Trial Rehearsal	Final selection: January 2027
Appointment Notification	February 2027
2027 / 2028 Programming	March 2027

Orchestra Leader

Next Steps

How to Apply

Please send your CV and a covering letter to:
Charlie Dobson (Chair)

Email: charles_snaygill@yahoo.co.uk
Deadline: 31 October 2026

We warmly invite prospective applicants to attend our open rehearsal on Saturday 2 May—an excellent opportunity to see the orchestra in action and meet current members. Alternatively attend our upcoming concerts in June.

You can also visit our website to learn more about the orchestra and listen to excerpts from recent performances:

www.settleorchestra.org.uk

Orchestra Leader

Join Us

Discover

- A welcoming and committed orchestra at the heart of its community
- The opportunity to work with emerging conductors from across the world
- A varied and rewarding concert programme
- Engaged audiences and a supportive musical environment

Looking ahead, Settle Orchestra is committed to broadening its artistic horizons and deepening its role within the community.

We are exploring future collaborations that celebrate music as a universal language—building cultural connections, sharing diverse perspectives, and creating meaningful musical experiences that resonate beyond the concert hall.

The Leader will play an important role in shaping and supporting this evolving vision.

Settle Orchestral Society: registered charity number 1025554

Settle Orchestral Society

We Look Forward to Meeting You

www.settleorchestra.org.uk

Facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/settleorchestra

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