

The 23rd



Burton upon Trent Music Festival aims to provide a platform to amateur performers to enable them to perform and receive a professional adjudication about their performance.

Management Team 2025/2026

President	Coral Gould MBE
Vice President	John Gould
Chair	Sharon Bonner LLCM
Vice Chair	Patricia Thorpe
Treasurer	Chris Moss
Federation Files Secretary	Anne Andrews
Entries Secretary	<i>Vacant</i>
Trophies Secretary	Patricia Thorpe
Stewards Secretary	Jean Edwards
Publicity Secretary	Lilly Prince
Associate Members	Carol Brittle Khan, Christine Eales, Katie Robb

The Burton upon Trent Competitive Music Festival is a member of The British and International Federation of Music, Dance and Speech.



PERFORM | EDUCATE | INSPIRE



Message from the Chairman

Thank you for taking the time to read the Burton Music Festival 2026 syllabus. As always, our goal is to provide competitors with a platform to perform and be assessed by experienced professionals in the music field. We're continually working to grow and improve the Festival, taking on board feedback from competitors, teachers, and sponsors.

This year, we're delighted to announce **a major new addition** to our programme — **GUITAR classes**, joining our much-loved Vocal and Piano categories! You'll also notice some **new Vocal classes**, so be sure to check the class details at the end of this syllabus for full information.

To give everyone a little more preparation time, the Festival will take place slightly later this year — **on Sunday 19th April 2026**. We hope this change will make it easier for all participants to finalise their entries and repertoire.

We remain committed to keeping costs as low as possible. However, due to rising expenses, we have made a small increase to entry fees — the first since 2022.

NEW – Guitar Classes

We're thrilled to welcome Guitar as a new instrument category! Working closely with local guitar teachers, we've developed a range of classes designed to suit different ages and abilities. These include Electric Guitar classes for various age groups, an Open Acoustic Guitar class, and a special **Acoustic Guitar with Song** class — perfect for budding guitarist-singers.

As with all new additions, these classes will be reviewed after the 2026 Festival to see where we can make improvements.

Vocal Class Updates

We continue to offer our **special Vocal class** for teachers, professional singers, and full-time singing students. New this year is a **Musical Theatre Recital Class**, giving competitors the chance to perform three contrasting songs from stage musicals or musical films — an exciting opportunity for those passionate about this genre

Adjudicators

We're delighted to welcome two new adjudicators to our panel and to finally greet Ben Costello in person, following his excellent work during our online "Covid Festival." We're confident all our adjudicators will provide invaluable encouragement and professional insight to every participant.

Sponsorship Opportunities

We are once again deeply grateful to our sponsors, whose generosity makes this Festival possible. With the introduction of new Guitar classes, we are seeking **additional sponsorship** to support prizes and awards. If you or someone you know would like to contribute, we'd love to hear from you — please contact us at

burtoncompetitivemusicfestival@gmail.com

If you have any questions about anything, please email burtoncompetitivemusicfestival@gmail.com and one of the Team will contact you.

Thank you again and we look forward to receiving your application.

Sharon Bonner



2026 Timescales

- Monday 3rd November 2025 Online applications open
[Apply Here](#)
- Saturday 28th February 2026 Deadline for online applications, including choice of pieces to be performed.
- Saturday 28th February 2026 Deadline for application payments.
Applications will be denied if any payments are not received by midnight.
- Saturday 21st March 2026 Deadline for submission of music for accompanist. To be submitted **in PDF format**, by email to:
burtoncompetitivemusicfestival@gmail.com
- Saturday 28th March 2026 Deadline for submission of backing tracks for Pop and Jazz classes. These should be submitted **in MP3 format** and further information of the provision of these files will be provided to entrants after application.

Sunday 19th April 2026 Day of Music Festival





Adjudicators

Ben Costello – Vocal Adjudicator

Ben is a freelance musical director, adjudicator, singing coach and accompanist, working internationally, and is also Artistic Director of Thames Concerts.

He is a generalist music adjudicator for the British and International Federation of Festivals, and is also a member of the new adjudicator interviewing panel. He was a member of the Adjudicators' Council for 11 years, and stepped down as Music Chairman in 2025.

He is also a music examiner for LCME and a consultant on their musical theatre syllabi.

A specialist in musical theatre and vocal performance, Ben has been musical director for numerous productions across the UK, and is involved at the cutting edge of performing arts training in London, with his portfolio over the years including many well known Performing Arts colleges. He also teaches singing at Kingston Grammar School and Tiffin Girls' School.

Born and based in London, Ben trained initially as a flautist before majoring in piano, singing and conducting. He read Music at Kingston University and the London College of Music, subsequently joining the teaching staff as the College's first resident MD.

Ben remains much sought-after as an accompanist, and collaborates in a variety of genres with countless singers and instrumentalists in many performing environments. He is also a Liveryman and on the Court of the Worshipful Company of Musicians. He chaired the Company's prestigious annual musical direction scholarship for eight years, and is presently Chairman of the Company's Jazz Committee.

Outside music, Ben is a keen motorcyclist and wine bore.





Richard Haslam – Guitar & Vocal Adjudicator

Richard studied for at Sussex University for a degree in Education, specialising in Music and also at the Royal College of Music where he gained a Diploma in Pianoforte Teaching and a Distinction in Grade 8 singing.

Richard was Director of Music at Burgess Hill School for Girls for nearly thirty years where he taught to A level as well as running a variety of extra-curricular activities including Chamber groups, Choirs and Orchestras and has recently retired from full time teaching.

Richard has taught piano and singing to Diploma standard and has also been a Moderator for GCSE Music and an examiner for A Level Music. He is currently an adjudicator for the British and International Federation of Festivals and a Mentor for Music for Youth.

Richard also examines for the ABRSM and has completed a number of overseas tours. He is an experienced accompanist, conductor and singer and has worked with a number of different groups in the community including Choral and Operatic Societies.

Richard ran his own choir - " Cantemus"-for over twenty years and raised over £300,000 for charity. He currently enjoys singing 1st Tenor in the Stratford-upon-Avon Chamber Choir.

Eileen Field – Piano & Vocal Adjudicator

Soprano soloist, accompanist and choral director, Eileen studied at the Royal Academy of Music and is a teacher of singing and piano from beginners to post-graduate level, and gives masterclasses for choirs and solo singers.

She has been an ABRSM examiner for forty years and worked as a Consultant Moderator, Trainer, Grade and Diploma examiner, and Lead Singing Consultant for the ABRSM Singing Syllabus and the ABRSM Songbooks, She has also selected and written performance notes for the Boosey & Hawkes Song Collections.

She has examined and presented seminars for teachers in the UK, Southern Africa, the Far East, Bermuda and the USA, and throughout Europe, including Scandinavia, the Faroe Islands, Iceland, Turkey and Poland, and her work as a long-established adjudicator for the British and International Federation of Festivals has taken her all over the British Isles and Ireland. She was appointed an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in 1998.



2026 Classes

General Information

- Ages refer to age of entrant as of 1st April 2026.
- Trophies are given to be kept for 1 year and are to be returned to the Trophies Secretary before the 2027 festival.

JUNIOR VOCAL CLASSES – UNDER 18

Class Number and Name	Song Type	Max. Song Duration	Sponsor and Award Name	Prize	Entry Fee
Class 1: 10 Years and Under	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The Heron Video Trophy and The D&C Eales Award	1 st - £25 2 nd - £15 3 rd - £10	£7.75
Class 2: 11 to 14 Years	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The Albion Trophy and The Caroline Owen Award	1 st - £25 2 nd - £15 3 rd - £10	£7.75
Class 3: 10 Years and Under	Show or Musical Film song 1970 - present	Max. 3 mins	The Mellow Dramatics Trophy and Award	1 st - £25 2 nd - £15 3 rd - £10	£7.75
Class 4: 11 to 14 Years	Show or Musical Film song 1970 - present	Max. 3 mins	The Vadis Insurance Brokers Trophy and Award	1 st - £25 2 nd - £15 3 rd - £10	£7.75
Class 5: 15 to 16 Years	Show or Musical Film song 1970 - present	Max. 3 mins	The Murray's Funeral Directors Trophy and Award	1 st - £25 2 nd - £15 3 rd - £10	£7.75
Class 6: 15 Years and Under	Classical song	Max. 3 mins	The Eric Reynolds Trophy and The Ivy Smith Award	1 st - £25 2 nd - £15 3 rd - £10	£7.75
Class 7: 16 to 18 Years	Classical song	Max. 3 mins	The Tim Lawrence Trophy and The Nick Lawrence Award	£50	£7.75

SENIOR SOLO VOCAL CLASSES

Class Number and Name	Song Type	Max. Song Duration	Sponsor and Award Name	Prize	Entry Fee
Class 8: Open Folk Song	Traditional, Unaccompanied	Max. 3 mins	The Anne Leatherland Trophy and The Kate and Brian Robb Award	1st - £25 2nd - £15 3rd - £10	£8.75
Class 9: Open Foreign Language	Foreign Language	Max. 4 mins	The Darquise Bilodeau Trophy and The Barbara May Award	£50	£8.75
Class 10: 17 Years and Over	Show or Musical Film song 1970 - present	Max. 4 mins	The New Era Trophy and The JASS Award	£50	£8.75
Class 11: Classical Operatic or Oratorio Aria	Classical song	Max. 4 mins	The Mason Family Trophy and The Friday's Friends Award	£50	£8.75
Class 12: English Classical	Art Song	Max. 3 mins	The Carol Brittle-Khan Trophy & Denis Mansfield Award	£50	£8.75
Class 13: Gilbert and Sullivan	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The Mike Thompson Trophy and Karen Thompson Award	£50	£8.75
Class 14: Recital (<i>three contrasting pieces</i>)	Own choice	Max. 12 mins	The Thornley Trophy and The Festivities with Friends Award	£50	£11.75
Class 21: Jazz Solo (<i>optional backing track</i>)	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The Syd Jones Trophy and Award	£50	£8.75
Class 22: Pop Song (<i>Backing Track in MP4 format</i>)	Pop Song	Strictly 4 mins	The Edwards Electrical Trophy and The 'Jenny' Award	£50	£8.75
Class 23: Open 1940 – 1969 Musical Theatre	Show or Musical Film song	Max. 3 mins	The Coral Gould Trophy and The Thorpe Award	£50	£8.75

Class Number and Name	Song Type	Max. Song Duration	Sponsor and Award Name	Prize	Entry Fee
Class 24 : Musical Theatre Recital (<i>three contrasting pieces</i>)	Show or Musical Film song	Max. 12 mins	TBC	TBC	£11.75
Class 30: Vocal Teachers, Professional Singers and Full Time Vocal Students	Own Choice	Max. 4 mins	TBC	£0	£11.75

DUET & ENSEMBLE VOCAL CLASSES

Class Number and Name	Song Type	Max. Song Duration	Sponsor and Award Name	Prize	Entry Fee
Class 15: Duet 11 Years and Under	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The Keith Gould Trophy and the Andrew Last Award	£50	£11.75
Class 16: Duet 12 to 17 Years	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The Rachel Gilman Trophy and The Alice Rose Bridal Award	£50	£11.75
Class 17: Duet 18 Years and Over	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The Keith Gould Trophy and The Steven Mansfield Award	£50	£11.75
Class 18: Duet Musical Theatre Open	Show or Musical Film song	Max. 3 mins	The Crescendo Vocal Trophy and Sharon Bonner Award	£50	£11.75
Class 19: Junior Ensemble <i>Ensemble classes limited to between 3 and 12 participants</i>	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The Edwards Electrical Trophy	TBC	£11.75
Class 20: Open Ensemble <i>Ensemble classes limited to between 3 and 12 participants</i>	Own choice	Max. 4 mins	The Burton Musical Theatre Company Trophy and Award	£50	£11.75

PIANO CLASSES

Class Number and Name	Song Type	Max. Song Duration	Sponsor and Award Name	Prize	Entry Fee
Class 25: Beginners Piano	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The David Mansfield Trophy and The Excel Music Schools Award	1st - £25 2 nd - £15 3 rd - £10	£7.75
Class 26: Grade 1 - 3 Piano	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The March Trophy and The Mike Mear & Margaret Jolland Award	1st - £25 2 nd - £15 3 rd - £10	£7.75
Class 27: Grade 4 - 5 Piano	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The Music with Carol Trophy and Award	£50	£8.75
Class 28: Grade 6 - 7 Piano	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The Edd Thorpe Trophy and Award	£50	£8.75
Class 29: Grade 8 and Above Piano	Own choice	Max. 3 mins	The Festival Trophy	TBC	£8.75

GUITAR CLASSES

Class Number and Name	Song Type	Max. Song Duration	Sponsor and Award Name	Prize	Entry Fee
Class 31: Guitar 12 yrs and under - Open	Own Choice	Max. 4 mins	TBC	TBC	£7.75
Class 32: Guitar 13- 18 yrs – Open	Own Choice	Max. 4 mins	TBC	TBC	£7.75

Class Number and Name	Song Type	Max. Song Duration	Sponsor and Award Name	Prize	Entry Fee
Class 33: Guitar Over 18 yrs – Open	Own Choice	Max. 4 mins	TBC	TBC	£8.75
Class 34: Acoustic Guitar - Open	Own Choice	Max. 4 mins	TBC	TBC	£8.75
Class 35: Acoustic Guitar with song	Own Choice	Max. 4 mins	TBC	TBC	£8.75

ACCOMPANIST FEES :

All entrants requiring the official accompanist will be required to pay a £6.00 accompanist fee for the day, payable at the time of entry, this covers an unlimited number of classes.

WEBSITE & ONLINE ENTRY FORM:

<https://burtonmusicfestival.com/>

BANK DETAILS FOR PAYMENT OF FEES:

Account name : Burton Music Festival
Sort Code: 40-15-20
Account Number: 62093928



Overall Winners

Winners from each class compete for the Junior, Senior and Piano Overall Winner awards. The Overall Winners will be selected by the adjudicators.

Junior Overall Winner

Winners from classes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 15, 16 & 19
The BADAC Trophy and the Little Theatre Company Award of £50

Senior Overall Winner

Winners from classes 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22 & 24
The Coral and John Gould Quaich and The Coral and John Gould Award of £100

Piano Overall Winner

Winners from classes 25, 26, 27 & 29
The Nannette Mansfield Award, donated by Denis Mansfield, of £50

Special Awards

The adjudicators will be responsible for awarding the special awards.

The Mabel Millin Trophy and Adele Bates Award

Awarded to the most promising vocalist under the age of 21. The receiver of this award does not need to have been placed in any of their classes.

The Marilyn Baker Trophy & Katie & Brian Robb Award

Awarded to the most promising female vocalist throughout the competition. The receiver of this award does not need to have been placed in any of their classes.

The Robert Adcock Trophy

Awarded to the most promising male vocalist throughout the competition. The receiver of this award does not need to have been placed in any of their classes.

