Maidstone Symphony Orchestra is seeking a successor to its long-standing professional conductor/music director Brian Wright, who will be retiring at the end of the current 2026-27 concert season.

The Orchestra

Founded in 1910 as Maidstone Orchestral Society, MSO today is a full-sized symphony orchestra bringing together a mix of professionals and ex-professionals, music teachers and skilled amateur players from across Kent. With regular rehearsals from September to mid-May it prepares five public concerts a year and aims at a professional performance standard.

Maidstone Orchestral Society is a registered charity (CIO) and is managed by a volunteer Committee.

Further information about the orchestra can be found at **mso.org.uk**.
Past repertoire is listed on the website. A secure web link to samples of recordings from recent concerts can be provided on request to **secretary@mso.org.uk**.

The Role

As we approach the retirement of our long-standing conductor Brian Wright we are seeking an experienced conductor/music director to take over the role from September 2028 onwards.

The successful candidate will:

- Plan and conduct weekly rehearsals and concerts (currently five per season) between September and May.

- Engage with orchestra members, encouraging a constructive and motivating working environment with high artistic standards.

- Work with the orchestra's leader, section leaders and management committee to continue to develop the orchestra's capabilities.

- Assist the committee on the selection of concert repertoire and choice of soloists with the aim of further developing its audience reach while taking account of financial constraints.

- Attend meetings of the Committee where relevant in an advisory capacity (normally four or five per year, mostly held on Zoom).

Person Specification

We are looking for an energetic and creative conductor/music director who can inspire high standards of performance and help us to develop further our audience reach. The ideal candidate will be able to demonstrate:

- Significant orchestral conducting experience and strong rehearsal technique

- Excellent musicianship and knowledge of orchestral repertoire

- Proven skills in working well with soloists

- Ability to motivate, communicate clearly and work patiently and effectively with professional and amateur musicians

- Commitment to creating a positive, constructive working environment

- Collaborative mindset in working with the orchestra's leadership and contributing to programming and strategic development.

Time Commitment

We are seeking a candidate who is committed to working with us for an extended period, ideally not less than five years.

Concerts are held on Saturday evenings in between October and May, preceded by an afternoon rehearsal. Occasionally a concert may be held instead on a Sunday afternoon.

Weekly rehearsals are held from early September to May on Thursday evenings from 1930 to 2200, normally in Maidstone. There are no rehearsals during Kent school holidays. In addition there is normally an afternoon rehearsal from 1430 to 1800 on the final Sunday before each concert. In total this adds up to 30 weekly rehearsals, 5 Sunday rehearsals, plus the concert day afternoon rehearsals.

Remuneration

The Music Director is engaged on a self-employed basis and is therefore expected to account for his/her own income tax, VAT and national insurance contributions.

Remuneration will be negotiable, currently in the range of £9,000 to £12,500 per full season dependent on experience, subject to inflation. Reasonable travel expenses will be available.

How to Apply

We welcome applications from a diverse range of candidates and are committed to equality of opportunity.

Applications should be emailed to **secretary@mso.org.uk** by 11 pm GMT on Sunday 6 December at the latest enclosing:

- A curriculum vitae including details of relevant conducting experience.
- A cover letter describing how your experience and approach would deliver the skills and qualities set out in the person specification.
- If available, links to any video recordings of recent rehearsals or performances.
- Details of two referees (one preferably from a current or recent orchestral appointment) whom we can contact if you are short-listed.

Selection process and timetable

An initial shortlist of candidates will be invited to an interview in January 2027, which may be followed by an invitation to take part of a Thursday evening rehearsal in January or February. Final short-listed candidates will each be invited to conduct a paid series of rehearsals leading to a concert in the 2027-28 season. The successful Music Director will be chosen following those concerts.