

Gloucester Cathedral celebrates new organ dedication with Their Royal Highnesses

Tuesday 7 July, 2026

A new chapter begins in the Cathedral's 1,000-year musical story.

Gloucester Cathedral has marked a landmark moment in its musical and cultural history with the dedication of its magnificent new organ at a special service on Sunday 5 July, attended by Their Royal Highnesses The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester.

The service brought together civic leaders, benefactors, musicians, clergy and members of the wider Cathedral community to celebrate the completion of one of the most significant investments in the Cathedral's musical life in recent decades.

Their Royal Highnesses attended in their capacity as Joint Patrons of the Cathedral's *In Tune* Music and Organ Campaigns, recognising the national significance of the project and its contribution to Britain's rich musical heritage.

Designed and built by Nicholson & Co and housed within the Cathedral's beautifully restored 17th-century organ cases, the new instrument combines exceptional craftsmanship with modern engineering to serve worship, concerts and music education for generations to come.

Featuring 3,338 pipes, each producing its own note or tone, the organ is capable of an extraordinary range of sound - from the gentlest whisper to a powerful, majestic crescendo.

Its rich foundations, soaring reeds and shimmering upper voices are brought to life by the Cathedral's magnificent acoustics, where sound resonates through the vast medieval space to create the immersive, awe-inspiring experience for which cathedral organs are renowned. With the ability to sustain notes indefinitely, the instrument can fill the building with music that is felt as much as heard.

The new organ will enrich the Cathedral's worship, inspire audiences, educate future generations of organists, and support concerts, recitals and community music-making for many years to come.

A landmark for sacred music

The occasion reflected Gloucester Cathedral's long-standing reputation as one of the country's leading centres of sacred music, while reaffirming its commitment to ensuring that this musical tradition continues to flourish for future generations.

Andrew Zihni, The Dean of Gloucester Cathedral, said:

"This new organ is far more than an extraordinary musical instrument. It is a gift to the Cathedral, to the city and to future generations. It will enrich our worship, inspire audiences, nurture young musicians and enable Gloucester Cathedral to continue sharing the transformative power of music with everyone who walks through our doors.

"We are deeply grateful to everyone whose generosity, vision and dedication have made this remarkable achievement possible."

Adrian Partington, Director of Music and Organist at Gloucester Cathedral, said:

"For any cathedral musician, a new organ is a once-in-a-generation event. This remarkable instrument has been designed specifically for Gloucester Cathedral's unique acoustic and musical tradition, giving us an extraordinary range of colour, power and subtlety.

"It will transform the way we accompany worship, support our renowned choir, singing and organ academies, and perform the great organ repertoire, while also opening up exciting opportunities for education, community collaboration and creativity.

Investing in the future

Alongside the Cathedral's growing Singing and Organ Academies, the instrument will help nurture the

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next generation of musicians through chorister education, organ scholarships, outreach programmes and opportunities for young people from across Gloucestershire to develop their musical talents.

The Cathedral's music programme welcomes thousands of people each year, starting with toddlers and running through to adulthood, ensuring that music remains at the heart of the Cathedral's mission and community engagement.

The Cathedral hopes the momentum created by the project will inspire continued support for its wider music programme, helping to sustain choral scholarships, educational initiatives and opportunities for communities across the region to engage with world-class music in an extraordinary setting.

Conclusion

As the final notes of the Dedication Service resonated through the Cathedral's historic nave, they marked both the culmination of years of vision, craftsmanship and generosity, and the beginning of a vibrant new era in Gloucester Cathedral's musical life.

With its new organ now at the heart of worship and performance, Gloucester Cathedral looks forward to welcoming congregations, visitors and audiences to experience its magnificent sound for many decades to come.

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