



# Jennifer Smith to stand down as Executive Director of Longborough Festival Opera

**Today 13 September 2023, Longborough Festival Opera (LFO) announced that its Executive Director, Jennifer Smith, will be standing down from her role after nine outstanding years.**

Smith took up the post of Executive Director in 2014. Under her leadership, Longborough Festival Opera has undergone a period of significant expansion. Alongside operational changes, the charity's turnover has grown by 66%, the administrative team has quadrupled in scale, and charitable reserves have expanded to provide a stronger bedrock for the charity's future. Jennifer steered LFO through the challenging period of closure due to Covid, working alongside Artistic Director Polly Graham to produce an innovative socially distanced solution, moving the 2021 season into a 270-seat circus tent. Jennifer has championed the substantial development of Longborough's educational work, helping to increase the reach from 75 students in 2014 to 3,000 young people in 2023.

Polly Graham said *"Jennifer's leadership has been instrumental in the festival's growth and success, and she has brought us through some challenging years, especially recently, with flying colours. We're sad to see her move on while looking forward to finding a worthy successor."*

Music Director, Anthony Negus added *"Since taking over the reins at Longborough almost a decade ago, Jennifer has been a wonderful force for transformation with her energy, passion and love of music."*

Jennifer commented *"Longborough is, and always has been, an outstanding festival. I have been incredibly fortunate to work with committed colleagues, trustees, artists, and the inspirational Graham family. I am brimming with pride on what we have collectively achieved. Longborough has a*



## Media Enquiries

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*tremendous future ahead, especially with exciting plans to stage the Ring Cycle in 2024. While my career now takes me in a new direction, I will continue to be a cheerleader for Longborough and its important work both on and off stage."*

Andrew Mosely, Chair of Longborough Festival Opera, commented: *"On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I thank Jennifer for her nine years of committed service to LFO, enhancing its reputation as a leading force for opera performance and musical education. Thanks to Jennifer's work, Longborough is in great shape to embark on its next phase of development. We wish her all the best for the next stage of her career".*

Jennifer will be taking up the role of Domestic Bursar at Balliol College from late Autumn 2023.

LFO will now begin its search for a new Executive Director, led by Peridot Partners,  
<https://www.peridotpartners.co.uk/>

**Applications for the post are now open.**

**Please contact Rebekah Abbott [rebekah@peridotpartners.co.uk](mailto:rebekah@peridotpartners.co.uk) or visit <https://www.peridotpartners.co.uk/jobs/executive-director-longborough-festival-opera/>**

# Notes to Editors

## About Longborough Festival Opera

Martin and Lizzie Graham started promoting opera in the grounds of their home in 1991 as Banks Fee Opera. Longborough Festival Opera has since grown into an established opera company in the heart of the Cotswolds, with an annual season in a purpose-built opera house seating 500. The acclaimed opera director Polly Graham, Martin and Lizzie's daughter, was appointed Artistic Director in 2018, working alongside Anthony Negus, Music Director and Jennifer Smith, Executive Director.

Longborough's intimate auditorium enables the audience to experience the drama and emotion on the stage on an almost personal level, firmly securing the summer season into the diaries of a loyal and ever-increasing audience.

Longborough Festival Opera is a charity relying on ticket sales and the generosity of its members and audience.

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