

# BBC pull Cardiff Singer of the World 2025 competition

The BBC has confirmed that its world renowned Cardiff Singer of the World competition will not be staged next year following uncertainty over its home since inception St David's Hall being available and no alternative venue secured.

Cardiff Council-owned St David's Hall was closed last year after reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) was discovered in its ceiling. Several panels in the roof are 'red-critical' and others are 'red-high risk'.

The council said it will remain closed until 2025 whilst installation of a new roof and refurbishment work is carried out.

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The BBC earlier this year said its preference was to hold the biennial operatic competition at St David's Hall, but was exploring other locations in the city as a contingency.

Having ruled out St David's Hall, the public service broadcaster has now confirmed that specific dates it had identified for staging the competition at the Wales Millennium Centre (WMC) couldn't be accommodated.

Instead of a week long competition, the BBC will now host a one off gala concert at the WMC featuring previous winners and competitors. The concert will form part of the WMC's Llais Festival. The concert will be recorded for broadcast on BBC Four and BBC Two Wales.

The decision not to stage the competition next year will come

as a blow to fans of the event. Cardiff Singer of the World also plays a positive role in promoting Wales as an inward investment location. It has been solely hosted at St David's Hall since the first competition 41 years ago.

The BBC said the competition will return to a refurbished St David's Hall in 2027.

Rhuanedd Richards, director BBC Cymru Wales said: "BBC Cardiff Singer of the World holds an important place in the international musical calendar as well as here in Wales. This gala concert is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate some of the exceptional voices to emerge from this competition to be enjoyed not just at the Wales Millennium Centre but by audiences across the UK.

"I'm also delighted to be working with the dynamic and creative team at Llais Festival and look forward to a night to remember at the Wales Millennium Centre next October."

An outsourced broadcast contract for Cardiff Singer of the World, including next year's one night gala concert, has been put out to tender by the BBC. Also being tendered are contracts to produce Blue Peter, the Eurovision Song Contest and Sports Personality of the Year.

The tenders form part of a requirement to open up more BBC television programmes to competition, following the launch of its Compete or Compare strategy in 2014.