

Dear Chorale Members

The Chorale has had a busy year with three brilliant concerts, a wonderful wine quiz, two lovely led walks, a perfect picnic and a fun summer social. All in all, it's been a good year: thanks to all of you.

We started well. Our Christmas concert on 2 December was a sell-out. Together with St Paul's Sinfonia and soprano Emma Walsh, we sang highlights from Handel's *Messiah*, plus Christmas carols and music for choir and audience. We received excellent feedback on social media and from audience members.

At our Spring concert on 23 March, together with St Paul's Sinfonia and four soloists, we sang the Haydn *Nelson Mass* and Schubert *Mass in G*. Our Musical Director, Mark Griffiths, considered the quality of our singing was the best he had heard from us.

Our Summer concert on 15 June presented us with a few organisational challenges. To our credit we rose to the challenges and received praise from St George's on how well we did. Bernstein's *Chichester Psalms* was a musical challenge, but we loved it and sang our hearts out! Chilcott's *Songs and Cries of London Town* was a lot of fun and Shearing's *Songs and Sonnets from Shakespeare* was beautiful. We received much praise for our performance, including from Mark at our Summer Social via a voice message, as by then he was on an opera tour in Japan. Also, a new summer dress code for male singers and musicians was introduced successfully.

We thank Mark Griffiths for leading us so ably throughout the year. We also thank our accompanist, Aeron Preston, who has made such a positive contribution to the Chorale.

We are pleased to confirm the dates of the three concerts for the upcoming season.

For a variety of reasons, confirmation of the programme for our Summer concert is not yet available. Members will be given this information as soon as it becomes available.

Autumn Concert - Saturday, 23 November 2024

Richard Blackford: *Mirror of Perfection* with Soprano and Bass soloists.

Faure: *Requiem*

Orchestra: St Paul's Sinfonia

Spring Concert – Saturday, 22 March 2025

Mozart: *Great Mass in C Minor*,

Orchestra: St Paul's Sinfonia

Summer Concert – Saturday, 14 June 2025

Programme to be confirmed.

The Annual General Meeting

This will be held on Tuesday, 8 October 2024, details to follow.

Further details regarding the 2024-25 season are set out below this letter.

We look forward to seeing you on Tuesday, 10 September, for the start of our 65th season.

Best wishes

Rosaleen Bishop
President

Sally Moran
Committee Chair

DETAILS AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 2024/2025 SEASON

REHEARSALS

Rehearsals will take place in St George's Church starting at 7.45 pm on Tuesday, 10 September, led by our Musical Director, Mark Griffiths. Rehearsals end at 9.45 pm. The rehearsal schedules for the three terms are attached and are also posted in the members' area of our website (password: Elgar).

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual subscriptions, ticket sales and money raised by Chorale members do not cover the cost of holding rehearsals, supplying music scores and putting on three concerts a year. The Chorale runs at a loss and reserves have had to be used to meet these expenses. Without an increase in subscriptions, we will drain our reserves in the next few years and place the Chorale in a financially unviable position. After careful consideration, the Committee has agreed an annual subscription for the 2024-25 season of £225, which is a £45 increase from last year. Members aged 30 or younger are asked to pay 50%, i.e. £112.50p per year. If it would help your finances to pay your subscription termly, please contact our Membership Secretary, Jan Messeder.

We also ask that the annual subscription is paid by bank transfer as this helps to simplify and reduce the considerable workload of our Treasurer, Elaine Ullmann. The Beckenham Chorale bank details are:

Lloyds Bank Sort code 30-91-35 Account number 01157186

Your payment should be identified as: BCSubs24/25 and your surname.

Over the last few years, a significant number of members have generously added an extra amount to their subscription, and this has been much appreciated. If you can, please consider making a similar voluntary contribution this year.

All annual subscriptions must be paid in full by the middle of October 2024.

MEMBERSHIP

Our current membership stands at 72. We welcomed several new members to the Chorale during the 2023/24 season and they have already made a positive contribution to the Chorale. As ever, we want to increase our numbers. To this end, we will hold a Come and Sing open rehearsal on Tuesday, 24 September. Flyers were included in the programme for our Summer concert, and it is also advertised on our website. More details of how to help advertise this will be sent out separately.

At the Summer Social members of the Committee and others not on the Committee introduced themselves and explained their areas of responsibility. It was evident to all the wide range of tasks that need to be undertaken so that we have enjoyable rehearsals as well as very successful concerts. It is fully appreciated that members contribute to the success of the Chorale on top of their own busy lives but, if you feel you could contribute in any way, please contact Sally Moran (Chair), Jan Messeder (Membership Secretary) or Henrike Hawkins (Concert Manager). Their contact details are as follows:

Sally Moran – sally.moran@btopenworld.com

Jan Messeder – jan_messeder@hotmail.co.uk

Henrike Hawkins – henriehawkins@hotmail.com