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Update Sunday 31 May 2020 (also at [Members Area / Weekly Updates](#))

Hi all, hope everyone is healthy, staying safe and keeping their spirits up. This update focuses on two key items, both important. Read on!

Letter from Darius (reproduced below, attached, and at [Members Area / Weekly Updates](#))

“Dear choir members,

I hope you're all keeping safe and well. It seems strange to think we would have done two concerts – and be well on the way to a third – since we last met. People's experiences of the lockdown vary so widely that it's difficult to find a way forward that will suit everyone, but while our normal activities are suspended, we still have to look ahead and plan, even while we recognise that plans we make may not come to reality.

I've been meeting with a group of music directors of symphonic choirs – that is, choirs who do large concerts with professional orchestras, such as the Halle, BBC orchestras, LSO, etc. This has been to support each other and to exchange ideas and information about our current activities. Some choirs have suspended activity altogether, sometimes because the orchestras to which they belong have furloughed all their staff. But most have continued some kind of online activity. It's become clear that, in music as in many other things, online activities have been a lifeline and given us extraordinary ways of making music that we might not have considered before. But paradoxically it has also underlined how irreplaceable and unique live, face-to-face interaction and music-making is.

Online rehearsals can never replace the live experience and are in some ways quite limited. But most choirs that have tried them have found them highly enjoyable and worthwhile. The Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, which is several weeks into doing these, still get weekly attendances of over 130. The Bach Choir (not the Sheffield one) have run 'come and sing' events which have attracted 400-500 participants from across the world. They are an excellent way of keeping in touch with the music we're doing, keeping on top of vocal condition, and perhaps most of all, maintaining the sense of ourselves as a musical community that's such an important part of singing in a choir.

We are hoping to do our first rehearsal with the full choir on June 30, as a 'taster' for when we start rehearsing again in September. Before that a small group of us will have a trial run to iron out any teething problems. As the lockdown relaxes gradually, it may be that 'live' rehearsals for small sections become possible which can be integrated with other choir members participating online. I'm also hoping to put together an online performance of the new arrangement I've done for the choir with the Black Dyke Band, for each of you to record individually. We'll make sure that any online rehearsals are as technically straightforward as possible, and send out clear instructions to enable even the least technologically confident to participate easily. I hope as many as possible will join us – it will be great to see you all again and feel we're making music together. If you have any questions please drop an email to me or to Anne or Marianne.

With very best wishes, Darius”

Messiah update

Following much discussion with Darius, the French and German choir officials and the City Hall, the committee has reluctantly decided to postpone the brass *Messiah* until Easter 2022. The City Hall isn't free for any of the potential dates around Easter 2021 so we were looking at the cathedral again, but there were clashes with other concerts there, as well as difficulties with the

visiting choirs. Also, and importantly, it was felt that we need to present this special concert as a triumph rather than a work-around.

Members who bought tickets at rehearsal or via the cathedral, please contact Finance Officer Graham Dawson (GrahamDawson@sheffieldphil.org). You will need to state (a) whether you purchased at rehearsal or from the cathedral, (b) how many tickets you purchased at each price, and (c) supply your bank details. Graham will reimburse you via a bank transfer. We will inform the cathedral that we have made the refunds on their behalf. If you bought your tickets on-line, you don't need to do anything; WeGotTickets will re-imburse you in due course.

What to do if your contact details change

If any of your contact details change, including address, email or telephone number, please send a message to emailchange2019@sheffieldphil.org to ensure that your details are amended on the Membership database and that you continue to receive the weekly update.

Weekly updates, Chorus and Classical Sheffield websites and passwords

If ever you don't receive the weekly update, please contact Membership Officer Marianne Grayson at MarianneGrayson@sheffieldphil.org. However it is uploaded every week in [Members Area / Weekly Updates](#). The chorus user name is the same for every member, it's the word *member* and the password is *darius5*; please don't share these. Urgent messages are always listed above the log-in box so members can read them without logging in.

The Members Area of the website lists rehearsal details, rehearsal notes and links to recordings, concert and re-audition arrangements, as well as dates for the following season, our official stage procedure, Darius' rehearsal schedule, how to look after your voice etc.

The website is available at <http://sheffieldphil.org> or via a Google search. If taken to an error page, clear your cache (computer memory) by pressing REFRESH, or F5 on your PC keyboard. Alternatively try turning off your router for 10 minutes before switching it on again. If none of this works please contact Anne Adams who will inform webmasters Matthew Morgan and Bill Best.

Classical Sheffield Member Area: <https://classicalsheffield.org.uk/about> ; pass = **moremusic**.

Chair Paul Henstridge chairman@sheffieldphil.org

Administrator Anne Adams administrator@sheffieldphil.org

Privacy Policy – summary SPC uses member emails in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) May 2018, ie, only to help run the Chorus and keep members informed about SPC activities. SPC will never pass your data to third parties - if another member asks for your contact details SPC will only ever share them if you consent. SPC will never use your data to send messages from third parties. Weekly updates are uploaded to the Chorus website every week, however email is the easiest and quickest method of sharing information so we hope you continue to allow us to send them to you. However, you may opt out by contacting administrator@sheffieldphil.org. The full Privacy Policy is on the Chorus website at <http://sheffieldphil.org/about-us/privacy-policy/>