

Important – Tues rehearsal arrangements, news about concert and social – see below

Combined live and virtual rehearsal for all Tue 22 June 2021; Answers to your frequently asked questions about rehearsals; Concert and social update; Making Music update; Diary dates; Reminders - Donations for the Chorus via Amazon, Music in the Round are hiring, Steel City Choristers looking for children to join, Music Hub recording; Tell us if contact details change; Websites and passwords; Contact emails

Weekly Update Saturday 19 June 2021 (also at [Members Area / Weekly Updates](#))

Live / virtual rehearsal on Tuesday 22 June 2021 (three attachments)

We are thrilled to be able to welcome – at long last - singers in a group of more than 30, to rehearse at St Mark's Church, Broomhill, for the next two weeks. St Mark's has been chosen to enable as many eligible singers to be involved as possible; Wesley Hall was just a bit too small. Nonetheless, the required Covid-19 safety measures still restricts the numbers somewhat, and the singing list (attached) comprises members with attendance of 50% or more who indicated their willingness to sing live in the online survey.

Marianne will contact these very shortly, and ask them to confirm their attendance on Tuesday 22 June. We will again rehearse the Rachmaninov movements 1, 3, 6, 8, 13 & 15, and Faure movements 1, 3, 5, 6 & 7. Darius may spend a bit of time moving us around, to test out the sound and see how the singers might best be fit into the space.

All members who are not attending live are of course very welcome – indeed encouraged - to attend the two rehearsals via Zoom. The link is the one we have been using each week:

<https://zoom.us/j/98573583645?pwd=czduZWUwdldOa09DWVpORU9UMktPUT09>

Instructions for using Zoom can be found in the Members Area of the Chorus website at [Members Area / Rehearsals](#).

Our Rehearsals and Events Officer James Oliver has prepared a special Risk Assessment and a 'What To Expect and Do' document relating to rehearsals in St Mark's Church, helped by bass and infectious diseases consultant Ben Stone – thanks to both men for this crucial work on our behalf. The two documents are attached, and it's very important that everyone who attends follows the instructions, which have been designed to mitigate the risks involved. **If you are attending live please make absolutely sure you have read and understand these.** You will also find them on the Chorus website at [Members Area / Rehearsals](#).

Thanks as always to Darius, Rachel and Marianne for organising and running the rehearsals, to Georgina for hosting last week, thus enabling Marianne to attend properly, and to Paul, James, Jim and Anne for help at the venue.

Answers to your frequently asked questions about rehearsals

- **How come we're no longer restricted to 30 people?** Ministers have made clear that the 'six singers only' rule does not apply if a choir is preparing for a professional event, and Making Music and our insurers have confirmed this. Since we are doing the Faure at a City Hall concert in January 2022, all members who have been rehearsing live are allowed to rehearse together as long as we can socially distance them all (and follow all the other measures of course). This is why we have hired St Mark's, ie, to provide the larger space required.

- **How do we know St Mark's Church is Covid-secure?** We have checked the venue's own Covid-19 Risk Assessment, and Paul, James and Marianne made a site visit on Tuesday to confirm our singers can be accommodated with the required social distancing. We have used Making Music's guidance (<https://www.makingmusic.org.uk/news/england-step-3-guidance-choirs>) as well as that from the [Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#).
- **Will vaccine/test status be checked?** No. We **are** requesting that people are either double vaccinated or have a negative lateral flow test on the day of the rehearsal, but we are trusting members to comply. We will continue to take everyone's temperature on the way into the venue.
- **I'm not on the singing list. Can I come on Tuesday?** Unfortunately not. Covid-19 safety precautions mean that numbers have to be controlled much more carefully, and limited to what is safe. Only those on the singing list may sing in the concert and attend the next two live rehearsals. We do hope everyone understands.
- **What about face coverings – and chatting?** Face coverings must be worn until we start to sing – and we can't stay to chat after the rehearsal.
- **What if I said I would sing live but I've changed my mind?** It goes without saying that anyone who feels ill should not attend, and anyone who decides that singing live is too much of a risk after all may drop out at any time. However, please let our Membership Officer Marianne Grayson know if you are on the rehearsal list and are unable to make it, so she can arrange for a substitute as soon as possible.
- **Is it too late to sign the petition about the 'six singers only' rule?** Not at all – it's still worth signing – see the Making Music update below for details if you want to help.

Concert and social – update (attachment)

We are still planning a performance of selected sections of Rachmaninov's *All Night Vigil* and Faure's *Requiem* at 6pm on Saturday 3 July 2021 in St Mark's Church, Broomhill, Sheffield. Joshua Stephens, previously organist at Sheffield Cathedral, will accompany the Faure on the organ. The concert music will be Rachmaninov movements 1, 3, 6, 8, 13 and 15, and Faure movements 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7. The 6pm performance will follow an afternoon rehearsal from 2.30pm to 4.30pm. The singing list is attached.

However, we have yet to finalise arrangements for social distancing in St Mark's, and may have to restrict audience numbers more than had been anticipated. We will know more once we have rehearsed in the concert venue and can be confident about how to space everyone – site visits and floor plans can only tell us so much! We may also have to charge a very small fee to ensure our insurance policy remains valid. We will share the details with everyone as soon as we can. We will be compiling a separate Risk Assessment in relation to the concert and will, of course, follow all the Covid precautions as required.

Turning to the social - we are extremely disappointed to have to announce that this event, which was to follow the concert, can no longer take place, because of the maintenance of restrictions until 19 July 2021. This is such a blow, as we were all looking forward to letting our hair down and having a jolly good time.

However, we are planning to have a social event after our first rehearsal in September. We will probably have a shorter-than-usual sing on Tuesday 7 September 2021, followed by a social.

Making Music update – sign the petition

Making Music [has now written to Oliver Dowden](#) at the DCMS to ask whether the government has received further scientific advice around the safety of singing, and if not, why the guidance

contains these inconsistencies. In addition, Making Music and abcd have launched the new [WellRehearsed free risk management rehearsal app](#) for all music groups to use to collect anonymous data, and help build a sector-wide picture of the spread of the virus. **Anne Adams is using the app on behalf of the Chorus.**

Making Music is still working closely with fellow organisations including Association of British Choral Directors, Association of British Orchestras, Incorporated Society of Musicians, Royal School of Church Music, Musicians Union, and members of the Singing Network UK, trying to

- understand what underlies the '6 singers only' limit
- identify how to achieve change of the current guidance and make sure that when Step 4 happens, choirs are able to meet on the same footing as other non-professional music or other non-professional arts groups.

The [petition to allow choirs to meet indoors](#) has over 58,000 signatures and is still worth signing to force a debate in Westminster Hall, keep the pressure on the government and DCMS, and to raise awareness with the public about this issue.

Diary dates (*dates in italics are electives*)

Dates for 2020-21

- Saturday 3 July 2021 at 6pm: performance of Faure's *Requiem* movements 1,3,4,5 and 7, and Rachmaninov's *All Night Vigil* movements 1, 3, 6, 8, 13 and 15. The performance will be held in St Mark's Church, Broomhill, Sheffield. Joshua Stevens will accompany the Faure on the organ.

Dates for 2021-22 and beyond

- *Saturday 9 October 2021 (Memorial service for Sue Spence, Firth Hall) - elective*
- *Sunday 12 December 2021 (St Luke's carol service) - elective*
- Saturday 18 December 2021 (City Hall carol concert(s) with Black Dyke Band)
- Saturday 23 April 2022 (re-scheduled Handel *Messiah* concert with Black Dyke Band, City Hall) – yet to be confirmed
- Sunday 19 March 2023 (re-scheduled Mahler Symphony No. 2 City Hall)

Under discussion

- An After Hours concert in the City Hall ballroom, November 2021
- Walton *Belshazzar's Feast* at City Hall, June 2022
- Faure *Requiem* at City Hall, January 2022
- Re-scheduled Verdi *Requiem* at City Hall, sometime in 2022-23
- re-scheduled Mahler Symphony No. 8 at Bridgewater Hall possibly May/June 2023
- Rutter *Gloria* - Black Dyke Band keen to do this with us sometime

Concert dates and details, including piano and tutti rehearsal dates, times and locations, are posted on the Chorus website as soon as they become available so that members can plan their activities, at [Members Area / Diary dates](#) (password details provided at the end of this and every weekly update).

Reminder - Donations for SPC if you shop with Amazon – double for Prime members!

For those of you who use Amazon for online shopping, please consider generating donations for The Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus by shopping at [AmazonSmile](#). There's a special promotion coming up, for those of you who are Prime members. If you shop Amazon Prime Day deals from 21st – 22nd June using smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1175185-0 or with AmazonSmile ON in the Amazon Shopping app, then AmazonSmile will DOUBLE donations to the Chorus.

Reminder - Music in the Round is Hiring!

Music in the Round is seeking a new Participation and Events Coordinator. The person who is recruited will join at an exciting time as Music in the Round focuses on fully integrating all their strands of activity in the concert hall and local communities in partnership with venues and organisations in Sheffield. [Find out more here](#). For further information, please contact: edward@musicintheround.co.uk. Application deadline: 9am, Wednesday 30 June 2021

Reminder - Steel City Choristers seeking children aged 7 and above

The Steel City Choristers, who sing in churches across Sheffield, are seeking children aged 7 and upwards to join the choir. See <https://steelcitychoristers.org.uk> for information about the choir. If your child is interested in joining, email steelcitychoristers@gmail.com.

Reminder - Music Hub – We Are Family

Have a listen to this up-lifting performance of '*We Are Family*' by students (and a few staff) from Sheffield Music Hub. Great to see the quality achieved by these enthusiastic youngsters!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFzaweBlv20>

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 (see below). 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 the important part without logging in.

The Members Area of the website lists all the information included in the update, eg 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 it is likely that your computer or laptop has stored the old website in its memory (cache) and you should clear it by pressing REFRESH, or F5 on your PC keyboard. Alternatively, it may be that your router needs re-setting; try turning it off for 10 minutes before switching it on again. If none of this works please contact Anne Adams in the first instance, and she will inform the webmasters Matthew Morgan and Bill Best.

A reminder of the Classical Sheffield Member's Area: <https://classicalsheffield.org.uk/about> ; the password is **moremusic**.

Contact emails

MD Darius Battiwalla dariusbattiwalla@talktalk.net

Chair Paul Henstridge chairman@sheffieldphil.org

Administrator Anne Adams administrator@sheffieldphil.org

Membership Officer Marianne Grayson MarianneGrayson@sheffieldphil.org

Finance Officer Graham Dawson GrahamDawson@sheffieldphil.org

New members Officer Sally Turnbull SallyTurnbull@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/>