



Introductory Sheet for New Choir Members

About us

Founded in 1935 by Leslie Regan (then Principal of the Watford School of Music) with support from his friend, the great Sir Henry Wood, Watford Philharmonic Society comprises an amateur choir and orchestra and is one of the largest musical societies of its kind in the country. The choir currently consists of around 170 members.

The Society usually holds three or four main concerts a year, generally in the Watford Colosseum, when it is joined by distinguished professional soloists and orchestral players. We are most fortunate to be able to perform in this wonderful concert hall, described by many as having one of the best acoustics in the country. On occasion we also have opportunities to perform in smaller groups at other functions such as weddings or special events, and to attend "Come and Sing" days.

Our conductor is Michael Cayton – a very experienced and enthusiastic conductor, who also conducts the Chiltern Choir in Chorleywood

Membership of the choir is open to all. There are no formal auditions; however from time to time the conductor listens to all members in order to ensure that he has a balanced choir, and will offer advice, support and encouragement to any member who is experiencing difficulties.

What we sing

We perform a wide variety of music, ranging from Britten's *War Requiem* to selections from operas such as Wagner's *Flying Dutchman* to musicals such as Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* and selections from Gilbert & Sullivan's light operas and traditional Christmas carols. The Autumn and Spring programmes tend to feature more "serious" works, whilst the Christmas and June concerts have a lighter programme.

In the 2016 / 17 season we will be performing:

<i>Saturday 29th October 2016</i>		<i>Mozart - Requiem</i>
<i>Wednesday 14th December 2016</i>		<i>Carols and Christmas Music</i>
<i>Saturday 29th April 2017</i>		<i>Bliss – Morning Heroes</i>
<i>November 2017</i>	<i>Rehearsals for this concert extend into the Summer term 2017</i>	<i>Bach – Mass in B Minor</i>

Rehearsals

The choir rehearses on Monday evenings between 7.30 and 9.30pm in the main hall at Watford Girls' Grammar School, Lady's Close, Watford WD18 0AE. There is on-site parking. In the run up to a concert, we practise with the orchestra and rehearsals may be extended by half an hour. There are also rehearsals at the concert venue on the afternoon of a performance.

Music is provided free of charge. Members are permitted to mark their scores; however, we request that only small pencil markings are made to avoid damaging them.

Choir members are required to do some basic preparatory work between rehearsals, essentially learning their parts (practice CDs are usually available for purchase, and there are also free internet tracks to help with the note learning). This enables the conductor to spend more time on musical interpretation.

In order to take part in a concert, choir members are expected to attend at least 60% of rehearsals.

Concert dress - female choir members wear black ankle length skirts, or trousers, black shoes/tights and **plain** black three-quarter or long-sleeved tops, plus a choir favour (available to purchase for £3.00). Men wear black open-neck long-sleeved shirts and trousers, black shoes, but no jacket.

How much will it cost?

Currently, the annual subscription is £183. 00, and can be given as one payment or three equal instalments.

Those under 30 pay £96 per annum, or 3 equal instalments in September, January and May.

Selling concert tickets

We rely heavily on our members to sell as many tickets as possible to their families and friends for all our concerts. To encourage this, WPS operates a Ticket Incentive Scheme giving members who sell more than a basic quota of tickets a discount on their subscription the following year

Would you like to become a member?

If you are interested in signing up as a “pay as you go” or full member please see Morfudd Wise (New Members Secretary) for a membership pack. She can be contacted at new.members@watfordphilharmonic.co.uk

We are a friendly society, and we arrange for all new members to meet and sit with a “buddy” during their first rehearsals.

How can you take part?

If you do not feel able to join the choir, come to our concerts anyway. You could become a Friend of the Watford Philharmonic Society for an annual fee of £25. Or you could sign up to our mailing list. In either case contact timvenner@aol.com or ring Tim on 01923-284320. Your email address will remain confidential and will only be used by us to tell you about Watford Phil. events.