

WATFORD PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 2ND OCTOBER 2023

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO THE SOCIETY ON THE 88TH SEASON

I hope the 2022-23 Season has been another varied, challenging, but above all enjoyable experience for us all. We've produced 5 very successful performances – three basically full houses and the Summer concert eventually managed an audience of 142 after a lot of hard ticket selling. The Orchestral Soirée here at St Luke's proved to be a great success and I am grateful to the many choir members who supported and swelled the audience numbers considerably.

Congratulations and my thanks must go to Michael, ably assisted by Rosemary for making rehearsals an enjoyable experience every Monday night despite all the hard work we do, but also for leading us on to produce concerts that we can be proud of. The orchestra rehearsals take place on Wednesdays and it is always exciting when we come together for the Sitzprobe prior to a concert.

I hope you will appreciate that I was very sorry that we had to raise our subscriptions this year – they have not been increased since 2018 and so many things have changed since then. Charlie will explain more fully, but I want to stress the benefits you receive from your membership and suggest not many other societies provide the opportunity to perform as many concerts with a full orchestra as we do. I also appreciate that some members have difficulty with our new rehearsal venue. Sadly Watford Girls raised their charges so significantly that it was no longer tenable to continue there. In fact when we attempted to negotiate with them, it became clear they no longer wanted our return. I really want to thank Mary and all the team at St Luke's for making us so welcome and I trust we shall enjoy many more years here in our new home.

As Chairman I am the vocal face of the Society – but none of these events, plus all the vital elements of the management and success of the Society's operations happens without your hardworking Committee and other Society members who are prepared to put their faces above the parapet. I must also include the wonderful raffle ladies too who add considerably to our income every year. I won't name names since I'm sure to leave someone out, but I sincerely thank you all!

We have an extremely exciting programme for the coming year and I trust we will have full houses, both on and off the stage for every concert. Sell tickets please – we deserve to be heard by as large an audience as possible, but above all enjoy the coming season of making music together with friends.

- Pam Allanson, Chairman