



## **Information for New Members**

Welcome to St George's Singers. The information here will tell you most of the things you need to know about how the choir runs itself as well as ways in which you can contribute to our continuing reputation as one of the north-west's leading amateur choirs. We are a friendly bunch, receptive to change, so if you have any suggestions and see ways for improvement please do not hesitate to feed your thoughts back to the Chair, Secretary or via your Section Representative. This will help us to continue our drive towards greater professionalism and choral excellence.

Enjoy your time with us and ask anyone if you have any questions!

### **Membership Subscription**

The annual membership fee is £120 (2009-2010 season). It can be paid in two instalments – the first by the end of September and the second by the end of January. You can also pay by standing order over 5 months starting in September. Please see the Treasurer to discuss alternative payment options if these are difficult for you.

We have a concessionary membership of £20 to encourage students and people under the age of 25 to join the choir.

The choir has charitable status and a statement of the year-end accounts is available from the Treasurer.

The choir welcomes new members (especially tenors and basses). If you enjoy the rehearsals and know of anyone interested in singing please invite them to come along and try us out for a couple of rehearsals

### **Rehearsal times and attendance**

The choir meets every Tuesday from 19:30 to 22:00 at St George's Church Hall, Poynton. Rehearsal for the new season begins the first week in September and runs until the final concert, which is usually mid/late June

You will receive a season schedule in advance of the new season. This includes concert dates, as well as rehearsal dates and minimum number of rehearsals you are required to attend in order to sing at a concert. There is an additional rehearsal on the Thursday evening before a concert.

Please attend rehearsals promptly and regularly and please make yourself available for concerts.

The rehearsal on the day of the concert is mandatory and doesn't count towards the minimum number. If you are late, you will not be able to sing in the concert.

Rehearsal attendance is monitored via a rehearsal register. You are responsible for ensuring your attendance is recorded accurately. If you attend part of a rehearsal, please note the register accordingly. You will be advised by your Section Rep if it appears likely that you will not reach

the minimum attendance required to sing at a given concert and depending on circumstances, the MD may exercise his discretion in your favour.

In order for us to gain an accurate picture early on in rehearsals of the number of people singing in the concert, please ensure you tick or cross the concert attendance box on the register. This allows the MD to understand the blend of voices he has for the concert, as well as enabling stage management/seating plans to be arranged.

If you are unable to attend a rehearsal, please inform your Section Rep, if possible.

## **Communication**

In order to cut down the time spent on announcements during rehearsals an e-mail is usually sent round before each rehearsal with that week's information. Please ensure the Secretary is kept up-to-date with your e-mail address and do check regularly as messages can go out more than once a week. Hard copies are available at rehearsal

## **Concerts**

### Publicity

Posters and leaflets are printed for each concert and are also available electronically. We rely on our members to display and distribute them to friends, relatives, and to local sites (e.g. libraries, information centres, schools, churches etc.) Please take as many as you are able to use and be pro-active and resourceful in advertising the concerts.

### Tickets

**You are expected to try to sell at least two tickets for each concert.** Obviously, the more tickets we sell, the better the atmosphere at concerts and the greater our income. So, please be positive! Our concerts really are worth coming to!

### Help

Please be ready to volunteer for some of the many tasks that need to be done to ensure the success of a concert, for example transporting and erecting staging and arranging chairs. In the event that you are unable to sing in a concert, at certain venues you are entitled to free entry to listen. In this case, we would welcome your help on the door or with refreshments in the interval.

### Concert Dress

Our concert dress varies according to the venue and the nature of the concert programme

For men either

- Open necked long sleeved black shirt and black trousers
- Dinner suit with white shirt and black bow tie.

For women either

- All **black** – either skirt or trousers which **reach the ankles** and black blouse with sleeves which may be  $\frac{3}{4}$  or full length. Black shoes and **black tights** / stockings (no bare flesh or flesh-coloured tights please). . If you choose to wear trousers, these should be dressy, smart and formal.
- As above with shirt unbuttoned over red vest top available from choir
- As above with shirt unbuttoned over own choice of brightly coloured vest/camisole

Choir dress is not a uniform and does not aim to make us look exactly the same, It is a code of dress, giving us a certain amount of flexibility and individuality whilst ensuring a fairly consistent look which does not distract the audience.

The Committee reserve the write to vary the dress from the above if felt appropriate for a venue or programme.

### **Music and folders and booklights**

You are responsible for music which is loaned to you. Please use only a soft pencil to make marks on it - all music should be returned with **your** markings removed.

In general music should be returned the Tuesday after a concert so that it can be checked and returned to the hirer without incurring further charges. Please be considerate and return music in advance if you are aware that you will not be performing in a concert.

You will need to provide your own copy of 100 Carols for Choirs which is used every year and if needed a copy of European Sacred Music(OUP) and Messiah. When necessary bulk orders are sent from the choir.

You will be given a black folder for concerts and a copy of Madrigals and Part-Songs and a booklight if needed. Once issued these remain with you whilst you are a member of the choir.

Sometimes choir members choose to purchase their own copies and this can usually be done through the choir.

### **Re-audition policy**

We have a policy of re-auditioning existing members every three years. This allows the MD to assess the progress of individual voices and to adjust the balance and blend of the choir as a whole.

### **Fund Raising**

We frequently perform concerts in prestigious venues and use professional soloists and orchestras. This is very expensive, so we are constantly looking for ways to raise extra funds.

Currently, our fund raising includes:

- The 100 Club – shares cost £15 each and you can purchase as many as you wish to increase your chances of winning a monthly cash prize.
- If you sign the Gift Aid form we reclaim tax on your subscriptions and donations. See the Treasurer for more information.
- The profit on hot and cold drinks sold during the rehearsal interval.
- Talent sales – members are encouraged to use their skills and sell their talents or products to other members and donate the proceeds to choir funds.
- Selling advertising in programmes
- By visiting the on-line shopping area of our website to purchase your groceries, presents, car insurance, etc. you are raising money for the choir. The shop in question will donate a commission to the choir and you pay the same price as you would going direct to the retailer's site.

If you have any ideas for, or would like to get involved in fund-raising, please get in touch with any of the committee members. This could include any contacts you may have with local

businesses who may consider becoming a sponsor. Please be proactive – you don't need permission to raise funds for the choir!

### Friends of St George's

We also run a 'Friends' scheme. Please consider inviting your friends or members of your family to support the Choir by becoming 'Friends of St George's'. For further details, see Jean Egerton (alto). Becoming a Friend is also a way of maintaining contact with the choir if you are unlucky enough to have to move away!

### Sponsorship

We are actively seeking individual, lottery and corporate sponsorship. If you have any experience of this, or know anyone who can help, please contact the Chair.

### **Other items of interest**

#### Hemiola

We publish a Choir magazine, 'Hemiola' once a term. This is a lively, interesting and informative forum for members' comments, ideas, reactions, news, articles of interest etc. The editor, Susan Hodgson, will be delighted to receive contributions at any time:

[susan.hodgson@dsl.pipex.com](mailto:susan.hodgson@dsl.pipex.com)

Website: <http://www.st-georges-singers.org.uk>

You can also find information about the Choir on our website. The members' only section username is **9SDPE** and the password is **grazioso4**. Peter Giles is our web-editor and will be delighted to receive feedback from you regarding its content / design. You will also be welcome to help in the maintenance of the site. Contact him at:

[peter.giles@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:peter.giles@manchester.ac.uk)

#### Socials

We are an active and sociable choir with both formally organised social events and a myriad of informal get-togethers, sectional curry rehearsals, concert outings etc. Don't wait to be asked – send round an e-mail and organise it! The Bull's Head on London Road North is where the post-rehearsal drinking takes place.

The season ends with a social evening held at the church hall usually the Tuesday immediately following the last concert. It is an informal evening for all members (partners welcome) starting at around 8pm until 10-10:30pm. Members of the choir volunteer to "do a turn" which can be musical, a reading, theatrical etc, if you have a "turn" you would like to perform please see the Chair or a Section rep prior to the social evening or on the night itself.

We do have a buffet dinner on the evening which choir members each bring a dish along to which makes up a wonderful spread. Also each member can bring their own drinks for the evening (alcohol is permitted by the church hall). This is a great fun evening and a lovely way to end the season.

## **Personnel**

Musical Director  
Assistant Musical Director  
Accompanist  
Assistant accompanist

Neil Taylor  
Matthew Hamilton  
Jeffrey Makinson  
Julia Mayall

Chair  
Vice Chair  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Publicity Officer  
Librarian

Anne Francis  
Cath Bryant  
Jacqui Smith  
Caroline Elves  
Susan Hodgson  
Gwyneth Pailin

Soprano Rep  
Alto Rep  
Tenor Rep  
Bass Rep

Andrea Millington  
Anthea Slater  
Mark Warrington  
John Ovey