

ROYAL
CHORAL
SOCIETY
150 YEARS
1872–2022
Singing to inspire



The Royal Choral Society will celebrate its 150th anniversary in 2022 with an exciting anniversary season packed with the world's greatest choral music. Join us!

Celebrating 150 years of music making



In 2022, the Royal Choral Society celebrates 150 years at the forefront of choral music in the UK. The choir that sang at the opening of the Royal Albert Hall in 1871 and performed under the batons of Verdi, Elgar and Gounod, is planning a celebratory season to showcase our remarkable heritage and lay new foundations for an exciting and ambitious future.

The Royal Choral Society is at the centre of a growing family of choirs, continuing its mission of inspiring and enriching the lives of every generation of music lovers. We are passionate about music, whether it is our annual performance of Handel's *Messiah* on Good Friday at the Royal Albert Hall (a tradition since 1876), 'Beating Retreat' alongside the Massed Bands of the Household Division at Horse Guards Parade, or working with corporates and charities to raise funds and awareness through music.

The Royal Choral Society is an independent and self-sustaining charity that does not receive public funding and is not 'attached' to an orchestra. We rely on subscriptions, ticket sales, sponsorship, donations from individuals and trusts and foundations to cover

our costs. The 150th anniversary gives the Society the opportunity to reaffirm its commitment to bring world-class choral music to the widest possible audience.

Our 150th 'season' includes high-profile performances of beloved choral works in London's key venues and in concert halls beyond the capital, all with our finest orchestras and acclaimed soloists, as well as collaborations with youth choirs and charities, and new commissions too.



Patron:
Her Majesty The Queen



President:
HRH The Duke of Kent
KG GCMG GCVO CD ADC



BY ROYAL APPOINTMENT

Music is a golden thread that runs through the tapestry of our nation. As a 'royal' choir, the Society has been privileged to sing at important events throughout our history, from the opening of the Royal Albert Hall in 1871 and the Royal Festival Hall in 1951, to concerts fundraising for the First World War effort, marking the 50th anniversary of VE Day, the 25th anniversary of the Falklands conflict and the centenaries of the First World War in 2014 and 2018.

We relish being at the heart of the big occasions in our nation's heritage. We are looking forward to the festivities for the 150th anniversary of the Royal Albert Hall in 2021, and of course our own 150th celebrations in 2022.

THE POWER AND GLORY OF MUSIC

Performance of traditional oratorio is fundamental to the musical reputation of any large choir, and the Royal Choral Society is proud to be one of the great exponents of this art. Although there are more than 40,000* choirs in the UK (and rising), there are relatively few auditioned ensembles of 150+ able to deliver the big, quality sound that works such as Verdi's *Requiem* needs – and as the choir who premièred this work in the UK, under the baton of Verdi himself, we speak from experience!

An important part of the Royal Choral Society's 150th celebrations will be the programming of some of the biggest works in the repertoire to showcase this incredible artform and to ensure that music lovers will be able to hear these works as they were intended – live. We also want to keep concert ticket prices low to ensure that music lovers from all backgrounds are able to access these concerts.

THE ROYAL CHORAL SOCIETY TODAY

The Society currently fields a membership of around 200 singers (across all ages and demographic groups) under the baton of Grammy Award-winner Richard Cooke, who took over as Music Director in 1995. Richard, a former King's College choral scholar, is a hugely experienced choral conductor who has worked with the greatest maestros, including Abbado, Tennstedt and Bernstein.

The choir is a sociable and welcoming family of singers, bonded by this incredible, life-affirming skill. Singing combats stress, is a natural anti-depressant, and fosters a sense of community. Choral singing has never been more popular: the 2-million-plus choir members* in the UK are a testament to the power and love of singing.

The Society has excellent membership retention and a successful recruitment strategy. Self-managed, the choir runs on a shoestring budget, ensuring that all funds are directed towards its primary function – promoting choral music. We support our own concert promotions, engage world-class orchestras and commission new works. We have an excellent media presence including 9 million hits on YouTube, and regularly fill the Royal Albert Hall – in December 2019 we entertained over 50,000 people in just four days for the Hall's Christmas concert season.

While the choir is planning for its 150th anniversary with confidence and passion, we are conscious of the need to reach out more widely for support and sponsorship to underwrite our plans.

* source Voices Now survey 2017

150th Plans and partnerships

We have big plans for our 150th anniversary in 2022. It will be a celebration not just of this historic choir, but of choral music itself, and an opportunity for choral lovers to revel in this much-loved repertoire.

As the Royal Choral Society was formed from the choir which sang at the opening of the Royal Albert Hall on 29 March 1871, our anniversary 'season' will begin with our Good Friday *Messiah* on 2 April 2021. The celebrations will continue until the end of our 150th year – December 2022, and encompass the Royal Albert Hall's own 150th gala concert in 2021 and our own celebratory '150th birthday' concert on 8 May 2022 – also at the Royal Albert Hall. In addition to these concerts, we will sing at the Royal Festival Hall and Queen Elizabeth Hall Southbank, and in venues around the UK – see our concert planner for the latest information. There will be many opportunities for sponsor benefits at all our high-profile concerts.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with leading brands have proved to be the perfect way for us to widen our audience reach. In addition to working closely with organisations such as the BBC (*Proms in the Park*, *Songs of Praise*), Raymond Gubbay Ltd (Classical Spectaculars and other choral concerts) and the Royal Albert Hall, the choir has also forged mutually beneficial relationships with corporates, venues and charities. The choir has toured to the USA, Slovakia, Germany and Malta, and performed in such diverse venues as the Stade de France and Twickenham Stadium (singing ahead of international rugby matches), at outdoor venues including Kenwood, and joined the military for national commemorative events such as Beating Retreat on Horse Guards Parade.

The choir has also recorded CDs and TV incidental music, and appeared on TV. The Royal Choral Society prides itself on the quality of its 'product' and the professionalism of our management team in bringing plans to fruition. We are always looking for new ways to make music!

Here are some examples of projects and mutually beneficial collaborations over the last 25 years.



COLLABORATIONS

Coburg

The choir was involved in several events to celebrate the bicentenary of Queen Victoria (our first Patron) and her consort Prince Albert in 2019. This was at the invitation of Coburg City Council (Coburg being Albert's birthplace). In May 2019 at London's Cadogan Hall, the choir performed works by Felix Mendelssohn (Queen Victoria's favourite composer) alongside the orchestra from the Coburg Landestheater, with the concert attended by HRH The Duke of Kent, the German Ambassador and princes from the House of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

The choir paid a return visit to Coburg in July 2019 to perform Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony*. This sell-out concert was attended by the British Ambassador to Germany who commended the musicians on this memorable collaboration.



Royal Albert Home

In 2020, the choir's rehearsal and concert schedule was suspended during the Covid-19 lockdown forcing the cancellation of many concerts including the annual Good Friday *Messiah* at the Royal Albert Hall, a tradition since 1876. But, in collaboration with the Royal Albert Hall as part of the launch of their 'Royal Albert Home' initiative, the choir recorded a 'virtual' Hallelujah Chorus; each member filmed themselves singing their voice part in isolation, with the videos edited together to create a 'performance'. This was released as a YouTube 'premiere' on Good Friday 2020, and the video enjoyed much media attention and 250,000+ views around the world in just three days.



Royal Albert Hall





CORPORATE

Waitrose

Waitrose Business Events sponsored the Royal Choral Society's performance of Haydn's *Creation* at Peterborough Cathedral as an exclusive ticket-only event for John Lewis Partnership account card holders. As a customer services exercise it was a resounding success, and one that Waitrose repeated the following year with two further sponsored Royal Choral Society concerts – *Bach's B Minor Mass* performed in Peterborough and Winchester Cathedrals.



Société General

The choir was asked by Société General to perform in a Christmas concert in the church of All Hallows by the Tower in the City of London



as part of their corporate social responsibility outreach work, and as a fundraiser for their annual chosen charity. This invitation was repeated over several years, and the concerts were very much enjoyed by singers and audience alike.

Chanel No. 5

The choir was invited to record the soundtrack for an advertisement campaign for premium brand perfume Chanel No. 5. The track, the theme from the Johnny Depp movie *Edward Scissorhands*, was recorded at Air Studios in Islington, and the memorable ad – which featured a twist on the legend of Red Riding Hood and the wolf – enjoyed a long life on TV and in cinemas.



CUNARD

Cunard

In a favourite event of the past 20 years, the Royal Choral Society took part in the dockside naming ceremony for Cunard's new flagship, the *Queen Mary 2* at Southampton, where the liner was officially named by Her Majesty the Queen. The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Band of the Royal Marines performed alongside the choir, as did singer Heather Small, who performed her hit song 'Proud' with the Royal Choral Society providing backing vocals. The choir members stayed on board the QM2, enjoying the sumptuous hospitality.

CHARITY

NSPCC

Our spectacular gala concert at the Royal Albert Hall to celebrate our 125th anniversary was sponsored in aid of the NSPCC. HRH Princess Margaret was in attendance and the concert raised a sizeable sum for the charity.



Nordoff Robbins

For our 140th anniversary, the Royal Choral Society performed Verdi's *Requiem* at the Royal Albert Hall with a portion of the proceeds donated to the music therapy charity Nordoff Robbins. The charity was also able to undertake audience bucket collections on the night.

Veterans Aid

We marked the centenary of the start of the First World War with a performance of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem* at the Royal Albert Hall in aid of the military charity Veterans Aid. The choir was accompanied by the London Philharmonic Orchestra with Richard Cooke conducting, and the concert was broadcast on Remembrance Day by Classic FM. Working with Lady Rothermere and the Lady R Foundation, sponsorship was raised to enable all ticket proceeds to go to Veterans Aid. £130,000 was raised for this remarkable charity which provides support for today's ex-servicemen and women in crisis.



Combat Stress

To mark the centenary of the end of the First World War in 2018, the Society performed at London's Cadogan Hall on Remembrance Sunday. The sell-out concert included Vaughan Williams' *Dona Nobis Pacem*, with poetry from the trenches read by actor Paul McGann. Our charity partner for the concert was Combat Stress, and a donation of £2000 was made after the concert, while the charity's volunteers raised over £1000 in a collection on the night.



Sponsorship Benefits



PARTNERING OUR 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Our anniversary programme presents a wonderful opportunity for corporate sponsors and partners to enjoy a beneficial association with the choir. We will be performing well known repertoire with top orchestras in venues which have real cachet. Our core 'product' is world class and would enhance the reputation of any business.

Our concerts will be backed by wide-ranging marketing campaigns covering print, radio advertising, social media and more, and there will be opportunities for brand alignment and superb corporate hospitality in high-profile venues such as the Royal Albert Hall and Royal Festival Hall.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss corporate partnerships and to develop bespoke packages of benefits with our partners. Not only can we help you achieve your business needs but through a partnership with the Royal Choral Society you will be supporting this important anniversary and helping the choir lay strong foundations for the next 150 years of music-making.

WHERE YOUR MONEY GOES

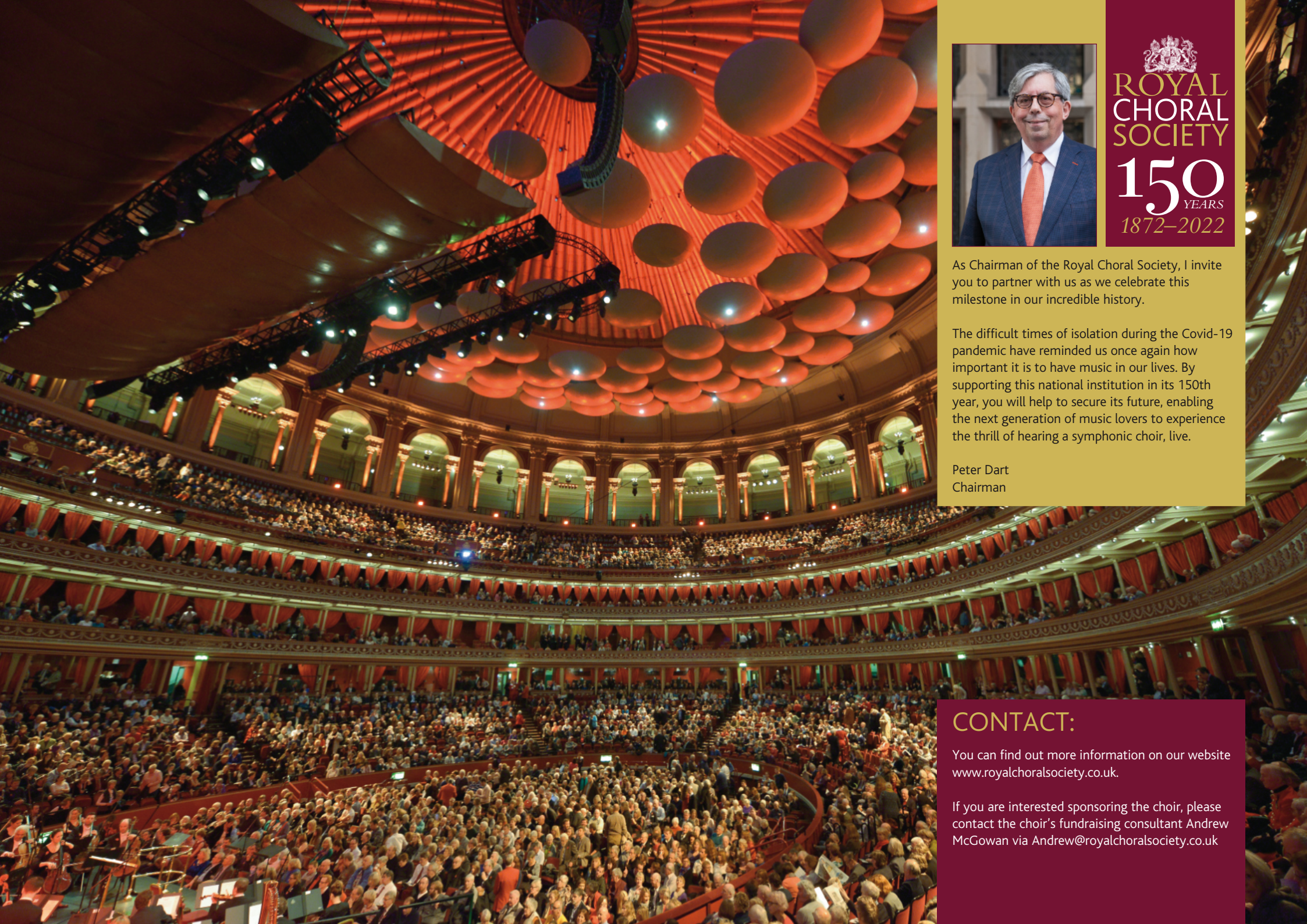
Putting on a concert is an expensive business. A concert with choir and orchestra at the Royal Albert Hall will need a budget of at least £50,000, while a smaller concert in a London church with a chamber orchestra will cost nearer £25,000. With your help we can realise our ambitions and secure our future.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

We welcome corporate involvement of any size. Please see our website www.royalchoralsociety.co.uk for all the details on potential corporate packages.

We are also keen to work with charities and for concert sponsorship to benefit good causes.





ROYAL
CHORAL
SOCIETY
150 YEARS
1872–2022

As Chairman of the Royal Choral Society, I invite you to partner with us as we celebrate this milestone in our incredible history.

The difficult times of isolation during the Covid-19 pandemic have reminded us once again how important it is to have music in our lives. By supporting this national institution in its 150th year, you will help to secure its future, enabling the next generation of music lovers to experience the thrill of hearing a symphonic choir, live.

Peter Dart
Chairman

CONTACT:

You can find out more information on our website www.royalchoralsociety.co.uk.

If you are interested sponsoring the choir, please contact the choir's fundraising consultant Andrew McGowan via Andrew@royalchoralsociety.co.uk



In 2022 we celebrate a special anniversary.
Join with us to make it exceptional!

www.royalchoralsociety.co.uk

