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## **The Choir of Leeds Philharmonic Society**

### **BENEFITS OF AN ASSOCIATION WITH LEEDS PHILHARMONIC CHORUS**

#### **Aim**

Leeds Philharmonic Chorus (LPC) is establishing a group of patrons to assist in funding work that will encourage the interest and involvement of a broad range of people in choral music from both a singing and a listening perspective.

#### **Background**

LPC is one of the leading choirs in the North of England. It dates back to 1870 and is widely regarded as the City of Leeds' premier choral society.

The choir consists of about 100+ active volunteer members whose members perform to professional standards with internationally renowned orchestras, soloists and conductors.

Over its long history the choir has consistently sung for the most distinguished musicians of the day from Britain and abroad including, in more recent years, Sir Charles Mackerras, Sir Charles Groves, Richard Hickox, David Hill, James Conlon and Gianandrea Noseda.

Repertoire comprises both traditional and innovative works in Leeds and elsewhere in the UK, including presentations at the Royal Albert Hall, the Bridgewater Hall, Manchester and Birmingham Symphony Hall.

Many of these concerts are undertaken in partnership with the BBC and Leeds International Concert Season. The Chorus is regularly to be heard on BBC Radio Three and has made a number of commercial recordings.

In recent years there have been several international tours, the first in 2001 to Brno, 2003 to Prague, 2005 to Tallinn, Riga and Helsinki, 2007 to Vienna, Budapest and Bratislava, 2009 to Poland and 2011 to Dortmund Germany.

## **Present position**

As a registered charity and non-profit making organisation, the Leeds Philharmonic Society relies heavily on membership fees, sponsorship and donations to fund its activities. Where possible, the Society seeks help towards the costs of its activities, but in the main, the membership fees are the primary source of income.

### *Touring*

Overseas singing tours to Continental Europe take place every two years and the next is planned for 2015. These are entirely funded by those participating, so help for this activity would be particularly welcome as it would allow us to assist more of our younger student members to participate by reducing the overall costs to individual members.

### *Performing*

Over the last 143 years, without any break, the LPC has consistently promoted live performances. The chorus has blossomed and grown, building an enviable reputation across the UK.

Even so, the society is realistic, and – as over 80% of its members are over 35 years of age – the need to capture the imagination and interest of younger people in the performance of large scale choral works is recognised and acknowledged, and the recruitment and retention of the new singing generation is vital for the future of the Chorus.

In terms of membership numbers, many choral societies across the UK have experienced a downward trend over the last decade, unable to continue due to dwindling and aging memberships. The change in focus of music education in schools has led to reduced teaching of vocal music and a consequent reduction of interest in choral singing. There is a generation by generation knock-on effect as choirs chase a diminishing pool of singers. The result is that the art of choral singing is being dramatically weakened. It is part of “Phil’s” mission to keep that tradition alive and, in a vibrant city with two universities this ought to be straightforward. However, even here with all the resources of a major metropolitan centre, it is increasingly a struggle.

The Chorus recently entered into a Joint Collaboration Agreement with the Leeds Grammar School Foundation to hold joint concerts and work together in choral workshops as well as providing other support. Each party has agreed to work with the other to help young people achieve a lasting interest in choral works and music in general. LPC believes this venture is an important step to countering the trend described and will assist us to encourage the interest and involvement of a broad range of young people in choral music.

It is also pleasing to advise that Dr. Ingrid Roscoe, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for West Yorkshire has accepted an invitation to become the President of the Society, an appointment that will greatly assist us to achieve our vision for the future.

## **Proposal**

It is estimated that £15,000 of additional funds per concert season is needed in order to continue providing high quality performances alongside our young people and other objectives.

In today's difficult economic times we are realistic in the belief that no one organisation is likely to provide that level of support.

Therefore the Chorus is seeking to enter into Patronage Agreements with a number of companies, local bodies and trusts, where each will provide a sum of money for a single season, or each year for a defined or an open period of time.

Any level of help will be gratefully received.

These funds will be used to provide stability to the Chorus and the Philharmonic Society and thereby facilitate the encouragement and development in choral music of the City's diverse population of young people.

## **Benefits**

In return for your help, LPC will, wherever possible:

- acknowledge the assistance given in all its programmes in respect to concerts held in the United Kingdom and overseas. Recognition will be by name and logo shown in the programme under the page heading *Patrons*.
- assist patrons in their corporate entertainment provision by providing concert tickets at discounted prices.
- display the names and logos of its patrons as part of its own publicity material at venues.

In addition:

- patrons will be seen by the public of the City of Leeds and at venues overseas, as helping to enrich the musical life of the community and of young people in particular.

- Concert goers, from a wide spectrum of different social/economic groups, are reached by the publicity offered by LPC giving a low cost and unique opportunity for patrons to become known for their philanthropy.

LPC hopes you will feel able to support this case for financial help. It is LPC's belief that patrons will receive benefits that greater than the level of assistance sought from an association with LPC.

For further advice or information regarding matters raised in the paper, please contact:

The sponsorship Secretary.

E-mail: [sponsors@leedsphil.org](mailto:sponsors@leedsphil.org)