



## **INTRODUCTORY LEAFLET FOR NEW AND PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS**

### **Welcome to the Epsom Male Voice Choir.**

The Choir was founded in 1983 and has grown over our 30 years of singing to become the leading men's choir in North Central Surrey with a current membership in excess of 60. We sing the traditional Male Voice Choir repertoire together with modern popular classics, opera and arrangements of favourite rock and folk numbers.

No knowledge of music or prior experience is needed - just enthusiasm and an enjoyment of choral singing. Our approach to learning songs is designed explicitly for those with no previous musical training or prior choir experience. Sheet music is provided but the key learning support is by use of CDs with the choir parts to practise whilst learning the words for each piece. All the choir parts are also on the Choir's website.

Performances are held throughout the year. We undertake concerts regularly and sing at weddings and charity events. Rehearsals are held at the United Reformed Church Hall, London Road, Ewell, Surrey, KT17 2BB on Wednesday evenings from 8.00 to 10.00pm.

Our musical director (MD) is Ian Assersohn. Juliet Hornby is our Deputy MD. Our accompanist is Lynda Chang. Their biographies can be found on the website at <http://www.epsommalevoicechoir.org.uk/index.htm> at **Key People**.

On the website you will also find other useful information including:

- Our values which set out what the choir stands for and what is expected from members to ensure that we all enjoy our singing;
- A list of members with photos to help you get to know your colleagues;
- Dates for our concerts and other performances;
- Notes on the meaning of music notations;
- Information on our uniform and dress code for performances;
- Guidance on rehearsal and performance standards to ensure we present ourselves in a professional manner;
- The Constitution of the choir;
- Information on the 100 club which is a voluntary scheme to raise funds for the choir and for the Chairman's Charity;
- Details of the Chairman's Charity supported by the Choir.

Subscriptions, presently £25 per quarter, are due at the start of the quarter after the one in which you join us. The payment quarters are: January, April, July & October each year. Payments can be made by Standing Order (preferred) or by cheque/cash. Our Treasurer David Bates will provide Standing Order mandates.

**Please remember to sign in at every attendance – signing in sheets are displayed in the foyer and to wear your name badge at all times**

## CHOIR VALUES

**What does the choir stand for and what is expected from members to ensure that we achieve the enjoyment of singing that we all seek while continuing to raise our standards?**

As members of the choir, we share and value:

- An enthusiasm for and the joy of singing.
- The musical talent, guidance and support of the MD and the accompanist in rehearsals as we learn our parts.
- The challenge and self discipline needed to learn our parts on our own at home between rehearsals, to sing from memory and perform the repertoire in harmony.
- Performing in a range of musical styles for entertainment, special occasions and for charity fundraising to bring music to our community.
- A pride in the sound, appearance and performance of the choir, knowing that it relies on each member giving of their best.
- The friendship, mutual support, and the social enjoyment that the choir brings.
- The underlying respect we have for one another and for our audiences.
- The work of members and their partners who take on the organisational tasks that are needed to run the choir over and above the singing.

## CHOIR REHEARSAL STANDARDS

**What does the Musical Director expect of us to ensure that we all enjoy rehearsals and continue to raise our performance standards?**

- **Show commitment to the choir** – This covers not just prompt and regular attendance at rehearsals and being free for performances but also a commitment to learn the music and pay subscriptions on time.
- **Come prepared for rehearsals** - As well as bringing your music, have a pencil (not a pen) to make notes of the MD's instructions and to annotate the sheet music to help your practice at home and avoid the same points having to be repeated at rehearsals.
- **Look after the music and keep it in order** – Remember that the music is not personal property and may be needed for other members in future. Avoid making permanent marks or using highlighters. Keep it in order so you don't waste time rummaging for a particular piece at rehearsals.
- **Remain silent when the MD speaks at rehearsals** – Do not chatter when anyone, not just the MD, is talking to the choir. Apart from people not hearing what is being said, it is simple good manners and respect for the individual not to talk over someone else.
- **Do the homework** – Practice at home is essential for all. There is nothing more likely to discourage members, especially those who do their homework, than repeating the same pieces week after week because others have not put in the time at home practising what has been asked of them.
- **Sign up promptly for concerts and other events** - The MD needs to know, with a

reasonable degree of **certainty, what size of** group is going to be available for an event and also that the choir is balanced. If not done promptly, choir engagements may have to be turned down because of an apparent lack of support. If your availability changes, tell the MD as well as altering the signing-up sheet.

- **Listen to and help others** –Listen to what others are singing in your part and whether it's different to what you are singing. It will help identify the parts of the music you need to work on and, if you are correct and your colleague wrong, suggest to them privately that they check that part against the music. The more we support and help each other the better we will be.

**The Musical Director has also made the point that homework is an additional expectation and not a substitute for presence at rehearsals. It is essential that choir members attend as many rehearsals as possible throughout the year as well as section rehearsals which are arranged on an impromptu basis prior to major concerts.**

Please note that each member is required:

1. To learn, practise and be part of the conductor's interpretation of the music.
2. To be part of the choir's overall balance and blend.
3. To build the choir's technical and musical abilities.
4. To develop the choir's spirit and sense of togetherness.
5. To give support and help to each other.
6. To consider the skills that he can bring to the choir to perform one or more of the many tasks that are required to enable the choir to run smoothly.