

CLOSING OUR 160th SEASON... FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Here we are, coming to the end of our 2021-2022 season. Yet again, it has been a year of trials and tribulations for the Society, however, we are still here, and making wonderful music.

When we all returned back in September, there was a lot of trepidation as to how the rehearsals would work with the continuing problems caused by Covid-19. The initial rehearsals felt strange for many. Those of us who had taken part in the Three Choirs Festival had become used to singing without social distancing, but for the majority of the Society it was the first time in two years that they had sat, literally 'shoulder to shoulder' let alone sing in a large group.

SATURDAYS AT 7.30PM

**2022-23
CONCERT
SEASON**

WORCESTER CATHEDRAL

**WORCESTER
FESTIVAL
CHORAL
SOCIETY**

26 NOVEMBER 2022
A SEA SYMPHONY
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS
SEA DRIFT
DELIUS

10 DECEMBER 2022
MESSIAH
HANDEL

18 MARCH 2023
DREAM OF GERONTIUS
ELGAR

**TICKETS £15 - £25 from
WFCS.ONLINE
0333 666 3366**
Local call rate & booking fees apply
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 506826

IN THIS ISSUE

	PAGE
UPDATES & NOTICES	
Chairman's round-up	1
Ticket offers	2
Come & Sing choral workshop	3
Seeking WFCS sponsors	3
Become a Patron	4
Staying in touch	7
FUND-RAISING	
100 Club news	5
Worcester Community Lottery	5
Online shopping	5
WFCS history book	6
FEATURES	
Member memories 40 yrs ago	9
Victoria Bradley	10
DIARY DATES	
Elgar Chorale concert	6
Three Choirs Festival preview	8
WFCS diary dates 2022-23	11
CONTACT US	
Officers & committee list	10

I would therefore like to thank everyone for their fastidiousness in testing prior to rehearsals, and wearing masks when moving around the Cathedral. Throughout the season, various members have contracted Covid, including Sam, but fortunately it appears that we have not been a 'super spreading' chorus! This mindfulness of others is a lovely quality that I feel within our family of WFCS.

Storm Arwen took away what would have been a superb 'welcome back' concert. Ticket sales were the highest on recent record for a November concert, and the chorus was in fine voice. Sadly it was not to be. At the moment, we are still awaiting news from our insurers with regards to any pay-out. Since November, David Norledge (Treasurer) has been fighting hard and hopefully we will receive something positive soon.

The *Messiah* concert, was a great success – finally we could perform... the first time since *Messiah* in December 2019! So we now look forward to this forthcoming performance of *St John Passion* and hope that ticket sales really pick up in this final run-up week.

I do hope that many of you and your friends will support our Come and Sing choral workshop day on 23 April, with Chris Allsop putting us through our paces.

As the season comes to a close, I would like to extend my thanks to David Norledge and Lesley Bellerby who are both stepping down as Trustees of the Society at the next AGM. Their work for the Society has been immense. David will have completed 16 years as Treasurer and Lesley 22 years as General Secretary – an extraordinary 38 years of combined service for the Society!

So a new chapter is opening for the Society. Barbara Ford will be taking over as Treasurer, and Stephen Greenwood as General Secretary. Julie Greenwood will take over as Librarian from Jenny Brumhead who, although standing down from the post of Librarian will remain on the Committee. Sue White will become Vice-Chair at the AGM and will succeed me the following year. By the way, if any of you feel you would like to help the Society in a more regular way and can assist the Committee behind the scenes please do not shy away!

It is still a great privilege and honour to be the Chair of this wonderful Society. May it continue for the next 160 years!

Ben Cooper (B)
Chairman



REMINDERS FROM THE TICKETS SECRETARY



Tickets for WFCS Season 2022-2023 (see full size poster on page 1), go on sale to the public on 1 September 2022. This is your chance to buy really good seats for your friends!

The programme for the Season, mostly delayed by Covid, is exciting and fairly familiar to most, so please book early.

There are also several ticket discounts available to Chorus members (listed right). Only one member chose the first of these options last season...!

Contact me on jjenkins@btinternet.com or 01905 354533 for these offers.

TICKET DISCOUNTS FOR CHORUS MEMBERS

- 20% discount if you book seats for all three concerts at the same time (ie a £25 for £20)
- 'Buy 5 tickets and get 6th free' for any



Judy Jenkins (A)
Tickets Secretary

'COME & SING' VIVALDI & RUTTER'S GLORIAS!



Don't miss our popular, annual Come & Sing one-day choral workshop on Saturday 23 April.

Hosted by WFCS, it's a fantastic day of music-making that gives both members and non-members the chance to try out even more of the 'choral greats'!

More than 100 amateur singers from across the UK are expected to take part in our annual workshop, which this year covers both Antonio Vivaldi's joyful masterwork, *Gloria*, and John Rutter's thrilling *Gloria*.

Participants don't need choral experience to take part, but being able to read or follow music is helpful to get the most from the day.

The workshop takes place in the convivial surroundings of St Andrew's Methodist Church in Pump St, Worcester.

We'll be under the baton of our esteemed former WFCS and Worcester Cathedral Director of Music, Christopher Allsop, with the brilliant Nicholas Freestone providing piano accompaniment.

Registration is from 9.30am, for a 10.15 start. After several singing sessions and breaks there will be an informal afternoon performance (including soloists) which participants' friends can attend free of charge. The day finishes by 4.45pm.

Tickets are £20 (adults) and £10 (students) which includes vocal score loan for the day, and free tea and coffee. There will also be delicious home-baked cakes to buy.

Singers can even pre-order a home-made packed or hot lunch when they book their ticket.

For more information, online booking and a downloadable PDF leaflet (incl. postal booking form) visit: www.wfcs.online/come-and-sing-events (Booking deadline Wednesday 20 April).



SEEKING WFCS CORPORATE SPONSORS FOR 2022-23

Our intrepid concert programme advertising coordinator Jim Norris (T) has been pursuing various Worcester-based companies this term, with the aim of potentially securing an overall corporate sponsor for our WFCS 2022-23 season, and/or a nearby restaurant as hospitality sponsor (similar to our past, very popular Prize Draw and marketing arrangement with Côte Restaurant).

Thus far, the discussions have not yet borne fruit. So if you have connections with a good-sized business in Worcester that might be interested in discussing a mutually beneficial corporate sponsorship package, please contact Jim as soon as possible (jimnorris1973@icloud.com).

CALLING WFCS PATRONS FOR 2022-23



ACKNOWLEDGES WITH THANKS THE SUPPORT OF OUR PATRONS IN 2021-22 AND IN MANY CASES 2020-21.

Patrick and Kate Aydon
Alison and Brian Boswell
Gardelle Bullock
Bygonia of Worcester
Joanna Brockell
Angela Brinton
Dr. David Carter
George and Anne Carter
Jane Cross
Patsy Doherty Wagner
Tony Dyson
Peter Gardner

Anja and Toby Hopper
Anna Lechmere
Mrs E. Lockett
Isobel Nicholas
Joan and Michael Perry
Terry and Barbara Plant
Fred Randall
Mr and Mrs D. J. Renney
Stuart Seneys
Kathy and Lewis Steele
Roy Walford

COVID SAFE
Worcester Cathedral is a Covid-safe venue compliant with government guidelines. We will place you as close as possible to your seat preference on the seating plan shown, but we reserve the right to amend your seat allocation, if necessary. We will contact you about refunding options if a concert is cancelled, according to WFCS normal terms and conditions.

CORPORATE PATRONS
Existing opportunities exist for local businesses to become Corporate Patrons of WFCS. A range of tailor-made packages offering commercial opportunities and benefits are available to complement support of a season, concert, soloist or other element of our performances.

To discuss ideas and opportunities, please contact our Publicity & Marketing Officer: Michelle Whitefoot at michellewhitefoot@wfcsonline.co.uk or 01890 512779



Worcester Festival Choral Society is a Registered Charity No. 506826
President: The Lord Bishop of Worcester
The Society gratefully acknowledges the support of the Chapter of Worcester Cathedral



**PATRONS
GUIDE**
2022-23





Become an Annual Patron and support great choral music in Worcester Cathedral

The WFCS Patrons Scheme raises significant funds for the Society each year.

That's why, as we look ahead to our next, 2022-23 concert season, we want to encourage many more WFCS members, family and friends to support great choral music in Worcester by taking up, or gifting, WFCS Patron packages for our upcoming season.

The price of the Patrons package is £125 and includes:

- Priority booking on a Front Nave seat of your choice at each of our three concerts (individual seat value £25)
- Complimentary concert programmes
- Complimentary interval refreshments in the Chapter House with WFCS members
- Your name and patronage acknowledged in our concert programmes
- A copy of the twice-yearly *Choral Chronicle* giving information about WFCS, and invitations to social events.

It's thanks partly to these significant, reliable donations that, as a Society, we have been able to stay afloat financially in recent times, to support the professional musicians we are privileged to work with, and to continue to cultivate great choral music in our County. Knowing that they are helping the Society, both financially and musically, is rewarding enough for many of our kind Patrons.

Please give one of our application forms (available in PDF format at <https://www.wfcs.online/become-a-patron> or hard copy from me) to anyone you can think of who might appreciate the opportunity to join us. You can also email me at annerenshaw@me.com.



Anne Renshaw (S)
Patrons secretary



**2022-23
SEASON**

AUTUMN 26 November 2022
VAUGHAN WILLIAMS: **A SEA SYMPHONY**
DELIUS: **SEA DRIFT**

WINTER 10 December 2022
HANDELS: **MESSIAH**

SPRING 18 March 2023
ELGAR: **DREAM OF GERONTIUS**

All concerts begin at 7.30pm.

WHY BE A PATRON?
WFCS Patrons enjoy a range of benefits across the season's three concerts in recognition of their valued support in maintaining great choral music in Worcester Cathedral. The annual package comprises:

- Priority booking to 19 August 2022 on a Front Nave seat of your choice at each of our three concerts (individual seat value £25)
- Complimentary concert programmes
- Complimentary interval refreshments in the Chapter House with WFCS members
- Your name and patronage acknowledged in our concert programmes
- E-newsletters on the Society's activities and invitations to social events

HOW TO APPLY
It's easy to become a WFCS Patron. Simply complete the table opposite and send it, together with your cheque payable to Worcester Festival Choral Society to:

Worcester Festival Choral Society
c/o Willow House
Shakley Beauchamp
Worcestershire
WR6 6RB
or email annerenshaw@me.com for online payment details
Tel: 01810 823322



Please reply before 19 August for priority seat selection!
Tickets go on public sale from 1 September.



**PATRON APPLICATION
2022-23**

PATRON PACKAGE

	Price	How many	Total cost
Front Nave season ticket	£125

SEAT PREFERENCE

Preferred row Seat No/s

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

Name/s

Address

Postcode

Phone

Email

PROGRAMME DETAILS

Your name/s as you wish it/them to appear in programme

Or mark **X** here if you don't want your name in programme ☐

SEATING PLAN

*Please mark with a cross your preferred choice of seats on the plan below. We will endeavour to place you as near to that location as possible with the seating plan in use at the cathedral at the time.



Chorus and Orchestra

Front Nave

Reserved seating

Yield

HELP TO RAISE FUNDS **FOR WFCS...**

TAKE PART IN THE **100 CLUB**

Membership of the Club has remained steady this year - we have lost four members over the last 12 months but had four new joiners, resulting in an overall increase in shares. We now have 59 members holding a total of 127 shares. As a result we'll be able to make another substantial contribution to the WFCS coffers this season - c £1,250. Thanks as ever to all members, including a number of those who have retired from singing but still support us in this way. We have had two draws so far this season - the final draw will be held in April when four lucky winners will see an unexpected (modest!) windfall.

Deirdre Myers (A)
100 Club Coordinator

PLAY THE **WORCESTER COMMUNITY LOTTERY**



Did you know that you, your friends and family can help support WFCS funds by buying tickets for the Worcester Community Lottery? Thanks to Worcester Community Lottery tickets bought by a small number of loyal supporters to date, more than £400 has once again been raised towards WFCS funds through this route in the past year. Several of our supporters have also won money and extra free Lottery tickets along the way. But with even more players supporting us, we could raise so much more!

- Worcester Community Lottery is a weekly online lottery that aims to raise money for local charities and good causes
- Every ticket costs £1. Of this 50p goes directly to the local charity selected by the player. A further 10p goes to other local charities
- The draw takes place every Saturday night at 8pm
- The top prize is £25,000 if 6 numbers are matched, £2,000 if 5 consecutive numbers are matched, and so on.
- The average odds of winning a prize are estimated at 50:1
- Minimum purchase is 1 month (5 wks') worth of tickets (£5 spend)
- Tickets are purchased online at www.worcesterlottery.org

So please consider playing, and telling your friends. Simply choose Worcester Festival Choral Society as the charity you want to benefit, to help contribute to staging our wonderful concerts.

HOW TO PLAY

1. Buy your tickets at www.worcesterlottery.org
2. Choose WFCS from the list of charities you wish to support
3. Check the winning numbers online each Saturday, 8pm

Thank you to all players and
GOOD LUCK!

SHOP VIA **AMAZON & THE GIVING MACHINE**

You can also add to the Society's funds at no extra cost to you, when you shop online:

- As an 'Amazon Associate', WFCS so can earn commission from any qualifying Amazon purchases you make via our special link (NB to work, this link **MUST** be clicked on directly from our WFCS website)
- The Society can also receive a charitable donation from other retailers, whenever you shop via TheGivingMachine, a registered charity that acts as a channel to more than 2,000 popular retailers including M&S, Tesco, Boots and Etsy

To find both of these special links, visit www.wfcs.online/support_us.

BUY THE WFCS HISTORY BOOK: **£820 RAISED TO DATE**

The book charting the illustrious history of Worcester Festival Choral Society, published to mark our 160th anniversary, has now sold more than 150 copies and raised £820 profit for the Society so far (with the considerable production costs also covered).

Copies of 'A Choral Chronicle – The History of Worcester Festival Choral Society' will continue to be available at rehearsals next season, and from our WFCS website meanwhile (www.wfcs.online/book) at the special direct-from-WFCS price of £20. 100% of the income goes to WFCS funds. Copies are also on sale at Waterstones Worcester, Worcester Tourist Info Centre, Worcester Cathedral Shop (rrp £25).

Charting the WFCS story from its Victorian origins to the present day via two World Wars, 11 conductors, hundreds of concerts and many famous-name connections, the 242-page, full colour book makes a fascinating read for any WFCS member or concert-goer. As well as drawing on a wide range of historical archives, the book includes 200+ colour images, plus anecdotes from long-standing Chorus members and many Directors of Music.

In it you can discover how WFCS was born in 1861; how Sir Edward Elgar led the WFCS 'Band', conducted WFCS concerts and chose us to premiere two of his choral works; the truth behind Conductor Hugh Blair's unusual dismissal; how WFCS was guest-conducted by Sir Adrian Boult and Sir Hubert Parry; how WFCS helped the Second World War effort; why the WFCS 'Centenary Concert' was a mistake; how the Society sang at the Royal Albert Hall; how the music is programmed for WFCS and Three Choirs Festival concerts... and much more.


So if you haven't already got your copy, please do consider buying or gifting one, and continuing to boost WFCS funds, in exchange for a riveting read.



THE ELGAR CHORALE
Director of Music
Piers Maxim

Great Malvern Priory
9th April 2022,

HYMNUS PASCHALIS
By Donald Hunt



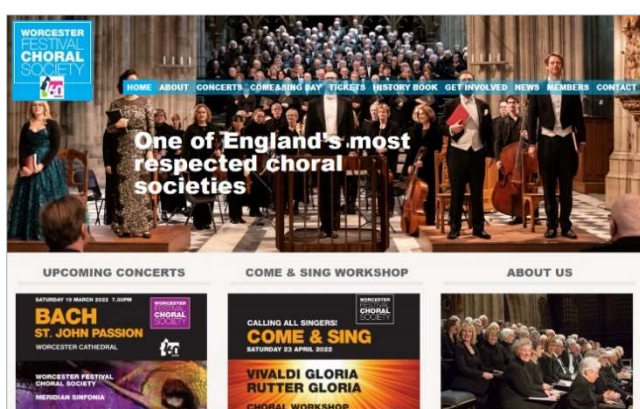
ELGAR CHORALE PRESENTS WORK BY **DONALD HUNT**

The next Elgar Chorale concert, in which several WFCS members sing, is on 9 April in Malvern Priory. It may be of interest to WFCS members, as the main work is by Donald Hunt, a former WFCS Director of Music. The choir is also presenting a commissioned short work by Roderick Williams, *Shout O Ye Winds!* and Finzi, *Requiem da Camera*, both delayed from the 2020 Three Choirs Festival. More programme details and tickets from www.elgarchorale.com.

STAYING IN TOUCH WITH WFCS **SEASON-ROUND**

As we head towards the summer break and await the next concert season, don't forget that there are several ways to stay abreast of the latest WFCS news. You can also keep in touch with fellow Chorus members, help to share Society updates far and wide, and find out what's happening on the Worcestershire music and arts scene...!

WEBSITE: www.wfcs.online



Keep an eye on our website www.wfcs.online for the latest concert, event and member news, press releases, concert testimonials, Patrons information, photos and other updates you can share with friends.



TWITTER: www.twitter.com/worcschoral
(890 followers and counting)



We also share our concert news, posters, ticket links, plus other local event and music news etc, via Twitter. So if you or your company are on Twitter, please follow our WFCS Twitter feed and Like/RT our messages to the wider world!



FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/WorcsChoral

(675 followers and counting)



Several times each week, you'll find the latest WFCS news and event updates, photo galleries, audio and radio clips, quizzes, interesting music-related video links, useful local arts information and much more on our Facebook page. It's one of the main ways we can raise our profile with wider potential audiences, as well as staying in ongoing touch with our members, Patrons and friends.

So if you are on Facebook, please Like our page and Like/Share/ Comment on our posts to help them reach far and wide. Even if you don't have a Facebook account, you can still type in the above link to read our posts.

Michelle Whitefoot (S)
Marketing & publicity officer



LOOKING AHEAD TO THE HEREFORD THREE CHOIRS FESTIVAL 2022

Ever since Worcester Festival Choral Society's inception in 1861, many members of the Society have been selected to sing in the renowned Three Choirs Festival Chorus whenever the Festival has been held.

The same is true this summer, when 35 WFCS members who passed the special Chorus audition before the last Worcester Three Choirs Festival (the results of which then apply for the full cycle of three Festivals) will take part in Hereford from 23-30 July.

The theme this summer's Festival is 're-imaginings', with the renowned Philharmonia Orchestra in residence once again.

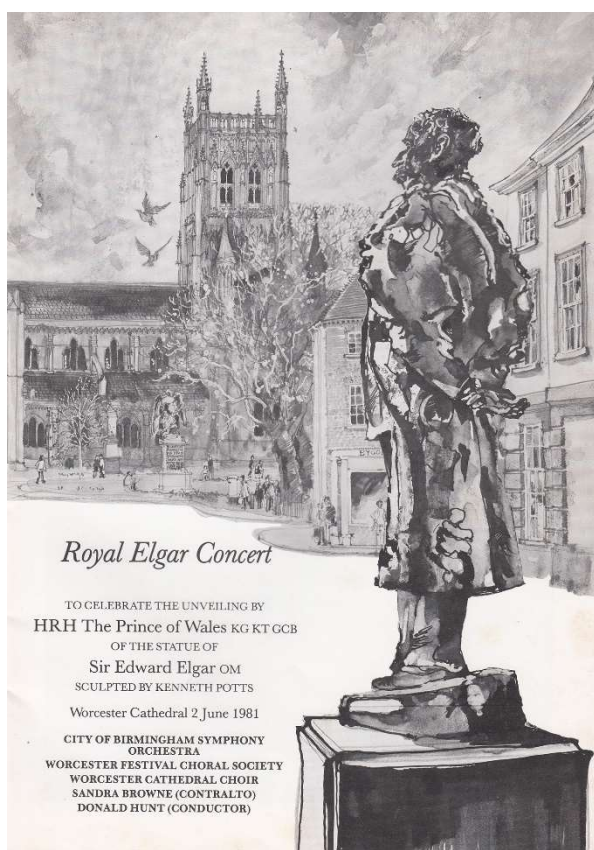
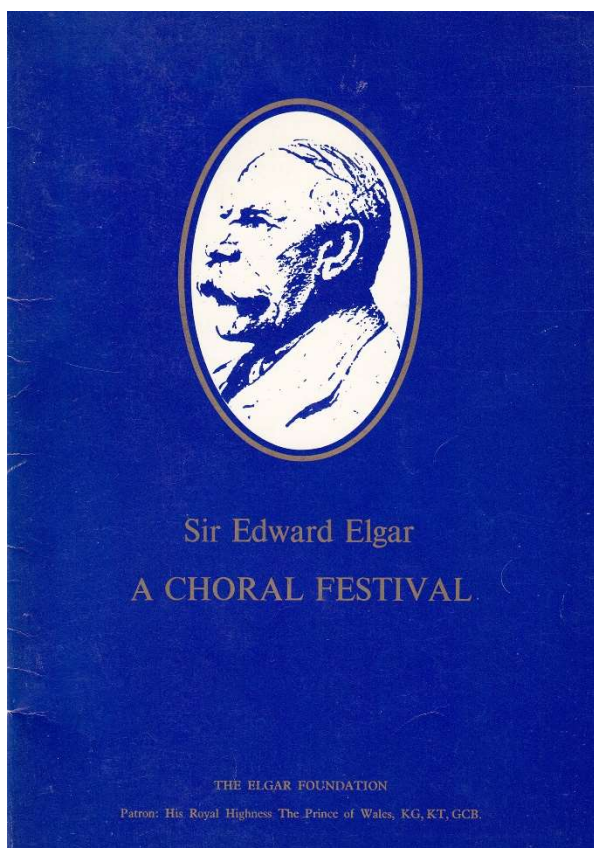


At the time of this publication, only the initial Festival preview has been published, however the full event programme – including which works the Festival Chorus will perform in its series of flagship evening concerts – is due to be announced very soon. Visit www.threechoirs.org for the latest updates.

Auditions for the next Festival Chorus cycle (ie from Worcester 2024 onwards) are not until autumn 2023, but to find out more, chat to our Three Choirs Festival Worcester chorus manager, Stephen Greenwood (B) in due course. Good luck to all of our WFCS singers who will be taking part this summer!



Left: Many members of WFCS performing Elgar's The Music Makers as part of the Three Choirs Festival Chorus in Worcester in 2021, conducted by Samuel Hudson. The Festival Chorus also includes singers from Gloucester Choral Society, Hereford Choral Society and the three Cathedral Choirs each year.



MEMBER MEMORIES FROM 40 YEARS AGO

"As a result of having to clear a bookcase under our stairs, which had long been a repository for what is politely called 'memorabilia', I discovered two of our society's programmes dating back to the early 1980s.

The first was dated 16 June 1980, which was the day we were all bussed up to London to sing *The Apostles* in the Royal Albert Hall; the concert was to raise funds for Sir Edward Elgar's Birthplace (see programme cover left). The second programme from 2 June 1981 was for a concert to celebrate the unveiling of the Elgar Statue which stands at the top of the High Street, opposite the Cathedral (see page from the programme bottom left). Both events were attended by HRH The Prince of Wales. The large glossy A4 programmes cost 50p and included advertisements for many long-gone Worcester businesses including 'Keys of Worcester' and 'The Metal Box'.

I was interested to note that at the time the Society boasted around 240 members, with tenors and basses being equally divided at 35 each. Clearly Health and Safety did not restrict the numbers on the seating at that time although I do seem to remember that it was rather unstable. The present structure with the restricted numbers is much more solid. Apart from my own name (then Miss Pugh) and that of my mother, I was intrigued to discover some names very familiar to me, a few of whom are still singing with us today.

Neatly folded in one of the programmes I discovered a copy of our very first WFCS newsletter dated May 1981. The following paragraph may be of interest: *"One of the most heartening and productive features of the year has been the way members have rallied round in various ways to lift the society out of its financial crisis. From jumping out of aeroplanes to sponsored knitting, with much bring and buy and coffee in between and to say nothing of one of our ladies actually running in the London marathon, we have raised nearly £2,000"*.

Fortunately now our financial management seems to be in safer hands despite a few cancellations due to Covid and mishaps with the roof. However....."

Sally Rees (S)
Membership secretary



VICTORIA BRADLEY



We were all saddened to learn of the sudden and untimely death of one of our longest-standing chorus members, Victoria Bradley (A) this term.

Victoria sang with Worcester Festival Choral Society over a 30 year period and also at many Three Choirs Festivals (see photo middle left, between Sam Hudson and Nick Freestone, as part of the 2021 Worcester Three Choirs Festival Chorus). She also sang with the Worcester Cathedral Chamber Choir until relatively recently, was a server at Worcester Cathedral, a member of the cathedral community for 35 years, and a friend to many.

There will be a Service of Thanksgiving for Victoria's life in Worcester Cathedral on Wednesday 23 March at 11.00am. A choir, directed by Sam, is being formed to sing at this service, with singers drawn from both choirs of which she was a member.

Our thoughts are with Victoria's husband Mark, her family and many friends.



OFFICERS & COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT

The Lord Bishop of Worcester

SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT

The Dean of Worcester

VICE PRESIDENTS

Dr Christopher Robinson CVO CBE
Adrian Lucas MA
Dr Peter Nardone

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

Samuel Hudson

ACCOMPANIST

Nicholas Freestone

CHAIRMAN

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01886 812779

WFCS DIARY DATES 2022-23

Any ongoing revisions will be notified to members and published at: www.wfcs.online/members

Autumn Term 2022

September	Mon 12	7.30pm	Worcs Cathedral	First rehearsal (arrive early to collect music)
	Mon 19	7.30pm	St Andrew's	Rehearsal
	Mon 26	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal (and poss AGM – tbc)
October	Mon 3	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Mon 10	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Mon 17	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Mon 24	-	-	HALF TERM
	Mon 31	7.30pm	St Andrew's	Rehearsal
November	Mon 7	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Mon 14	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Mon 21	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Sat 26	1.30pm 7.30pm (line up 7.05pm)	Worc Cathedral	Afternoon rehearsal (compulsory) AUTUMN CONCERT Vaughan Williams: A Sea Symphony Delius: Sea Drift
	Mon 28	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
December	Mon 5	7.30pm	St Andrew's	Rehearsal
	Sat 10	1.30pm 7:30pm (line up 7.05pm)	Worc Cathedral	Afternoon rehearsal (compulsory) WINTER CONCERT Handel: Messiah
	<i>tbc</i>	<i>tbc</i>	<i>Worc Cathedral</i>	<i>Worcs Cathedral Christmas Concert</i> <i>(WFCS participation tbc)</i>

Spring Term 2023

January	Mon 9	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	First rehearsal (arrive early to collect music)
	Mon 16	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Mon 23	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Mon 30	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
February	Mon 6	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Mon 13	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Mon 20	-	-	HALF TERM
	Mon 27	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
March	Mon 6	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Mon 13	7.30pm	Worc Cathedral	Rehearsal
	Sat 18	1.30pm 7:30pm (line up 7.05pm)	Worc Cathedral	Afternoon rehearsal (compulsory) SPRING CONCERT Elgar: The Dream of Gerontius
April	<i>tbc</i>	<i>tbc</i>	<i>tbc</i>	Come & Sing Choral Workshop (details tbc)

All photos of WFCS, Worcester Cathedral and Three Choirs Festival in this issue taken by, and copyright to, our photographer Michael Whitefoot, with grateful thanks! www.michaelwhitefoot.co.uk