

CHATTERIS MUSIC SOCIETY NEWS LETTER

December 2021

Christmas is nearly upon us once again and inevitably we look back over another year that has nearly ended and wonder why it seems to have passed so quickly. The Committee have met three times since the last newsletter in October and we can report progress on a number of fronts including, crucially, restarting our concert programme.

You are already aware that our long postponed Annual General Meeting is planned to take place at the **King Edward Centre, Railway Lane, Chatteris** on 12th February 2022 commencing at 15.30 hours. We look forward to welcoming the Fenland Youth Orchestra to entertain us following the business meeting and refreshments. Proceedings should finish by about 17.30 hours. We will, of course, endeavour to follow all official Covid guidelines relevant at the time of our AGM but given the current rapidly changing situation due to the Omicron variant it is impossible to predict where we will be with that by February next year. We have already agreed that for refreshments we will use pre-wrapped food and disposable cups etc.

As we said in the last Newsletter, whatever the National Covid restrictions are for holding public meetings we would encourage everyone attending the AGM to act thoughtfully and responsibly in this matter and have respect for the wishes of others. Appropriate use of facemasks and social distancing are simply common sense!

We are very pleased to announce that our first concert following lockdown will be given by the Trumpeter Crispian Steele-Perkins accompanied by organist Ian LeGrice. This will take place on Saturday 26th February 2022 commencing at 14.00 hours and finishing by 16.30 hours. The venue will be **St Peters Church, High Street, March PE15 9JR**. This is an afternoon concert rather than our normal evening spot in order to allow people living in rural areas to travel home in daylight. We are aware that some more elderly members of our audience prefer not to venture out after dark, particularly in winter and on Fenland roads. As well as playing well known trumpet music Crispian will also bring with him and demonstrate some of his antique and more unusual trumpets.

A further concert has been provisionally arranged for Saturday 30th April 2022 when we hope to stage a concert by The King's Men (the choral scholars of King's College, Cambridge). This will be an evening concert and also held at **St Peter's Church, March** commencing at 20.00 hours so please note your diaries. The King's Men last performed for Chatteris Music Society on 24th April 2015.

Further concerts will be arranged following our AGM when there will be an opportunity for you to give us suggestions for performers at future Chatteris Music Society concerts. These can be either artists who have performed for us previously or new acts which you think might be suitable for inclusion in our ongoing concert programme.

It will be evident from the forgoing that we intend to use St Peter's Church, March as one of our future concert venues. This venue has, in general, better overall facilities than Chatteris Parish Church (CPC) and the hire charges are over 75% lower on average! The one possible downside to using St Peter's is that they still have their pews which in general are not so comfortable as the chairs at CPC. But you can always bring your own cushions to sit on if you prefer!

We have noted that a smaller percentage of our membership now live in Chatteris than was the case a few years ago and that a larger percentage now comes from the surrounding area and further afield. It therefore makes sense to diversify our concert venues while not overlooking the fact that our name remains Chatteris Music Society. We are continuing to look at another venue south of Chatteris which we think would also be suitable for some of our future concerts.

The future of our Grand Piano now looks more certain than reported in the last Newsletter. The good news is that it will probably not go into storage because there is the opportunity that it can be homed in a venue where humidity is much lower than at CPC and where a humidifier can be run 24/7 from a mains electrical supply without problem. This should stop, or at least considerably reduce, the deterioration of the instrument and still leave it available for community use as well as for our concerts when required. We are hoping to agree final details for moving the Piano to its new home early in the New Year. Meanwhile it remains at Chatteris Parish Church.

Notwithstanding the current spike in Covid infections due to the Omicron variant we are pressing on with arrangements to restart our concert programme. Let us hope the current spike is short lived and the booster vaccination programme is effective so that normal life can go on. Clearly we will eventually have to accept living with Covid and vaccines.

May we wish you a happy and peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year. We look forward to seeing you at the AGM next year.

The CMS Committee

