



*The community choir for Rotherhithe & Bermondsey, where local people come together to sing*

## **The RBCS Trustees' Report February 2017 AGM**

### ***First of all, the 'Thank You's***

Most importantly thank you to Sue Heath-Downey, our Musical Director, for her enthusiastic leadership in all matters musical in 2016, which enabled the choir to achieve much more than many of us could imagine. Thanks also to St Mary's and St Peter's churches in Rotherhithe and St James church in Bermondsey for providing wonderful performance spaces, to Time and Talents for rehearsal space and to our patrons and sponsors Simon Hughes and Prem Goyal. And of course, we wouldn't have a choir without singers, who not only sing but provide the choir with all sorts of support in kind and unpaid work. We are very grateful.

### ***What we achieved***

We staged three concerts, we sang at the Brunel Museum as part of the Thames Festival and we organised an open-to-all 'Come and Sing the *Messiah*' event. We appeared under the Christmas Tree in Trafalgar Square to sing carols and collect donations for the Anthony Nolan charity. We revelled musically in familiar favourites, Handel's *Messiah* (with orchestra and professional soloists) and Vaughan Williams' *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*. And we rose to the challenge of the darker, modern music of Tippett and Honegger.

### ***We are committed to being a Community Choir***

Our commitment to being a community choir grows ever stronger. Anyone who wants to come and sing can join us, no audition required. We make time for social chat at rehearsals (and afterwards in the pub!), we invite audiences to join us for refreshments at a performance and to get to know us and usually there is a well-earned party for singers and their families after the end of term. And our concerts are free, so everyone is welcome to come and listen. We know this is the right approach because the number of singers in the choir is growing and so are our audiences.

### ***Making the Most of Making Music***

The choir continues to be a member of our national association, Making Music, which keeps us up to date with good practice. This has been especially helpful this last year in relation to claiming Gift Aid. Gift Aid will allow us to grow the donations we have received by claiming the income tax back from the government. This will be worth several hundred pounds a year to the choir. As a member of the choir, you can register with the Making Music website, which has all sorts of information about music and musical events: [www.makingmusic.org.uk](http://www.makingmusic.org.uk).

### ***Looking forward to 2017***

In 2017, there will be wonderful music of course, including the Fauré *Requiem*, Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* and Howard Goodall's *Eternal Light*. And behind the scenes, we will be looking for ways to mobilise the wealth of expertise of all kinds in the choir, which at present often goes unrecognised. Expect more invitations to join in planning repertoire, designing publicity material and other interesting activities.

### ***From the RBCS Trustees 2016***

Clare Birks (chair), John Hawthorne (Treasurer), Steve Hodges (Secretary), Penny Barrett, Emily Clemo, Lynette Thornton and John Haydn-Jones.

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