

Treble Line Newsletter

Dr Alan Thurlow is now our President

We are happy to report that Dr Thurlow has accepted the invitation to become Treble Line's President. It is good to have the support of such a distinguished musician who started as a chorister in a parish church. Dr Thurlow was for many years the organist and director of the choir at Chichester Cathedral, but is also acutely aware of the tasks facing parish churches that are committed to sustaining this form of choir.

Website

Our website (<http://trebleline.org.uk>) has been running for some months. Please visit it, explore its tabs, and give us your comments. The website contains, among other things, an outline of the organization's aims, a list of choirs with boy-only top lines, a link to the 2011 survey's report, and a place where contribution can be added on key issues. We would be glad to add pictures of your choir to the 'gallery' section. Please send material to the Secretary (b.hill@imperial.ac.uk)

Meeting at Charterhouse, 15 September 2012, 2.00 to 4.30

A general meeting will be held on 15 September, starting at 2.00. Representatives of all churches known to have a choir with a boys-only top-line are warmly invited, as are others interested in sustaining this part of our musical heritage.

Details of the Programme are on the next page. It would be very helpful if you could let the Secretary know in advance if you, or a representative, are intending to come (b.hill@imperial.ac.uk)

Treble Line is an organisation set up for UK parish churches that maintain choirs with top-lines consisting only of boys. While Treble Line recognises that girls-only, ladies or mixed top lines have an important role to play in parish worship, it believes that the all-boy treble section can bring rather special benefits to its members, the churches of which they are part, and wider society. Treble Line is a network created by choir directors to foster choirs of this type. The name was adopted at a meeting of choir directors and other interested individuals held at Charterhouse, London on 5 February 2011 that followed a preliminary meeting held in Reading in 2010.

The aims of Treble Line are to:

- promote and encourage the singing boy in church and liturgical choirs
- support and encourage the all-male choir
- encourage clergy and organists in the running and establishment of such choirs

Treble Line acknowledges that the RSCM provides a valuable service in providing support for all types of choir. Nevertheless, it may be helpful for choirs with boys-only top lines to exchange experiences, such as what works in recruiting and maintaining trebles, how they are treated when the voice changes etc.. Treble Line is a means by which good practice can be spread and, hopefully new choirs established.

Officers

Chairman: [Rev. Jonathan Boston](#)

Secretary: [Prof. Berkeley Hill](#), 1
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Treble Line Meeting at Charterhouse, London, on Saturday 15 September 2012

(for information on how to get there, see box below)

AGENDA (to be adopted at the meeting's start)

2.00 Welcome by the Chairman (Rev. Jonathan Boston)

2.10 The characteristics of sustainable 'Treble Line' choirs—results from the 2011 survey of member churches (presentation by Berkeley Hill)

2.40 Discussion 'What makes a boys section sustainable'

3.00 Re-establishing a choral tradition with boy trebles: case study of Reading Minster (presentation by Peter West)

3.30 Break for tea

3.45 Round table: 'Practicalities of recruiting'. Opportunities for everyone present to share experiences of what works, and what does not, in their particular circumstances when recruiting trebles.

4.30 Close

Directions to:

Charterhouse
(Sutton's Hospital)
Charterhouse Square
London EC1M 6AN

By underground: The nearest underground stations are Barbican and Farringdon. At the exit of Barbican station, turn left until you reach Carthusian Street, turn left and then take the first turn on the right, on the cobbled street through the car park, which leads around Charterhouse Square, until a post box and a large medieval gateway is reached (adjacent to the Malmaison Hotel). Pedestrian entry is through the gatehouse - please report to the gatekeeper

Why Come?

A cordial welcome awaits you.

The Directors of Treble Line choirs are, almost without exception, very busy people with many competing demands on their time. But they are also uniquely experienced in making choirs with boys-only top lines work in a sustainable way. Sharing best-practice drawn from this experience is an important way by which choirs with all-boy top lines can be supported and fostered.

Treble Line is predominantly a 'virtual' organisation, for which electronic communication is the basis of networking. Nevertheless, it is useful occasionally to meet face-to-face, not least because this makes subsequent e-mails so much more effective. For example, setting up a joint choir event is greatly helped by knowing something about the personality of the person you are approaching.

The meeting on September 15 has two presentations, but a key element will be the contributions from 'the floor'. The focus is on the recruitment process, though this will no doubt stretch to how recruits are retained and developed.

There will be plenty of opportunity for all experiences to be shared.