

Hello to the remaining **choir members planning to join us in Kent!**

Uncertainty still reigns but we HOPE that things are coming together. We regret that even the most enthusiastic who had booked to travel from France cannot now participate after all. And the determined Germans are also faced with the impossibility of crossing La Manche by car or train without transiting through France (or Newcastle!)

Meanwhile audience bookings are ticking up slowly but steadily though not yet affording us enough cash-flow to manage easily. But we do have a good range of accommodation paid for and the 15th (of n?) re-jigging of **who sleeps where and with whom?** has just been completed over breakfast today.

We are beginning to see forecasts of **weather** for the 'festival' outdoor performance/rehearsal period and of Covid-19 case-numbers (prospects for the latter seem more dramatic than for the lighting flashes on current predictions). The ever-present risk of PINGS on the NHS **self-isolation** app remains and could still yield us a much-thinned band of musicians (mainly younger than the well-vaxxed choir); so please be careful out there! We plan to sing (and eat and drink) almost exclusively - and possibly entirely - **out of doors**. (Pippa stresses the need to LEARN and listen to the Rutter which is very difficult: gusts of wind barely disguise tuneless or hesitant performance!)

Accommodation will be indoors, albeit rather more (expensively) dispersed than usual and in places with windows and garden/outdoor access and few shared corridors. We have, however, decided not to impose young musicians on generous older locals who had offered rooms.

I am writing individually today to you all about your digs. We have tried to match your requests and needs to what we have to offer. Please be tolerant if it's not quite what you dreamed of (and ecstatic if your holiday dreams are fulfilled). It will be helpful if could you **pay quickly** if I ask for money! And any generosity among those of you who can contribute will MASSIVELY HELP with the prevailing anxiety index (*whyever* did we decide to do this festival now?! Don't worry we know why and remain enthusiastic, albeit a bit nervously).

More soon!

JONATHAN

21 July 2021