

Ian Rhode-Bell – Questions and responses

1) I'd be interested to hear if you have any thoughts on how you might approach managing the membership and if there are any changes you might want to make. If you were successful as a nominee Director, would it be the Membership you were interested in being involved in?

Answer: My experience in running teams in the software industry, and my experience in organising inclusive open space conferences has taught me that people learn best when they are in a space where they feel comfortable, challenged but not overwhelmed. One of the strengths of the Sunday Boys has always been how it has welcomed new members and helped them to learn and contribute to the choir from the very beginning. As the choir has gone from strength to strength musically, this has obviously steepened the learning curve for new members. Sometimes it can feel a bit like you have to grab the train and hold on for dear life! I'd like to focus on what we can do to help supporting new members in their learning - whether that be a buddy system, sectional rehearsals, or the possibility of a "two speed" choir.

Whether I were elected as Membership Director, or Nominee Director, I would also want to help continue the excellent work that Ed has done over his time as Chair to involve members in determining the direction of the choir, and its future. His use of open spaces to encourage participation is definitely something I would want to continue and expand.

Lastly, the past few months with COVID-19 have led to a lot of changes in choir, and this will obviously have to continue for some time. The changes we have made to rehearsals have I feel been broadly successful, but something has been lost in the things that go along with rehearsals - friendship, camaraderie and teamwork. Luckily enough, I have also been involved in organising several fully-online conferences recently, and this has given me some ideas for how we can improve this as we adapt to the "new normal".

2) What made you stand for two roles?

Answer: My first impulse was to run for Membership Director, as this is the area where I would like to contribute. If I were elected as Nominee Director instead, this is still where I would focus my efforts in collaboration with the Membership Director - on improving the experience of choir for its members, particularly new members.