



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP  
Prime Minister  
10 Downing Street  
London  
SW1A 2AA

21<sup>st</sup> June 2021

Dear Prime Minister,

I'm writing to urge you to ease the COVID-19 restrictions on choirs in England.

As you know, the current restrictions prohibit amateur choirs from practising in-person, indoors, in groups any larger than six choristers. After months of being denied the chance to sing together through successive lockdowns, in effect, these continued restrictions prevent most choirs from practising or performing at all.

As a graduate of the Royal College of Music, a musician, former composer and music teacher, as the Chair of the APPG for Music, and having been a Trustee for organisations from the National Youth Orchestra to Music For Youth UK, I know very well how much joy singing together brings to all involved. I also know how beneficial singing is for mental health and wellbeing.

In my view, the continued restrictions on choirs are inconsistent with the freedoms that have been allowed in other sectors. For example, indoor gym classes, which have been identified as being a particular risk for spreading COVID-19 due to people exercising produce high levels of aerosols, have been permitted to reopen with no such limits on class sizes. Pubs cannot offer the levels of ventilation or space for social distancing that most choral venues provide and represent a much greater risk, yet have been able to open at a significant level of capacity. While I warmly welcome the degree of freedom afforded to gyms and pubs, I would like to see, at the very least, a comparable approach taken when it comes to choirs.

The arts, especially music, have suffered disproportionately throughout this pandemic. To lessen any further detriment to amateur music in England, I encourage you to lift restrictions on choirs as soon as possible.

Yours ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David'.

David Warburton MP  
Member of Parliament for Somerton and Frome

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