

# NewSPAL

The performing arts library in Surrey

## Monthly Update

Hello and welcome to our June newsletter. We hope you've had a chance to enjoy some of the lovely weather recently - we certainly earned it through May!

NewSPAL's cataloguing team are hard at work in Ewell Library; by the beginning of this month we had catalogued over 100,000 items! Thank you to all involved, and also to those who have responded to the call over the last month and are beginning to learn the ropes now. We hope that all of the vocal, orchestral and drama sets will be fully catalogued by the time we move to Woking. And we can see that many of you are able to be involved again in live music making - there are boxes and boxes of items that are ready to go out to user groups that we are working through before they go out.

If you have borrowed items from Surrey library, and they come with a coloured dot at the top right of the cover, that means that one of our volunteers has checked those copies and entered them onto our new system. It's a neat way of knowing whether any given item needs to be dealt with again, and therefore of saving us time particularly when items come back into the library from loan - we can instantly see whether they can go straight back onto the shelves or whether we need to process them first. If at all possible, when you see that you have a dotted item, please could you leave the dot in situ - just a small plea to help our volunteers!

## Composer/Playwright of the Month

This month, Ian Codd has written a fascinating article about six different composers' responses to war. All are featured in the SPAL collection which will be transferred to NewSPAL. To read the article please [click here](#).

## Working towards Woking

In our April newsletter we were pleased to announce that planning permission has been granted for NewSPAL's new home on Commercial Way in Woking, and you have been wondering what needs to be done, and what our timeframes might be now. Within the last few days, Mark and Kate went to the site to meet with Mark Ferguson, Woking Borough Council's Senior Property Surveyor, and spent a very useful couple of hours looking round the building, and discussing how we will need it fitting out to provide a welcoming, suitable, and secure home for the library. We are keen to also begin detailed discussions on the terms of the lease that NewSPAL will have. We are however all very aware that the financial situation has changed over the last 15 or so months and that all councils are facing significant financial and logistical challenges, so we will undoubtedly need to be creative about the way forward.

We would still like to move before the end of 2021, but this is an ambitious target that will

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require considerable commitment and energy from all sides, and it may not be possible to achieve this timescale. We will of course keep you updated on our progress via these newsletters over the next few months.

## DCMS guidance on amateur singers

In our last newsletter we asked you to let us know what activities you were planning as groups could begin to get back together as lockdown was eased. Since then amateur choirs were told that singing indoors is only permissible in groups of up to a maximum of 6.

The disappointment and frustration caused has been immense and [this article](#) from Surrey Live expressed it perfectly. Many of you will already know of a number of protests have been, and continue to be, made. You may have protested yourselves. If you would like to find out more information about this, please [click here](#) to be redirected to the Making Music website; you'll find an explanation of the current guidance, and then further down the page an outline of what Making Music (along with other representative organisations) is campaigning on, and ways of making a difference yourselves.

We hope that many of you will be able to sing together in groups of 6 or perhaps more outdoors as the summer continues, but in the meantime let's keep putting the government under pressure to change this unfair guidance.

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Please do forward this to members of your group or any contacts who may be interested in keeping up to date with NewSPAL news.

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