

# Eltham Choral Society

Summer Concert 2024

Esther Bersweden

*Time and Tides:*

*An Exploration of Greenwich*

Joseph Haydn

*Nelson  
Mass*

Conductor Max Barley

Organ Matthew Jorysz

Saturday 6 July, 2024

St Alfege Church, Greenwich



**Eltham Choral Society  
Summer Concert 2024**

**Conductor Max Barley  
Organ Matthew Jorysz**

World premiere

**Esther Bersweden: *Time and Tides:  
An Exploration of Greenwich***

1. Time
2. The Lady Oriana
3. A Drop of Nelson's Blood
4. One Tree Hill
5. When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer
6. Even Such is Time

*Interval (refreshments available)*

**Joseph Haydn: *Missa in Angustiis  
(The Nelson Mass)***

**Soloists** Daisy Livesey (soprano); Hera Protopapas (alto);  
Philip Lawford (tenor); James Woollard (bass)  
(soloist from the choir: Jill Pollock)

1. Kyrie
2. Gloria
3. Credo
4. Sanctus
5. Benedictus
6. Agnus Dei

## Franz Joseph Haydn (1732—1809)



One of the most outstanding composers of the classical period and mentor to Beethoven, Haydn was born in Austria in 1732 and died in Vienna in 1809, in a house bought with the proceeds of his two extended visits to England in 1791-2 and 1794-5, where he was a hugely successful and popular figure. Most of Haydn's career was spent as court musician for the Esterházy family. His principal task for his last employer, Nikolaus II, was to compose a new Mass each year for the name-day of his patron's wife, Princess Marie Hermenegild. This resulted in six masterpieces composed between 1796 and 1802. The third in

the series, the *Missa in Angustiis*, (Mass in Time of Peril), now more widely known as the *Nelson Mass*, was composed in 1798. Haydn called the first in the series in 1796 *Missa in Tempore Belli* (Mass in Time of War) reflecting the fact that Austria had been at war with the French Republic ever since they deposed Louis XVI in 1792. With French troops threatening Vienna the Austrians had sued for peace in 1797 but the following year war broke out again when the young General Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Egypt. The peril of the title may well refer to this renewed threat from that upstart general.

By the time of the first performance of the mass at the Esterházy Palace in Eisenstadt in September that year, those present would have known that the previous month the French had been defeated in the Battle of the Nile by British forces, led by Rear-Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson. This, as well as Nelson's success in the Battle of Trafalgar in October 1805, meant that the Mass gradually became known as the '*Lord Nelson Mass*', particularly after Nelson himself visited the palace at Eisenstadt, where he may well have heard the mass in person.

These six late masses show the influence of his London symphonies, highlighting the soloists and chorus, while still allowing the orchestra to play a prominent role. Haydn replaces the more usual succession of stand-alone choruses and arias with a more organic interaction between the chorus and the soloists, creating a dramatic exchange matched with musical structures of great depth.

## Missa in Angustiis (The Nelson Mass) No. 11 in D Minor (1798)

**1. Kyrie** The Kyrie suggests an atmosphere of terror, confusion and anguish, and is composed, rather unusually both for Haydn and for any mass, in D Minor

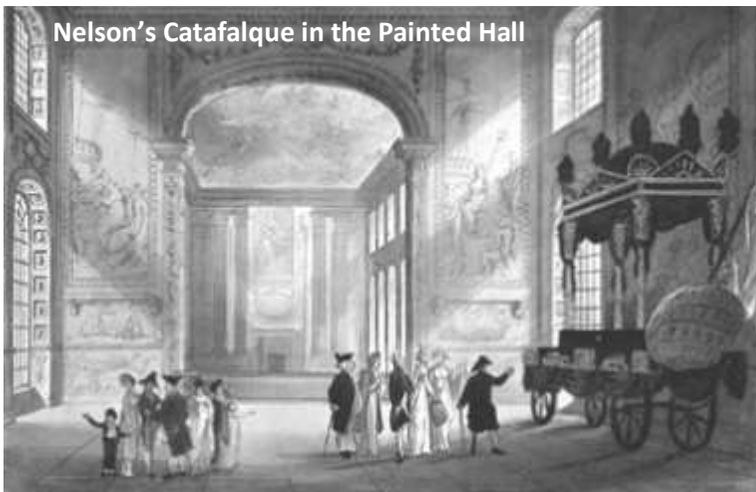
**2. Gloria** By contrast, the Gloria is a celebratory dialogue between soloists and chorus. Here too Haydn stays with the minor key. The conclusion repeats the music of the opening, creating a symphonic structure, a hymn of praise, with a supplication at its core.

**3. Credo** The opening of the Credo takes the form of a canon between the sopranos and tenors, alternating with the altos and basses. Haydn focuses particularly on Christ's birth and passion, creating a dialogue between the soloists and the chorus. Two years earlier Haydn had used a canon for the sinister minuet in what is possibly his finest String Quartet, Opus 76 No. 2, one of his other rare works in D Minor

**4. Sanctus** The Sanctus begins in a solemn mood, but this soon changes with a bright Allegro for the phrase '*Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua*' (The heavens are full of thy glory).

**5. Benedictus** The Benedictus returns to the sombre D minor of the Kyrie. Haydn turns this short text into another extended dramatic dialogue between chorus and the soloists, shifting to the major only for the soprano solo. The fanfare-like accompaniment just before the '*Hosanna*' brings to mind the peril of the work's title.

**6. Agnus Dei** The Agnus Dei, like the Kyrie, is a three-part invocation. The first two sections are sung by the four soloists. The chorus then returns for the concluding plea for peace and the Mass concludes in a triumphant D major.



## **Esther Bersweden *Time and Tides: An Exploration of Greenwich***

The overarching theme of time in Esther Bersweden's new work '*Time and Tides*' has been inspired by the rich maritime and royal heritage of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, home to the Royal Naval College, the Queen's House, the National Maritime Museum, the Royal Park, the Royal Observatory, the Cutty Sark, St Alfege Church, and of course the Prime Meridian. At one level, the texts and music of this new work explore those historical themes. But on another level, the six vignettes, taken from different literary sources, with each set to a different style of music, are a reflection of time at the human level of youth, maturity, wisdom, old age and death. The theme of time is conveyed through both the texts and musical motifs. The melodic motif sounds like a bell chime; the rhythmic motif is the word 'TIME' spelt out in Morse code: dash, dot dot, dash dash, dot.

The first and last movements, *Time* and *Such is Time* bookend the Music by both having time as their Greenwich-related theme. This strengthens the overarching theme and allows the listener to arrive back at the opening theme but seen and felt in a different way. In the first movement, one of the lines of text reads '*a time to be born and a time to die*', and the subsequent movements play out this narrative, following a trajectory of themes from birth to death.

The second movement, *The Lady Oriana*, refers to Queen Elizabeth I, who was born in the original Greenwich Palace of Placentia, a royal residence from 1433 to 1642 (demolished in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century). This movement is about Elizabeth as a young '*queen of twenty*' and as such represents birth and youth. It makes use of a polyphonic style which is reminiscent of Thomas Tallis (1505-1585), who lived in Greenwich and is buried here in the church of St Alfege.

The third movement, *A Drop of Nelson's Blood*, with its repetitive and rhythmic features, is a sea shanty and represents adulthood. One of Greenwich's most iconic naval institutions is the Royal Naval College. Originally the Royal Naval Hospital it is now the Old Royal Naval College and home to Greenwich University. The Hospital was built in the 1690s as a retirement home for Navy veterans. Nelson's body lay in state in the magnificent Painted Hall for three days in January 1806, after the Battle of Trafalgar. This made the choice of the text for the sea shanty an easy one.

The fourth movement, also adulthood, combines the themes of nature and royalty. It is about Elizabeth when she '*plan'd for Britain's good*'. The text about '*Fair Eliza*' is inscribed on a bench on the viewpoint at One Tree Hill in Greenwich Park. After two verses have been sung, the organ takes over for a pastoral-like reflection on the melody, reminding us of simple folk songs.

The fifth movement takes inspiration from The Royal Observatory, which was established in 1675. The text is a poem by the 19th century American poet Walt Whitman and tells of an astronomer who, having spent too long in a lecture room learning about the stars and how to order and measure them, goes outside to gaze at them in awe and wonder. It is in two distinct sections: in the first section, the studying/working aspect of adulthood is predominant; in the second, it is as if the narrator has gained wisdom in his later adulthood.

The sixth movement, *Even Such is Time*, wraps up the overarching trajectory of time. Although the text is about old age and death, it does not end sadly or uncertainly, but with true faith and trust in God. Despite being about death, this movement, and thus the whole work, ends with tangible feelings of joy, triumph, peace and hope.

*Eltham Choral Society has been able to commission this new work thanks to a generous donation from an anonymous benefactor and we are delighted to be performing the world premiere of this piece in St Alfege Church in the heart of Greenwich.*



View from Greenwich Park near One Tree Hill

## Time and Tides - Libretto

### **1. Time *Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8 (NIV)***

There is a time for everything,  
 and a season for every activity under the heavens:  
 a time to be born and a time to die,  
 a time to plant and a time to uproot,  
 a time to kill and a time to heal,  
 a time to tear down and a time to build,  
 a time to weep and a time to laugh,  
 a time to mourn and a time to dance,  
 a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them,  
 a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing,  
 a time to search and a time to give up,  
 a time to keep and a time to throw away,  
 a time to tear and a time to mend,  
 a time to be silent and a time to speak,  
 a time to love and a time to hate,  
 a time for war and a time for peace.

### **2. The Lady Oriana *John Wilbye (1574-1638)***

The Lady Oriana was dight all in the treasures of Guiana;  
 And on her Grace a thousand Graces tended:  
 And thus sang they: Fair Queen of peace and plenty,  
 The fairest Queen of twenty. Then with an olive wreath,  
 for peace renowned, her virgin head they crowned:  
 Which ceremony ended, unto her Grace the thousand Graces bended.  
 Then sang the shepherds and nymphs of Diana: Long live fair Oriana.



**The Prime Meridian**

### **3. A Drop of Nelson's Blood *Traditional***

Oh, a drop of Nelson's blood wouldn't do us any harm,  
 And a drop of Nelson's blood wouldn't do us any harm  
 And a drop of Nelson's blood wouldn't do us any harm  
 And we'll all hang on behind.  
*Come on and roll the old chariot along,  
 We'll roll the old chariot along,  
 And we'll roll the old chariot along,  
 And we'll all hang on behind!*  
 Oh, a bottle of rum wouldn't do us any harm,  
 And a bottle of rum wouldn't do us any harm,  
 And a bottle of rum wouldn't do us any harm,  
 And we'll all hang on behind.

**4. One Tree Hill *The London Chronicle* May 25-27<sup>th</sup>, 1784**

Here fair Eliza, Virgin Queen From business free, enjoy'd the scene.  
 Here oft in pensive mood she stood And kindly plan'd for Britain's good:  
 So record tells and this beside, Sung ditties to the silver tide  
 Full worth such honours art thou still, Belov'd of thousands, One Tree Hill.



**5. When I heard the learn'd Astronomer *Walt Whitman* (1819-1892)**

When I heard the learn'd astronomer,  
 When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me,  
 When I was shown the charts and diagrams, to add, divide, and measure  
 them, When I sitting heard the astronomer  
 where he lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,  
 How soon unaccountable I became tired and sick,  
 Till rising and gliding out I wander'd off by myself,  
 In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,  
 Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.

**6. Even Such is Time *Sir Walter Raleigh* (1552-1618)**

Even such is time, that takes in trust our youth, our joys, our all we have,  
 And pays us but with age and dust; who, in the dark and silent grave,  
 When we have wandered all our ways, shuts up the story of our days.  
 But from this earth, this grave, this dust, my God shall raise me up, I trust.

## St Alfege Church, Greenwich



History at the church of St Alfege begins in 1012, when Danish warriors killed a hostage they had taken during their raid on Canterbury. The murder in Greenwich of Alfege, who was the Archbishop of Canterbury, led to the building of the original church. In 1710, following a severe storm, the roof of that church collapsed. The churchwardens then petitioned Parliament for a contribution towards the rebuilding of the church. This then paved the way for the *New Churches in London and*

*Westminster Act*, which provided for fifty new churches to be built in London to serve its growing population. The architect Nicholas Hawksmoor was chosen to design the new St Alfege Church, which was built between 1712 and 1714. Hawksmoor was born in 1661, the son of a Nottinghamshire farmer. Little is known about his life before he became clerk to Christopher Wren, at the age of about 18. From about 1684 to about 1700, Hawksmoor worked with Wren on projects which included Chelsea Hospital, Greenwich Hospital, St. Paul's Cathedral and Hampton Court Palace. Hawksmoor also worked closely with John Vanbrugh on Blenheim Palace and Castle Howard. However, his talent can best be seen in his six London churches, of which St Alfege Church was the first. To save money, the tower was not replaced at that time but remained as it was until 1730, when it was remodelled by a local architect, John James. Bombing in the Second World War caused a second roof collapse, and a wholesale restoration, after which the church was rededicated in 1953. Among the extraordinary cast of characters buried in the crypt and graveyard is General Wolfe, victor of Quebec, and the 16<sup>th</sup> century Renaissance composer Thomas Tallis.

*(Photo and text with kind permission from the St Alfege Archives)*

## Eltham Choral Society

President: Sir Willard White

Vice-Presidents: Clive Efford, Nicholas Jenkins

Members:

### Soprano

Brenda Arthur, Linda Barcock, Diane Bell, Valerie Churchill, Eileen Cox, Daisy Cripps, Jane Ellis, Sue Frame, Fiona Gardiner, Madeline Grainger, Pat Hammodi, Carole Homan, Stephanie Johnson, Valerie Lester, Deborah Levy, Julia Lloyd, Rita Mather, Sue Nicholas, Jill Pollock, Sue Quirk, Megan Scott, Gillian Smith, Sylvia Stevens, Hanna Walton, Maggie Watson

### Alto

Maggie Ayres, Barbara Barker, Jan Boldt, Brigitte Burrows, Celia Chidwick, Juliet Chiosso, Caroline Clifford, Myrtle Cole, Annabella Cook, Christina Demetriou, Claire Ewen, Pam Fanshawe, Keri Hacker, Andrea Harper, Louise Hodgson, Maggie Isom, Venetia Kent, Sue Mack, Sara Miller, Tricia Murphy, Mary Nunn, Silvie Prial, Patsy Sargent, Sheila Thompson, Marilyn Williams, Clodagh Woodall

### Tenor

Heather Clare, Craig Dacey, Nick Isom, Kimball Johnson, Martin North, Henriette Raison, Chris Savage, Roderick Tutt

### Bass

Terence Barcock, David Brining, Graham Dix, Greg Hammond, John King, Andrew McGeachie, Timothy Nunns, Mario Pinto, Matt Rubery, William Sterling, Peter Waugh, Richard Wilkes

## Eltham Choral Society



Eltham Choral Society (ECS) was established well over 100 years ago and is based in Eltham in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. ECS is a mixed choir of 80 voices. A registered charity, it is affiliated to Making Music. The choir has a long and distinguished history of choral singing in Eltham, South East London and beyond. The

choir's repertoire ranges from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century and includes the great choral works of Bach, Brahms, Handel, Haydn, Mendelssohn, Mozart and Verdi, but also includes lesser-known pieces and works by contemporary composers. ECS has commissioned a number of works from both established and up-and-coming composers, including Bob Chilcott's *Aesop's Fables* (2008) and Gareth Treseder's *In Flanders Field* (2017) and tonight we are delighted to perform the world premiere of Esther Bersweden's new work *Time and Tides: An Exploration of Greenwich*, a theme that was suggested by long-standing choir member Martin North. New singers are always welcome in the choir, and details of how to apply for membership are available on our website. Singers under the age of 26 may also apply to our Anita Bursary for support with the membership fee.





### **Daisy Livesey (soprano)**

Daisy Livesey is an oratorio singer supported by the Josephine Baker Trust. Her recent solo engagements include Bach's St Matthew Passion (under Jonathan Willcocks with Canzona for Leith Hill Music Festival), Bach's St John Passion (under Tom Hammond-Davies with Oxford Bach Soloists at Edington Priory) and Mendelssohn's Elijah (with Max Barley at Holy Trinity, Sloane Square). Daisy was soloist and chorus member in Hampstead Garden Opera's sold-out production of The Fairy Queen in 2024, directed by Eloise Lally and Seb Gillot. Daisy is an undergraduate at the Royal Academy of Music and is taught by Alex Ashworth and Iain Ledingham. Highlights of her studies at the Academy include working with John Butt, Eamonn Dougan, Iain Ledingham and Philippe Herreweghe both as a choir member and soloist in the RAM Bach series concerts. As a choral singer, she has worked with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Arcangelo. Daisy has benefitted from masterclasses with John Mark Ainsley, Nick Pritchard, Susan Manoff and Emma Kirkby.



### **Hera Protopapas (mezzo-soprano)**



Hera is a Greek-Swedish mezzo soprano who has a passion for storytelling, currently completing her Master's degree at the Royal Academy of Music and learning with Giles Underwood and James Cheung. She is particularly interested in baroque, classical and new music and is also fascinated by narratives that transcend time periods and styles. Hera regularly performs as a soloist in concerts around London, and recent engagements include Bach's St Matthew Passion at Holy Trinity, Sloane Square, Mendelssohn's Elijah, with Eltham Choral Society, and Bach's B Minor Mass with the North Herts Guild of Singers. She is looking forward to performing Mozart's Coronation Mass with the

Royal Choral Society later in July. During her studies at the Academy she has been a regular contributor to the Bach cantata concert series, a finalist in the Joan Chissell Schumann Lieder Prize, and received commendations in the Isabel Jay Memorial Prize and the Nancy Nuttall Early Music Prize. She regularly collaborates with composers in performances of new music. A passionate choral singer as well as soloist, Hera is a deputy with the Gothenburg Symphonic Orchestra Vocal Ensemble and a choral scholar with the Oxford Bach Soloists and at Holy Trinity, Sloane Square.

### **Philip Lawford (tenor)**

Philip began his musical life as a chorister at St Paul's Cathedral, and was subsequently awarded a choral scholarship to Christ Church, Oxford. He then combined a career, first in the City as an investment banker, and subsequently in the charity sector, with membership of some leading chamber choirs, including the Clerkes of Oxenford, the Tallis Chamber Choir, the Corydon Singers, and the Academy of St Martin the Fields Chorus. With these, he had the opportunity to sing in all the major London concert venues, many European countries, and in the USA and Hong Kong. Philip also diversified into musical theatre and operetta and sang most of the leading Gilbert & Sullivan tenor roles. He now has a growing realisation that he is becoming too old to play the parts that he could sing, as they are mostly written for young men! Philip is delighted to be asked to return once more to perform with Eltham Choral Society as tenor soloist.



### **Jamie Woollard (bass)**

Jamie is currently a Jette Parker Artist at the Royal Opera House for the 2023 - 2025 seasons. His roles at ROH in these seasons are Zuniga (Carmen) Zaretsky (Eugene Onegin), Count Ceprano (Rigoletto), Second Prisoner (Fidelio), Sciarrone (Tosca) and Dumas (Andrea Chénier). He will also be covering Timur (Turandot), King of Egypt (Aida) and Colline (La bohème). Jamie is a Samling Artist, a BBC Music Magazine 'Rising Star' 2023, and was awarded second prize at the Maureen Lehane Vocal Awards 2021. In concert, Jamie has performed at Wigmore Hall, St Martin in the Fields, and with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. In 2023 Jamie made debuts at Cadogan Hall with The Mozartists, and in Messiah with the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. Jamie graduated from Royal College of Music Opera Studio in 2023, where he performed numerous roles. In his final year Jamie was a Jerwood Young Artist with Glyndebourne Festival Opera, where he covered Snug in Britten's A Midsummer Night's Dream and played Thierry in Dialogues des Carmélites.



## **Esther Bersweden - Composer**

Esther is an up-and-coming young composer and conductor who gained a Distinction in her Music MA at the University of Bristol In 2021, specialising in Composition. She currently works in the Music Department at Redmaids' High School in Bristol. Esther particularly loves writing choral music. In addition to the commission from Eltham Choral Society she has composed works for the Bristol Bach Choir, Thames Chamber Choir, City of Bristol Choir and the Royal School of Church Music



(RSCM). She has also had her compositions sung by other choirs in parish churches, schools and cathedrals around the country and a recent service of Evensong at St Martin in the Fields London was broadcast on BBC Radio Three. Esther has been involved in the musical life of the church of St Paul, Clifton for the last eight years, where she held the organ scholarship as an undergraduate, during which time she discovered a love of conducting. With choral conductor Christian Spielmann, Esther has recently set up the Avon Chamber Choir which is based in Bristol. In November 2022 they gave the premiere of Esther's *Requiem*.

## **Come and sing with us**

To join Eltham Choral Society, check the details on our website or simply come along to a rehearsal:

Thursdays at 19.30

(during school term time)

Auditions are not required.

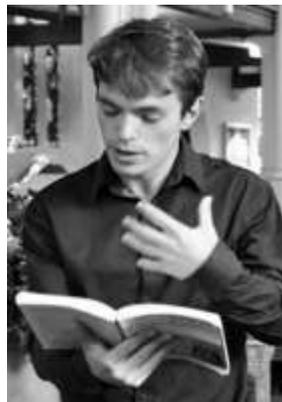
Rehearsal venue:

St Luke's Church,  
Westmount Road,  
Eltham, SE9 1XQ



## Max Barley - Conductor

Max was a chorister at King's College, Cambridge and Organ Scholar at St John's College, Oxford. He studied conducting on a scholarship at the Stiftung Maximilianeum in Munich. Max gained a Distinction in his Masters in Choral Conducting at the Royal Academy of Music under Patrick Russill, and Organ with David Titterington. He is a Fellow of the Royal College of Organists. Max now pursues a busy career as a freelance choral conductor. In addition to his role of Musical Director with Eltham Choral Society, Max is Director of Music at Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Square, where he directs the amateur and professional choirs. Max is Principal Conductor of the Guildford Chamber Choir and MD of Vocality in Surbiton. He also runs a *Soup and Songs* community choir in Chelsea for which he recently received a Community Hero award. In 2021 and 2022 he was director of the Berlin Radio Choir's *Liederbörse*, and conducted two of their concerts in the Berlin Philharmonie. Max is also Chorus Master for Opéra de Baugé in France.



## Matthew Jorysz - Organist

Matthew is Assistant Organist at Westminster Abbey where he shares with the Sub-Organist and Organ Scholar in playing the organ for services in the Abbey, accompanying and assisting with the conducting of the Abbey Choir and training the choristers. He also coordinates the weekly Sunday Organ Recitals. Matthew was honoured to play at



the state funeral of Queen Elizabeth II in 2022 and subsequently at the coronation of Charles III and Camilla in 2023. He studied Music at Clare College, Cambridge, where he was the Sir William McKie organ scholar for the Clare College choir under the directorship of Graham Ross. He has accompanied the choir in broadcasts, and for CD recordings, as well as on tours to Europe and the United States, including a performance at the Library of Congress. Prior to his university studies, Matthew was an organ scholar at Salisbury Cathedral from 2011 to 2012 and also accompanied the choir for the many services in the absence of an Assistant Director of Music. His discography includes several recordings with the countertenor Hamish McLaren and with the Choir of Clare College, Cambridge.

*Eltham Choral Society is grateful that Matthew was able to step in at short notice for tonight's performance after the indisposition of Andrew Lenon, our Accompanist and Organist.*



## Future concerts



**Thursday 17 October 2024, 19.30**

**Come & Sing**

**Samuel Coleridge-Taylor: Hiawatha's Wedding Feast**

*Come and join the choir for a concert from scratch of this much-loved work*  
St Luke's Church, Westmount Road, Eltham SE9 1XQ

**Saturday 14 December 2024, 19.30**

**The Christmas concert**

**Benjamin Britten: Saint Nicolas**

**Carols for choir and audience**

Holy Trinity Church, Southend Crescent, Eltham SE9 2SD

**Saturday 5 April 2025, 19.30**

**Maurice Duruflé: Requiem Op. 9**

**Esther Bersweden: Time and Tides: An Exploration of Greenwich**

Holy Trinity Church, Southend Crescent, Eltham SE9 2SD



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**Eltham Choral Society is a registered charity (1023904)**

**[www.elthamchoral.org.uk](http://www.elthamchoral.org.uk)**

**Winkworth**

Blackheath and Greenwich Estate Agents have kindly sponsored soprano Daisy Livesey for tonight's performance



