

## GENERAL ELECTION 2019 – FACTSHEET FOR MEMBERS

The ABO is keen to ensure that the voice of the UK orchestral sector is heard during this General Election.

Earlier in the campaign we published an open letter to the leaders of the Conservatives, Labour and Liberal Democrats, and fed this into the manifesto writing teams of each party. You can read this letter [here](#).

The ABO's championing of the sector on a national level will be made more powerful if members advocate and engage with their local candidates in this election. We therefore encourage you to contact candidates to ask them to give assurances that, should they be elected in 12 December, they will work to support the UK orchestral sector over the next Parliament.

You can contact your local candidates by following this short step-by-step guide.

### 1. Find out who your local candidates are

- Prospective parliamentary candidates can be found on the following website: [whocanivotefor.co.uk](http://whocanivotefor.co.uk). You can also try the website of your local council as they will list candidates.

### 2. Write to all local candidates and ask them to state their support for the UK orchestral sector

- It is important to write and engage with all candidates in your constituency, even if you feel that a particular candidate is likely to be more supportive.
- Email addresses for candidates can usually be found on their website. Please note that it is not possible to find contact details for every candidate as some choose not to share this information publicly.
- If there are no direct contact details available, you can try to contact them through social media. You can also contact candidates through their party's local branch. You can find these by ringing the main telephone line for the political party and asking for further details.

3. **Use this template email as a basis for your approach to the candidates.** The sections highlighted in yellow should be changed depending on the constituency.

Subject: **Will you support [name of your organisation] if you're elected?**

Dear [insert full name of candidate]

I am writing to ask if you will support [name of your organisation], and the wider UK orchestral sector, if you are elected to Parliament on 12 December.

[Insert a personal sentence here, for example you may want to briefly introduce your organisation, your role in the community and the cultural, economic and educational benefits you bring to the area].

It is vital that the next Government takes positive, proactive steps to support the UK orchestral sector over the next Parliament. This includes:

- Maintaining and increasing public funding and creative industry tax relief for orchestras.
- Securing a relationship with the EU that maintains frictionless movement of goods and people to enable continued cultural exchange.
- Investment in musical education and opportunities to develop an effective pipeline for home-grown talent.

More information about these policies can be found in an [open-letter from the Association of British Orchestras](#).

I appreciate there will be many demands on your time during this campaign, but I hope you are able to write back to me and share your views on the proposals outlined above. I would also welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss these issues in further detail.

You can contact me on [insert details] if this is of interest.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,

[insert name and postcode]

#### **4. Inform Connect Communications about any interaction you have with any candidate**

Please email Connect, the ABO's Westminster based team, to let them know about any engagement you have with any of your local candidates. The email address is [abo@connectpa.co.uk](mailto:abo@connectpa.co.uk). Connect will use this information to follow up with any candidate who is elected at the General Election.