



ROYAL  
PHILHARMONIC  
ORCHESTRA



## News release

23 December 2019

# ROYAL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA MOVES HEADQUARTERS TO WEMBLEY PARK

Today, 23 December 2019, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) and developer Quintain announce a major partnership that will see the Orchestra move its headquarters to Wembley Park from May 2020.

This follows on from the RPO's appointment of Vasily Petrenko as its new Musical Director and builds on recent news that the Orchestra is expanding its live performance programmes in London, including at the Royal Albert Hall, as well as its commitment to the UK regions. For the RPO, the move is the realisation of its long-held ambition to imbed the Orchestra in a diverse community, in line with its mission to be a truly inclusive and contemporary international orchestra for the modern age.

The RPO's role as a key arts anchor tenant represents a major milestone in the transformation of Wembley Park, the 85-acre area around the national stadium, creating a new cultural neighbourhood for NW London, with music at its heart. The partnership was brokered by Futurecity, cultural advisor to Quintain, who helped both parties develop a shared vision to establish a creative hub bringing together education, community outreach, performance, digital projects and administration in a single location.

The RPO will contribute significantly to the regeneration of the area, building on what is already a long-standing relationship with the London Borough of Brent. Over the last 15 years, the RPO has worked with more than 9,000 young people in the Borough through projects such as The World Orchestra Project (2012) (supported by the Mayor's Music Education Fund), Trans-cultural ConneXXions and the three-year '7-Up' schools' project. On arrival at Wembley Park, the RPO will launch a new programme of schools' engagement across Brent as part of London Borough of Culture 2020, supported by the John Lyon's Charity.

Wembley Park is also the Principal Partner for Brent London Borough of Culture 2020, and will support and host a number of key projects for the programme throughout the year, including the opening ceremony, RISE, which takes place on Olympic Way on 18 January.

James Williams, Managing Director of the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra says: "This partnership sets a new benchmark for orchestral music in Britain, creating the exciting opportunity for the RPO genuinely to enrich a community through a combination of performance, community engagement and education activity. Wembley Park is the perfect



choice for such a bold project, one which allows us to approach the RPO's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a creative agenda that is innovative and forward looking."

James Saunders, chief executive of Quintain, the developer behind the transformation of Wembley Park says: "We're delighted to welcome the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra to Wembley Park. As a major cultural force with an international reputation and fantastic connections in the Borough of Brent, RPO will play a key role in furthering the cultural ambitions and programme of Wembley Park."

Justine Simons OBE, Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries says: "I'm delighted that the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra is moving its head office to Wembley Park. It's an exciting new chapter for the internationally-renowned orchestra and a huge boost for Brent as it prepares to start its year as London Borough of Culture."

Cllr Muhammed Butt, Leader of Brent Council says: "This high-profile cultural partnership is a match made in Brent. As we warm up for our year as the London Borough of Culture 2020, it is important to remember that arts and culture are for everyone. Brent will soon be home to not just the National Stadium but also The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. This is an amazing opportunity and I'm excited to see the positive benefits this brings."

## **ENDS**

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## **About Wembley Park**

Wembley Park is a dynamic new neighbourhood being created in North West London. With 6,100 new homes being created by developer Quintain, in addition to the 1,400 already built, Wembley Park is one of Europe's largest regeneration schemes. Building on the international reputation for music and sporting events for which the area is known, Wembley Park is fast becoming a landmark destination with culture, entertainment and a community at its heart.

The cultural strategy for the area is overseen by Josh McNorton, cultural director at Wembley Park, and includes affordable artist studios, run by Second Floor Studios & Arts, a public art programme and extensive cultural programming and events, most of which are available free of charge. Each year, Wembley Park presents International Busking Day, supported by the Mayor of London, the world's largest celebration of street performance, with over 50 artists showcasing their talent across five stages of free music and entertainment.

**About the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**

For more than seven decades the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) has been at the forefront of music-making in the UK. The Orchestra's regular performances London's Cadogan Hall are complemented by a distinguished series at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, as well as its new position as Associate Orchestra of the Royal Albert Hall. The RPO also makes frequent visits to its seven principal regional residencies across the UK. With a wider reach than any other UK large ensemble, the RPO has truly become Britain's national orchestra. International touring is also vital to the Orchestra's work, taking it to many prestigious destinations worldwide. The Orchestra has recently announced the appointment of Vasily Petrenko as Music Director from 2021.

Registered Charity No. 244533

**About Futurecity**

<https://futurecity.co.uk/>

**Wembley Park Culture and Placemaking Strategy**

<https://futurecity.co.uk/portfolio/wembley-park-culture-and-placemaking-strategy/>

**GLA Cultural Infrastructure Plan**

[https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/cultural\\_infrastructure\\_plan\\_online.pdf](https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/cultural_infrastructure_plan_online.pdf)