

HEREFORD CHORAL SOCIETY - AUTUMN 2021
GUIDANCE on COVID19 precautions for rehearsals

Version 1

Introduction

- Hereford Choral Society recognises its legal duty to its members (and other users of the venues where it rehearses and performs) to minimise the transmission of Covid-19 by taking **reasonable** measures.
- This will involve all of us needing to adhere to some extra rules for the time being.
- The purpose of these rules is to give as many members as possible the confidence to return to rehearsals and again enjoy choral singing together after a year's enforced break.
- The extra rules will be kept under review by the committee. In September especially we will be feeling our way forward and learning from experience. Members' suggestions and requests for clarification will be welcome: please email them to the Secretary (Mark Ewins) or the Vice Chairman (Guy Rawlinson).
- Ultimately the decision on whether to return this September or not is for each individual member to take in the light of their own vaccination status, health and circumstances. If you feel unable to return to singing this autumn, Hereford Choral Society will respect your decision and will not hold it against you in the future.
- For those who do return, unreasonable failure to adhere to the rules currently in force might lead to a member being asked to withdraw from Hereford Choral Society until such time as the need for special Covid-19 measures has completely passed.

1 Avoiding bringing infection into a rehearsal

You should not attend a rehearsal if

- you have tested positive in the last ten days
- you have been in close contact with a person who has tested positive in the last ten days
- you have Covid 19 symptoms or feel unwell.

Please let the Membership Secretary know that you are unable to attend and the reason.

Depending on how things go in practice during the autumn, it may be necessary for the committee to adjust the normal rule concerning a member being debarred from singing in a concert owing to the number of rehearsals missed.

In addition, since it is possible to be double vaccinated and infected with Covid and infectious to others but to have no symptoms ('asymptomatic') oneself,

- you are strongly encouraged to take a lateral flow test (available free of charge from any local pharmacy) each day before you attend a rehearsal, i.e. on Mondays and on the concert Saturdays.

2 Minimising the risk of infection, with ongoing precautions although these are no longer being enforced on the public at large in England (as of 17th August 2021)

Face masks

- Please wear a face mask from the moment when you enter the Zimmerman Building (or any other rehearsal venue) and continue to wear it until the conductor starts the rehearsal.
- Please wear it again during the mid-rehearsal break.

At the end, please put your mask back on again and wear it until you are outside the building.

Social distancing

- Please be prepared to queue in a socially distanced manner when entering the rehearsal venue and in single file on the stairs. Members of the committee may need to help with this.

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- On entering the rehearsal venue, apart from any essential admin. (especially at the first rehearsal), please take your seat and remain seated there.
- We all have to accept that for the time being this will restrict social interaction before and after the rehearsals to talking quietly through masks to the members on either side of oneself.
- Given the size of the choir and of the rehearsal venues (Zimmerman, or occasionally Broadlands), there is very little extra space available to set chairs out further apart than in the past.
Please be prepared for this fact.
- The school toilets will be available, but it will be desirable to keep their use to a minimum.
- After the rehearsal has finished, please put your mask back on and remain seated.
It will be necessary to restrict the flow of members leaving (compared with past practice) whilst also ensuring that the chairs are stacked. How this will be done will be explained at the first rehearsal.

Sanitising

- Although gel for sanitising hands will be available on entry to the rehearsal venues, you will find it helpful to bring your own small container of hand-gel, so that you can use it as and when you wish.
- It is unlikely that there will be time for the Society to sanitise the chairs before members are admitted. Therefore please bring your own antiseptic wipe for this purpose if you wish to sanitise your own seat.
- (After the rehearsal, the Zimmerman hall will be disinfected overnight with a misting machine before school the next day.)

Ventilation

- Fortunately, the Zimmerman hall has numerous large windows which open.
Please be prepared for rather more draught than usual.

3 Reporting infection / Your seating position / Track and Trace

As part of a responsible return to holding rehearsals, the Society must be able to play its part in helping to limit the spread of infection when it does occur.

You must therefore consent to the following.

- You must contact the Membership Secretary **immediately** if after attending a rehearsal or a concert you develop symptoms of Covid-19 or test positive.
- You accept that where you sit for a rehearsal will **either** be determined in advance by the Membership Secretary (as for a concert) **or otherwise** it will be recorded accurately each week.
- You agree that the contact details you have provided to the Hereford Choral Society for its normal administrative purposes may also be used by the Society to fulfil its obligations relating to Track and Trace.
- If at a rehearsal or concert you have sat close to another member who subsequently tests positive for Covid-19, you understand that on the basis of the Society's seating records you may be contacted through Track and Trace and asked to self-isolate, in line with government advice.

This guidance shares many points with guidance issued to other choral societies and to the 2021 Three Choirs Festival Chorus. Thank you in advance for your co-operation. As the guidance is being circulated two weeks before rehearsals start, it may prove necessary to make some adjustments very early on.

Guy Rawlinson 23rd August 2021