

DOWNLAND SINGERS: RETURNING TO REHEARSALS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

RISK ASSESSMENT

1. Ventilation:

This is the most important measure for reducing the risk generated by airborne droplets and aerosols (smaller droplets that can remain airborne for longer).

Downland Singers will keep all appropriate doors and windows open to create a through-draught that will carry away the aerosols. The church has a high ceiling and affords more space and ventilation. This will not present a problem during early rehearsals but later in the term it may require that we all make sure we are suitably attired – bringing an additional jumper, gloves, scarves, blankets etc. It will be uneconomical to run the heating system to compensate for loss of heat through ventilation and also heat creates a warm atmosphere for any virus present to thrive.

2. Seating:

Chairs which have been used previously by other users will have been sanitised. We will restrict the number of chairs made available following Trinity Church procedures regarding spacing and social distancing. Members will be asked to take their assigned seats on arrival and not mingle in groups. All seats used will be sanitised after the rehearsal.

3. Reducing pinch points:

Pinch points at which it is most likely that members will be caught up in close contact with others will be reduced.

Members are asked:

- to enter the church using the MAIN door situated at the front of the building only.
- on entering the building to find their seat, sit down and remain seated.
- to take comfort breaks at any time (there will be no need to ask!) during the rehearsal to reduce congestion in the toilet spaces.
- to pay subs on-line via BACS - alternatively, a pre-filled cheque can be given to Malcolm in an envelope
- to not mingle socially within the building - there will be no break to help alleviate pinch points.

4. Refreshments:

Our monthly social will be deferred for a while and refreshments will not be provided until it is deemed safe to do so. Members may bring a bottle of water for their own use.

5. Socialising:

This is obviously a vital part of the choral experience for many but for the time-being we ask that you do not socialise whilst in the building. There is space in the church garden outside to talk in small groups before or after the rehearsal but please continue to observe social distancing. We would ask that you do not meet in the Car Park as this will cause a safety hazard for other drivers and premises users.

6. Face Coverings/Masks:

In accordance with the guidelines issued by Trinity Church, masks must be worn at all times while moving around the premises unless a member is medically exempt. Masks may be removed once you are seated. The building will be well ventilated and Downland Singers is a small choir where social distancing is able to be maintained. Initially, it will be a matter of personal choice as to whether or not you wish to continue to wear a mask while singing. The situation will be monitored and should circumstances change then members will be required to wear a mask throughout rehearsals.

The accompanist will be seated away from the choir so will not be required to wear a mask.

The MD will use a clear face shield and remain distanced from the choir. A microphone can be provided if felt necessary by the choir so the MD does not need to shout (remembering that the choir will be spread further apart than usual).

7. Temperature tests:

Some choirs are testing members' temperatures as they arrive. Downland Singers have decided against this for two reasons:

- It is not generally considered to be a very useful indicator.
- It would create another pinch point.

8. Music:

All music to be distributed will be left untouched for at least 72 hours before the rehearsal. The Librarian will distribute the music to individual members at the start of the rehearsal having previously sanitised her hands and may wear protective gloves.

Members are asked:

- not to queue or ask for their music as the Librarian will be working to her own system for distribution
- not to share music
- not to share pencils - please bring your own (plus a spare should the first one break!)

9. Registering/Track and Trace:

As usual, a register will be taken of all members present and this will provide the Track and Trace system. The Secretary will register everyone during the evening. There will be no need to sign in, alleviating the need to queue to be registered - just go to your seat on arrival.

The church is a Track and Trace venue so members can scan the QR code as they enter if they so wish.

10. Hand sanitisers.

Hand sanitiser is available as you enter the church. All members must sanitise their hands once on the church premises and before entering the main church building.

11. Lateral Flow Tests:

Whether or not you have been vaccinated, we would like to encourage all members to perform a Lateral Flow Test before attending rehearsals. This is for everyone's peace of mind and something we can all do to help to keep everyone safe. Tests also allow us to monitor the situation and respond as quickly as possible to outbreaks.

If you have a positive test at any time, or have Covid symptoms and have been attending rehearsals, please let the MD know immediately.

12. Attending Rehearsal and feeling unwell:

Please do not attend if you feel unwell or have been in contact with anyone who has tested positive or been asked to isolate etc. even if you have been vaccinated.

13. Live Streaming:

It may be possible to eventually set up live-streaming rehearsals so that those who do not yet feel ready to return to live singing may take part.

14. Covid Gurus:

It will be appreciated if there are a few members who can help with issues associated with Covid 19 and take responsibility for making sure this Risk Assessment is carried out at weekly rehearsals. If you are able to help, please speak to the MD.

15. Insurance:

We have a duty to be seen to be taking precautions and not be 'negligent'. Our insurance is through Making Music and this will cover the choir as long as we have an adequate risk assessment and resulting processes in place.