

Wimbledon Choral Society
rehearsing in St Mark's Church.
Including Risk Assessment

St Mark's continues to do its best to provide a safe and healthy environment for its many users, but responsibility and liability for the use of St Mark's remains with WCS.

Numbers

St Mark's has closed off the front pews and alternate rows. If people are seated 2 metres apart it means that 37 people can sit in the pews. Looking at the altar, that is 8 people in the left pews, 11 in the pews left of centre, 10 in the pews right of centre and 8 in the pews on the right.

There is choir seating on the right of the altar which can sit 4 and a side pew to the left of the altar which can seat 1. These are out of the vision of the conductor. Seats could be placed at the rear of the church alongside the chapel and the left rear which means that 8 more seats could be provided but this is also along the exit route. The church would prefer to limit the numbers to 37 so this paper will propose 37 people to attend a rehearsal at one time.

The church has the facility operational to Zoom the service. A screen is shown on the altar so that those on Zoom can be seen. The rehearsal can be a Zoom meeting with those tuning in on Zoom being displayed on the screen and they will be able to see the conductor and hear the choir.

Entry and exit

There are two double doors into the foyer and two double doors into the church.

People would wait outside the church and come into the doors by the usual entry doors which will be fixed open. They will then be checked on a list and instructed to sterilise their hands. They will not be admitted without a mask unless they are exempt. They will then enter by the doors off the foyer which will be fixed open. The seats will be marked by a coloured card. They will first fill the front pews and then work back to the rear filling the front seats before they take the pew behind. This will need a person to ensure that people sit correctly. They will remain in their seats throughout the rehearsal and not mingle with the other singers. The doors will be closed after everyone has entered.

When the rehearsal has finished, the other doors into the foyer will be kept open and the other doors will exit out of the church will be fixed open. There will be a barrier to ensure that people will be directed out of the correct door. The rear pews will exit first as there will be people sitting by the aisles and we do not want people queueing to leave in the aisles next to those who are sitting.

When the church has emptied, the second rehearsal attendees who have been waited outside the church will be shown in to follow the above procedure.

Fire evacuation

Should there be a requirement to evacuate the building, then the door monitor will remove any barriers in the foyer to ensure a safe unrestricted exit from the building. The first rendezvous point is the car park outside the church and exit is via the foyer doors.

Should the foyer not be accessible, the second exit point is into the garden where there is a second RVP.

People attending

The choir will be asked if they wish to attend an early or a late rehearsal. There will be two rehearsals – 7.30- 8.30 and 8.45 – 9.45. They will be noted to limit the number to 37 for each session and only those on the list will be allowed entry. Each rehearsal will require an appropriate number of each section. If more people wish to attend than 37, there will need to be a rota so that all people get an equal opportunity to attend. WCS will be required to keep the roster for 21 days for track and trace purposes should it be required. If St Mark's is notified of a case, they will contact WCS who will be responsible for notifying those in attendance. Should St Mark's become aware of a case, they will notify WCS so that the choir can be notified.

When people say they wish to attend, they will be asked to specify whether they are exempt from wearing a mask, which will be noted on the register so that there is no embarrassing situation at the door.

People will not be able to enter or leave outside the set times unless there is an emergency.

Rules will be strictly enforced for everyone's safety. Those who have a cough, a temperature or who feel unwell will be asked not to attend or will be asked to leave. All will wear a mask unless exempt apart from when they are singing. All will be required to sanitise their hands upon arrival and be asked not to touch things if possible. They will go straight to their seats and will not leave until the end of the rehearsal. There will be no drinks offered but people may bring their own drinks if they wish. They will keep their possessions with them at their seats. All the seats will be marked by a bright card marker and will be left in position so that they can be reused again.

There will be no register inside which uses shared pencils. The only register will be held by the door monitor.

Music cannot be shared and as people are 2 metres apart this will mean that it is impossible.

There will be a toilet available for use. However, we prefer it is not used although it will be available if required.

There will be a door monitor to note people on entry and exit and to give direction.

There will be a seat monitor to ensure that people sit at the front pews first and do not chat in the aisles and to ensure that the rear pews exit first. Clearly it will be first in, last out.

Ventilation

There are no windows in the church that can be opened. To provide ventilation, the church opening team will unlock both double doors into the foyer and the double doors into the church, the fire exit door into the garden and one toilet. Throughout the rehearsal the garden door and a door in the foyer will be open so that there is some ventilation into the church. The closing up team will ensure that all those doors are locked. The garden door and the foyer second double doors are normally never opened for WCS rehearsals. Choir members will therefore need to wear warmer clothing as it may be colder than normal.

Technical issues

St Mark's currently streams its services and there is a screen on the altar showing those who are on Zoom. WCS will need to provide its own kit and necessary technical input and operation of a rehearsal put on Zoom. As St Mark's has a technical director, Ian Parker, and it is suggested that Neil Dennis liaise with him to ensure that we will be able to film the rehearsal and that the Zoom participants can be shown on the screen. All the Zoom participants will be placed on mute. The piano will also need to be wiped clean before and after use.

There is the consideration that volume increases the aerosols in the air. Neil F will need to consider this in the rehearsal.

Other issues

Instructions to the choir will be placed on the website, sent to each person attending and also there will be a safety briefing at the start of the rehearsal to ensure compliance.

I suggest that as some people will wish to attend and some may not be able to attend, that these rehearsals will not be used as part of the numbers of the rehearsal attendances for each concert.

WCS can either provide a large hand sanitiser for our use or contribute to St Mark's for the use of their sanitiser. I propose that WCS provides its own.

Under previous rehearsals, the car park barriers were open from 7pm to 7.45 and then from 9.30 to 10.15pm. We have the barrier key to release the barriers should that be required. If WCS has two rehearsals, the barrier will need to be programmed so that there is also access between 8.15 and 9pm to allow people to arrive for the late rehearsal and to leave the early rehearsal.

This risk assessment will be amended before the commencement of rehearsals and the final copy sent to the choir and placed on the website.