

## 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.

In England there are currently no rules on social distancing, registration and mask wearing and choirs can operate as usual. Although a large proportion of people have now had two vaccinations, there is currently a high rate of Covid cases in England. Guidance from the Government suggests that safety measures be in place to mitigate risks from Covid. WCS Committee agree that the safety of our choir members is paramount and we will implement safety measures whilst pursuing the aim of the choir to rehearse together and perform concerts. We also have a duty to allay the concerns of our choir members.

### Numbers

As yet it is unknown how many choir members will return to singing and how many possible new members may join us. It is reasonable to assume that there will be over 100 members attending rehearsals, possibly up to 160.

It is therefore decided that the first two rehearsals take place with half the members – the first rehearsal will be for those surname begins with A-K, the second week with surnames L-Z. The third week it is intended to have a full rehearsal with all members invited. This will be reviewed after the second week.

St Mark's have the facility still in place to Zoom the rehearsal but as the aim is to have a live concert in November, where no social distancing is feasible, Zoom rehearsals do not assist in preparation for the concert and setting up and dismantling the equipment creates a significant burden for several individuals. Therefore we will not be using Zoom. We appreciate that this will remove the opportunity to keep in weekly touch for some members who do not wish to attend live rehearsals, however consideration will be given to recording a rehearsal once a month for those members (whose number is not known).

The choir will be encouraged to sit in a checkerboard formation.

### Entry and exit

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

There will be one committee member at each double door entrance to the foyer and they will take registration. Members will be required to confirm that they:-

have no symptoms,

have not tested positive within the previous 14 days,  
have not been contacted by track and trace,  
have not been told to self isolate,  
have no temperature  
do not feel unwell

AND

have taken a lateral flow test that day which was negative

Inability to conform to the above will mean that entrance is denied.

To prevent congestion on arrival, entry times will be staggered.

7.00 -7.10     A-C, L-Q

7.10 – 7.20     D-G, R-T

7.20 – 7.30     H-K, U-Z

All entry doors will be fixed open and will remain open throughout the rehearsal.

There will be hand sanitiser available on arrival.

Members will be encouraged to take a seat and not linger in the foyer.

Members will be asked to move along the pews where there are vacant places so that later arrivals do not have to climb over them.

Masks will be worn on a voluntary basis and we ask the choir to respect the wishes of members who may wish to still socially distance or wear a mask.

Choir members will be expected to sing without a mask.

On exit, the Director will ask the rear pews to leave first so that there is no congestion on exit. All the double doors will be open for easier and quicker exit.

## Fire evacuation

Should there be a requirement to evacuate the building, then the Director will order the exit via rear rows first. 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.

## The interval

Halfway through the rehearsal, previously tea and coffee were served and the choir members mingled in the foyer. We will not serve refreshments in the interval and choir members will have to bring their own if they are required. Those wishing to socialise will be asked to go outside either into the garden or out of the front of the church. If it is too cold or wet the

Director of Music may decide not to have an interval, in which case the rehearsal will finish earlier than normal. Rehearsals will finish at 9.30 with an interval or 9.10 without an interval.

There will be two toilets available for use. The windows will be opened in both toilets for ventilation.

## Committee member with Covid responsibility

If a choir member gets Covid, they will notify the committee member and she will notify the relevant parties.

If St Mark's is notified of a case, they will contact WCS who will be responsible for notifying those in attendance.

A person who becomes ill during rehearsal will be asked to leave and a committee member, most likely the voice rep, will be tasked with ensuring that the person is able to get home safely.

The Committee member with Covid responsibility is the General Secretary. Each week she will check local Covid levels and liaise with the committee if there is a notable change and the risk assessment will be reviewed.

## 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 the toilets. Throughout the rehearsal the garden door and the doors in the foyer and the doors to the street will be open so that there is 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.

The heating system at St Mark's will not be on during rehearsals for the foreseeable future.

## Technical issues

The piano will also need to be wiped clean before and after use. This will be done by the opening and closing team.

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

## Other issues

Instructions to the choir will be placed on the website and sent via email to each person in the choir.

It is likely that the rehearsals will finish earlier than the 9.45 finish in 2019. Auditions will take place after the rehearsal has finished.

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

St Mark's currently has closed every other pew on one half of the church for the part of the congregation that wishes to socially distance. WCS will replace the current tape with rope which will be removed at the start of every concert and replaced at the end.