

## HOLMBURY ST MARY CHORAL SOCIETY (HOLMBURY CHORAL)

### A - Covid-19 Risk Assessment (Rehearsals)

This risk assessments covers risks and mitigations relevant to HSMCS resuming rehearsals in autumn 2020. It is based on the following assumptions:

- Abinger Hammer Village Hall is inappropriate as a rehearsal venue for the time being (cannot accommodate enough singers at appropriate distancing)
- Holmbury St Mary church is to be the interim rehearsal venue
- No plans are considered for any performances in the near future
- The risk assessment will need re-visiting if the venue changes, or if UK legislation changes
- This risk assessment to be shared with all stakeholders (singers, MD, accompanist, venue) and become the basis for attendance
- Follows confirmation of conditions from Holmbury Church 9Sep20 (Anne Rodell, Churchwarden)
- Subject to Government restrictions (8<sup>th</sup> September announcement re. 'Rule of Six')

### Sources

- [Gov.uk FAQ, especially section 3.18 22Sep20](#)  
*"In a Covid-19 Secure venue or public outdoor place, non-professional performing arts activity, including choirs, orchestras or drama groups can continue to rehearse or perform together where this is planned activity in line with the performing arts guidance and if they can do so in a way that ensures that there is no interaction between groups of more than 6 at any time<sup>1</sup>."*
- [Making Music risk assessment template 21Sep20](#)
- [Making Music guidance 23Sep20](#)
- [Choirs and the 'Rule of Six'](#)
- [Government guidance on local lockdowns](#)
- [Performing Arts: working safely during coronavirus](#) (24Sep20)
- [Create a coronavirus NHS QR code for the venue](#)

Authors: Phil Rawlings and Liz Cave

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<sup>1</sup> interpreted as 'when not immediately involved in that planned activity'

<b>Group: Holmbury Choral</b>		<b>Rehearsals: Thursday 8-9.30pm</b>		<b>Venue: Holmbury St Mary Church</b>	
Risk Area		Mitigation		Notes	
<b>1. Infection rate in the local area</b>					
Local restrictions may apply with little notice.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check government guidance on local lockdowns.</li> <li>If there are local restrictions or a local surge in cases, cancel rehearsals for that week. Communicate with members, MD, accompanist, venue.</li> <li>Church may also cancel for similar reasons (fee will be waived)</li> </ul>		<a href="#">Government guidance on local lockdowns</a> <a href="#">Check coronavirus cases weekly</a> Check we have up-to-date email/messaging details	
<b>2. Risk to/from individuals to/from group</b>					
High/moderate risk/vulnerable individuals attend		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Check definition of high/moderate risk/vulnerable persons at least once a term</li> <li>Re-evaluate at regular intervals/as guidance changes, e.g. at least once a term</li> <li>If allowing attendance, clarify it is attendee's decision, that the choir's measures cannot reduce risk to zero – Attendance at rehearsal is implicit acceptance of the risk</li> </ul>		All over-70s are moderate risk, at least <a href="#">NHS guidance</a>	
Infectious individual attends rehearsals		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>exclude potentially-infectious individuals from attending and entering rehearsal venue</li> <li>exclude individuals who are in quarantine from attending</li> <li>use on-the-door questionnaire to stop potentially-infectious individuals entering rehearsal venue – ask 1) do they have any of the symptoms: elevated temperature, continuous cough, loss of smell and taste, 2) have they been in close contact with someone with symptoms 3) have NHS Test &amp; Trace asked them to self-isolate, 4) have they returned from abroad and been asked to self-isolate (quarantine) – record the responses (keep for 21 days)</li> </ul>		Requires volunteer to man the door  Non-contact thermometers not considered reliable	
Inability to test & trace when someone falls ill outside meeting		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>display Test and Trace poster with QR code, all attendees should scan to register, if they have the app (recommended)<sup>2</sup></li> <li>keep register, with seating plan, of everyone who attends rehearsals every week, for 21 days<sup>3</sup> (for NHS Test &amp; Trace)</li> <li>ensure if anyone falls ill (Covid-19) between one rehearsal and the next that they know to contact the group: if that happens, that person also to contact NHS Test &amp; Trace</li> <li>contact all attendees of last 2 rehearsals; ask to self-isolate for 14 days from date of attending rehearsal with patient (if not registered with Test &amp; Trace)</li> </ul>		No wifi in the church, the app will later connect and register when in range Liz H	

<sup>2</sup> Legal requirement on the venue from 24Sep20

<sup>3</sup> Legal requirement from 18Sep20

Inability to deal with person becoming unwell (Covid-19 symptoms) in rehearsals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ send person home immediately</li> <li>▪ if you need to call transport for them, seat them on non-upholstered chair, wearing face covering and disposable gloves, by open window or door until transport arrives</li> <li>▪ ask person with symptoms to take a test asap and communicate the result to you</li> <li>▪ terminate rehearsal immediately and send everyone home, asking them to self-isolate until test result received</li> <li>▪ clean rehearsal space carefully, inform venue</li> </ul>	<i>to Liz H</i>
Complacency means mitigating measures not complied with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ remind attendees verbally - at entrance, at break, during rehearsal, as it fits with the schedule</li> <li>▪ make sure we communicate in ways appropriate to everyone (e.g. consider dyslexia, deafness, vision-impairment etc.)</li> </ul>	<i>Keep high on agenda</i> <i>Rota required</i>
Non-compliance with measures means risk to other attendees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ make it clear to members that if they do not comply with the measures group has in place, they will be excluded</li> <li>▪ enforce exclusion rigorously - it may make some people cross, but the majority will be relieved and behind us</li> </ul>	
<b>3. Behaviour of attendees/individual safety measures</b>		
Individuals spread or breathe in virus-laden particles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 2-metre social distancing AT ALL TIMES, this means before, during and after musical activity, during breaks, in bathrooms</li> <li>▪ sneeze/cough into tissue/crook of arm (if not wearing a face-covering)</li> <li>▪ no hugging, hand-shaking, lingering to chat in rehearsal venue before/after; chat, if you wish, outside, at 2m distance.</li> <li>▪ make wearing of face-coverings in the rehearsal venue mandatory, while not in singing configuration</li> <li>▪ have a box of disposable face coverings on hand for those who don't bring one</li> </ul>	<i>Remind all that 'no mingling' is an absolute prerequisite of being allowed to meet for activity; not complying jeopardises rehearsals for all.</i>
Individuals spread/pick up virus by touching shared surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ avoid touching shared surfaces as much as possible</li> <li>▪ sanitise/wash hands on arrival, departure, before/after break, after bathroom visit</li> <li>▪ bring your own and do not share sheet music</li> <li>▪ use allocated seat and keep all own personal belongings by and in that space</li> <li>▪ members to bring own refreshments (if wanted)</li> <li>▪ members to take own rubbish home (bins are provided for used wipes)</li> </ul>	
<b>4. Rehearsal space</b>		
Build-up of aerosols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ fans not to be used - they can blow particles over people</li> <li>▪ ventilation not required before/after rehearsals as venue not used for 72hrs before/after</li> </ul>	<i>Monitor use of venue by others</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ two windows to be opened (ajar) during rehearsal<sup>4</sup></li> <li>▪ reduce length of rehearsal overall to maximum one hour (singing time)</li> <li>▪ reduce length of chunks of rehearsal to between 15-30mins per chunk followed by break (preferably outside)</li> </ul>	
Build-up of virus on shared surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ cleaning team to wipe touched surfaces (chair backs, light switches, window latches, door handles)</li> <li>▪ leave piano as-is</li> </ul>	<i>Record who does cleaning</i>
Covid-19 transmission in toilet facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ensure social distancing maintained when queueing for facilities</li> <li>▪ ensure cleaning after use – wipes will be available</li> <li>▪ encourage hand washing - soap, paper towels, poster reminding</li> </ul>	
Queueing points and traffic flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ maintain 2m social distancing at all times</li> <li>▪ arrival will take time - register/pre-assessment: manage queueing</li> <li>▪ leaving after rehearsal - reminder not to linger inside and to socialize outside only (max. 6)</li> </ul>	<i>Forehead thermometers are very unreliable; other means of taking temperature probably more hazardous to others than the benefit warrants.</i>
Contaminated material not properly disposed of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ members to take all own rubbish home</li> <li>▪ bins provided for used wipes</li> </ul>	
Other users of the building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ensure communications with church regarding timings of other users (services, private prayer, special events)</li> </ul>	
Temperature of the rehearsal space is too low for health security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review heating and ventilation plan and adjust if possible; if essential ventilation reduces temperature to unhealthy levels, shorten or cancel rehearsal</li> <li>▪ Inform members of the need to come prepared</li> </ul>	<i>Church will put heating on in advance (incl. in fee agreed). To be reviewed.</i>
Venue used by others <72 hours before rehearsal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consider cleaning by Choir before rehearsal</li> <li>▪ or cancel rehearsal, and communicate to members</li> </ul>	<i>Benefice council meeting 14<sup>th</sup> October evening</i>
<b>5. Your musical activity</b>		
2-metre spacing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ find out how many members willing/able to attend now and reassess venue capacity on findings</li> <li>▪ reduce numbers rehearsing to ensure radius of 2m around each singer/player and 3-5m distance to conductor</li> </ul>	<i>Measure venue for numbers accommodate with 2m spacing around circumference + 3m for MD/accompanist</i>
Covid-safe placing of individuals during activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ not face-to-face</li> <li>▪ 3m-5m between front row of singers/players and conductor</li> </ul>	<i>Provide seating/singing plan</i>

<sup>4</sup> NB: Guidance from The House of Bishops Recovery Group (CoFE) 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020: “Most church buildings are large spaces, compared with small shops, offices, pubs and restaurants, and well naturally ventilated. It is not necessary to keep external doors open for added ventilation where this causes discomfort over the colder months, where existing Covid-safe practice ensures physical distancing of 2m and the use of face coverings, for example.”

Participants cannot hear each other/conductor/vice versa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ do not just shout or speak/sing more loudly! (increased emission of aerosols)</li> <li>▪ use a pocket amp/head mic for conductor</li> <li>▪ encourage quiet between ‘sings’, to aid instruction</li> <li>▪ weigh up (temporary) unsatisfactory musical experience against social isolation and (long-term) danger of group drifting apart</li> </ul>	
Virus spread through sheet music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ email music to members and ask them to print their own for practice (acceptable if Holmbury Choral has bought/hired)</li> <li>▪ provide electronic print-your-own licenses</li> <li>▪ use out of copyright print-your-own music (e.g. CPDL, ISMLP)</li> <li>▪ buy and have sent straight to participants’ homes</li> <li>▪ hire/buy as usual, pack into sealed folders (paper is lesser risk), issue to members with instruction to leave sealed for 72 hrs</li> <li>▪ in all cases, remind constantly not to share and only to use own set of music</li> </ul>	<i>A mixture of methods is likely</i>
Increased aerosols through high volume sound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ reduce volume of singing – fewer aerosols produced; also reduces risk of ‘hoovering up’ a large amount of aerosols through in-breaths</li> <li>▪ singing some consonants can also increase aerosol production (– this is perhaps not the moment to insist on clear and strong articulation)</li> <li>▪ adapt what we do in rehearsals (e.g. focus on harmonies, rather than articulation; listening rather than fortissimo)</li> <li>▪ adapt repertoire temporarily to work on quieter pieces with less ‘air-intensive’ techniques</li> </ul>	
Aerosol transmission to/from conductor facing the group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 3m-5m between front row of singers and conductor</li> <li>▪ face coverings for conductor and singers/players whilst not in singing configuration</li> <li>▪ pocket amp and head mic so does not have to shout to make themselves heard</li> </ul>	
Accompanist exposed to Covid-19 via singers and/or piano	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ only usual/official accompanist to use piano – no-one to casually bash through their notes</li> <li>▪ ensure accompanist hand sanitises before/after</li> <li>▪ accompanist to turn own pages to avoid compromising social distancing</li> <li>▪ no-one to face accompanist to sing/play</li> <li>▪ piano placed &gt;3metres from conductor/singers</li> </ul>	<i>Do not clean piano (only used by Holmbury Choral)</i>
<b>6. Ancillary activity</b>		
Arrival/departure compromises 2m social distancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ remind as to expected behaviours: no lingering (inside) on arrival or departure to chat to friends</li> <li>▪ to go straight to allocated space on arrival and to leave hall straight away on departure – chatting can be done outside!</li> </ul>	

<b>7. Transport to/from rehearsals</b>		
Attendees pick up Covid-19 on the way to/from rehearsals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ inform members, so that they are aware of desirable hierarchy of transports: walk, cycle, own car – ideal</li> <li>▪ shared car – use face coverings, open windows, sit far from each other</li> </ul>	<i>space is available at venue for umbrellas/wellies/wet raincoats</i>