

Nantwich Choral Society

Covid Procedures for Rehearsals

September 2021

Introduction

With the lifting of all lockdown restrictions in July 2021, and the indication from many members of their intention to return to rehearsals in September 2021, we have prepared these procedures which will hopefully keep those of you attending rehearsals in St Mary's Church as safe from Covid19 as is possible.

However, it must be said at the outset that the ultimate arbiter of what is considered safe is the individual. You are ultimately responsible for your own safety and, should you feel uncomfortable with any aspect of the rehearsal, then you should voice your opinion to a committee member, who may be able to get the issue resolved to your satisfaction, or else you should leave the rehearsal in order to protect yourself.

That said, the committee has undertaken a full risk assessment, using risk assessment templates supplied by Making Music, and the following procedures hopefully identify what we have done to make your experience of rehearsing with NCS as comfortable as possible. As a result of the Risk Assessment, the following procedures identify what you can do and what the Society is doing to protect you.

What you can do

- Do not attend rehearsals if you are showing any symptoms of Covid 19:

- High temperature (fever)
- Chills or shivers
- Persistent cough
- Loss or change in smell (anosmia)
- Loss or change in taste (dysgeusia)
- Headache
- Unusual tiredness (fatigue)
- Sore throat
- Sudden confusion (delirium), especially in older people
- Skin rash
- Changes in the mouth or tongue (COVID tongue)
- Red and sore fingers or toes (COVID fingers/toes)
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pains
- Muscle pains
- Hoarse voice
- Diarrhoea
- Skipping meals
- Abdominal pains
- Runny nose
- Sneezing

Look at the ZOE Covid Study for more details of all currently identified symptoms.

<https://covid.joinzoe.com/post/the-20-symptoms-of-covid-19-to-watch-out-for>

- Do not attend if you have recently tested positive in either the PCR or Lateral Flow Test.
- Do not attend if you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive.
- Consider the circumstances as to whether you should attend, if you have been contacted by the NHS Covid App or NHS Test and Trace.
- Do not attend if quarantining after being abroad.
- Consider undertaking a **Lateral Flow Test** for Covid prior to attending rehearsal. These are available in packs of 7 from your local pharmacy and are currently free of charge. There was talk of them incurring a charge from 1st July, but that didn't seem to materialise. Whilst not 100% successful, they can give a degree of peace of mind.
- When attending rehearsals please accept the following requirements:
 - Consider your travel arrangements, particularly if you intend sharing transport with another Society member
 - Submit to non-intrusive infrared forehead temperature check
 - Ensure you are registered as having attended on the register
 - Sign in using Smart phone QR code for Track and Trace, if you are using that facility.
 - Your attendance will be seen as a declaration that you are fit.
 - Wear a mask whilst indoors and not singing
 - Choose whether to wear a mask whilst singing. The choice is yours and no-one can question your decision.
 - Consider singing at reduced volume to limit spread of aerosol.
 - Maintain social distancing where possible when not sitting in singing locations.
 - If you feel ill during a rehearsal, please move to an isolated area, having first told someone to get assistance.
 - Provide your own refreshment.
- Ensure you are fully vaccinated. We cannot insist on this, but it would seem that most people already are double "jabbed". It won't necessarily stop you getting Covid19, or stop you infecting others, but at least the symptoms may be reduced and hospitalisation made less likely.

What the Society will do

There are no longer any restrictions in St Mary's regarding social distancing. However, since we will be singing, we feel it advisable to maintain social distancing at the 2 metre level. We will be using the nave for rehearsals and we will stagger the seating positions in

alternate rows in order to ensure at least a 1 metre distance and hopefully nearer 2 metres spacing between individuals. Certainly no-one will be singing directly behind another member in consecutive rows.

- We will ensure Track and Trace QR codes and a manual registration system is in place.
- We will ensure social distancing is in place looking in particular at positioning with respect to singing and the projection of aerosols.
- We will provide non-intrusive forehead temperature checks on arrival.
- We will ensure cleaning before and after rehearsal is done in accordance with Church Covid Policies and Procedures.
- We will ensure there is access to alcohol wipes and gels throughout the rehearsal.
- We will ensure there is adequate ventilation of the premises during our attendance.
- We will ensure adequate breaks take place (every 60 minutes)
- We will use microphones for communications rather than having to shout.
- If anyone is notified of having had contact with the virus, following a rehearsal, we will consider cancelling the next rehearsal, subject to quarantine requirements and recommendations provided by the NHS Track and Trace and the NHS Procedures.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

- The committee will consider whether rehearsals should continue if it is seen that Covid cases are rising out of control in Nantwich and surrounding areas, even if there is no central government or local restriction advised.

Conclusion

The list of “to Do’s” seems long, especially for the individual member, but in reality it is essentially those measures to which we have all become accustomed over the last 18 months with a few extra controls to cover our singing activities. Whilst the Society is still trying to do what it can to mitigate risk, and many of the measures are those which we implemented for the few rehearsals we managed in November 2020 with no problems, the government now says that the individual must make their own decisions regarding their own safety as society opens up once again.