

Seating Arrangement

Seats are unallocated within each voice part, except on occasions for semi-chorus seating. Your seat for the afternoon rehearsal is your place for the concert, but tallest people should sit towards the back, or the outsides of the row, because of sight lines.

Please stick to the seating plan, which is designed to ensure that every member is able to sit next to a colleague from the same voice section - even if this means splitting a friendship group. Being isolated by voice part can ruin the experience for anyone thus affected, which can be very dispiriting after all their hard work preparing for the concert.

The Rehearsals and Events Officer is responsible for seating so please be prepared to move if asked either by them or by a Voice Rep.

Afternoon Rehearsal

Latecomers must wait for a suitable break before joining the body of the Chorus.

If the Conductor releases the Chorus early but keeps the orchestra onstage, leave very quickly and in complete silence or remain until the orchestra finish.

Concert Presentation

Please maintain a professional presentation at all times, ie correct concert dress, no fidgeting with music, no bottles of water and no waving to the audience.

There should be no talking from when the first violinist stands to tune up the orchestra.

Platform Procedure

If we are filing on, line up in single file along the stairways, taking care not to cause an obstruction as the orchestra members have to get up and down, and some will be carrying expensive instruments.

- Front row leads on, folders under outward facing arm held at side.
- Sit down immediately on reaching your seat.
- Stand as one body when the leader of the orchestra enters or stands to take welcoming applause, and either sit when he/she sits or remain standing ready to sing.
- If we are not singing in the first half, then we are "as audience" so remain seated at all times. However, remember we are 'on show', so stay silent and don't make distracting movements.

If drifting on, take your seat in your own time - but perhaps be mindful of where you are sitting eg not arriving too late if you are in the middle of a row.

Interval

- Back row leads off, leaving folders on seats.
- Move away as quickly as possible once you reach the backstage area - it is often blockages here that hold up those who are still on the platform.
- Make sure you return in plenty of time after the interval, which for us may effectively be just five minutes.

At the end of the concert / when we have finished singing

- Keep very still once the piece ends, keeping scores open
- When applause begins, close scores 'as one', tucking them under right arm with left arm down at your side (right arm holding score across your body).
- Do not applaud during the initial applause period, ie while you are standing - we are being applauded along with the other performers.

- Sit down as one, when the conductor leaves the stage.
- Stay seated when conductor, soloists, MD etc return on stage for further applause, when you may applaud along with the audience, scores on your knee.
- Stand if the conductor asks us to, and do not applaud while standing. Sit again when the conductor leaves the stage.
- If our MD performed in an additional capacity, e.g. organist, applaud as for soloists.
- File out as quickly as you can from the back row, intermingling with people in the organ seats when used.
- Move as quickly as possible down the stairs and along the corridors - it is often blockages in the backstage area that hold up those who are still at the stage exits or on the platform.

Concert Dress Code

It is important that all singers feel comfortable and confident in what they are wearing. The concert dress code is designed to give freedom of choice and design, but also a degree of uniformity and appropriateness to the overall appearance of the chorus and to the venues at which we sing.

Men

- Black shirts (no shiny material, black buttons), black trousers, black socks, and black shoes
- Black jacket or DJ for formal concerts eg City Hall, or if cold
- No frills or flounces, no waistcoats, cummerbunds or breast pocket handkerchiefs.

Women

- Black dress or long skirt or trousers, formal rather than fashion or niche, and full length, ie, resting on top of the foot when wearing concert shoes, whether trousers or skirt/dress. No crop or ballerina length, no very narrow or skin-tight trousers.
- Long-sleeved (below elbow) black top or tunic with modest neckline front and back; no slashed or off-the-shoulder.
- Fabric to be non-patterned (unless within the weave), non-shiny and no open-weave. No frills or flounces, cut-outs or open-weave lace.
- Black or neutral socks or tights.
- Smart black shoes or smart black sandals if preferred - take extra care that tights or socks are black if wearing sandals. No boots unless ankle length and fairly plain.
- The sashes are mandatory for sopranos and altos. They are to be worn over the outer shoulder, secured by a small gold pin or brooch. Specialist clean only.
- Black clutch style or small evening handbag.
- If you choose to wear a necklace and/or earrings, they should be small

Please note the importance of NOT wearing perfume or aftershave, for either rehearsals or concerts, as they can cause some members to have allergic reactions, and can interfere with efficient breathing.