

## City of Oxford Choir - information for members

Welcome to the City of Oxford Choir! It's great to have you as a member and we hope that you enjoy your time making music with us.

Here is some practical information about the choir. If any question that you may have is not answered, do ask any member of the committee who will be happy to help. You can either find them during a break at rehearsal or phone or email them. Their contact details are on the choir membership list (see below).

### Your contact details and choir communications

Our Librarian, Margarita Morris, keeps a current list of the addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of all members of the choir and circulates it regularly to all members. She will give you a form to fill in when you join and you need to do this before you take away any music. Please let Margarita know as soon as possible of any change in your details so that the list can be kept up to date.

We use email for communication of rehearsal dates and times, concert dates, and other important information so please do keep an eye out for choir emails.

### The choir website and social media

[www.oxfordchoir.org](http://www.oxfordchoir.org) Twitter: [@CityOxfordChoir](https://twitter.com/CityOxfordChoir) Facebook: [The City of Oxford Choir](https://www.facebook.com/CityOxfordChoir)

Lots of information about the choir is contained on the choir website including details of our forthcoming concerts. There is a members' section where you can find rehearsal and concert dates as well as pre-rehearsal homework and our constitution.

*Please follow us on twitter and retweet our status updates that advertise our events. Please "like" our Facebook page and share the updates and event invitations there.*

### Membership subscription

The annual membership subscription for 2016-7 is £198 and includes all your music. The subscription is revised annually following discussion and a resolution at the AGM. Please pay by a direct BACS payment if you can. Our treasurer can give you the bank details. If this is not possible you may pay by cheque made payable to the City of Oxford Choir.

If you would prefer to pay in termly instalments of £66 then this is also possible. Moray McConnachie is the Treasurer. He does a great job of chasing for money owed, but if you can pay him before he has to ask then that would be fantastic.

The full year is normally payable (we do make exceptions e.g. for maternity and other unavoidable leave!) even if you are not singing for a term: this is because the membership fee needs to cover our professional musical director's fees, music costs and rehearsal venue hire. We rely on ticket sales for our concerts as well as fund-raisers to pay for the other expenses of the choir, for example the cost of accompanists (organists, pianists, chamber groups) and the cost of our concert venues.

As a charity we are keen that people should not be prevented from singing because of their finances. If you cannot manage the full fee please speak in confidence with the Secretary, Treasurer or the Chair to make an alternative arrangement. No-one else will know.

Usually all music is sourced by Margarita Morris, our Librarian, and loaned at no cost to members but very occasionally members will buy music themselves. If this poses a problem for you please talk to the Treasurer or the Chair.

### **Easy Fundraising**

In an effort to keep subscriptions down we have an Easy Fundraising site. It is a simple click-through site that enables many of your online purchases to earn commission for choir funds. Please use it whenever you shop online so you can do your bit for choir fundraising.

<http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/oxfordchoir>

### **Rehearsals**

We are rehearsing in various venues in 2017, normally on Mondays, from 7.30pm, to 9.30pm. Please be on time, arriving ready to start singing at 7.30pm sharp as we always have a lot to get through!

The committee expects you to attend every rehearsal but clearly there will be occasional times when you are ill or where a rehearsal conflicts with, for example, a work engagement or family event. If you know in advance that you will not be able to attend a rehearsal for any reason, you **must** tell our Musical Director, Duncan Aspden, **as far in advance as possible** by adding an entry to his absence book. If you are unable to give notice of absence more than a week in advance then you **must tell Duncan by texting him on 07812 193615**.

Where a choir member has been absent for more than 25% of rehearsals of any one set leading to a concert their inclusion in the concert is subject to the Musical Director's discretion.

### **Your choir number**

Each member has a number. Your music for each concert will have this number on it. Music is available at the beginning of rehearsals early in each term so please pick up the music with your number on as you arrive.

You will also be given a maroon coloured music folder which will have your choir number on it. This will be loaned to you for the duration of your time with the choir and you will need to use it for all choir performances.

### **Rehearsal refreshments**

During the break in our rehearsals we have notices from committee members, a glass of fruit juice and a chance for a chat with other choir members. Choir members take it in turns to provide the juice and the cups.

## Concerts

We usually perform three times a year in one of the Oxford College chapels or an Oxford church and have an away day in the early part of the calendar year where we may rehearse and sing outside of Oxford. We are always looking for new suitable venues so if you know of one do let a committee member know.

The concerts are almost always Saturday evenings and we have a “dress” rehearsal on the afternoon of the concert in the venue. The dress rehearsal usually begins at 2 pm. You don’t have to wear concert dress for it!

As well as regular concerts we sometimes perform at other events, for example conferences or weddings, for a fee. If you know of an event at which we could sing please do let a committee member know.

Alberto Gianetto manages each concert on the day. As you can imagine there are lots of things which need to happen before the concert can take place for example setting out chairs, arranging refreshments for interval drinks, transporting and putting together staging and folding programmes. The choir shares out these tasks, ably co-ordinated by Alberto who will ask for volunteers well before the concert.

### Dress for concerts

Men: Plain **black** long-sleeved, open-collared shirt, black trousers, black socks and black shoes. We sometimes wear black jackets if the venue is cold.

Women: Black long-sleeved (at least below elbow) blouse or shirt, black ankle length (at least below knee) skirt or long trousers, black tights/socks and black shoes. You are welcome to wear jewellery but please not too sparkly because of the lighting in the concert venues.

### Tickets for our concerts

Alice Priestley is in charge of ticket sales and several weeks before the concert she will ensure tickets are available to choir members. All choir members are expected to sell a bare minimum of at least two tickets, but the more you sell the more adventurous we can be in future music-making! You are allowed to sell your first two tickets for each concert at the discounted rate.

It is very helpful if you can sell tickets as early as possible and give Alice the money for them because she can then know in advance the likely audience size and not have to spend the concert day chasing money and/or unsold tickets.

### What happens if you are unable to sing in a concert?

We hope that you will put the dates of concerts in your diary early so that you will always be able to sing in them, but we recognise that sometimes the concert date may conflict with another non-movable important event, or you may be away with work or busy on a specific project which means that you are unable to sing in a particular term.

If this is the case, please let Duncan and Margarita know **as soon as possible**. She needs to know because she is in charge of ordering all the music for concerts, which she sometimes does

as early as 6 months before a specific concert. Music costs money so if Margarita does not have to order copies that we do not need then we don't waste money. If you have taken music for a concert and then realise you won't be able to sing in that concert you **must give your music back to Margarita without delay** as keeping it costs the choir money and causes a considerable headache for all concerned.

Duncan needs to know because the number of people available for each part will affect his decisions about the music we sing.

Missing a concert should be an exceptional event – there is no sense in which it's OK to miss a term just because you don't fancy it and it is extremely unfair on the rest of the choir just to miss a concert because you had a better offer at the last minute.

### **The constitution of the choir**

The choir has a constitution which governs the way that it operates. The constitution is available on the choir website and provides that we have an Annual General Meeting once a year. The AGM usually takes place in October and is quite a social event too. It is the choir's chance to nominate and elect new members of the committee, debate issues of interest or concern and hear reports from the Musical Director and the committee officers, and discuss and set the annual subscription as well as the Musical Director's stipend.

### **The Committee**

The Committee members are:

#### **Officer posts**

Chair:	Tony Brett
Treasurer:	Moray McConnachie
Secretary:	Robert Grayson
Librarian:	Margarita Morris
Publicity Manager:	Emma Bolton

#### **Non-officer posts**

Tickets:	Alice Priestley
Concert Manager:	Alberto Gianetto

We hope you will enjoy singing with the City of Oxford choir and thank you for joining us – one of Oxford's leading amateur choirs.