

## **Royston Choral Society**

### **Working Practices**

RCS is a non-auditioned community choir. We aim to be accessible, friendly and informal, but we do take seriously our desire to perform to the best of our ability and, in order to do that, we have introduced some guidelines for our members. We don't call them rules, because we don't want to be prescriptive, but these practices will support us in being the very best choir we can be. Your committee works hard to make singing with RCS an enjoyable experience; we ask that you do your bit to help us in that aim.

### **Rehearsals**

We rehearse on Tuesday evenings from 7.45 to 9.45 in St John the Baptist, Royston's parish church. Please arrive a few minutes before 7.45 if you can, so that you have time to sign in and get ready to sing at 7.45. The door is usually open half an hour before rehearsal starts.

At the beginning of term, there is music to be collected, and subs to be paid. On the first evening of the new term, if you can, please be there in plenty of time, so that the admin can be dealt with before the rehearsal starts.

During rehearsal, we have short break for refreshments. We ask you, if you can, to put 50p in the pot to cover the costs. This is a good chance to catch up with friends in the choir, but we try to keep it to 10 minutes, so that rehearsal time isn't lost. Please help us do that by returning promptly when asked.

If you can help with making tea and coffee, please add your name to the rota. If no-one volunteers, there won't be any!

### **Attendance**

We all know that practice is key to improvement and we ask that our singers commit to attending rehearsals whenever they can. We understand that some of our members work away sometimes, and some have other commitments that make attendance difficult from time to time. However, wherever possible, we ask you to give rehearsals priority as you plan your week.

Our aim is that we are all ready when the time comes to perform in the concert, and we will do our best to help you reach the required standard. In order to do that, we need your help.

If you know you're going to miss a rehearsal, please let your part rep know (see below for his or her details). If you miss three rehearsals in a single term, your part rep will contact you to check if all is well and to discuss whether you will be able to attend enough rehearsals to enable you to be ready in time for the concert. Andrew, our MD, will be involved in the decision about whether you will be well enough rehearsed to sing in the performance.

If you are likely to miss the Tuesday evening before the concert, the additional rehearsal on the night before the concert or the rehearsal on the day, you **must** speak to your part rep and to Andrew as soon as you know. Andrew will discuss the situation with you, and he will decide what are the minimum requirements in terms of other rehearsal for you to reach the standard to be able to sing in the concert. Inevitably, this will depend on a whole range of criteria, which is why he will make the decision for you, individually, based on your discussion and his knowledge of your voice, your abilities and your experience. The minimum requirements Andrew sets for you will be different

from the requirements for someone else, so please don't just assume you will or won't be able to sing; come and talk to him. We want everyone to be able to take part on the day.

## **Music**

We always provide music for you to borrow, and the cost of that is covered by your subscription. The music comes from various library sources, unless it's a piece of which we own our own set. Hired music needs to be returned to its owner immediately after each concert, so we ask that you return your copies on or by the day of the concert. There's always a box in which to leave it after the performance on concert day; if you're not able to sing in the concert, please make sure you get it back to Caroline in advance of the performance.

If your music is late getting back to us and, as a result, either we incur a fine for late return or someone has to do a double trip to return additional copies to the library or other lender, we may ask you to reimburse those costs.

Some of our members prefer to buy their own copy of the music. We will arrange that for you. We have access to discounts from some suppliers and we are able to raise a little money for the choir by asking you to pay the list price and retaining the discount for RCS. If you would like to buy a copy of a particular work through us, please let Caroline know and she will add it to the order. When you get it, please put your name in it; you would be surprised how many members forget and hand in their own copies after the concert!

## **Subscriptions**

In order to function and to be able to perform interesting works, we need to fund ourselves. RCS doesn't make money, but we try not to lose too much either. We are fortunate in having some reserves, but we try to maintain them rather than let them dwindle, year after year.

Subscriptions are set by the committee, and we aim for a level that is affordable but realistic. Even if we had a full house at each of our concerts, we could not cover the costs of staging them, so subs must contribute to concert costs as well as rehearsing.

We want to acknowledge members' commitment to the choir and our new (from Autumn 2016) subscription structure does that.

The subscription rates will be:

For the first and second terms of attendance in the choir's year: full £45, concession £35.

For the third term in which you have attended in the current year: full £25, concession £20.

In this way, if you attend all three terms, you will receive a substantial discount in the third one. The choir's year follows the academic year, and runs September to July. Thus the discount is available in the summer term for those who have attended in the previous two terms.

The annual subscription will be: full £110, concession £90. (There's no discount for paying the concessionary subscription annually, as the rate is already discounted.)

We don't want to exclude anyone from singing because of financial barriers. If you are having difficulty affording your subscription, please speak in total confidence to Caroline.

## Concerts

We perform four concerts per year, in November, December, around Easter and in the summer. We perform in various local venues around Royston.

You will receive details of concert day arrangements shortly before each one, but there is always a rehearsal on the day of the concert and usually the evening before. Dress code tends to be dinner jackets for the men and all black, long sleeved tops and long length either trousers or skirts for the ladies. Sometimes that is varied for our lighter concerts.

Tickets do not sell themselves! In order to be able to perform the music that we love, we need to sell as many as possible, and choir members are the most effective salesmen and women. Please try to sell as many tickets as you can for our concerts, so that we can go on performing with high calibre instrumentalists and soloists.

We try to obtain funding where we can. If you know of an organisation that might sponsor us or contribute financially, please let us know. We sell advertising space (at a very reasonable rate) in our programmes; if you know of anyone who would be willing to advertise with us, please let us know that too. We need the copy about 4 weeks before the concert date.

## 100 Club

In order to help with our financial health, we run a 100 club – though it has far fewer than 100 members! The subscription is £20 per year, and we hold a draw each month, September to June, for prizes of £25 and £10. Please join, and rope in your family and friends too, if you can! You can join in at any time.

## Part Reps

Your part rep is your first line of communication in matters to do with being a member of RCS.

He or she will answer your queries, try to sort out any problems you have with attendance etc, pass on your feedback, hold your contact details and make sure you're kept informed of all that's going on. The part reps will organise the seating plan for the concerts, will ring you if we haven't seen you for a few weeks and will chase you if you've forgotten to do something you ought to have done!

The current part reps are listed, along with their telephone numbers and email addresses, below. Nick would like to step aside, because of work commitments, so we're on the lookout for a new part rep for the tenors. Any volunteers?

Sopranos:	Suzie Harrison	01763 838188	<a href="mailto:suzie.harrison@gmail.com">suzie.harrison@gmail.com</a>
Altos:	Sue Pegram	01763 838185	<a href="mailto:sue.pegram@syngenta.com">sue.pegram@syngenta.com</a>
Tenors (for now):	Nick Keep	01763 246073	<a href="mailto:n.keep@mail.crust.bbk.ac.uk">n.keep@mail.crust.bbk.ac.uk</a>
Basses:	Peter Murray	01763 245682	<a href="mailto:Peter.x.murray@btinternet.com">Peter.x.murray@btinternet.com</a>

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