



BCS Logo Standard

Welcome Handbook

Please read this as it tells you everything that you need to know!

BCS organisation

We are a charity, and our purpose is “to educate ourselves and others in the art of choral singing and to contribute to the culture of the community by the presentation of choral concerts and other activities.” A full copy of our constitution is available from the choir’s website (www.bristolchoral.co.uk)

We are organised by a committee and below is a list of the current serving members and their roles.

Chair	Caro Barrett
Chair Elect	Joi Demery
Committee Secretary	Amber Dennis
Treasurer	Yvonne Preece
Chorus Manager	Sarah Fernandes
Concert Manager	Joi Demery
Marketing Manager	Sharon Crawford
Schools Link Co-ordinator	Caro Barrett
Development Manager	Helen Moss
Voice Representatives	
Soprano	Kate Floyd
Alto	Ginny Royston
Tenor	Ed Crane
Bass	David Rodgers

Other important players include

Librarian	Mary Duval/ Sarah Burns
Website Manager	Elizabeth Elliott
Auditions Secretary	Carla Murray
Apprentice Manager	Diana Wetz

The contribution of the above people is augmented, in all areas of the Choir’s activities, by the contribution of many choir members. We positively welcome members’ help and support.

Communication

Should you wish to bring anything to the attention of the Committee, the normal route is via your Voice Representative, to whom you will be introduced at one of your early rehearsals.

We communicate through e-mail as far as possible. Most people are happy for their address, phone number and email address to go onto the published choir list – but you may restrict that information to the Choir Manager if you wish.

BCS is committed to working with young people, principally those within the city's boundaries, and the aim of the commitment is to

- ◆ enhance the choral/musical opportunities for young people
- ◆ encourage the next generation of singers / musicians
- ◆ establish the Society as a concerned, outward-looking and responsible organisation within the city's cultural life.

We operate an Apprentice scheme, whereby a young person from the age of 14 can join Bristol Choral as an apprentice. Each apprentice is placed with a choir mentor, who is CRB police checked, and who will always guide them in rehearsals and concerts.

We also offer choral scholarships. This is open to 18 to 30 year old students on full or part time music courses. See our website under "young people" for full details.

Our **Music Director is Hilary Campbell** and our **Assistant Music Director and Accompanist is Steven Kings**. Both are professional musicians appointed by the Committee. Neither is involved in the management of the Choir, although we rely on their musical expertise and take account of their musical judgements when making decisions.

Music making

Our programme for 2018/19

27th October 2018	Finzi, VW, Howells	Bristol Cathedral
15th December	Messiah	Clifton Cathedral
2nd February 2019	C&S Armed Man	Tyndale Baptist Church
9th March	Mozart & Handel	Bristol Cathedral
15th June	Smmer programme	Bristol Cathedral

Rehearsals

Rehearsals normally take place on Wednesdays at The United Reform Church, Waterford Road, Henleaze. A rehearsal schedule is on our website and in your pack. We start promptly at 7.15pm and end at 9.30pm You will be notified of any change of venue.

Members are expected to attend all rehearsals. If it is unavoidable, we can miss up to two rehearsals per concert..(for the Messiah it is only 1 rehearsal) If we miss more, then Hilary will ask us to do a Concert-Specific Audition (CSA) to make sure we are up to speed. The choir manager will speak to you about that, please do not bother Hilary with special requests. Our attendance at the final rehearsal, which takes place on the day of the concert, is essential. There is no flexibility: if we miss that, then we miss the concert..

Please sign the register every time you come to a rehearsal. If you only attend half, then put half in the register. On your first visit, find the register for your voice part at the back of the church. and write your name at the bottom of the list. If you do not sign in each week, your participation in the forthcoming concert will not be automatic. Bring a pencil with you to annotate your score.

Music scores

Music is available by the first rehearsal for the concert and can usually be bought or hired. Our Librarian takes orders for music in good time. All choir members who hire music are expected to return it promptly when they have finished using it, with all markings erased. It is essential that members take note of verbal / email instructions about the handing-in details for each concert's hired music. Any scores lost or not returned by a member, will have to be paid for.

If you decide not to join the choir, please be sure to return your hired music as soon as possible.

The choice of music is the responsibility of the Committee with guidance from Hilary. Members are canvassed periodically for their preferences

Special Note:—We do not hire out Messiah copies, you need to provide your own, we use the Watkins Shaw edition.

Concerts

Concert dress is supplied by members themselves. Normally, ladies wear a floor-length black skirts or dress trousers and a long-sleeved black top with an appropriate neckline. Gentlemen wear black trousers and a black, long-sleeved shirt, worn open-necked. This may vary for some concerts. No light-reflecting or ostentatious jewellery on the concert stage please, or anything that could distract audiences. Out of consideration we request that minimum, if any, perfume or hair spray is used, for the well-being of those singers who have allergies to these products.

All members use a red music folder during concerts, which can be bought from the Choir Manager when new members pass their auditions. Currently, the folders cost £20.50p.

Auditions

Entry to the choir depends on passing an audition and paying the subscription. All members' auditions must be current if they are to sing in concerts. The procedure is that you confirm to the Chorus Manager

that you wish to audition and your details will be passed to the Auditions Secretary, who will contact you regarding the time and place of the auditions. Notice of audition dates will be given in due course.

At your first audition, Hilary will ask you to sing some scales or arpeggios, to get a feel for your range, to sing a note of a chord (hearing test), to sing a **short** prepared piece and to do some sight reading. You will need to bring an extra copy of your prepared piece, for Steve to accompany you on the piano. The audition takes about 10 minutes. At subsequent, triennial auditions, Hilary will ask you to sing some scales or arpeggios and to sing a prepared piece.

Subscriptions, ticket sales and fund raising

Our annual subscription is £180.00 (concessions are available: please consult the Choir Manager.) A pro-rata subscription may apply to those who join mid-season. Subscriptions are due by the first concert and for new members, on passing their audition, and should be handed to the Treasurer or the Chorus Manager. Please make your cheques payable to Bristol Choral Society. If you are a tax payer, please fill in a gift aid form (enclosed with this pack). This will enable us to reclaim tax you have paid while involving you in no extra expense. You can also pay on line (see form)

Ticket sales are the responsibility of every member, and are a vital form of income. The cost of the repertoire that we hope to perform, with the appropriate size and status of orchestra, number of soloists and hire of venue, is totally dependant on our income. All members are encouraged to sell as many tickets as possible, you can book by going on www.bristolchoral.co.uk/concerts/ clicking on "online" at the bottom, of the relevant concert page, Or book direct at Colston hall, in person, online or by phone. 0117 2034040 **So please do your best to sell as many tickets as possible for each concert – so much depends upon it. And besides it is much more enjoyable to perform to a full audience rather than a small one!**

Choir trips & social events

Foreign trips are sometimes organised, in April 2018 some of us went to Lisbon.

Choir weekends, where we can enjoy music-making in a pleasant rural setting, are also something to look forward to.

In addition, we organise a variety of other events including *Come & Sing* days, quiz nights, fund raising evenings, and walks. Do come along – they are a great way to get to know each other.

Our AGM can also be thought of as a “social” occasion because after the meeting we have an American supper.

Fund raising

We are grateful to our Patrons, Friends, Sponsors and Supporters for their financial assistance, and are always happy to hear from those interested in joining their ranks. Ann Butterfield is the contact:

abuttercup@blueyonder.co.uk

Fund raising activities include sales of home-made jam and marmalade, a weekly raffle, 2nd hand music sales (advertised on our web site) and the various music days and other events mentioned above. All ideas for further fund raising are welcome, especially if members can organise or help to co-ordinate them. If you have any suggestions, please contact Geraldine Buchanan (Alto 1) as a first step.

Finally.

Please complete and give to the Choir Manager the accompanying “Application for Membership” form at your first rehearsal, doing so in no way commits you to taking an audition, but gives necessary information to the choir manager.

Once you have passed your audition and thus become a member, please complete the “Remittance Advice” form and a “Gift Aid” form (if you are a taxpayer) and give them to the Choir Manager, along with your subscription.

I hope that you find this booklet helpful, and that you will enjoy singing with BCS.

If you need any further help or information, please contact me by email, or speak to me on Wednesday evenings.

Sarah Fernandes
Chorus Manager

email: bcschorusmgr@gmail.com