



Dorset Police Male Voice Choir

Guidance Notes and Tips for Concert Organisers

For some of you, this will be the first time that you have organised a concert. It is hoped that the following notes will help smooth your way through the many things that you will need to consider and do, to ensure that the event is a resounding success.

The following notes should be carefully read in conjunction with the choir's terms and conditions and application form. Concert dates are agreed on a first come first served basis.

The Choir

The choir will take responsibility for the musical content of the evening. All concerts start at 7.30pm unless specifically agreed to the contrary at the time of booking.

It will provide soloists and a Master of Ceremony who will introduce the choir, the music, soloists and anything else that helps to make the evening run smoothly.

Concert programmes should allow an interval of 15/20 minutes and the concert should end around 9.45pm.

The Organiser

Point of contact – the organiser should appoint a single point of contact and provide their email address to the Choir Concert Secretary: philip.n@live.co.uk so as to avoid duplication or confusion about making contact.

Location – The choice of venue is one of the most important decisions that need to be made. The following are the key points that should be considered when making that decision:

Acoustics – a choir needs to sing in a location with good acoustics such as a church or theatre. Whilst village halls, community centres and school halls are used much depends on their size, height of ceiling and general acoustics. Staged areas with curtains, drapes and boxed in effect have proved to be unsuitable for choirs

Capacity – the location needs to be of a size that you think can be filled and give the financial return looked for. It must be capable of providing room for a choir of 40/45. Consideration needs to be given to providing an area from which refreshments can be served in the interval and the choir will require its own room to assemble in.

With a choir of 40, tiered staging would be preferable

If the choir has to use its own electronic piano and piano speakers, access to power points will be needed. However, the availability of a tuned grand piano in the location is preferred.

The provision of a microphone is essential so that the audience can hear the necessary announcements.

Car parking should be available either on site or nearby.

Ensure there is access to toilet facilities

The Choir's Venue Co-ordinator will make a short visit to the proposed venue soon after your application is received to ensure that it is suitable from the choir's point of view.

Pre-Concert Requirements

Publicity – This is key to the success of the evening. As soon as the date has been agreed, ensure that it goes into the diaries of all those who are to be associated with the organisation of the event. Ensure that where possible, the date does not clash with any other unconnected local activities.

The issue of programmes can help to raise a small amount which can be achieved by pricing them at say 50p each, asking for a donation, or getting local businesses to place a small advertisement in it for a donation. Alternatively, a slightly increased ticket price can be charged to include a programme.

The choir will advertise the concert on its own website.

Advertising Material – Produce posters large and small at least a month before the concert. It should show the location with the date, time, cost of tickets, post code and contact telephone numbers and email addresses. Details of the charity to benefit from the proceeds should also be shown. Seek help from local organisations, churches and other groups in publicising the event. If you have one, use your own website to promote the event. Tell the local press, including the free newspapers and community publications and also local television and radio stations. Further help is available from the Choir's Publicity Officer, email: henryfeilden@yahoo.com if required.

Remember – tickets do not sell themselves. Whilst the choir members will buy some tickets, the responsibility for ensuring that all tickets are sold is down to the organisers. Give your own members a target to sell. It is not that difficult for each of them to sell 5 or 10 tickets. It is essential to try and sell as many tickets as possible before the concert – you should not rely on selling all your tickets at the door.

Income – The purpose of the concert is to help you raise as much as possible. The main source of your income will come from ticket sales and these should be priced at a level to attract an audience, ensure that your expenses are covered and provide a surplus for your organisation. Tickets priced at £5 with an audience of 200 would generate £1000 gross - £8 tickets would gross £1600. Further income can be generated by selling refreshments or seeking donations for a glass of wine in the interval, a retiring "bucket" collection at the door or charging for a programme. Local businesses are often prepared to sponsor the event in return for an advert in the programme. Subject to the type of venue used it may be possible to hold a raffle (some churches will not allow this). Subject to the prizes on offer, this can generate a sizeable amount. You will have been

advised of the choir's expenses and you should ensure that you have taken into account any other expenses that you will incur when setting the ticket price. The choir is normally able to sell a number of tickets for each concert at a discounted cost to choir members' partners, the level of discount to be arranged between the organisers and the Choir Venue Coordinator.

Final Arrangements

A month or so before the concert the Choir Marshall and the Choir Coordinator will visit the venue to meet with the Concert Organiser to finalise the Choir's requirements and to check on the progress of ticket sales.

On the concert day, the Organisers need to ensure that they have enough time to sort out any last minute glitches. They should also have with them the telephone numbers for the caretaker or other people responsible for the venue, in case of last minute problems.

The choir will require access to the premises at least 1 hour before the concert.

Refreshments of a non-alcoholic nature, during the interval would be welcomed by the choir.

It is usual for someone from the organisation to say a few words of introduction or at the end of the concert. This person should be identified before the concert so that they can liaise with the MC regarding the appropriate time that they should make their announcements.