

Portobello Orchestra

COVID-19 Risk Assessment for Rehearsals

1 Identified risks

1. Orchestra members could be infected with Covid-19 while travelling to and from the rehearsal venue.
2. Orchestra members could be infected with Covid-19 by a carrier present during a rehearsal.
3. Orchestra members could be infected with Covid-19 from contaminated surfaces at the venue.
4. Orchestra members, if infected, could contaminate surfaces causing potential danger to other users of the building.

2 Risk mitigation strategy

We will comply with the government guidelines concerning measures that should be taken by all organisations at all community events. These cover the sizes of groups that can meet, the use of face masks and social distancing. They are subject to change and members of the orchestra must keep themselves up to date, as well as monitoring the orchestra website for changes to the risk assessment.

We will comply with the venue's individual requirements for users of the premises including entry and exit, the use of toilets, preparation of the rehearsal room and clearing up after a rehearsal. These requirements will be posted separately on the orchestra website and members of the orchestra are advised to ensure they are familiar with these requirements.

The following sections outline the orchestra-specific risk mitigation actions that we will adopt.

2.1 Restricting Attendance at Rehearsals

1. We will exclude the following from rehearsals:
 - (a) Anyone who has any of the symptoms of Covid-19,
 - (b) Anyone who has knowingly been in contact with a person with symptoms of Covid-19 in the previous 14 days,
 - (c) Anyone who is in quarantine following overseas travel, or has been advised to self isolate by the government track and trace service.
2. We will advise those in higher risk groups who may be more vulnerable to the disease not to attend rehearsals.
3. We will limit the number of attendees in accordance with government legislation and venue's requirements, and to allow distanced setup of the orchestra as described in section 2.3.
4. We will require members of the orchestra attending a rehearsal to follow venue guidance and restrictions at all times when in the building, and to maintain social distancing at all times.

Action required:

1. Each member of the orchestra must register, preferably 24 hrs in advance, in order to attend a rehearsal. This may be done using a website form or by contacting a designated committee member, and filling in a paper form on arrival at the rehearsal. The registration process will include a declaration by the registrant that they are not in the excluded groups enumerated above (2.1).
2. If the number of those who register for a rehearsal exceeds limit described in section 2.1, then some of the registrants will be told that the rehearsal is full and they cannot attend. Care will be taken to do this in a fair and equitable way.
3. If a member comes to a rehearsal without registering in advance they will only be admitted if the rehearsal is not full and they fill in and sign the paper registration form on arrival.
4. All members of the orchestra must complete an individual risk-assessment before attending the first rehearsal. This may be done on line, and will involve making a declaration that they have read the NHS vulnerability categories for Covid-19 infections, and that they consider themselves fit to take part in rehearsals. They will also be asked to provide up to date contact details which may be needed for track and trace.

2.2 Travel to the rehearsal

Members will be advised to travel to the venue on foot, by bicycle or in their own car, as far as possible. Members travelling by public transport should strictly follow government advice on face coverings and social distancing.

2.3 Before the rehearsal

We will reduce the risk of infection during the time when members arrive at the venue, set up the room and prepare to play, by taking the following measures.

1. Members will be required to enter the venue singly, and maintain social distancing.
2. All members will be required to either wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water or use their own hand sanitizer on arrival.
3. Members will be required to wear masks in the rehearsal venue wherever practicable, including prior to entering to the venue.
4. The orchestra seating will be set up in a way that complies with the current government guidelines. Each member should ensure that their own playing position conforms to the following guidelines:
 - (a) All players to be at least 2 meters from their nearest neighbours;
 - (b) Flute players to be 3 metres away from any other player.
5. In addition to these guidelines each member must:
 - (a) Bring their own music stand and music (Printed copies of the music will be made available at the first rehearsal);
 - (b) Unpack and set up their instrument at their playing position, or in a designated area of the room;
 - (c) Avoid touching any object in the rehearsal room, or sitting on benches, other than the chair at their playing position;

- (d) Wash or sanitise their hands after handling objects in the venue, such as chairs.
- (e) Pianists must clean the instrument keys carefully with sanitising wipes before and after use.

Action required:

1. Guidance to be provided to members on the venue rules and restrictions.
2. A seating plan of the rehearsal room to be drawn up and made available at the start of each rehearsal.
3. Sanitising wipes to be provided by the orchestra at each rehearsal.

2.4 During the rehearsal

While playing the risk of infection will be reduced by:

1. Ensuring effective ventilation in the rehearsal room by opening doors and windows when possible;
2. Rehearsing in 2 x 40 minute sessions with a 20 minute break between them to fully ventilate the room;
3. Ensuring individuals bring any refreshments they need for break times themselves;
4. Requiring the use of face coverings when it is practical to do so;
5. Encouraging a culture of quiet communication at all times to minimise droplet and aerosol production and distribution;
6. Maintaining silence during the rehearsal unless asking a question to the music director or leader so that the musical director can communicate with orchestra without shouting;
7. Collecting moisture from wind instruments in a container or a paper or cloth towel, to be removed from the venue by the player.

2.5 After the rehearsal

1. We will reduce the risk to orchestra members and to other users of the building by systematic cleaning as follows.
 - (a) Players must pack away their own stand, instrument and music at their playing position if possible.
 - (b) Each player should clean his or her chair and stack it away in line with the venue requirements.
 - (c) Hard surfaces that have been touched should be cleaned in accordance with the venue requirements.
 - (d) Wind players should clean and sanitise the floor around their seat to neutralise and remove any droplets that may have fallen from their instruments.
2. We will reduce the risk to the wider public through tracking infections suffered by the orchestra members.

- (a) Should any member develop symptoms of, or test positive for Covid-19 during a period of fourteen days after a rehearsal, they should inform the designated Committee Member for the most recent rehearsal they have attended so that an assessment can be made of those members who are likely to have had significant contact (as defined by the government) with the infected member.
- (b) The designated Committee Member will be responsible for setting up a communication chain to ensure that all such members are informed in line with the governments self isolation requirements. The designated Committee Member will also inform the venue management.