



Fareham Philharmonic Choir

New Members Handbook

Welcome

Dear new member,

Welcome to the Fareham Philharmonic Choir!
We're so pleased you've decided to join us.

This handbook is here to help you settle in, understand how the choir runs, and know what we expect from our members—and what you can expect from us.

Getting Started on Our Website

When you join, your details will be registered on our website:
www.fpchoir.org

You'll be given login details (email address as username + password).
Please log in and change your password [here](#) to one that:

- Has at least 8 characters
- Includes at least one capital letter, one number, and one special character

Once logged in, you'll find our Members' Area, full of useful information. Take a few minutes to explore it.

We'll ask for some details when you register:

- Name
- Phone number
- Email
- Address
- Emergency contact (next of kin)
- Personal photo (you can upload this yourself)
- Any details to support your participation (e.g. mobility needs)

These details are kept secure and are only accessible to the secretary and webmasters.

If you need help with the website, just let us know—we're happy to help.
Questions? Email membership@fpchoir.org

On joining, you'll receive:

- A name badge (please wear it at rehearsals)
- A fire escape plan

Getting Involved

The choir thrives on more than just singing—it's also about teamwork.

We encourage all members, especially new ones, to volunteer in some way. This helps you:

- Feel part of the community
- Learn how the choir runs
- Share the workload fairly

Roles are available both within the committee and in general support. Each role has a fixed term, and you'll always get help from an experienced committee member during handover.

Even a small amount of help makes a big difference.
Interested? Speak to your section representative.

Background

The Fareham Philharmonic Society was founded in 1898 by Eugene Spinney, originally with both orchestral and choral members.

Today, we're a strong choir supported by local instrumentalists for major concerts.

Our Musical Director, Andrew Cleary, joined in 2018. He works to:

- Develop our singing technique
- Expand our repertoire
- Keep rehearsals enthusiastic and enjoyable while aiming for high standards

Rehearsals

Where: United Reformed Church, Osborn Rd. South, Fareham PO16 7DG
When: Mondays, 7.30–9.30pm

- Please sign in on arrival.
- Let your rep or the secretary know if you can't attend:

- sop1rep@fpchoir.org
- sop2rep@fpchoir.org
- alto1rep@fpchoir.org
- alto2rep@fpchoir.org
- tenorrep@fpchoir.org
- bassrep@fpchoir.org

- We start promptly at 7.30pm.
- Break at 8.30pm with refreshments (please join the rota if you can).

There are no rehearsals at Christmas or in August.

An extra rehearsal is sometimes added on the Thursday before a concert.

Concert Commitment

- Attend at least 75% of rehearsals plus the final rehearsal on concert day.
- Final participation is decided by the Musical Director.
- Joining the choir means committing to concerts unless personal circumstances prevent you from performing.

Vocal Introduction

After a few rehearsals, you'll have a short, informal session with the MD.

You may be asked to:

1. Sing a scale (to check vocal range).
2. Sing one note of a two-note chord.
3. Sing a short piece of your choice (hymn, folk song, etc.).
4. Sing a simple passage rehearsed earlier that evening.

No unfamiliar material will be used—sight-reading is not required (though it's a bonus if you can).

Sometimes a new singer may be asked to rehearse a little longer before performing in a concert, to build confidence.

Financial Matters

Subscriptions

- £198 per year (or £16.50 per month) for 2025–26
- Usually paid by Direct Debit
- Payable until you formally resign

Please consider Gift Aid if you pay income tax—it boosts our funds at no extra cost to you.

Fundraising

Concerts involve extra costs (venue hire, musicians, music hire, publicity, etc.). We rely on fundraising events to help cover these. Please support in any way you can.

Music

Members need their own copies of:

- Carols for Choirs 1
- Carols for Choirs 2
- Carols for Choirs 5

Other music is usually hired, though you may purchase your own (Andrew will confirm editions).

Sometimes discounts are available if bought through the choir.

A black music folder is required for some concerts.

Concerts

We usually perform three concerts a year (April, October, December).

We also run workshops or 'Come and Sing' events, and sometimes a summer concert.

Preparation

All members help with:

- Collecting and assembling staging
- Setting out chairs
- Clearing away afterwards

Everyone can help—it's not just heavy lifting. Gloves are useful.

Friends and family are welcome to help with front of house and refreshments.

Tickets

- Sold at rehearsals, through members, online, and on the door
- Advance sales are especially important
- Please try to sell at least three tickets per concert

Concert Dress

Men

- Black shirt
- Black trousers
- Black shoes and socks

Women

- Long-sleeved black blouse/top (not T-shirts)
- Black trousers (not jeans) or ankle-length plain black skirt/dress
- Black shoes/smart boots with black tights
- Choir scarf (available at small cost)
- Simple jewellery only (nothing large or reflective)

This can also be found on the website, [here](#).

Welcome to the Choir

We're delighted to have you with us. Singing together is at the heart of what we do, but just as important is the friendship, teamwork, and fun we share.

Here's to making music together!