

## **Frome Symphony Members' Guide and Code of Practice**

**(Updated April 2014)**

### **Introduction**

This members' guide and code of practice has been produced by the committee. It was originally developed in consultation with members in 2012, and has since been updated for accuracy and clarity. Its purpose is:

- to help ensure that membership is an enjoyable and rewarding experience for all;
- to ensure that all members are treated fairly and know what to expect;
- to provide the framework in which we can present brilliant concerts which attract big audiences;
- to enable Frome Symphony to adopt best practice as an amateur orchestra and music society;
- to assist in the smooth running of the orchestra, and avoid unnecessary organisational workload.

For the majority of members this guide represents "business as usual" but if any part is likely to cause you any difficulties, please speak to the chairman or another committee member in confidence, and we will be glad to see if we can help.

### **1 Organisation**

- a) Frome Symphony operates as a not-for-profit music society. It is funded through a combination of members' subscriptions, sponsorship, private patronage and surpluses on concerts.
- b) Frome Symphony is managed by a voluntary elected committee, members of which undertake specific tasks in the areas of concert organisation, administration, finance, publicity and fundraising. If you would like to join the committee, or if you are willing to help with the organisation of the orchestra in any other way, then we would be delighted to hear from you.
- c) Frome Symphony employs a professional music director, who attends committee meetings on an "ex-officio" basis.
- d) Frome Symphony's concert seasons are planned annually, with each season running from September to July.
- e) Concert programme planning is the responsibility of the committee and the music director. All members are invited to make programming suggestions, which will be appraised for feasibility.
- f) An annual general meeting of all members takes place following the end of each season once the accounts have been finalised. Each member has a vote at this meeting.

The committee membership is as follows:

Post	Name	Responsibilities	Phone	Email
Chairman	Jon Bengier	Planning, concert administration, communications	01373 302753 07760 393514	<a href="mailto:jon@fromesymphony.org.uk">jon@fromesymphony.org.uk</a>
Vice Chairman	Barry Fogden	Patrons' scheme	01749 840379	<a href="mailto:barry.fogden1@btinternet.com">barry.fogden1@btinternet.com</a>
Treasurer	Maria Beaven	Financial management	01373 830535 07940 420596	<a href="mailto:beavens@talktalk.net">beavens@talktalk.net</a>
Orchestral Manager	Linda Allen	Librarian, booking guest musicians	01373 472484 07964 151606	<a href="mailto:keithmallen03@gmail.com">keithmallen03@gmail.com</a>
Publicity Officer	Tracey Edis	Press, printed publicity	01373 302753 07717 467053	<a href="mailto:tracey@traceyedis.net">tracey@traceyedis.net</a>
Sponsorship	Gemma Mounty	Commercial sponsors	07929 363879	<a href="mailto:gemma_mounty@yahoo.co.uk">gemma_mounty@yahoo.co.uk</a>

## 2 Joining the orchestra

- a) Membership is open to all musicians who consider themselves able to play the repertoire (some of which is fairly advanced) to a high standard, who are able to attend regularly (see section 6 below) and subject to vacancies existing in the instrumental section concerned. Advice is available to prospective members who are unsure as to their suitability (see d below).
- b) In the case of instrumental sections which are fully subscribed, the chairman holds a waiting list of potential members who wish to join. Recruitment from the waiting list is at the discretion of the committee.
- c) Frome Symphony welcomes new members of all ages, and we actively encourage young and developing players who have reached an appropriate standard on their instrument, as well as adult restarters and experienced players.
- d) Musicians who wish to join the orchestra should contact the chairman in the first instance, who will either respond directly, or if specialist advice is required will forward the enquiry to the music director or the relevant section principal.
- e) All current members are encouraged to positively promote the orchestra to potential new members, and to actively seek musicians who are potential members in those sections where we have vacancies.
- f) On joining, members should provide their full name, address, postcode, telephone number and email address to the orchestral manager.

## 3 Leaving the orchestra

- a) Any member who is planning to leave the orchestra for any reason, either permanently or temporarily must inform the chairman at the earliest opportunity. This enables the committee to plan ahead to fill the position for future concerts, and to mobilise potential new members from the waiting list.

## 4 Subscriptions

- a) The day to day running costs of the orchestra, including public liability insurance, professional fees, venue hire and music hire are funded in part by members' subscriptions.
- b) All members are required to pay subscriptions at the rates agreed at the Annual General Meeting.
- c) Subscriptions are payable on either an annual or termly (three times a year) basis, at either of the first two rehearsals of each term.

- d) Subscriptions should be paid to the treasurer by cash or cheque payable to "Frome Symphony". A receipt can be issued on request.
- e) Subscription rates (effective from September 2014) are as follows:

Category	Annual	Termly
Adult	£115	£40
Student/OAP	£85	£30
Under 18	£70	£25

- f) Members joining the orchestra for the first time after half-term pay half-price subscription for that term.
- g) Subscriptions are non-refundable.
- h) Any member experiencing genuine difficulties in paying their subscriptions should speak in confidence to the chairman or treasurer.

## 5 Rehearsal Arrangements

- a) Rehearsals take place on Monday evenings from 7.15pm (prompt start) to 9.30pm at Hayesdown First School, Wyville Road, Frome, BA11 2BN.
- b) There is ample parking at the venue and on surrounding residential roads. Please use the main car park or the tarmacked area to the rear of the school, and do not obstruct the access route between the entrance and rear of the school.
- c) Depending on the concert schedule, around 34 rehearsals are scheduled each year. The rehearsal and concert schedule is published well in advance at the following website address: <http://www.fromesymphony.org.uk/calendar.html>.
- d) Some programmes have varying levels of orchestration, and there may be occasions where sectional rehearsals are organised, or where a particular section is not required at all. These will be notified by the music director at rehearsals well in advance, and on the rehearsal schedule.
- e) A fifteen minute break takes place during the rehearsal, and refreshments are provided for a small voluntary donation.
- f) Members should bring their own music stands and pencils to rehearsals.
- g) For security and insurance reasons, non-members are not normally allowed in the rehearsal venue except to drop off and pick up. If you would like to invite someone to sit in and observe a rehearsal, this is usually fine - please speak to a committee member beforehand.

## 6 Attendance at Rehearsals and Commitment

- a) Frome Symphony aims to present a wide range of challenging and exciting programmes at a high performance standard and which continue to attract paying audiences. In this context, the rehearsal schedule does not allow time for repetition of the rehearsed material or essential information, and players who miss rehearsals are unlikely to be adequately prepared for performance.
- b) For rehearsals to be effective, it is important that as many instrumental parts as possible are covered, so that the overall balance is maintained and other players know what to expect.
- c) **It is therefore expected that members will attend all rehearsals for a concert in which they intend to perform.** Any member who is unable to commit to this must, before rehearsals commence, discuss the situation with the music director or chairman to agree whether it is appropriate for them to participate in the concert, or to agree mitigating arrangements.

- d) An attendance register is kept; if a player misses more than two rehearsals for any concert (except by prior arrangement), the committee may, at its discretion, engage a substitute player for the concert, to ensure that performance quality is maintained.
- e) The orchestra will try to accommodate more flexible attendance arrangements (e.g. late arrivals) for members who have care or work commitments, provided these are agreed in advance and appropriate arrangements are made to catch up with the rehearsed material. Please speak to the chairman if this applies to you.
- f) If you unavoidably have to miss a rehearsal, please advise your section principal and/or a committee member of your absence in advance, and make arrangements for your sheet music to be available at the rehearsal for others to play if required. On return, please speak to your section principal to catch up on any important aspects of the rehearsal (e.g. dynamics, bowings, repeats, cuts) which you may have missed.
- g) If, in exceptional circumstances, you need to be absent at short notice, please call or text the chairman or your section principal before the rehearsal starts.
- h) For “one-to-a-part” players (specifically woodwind and brass) who are unable to attend a rehearsal, it is expected that you will try to arrange for your part to be covered by a suitable deputy (where available) in the rehearsal. The chairman keeps a list of contacts (particularly those on membership the waiting list) who are willing to attend rehearsals as deputy to gain orchestral experience.
- i) Where the music is technically challenging, members are encouraged to do home practice where possible to ensure that rehearsal time is used productively to develop a high-quality ensemble performance, rather than learning the notes.

## 7 Concerts

- a) Concert dates and associated dress rehearsals are available on the website up to a year in advance. Please see <http://www.fromesymphony.org.uk/calendar.html>
- b) **If you are unable to perform in a concert for any reason, please inform the chairman or orchestral manager as early as possible, and before the relevant rehearsals start, so that cover arrangements can be made.**
- c) In order to perform in a concert, it is essential to attend the final rehearsal, usually on the afternoon of the concert. If this is likely to present a problem, please speak to the chairman in advance.

## 8 Sheet Music

- a) Frome Symphony hires in sheet music through the library service and from publishers at considerable expense. As an example, the hire costs for a single set of orchestral parts can exceed £500.
- b) The librarian will issue sheet music to members, who are then entrusted with its safe-keeping and returning it via their section principal immediately after the concert.
- c) If we fail to return any part of the music to the supplier following a concert there is an administrative burden and financial penalty to the orchestra. Since we cannot budget for this, it will be necessary to invoice any member who fails to return their music for any additional costs incurred.

## 9 Communications

- a) The music director and committee will communicate with members to provide essential information concerning rehearsals, concerts, organisation and any changes to the planned programme of events.

- b) Communications take place through announcements at rehearsals or by email. To retain privacy, emails are sent with individual email addresses remaining invisible to other recipients.
- c) Any member without access to email should speak to a committee member to arrange alternative communication methods.
- d) The chairman sometimes receives information by email concerning orchestral courses and other events which might be interesting and useful to members. If you do not wish this information to be forwarded to you, please advise the chairman.

**10 Other Matters**

- a) Frome Symphony has implemented a Child Protection Policy which defines the respective responsibilities of the orchestra and parents/guardians, and identifies the responsible adult at rehearsals. This policy will be issued to parents/guardians of all members under the age of 18.
- b) Frome Symphony is a member of "Making Music", an organisation which provides support and guidance for amateur music organisations in the UK. Our membership includes public liability insurance cover. Members are responsible for insuring their own instruments against loss and accidental damage should they wish to do so.
- c) A number of social activities take place, for example some members retire to a town-centre pub for a chat after rehearsals and concerts, and a Christmas meal is organised.