

Questions about joining



Here are some of the most common queries we receive about singing with us. If you don't find what you're looking for, please get in touch with Emily, our membership secretary: membership@bristolbach.org.uk

Can I try you out?

Yes of course. We hold one open audition every school term, so three a year, and anyone is welcome. They are normally as we begin the repertoire for our next concert, so the music will be new to most of us. The dates should be on the website or social media, or contact Emily if you can't find what you're looking for. If you're unsure about whether we're right for you, this is the perfect way to find out. We just ask that you let Emily know in advance that you're planning to come and, if possible, what voice part you would like to sing, so that we can get music for you.

How do I audition?

Once you've been to an open rehearsal, please fill out and send an application form to Emily. We'll then arrange an audition in the following weeks, which will normally take place during the break in rehearsal.

When and where do you rehearse?

Rehearsals are currently being held on Thursdays from 7.30 to 9.30 pm in the Mackay Room at Bristol Grammar School.

What about health and safety in the COVID-19 pandemic?

Our rehearsals are fully risk assessed in line with current government and Making Music guidelines and, although we do not sing with masks, we ask our members to take a lateral flow test the day of the rehearsal if possible. We also practise social distancing of 1m+ in a fixed seating plan, and our rehearsals take place in a room with supply and extract ventilation, controlled by a CO₂ occupancy based sensor. Please contact Emily for any further details.

What is your repertoire?

The BBC performs a wide repertoire from the 16th Century to the present day, with an emphasis, beyond Bach, on 21st century music. The variety of repertoire is linked by its quality and challenge.

How much time do I have to commit?

We expect singers to commit in principle to all concerts in the season (usually 4 or 5), and to attend every Thursday rehearsal as far as possible (although individual circumstances such as young families or work commitments are taken into account). In addition there is usually a concert rehearsal on the Monday before each concert and a Saturday afternoon rehearsal on the day of the concert.

How much will it cost?

Members pay an annual subscription in September as a contribution to rehearsal and professional costs. At the moment this is £186 per annum. Music is provided and charged, although some can be hired at minimal cost. Any problems with this can be discussed with the Treasurer in confidence.

If you join partway through a season the subscription is charged at a pro rata rate. Financial support from the Alan Farnill Fund is available for new singers at the start of their working career. Starting in 2019, we have offered scholarships to those in full-time school education who are looking to bolster their choral singing experience and may not have the opportunities to do so at school or elsewhere. For more information on all of this, please contact Emily.