

Questions for the choirs

Q1. How do I sign up to join the choir?

- The best way to join up is by filling in the registration form for your choir on our website. You can find them [here](#). If you have any problems filling it in please call the charity on 01235797747.

Q2. Which choir shall I join?

- The closest one to you. If there's no choir in your area, join the Oxford choir.

Q3. How long does the choir session last?

- Virtual sessions last 1 hour.
- Face to face sessions last 60 - 90 minutes (an hour and a half). This is because in some areas we have tea and cake at the end.

Q4. What days do the choirs happen?

- Most choirs take place on Saturday or Sunday – please check specific choir page for each choir day.

Q5. What happens if you are non-verbal?

- The choir celebrates that everyone has their own way of sharing their voice. Here are a few examples of ways you could join in:
 - Using Signing (e.g. Makaton/ Signalong)
 - Singing or other vocalisations
 - Making sounds with an instrument or sound maker

- Using technology e.g. an iPad or EyeGaze
- Movement and dance

Q6. What can I expect to happen in a choir session?

- Each choir session follows a similar structure:
 - Hello song
 - Warm-up
 - Learning and playing songs
 - Creating new music from our sounds
 - Sharing circle (when you can share a song, poem, story, sound or a piece of news!)
 - Announcements
 - Goodbye song.
- You can join in as much or as little as you like.
- [A Typical Choir Session Template](#)

Q7. What do I need to bring to the choir?

- There is no need to bring anything, but if you would like to, any of the following list of items might be useful to you:
 - Sound makers
 - Lyric sheets
 - Big smile
 - Soundabout t-shirt (if you have one and you'd like to wear it)
 - If you are joining a virtual choir session you will need a phone or tablet or computer.

Q8. Does it matter what age you are to join the choirs?

- Oxford, West of England, Leicestershire, Gloucestershire – any age.
- West Midlands (including Birmingham, Coventry, Solihull, Sandwell and Worcestershire), Oxford Youth – 25 and under
- Peterborough, Wiltshire – 18 and under.

Q9. Does it matter what your disability is?

- Definitely not! The choirs are for people of all abilities. We would love it if you could tell us how we make the sessions more fun and easy for you to access.

Q10. Do we need to pay for the choir session?

- No, but all donations are welcome.
- If you would like to, there is a suggested donation of £5 per session which goes towards the running costs of the choirs. [Why not donate to help make music change lives?](#)

Q11. How do I buy a Soundabout T-shirt?

- Purchase a [Soundabout T-Shirt](#) from our online shop!
- You can also buy a [Soundabout Hoodie](#)

Q12. Can anyone wear a t-shirt? What if I don't want to wear one?

- Yes anyone can wear a t-shirt and we encourage you to wear one if you can, but they're not compulsory.

Q13. Who are the main leaders?

- Emma (H) – music director for Peterborough, Oxford, West of England, Wiltshire
- Eleanor – co-directs the Peterborough choir with Emma (H)
- Will, Emma (B), and Alison – music directors for Leicestershire
- Karen and Mariana – music directors for the MAC-Soundabout West Midlands Choir.
- Becca – directs Gloucestershire

Q14. What happens if I don't have zoom?

- Don't worry – you can just click the link in the email which will be sent to you the Friday before the session.
- For face-to-face sessions there is no need to have Zoom as we will meet at a venue in your area.

Q15. As we come out of lockdown, will there be some choirs in person?

- Yes, we have a hybrid approach. There is the option to join our choirs face-to-face or virtually – whichever suits you best.

Q16. How do I find any forms to be filled in?

- You can find all the registration forms [here](#). Please click the link on the webpage to go to your local choir registration form. If you have any problems filling it in, please call the charity on 01235797747.

Q17. How did Soundabout start?

- Soundabout was launched in 1995 in Oxford with the aim of empowering school staff working with children and young people with special needs to make music interactively with their pupils with severe and complex disabilities. The overwhelming and enthusiastic response to this project by both pupils and school staff suggested that a permanent staff training programme would be welcomed in schools across the UK and in December 1997, Soundabout was officially founded as an independent charity, with our first inclusive choir starting in February 2018. We have grown from there!

Q18. How do we receive the Zoom links?

- They are sent to you via email.

Q19. When do I receive the Zoom links?

- They will be sent to you the Friday before the choir sessions, followed by a reminder shortly before the choirs start on the day of the session.
- If it doesn't arrive, please check your junk email box and if it is not there, please get in touch.

Q20. Who do I contact if I have a question?

- Please email choir@soundabout.org.uk or call 01235797747.

Q21. Will I be able to add my voice or instrument to backing tracks?

- Yes – any and all contributions welcome

Q22. When do I do my recordings?

- We will always give a clear deadline for when recordings need to be completed (and you will always have at least one week to send them in), but you may complete them whenever suits you best within that timeframe.

Q23. Can anyone join?

- Yes – the choirs are for everyone and the whole family can come along and take part together if you would like.

Q24. What kind of music do you sing?

- We sing a mix of lots of different types of songs. We pick songs based on suggestions that come from our choir members and sometimes write our own! We have also done some collaborations with other choirs such as The King's Singers and have worked on shared songs with them. All suggestions welcome. We create lyric sheets using Wigit symbols to make them more accessible and easier to understand.

Q25. Can I keep my camera off in a Zoom session?

- Yes – occasionally we'll record and if you don't want to be recorded you can turn your camera off then too. We'll always make it clear when we are about to record. If you are feeling shy and would like to keep your camera off, that's fine too, but we politely ask that you email us to let us know if this is the case for you.

Q26. Does it matter if I miss a session?

- Not at all. We understand that people's lives are busy and things happen that mean sometimes you can't attend.

Q27. Are there opportunities to do solos?

- Yes, during our sharing circle. Just let us know by email, but there is no pressure to share anything.

Q28. Where are the choirs located?

- Peterborough (alternate Saturdays 11am)
- West Midlands (alternate Saturdays 11am)
- Coventry (alternate Saturdays 11am)
- Solihull (alternate Saturdays 11am)
- Birmingham (alternate Saturdays 11am)
- Sandwell (alternate Saturdays 11am)
- Worcestershire (alternate Saturdays 11am)
- Leicester (alternate Saturdays 12noon)
- West of England – Bristol (alternate Sundays 11am)
- Oxford (alternate Sundays 3:30pm)
- Wiltshire (alternate Sundays 4:45pm)
- Gloucestershire (alternate Saturdays 3:30pm)

Q29. Do I have to attend the choir session for my area?

- We encourage you to join the nearest choir to yourself. If there is no choir in your area, we recommend joining the Oxford choir. If the timing of your nearest choir doesn't work for you, we recommend you join the Oxford choir.

