

Aylesbury Symphony Orchestra
COVID-19 Risk Assessment
01/09/2021 (Reviewed ahead of returning to Rehearsals September 2021)
For Venue: Aylesbury Music Centre (AMC)

This Risk Assessment is based on the Making Music Template and each possible mitigation and action has been considered by the ASO Committee. Some mitigations and actions have been considered as Not Applicable, but those that are applicable have controls that have been applied, or are being considered. As at July 2021 social distancing rules do not apply under Government guidelines so these have been crossed out.

Risk Area	Possible Mitigations and Actions	Other relevant notes	Applicable to ASO	Controls in Place
1. Infection rate in your area high				
Local restrictions apply with little notice				
	Check government guidance on local lockdowns.	Government guidance on local lockdowns	Yes	As at 1st September 2021 England are in Step 4 of the roadmap and no local lockdowns are in place
	Check Coronavirus cases data regularly	Check corona virus cases data regularly	Yes	
	If there are local restrictions or a local surge in cases, cancel rehearsals and playing		Yes	Committee in ongoing discussion. Online meeting will be held in the event of local government guidance changing for our area.
	Communicate with: members, MD, volunteers, venue		Yes	
	Whole committee decision		Yes	
2. Risk to/from individuals to/from group				
High/moderate risk/vulnerable individuals attend				
	Check definition of high/moderate risk/vulnerable persons at least once a term (see notes)	NHS guidance: risk categories	Yes	Reviewed 01/09/2021
	Identify high/moderate risk/vulnerable individuals via self-assessment, questionnaire, direct conversation		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
	Re-evaluate at regular intervals/as guidance changes, e.g. at least once a term		Yes	Committee monitoring
	Consider excluding high/moderate risk/vulnerable individuals from attending sessions		Yes	As per advice to members
	Re-evaluate individual exclusions regularly (at least once a term) - determine criteria, e.g. change of guidance		Yes	Regular communication with relevant members
Infectious individual attends rehearsals				
	Exclude potentially infectious individuals from attending and entering rehearsal venue	See Notes Tab, Note 1	Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
	Use pre-attendance questionnaire via online form or email to stop potentially infectious individuals attending	Download a sample questionnaire from our COVID secure rehearsals guidance	Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members, stressing that attendance is confirmation that the member is not high or moderate risk and agreement to follow our procedures.
	Use on the door questionnaire to stop potentially infectious individuals entering rehearsal venue		No	Committee decision not to use a process on the door to prevent queues forming
	Consider temperature checking at entrance BUT not reliable indicator: can be infectious before/without high temperature	if using temperature checks, buy best quality thermometer – there are big differences	No	Committee decision not to use due to reliability of measure
Inability to track & trace when someone falls ill outside meeting				
	Keep register of everyone who attends rehearsals every week, for 21 days (for NHS Track & Trace)	from 18/9/20, it is mandatory to keep details of attendees for 21 days for NHS Test & Trace	Yes	Members to complete Rehearsal Register prior to attendance
	Ensure if anyone falls ill between one rehearsal and the next that they know to contact group and who to contact	if that happens, contact NHS Track & Trace and contact all attendees of last 2 rehearsals; ask to self-isolate for 14 days from date of attending rehearsal with patient	Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
	Display NHS Test & Trace poster at entrance to venue for members to scan using NHS app	from 24/9/20 it is mandatory to register for and display an NHS Test & Trace poster with a QR code at the entrance to your venue	Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members. AMC have their own poster on the entrance door, ASO have one inside venue.
Inability to deal with person becoming unwell in rehearsals				
	create a plan for this eventuality	See Notes Tab, Note 2	Yes	Procedure agreed with committee
Complacency means mitigating measures not complied with				
	create posters and signs to display each week at the entrance, by bathrooms, other prominent locations as reminders	<i>this is potentially the biggest risk going forward, as participants get 'used to' rehearsing again: be very aware and keep this high on agenda</i>	Yes	Signage on display at venue
	remind attendees verbally - at entrance, at break, during rehearsal, as it fits with your schedule		Yes	Verbal reminders during rehearsal
	make sure you communicate in ways appropriate to everyone (e.g. consider dyslexia, deafness, vision-impairment etc.)		Yes	Email, signage and verbal communication
	make it someone's responsibility to do reminders, and rotate that, that increases everyone's buy-in		Yes	Committee responsibility
Non-compliance with measures means risk to other attendees				
	make it clear to members that if they do not comply with the measures group has in place, they will be excluded		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
Risks to some members from meeting or NOT meeting in person				
	decide on balance of risks between potential for physical harm (picking up Covid-19) versus mental harm (loneliness, social isolation)		Yes	Considered by committee, attendance available to all who want to play but not mandatory
3. Behaviour of attendees/individual safety measures				
Individuals spread or breathe in virus-laden particles				
	Set out expected behaviour at venue including the wearing of face masks	See Notes Tab, Note 3	Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
	Clarify and remind frequently for wind/brass that they can remove face masks for playing, but should wear them at all other times in the venue.		No	
	Have a box of disposable face coverings on hand for those who don't bring one		Yes	Spare masks at entrance to venue
Individuals spread/pick up virus by touching shared surfaces				

Set out expected behaviours at venue	See Notes Tab, Note 4	Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
Volunteers pick up virus in course of their duties			
Set out procedures for volunteers helping with register/set up of seats/traffic management/cleaning etc.:	See Notes Tab, Note 5	Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all committee members and volunteers
4. Rehearsal space			
Your usual venue is not Covid-19 secure			
Find out if they are – have they published their risk assessment, is it Covid-19 compliant		Yes	AMC RA received, satisfactory
Check against COVID-19: Guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose community facilities (link in notes)	Covid-19 Guidance for the safe use of multi-purpose-cr	Yes	Have reviewed in light of AMC as venue, no issues
If they are not – find a different venue		No	
Space not large enough (floor and volume) to be safe			
Find out first how many of your members currently willing/able to return in person	As at 1/9/21 survey shows 94% want to return (estimate around 40 members)	Yes	Initial survey and email communication done, we are expecting 94% to return, 31 have confirmed.
rehearse outdoors		No	
consider: private gardens, parks, large gazebos, open-sided barns, car parks, multi-storey car parks, football grounds, sports grounds, sports halls, stadia		No	
Reduce numbers rehearsing to ensure radius of 2m around each player and 3m distance to conductor		No	
Reduce numbers rehearsing to ensure social distancing of 2m is possible at all times, not just during playing		No	
Consider: entrance/exit, route to bathrooms, route to break area, socially distanced queues at any of these points		No	
Find a different venue to rehearse in to accommodate capacity		No	
Build-up of aerosols			
rehearse outdoors (see above)		No	
Find out if there is mechanical ventilation (air-conditioning) and what kind, to what standard	do not use fans - they can blow particles over people	No	There is no mechanical ventilation in the AMC hall.
If no mechanical ventilation in place, look at doors and windows		TBC	There are two sets of fire exit doors that open into the outdoor space at rear of hall, and one entrance door that opens into the foyer
test (to some extent) effectiveness with CO2 monitor before and after ventilation	consider plug-in HEPA filters/air-purifiers, but make sure appropriate for size of space and highest grade HEPA filter	No	Not considered necessary
Build ventilation into your schedule: before rehearsals, in break, afterwards		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all committee members and volunteers
Reduce length of rehearsal overall to maximum one hour		Yes	Committee consider that a 90 minute rehearsal is safe
Reduce length of chunks of rehearsal to between 15-30mins per chunk (followed by ventilation)		No	Windows and doors to be kept open during rehearsal so there will be no break
Ideally ask participants to go outside/elsewhere whilst you ventilate		No	Communication and guidance sent to all members
Find a different venue to rehearse in if good ventilation not achievable		Yes	Ventilation considered sufficient for AMC Hall
Build-up of virus on shared surfaces			
Ask venue to remove any equipment or items that you do not use to prevent people leaning against/using them		Yes	There are only chairs and musical equipment in the hall, there are no other tables or surfaces that will be used. Other shared surfaces are door handles and door face plates.
Use hard chairs (can be cleaned)		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all committee members and volunteers. Hard chairs to be used rather than fabric chairs.
Clean before and after use		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all committee members and volunteers
Limit number of volunteers handling such shared equipment		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all committee members and volunteers
Keep a register of who does it on what date; provide gloves and hand-sanitiser	See Notes Tab, Note 6	Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all committee members and volunteers
Covid transmission in bathroom facilities			
Aerosols in air			
ensure social distancing maintained when queueing for facilities and also inside toilet block		No	
consider blocking off some of the sinks to maintain that		No	
consider queue traffic management with tape/barriers/stewards		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
Contaminated surfaces			
ensure cleaning before and after rehearsals, more frequently if few facilities for many people		Yes	
encourage hand washing - soap, paper towels, poster reminding, poster with handwashing technique		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
provide hand sanitiser on way into toilet facilities		Yes	
Queueing points and traffic flow (applies to all rooms / areas)			
Difficulty of maintaining 2m social distancing:			
Think about pathways and routes throughout the rehearsal venue needing to allow for 2m social distancing		No	
2m markers on floor; one way systems; clear signage		No	
well-marked paths with directional arrows/flow control measures (cones, barriers)		No	
Arrival will take time (register/pre-assessment/temperature)-manage queueing		No	
Leaving after rehearsal—consider staggering it; reminder not to linger and socialise inside		No	

Queueing for the bathrooms/routes to and from bathrooms/inside the bathroom block	No	
Break area and routes to and from break area	No	
Refreshments area (if there is) and routes to and from it	No	
'Bagging area', e.g. where instrument cases or bikes or other large items can be 'parked', and routes to/from it	No	
Rubbish		
Contaminated material not properly disposed of		
to be discussed with venue - whose responsibility? Whose bins/bags? Where to dispose bins/bags to?	Yes	Members told to take all rubbish home, but should be minimal
more bins than usual	No	
ensure no rubbish there before rehearsals/bins empty	Yes	No bins in hall, AMC will empty all other rubbish
dispose of rubbish safely after rehearsals	No	
provide volunteers with gloves, hand sanitiser, soap/towels	No	(equipment issued anyway as part of cleaning of surfaces)
Cost		
Measures that are possible/deemed necessary are not affordable		
discuss with venue – can they reduce rent/take on some of the costs, e.g. cleaning?	Yes	Committee have obtained costs from 3 venues
consider member subscriptions and how many might be able/willing to increase their subscription	Yes	Survey and email to members done, 88% willing to pay usual or higher subs
look at your budget – are there other costs which can be reduced in compensation? e.g. sheet music costs, concert costs	Yes	Cost modelling done on 3 venue scenarios
Other users of venue		
Activity before yours leaves legacy of droplets/aerosols		
discuss with venue what activities take place before you that day	Yes	Venue confirmed the hall is occupied but will be cleaned and ventilated before our use
Ensure enough time to clean and ventilate between previous activity and yours	No	
ensure enough time so that participants do not cross over, creating pinch points you would not be able to control	No	
consider scheduling your activity a bit later to ensure 'clear blue water' between previous use and yours	No	
5. Your musical activity		
Venue cannot accommodate whole group at 2m distancing		
find out how many members willing/able to attend now and reassess venue capacity on findings	No	
reduce numbers rehearsing to ensure radius of 2m around each player and 3m distance to conductor	No	
investigate new venue	No	
Covid-safe placing of individuals during activity		
not face to face	No	
consider back to back; side by side; staggered rows; everyone has 2m radius; 3m for flutes/trumpets	No	
consider re-doing entire set up – can trumpets or flutes be the front row for a while?	No	
3m-5m between front row of players and conductor	No	
consider plastic screens	No	
Participants cannot hear each other/conductor/vice versa		
do not just shout or speak more loudly! (increased emission of aerosols)	Yes	Conductor not required to wear mask so he can be heard
consider instead a pocket amp/head mic for conductor	Yes	Not necessary
if you have some budget/someone with tech, consider mics over the group and feedback speakers to the conductor	Yes	Not necessary
weigh up (temporary) unsatisfactory musical experience against social isolation and (long-term) danger of group drifting apart	Yes	Not necessary
Substantial numbers cannot attend in person		
this is likely initially, so make a plan to provide activity, to minimise risk of alienating non-attendees long-term	Yes	Not necessary
weigh up (temporary) investment in additional resources (e.g. additional MD time) against losing these members forever	Yes	Not necessary
Virus spread through use of shared instruments/equipment		
if unavoidable (e.g. large instruments, percussion), create a cleaning regime (see guidance in notes)	Making Music guidance Covid-19 secure cleaning for various instruments	Yes
ensure that volunteers involved in handing out/setting up of shared equipment are registered/provided with gloves etc.		Yes
ensure that all users of shared equipment wash hands before and after use and/or use hand sanitiser		Yes
ensure that the same instrument is always issued to the same user to further minimise cross contamination		Yes
Virus spread through sheet music		
email it to people and ask them to print their own for practise (acceptable if you have bought/hired)		Yes
buy electronic print-your-own licenses		No
use out of copyright print-your-own music (e.g. ISMLP)		Yes
buy and have sent straight to participants' homes		No
experiment with electronic music (bring own iPad etc.) - consider accessibility/affordability, not possible for all		No
hire/buy as usual, pack into sealed plastic folders, issue to members with instruction to leave sealed for 72 hrs		No
in all cases, remind constantly not to share and only to use own set of music		Yes
Increased aerosols through high volume sound		
reduced volume of playing wind/brass also means less need for participants to breathe deeply		Yes
adapt what you do in rehearsals (e.g. focus on harmonies, rather than articulation; listening rather than fortissimo)		Yes

adapt repertoire temporarily to work on quieter pieces with less 'air-intensive' techniques		Yes	Conductor to manage with players
Virus spread through shared equipment			
make clear from the start and build in regular reminders NOT to share equipment	depending on your group this could be sheet music, music stands, mutes, rosin, valve oil, reeds, strings, mics, etc.	Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
keep reminding members to bring all of their own stuff		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
for emergencies (e.g. instrument breaks!), have a disinfecting plan in place and/or gloves etc. to minimise transmission risk		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all committee members and volunteers
Aerosol transmission to/from conductor facing the group			
2m-5m between front row of players and conductor		No	
consider use of plastic screen	Beware – aerosol can travel above; it can act as 'virus trap' not cleared by ventilation; who will clean, properly?	Yes	Not considered an issue at present
face coverings for conductor and players		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
pocket amp and head mic so does not have to shout to make themselves heard		Yes	Not necessary
Instruments which accumulate spit			
ensure players bring towels for emptying spit on to and plastic bags to contain them	or: old take away plastic boxes which can be sealed and taken away	Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
have paper towels and sealable plastic bags on stand-by for those who forget; remember safe disposal afterwards		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all committee members and volunteers
remind players regularly not to empty on to floor, try and help them re-learn what may be automatic behaviour!		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
Wind/brass instrument potentially higher aerosol production			
to inspire confidence in fellow players, consider greater distance (e.g. 3m) especially for trombones and flutes/piccolos	in the shortest (tubing) highest/loudest instruments there may be higher aerosol production	No	
increase ventilation/shorten rehearsal bouts		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all committee members and volunteers
where available or people can create their own, suggest bell-coverings		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
Percussion needs help setting up			
see above for volunteers – note and limit their activity, provide relevant PPE		Yes	Not currently an issue, will monitor
see above for shared equipment – limit use, clean before and after, ask player to hand sanitise before and after use		Yes	Not currently an issue, will monitor
Accompanist/soloist exposed to Covid-19 via players and/or piano			
ideally only usual/official accompanist to use piano – no-one to casually bash through their notes		No	
clean piano thoroughly before and after rehearsals		No	
ensure accompanist hand sanitises before/after		No	
accompanist to turn own pages to avoid compromising social distancing		No	No intention to use accompanist or soloist at present
No-one to face accompanist to play; if proximity to piano needed, then side by side with pianist and 3-5m distance		No	
consider positioning of piano in relation to players – 3-5m; screen necessary?		No	
6. Ancillary activity			
Provision of refreshments is source of transmission			
ideally ask participants to bring their own		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members (drinks only, no food)
if you have to provide – does venue have protocol for this? If so, follow that		No	
if you have to provide and no venue protocol exists, then provide with disposable cups and teaspoons		No	
consider pre-packed small biscuit packets		No	
if you use venue mugs or even your own – really consider if this is so essential to your activity that it is worth risking:		No	
Breaks risk compromising 2m social distancing			
Ideally people leave the room entirely, but where should they go?		No	
how they get there whilst not bunching up		No	
whether there's enough room there for them to maintain 2m distancing		No	No break
Absolute requirement of 'no mingling', at all times (even during breaks)		No	
Absolute requirement to be socially distanced at all times (2m minimum)		No	
how you get them all to leave quickly but in an orderly fashion so you get maximum ventilation time		No	
Arrival/departure compromises 2m social distancing			
stagger arrival/departure times?		No	Not considered necessary
remind of expected behaviours: no lingering on arrival or departure to chat to friends		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
Absolute requirement of 'no mingling'		No	
Absolute requirement to be socially distanced at all times (2m minimum)		No	
to go straight to allocated space on arrival and to leave hall straight away on departure – chatting can be done outside!		Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members
use signage, one way systems, volunteers, tape on floor...		Yes	Signage provided, volunteers will enforce
7. Transport to/from rehearsals			
Attendees pick up Covid on the way to/from rehearsals			
Communicate with members, so that they are aware of desirable hierarchy of transports:	See Notes Tab, Note 7	Yes	Communication and guidance sent to all members

8. Your organisation

Desirable/necessary risk management measures unaffordable

carefully cost up one-off investments (e.g. pocket amp/mic for conductor) with new ongoing commitments (venue?)	Yes	Under consideration by committee
consider cleaning materials, disposable stuff (e.g. gloves, coffee cups etc.), extra binbags...	Yes	Under consideration by committee
are you saving costs elsewhere?	Yes	Cost modelling done
are you able to increase your income (e.g. voluntary increased subscriptions)	Yes	Cost modelling done

Volunteers needed to run rehearsals

do you want to go ahead now with in person rehearsals?	Yes	Survey and Committee have agreed to go ahead
carefully work out the number of people you will need – can those attending to play help with a task in rotation?	Yes	Under consideration
consider burnout risk if it's always the same suspects or if you expect too much of a single person	Yes	Under consideration

Loss of income from membership subscriptions

if you are providing different activities to parts of your membership – should that carry the same subscription?	Yes	Based on member survey responses committee have agreed to ask for usual subs to be paid
will you/are you providing a 'reduced service' and are members therefore going to expect a reduced charge?	Yes	To be considered on an individual member basis
you have additional costs – can careful communication with members enable you to cover those from subscriptions?	Yes	Cost modelling done
consider those who are able to pay more	Yes	To be considered on an individual member basis
consider those who are able to pay less – and who may have lost their job over this or struggle with finance as a family	Yes	To be considered on an individual member basis

Loss of reputation due to rehearsing/not rehearsing

you are obliged to consult your stakeholders, i.e. your members, volunteers, music professionals (MD, accompanist), venue	Yes	Survey and communication in place, regular committee discussion ongoing
ensure you communicate whatever you decide (rehearsing/not rehearsing) thoroughly to all the stakeholders	Yes	Communications ongoing
communicate with the public, i.e. potential members or volunteers, past or potential audiences etc.	Yes	Website to be updated, newsletter to be sent when arrangements are confirmed
if you do rehearse in person, be sure to communicate with the passing public that this is permitted activity	No	Not considered necessary
share with public your risk assessment (e.g. link to website)	Yes	Published on website