

# Paisley Philharmonic Choir

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## **The thought of singing scares me**

There could be a variety of reasons for people's reluctance to sing, even though they would really like to.

### **I can't sing ....**

How did you reach this conclusion? There may be instances where people have some problems with their voice, but it's often something they say without a substantial reason. Some vocal difficulties may be due to physical issues, and some can be overcome with training and practice. Also, revealing something as uniquely 'you' as your singing voice can make you feel vulnerable. Often people have had their voice criticised at some point in their lives, and that's made them determined not to be vulnerable again! Or perhaps they've had a bad experience in a choir that has put them off. It's worth giving some thought to your reasons before dismissing something that might bring you enjoyment. Worth remembering also, that one person's opinion does not have to exclude you for life!

### **I'm terrified of auditioning ....**

No auditions are currently required for newcomers to the choir, and you won't be asked to sing solo.

### **I won't be able to remember tunes and lyrics ....**

There's a tendency for some people to think that 'good' singers can hear a song a couple of times and remember it. There may be some who are better than others at picking up a tune and lyrics, but that's an unrealistic expectation! It actually takes weeks of practice to learn the pieces of music for a concert. PPC members will always have the musical scores in front of them, including during a concert. Even those who don't read music will have learned to be able to follow the score adequately, and they are often strong at learning by ear. Choir members may also have practiced at home, listened to the pieces and sung along many times, using online resources.

## **Everyone will be better singers than me ...**

One of the great things about choirs is that they are not a competition (unless you're competing as a choir in a choral competition). Each individual's voice is just a part of the whole. 'Harmony' is not just a matter of singing the different SATB parts, but of an overall oneness under the leadership of the Musical Director.

## **What if I go wrong? Will I spoil it for everyone else? ....**

Everyone makes mistakes! Repetition will minimise that – listen to your choir's pieces over and over on whatever media you can. Follow them with your music score to see where the words fit with the music. Make notes about what you need to watch out for, put pencil markings on the score itself that you can rub out later, use coloured mini stickers that will pull off easily to give you reminders for each piece of music. Your Musical Director will often point out things to take note of.

There's an advantage to singing in large groups in that you can hold back your voice, hidden within the bigger sound to start with, until you become less hesitant and your confidence grows. Choir members remember what it was like for them on first joining and they had similar concerns to you. They are much more likely to be understanding than judgemental or critical.

## **To overcome all of this you need to start singing – a lot! ....**

- Make it a habit, set aside time for it
- Try to find a place where you are comfortable – even if it's in the shower, or the car!
- Start, perhaps, humming to yourself while you're working around the house, or pottering in the garden, in the shed, or in the garage if you're fixing bikes or whatever! Put some music on and sing along
- Get used to hearing your own voice, record yourself singing with your favourite singers
- Be as determined to give this your best shot as you would be to avoid it after a bad experience
- There's a choir for most musical tastes – including community 'sing-along' sessions