

Kent Police Male Voice Choir – Recruitment

Musical Director - Martin Rendle

Accompanist - Karen Barton-Holman

Patron - Jools Holland

Our 2023 recruitment campaign is about getting men together to integrate them into the KPMVC, teach them a programme of music and perform at future concerts; and hopefully remain with the choir for its yearly concert programme.

At rehearsals you will meet existing and retired police officers, civilian members of staff and people from all walks of life who, together, make up the KPMVC. Practice finishes at 9.30pm.

At the first practice we will let you find your own natural voice which may mean moving from section to section until you are comfortable with your singing range. We will supply you with all the music required and will be happy to help you enjoy the many varied songs, choruses and anthems we sing.

We, of course, would not expect you to join in any concert until we feel you are musically ready but you would be most welcome as our guest at any of our scheduled concerts.

Hopefully, after a few sessions - or sooner if you are a more able singer - you will be confident enough to begin that commitment to the choir and we can begin to make arrangements for your uniform. We certainly do not anticipate new members wearing the choir uniform until they are ready and confident.

Your questions answered

Who is the choir for? The answer is quite simple: MEN.

- Men who are looking for a new way to unwind from the stresses of daily life (music is good for that, and singers don't have to buy an instrument!)
- Men who want to get out more
- Men who have wondered what it is like to sing
- Men who know they can sing but have not bothered for some time
- Men who already sing with another choir and want to broaden their experience
- Men who no longer participate in an active sport but wish to join a group activity
- Men who enjoy the company of other men and wish to put something back into the community

But I have never sung – can I come?

Absolutely! We're geared up to helping people 'discover their voice'. Our musical director Martin and our accompanist Karen are very experienced in leading singers who have never sung and/or who cannot read music. **Is the choir only for beginners?**

We welcome experienced singers and beginners alike. People have joined our choir without the ability to read a note. Others come with a wealth of experience and have the ability to read, write and conduct. Whatever your ability you will be made welcome.

Have I got to be auditioned?

There is no formal audition. However, during your first few sessions we'd like to be able to hear you sing so that we can ensure you are singing in the right section and that you can hold a tune. You will find that you will be sitting next to an existing choir member who will guide you in the right direction. However, if you are one of the very few people who struggle a lot and maybe cannot hold a tune then we will be kind enough to let you know at the outset. After a while you will be asked to sing in private to our Musical Director to confirm the 'section' you will be asked to sing in.

How long has the choir been going?

The choir was formed in 1978. Many of the members have joined us over the years and a number of founder members still sing with us. What we are trying to do is ensure that the choir continues to exist well into the next decade (and beyond) In order to achieve this we need to recruit new voices. The choir currently has 45+ members.

What is a male voice choir?

Our choir is essentially a group of men who enjoy singing together. Like a mixed voice choir, a male voice choir sings in four parts: Tenor 1, Tenor 2, Baritone and Bass. The tenors sing in a higher voice range with the baritones and basses at the lower end of the scale. All voices can sing the main tune but more usually harmonise by singing in four parts.

What help will I get and how is the choir organised?

Martin Rendle has overall charge of the musical content of the choir and Karen Barton-Holman assists him as our accompanist. The choir is a registered charity and is run by an elected committee who manage it on a day-to-day basis. Not only will the officers of the choir be there to help you settle in but every existing member wants to ensure that you have a solid singing foundation so that the choir as a whole may improve.

What music will we be singing?

An eclectic mix! It will be much the same as that heard on any of our recordings. We have an enormous repertoire and sing numbers from the musicals (e.g., Les Misérables), some standard songs (e.g., When the Saints Go Marching In), some sacred numbers and fun numbers. At Christmas we sing traditional carols and other associated seasonal numbers

You are a Police Choir - what does that mean?

Our foundation is with Kent Police and we still represent the police in the eyes of the public in the wider community. Although our members are not all policemen or retired policemen, we have over the years diversified to include selected members from all walks of life. Yes, we have to be sensitive to the image and standing of the police and be responsible for the image our members may make which includes security as an aspect, but we have found over the years that those who join us are good honest citizens whose wish is to make music. So, while we are known as the Kent Police Male Voice Choir, like the Force itself, we take members from wherever they come! The choir committee is responsible on behalf of the Force for good order and discipline of the choir.

When will I be given my own music and uniform?

During your first few weeks or months you may not be ready to sing at concerts so a uniform will not be required straight away. Once we are satisfied that you wish to make a long-term commitment to the choir, we will provide you with a uniform jumper emblazoned with the KPMVC logo and a choir shirt. The jumper incurs a small cost but the shirt is supplied to you free of charge. You will have to purchase your own black trousers (specific garment reference will be supplied) and wear polished black shoes with your uniform. All music will be provided free of charge but is returnable should you leave the choir. There is an annual membership subscription currently standing at £120.00.

What if I cannot make every practice or concert?

It is important that every choir practices. However, we understand that new members will have their own domestic issues which may mean missing some practices and concerts – this is life! All we ask is that you attend as many sessions as you can so that you are confident at a concert.

Where can I read more about the choir?

Please look at our web site www.kpmvc.co.uk for full details about the history of the choir, news, views, members and forthcoming concert venues and programme.

Should you wish to discuss any aspect of our choir then please contact our secretary whose details are shown on our web site.

We hope to see you soon!

George Rogers (Chairman KPMVC)