



Heart & Soul Community Singers Year in Review 2021



www.heartandsoulsingers.co.uk



Dear Singers...

"Singing changes us. It brings us into deeper connection with ourselves and with each other. When we sing songs with meaning, in context, they have power and we can be transformed.

It has been a privilege and a joy to lead us all in song through these strange times and to have so many of you show up week after week to co-create beauty and sustenance. Thank you. And to the wider circle of resting members and yet-to-be members, I hope this inspires you to come and sing with us in 2022!"

Ella x

Heart & Soul Community Singers



Looking back over **12** extraordinary months...
...of lockdowns, singing, community and friendship.

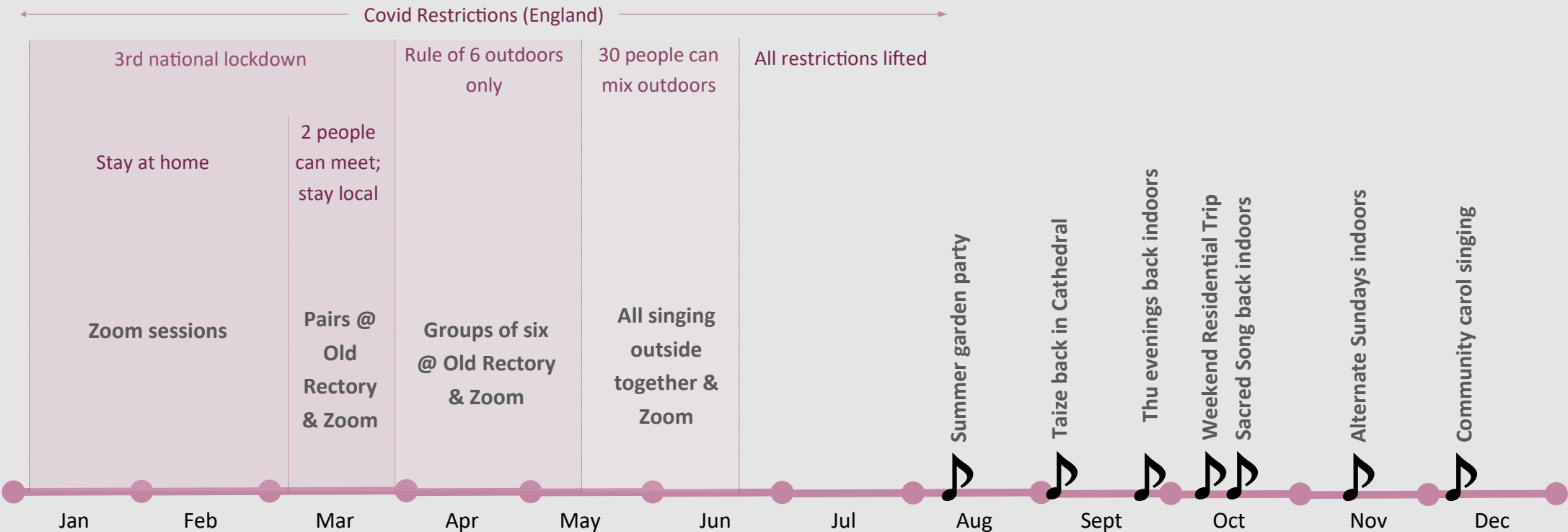
"Singing brings me so much joy. It always transforms how I feel.

And I've loved meeting so many lovely people I'd never have met if I hadn't sung with them." (Dee)

Heart & Soul Community Singers



217 singing sessions...



91 on Zoom; 95 outdoors (24 of these also Zoomed),
and 31 indoors sessions

Who's Zoomin' Who?

"Zoom sessions were invaluable... they gave me a sense of connection and togetherness I wouldn't otherwise have had."
(Maureen)



Many choirs didn't meet through the pandemic and some sadly haven't survived.

336+ hours singing together 

1 residential weekend away

Zero cases of Covid community transmission*

2000+ individual sessions attended

1 summer garden party 

*Using regularly reviewed & updated COVID-safe risk assessment and community behaviour agreement

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Baby it's Cold Outside

"Walking away from freezing railway arch, racecourse or cathedral after singing feels 100% better than walking in." (Emma)



"Singing outdoors has given us confidence and brought us closer with new friendships." (Pam)

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"Singing on zoom when necessary, under the railway arches and down at the racecourse on long summer evenings as the sun goes down has been something I will always treasure!" (Liz)



Singing together has helped us stay connected throughout the pandemic.

"In this group there is always an openness and sharing of experience of joy, grief, loss and lots and lots of fun." (Julie)

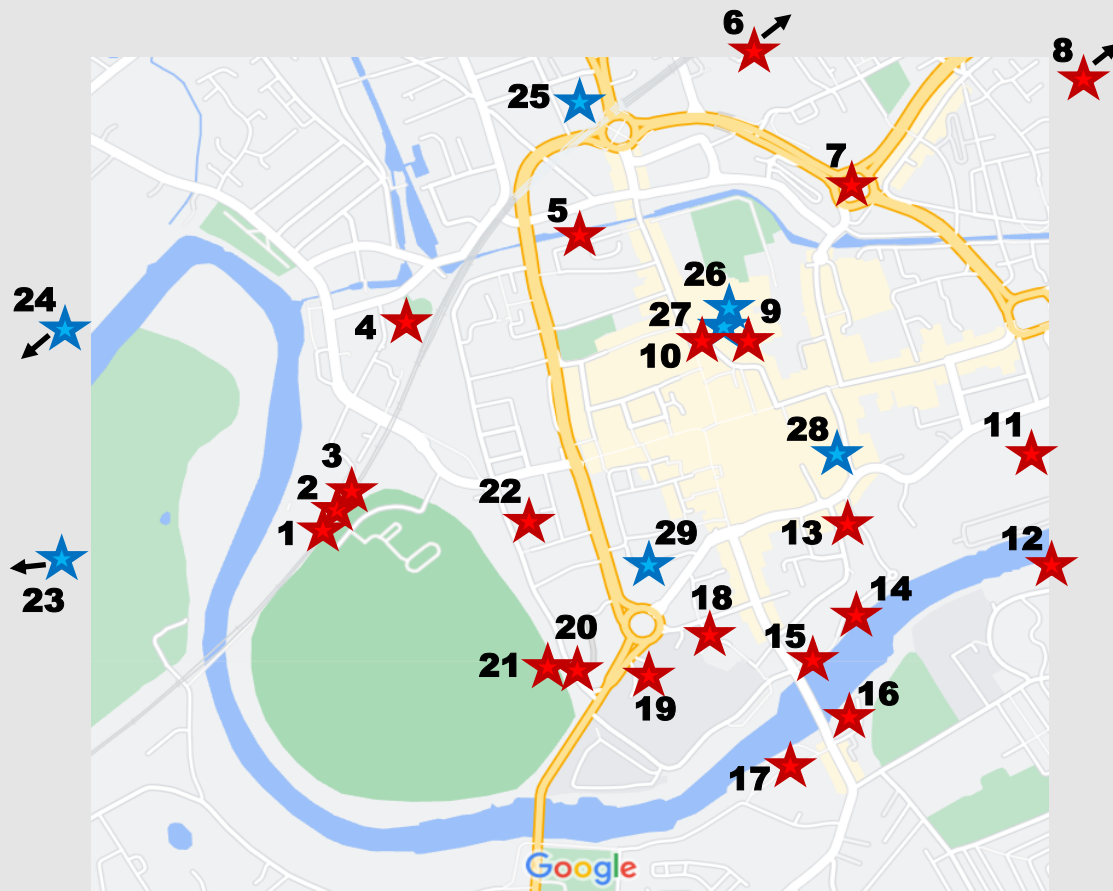
"Thanks Ella for your rebellious spirit and magical music making." (Andy)

"I have really established 'choir friends for life.'" (Louise)

"During my singing sessions, I feel emotionally & spiritually uplifted, and these positive feelings remain with me leaving me enriched & nourished at a deeper level." (Monica)



210 songs of love and hope shared...



OUTDOORS ★

1. Small arch
2. Large arch
3. Sunny arch
4. Water Tower Gardens
5. Canal terraces
6. Kingsway Nursing Home
7. Magic roundabout
8. Drew's garden
9. Bell Tower Walk
10. Cathedral Gardens
11. Grosvenor park
12. River & meadows walk
13. Roman Gardens
14. The Groves
15. Old Dee Bridge (XR)
16. Mill St. Green
17. Edgar's Field
18. The Rectory

19. The Castle
20. HQ
21. Racecourse terrace
22. Callin Court Retirement Apts

INDOORS ★

23. Trigonos, Nantle
24. Saltney Ferry Community Café
25. Northgate Church
26. The Lady Chapel, Cathedral
27. St Anselm's Chapel
28. Wesley Church
29. Unity Centre

...in 29 locations across Chester & beyond



We've also brought music and joy to the local community.

Beth on Facebook: "What a lovely morning. Went for a walk...and then wonderful singing voices came out of the fog. Stayed for an hour listening 'til chill got through my gloves. If you know who the singers who sing in Water Tower Gardens Chester on Sunday mornings are, please pass on my admiration and thanks. Made my week."

A fortnight later, Beth joined us singing in the park :-)

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"In the early days of lockdown, having recently moved here, I went for a walk and heard your choir singing on the racecourse. I just stood and cried it was so lovely."

(Resident from Callin Court)

"Are you in the choir who sings here every week? I won't lie some weeks you saved my sanity."

(Resident from apartments by railway arch)



In The Summertime...



"So
much
joy!"
(Jane)



Heart & Soul Community Singers



72+ members singing together 

9 new members joined

1 new name and website

14 Christmas carols shared
outside 2 retirement / care-homes

*"Thank you for coming to sing to us, it's given people
much pleasure."*

(Jenny Thomas, Callin Court Retirement Appts.)



Residential, Nantlle, Snowdonia. Heart & Soul Community Singers



For many of us singing brings spirituality, joy and laughter to our lives...
and we wanted our new name to reflect this.

"This is a community full of
heart—and one that feels like
my tribe." (Nicola)

"Lots more laughter and
singing ahead I hope!" (Cate)

"Thank you Ella
for helping us keep
our hearts bright
in the dark
times." (Jeannie)

"The sessions are so
uplifting and good for my
soul." (Sylvie)



Taize sessions

"I love the Taize, the sound,
the feeling, the challenges.

Heaven!" (Stan)

 **Chester Cathedral** @ChesterCath · 17 Dec 2021

A lovely surprise this morning; the Taize Choir, who normally perform inside the Cathedral, are singing in Abbey Square. Do pop by if you happen to be close.



"When I sing in the Taize group
I feel just for that short time my
heart and soul take flight
within the company of the other
singers." (Linda)

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Singing together can also help support our wellbeing.



"Singing together whether inside, outside or on zoom has been an absolute lifesaver through the craziness of the last couple of years. I don't know how I'd have coped without it." (Jo)

"I've learned that I can hold my own as a singer and I feel increasingly better in myself - including my mental health. Singing with Ella has given me new purpose, new friendships and so much to look forward to." (Drew)

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Earth Song

"Singing outdoors has brought us closer to nature and I find I am teaching more seasonal songs as a result. It has also meant learning to sing in a different way as acoustics change dramatically (or disappear!) and we have learned new skills through this experience." (Ella)





"I am passionate about singing as a form of activism and in particular as a means to express our love for the planet and all life. I'm so happy to be now running monthly Singing For The Earth sessions and to be supporting green events and environmental protests with song." (Ella)





"This time has shown how powerful singing together can be and how dependent on each other we really all are. I need the group to sing my songs as much as you need me to teach them.

And I love that through this collective process, we are now very obviously so much more than just a singing group. It has been a joy witnessing the growing connections between singers and the myriad of ways we all support each other on so many levels."

Ella Speirs—National Voice Practitioner and leader of Heart and Soul Community Singers

Heart & Soul Community Singers



Who we are

We sing simple but beautiful songs about the heart and soul of human experience; joy and sadness, hope and grief and everything in between.

We co-create community with each other through singing together and generally leave sessions feeling nourished, uplifted and connected.

We enjoy heartening the community around us by singing in public spaces and hold a mixture of indoor and outdoor sessions.

We aim to be accessible to anyone who wants to sing with others; there is no music to read; all songs are taught by ear at a gentle pace and newer and less confident singers have the support of those more experienced.

We run several sessions throughout the week, some themed. All members are welcome to attend as many or as few sessions as they can/wish to.

Our singing sessions

Sing Out Your Song!

Mondays 10.30-11.30, Zoom.

Thursdays 7-9pm, Northgate Church Hall.

Sundays 10.30-12 , various indoor and outdoor locations in Chester.

Taize

Fridays 10.30-12, Chester Cathedral.

Sacred Song

2nd Saturday of each month, Wesley Church Hall.

Singing for the Earth

4th Saturday of each month, various outdoor locations in Chester.

We are always open to new members; no experience needed, there are no auditions and no expectation to sign up for any specified length of time.



"I have found the singing a tremendous adventure, something I never thought was for me but the sheer enjoyment is deeply felt and liberating." (Anne)

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