

Participant Information Sheet

Sing for Happiness: A study of the subjective wellbeing impact of participating in a singing group in Bristol

You are invited to take part in a research study taking place at the University of the West of England, Bristol. Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the study is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully and if you have any queries or would like more information please contact Kat Branch (Centre for Music): kat.branch@uwe.ac.uk

Who is organising the research?

This project is being undertaken by Kat Branch, Head of the Centre for Music, in partnership with St George's Bristol, as an ongoing study researching the impact of group singing in Bristol.

What is the aim of the research?

Whilst much research has been done globally exploring the impact of group singing, many studies focus on specific groups such as those with a specific health condition, educational context or social situation. Given the prolific quantity of community singing groups and choirs in Bristol this study has a regional focus instead.

Participants from any background, interest, experience or life situation are invited to join the study so that we can take a broader view on the wellbeing impact of group singing, in a region where singing seems to be especially popular, and explore whether wellbeing benefits are impacted by our different backgrounds and circumstances.

My research questions are:

1. What is the short term and long term impact of community singing on subjective wellbeing of participants?
2. Are there different wellbeing outcomes for those already participating in singing groups compared those who are doing so for the first time?
3. How do wellbeing outcomes compare from group singing online when compared to in-person meetings?

To help me answer these questions I will be asking participants to complete a brief weekly questionnaire immediately before and after each singing session.

I will also be asking participants to complete a more detailed survey at the start of the Sing for Happiness Project and after the final performance to look at what happens to overall wellbeing over several weeks.

If possible I would like to supplement this with a focus group of randomly selected participants to hear in depth descriptions of the experience of participating in Sing for Happiness.

Why have I been invited to take part?

As someone who has a ticket for Sing for Happiness 2025 your feedback on your experience in Sing for Happiness is the essential data needed for this study.

Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part in this research. You are welcome to participate in the singing sessions and performance with no obligation to take part in the research. It is up to you to decide whether or not you want to be involved. If you do decide to take part, you will be given a copy of this information sheet to keep and will be asked to sign a consent form.

If you do decide to take part, you are able to withdraw from the research without giving a reason for up to 2 weeks after the Sing for Happiness final performance, at which point your information will have been anonymized and therefore can no-longer be traced back to you. If you want to withdraw from the study within this period, please write to kat.branch@uwe.ac.uk.

Deciding not to take part or withdrawal from the study does not have any penalty. It will not in any way affect your participation in Sing for Happiness.

What will happen to me if I take part and what do I have to do?

Registering to participate

If you agree to take part you will be asked to complete a short online questionnaire capturing your personal and demographic information (name, address, contact information, gender, ethnicity etc), your singing background (e.g.no previous experience, already attending a choir/group) and confirming your consent to participate.

Longitudinal questionnaire

A week or two before the first Sing for Happiness rehearsal you will need to complete an online questionnaire about your overall wellbeing which will have a second part after the final performance to explore the longer term impact of joining Sing for Happiness.

Mood survey

You will also receive a single link to a brief online mood survey which I would like you to complete every time you attend a Sing for Happiness rehearsal. I will ask you to complete this just before your rehearsal and just after.

I can't access online surveys

If you do not have access to a device to complete questionnaires and surveys online I will post printed versions to you with an SAE for you to return it to me. However, if you are able

to complete the questionnaire online I would be grateful if you could do so as this makes the data much quicker to collate and removes the risk of misreading responses.

If time allows I will contact up to 10 participants to invite you to an in-person focus group at UWE Centre for Music or St George's Bristol at a date after the final performance, where we will have a group conversation about your experiences which I will record, transcribe and analyse. No one outside the research project will have access to the recordings and they will be stored on a secure server in a password protected file.

Once our conversation has been transcribed and completely anonymised quotes may be used in publications and other public forums.

What are the benefits of taking part?

This project is a unique opportunity to track your experiences of singing in a group whether you have sung in a choir many times or are trying this for the first time. Your valuable insights and experiences will help people to understand what singing in a group is like and whether wellbeing is improved, remains neutral or could even be reduced through group singing.

What are the possible risks of taking part?

There are no foreseeable or anticipated significant risks to you in taking part in this study. If, however, you feel uncomfortable at any time you can withdraw from the study up to two weeks after the final performance.

Completing regular surveys can feel irritating for some people so whilst I will ensure these are as brief and straightforward as possible, you may not wish to add survey completion to your Sing for Happiness experience.

What will happen to your information?

All the information I receive from you will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be anonymised 2 weeks after the final performance or the focus group if you also participate in this. Your survey responses will be given a single unique code that will not relate to you.

Similarly if you participate in the focus group your words will be transcribed and your survey code used to anonymise your contribution in the transcript.

If you provide responses via post these will be kept in a locked drawer in my office which is also secured via a key. These will be destroyed using UWE Bristol's confidential document disposal system within 2 months of the completion of the study.

Where will the results of the research study be published?

I will be aiming to present these results of this study at relevant conferences and may seek to publish the results in relevant academic journals.

Who has ethically approved this research?

The project has been reviewed and approved by the University of the West of England Research Ethics Committee. Any comments, questions or complaints about the ethical conduct of this study can be addressed to the Research Ethics Committee at the University of the West of England at:

Researchethics@uwe.ac.uk

What if I have more questions or do not understand something?

If you would like any further information about the research please contact in the first instance: kat.branch@uwe.ac.uk

Privacy Notice for Research Participants

Purpose of the Privacy Notice

This privacy notice explains how the University of the West of England, Bristol (UWE) collects, manages and uses your personal data before, during and after you participate in the study exploring why students engage with the Centre for Music and what the impact of this engagement is.

‘Personal data’ means any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person (the data subject). An ‘identifiable natural person’ is one who can be identified, directly or indirectly, including by reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier, or to one or more factors specific to the physical, physiological, genetic, mental, economic, cultural or social identity of that natural person.

This privacy notice adheres to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) principle of transparency. This means it gives information about:

- How and why your data will be used for the research;
- What your rights are under GDPR; and
- How to contact UWE Bristol and the project lead in relation to questions, concerns or exercising your rights regarding the use of your personal data.

This Privacy Notice should be read in conjunction with the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form provided to you before you agree to take part in the research.

Why are we processing your personal data?

UWE Bristol undertakes research under its public function to provide research for the benefit of society. As a data controller we are committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal data in accordance with the (EU) 2016/679 the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 (or any successor legislation) and any other legislation directly relating to privacy laws that apply (together “the Data Protection Legislation”). General information on Data Protection law is available from the Information Commissioner’s Office (<https://ico.org.uk/>).

How do we use your personal data?

We use your personal data for research with appropriate safeguards in place on the lawful bases of fulfilling tasks in the public interest, and for archiving purposes in the public interest, for scientific or historical research purposes.

We will always tell you about the information we wish to collect from you and how we will use it.

We will not use your personal data for automated decision making about you or for profiling purposes.

Our research is governed by robust policies and procedures and, where human participants are involved, is subject to ethical approval from either UWE Bristol's Faculty or University Research Ethics Committees. This research has been approved by Dr Alpesh Maisuria on behalf of the ACE Faculty Ethics Committee. The research team adhere to the **Ethical guidelines of the British Educational Research Association (and/or the principles of the Declaration of Helsinki, 2013) and the principles of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).**

For more information about UWE Bristol's research ethics approval process please see our Research Ethics webpages at:

www1.uwe.ac.uk/research/researchethics

What data do we collect?

The data we collect will vary from project to project. Researchers will only collect data that is essential for their project. The specific categories of personal data processed are described in the Participant Information Sheet provided to you with this Privacy Notice.

Who do we share your data with?

We will only share your personal data in accordance with the attached Participant Information Sheet and your Consent.

How do we keep your data secure?

We take a robust approach to protecting your information with secure electronic and physical storage areas for research data with controlled access. If you are participating in a particularly sensitive project UWE Bristol puts into place additional layers of security. UWE Bristol has Cyber Essentials information security certification.

Alongside these technical measures there are comprehensive and effective policies and processes in place to ensure that users and administrators of information are aware of their obligations and responsibilities for the data they have access to. By default, people are only granted access to the information they require to perform their duties. Mandatory data protection and information security training is provided to staff and expert advice available if needed.

How long do we keep your data for?

Your personal data will only be retained for as long as is necessary to fulfil the cited purpose of the research. The length of time we keep your personal data will depend on several factors including the significance of the data, funder requirements, and the nature of the study. Specific details are provided in the attached Participant Information Sheet.

Anonymised data that falls outside the scope of data protection legislation as it contains no identifying or identifiable information may be stored in UWE Bristol's research data archive or another carefully selected appropriate data archive.

Your Rights and how to exercise them

Under the Data Protection legislation you have the following **qualified** rights:

- (1) The right to access your personal data held by or on behalf of the University;
- (2) The right to rectification if the information is inaccurate or incomplete;
- (3) The right to restrict processing and/or erasure of your personal data;
- (4) The right to data portability;
- (5) The right to object to processing;
- (6) The right to object to automated decision making and profiling;
- (7) The right to [complain](#) to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Please note, however, that some of these rights do not apply when the data is being used for research purposes if appropriate safeguards have been put in place.

We will always respond to concerns or queries you may have. If you wish to exercise your rights or have any other general data protection queries, please contact UWE Bristol's Data Protection Officer (dataprotection@uwe.ac.uk).

If you have any complaints or queries relating to the research in which you are taking part please contact either the research project lead, whose details are in the attached Participant Information Sheet, UWE Bristol's Research Ethics Committees (research.ethics@uwe.ac.uk) or UWE Bristol's research governance manager (Ros.Rouse@uwe.ac.uk)

v.1: This Privacy Notice was issued in April 2019 and will be subject to regular review/update.

Register to participate here:

[Participant Consent and Registration Form](#)

Or

go.uwe.ac.uk/happinesschoir

