



Hiring Knottingley Concert Brass

Introduction

This guide has been produced to help you get the most from **Knottingley Concert Brass** when they are booked to perform at your concert. It has sections that provide you with information on booking the band, publicity, preparing for their arrival, set-up and preparation requirements, stage or performance area considerations, plus contact details for the band.

Booking the Band

When contacting the band to request a booking, you should be considering the following type of information:

- Date and time of concert. As most of our players hold full time jobs, getting a band together during normal working hours is difficult.
- What type of music? Any special requests? Have you allowed enough time for us to prepare these, before the concert date?
- Have you arranged publicity for the event? Do you need a compare?
- Have you enough space to accommodate a brass band?
- If sharing with other groups, how are change-overs going to be organised (it takes time to set-up percussion, for example).
- How long will the band be expected to perform for? During longer concerts, what interval(s) will there be, if any, to give the band a chance to recover?
- Indoor or outdoor event? If outdoor:
 - Is there any shelter from rain, sun and/or wind for the band?
 - Is there a hard, level surface to set the band on?
 - If the event has to be changed or cancelled due to bad weather, what alternative arrangements are there, and how do you notify the band in those circumstances?

Information and help on these items are discussed further, below.



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Advanced Booking

The band performs at various events throughout the year, so you should arrange to book the band in plenty of time to avoid disappointment. If you have special musical requirements (style of music, particular pieces), then these need time to be rehearsed. One or two pieces require a minimum of four weeks, but two months or more is better. The more specific your requirements, the longer the time needed to prepare. The band will happily take bookings a year or more in advance.

Publicity

A good audience is often the make or break of a successful concert, so thought should go into getting good advanced publicity out to your potential audience. KCB is unable to publicise your event, and this is the responsibility of your event organisers. Whilst we do have a few people that may accompany the band to some public events, you should not assume the band will bring a lot of supports to fill out your audience.

When preparing your publicity documentation, please refer to the band as: **“Knottingley Concert Brass”**. Since May 2009, our musical director and conductor is: **“Ian Dean”**. If you would like more detailed information about the band for your publicity, this can be obtained from the band’s secretary: **kcbsecretary@hotmail.com** or on the band’s web site: **kcb.orpheusweb.co.uk**.

Suggestions for publicising your event include:

- Leaflet drop to homes around the venue
- Advertising in the **“What’s On”** section of your local newspapers
- Advertising on local radio or television **“What’s On”** sections
- Advertising posters can often be put up free of charge in local shops and supermarkets, sports centres, public halls, libraries, some churches, tourist information offices and not forgetting the venue itself. For a small fee, the local council will often display posters up to A0 size on their official advertising boards.



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Arrival and Stage Preparations

The full band is usually made up of around 25 performers, including one or two percussionists. The majority are usually seated and it is helpful if you can supply suitable seating. Chairs with arms are not really suitable as they interfere with performing, so should be avoided if possible. Several performers have large instruments such as the Bases and percussion equipment. Therefore a suitable playing area is required to accommodate the band. An area about 20m² (5m x 4m) or larger is fine, though we are prepared to be flexible and rearrange to fit in with differing configurations where size is limited or not very square, or when the band is performing alongside other groups who also have their own space requirements. If you have booked an ensemble, then there will be fewer performers of course, and requirements can be discussed once the booking is confirmed.

For local events, the band will arrive individually, so nearby parking is helpful. For events further afield, a coach will be required (consider the extra costs involved) and coach parking during the event will be needed. The band brings larger instruments and other equipment in a trailer or on the coach. Access for this near the stage or playing area will be required, if only before and after the concert, so that equipment can be unloaded. Ideally the band should be provided with a room near the playing area, where we can dress, store instrument cases during the concert, and tune up instruments prior to the performance.

To allow for the setting up of the playing area, at least 30 minutes in advance of the concert is normally required, preferably out of sight of the audience. Where this is not possible; such as when following another group on stage; consideration should be given on how best to get one group off, and the next group on to the stage. Where special instructions need to be given to the band, these should be supplied in advance to give us enough time to get everyone informed of your requirements.



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Outside Events

These present their own difficulties for a brass band, which should be carefully considered.

Even when the British weather is fine, there are still problems to consider. Large instruments suffer in direct sunlight. Music stands are top heavy, and sheet music make great sails in windy weather, so protection from sun and wind is desirable. Playing a brass instrument is physically tiring, made harder on a hot day or in direct sunshine. So even on a lovely day, any form or shade from sun and wind for the band and instruments would be very welcome. This is particularly required when the weather is not good.

Other things to consider include: Is the ground level and firm? Unlevel surfaces make sitting for long periods whilst playing an instrument uncomfortable, and the top-heavy music stands are prone to toppling if not upright. Chairs placed directly on grass have a tendency to sink making playing both difficult and uncomfortable, as well as unsafe (consider falling sideways with a full size bass in your hands, should a chair suddenly sink a few inches), so hard ground or firm ground covering is preferable.

Consider the location of an outside event. For the enjoyment of the band and audience, try to avoid areas of heavy activity or where animals may make a nuisance of themselves or get startled. Avoid locations such as busy sport fields, near building sites or next to duck ponds or animal sanctuaries. Noisy locations are obviously not preferable as people want to hear the music, not local building works, air or traffic noise etc.. Also it is not safe to locate the band near a busy road. We make quite a distracting feature for drivers who need to concentrate on the road, and some music produces sudden loud noise that can dangerously startle an un-expectant driver for a moment.

What arrangements are in place if the weather is unsuitable to go ahead outdoors? Will there be an alternative indoor venue, and will the band still be required? How will we be notified of any changes close to the performance time due to weather conditions?



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The Performance

To get the most from the band, a performance of one to two hours is normal. If sharing the stage with other groups, only a 45 minute session may be available to us. Less time than this often makes it less desirable for the band. Although we always try to put on a professional performance, we are an amateur band who do not get individually paid, and with all the time and work required to prepare for, attend and put on a concert, a shorter session may not be desirable or feasible for the full band.

We do not bring a compare, so you should arrange for one if required. At the start of a concert, it is normal to introduce the band (after any safety announcements) and the main band will enter and take up positions on the stage. Once everyone is in position, our Conductor can be announced and he will enter the stage, greet the audience and begin the performance. Introductions between pieces can be either be done by your compare or by a member of the band if arranged in advance. Intervals, start times and the end of the performance announcements should be made by your own compare.

When performing for longer than an hour, it is normal to try and give the band one or two breaks or intervals. Two sessions of 45 to 50 minutes with a 15 minute interval is typical. Refreshments for the band are always welcome, especially interval drinks, to help tired lips recover for the next session.

Contacting the Band

Secretary	Ruth Price	kcbsecretary@hotmail.com
Musical Director	Ian Dean	ian.dean@digforfire.co.uk
Email the band		kcb@orpheusmail.co.uk
Web Site		kcb.orpheusweb.co.uk

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