

Penicuik Folk Club
Pre-Booking Information for Guests and Promoters

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1. Normal Arrangements

We meet every Tuesday throughout the year at 8.00pm (concerts) 8.30 (singarounds).

Once/month (normally the second Tuesday of the month) we have a concert night – all other Tuesdays are free singing/playing sessions. We can “use” other Tuesdays, only slightly reluctantly, and other days of the week, rather more reluctantly. We do not run concerts in July (summer holidays) and August (Edinburgh Festival!).

We book folk musicians and encourage the playing and singing of folk music – but we interpret “folk” very liberally. Many of our guests and regular sessioneers veer into country and western, blues, acoustic rock/pop. We work on the premise that any song has the potential to become a folk song – it just has to be good enough to last long enough to become part of the singing tradition.

Concerts begin at 8.00pm and end at 11pm – normally two 45-minute “spots” supported by a short opening act in both halves of the evening. We comper the evening concisely and sensitively. We have skilled club performers, so do not fear the curse of “death-by-floorspotter”! We occasionally have an “invited” opening act ... generally local musicians gaining experience or trying to persuade us to book him/her/them. For the most part, we do the support-act duties ourselves.

2. Ticket prices and fees

Ticket prices can be varied for higher-fee guests. We normally work on the basis of what we gauge to be an achievable guaranteed fee against a generous percentage of the door takings. We are not a profit-making body. We simply aim to stay viable while putting as much money as is feasible into the pockets of our guest artistes.

We have managed to break even (losing some, winning some) over the years – long may that continue.

3. Merchandise

We are happy to promote the sales of CDs etc. via on-stage announcements and encouragement to buy. We will undertake the selling of guests' merchandise for no fee (although a donation for the raffle is always welcome!).

We do not normally accept "other" stalls selling jewellery, etc at either gigs or festival.

4. Bookings and contracts

Bookings are normally made via Chairman Alan Murray and contracts issued by Treasurer Ken Davies (dikendavies@btinternet.com).

We ask that all booked artists avoid playing in the Edinburgh area within 3 months (either way!) of a Penicuik Folk Club gig.

We do not attempt to enforce this, but breaking the rule rarely benefits either club or guest artist. A "quiet night" is dispiriting for you and for us and potentially financially damaging to both folk club and guest artist.

We are happy to receive demos to Alan (350, Rullion Road, Penicuik, EH26 9AD). Before posting that demo CD, however, it is worth noting that most of our bookings are the result of our own listening experiences, those of club members and those of fellow folk club organisers.

Please do not include silly food-and-drink requests in contracts ("a bottle of red wine and a crate of beer for each band member ..." - that sort of thing). One high-profile band member famously asks for a Shepherd's Pie to be available – but as we have no plans to book the Rolling Stones, that will not present us with a problem. We will delete and ignore (very politely) requests that are not appropriate to a non-profit-making folk club. Apologies for the rather "firm" note of this section – but it's best to get such things cleared up as soon as possible. Disagreements with guests are almost unheard-of and the few that we have encountered have been the result of lack of clarity at this stage. One of our main aims is to make guest artists feel welcome, valued and confident – but no shepherd's pie ... sorry.

5. Folk Club PA Spec

We can provide an excellent and well-maintained system, manned by one of us (alan@amroth350.wanadoo.co.uk) – or by your soundperson if that is preferable:-

- 1) Spirit Folio mixing desk – 8 balanced and 2 stereo unbalanced inputs.
- 2) Yamaha stereo digital reverb
- 3) Peavey CS200X 100W/side stereo amplifier
- 4) Celestion "Bose-clone" speakers with powered controller
- 5) 4xBeyer dynamic vocal/instrument mikes (as good as SM58s, we say)
- 6) 2xEV dynamic vocal/instrument mikes (ditto)
- 7) 2x dynamic Spirit instrument mikes
- 8) 1xShure SM81 condenser mike
- 9) 4xDI boxes+cables

- 10) Stage box and multi-core cable.
- 11) Laney powered monitor speaker and passive extension speaker (i.e. 1 monitor mix, 2 stage monitors)
- 12) CD player for incidental music
- 13) 8 mike stands and all leads after the DIs (we have jack leads, but most artists provide their own).

Our experience is that, in our up-to-150-seater venue, the stage monitors are rarely desirable. As we also know our PA system inside out, most artists are happy to leave us to run it to their requirements and we enjoy working with guests to achieve a good sound. Lighting in the venue is simple, hotel-function-room style. For a bigger gig we can hire the Town Hall, with full stage lighting. More extensive PA and staging requirements generally cannot be met and we cannot, in general, afford to hire in such gear without effectively taking the cost out of the artist's fee.

6. Publicity

We expect artists to provide a good-quality image (ideally electronically or on a Web page) and some biographical details. We print high-quality posters and fliers from this. We also promote the gig directly on our Web page (www.penicuikfolk.org.uk) and via an extensive email list and electronic press contact list.

7. Accommodation

We are happy to arrange free accommodation; given sufficient warning ... this is almost never a problem. Such accommodation will be on real beds in secure, comfortable and welcoming homes, with a post-gig dram or cup of tea available as appropriate!