

Fees and charges at Surrey Performing Arts Library (SPAL)

Background.

The Performing Arts Library's main source of income comes from group membership - hire charges, booking fees and member subscriptions.

A review of Surrey Performing Arts Library was carried out by a member of SCC Policy and Performance Team. That report identified that our fees and charges for performance groups were low compared with the private sector and some library authority controlled performing arts libraries.¹ These were reviewed and the new prices put in place in September 2014. They were last amended in 2016 to reflect the withdrawal of the West Sussex contract and the increased charges that West Sussex groups would have to pay.

The changes and rationale for each change were:

Subscriptions	2013-2014	2015-2016	% Increase	Rationale
Surrey and West Sussex*	£25	£26	4%	Easier for groups to absorb and unlikely to lead to non-renewal.
Other groups	£32	£33	3.12%	

Vocal Scores	2013-2014	2015-2016	% Increase	Rationale
Surrey and West Sussex*	£5 per 20 per month	£5 per 20 per month	0%	Increases in ILLs and other charges will very substantially increase costs for Surrey choirs, but we don't ILL for non-Surrey choirs.
Other groups	£7 per 20 per month	£8 per 20 per month	14.29%	

Packaged Vocal Sets	2013-2014	2015-2016	% Increase	Rationale
Surrey and West Sussex*	£4 per 20 per month	£4 per 20 per month	0%	Scores only cost c.£2 each. Any increase would lead choirs to stop borrowing.
Other groups	£6 per 20 per month	£6 per 20 per month	0%	

Orchestral Sets	2013-2014	2015-2016	% Increase	Rationale
Surrey and West Sussex*	£8 per set per month	£9 per set per month	12.5%	Increase in ILLs and other charges will have less impact than on choirs.
Other groups	£10 per set per month	£11 per set per month	10%	

Play Sets	2013-2014	2015-2016	% Increase	Rationale
Surrey and West Sussex*	£4 per set per month	£4 per set per month	0%	Most price sensitive borrowers. Considerably less expensive to buy than music.
Other groups	£5 per set per month	£5 per set per month	0%	

Reservation Fees	2013-2014	2015-2016	% Increase	Rationale
All groups	£3 per title	£4 per title	33.33%	Should raise more than £1000, but not be a deterrent to reserving.

Interlibrary Loan Fees	2013-2014	2015-2016	% Increase	Rationale
All groups	£5 per set	£10 per set	100%	Recover more ILL /courier costs.

* In 2016 the service, due to budgetary constraints, West Sussex Libraries withdrew from their contract with SCC to provide services to West Sussex performance groups. The cost to West Sussex at that point was £9,000 pa. At that time, West Sussex groups were charged the same as non-Surrey groups, however hire charges and subscription charges were largely maintained at the Surrey rate until autumn 2016 as part of the withdrawal agreement.

Comparison with other Performing Arts Libraries (PALs).

To determine how SCC charges fit into the market pattern, the service looked at 10 library authority controlled PALs, most of which operate music only.²

Direct comparison with other PALs is not made easy due to the varied pricing structures with some dividing vocal scores by timing (under or over 5 minutes), some pricing per copy and other per set. As can be seen from above, SCC have chosen a simplified pricing structure based on type and/or copies. However, some comparisons can be made.

Subscription fees:

Only 4 others indicate they levy a subscription fee. As the remaining 8 choose not to offer a subscription service, then Surrey could be said to perform competitively in this area

Nottingham: none for music groups; £50pa for drama groups

Liverpool: £28pa (Liverpool); £58pa (outside Liverpool)

Hampshire: £15

Surrey: £26pa (Surrey); £33pa (outside Surrey)

Based on active borrowing 2016-2017 this would have achieved c £13,000 income.

Set hire charges.

Music (comparison is hire per month per set of 20 for local groups only)
Surrey is competitively priced.

Hampshire	£25	Surrey	£10
CYML	£15	Kent	£4
Nottingham	£14		

Orchestral sets: charges vary considerably from £40 for first month (£20 pcm thereafter) in Leeds to £2 or £4 pcm in Kent and our own £9 pcm sitting in between.

Drama sets. The only comparison is with Leeds (charge is per copy) so an average 12 copy playset would cost £6 in Leeds and £4 in Surrey

Search fee (ILL fee)

Surrey	£10 per set of 20	Nottingham	£6
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¹ The major factors contributing to the PAL budget are high staff costs due to administratively complex processes with the service housed in high quality, high cost property.

² Carlisle Library; Community and Youth Music Library (CYML); Encore Music Hull; Hampshire; Kent Libraries; Leeds Music and Performing Arts Library; Liverpool Libraries; Nottingham; Oxford Libraries; Westminster Music Library; Westminster Reference Library (Performing Arts Collection)

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