



Choir: Plymouth

Section: Soprano

My name is Diane, I'm 41 years old and I live in Plymouth. I run a small business, am doing a PhD part time, I'm married and have 4 young children. I started singing as a girl in a local church choir. I sang a bit in secondary school but left school very young so this also ended my singing. I hadn't sung for many years before starting La La. I lived in rural Scotland for a few years and the only choir available was a 'Ladies Choir' which really wasn't me.



What made you decide to join La La and what made you stay?

I moved with my family to Plymouth about 2 ½ years ago and one of the first things I did was to find a choir. There were about 3 that I knew of and was going to try out. I couldn't find the venue for one of them, so missed that session then the next one I tried was La La. I knew then that I'd found my place and I didn't need to try any others.



What do you feel makes La La different from other choirs?

Sam makes the choir extremely accessible. She has a really informal style and one of her phrases is 'if you make a mistake, make it loudly', which appealed to me. Behind her informality, Sam is an incredibly talented craftswoman. I love to watch her during choir, as this is where you really see her skills working; she somehow manages to simultaneously keep all the sections going with amazing good humour and patience at times! I think Sam's talents also lie in her ability to hold the choir; we all go to choir for different reasons and there's an awful lot of private stuff going on for people. Sam seems to somehow be able to contain this and put those feelings to really effective use. The energy and humour in the room is palpable. Sam knows her choir members

well and has an instinctive ability for understanding where people are at. For me, choir is like therapy.



What has La La done for you and how has that improved your life?

When I joined La La, I was pregnant and had my baby 5 months later. By then I was hooked and desperately didn't want to leave. I spoke to Sam and we agreed that I would try to bring the baby, but I was keen not to distract too much attention from choir. It was a lovely time and my little girl was welcomed so warmly by the La La family; she would be passed around the choir members if she became fractious, usually ending up sleeping on Sam's shoulder! I cannot express how grateful I am to Sam and the choir members for letting me bring her along.

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I was also new to Plymouth so La La gave me a social outlet. I don't get the chance to go out particularly often but I can honestly say that I've gained true friends from being at La La. It does genuinely feel like a family as we care and support each other. It's amazing to attend a gig where there can be up to 200 of us singing. We have a lot of fun at these events and there's also the sense of wanting to do well for Sam as she gives us so much back. This is also where you really see Sam at her best and her professionalism gives us real confidence.



What would you say to anyone thinking of joining La La?

I would urge anyone to come along and give La La a try; you don't have to be a 'good' singer, you just have to love singing and you will be carried along until you find your feet.

Find out more information about times and dates online at www.lalachoires.co.uk or contact Sam on sam@lalachoires.co.uk



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