

## **Information Sheet.**

We have over two decades experience of playing for barn dances/ceilidhs and these notes are based on that experience in the hope that they will help to make your event a success. We are happy to discuss any other requirements you may have.

### **Electricity.**

Like just about all bands we use a Public Address system to ensure a clear and balanced sound (though we don't usually play at rock-band levels of volume). We therefore require a couple of 13 amp wall sockets, ideally for our exclusive use (lighting dimmers, tea urns, cookers and bar equipment can all cause problems if we have to share the electricity supply with them). Ideally this should be within 20 feet of where the band is to play.

We also need space to set up two loudspeakers (on stands) just in front and to the sides of the place the band is to perform. These each require a few square feet of space, so please be aware of this if you wish to put tables, chairs etc. close to the "stage".

### **Electrical safety.**

The contract specifies that the engager must take all reasonable steps to ensure a safe supply of electricity (although we have not found an insurmountable problem with electricity supply in the last twenty-odd years). Should there be any problems we will make best efforts to work around them.

### **Setting Up.**

It usually takes us an hour to set up equipment and to carry out a soundcheck. Longer than this would be appreciated, especially if equipment has to be carried upstairs. The soundcheck stage of setting up, which is essential to get the best possible sound quality, often involves running the amplifiers at a much higher volume than will be used during the performance, and there may also be some "feedback" (loud howling noises) during setting up. It may be advisable to consider whether or not to have the audience present at this time!

### **Dismantling.**

It takes us at least thirty minutes to dismantle and remove equipment, so we will need access to the venue for at least thirty minutes after the performance ends.

We can provide recorded background music before the performance and during the interval if required. If you wish to provide your own recordings for this purpose please let us know in advance.

### **Space.**

We require an area sufficient to allow for two musicians, a bunch of instruments, microphone stands etc. and a caller, on a raised stage if one is available. A minimum of 12ft by 8ft, and more if possible. We also appreciate it if there is room for a bit of a gap between us and dancers (for safety reasons, so no-one trips over anything).

English country dancing/barn dancing requires a fair amount of room for the dancers. No area is likely to be too large. The dances often require the dancers to make a large circle, or "sets" of up to eight couples in two lines, there is a fair bit of movement around the

floor required and it's usual to have several sets dancing at the same time. Some venues (especially hotels, in our experience) lay out very small dance-floors, intended to accommodate a few people dancing to a disco, which they then surround by tables. It may be necessary therefore to ask the venue to move more tables and other obstructions out of the way than they usually would.

We occasionally find that the dance floor has been strewn with straw. We don't recommend this practice as dancers often slip on the straw, with consequent risk of injury. A highly-polished dance floor may be good for ballroom dancing, but is not ideal for our purposes.

### Lighting.

For many kinds of entertainment the band are lit by stage lights or similar, while the audience is seated in a much lower level of lighting. For barn/country dancing however it is best to set the level of light so that the audience can easily see and find their way about the dance floor without running the risk of accidents.

### Discos and other bands.

Sometimes we find ourselves sharing a booking with a disco. While we have no objection to this, it is our experience that mixing a barn dance with a disco requires a bit of careful programme planning, and some care in deciding where to put the disco and where to put the band (we're happy to discuss this with you). We would suggest that the disco, should you wish to hire one, should only start after the end of the barn dance. We'd particularly welcome a few minutes after the end of our performance before the disco starts (or at least, before lights are dimmed) to make it easier for us to dismantle equipment.

We have no objection at all to sharing the bill with other bands. However, making the changes between one band and the next run smoothly does require a bit of skill, careful programming and additional time. We therefore ask that you discuss this with us so we can help you make things work smoothly.

If you have any concerns or questions please do not hesitate to contact us.