

This document is intended as a guide for the choral society to ensure that all members operate in a fair and orderly manner, which in turn will enable the choir to organise its members to sing to the best of their ability and fulfil the aims and objectives of a choral society.

Constitution

27th January 2017

Second amendment – 2018

Third amendment – 2020

CHESTERFIELD CO-OPERATIVE CHORAL SOCIETY

1. Name: The choir shall be known as Chesterfield Cooperative Choral Society [the Society].
2. Aims & Objectives:
 - a. To promote & encourage choral singing for the membership of the society.
 - b. To contribute to the musical, artistic and physical life of Chesterfield community and district.
 - c. To offer public performances and recitals of choral music and any other collaborative works which the Musical Director, in consultation with the Committee, may decide upon.

RULES OF THE SOCIETY

3. Membership:
 - a. Membership is open to those over the age of 18 who are interested in singing, and who will abide by the rules of the society.
 - b. Applicants shall fill out a contact form, available from the Secretary and shall receive a welcome pack inclusive of relevant documents.
 - c. Annual subscriptions can be paid monthly, per term, or in instalments as agreed by the Treasurer. There is an expectation that members continue to pay subscriptions during any planned absences, except when agreed otherwise.
 - d. Any member whose attendance or behaviour is considered to bring the choir into disrepute (please see Code of Conduct), may be requested to resign by the Committee and MD, in tandem.
4. Attendance at Rehearsals:
 - a. Membership of the society is dependent on the singers participating in full rehearsals on a weekly basis for the choral year (January to December)
 - b. Rehearsals will take place from 7.30pm – 9:30pm every Friday at a specified venue.
 - c. If a member is unable to attend a particular rehearsal, they should notify the vice-chair before the rehearsal – except in the case of an emergency.
 - d. Members should arrive punctually for rehearsals as the “warm up” work is very important to the overall sound of the choir.
 - e. The MD may request extra rehearsals before a special event, within reason, and in consultation with the choir members.
 - f. If a member has to opt out of the choir for a period, the MD and Committee shall be informed.
 - g. Members may participate in concerts/performances at the MD’s discretion.

h. Any member who, without giving due notice to the Committee, fails to fulfil the terms of membership will, after due contact from the Committee, be deemed to have resigned from the society.

5. **Music:**

a. Musical scores are usually on loan to singers (unless they buy their own). The Committee shall administrate the choral library under the advice of the MD.

b. Music is often borrowed from libraries. Where this is not possible, in order to facilitate the Society to purchase scores required for performances, the Committee may require members to make a financial contribution. The Committee and MD shall make every effort to source music before asking members to contribute.

c. Whether the scores are owned by, or hired by, the Society, due care must be taken not to damage the music – any markings should be made in pencil.

d. If a score is lost, stolen or damaged beyond use, it is the responsibility of that singer to replace it at once. (Therefore, all scores should be numbered and allocated to singers with a record of these numbers kept)

e. It is illegal to use photocopied scores, unless copyright permission has been granted to copy them from the publishers.

6. **Choir Uniform For women:**

Formal concerts (e.g. Christmas and Easter): Long black dress/skirt/trousers, black top with sleeves and black shoes

Informal concerts (e.g. Summer): Long black skirt/trousers, light coloured top (no pattern or logos) and black shoes

For men:

Formal concerts (e.g. Christmas and Easter): Black Tie (consisting of black dinner jacket, white dress shirt, black dress trousers, black waistcoat or cummerbund, black bowtie and black shoes

Informal concerts (e.g. Summer): black tie +/- jacket and light-coloured bowtie

This uniform must be worn at all public performances, unless otherwise agreed by the committee

7. **Administration:**

The organisation of the affairs of the society shall be vested in a Committee, to be elected at each Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Society, by secret ballot. The date of the AGM to be circulated in writing three weeks beforehand, to be held not later 14th February of each year.

The committee are accountable to the membership of the Choir. Each elected Officer shall give an account of their activities on behalf of the Choir at the AGM.

8. **Structure of the Committee**

Officers:

Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and two representatives from the members. The Musical Director shall sit on the committee as an ex-officio member.

a. Nominations for officers and committee members should be duly proposed and seconded in writing and forwarded to the Secretary or Chair following receipt of the notice of the AGM. The nomination list shall close seven days prior to the AGM.

- b. Nominees may not be elected in absentia.
- c. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson has the casting vote, except in the election of the Chairperson; the casting vote shall be given to the MD.
- d. Vacancies on the Committee shall arise when the Secretary or Chair has received written notification of resignation from a serving member. In the event of a committee member resigning during the term of their office, the committee shall deem whether it is necessary for an immediate replacement to be elected at an EGM, or whether to wait until the next AGM.
- e. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be held within four weeks of any vacancies arising for electing new members (where necessary). Notice of this meeting must be served on all members 14 days in advance of the date of the meeting. Nominations, duly proposed and seconded, may be forwarded to the Secretary or Chair.
- f. Should nominations exceed vacancies, elections shall be held by secret ballot. In the event of no nominations being received for a vacancy, nominations may also be presented at the time of the AGM.
- g. In the event of only one nomination received for an officer's post, the nominee shall be declared to have been elected unopposed and no formal vote is required.
- h. Committee officers shall not hold more than one elected position on the committee.
- i. The Committee shall meet at least three times a year, or more often at their own discretion. They shall not sit without a quorum which shall consist of; the Chairperson (or Vice-chair in the Chair's absence), Treasurer, MD and one other committee member.
- j. Committee members who form the quorum are expected to attend 80% of committee meetings to ensure that the committee can function and make decisions.
- k. The Chair shall call a committee meeting no later than 21 days after the AGM
- l. The Committee may, at any time, appoint a sub-committee to help in some aspects of the affairs of the Society that would be more conveniently undertaken or carried out by a sub-committee. They may appoint members other than Committee members to sit on such sub-committees. All proceedings and activities of sub-committees shall be fully and promptly reported to the Committee.
- m. The term of positions are for two years. Officers shall retire from their positions at the end of their term at the AGM and seek re-election

Musical Direction

- o. The Committee shall work with the MD to ensure that concert dates and programmes are confirmed a minimum of 12 months in advance. In addition, they shall work with the MD to ensure that events for the following 12 months (i.e. two years of programmes) are being planned.
- p. The Musical Director shall have final approval of all proposed programmes of music.

9. General Meetings

- a. AGM shall be held no later than 14th February of each year. Notification of the AGM shall be given to members a minimum of three weeks in advance.
- b. Any society member, who obtains the signature of one quarter (25%) of the members of the society, shall have the right to direct the Secretary or Chair of the Committee to call an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM). Such members shall be obliged to submit in writing to the Committee their reasons for calling such a meeting, and no other business shall be considered by such an EGM. The EGM shall be called within four weeks of receipt of the written request and submission of the members' signatures.

c. The proceedings of each AGM, General Meeting and Committee meetings are to be written into a Minutes Book by the Secretary or a nominated committee member. Such minutes, signed and dated by the Chairperson, shall in the absence of proof of error, be accepted as evidence of the facts therein stated.

10. Alteration to the rules

a. Alterations to the Rules of the Society may be made at any time by a General Meeting (emergency or annual) at which 66% (2/3) of the members are present.

b. Notification of any such alteration must be given in writing to the Secretary or Chair at least 4 weeks before the General Meeting.

c. The alteration shall be circulated in writing by the secretary or Chair to all members, together with the notice convening the General Meeting two weeks before the date of the meeting.

d. A ballot shall be taken on the motion in the normal way (see section 8f).

11. Musical Director and Accompanist

a. The Musical Director shall be appointed by the Committee in consultation with the accompanist.

b. The Accompanist shall be appointed by the Committee in consultation with the Musical Director.

c. The Musical Director and Accompanist shall abide by the terms and conditions of their contract.

12. Finance

a. The sources of income open to the Society shall be:

i. Annual Membership Subscriptions at a rate to be fixed at the AGM.

ii. Additional contributions from members to purchase music

iii. Private donations.

iv. Revenue from public concerts

v. Grants or sponsorship that may be recommended by the Committee

vi. Prize money from choral competitions.

b. The annual members' subscription shall be decided at the AGM and shall be operational until the next AGM. Annual increase in subscription fees may be increased by up to 10%. Rates (including discounted membership) shall be available from the treasurer

c. The Society is a not for profit organisation. Any income and property of the group shall be applied solely towards promoting the objects and aims of the group. The division of profits or assets among group members is prohibited

d. Dependent on how the Society is founded; the assets of the Society shall be held by The Committee in the name of the Society.

e. In the event of the closure of the Society, the assets shall be realised, and after the debts have been paid, the balance shall be shared with a musical charity as chosen by members of the choir.

13. Choral Events

It is the responsibility of all elected members of the Committee to:

- a. Liaise with the MD as to any additional wishes or requirements they may have, remembering that the MD is in charge of the rehearsal and performance
- b. Source additional seating and staging where required
- c. Arrange any supplementary lighting and amplification as requested by the MD
- d. Liaise with the venue over provision of drinks etc.
- e. Gain access to adjacent church halls etc. for dressing rooms as required
- f. Arrange for a list of volunteers to assist on the day; drinks providers and front of house as required
- g. Ensure any required safety announcements are made
- h. After the concert; ensure the venue is returned to normal condition and the building is secured

14. Publicity

- a. The committee is responsible for updating and maintaining the website with information about concerts, joining the Choir, photos and other appropriate information.
- b. The committee shall establish links with local media and other local groups and associations to provide regular reports and press releases on behalf of the Choir, including concerts and rehearsals.
- c. They shall also promote Choir concerts and events, ensuring posters and other advertising materials are generated in good time.
- d. The committee shall also maintain a Facebook page/Twitter/social media with updated information, news and events.

15. Library

The committee shall conserve and keep a record of all the music owned by the Society. They shall order or hire music as required by the MD.

It is the job the committee to issue and recover music from the members and keep records of these transactions.

The musical scores are a valuable asset of the Society and as such shall be kept in a suitable and secure location, as decided by the Committee.

Duties of Officers

Chairperson

The Chairperson shall preside over all General and Committee meetings and shall conduct such meetings in an orderly manner and in accordance with the rules of the Society.

In the absence of the Chairperson, the vice chair shall act as chair, in a temporary capacity. In a tied vote at any meeting the Chairperson shall have the casting vote, except in the election of the Chairperson; the MD shall be given the casting vote.

It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to ensure that members are kept up to date with the annual calendar and any developments in a timely manner.

Vice-Chair

The Vice-chair shall deputise for the chairperson at all meetings and assume full responsibility for the running of the Choir/Committee in the event of the elected chairperson's unavailability

Secretary

The Secretary shall record and maintain the minutes of all meetings, EGMs & AGMs, and shall circulate them and chase actions.

They shall send out notices of Committee and General meeting to the appropriate members at the correct times for each meeting.

As required, deal with choir correspondence.

Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be responsible for the safe keeping of all monies entrusted to him/her on behalf of the Society, as ratified by the Committee. They shall ensure that all subscriptions, donations, grants and contributions are lodged in a bank or credit union and duly acknowledged and receipted.

All monies paid out shall be properly vouched for and a receipt obtained for the same.

The Treasurer shall prepare a statement of accounts for presentation and approval at the AGM. Interim statements, if required, shall be provided to the Committee.

The Treasurer shall be responsible for ensuring that the society shall be aware of impending financial problems, where they pose a threat to the continuance of the society.

All elected members

It is the responsibility of all elected members to ensure the effective running of The Society; this may include tasks in addition to those described in roles and responsibilities above.

Elected members shall keep a record of all the music owned by the society. They shall work with the MD to order or hire music as required.

Elected members shall issue and recover music from the members and keep a record of these transactions.

Elected members shall ensure that all musical scores are kept in a suitable and secure location.

The Musical Director

The MD shall propose a plan of events and/or competitions for the year(s) ahead, taking into consideration the progress of the choir, numbers singing and the wishes of the majority of the society's members. They shall advise the Committee and the Society on the suitability of selected pieces to be rehearsed and performed.

The MD shall have complete authority at rehearsals and performances in all matters relating to musical standards and levels of proficiency.

The Accompanist shall liaise closely with the MD.

Honorary Life Membership

It shall be the prerogative of the Committee to nominate, as an Honorary Life Member, any person who has rendered exceptional services to the Society, or to Music or the Arts in that locality, and whose distinguished position would be considered an honour to the Society.

Such a nomination shall be proposed and ratified at the AGM.

Code of conduct

Choir Members

- Be committed and punctual members of the choir, always informing the vice chair 24 hours prior to being absent from rehearsals or engagements/events (except in the case of emergencies).
- Promote an inclusive, safe, harassment-free environment. Be respectful of everyone. If there is a section that needs more work the other sections should be patient, quiet and work on their own part (quietly).
- Be focused and cooperative during rehearsals and engagements/events.
- Understand that you are singing as part of a group and that your contribution is a valuable part to the sound of the whole choir.
- Learn the music.
- Enjoy yourself and have fun Onstage:
- Know the music.
- Focus on the MD throughout the warm-up and performance.
- Remember that the audience can see and hear you between songs. Remain quiet between songs.
- Abide by the dress code.
- Smile and Have Fun!

The Committee

- Be committed and punctual, always informing the vice chair 48 hours prior to being absent from meetings, rehearsal or engagements/events (except in the case of emergencies).
- Do not interrupt each other. Give the speaker your full attention and respect. No talking or side comments during the meeting.
- Ensure all changes and developments are reported to the Choir in a timely manner
- Promote a safe, harassment free environment. Be respectful of everyone.
- Abide by the overall choir rules.

Musical Director

- Be committed, reliable and punctual, always informing the Committee a minimum of two weeks in advance of any planned absences from rehearsals (except in the case of emergencies).
- Attend committee meetings, rehearsals, and engagements/events.
- Maintain order in meetings and rehearsals.
- Promote a safe, harassment-free environment.
- Understand that the choir is a team and the practicalities of running the team are important.
- Act as a mediator in necessary situations/circumstances.
- Abide by all the choir rules.