

RULES AND CONSTITUTION

(MARCH/APRIL 2019 APPROVED BY THE CHARITY COMMISSION)

NAME

1. TITLE- BIDDULPH MALE VOICE CHOIR formed in 1922 comprises a society of men constituted to share the pleasure and satisfaction, the cultural effort and discipline of learning and singing choral music.

2. The Choir shall be non-political and non- sectarian in its membership and governance.

Objects

3. The objects of the choir shall be:

(a) to promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in the appreciation of the musical arts generally and of choral music in particular;

(b) to make donations to any charitable organisations as the Committee may from time to time determine.

4. In furtherance of the said objects but not otherwise, the choir shall have power to:

(a) sing and participate in services in churches and places of worship of any religion or denomination;

(b) present concerts in churches, halls and public places;

(c) participate in music festivals and competitions;

(d) organise and sponsor a competition for singers instrumentalists and choirs known as THE BIDDULPH AND DISTRICT MUSIC FESTIVAL.

5. In all such cases the choir may require and receive for its services such fees, donations, remuneration or refund of expenses as the committee may determine.

Membership

6. Membership of the choir shall be subject to the approval of the choir committee but shall not arbitrarily be refused to any person, or subsequently terminated, provided that;

(a) application for membership is made in accordance with the procedure established by the choir;

(b) The applicant is in possession of a moderate voice and music sensibility sufficient to satisfy the Musical Director (in association with other members as may be required by the committee);

(c) The applicant upon provisional acceptance, attends a satisfactory proportion of rehearsals over an initial period of three months and thereafter continues to attend rehearsals in a consistent manner and pays the required subscription;

(d) During his membership he upholds to the best of his ability, the rules, constitution and objects of the choir and cares for in a proper manner, any copy music, uniform blazer or other properties loaned to him by the choir. Any such uniform blazer or other properties shall be worn or used only for, or in connection with official choir engagements.

7. (a) A member shall not be eligible to take part in any concert, festival or public performance unless he has attended to the satisfaction of the Musical Director a sufficient number of rehearsals in the period prior to the performance;

(b) The Musical Director will have absolute discretion to exclude from competition or major concert, any chorister whose tonal qualities, voice control (temporarily or permanent) and standard of rehearsal appear to be inadequate in the final run up to the event.

8. Membership of the choir may be terminated for the following reasons;

(a) The member resigns by notice in writing;

(b) The member is in default of payment of the appropriate subscription;

(c) The member behaves in a manner prejudicial to the interests of the choir;

Provided that a member shall be entitled to be heard before a decision is taken.

9. No member, whether chorister, committee member or official shall, unless specifically authorised or directed by the choir, assume the responsibility of speaking on behalf of the choir or publicly expressing his personal views as being the considered policy or views of the choir. Membership will be immediately withdrawn from any person found to be deliberately or consistently disregarding this restriction to the detriment of the choir.

10. Each member shall on admission to the choir receive a copy of this constitution in writing or via the website.

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP.

11. The choir at its Annual General Meeting may, on the recommendation of the General Committee and subject to the approval of two thirds of the members present and voting, appoint Honorary Members with duties and privileges as follows;

(a) A PRESIDENT to conduct the business of the Annual General Meeting; to endeavour to enhance the standing of the choir; to further and support its interests by such means available to them.

The functions and occupancy of the office of President shall be reviewed by the committee at intervals and referred at its discretion to the Annual General Meeting.

(b) VICE- PRESIDENTS who will normally be elected from persons who have the interests of the choir at heart (but who might otherwise not be eligible for membership) and who consistently demonstrate their interest either financially or by other particular means at their disposal.

Vice Presidents shall normally be elected or re-elected for a three year period and shall be accorded such privileges as the choir shall from time to time decide.

(c) HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS. Honorary Life Membership will normally be conferred upon men who have served the choir well over a considerable number of years. They shall have all the privileges of membership during their life-time but shall not be required to pay membership subscription.

(d) Nominations For Honorary Membership, including the office of President, shall be submitted to the Secretary in writing not less than three months before the date of the Annual General Meeting and such nominations of the candidates for election shall be considered by the committee which may at its discretion include such nominations in the agenda of the AGM.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

12. The Annual General Meeting of the choir to which all members shall be invited and eligible to attend, shall be held each year not later than 15 months after the holding of the preceding Annual General Meeting for the purposes of;

(a) reviewing the progress and achievements of the previous year through the consideration of reports submitted by retiring Officers of the Choir.

(b) appointing officers and a choir committee (elsewhere herein referred to as "the Committee") to serve and undertake the business of the choir for the ensuing year;

(c) Considering any competent business of general interest and concern to members.

13. At least 21 days clear notice shall be given to all the members of the choir of the date of holding the Annual General Meeting at which time all members shall be issued with;

(a) an Agenda for the meeting;

(b) a statement of accounts for the preceding year.

The Annual General Meeting shall normally be held during the month of September and minutes when completed and approved made available to the Choir.

OFFICERS

14. THE PRINCIPAL OFFICERS of the choir shall be as follows;

(a) CHAIRMAN of the committee

(b) VICE-CHAIRMAN of the committee

(c) SECRETARY to be responsible for the proper conduct of all business relating to the choir and its activities; to arrange and prepare agenda for and maintain records of all meetings.

(d) TREASURER to be responsible for the proper conduct of all finances of the choir including the banking and investment of its income; the payment of its debts and the presentation annually of a statement of accounts.

15. OTHER OFFICERS of the choir shall be appointed or elected according to the needs of the choir and the range of its activities-including but not limited to ;

(a) CONCERT SECRETARY to be responsible for concert bookings and related arrangements.

(b) A LIBRARIAN to be responsible for distributing, maintaining and recording choir music stocks.

(c) SECTION REPRESENTATIVES to collect subscriptions, maintain records of attendance and generally liase with the membership.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

16. The Principal and other officers of the choir and members of the committee shall retire each year at the Annual General Meeting but shall be eligible for re-election.

17. Nominations for election as an officer or member of the committee must be made during the four weeks preceding the Annual General Meeting and shall be regulated as follows;

(a) each nominee must be proposed and seconded on an official nomination paper by two choir members;

(b) no chorister can nominate or second more than three candidates for election.

18. Election of Officers and Committee members, by ballot if necessary, shall be by a simple majority of members voting. Election of Officers shall precede the election of Committee Members. Nominees failing to be elected to an official post shall be eligible for election as a Member of the Committee and their names included in the ballot for the Committee. For the avoidance of doubt the officers referred to above are those specified in para 14 & 15a. The officers referred to in paragraph 15b & 15c may but need not be members of the General Committee.

COMMITTEE

19. It shall be the duty of the committee to develop and implement the general policy of the choir in accordance with its declared aims and objectives and, subject to any conditions imposed on it by the choir at a General Meeting; to provide for the administration, management and control of the affairs and property of the choir.

20. The committee shall comprise Secretary, Treasurer, Concert Secretary plus but not exceeding ten other members inclusive of the Musical Director and such other officers as may be deemed appropriate at the Annual General Meeting; it shall meet at intervals of not more than six weeks.

21. (a) All members of the committee shall have equal voice and vote in the proceedings of the committee.

(b) In addition to the elected and ex-officio Members, the Committee may co-opt further temporary members in a consultative, non-voting capacity.

(c) The Committee may delegate any of its powers to Sub-Committees.

22. As soon as possible after the Annual General Meeting a first meeting of the General Committee shall be convened at which appointments shall be confirmed as follows;

(a) Musical Director to be responsible for training, teaching and rehearsing the Choir and conducting them at all engagements as they may arise; to undertake and ensure the voice testing of new applicants for membership and the periodic re-assessment of established Choristers as may be deemed desirable by the Musical Director.

(b) DEPUTY or ASSISTANT to the Musical Director to assist the Musical Director in all possible ways.

(c) ACCOMPANIST(S) to play the piano at rehearsals and support the Choir and Musical Director at all their engagements.

(d) A FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE; (e) A MUSIC SUB-COMMITTEE.

(e) If the decision is made to organise a music festival, a BIDDULPH AND DISTRICT MUSIC FESTIVAL COMMITTEE referred to as "The Festival Committee".

QUORUM

23. A quorum at the Annual General Meeting or any Committee Meeting shall be formed by THREE members (including any two of Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer) or HALF of the members entitled to attend whichever is the greater.

FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

24. The Finance Sub-Committee shall comprise Treasurer and two or three other

members and shall meet as required by the Treasurer to consider matters relating to the choir general finances and report there-on to the Committee.

MUSIC SUB-COMMITTEE

25. The Music Sub-Committee shall be responsible to the Committee for;

(a) Advising the Committee on the broad musical policy to be followed by the Committee;

(b) The selection of all copy music;

(c) The selection of musical items and the arrangement of programmes.

26. The Sub-Committee shall comprise the Musical Director and such additional Members as the Committee may direct.

FESTIVAL COMMITTEE

27. The Festival Committee (if necessary) shall comprise of Festival Secretary, Treasurer and SIX other members including an elected Chairman, shall be responsible for all aspects of the organisation of the Biddulph and District Music Festival with the support as required of the Committee and the general membership of the choir.

28. Progress reports as appropriate shall be made at intervals not exceeding three months, to the Committee and an Audited Statement of Accounts of the Festival shall be submitted to the Committee not later than Three months after the event.

FINANCE

29. The Annual membership subscription rate shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting. Subscriptions are payable on 1st January and may be paid by three monthly instalments. New choristers will pay subs pro-rata from the date they complete their probation.

30. The financial year of the choir shall terminate on the 30th June.

The financial position of the choir shall be reviewed monthly by the Committee.

31. All choir accounts for the preceding year and the statement of accounts prepared by the Treasurer shall be audited by the choirs appointed auditors before the statement of Accounts is submitted to the Annual General Meeting.

32. Reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred by members on the authorised business of the Choir will be reimbursed at the discretion of the Committee but no ex-gratia payments or honoraria may be awarded to Officers or other members.

33. Professional services to the Choir including those of the Musical Director and Accompanists may be reimbursed by the payment of fees or honoraria at the discretion of the Committee and those honoraria or fees shall be reviewed annually by the Committee at the first committee meeting following the AGM.

ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

34. The constitution and rules of the Choir shall only be altered at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting duly called. No alteration shall be made to the rules that would cause the Choir at any time to cease to be a charity at law and no alteration shall be made to Rule 3, Rule 36 and this Rule without the prior written approval of the Charity Commission.

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

35. A Special General Meeting of the Choir may be called to discuss and consider any urgent or important business of special interest or concern to the members subject to the following;

(a) The General Committee of the Choir at a meeting resolves that any particular matter is outside its competence or jurisdiction to determine.

OR

(b) A proposal signed by a choir member is submitted to the Secretary in writing setting out an item or items to be discussed, such proposal to be signed and

seconded by a choir member and further supported by the signatures of an additional SIX members.

(c) At least fourteen days notice shall be given to the Choir of the date of the holding of the Special General Meeting by which time all members shall be issued with an Agenda for the meeting.

(d) The meeting will normally be chaired by the President of the Choir and shall be subject to Rule 23-QUORUM of this constitution.

DISSOLUTION OF THE CHOIR

36. If, upon the winding up or dissolution of the choir, there remains any property whatsoever after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, the same shall not be distributed among the members of the Choir but shall be given or transferred to some charitable institution or institutions having objects similar to the objects of the Choir, such institution or institutions to be determined by the members of the Choir at or before the time of dissolution and insofar as effect cannot be given to such provision, then to some charitable object.

37. For the avoidance of doubt it is declared that the Biddulph & District Music Festival ("The Festival") is autonomous and its finances administered, kept and are the specific responsibility of the Festival Treasurer for the time being. Monies comprised in such separate accounts as the Festival may from time to time hold, form part of overall choir funds (save that monies expressly donated for the Festival shall only be used for such purpose) and the Festival Committee are responsible to the General Committee for the proper administration of the Festival's affairs and to ensure that the Festival is run on a proper and sound economic basis. The Festival Committee shall not take or permit any action by commission or omission that would involve the Choir in any liability, financial or otherwise.