

HONLEY LADIES CHOIR HANDBOOK

Registered Charity Number 1211647

Honley Ladies Choir is run by its members in order to:-

- Promote high quality choral singing through giving public performances.
- Give members satisfaction and enjoyment through musical achievement.
- Foster a social and community spirit through music.

1. Rehearsals

- a) The Choir shall rehearse on Thursdays (with the exception of holidays) at St Paul's Church, Armitage Bridge: this may be subject to change if our regular venue is unavailable.
- b) Rehearsals will commence at 7.30 p.m. prompt and finish at 9p.m. As a matter of courtesy to our Musical Director and Accompanist and other Choir members, all members are asked to ensure that they are at their place and ready to start singing at 7:30. (Church doors are generally open by 7:00 please use the time between 7:00 and 7:25 or the period after rehearsal to catch up with other Choir members.) Any members who are unavoidably late are asked to quietly take a seat at the back of their section to avoid disturbing other members.
- c) To avoid distractions, any member having a question about the music during rehearsal time is asked to raise their hand to direct the question to the Musical Director so that all members can clearly hear the question and response, rather than asking questions of other Choir members.
- d) Any notices and information will be given to the Choir by a committee member at the end of the rehearsal time.
- e) The Musical Director, with the approval of the General Committee, may schedule extra rehearsals as deemed necessary.

2. Qualifications for Membership

- a) Acceptance as a full member is subject to a satisfactory voice test by the Musical Director on the applicant's third attendance.
- b) New members will be advised of the date of their first official engagement with the Choir, which will allow sufficient time for the member to be provided with uniform and music.
- c) Members will be offered Life Membership of the Choir at the discretion of the committee, having regard for their length of service and their contribution to the Choir.

3. Obligations of Membership

- a) The acceptance of membership entails a commitment. Other than in exceptional circumstances members are expected to attend all rehearsals, concerts and competitions.
- b) A record of attendance will be kept. Any member unable to attend is asked to inform the membership secretary in advance of the rehearsal.
- c) In order to avoid disruptions, any member missing a rehearsal should check with members of their section for any changes / notes on the pieces being practiced before the start of the next rehearsal.
- d) Any member expecting to miss the 2 rehearsals immediately prior to a concert or performance should inform the Musical Director. If the Musical Director considers the member insufficiently rehearsed, she will be asked not to take part.
- e) Each member is expected to observe a high standard of behaviour on all occasions.

f) Any member wishing to resign from the Choir should send a notice of resignation to the Membership Secretary.

4. Subscriptions

a) Members are expected to pay the current annual subscription quarterly by Standing Order on the first day of the months: January, April, July and October or by arrangement with the Treasurer. The amount of the subscription will be determined annually and members will be informed at the Annual General Meeting. A Gift Aid form will be available for members to fill in if they are currently paying tax.

b) In the case of extended illness or other special circumstances, the Choir member should send a letter asking for leave of absence to the Secretary for discussion at the next General Committee Meeting. The General Committee has the right to decide that fees may be waived.

c) If a member has not paid subscriptions 6 months after the due date they will be deemed to have resigned from the Choir.

5. Choir Property

a) Uniforms, binders and music are at all times assets of the Choir. They are only ever on loan to members and must be kept in good condition. *Each piece music is labelled with the members number.*

b) Each new member is currently required to pay a deposit of £30 for their music and £20 for the Choir jacket provided by the Choir

c) When a member leaves the Choir the deposits will be repaid subject to all items being returned in good condition. Scarves and other costume decorations will be held by the wardrobe mistress and handed out prior to a concert. Members must return these in a good condition.

d) If a member is granted a sabbatical or is unable to attend rehearsals for more than 6 months her music and apparel should be returned and her deposit will be refunded. When the member returns to the Choir she should repay the deposit and her music and apparel will be returned.

6. Musical Content

a) In all matters concerning the music sung by the Choir the decision of the Musical Director is final.

b) Decisions regarding guest artists for concerts and other engagements will be made jointly by the General Committee and the Musical Director. No decision regarding engagement, conditions of engagement or fees paid to guest artists or comperes shall be made without the agreement of the General Committee.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE CHOIR

As a registered charity, the Choir must appoint between 3 and 8 trustees to ensure that it is run in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. The trustees delegate general management of the Choir to the Officers and Members of the Choir Committee.

7. Officers of the Choir

The officers of the Choir will be:

Chairman

General Secretary

Membership Secretary

Treasurer

8. General Committee Members

The General Committee will consist of six members of the Choir proposed and seconded by Choir members and elected at the Annual General Meeting. At least 1 trustee must be a member of the committee.

9. Terms and Conditions of Office

- a) Officers and committee members will serve for the period between one Annual General Meeting and the next. They must then stand down or submit themselves for re-election for any office or as an ordinary member for the following period.
- b) Election of trustees, officers and committee members will be by a simple majority of full voting members in attendance at an Annual General Meeting. Only candidates nominated and seconded by full voting members of the Choir will be eligible for election. The closing date for nominations will be 14 days prior to the Annual General Meeting.
- c) In the event of insufficient nominations, late nominations will be accepted at the Annual General Meeting.

10. Entitlement to Vote

- a) Any person accepted as a full member and who is not in arrears in respect of subscriptions payable at the time will be entitled to vote at an Annual General Meeting or an Extraordinary General Meeting.
- b) The Musical Director and/or the Accompanist or any other person receiving fees or other remuneration for their services to the Choir will not be entitled to vote.

11. General Committee Meetings

- a) General Committee Meetings will be held monthly. The venue will be as agreed by the members of the General Committee.
- b) In order to facilitate the business of the Choir, General Committee Meetings require a quorum of five officers or members. If the Chairman is absent a person will be elected to chair the meeting by the members present, always ensuring that a quorum exists.
- c) An officer of the Choir may convene an Emergency Committee Meeting, which should be quorate, in order to deal with an emergency issue.

12. Annual General Meetings

- a) An Annual General Meeting will be held each July for the following purposes:
 - i) to approve the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting.
 - ii) to receive a Chairman's report
 - iii) to receive a Treasurer's report and audited annual statement of accounts
 - iv) to receive a Secretary's report
 - v) to receive a Musical Director's report.
 - vi) to receive a Trustees' annual report
 - vii) to elect trustees for a 3 year term
 - viii) to elect officers for the ensuing year
 - ix) to elect General Committee members for the ensuing year
 - x) to conduct any such business as may have been submitted by any member, who must have

submitted the motion in writing to the Secretary at least fourteen days prior to the Annual General Meeting.

- b) The General Committee shall convene the Annual General Meeting by giving notice to all members at least one calendar month prior to the date of the meeting and issuing the minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting.
- c) All full members of the Choir including the Chairman may vote at a meeting which they are entitled to attend. A motion shall be carried by a simple majority. Should the votes be equal the Chairman will have the casting vote.
- d) All members of the Choir should endeavour to be present at the Annual General Meeting. Apologies for absence should be given to the Committee prior to the meeting.
- e) Ten members or 5% of membership (whichever is the greater number) shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of the Annual General Meeting.

13. Extraordinary General Meetings

In exceptional circumstances an Extraordinary General Meeting may be requested in writing to the Chairman of the General Committee, by a quorum of ten full voting members of the Choir. The Extraordinary General Meeting so requested will be called within 21 days of receipt of the letter by the Chairman and held within a further 28 days. The Choir members will be notified of the date and purpose of the Extraordinary General Meeting at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

14. Finances of the Choir

- a) Books of accounts will be kept by the Treasurer.
- b) Statement of accounts and returns as agreed at the AGM will be sent to the Charities commission within 10 months of the end of the financial year.
- c) In the event of the Choir disbanding for any reason, any remaining monies shall be payable to a charity with similar charitable objectives. The choice of charity will be determined by the General Committee in office at that time.
- d) The dissolution of the Choir will be agreed by a vote on a resolution to disband at a general meeting of Choir members approved by a 75% majority of those voting or by a resolution agreed in writing by all Choir members.

15. General

- a) The General Committee shall have the power to make such decisions as they may deem necessary for the administration of the Choir and to appoint and dismiss all paid officials of the Choir.
- b) All matters not provided for in this handbook shall be decided by the General Committee.
- c) The General Committee will maintain up to date policies and procedures on actions to be taken to maintain Equality and Health & Safety Standards and deal with Complaints or Safeguarding issues.. Copies of these policies are available on the Choir website.
- d) Any ideas and suggestions for alterations to the handbook should be passed on to the Chair for consideration by the committee.
- e) Alterations to this handbook agreed by the committee will then be submitted to the trustees for approval to ensure they comply with the requirements of the Choir Constitution and the Charities Act 2011 before being submitted to general Choir members for approval.