

# **Dover House Singers Community Choir Constitution**

## **1. Name**

The choir is called The Dover House Singers. The name may be shortened to DHS informally.

## **2. Mission statement**

Our mission is to provide a fun and welcoming environment where people can come together to sing, enhance their musical skills, create lasting friendships and share the joy of music with the wider community through performance.

## **3. Rehearsals**

The choir normally rehearses once a week on a Wednesday evening from 8 -9.30pm. The choir meets at The Worth Centre, St Margaret's Church Hall, Putney Park Lane, SW15 5HU. The year will normally be divided into three terms of around 12 weeks and members will be informed of the relevant dates. Occasionally the venue may change and arrangements will be made to relocate or alter timings and the choir will be informed by email.

## **4. Equality**

The choir is committed to equality and diversity, welcoming people of all ages and backgrounds. It will actively seek to act against discrimination on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, age, race, nationality, ethnic heritage or cultural origin, disability, religion or belief or any other aspect of identity which can lead to discrimination.

## **5. Aims and objectives**

Dover House Singers is a community choir with the following aims:

- to build a welcoming and inclusive environment where individuals from all walks of life can come together and connect through the shared joy of singing
- to provide opportunities for members to develop their vocal and musical abilities through regular rehearsals, workshops, and performances
- to create a fun and supportive social network where members can form lasting friendships and enjoy a sense of belonging
- to share the joy of music with the wider community by performing at local events, festivals, and charitable functions.

## **6. Membership**

Membership is open to all adults without the need for an audition. Members are asked to be proactive in encouraging others to join and in promoting the aims and ethos of the choir.

## **7. Membership fees**

Fees will be set annually by the committee, and should be reviewed annually by the committee prior to the AGM.

Termly fees should be paid into the choir bank account at the beginning of each term, by online transfer. Alternatively, members can pay cash on a weekly basis. Members are asked to pay

promptly without the need for reminders. People should not be prohibited from joining the choir by inability to pay, and should talk to the treasurer so that fees can be waived or reduced, if appropriate.

### **8. Attendance**

Members are asked to attend both rehearsals and public performances during the year as often as they can.

### **9. Choir management**

The choir is the responsibility of the organising committee. The committee will ensure the choir is managed in a democratic way, and all committee members shall take collective responsibility for the decisions made at a meeting of the committee.

The committee shall regularly consist of:

Secretary (Honorary Officer)

Treasurer (Honorary Officer)

Membership Secretary

Communications Officer

Publicity Officer

Up to three other committee members, as appropriate, drawn from choir members.

Members can be co-opted into other roles as deemed necessary. The committee can also co-opt sub committees from time to time to take on specific tasks, such as organising social events.

### **10. Terms of office**

In order to maintain a sense of continuity, all officers and committee members serve for a period of two years in the first instance but are eligible for re-election at the AGM in subsequent years. Members are encouraged to volunteer for different roles in order to share the workload.

### **11. Key areas of responsibility**

Musical Director

The Musical Director (or MD) is responsible for the musical direction of the choir. The MD shall be appointed for their values, professionalism in music and choral production, and performance. The MD shall oversee all choir tuition, stage presentation and concert management, as well as other choral activities. The MD will be paid for this tuition, and the fee will be set in agreement with the choir committee, and will reflect the rate set by the Musicians Union. The MD will also encourage members of the choir to contribute expertise and songs and assist the musical development of choir members. The MD shall consult with the committee and liaise with them in decision making.

### Secretary

The Secretary is an honorary position to be appointed from the membership of the choir. The duty of the Secretary is to take and record minutes of all choir meetings. The Secretary will notify committee members of meetings and also co-ordinate the agenda.

### Treasurer

The Treasurer is an honorary position, appointed from the membership of the choir. It is the responsibility of the treasurer to keep the accounts up to date and in good order; to pay invoices promptly (including the fee paid to the MD). The Treasurer must keep the committee informed of the financial position of the organisation and share details with the choir twice a year.

### Membership Secretary

Responsible for welcoming new members, and liaising with the treasurer. They keep the email list of choir members up to date and occasionally contact lapsed members to see if they still wish to receive information.

### Communications Officer

In charge of forwarding relevant and interesting information to members by email and responding to queries from potential new members or other organisations asking the choir to perform.

### Publicity Officer

Will promote and be responsible for raising the profile of the choir, through social media and press and promotional activity. Will also keep the general public informed by publicising various events such as performances.

Other roles filled by members of the choir include librarian, website editor, concert co-ordinator and section leaders.

## **12. Role of the committee**

The committee has the responsibility to ensure the organisation meets its aims and objectives and that members observe the constitution. The committee will also receive the accounts of the choir and decide on fundraising actions and policy. The committee will ensure that activities are carried out and decisions are made in a democratic way and in the best interests of the choir. If necessary, the committee can organise sub-committees to take on specific tasks such as finance or fundraising, and a social /events committee or the organising of a specific event. No member of the committee shall exercise their right to power for the adverse effect of the choir.

## **13. Meetings of the committee**

The Committee shall ordinarily meet to discuss choir business and finance twice a year. However, it can meet as often as required and a meeting can be called at any time by committee members or the Musical Director. The quorum for committee meetings is three committee members.

#### **14. Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

The AGM shall be in the summer of each year. The purpose of the AGM shall be to:

- Elect new honorary officers (or to re-elect)
- To receive the report from the Musical Director
- To receive the statement of accounts from the Treasurer

Matters can be debated at the AGM after prior notice has been to the Secretary or MD prior to the meeting.

#### **15. Extraordinary General Meetings (EGM)**

An EGM can be called in exceptional circumstances, provided the request has been made in writing - proposed and seconded. At least seven days' notice has to be given for any motion to be raised at an EGM. The quorum for an EGM is 15 active members.

#### **16. Member code of conduct**

We are a welcoming and open choir and to make sure everyone can enjoy our rehearsals and concerts, we follow a simple code of conduct:

- Be polite, considerate and respectful to all
- Show respect and courtesy to the Musical Director at all times
- Pay attention and do not distract/disrupt others with private conversations during rehearsals
- Pay subscriptions on time
- Have fun.

Choir members who do not abide by this code of conduct may be encouraged to consider their behaviour, and in exceptional circumstances, asked to leave.

#### **17. Public performances**

All members of the choir should engage in a 'sense of occasion' and conduct themselves in a manner fitting to the occasion and reputation of the choir at all times.

#### **18. Medication issues**

Anyone on medication is expected to take sufficient care of their own welfare.

#### **19. Health and safety**

Members have a duty of care under health and safety law for themselves and others affected by their action. The choir cannot take responsibility for any injury, however caused. If a member has a health and safety issue with a venue then they must speak with a committee member or MD.

#### **20. Public engagement and fees**

Requests for performances should be directed to the Communications Secretary or other committee member who shall seek authorisation from the committee and Musical Director. The choir may perform public concerts in order to fundraise for agreed causes, organisations or for choir funding.

### **21. Issue and use of choir music**

Music will be available on the members section of the website. Generally, library copies are also available for temporary use.

Members will be issued music free of charge as much as possible, paid for from members subscriptions. Members are expected to print their own music and bring all relevant music to each rehearsal.

### **22. Social activity**

The social aspect of the choir is to be encouraged wherever possible. The choir aims to nurture a friendly atmosphere and social meetings are encouraged.

### **23. Fundraising**

The committee or social committee may arrange fundraising events, such as carol singing, during the year. Members of the choir are expected to support as many of these events as possible, by attending events, securing prizes and volunteering to help.

### **24. Winding up the organisation**

In the unlikely event of winding up The Dover House Singers, any balance of funds remaining after all debts have been paid will be distributed to charities of choice. None of the revenue generated by the choir will be shared by the members. DHS is a non-profit organisation.

Dover House Singers  
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