

**Choir Constitution**  
**Upbeat! Ladies Choir and Offbeat! Male Voice Choir**  
**Constitution, Formation Document,**  
**Rules and Regulations.**

## **1 NAME**

The choirs shall be known as Upbeat! Ladies Choir and Offbeat! Male Voice Choir

## **2 REHEARSALS**

The choirs shall normally rehearse once a week:

Tuesday evening from 7.30-9.00 for Offbeat! Male Voice Choir

Thursday evening from 7.30-9.00 for Upbeat! Ladies Choir

Extra, joint choir rehearsals might also be held on Monday afternoons, at the discretion of the Musical Director. Notice of these and start times will be emailed to choir members.

Rehearsals shall be held in Grundisburgh Village Hall, Felgate Way, Grundisburgh, IP13 6TJ, during term time. There will normally be three 12 week terms excluding half terms and holidays. In the event of this venue being unavailable, alternative arrangements will be made to relocate or alter timings.

If a change has to be made then the Secretary or nominated person will contact all members by email to provide an update.

Both choirs have an Accompanist who attends weekly rehearsals.

## **3 EQUALITY**

The Choirs shall be committed to equality in all their functioning, both internally and externally. It will actively seek to act and campaign 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.

In order to maintain clarity, Upbeat! ladies choir will remain as a female only choir, or those who identify as female and Offbeat! male voice choir will remain as a male only choir, or those who identify as male.

## **4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The choirs have been established to meet the following objectives:

- To learn and perform music to enjoy and share with others
- To provide a community group for local community to come together
- To perform publicly for the purposes of entertainment and fundraising for charities
- To perform at community events and functions (E.g weddings)
- To promote choral singing to the general public via concerts and other events

## **5 MEMBERSHIP**

Membership is open to anyone sharing the values of the choirs and members will be encouraged to attend a majority of rehearsals. Members are asked to be proactive in encouraging others to join us and in promoting the objectives and aims of the choirs. The

choirs will be open to all adults aged 18+.

## **6 MEMBERSHIP FEES**

Fees will be initially set termly by the committee and are to be reviewed annually by the committee prior to the AGM.

Emails with due dates for fees will be emailed out prior to the start of each term by the Secretary. All money is to be paid into the choir's account before the beginning of each term, by bank transfer, or cash. Members are asked to pay promptly without the need for reminders. Anyone who has not paid their fees in full by the start of term, will be sent an email in order to resolve non payment.

If a member decides to leave the choir, they will be asked to give notice to the Secretary by email and they will then be removed from any choir circulations.

Leavers will also be required to return all music scores and folder to the Secretary.

They can request to rejoin the choir, but may need to be added to a waiting list until a space becomes available for them.

## **7 ATTENDANCE**

Members are asked to attend at both rehearsals and public performances during the year as often as they can. If they are unable to attend a rehearsal and/or performance then members are asked to let the Secretary know in advance. Members are required to sign in each week.

## **8 CHOIR MANAGEMENT**

The choirs shall be 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 committee meetings.

The committee will be responsible for appointing the Musical Director.

The committee shall regularly consist of:

- Musical Director - currently Carol McConnell-Theobald (Jopling)
- Chair (Honorary Officer) - currently Graham Boshier
- Vice Chair (Honorary Officer) - currently Sarah Ray
- Secretary (Honorary Officer) - currently Helen Gosling
- Treasurer (Honorary Officer) - currently Julie Vowles
- Publicity Officer (Honorary Officer) - currently Sara Brook
- Events Secretary (Honorary Officer) - currently Anna Greenwood

The committee can co-opt further members at their discretion and as deemed necessary. The committee can also co-opt sub committees from time to time to take on specific tasks such as the organising of fundraising ventures and a social/events committee.

## **9 TERMS OF OFFICE**

In order to maintain a sense of continuity, all officers and committee members shall serve for a period of one year in the first instance but be eligible for re-election at the AGM in subsequent years.

## **10 AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

### **Musical Director (MD)**

Shall have the responsibility for the musical direction of the choirs. 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 honorary officers of the committee and liaise with them in decision making.

### **Chair and Vice Chair**

The role of the Chairs is an honorary position appointed from the membership of the choir. The Chairs must be of good standing and promote the interests of the choirs. They shall, jointly, be the official spokespersons of the choirs in consultation with the MD. The Chairs (or one of them) will preside at meetings of the committee and sub committees (where possible) and direct members through the agenda and maintain good order in all choir proceedings. They will oversee the democratic decision making of the choirs. The Chairs will also encourage the active participation of everyone in fundraising and social activities of the choirs.

### **Secretary**

The Secretary is an honorary position to be appointed from the membership of the choirs. The duty of the Secretary is to be a point of contact for the public and also to take and record minutes of meetings and also provide them with notice of agenda. The Secretary will notify choir members of rehearsals and singing events. The Secretary will also write communications on behalf of the choir.

The Secretary will also be responsible for enrolling new members, sending notice to pay termly choir fees and providing and checking weekly registers. Also to liaise with the Treasurer re revenue from said fees. He/She will maintain a list of membership, which will be securely kept and will manage members joining, along with a database of members' email addresses.

The Secretary will collate, store and label sheet music where necessary and distribute to choir members.

### **Treasurer**

The Treasurer is an honorary position, appointed from members 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) and to form a good professional relationship with possible sponsors. The Treasurer must keep the committee informed of the financial position of the choirs.

### **PR and Publicity Officer**

Will promote and be responsible for raising the profile of the choir, through the choir website and such means as editorial in local newspapers and other forms of social media, including Facebook. Will also keep the general public informed by publicising various events such as concerts and any fundraising events taking place during the choir year.

## **Events Secretary**

To oversee the organisation of concerts, performances and social events, or the organising of a specific event.

## **11 ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE**

The committee has the responsibility to ensure the choirs meet their 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 choirs. 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.

## **12 MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The committee shall ordinarily meet to discuss choir business and finance once every half term. However, the Committee can meet as often as required and a meeting can be called at any time by the Secretary, Chair or MD. The quorum for committee meetings is five committee members.

## **13 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The choir year runs from August to July. The AGM shall normally be held in August or September of each year. The purpose of the AGM shall be to:

- To elect honorary officers (or re-elect)
- To receive the report from the MD and or Chairperson
- To receive the Secretary's report
- To receive the statement of accounts from the Treasurer
- To decide the amount of membership subscription
- To discuss and decide on matters received in writing by the Secretary at least 7 days prior to the published date of the AGM.

Nominations for Honorary Committee Members must be sent to the Secretary at least 7 days prior to the published AGM date. Nominations must clearly state which position the nominated person is being proposed for and include the name of a seconding member.

Voting at the AGM will be by a show of hands of all eligible choir members in attendance. In the event of an equal number of votes being cast the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson shall have the casting vote.

Matters can be debated at the AGM after prior notice has been given in writing to the Secretary at least seven days prior to the meeting. The quorum for an AGM is 20 active members.

## **14 EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETINGS (EGM)**

An EGM can be called at any time provided the request has been made in writing and 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 20 active members.

## **15 MEMBER CODE OF CONDUCT AND ATTIRE**

Each member of the choirs shall conduct themselves in keeping with the expected standards as stated by the Committee and as laid down by the choirs constitution, rules and regulations. Members shall attire in accordance with the dress policy for the choir performances.

Members are asked not to be under the influence of drink or drugs at a rehearsal or public performance. Any member thought to be so may not be permitted to participate.

When engaged in choir business no member shall take it upon themselves to make any official complaint to the hiring organisation. If a member has a concern or grievance with the booking agent or venue then the member will bring the issue to the attention of the Secretary who will bring the matter before the committee for consideration.

## **16 PUBLIC PERFORMANCES**

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

## **17 MEDICATION ISSUES**

Members taking regular preventative medication (eg for epilepsy or diabetes) MUST inform the Secretary and also must ensure that this medication is up to date and taken as necessary prior to performance. Anyone on medication is expected to take sufficient care of their own welfare.

## **18 HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Members have a duty of care under health and safety law for themselves and others affected by their action. Members will always be notified of H&S issues at a performance venue. 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 the choir Secretary. H&S matters will be dealt with by a member of the choir committee and should not be dealt with individually by a member of the choir.

## **19 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND FEES**

Requests for performances should be directed to the Secretary who shall seek authorisation from the committee and MD.

The choir may perform public concerts in order to raise funds for agreed causes, organisations or for choir funding. The choir will attempt to support sister organisations. Fees and donations should be paid to the choir Treasurer by the organising body.

## **20 ISSUE AND USE OF CHOIR MUSIC**

Members will be issued music, free of charge as much as possible, paid for from members subscriptions.

All music scores and folders will need to be returned to the Secretary when a member leaves the choir.

## **21 SOCIAL ACTIVITY**

The social aspect of the choir is to be encouraged wherever possible. The choir as an organisation is to nurture a friendly atmosphere and social meetings are to be encouraged. In addition, if choir trips are to be organised, members will be asked to pay towards the cost of such trips.

## **22 MASSED CHORAL PARTICIPATION**

From time to time, the choirs may be asked to participate in combined concerts or massed choral events. Participation at such an event is subject to the consent of the MD and the committee and this decision will be taken in light of the choirs diary and financial position.

## **23 FUNDRAISING**

The committee or social committee may arrange a number of fundraising events during the year and members of the choir are expected to support as many of these events as possible.

Choir members shall be invited to put forward their choice of charity to be supported by the choirs at concerts. This will be discussed and agreed by the committee.

## **24 WINDING UP THE ORGANISATION**

In the unlikely event of winding up the organisation any revenue after debtors will be distributed to our charities of choice. None of the revenue made by the choir will be shared by the members. Upbeat! Ladies and Offbeat! Male Voice choirs are non profit making choirs and any profits made after choir costs, will go to a designated charity.

Upbeat! Ladies and Offbeat! Male Voice Choirs  
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