



SOUTH DEVON CHOIR

CONSTITUTION

1 **TITLE** The Choir shall be called the 'South Devon Choir', a Charitable Trust registered with the Charities' Commission.

2 **OBJECTIVES** The objectives of the Choir shall be:–

- (i) to educate the public in the arts and sciences, and, in particular, the art and science of choral music by the presentation of concerts and other activities
- (ii) to assist and further such charitable institutions and charitable persons as the Committee shall from time to time determine

In furtherance of the above objectives, the Choir shall have the power to:–

- (iii) raise funds and to invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donations and loans, provided that the Choir shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds for its charitable objectives
- (iv) do all such lawful things as are necessary to achieve the above objectives, or any one of them.

3 **MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHOIR** There shall be four categories of Membership of the Choir:–

SINGING MEMBER A Singing Member is a member of the Choir who regularly attends rehearsals and participates in concerts of the Choir. A Singing Member shall have the right to:–

- a) attend all meetings of the Choir
- b) vote on any matter concerning the Choir
- c) be a member of the Choir Committee

FRIEND OF THE CHOIR A Friend of the Choir is a person who is interested in furthering the Objectives of the Choir. He or she shall not have the right to vote on any issue concerning the Choir nor to be a member of the Committee. A Friend shall be entitled to attend the Choir's Annual General Meeting but not to vote on any issue raised at the said Meeting. A Friend may, at the discretion of the Committee, be acknowledged in any publicity used by the Choir.

VICE-PRESIDENT A Vice-President is a person who is interested in furthering the Objectives of the Choir through financial support or other assistance. A Vice-President shall have the same rights as a Singing Member and also recognition, at the discretion of the of the Committee, to be acknowledged in any publicity used by the Choir.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBER The Committee, by unanimous decision, may decide to confer Honorary Life Membership on a person who has made an outstanding contribution to the work or membership of the Choir. Such Member shall be exempt from the payment of subscriptions and enjoy the same rights as a Singing Member.

4 **MANAGEMENT** The Choir shall be managed by a Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting.

5 **COMMITTEE** The Committee shall consist of a Chairperson, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer, acting as Officers, plus six other members, one of whom shall act as Vice Chairperson. All members of the Committee shall be elected by ballot if necessary, to hold office for a period of three years. One Officer and two general members shall retire each year by rotation but shall then be available for re-election. All members of the Committee shall be Trustees of the Choir.

- 6 **DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE** It shall be the duty of the Committee to safeguard the interest of the Choir and to manage the affairs of the Choir on behalf of the Members. The Committee shall meet monthly, normally on the second Monday of each month during singing terms and/or otherwise by agreement. In the event of a vote being required and tied, the Chairperson shall have the casting vote.

The Committee shall appoint a Director of Music and an Accompanist at any time for a one- or two-year period, but the appointments shall be ratified at the Annual General Meeting, or at a Special General Meeting if an appointment is to commence before that event.

No member of the Committee shall be paid a salary or fee or supplied with goods or services at a cost to the Choir in any circumstances whatsoever. However, this shall not prevent the member obtaining reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred on behalf of the Choir. The Committee shall have the power to co-opt additional, non-voting members of the Committee if order to carry out its management functions.

- 7 **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** The Choir's year shall end on 31 August and the Annual General Meeting shall be held on a date in January the following year, as determined by the Committee. At least seven days' notice of the date proposed shall be given to all Members. At this Meeting, the Honorary Treasurer shall submit accounts and a balance sheet duly examined by a suitably qualified person previously appointed by the Committee. The Meeting shall elect Officers and Members of the Committee where vacancies exist.

- 8 **SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING** The Honorary Secretary shall convene a Special General Meeting on receiving either:–

- (i) a request signed by ten or more Members identifying the specific purpose of the Meeting, or
- (ii) instructions from the Committee so to do.

Seven days notice of any such Meeting, stating the specific purpose of the Meeting, shall be given to all Members except where alteration of this Constitution is proposed (see Clause 16).

- 9 **QUORUM** The Quorum for meetings of the Choir shall be ten or one tenth of the number of Members, whichever is the greater. The Quorum for meetings of the Committee shall be four members of the Committee, including at least one Officer.

- 10 **SUBSCRIPTIONS** The annual subscription rates applicable to the various classes of Choir Membership shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting. A Singing Member, in addition to the full annual subscription, shall purchase or hire/his or her own copy of the work to be performed in which he or she is taking part. In extenuating or special circumstances, the Committee may approve a reduced fee or put in place special arrangements to pay the full fee by instalments. Where a new Singing Member joins the Choir after 31st December half the Annual Subscription shall apply. Members under the age of 18 on the day of the first September rehearsal shall be entitled to free membership for that Season.

- 11 **ATTENDANCE AT REHEARSALS** A record of Singing Members' attendance at rehearsals shall be kept and the Committee shall have the power to prohibit a member from taking part in a performance in the event of unsatisfactory attendance at rehearsals.

- 12 **ORDERING OF GOODS** Members are forbidden to order any goods on credit or enter into any engagement in the name of the Choir unless this has been previously authorised by the Committee.

- 13 **EXPULSION OF MEMBERS** If at any time the Committee unanimously decides that a Member has seriously acted against the interests of the Choir, a letter shall be sent inviting that Member to withdraw from the Choir by a specific date. In default of such withdrawal by the due date, the reason for the expulsion of the Member shall be presented to the Members at a Special General Meeting held within fourteen days of the specified withdrawal date. At such meeting, the

Member concerned shall be allowed to offer an explanation of his or her conduct orally or in writing. If, thereupon, two thirds of the Members present shall by ballot vote for his or her expulsion, he or she shall immediately cease to be a Member of the Choir

- 14 **DISSOLUTION OF THE CHOIR** The Choir shall only be dissolved by resolution of at least five sixths of the Members present and voting at a Special General Meeting called for the purpose of considering such dissolution. In the event of dissolution, any balance of cash remaining in hand, after the realisation of assets and payment of debts, shall be handed over to a charity or charities as the Members present decide.
- 15 **INTERPRETATION OF THE RULES** The Committee shall have the power to decide the answers to such questions as may arise out of interpretation of this Constitution and their decision shall be final.
- 16 **ALTERATION TO THE CONSTITUTION** Any proposed alteration to this Constitution shall receive the assent of two thirds of the Members present and voting at the Meeting containing the proposal, whether Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting. Any resolution for alteration of the Constitution shall be received by the Honorary Secretary at least twenty-one days before the date of any such Meeting. At least fourteen days notice of such a Meeting shall be given by the Honorary Secretary to the Members together with a notice of the alterations proposed, notwithstanding that no alteration shall be made to Clause 2 (Objectives), Clause 14 (Dissolution of the Choir) or this Clause until the approval of the Charity Commissioners has been obtained. No alteration shall be made which would have the effect of causing the Choir to cease to be a charity in law.

(This Constitution was approved by a Special General Meeting on 25 April 2007 and approved by the Charity Commissioners on 30 May 2007).