

THE CONSTITUTION

1. NAME

The name of the organisation is Manchester Community Choir, called 'the Choir' in this Constitution.

2. AIM

To establish and run a community choir accessible to all, irrespective of musical experience.

3. VALUES

The Choir is not aligned to any political party or religious denomination. The Committee and the Choir performances reflect the commitment of the Choir to issues relevant to the local and national community, which are concerned with equality, humanity and respect, and which celebrate the rich diversity of our local and national community. The elected Committee and its contracted Directors will conduct its business in ways which reflect and are consistent with these values.

4. OBJECTIVES AND POWERS

- a) To give performances
- b) To employ Musical Directors, commission work, hire premises and undertake any other work to further the aim of the Choir.
- c) To carry out the activities of the choir without discriminating against any individual on any grounds, including race, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, physical or mental ability, and with respect for all members.
- d) To receive monies and other forms of assistance only to further the aim of the Choir.

5. MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

- a) Membership is open to any individual over the age of 16, who supports the aim of the Choir. Musical experience is not a condition of membership, and the Choir will not audition prospective members.
- b) No individual employed by the Choir will be eligible for membership.
- c) The Treasurer, Membership Secretary or a nominated Officer of the Committee, will keep a full record of all members and subscriptions paid
- d) Prospective members will join the Choir by completing a subscription form and paying the subscription fee.
- e) Any member whose membership is terminated by the Committee shall have the right of appeal to the next General Meeting or Annual General Meeting, whichever is the sooner.
- f) Only members who have paid their subscriptions will be allowed to vote at the AGM or other General Meeting.
- g) The membership year will run from September of each year. New members joining during the year will pay a pro rata subscription rounded to the nearest third.
- h) The Committee will decide the annual subscription rate before the beginning of each membership year. It will be based on keeping costs as low as possible for members, and offering lower rates for low income and unwaged members.

6. MEETINGS

- a) The Secretary will arrange for written record of all meetings to be kept, and will circulate minutes to all Committee members and the Musical Director. Minutes of the AGM will be circulated to all members.
- b) Minutes will be made available to all members of the Choir at Choir rehearsals.
- c) Any proposed changes to the Constitution or proposal to wind up the Choir will be posted to all members at least 14 days before the meeting at which the proposal is to be discussed. Such proposals must be agreed by three-quarters of those present and eligible to vote by way of a simple majority.
- d) Any other matters put to the vote at any meeting will be decided by a simple majority of those present and eligible to vote.
- e) In the event of a tied vote at any meeting, the Chair of the meeting will have an additional casting vote.
- f) Voting will usually be by a show of hands, unless a proposal to use a secret ballot is proposed, seconded and passed by the meeting.
- g) The Annual General Meeting will be held in the spring term of each membership year. The secretary, or other committee member will ensure that all choir members have written notice of the meeting no less than fourteen days before it is due.
- h) The business of the AGM will include
 - Election of Committee Members and Officers
 - Financial report
 - Other Officers Report
 - Musical Director's report
 - Any formal proposals submitted to the Secretary in writing to be received at least 3 days before the meeting
- i) A General Meeting can be called by the Secretary at the request of the Committee, or by at least 7 members.
- j) A written notice of any special General Meeting, and the agenda, will be sent to each member to be posted no less than 14 days before the date of that meeting.
- k) The quorum for all General Meetings, including the AGM will be ten members or one quarter of the current membership, whichever is the greater.
- l) Rehearsals and meetings will as far as possible be held in venues which provide barrier free access.
- m) Committee meetings can be called at the request of the Chair or at least three Committee members. All Committee members will be notified at least 7 days before the meeting.
- n) A Committee meeting will be held at least once in every two months.
- o) The quorum for a Committee meeting is four committee members, or half the number of Committee members plus one if the committee falls below 10. For a quorum to be achieved, at least two officers must be present.

7. COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

- a) The Committee will comprise five Officers: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Membership Secretary and Treasurer, with up to 15 additional Committee Members.
- b) Officers and Committee members will be elected at the AGM.
- c) Any member can volunteer to serve on the Committee at the AGM, and all members will be expected to help with the running of the choir from time to time.
- d) All members of the Committee will retire at each AGM. Any individual will be eligible for re-election, except that no member can fill the same Officer's post for more than three

consecutive years.

- e) The Committee can co-opt any member as a full Committee member to fill an Officer vacancy on the Committee until the next AGM. Any such period of service will not count towards the maximum time as specified above (d).
- f) The Committee can establish working groups or sub committees to deal with specific aspects of running the choir, provided that
 - any working group consists of at least three members, including one Committee member where considered necessary by the Committee
 - all proposals made by working groups shall be subject to approval by the full Committee
- g) The Committee, or any working group, can invite any non members with special expertise, to attend Committee or working group meetings, although they will not have voting rights. This may include employees of the choir, or representatives of funding bodies.
- h) In the event of an officer or Committee member losing the confidence of the Committee or the membership, problems will have been discussed with them, which may result in a verbal request to refrain from that behaviour.
For a more serious breach of the Constitution, or behaviour not in accordance with the values of the Choir, this will be put in writing. A second verbal request may also be followed by a written request. If no change in behaviour takes place, or the problems still persist, the Committee can take a vote of no confidence in that member and ask them to leave the Committee.
Where the behaviour, or problems are such that there is no alternative but to act immediately, and there is not time for verbal or written requests, the Committee may convene an emergency meeting for the express purpose of determining whether or not a vote of no confidence should be taken, and the person be asked to leave the Committee.
The decision will be recorded and minutes of the meeting will be open to all members except where personal matters are discussed. In the event of the vote not being unanimous, at least 75% of the vote will be required.

8. FINANCE

- a) The Committee will open and maintain a bank account in the name of the Choir. All monies will be paid into the account.
- b) Any money paid out in the name of the Choir in excess of £25 will only be paid by cheque from the bank account. The Committee will decide and the Treasurer will instruct the bank from time to time which signatures can be accepted. No cheque will be valid without at least two signatures. No cheque will be signed before all other details are completed without the express permission of the full Committee.
- c) Sums of £25 or less may be paid in cash on the authority of the Treasurer and one other officer.
- d) No Committee member will derive any financial benefit from the group, other than the payment of reasonable expenses, which may include travelling and dependent care expenses, for them to take part in Committee activity, as agreed by Committee.
- e) Any Committee member who carries out an activity agreed beforehand by the Committee, will not be personally liable for debts, and will be entitled to be indemnified from the Choir's funds, provided that no payment will be made, or obligations entered into which cannot be met from the choir's funds.
- f) A copy of the Choir's most recent bank statements will be made available to any member on request.
- g) The Choir's financial year will run from 1st September to 31st August.
- h) Each AGM will receive a written financial statement for the preceding year, audited by a competent independent person chosen by the committee, but not a member of the Committee.

9. CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

- a) Changes to the Constitution can be made at the AGM or a General Meeting called specifically for the purpose, except that no changes can be made to the Aims, or the Winding Up sections of the Constitution.
- b) Any member of the Choir can propose and second a change to any other part of the Constitution by writing to the Secretary, at least 21 days before the meeting at which the proposal is to be discussed.

10. WINDING UP

- a) The Choir can only be wound up by a vote at a General Meeting called in accordance with Section 5 above.
- b) If the proposal to wind up the Choir is passed, and after settling all proper debts and obligations, including refund of grant to funding bodies, there are any assets remaining, these shall not be given to any member of the Choir. Instead they shall be transferred to another organisation agreed by the meeting which passes the resolution to wind up the Choir. Any body put forward as a potential recipient should be charitable and in keeping with the ethos of the choir, i.e. not a registered political or religious body.

This Constitution was adopted at the AGM of the Manchester Community Choir on 17th November 2002

	Name	Signature	Date
Chair			
Vice Chair			
Secretary			
Membership Secretary			
Treasurer			