

Raise Your Voices Constitution – Revised version approved April 23rd 2026 at the AGM

1) TITLE

The name of the Choir shall be 'Raise Your Voices', hereinafter referred to as the Choir.

2) OBJECT

The object of the Choir shall be to offer opportunities for its Members to participate in a cappella group singing primarily within the Choir's home base of Wirksworth.

3) MEMBERSHIP

i) The Members of the Choir shall be those who enrol with the Choir and who pay an initial membership subscription followed by a pay per session at the appropriate rate whenever they attend Choir rehearsals. Any proposed changes to the weekly subscription rate shall be proposed by the Steering Group and shall be determined by a majority vote of at least 30 submitted by those present at the Choir's Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting, which may be held during one of the Choir's weekly rehearsals. Votes may include proxy votes which have been submitted beforehand to the Chair of the meeting, who will cast the proxy votes at their discretion.

4) STEERING GROUP

A Steering Group will be responsible for the administration of the Choir's activities and finances on behalf of the Choir Membership. The Steering Group will consist of a Co-ordinator for Communications, Social Media and PR, a Treasurer and up to five other Choir Members, as agreed at the Annual General Meeting 2019.

The Steering Group shall be elected by, and out of, the Choir's Membership from those aged over the age of 18 at the Annual General Meeting.

There is no set period for Steering Group members to serve. Annual election and/or re-election will take place with the opportunity for any Choir member to put themselves forward at that time.

If for any reason a Steering Group Member wishes to resign or is unable to contribute to the Steering Group during their year of 'Office', another Choir member may be co-opted until the next Annual General Meeting.

5) POWERS

In furtherance of the Choir object, but not otherwise, the Steering Group may exercise the following powers in consultation with the Choir Members:

ii) Power to contract with such individuals (who shall not be Members of the Steering Group) as are necessary for the proper pursuit of the objects.

iii) Power to make donations from profits to local charities or similar local causes in accordance with the decisions of Choir Members whilst ensuring that sufficient Choir funds remain available to sustain the Choir's activities, as described within this constitution. The charities, causes and the amount to be donated shall be determined by a majority vote of at least 30 Members amongst those present at the Choir's Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting, which may be held during one of the Choir's weekly rehearsals.

iii) Power to do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the Choir object.

6) CONDUCTOR/MUSICAL DIRECTOR

The Choir shall appoint a Conductor/Musical Director who will be expected to be in attendance at Steering Group meetings.

7) MANAGEMENT

The Steering Group will be responsible for the control of finance on behalf of the Choir Membership and will co-ordinate arrangements for rehearsals, concerts and other events.

The Steering Group shall meet at least two times each year.

Choir Members will have an opportunity to raise any issues or ideas for consideration at any Choir rehearsal. Similarly, the Steering Group will present any recommendations to the Choir either at rehearsals or at the at the Choir's Annual General Meeting and/or Special General Meeting. A majority vote of at least 30 Choir Members, including any proxy votes submitted beforehand to the Chair of the meeting, shall determine whether proposals are taken forward. Any proposal must meet the Choir's object, as set out in this constitution, and must be capable of implementation through a realistic, practical action plan.

8) FINANCE

- a) The financial year shall end on 31 January.
- b) A banking account shall be operated in the name of the Choir and cheques shall be signed by any two of the Treasurer, the Co-ordinator for Communications, Social Media and PR, and two other nominated Steering Group Members.
- c) Sufficient funds shall be maintained within the banking account to cover the Choir's liabilities and rehearsal/performance plans
- d) The Choir may receive donations, grants in aid and financial guarantees.
- e) Tickets for any or all of its concerts and other events may be offered for sale to the public.
- f) The income and property of the Choir, whencesoever derived, shall be applied primarily towards promoting the object of the Choir as set forth above and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred either directly or indirectly to any Members of the Choir except in payment of legitimate expenses. Donations to local charities or similar local causes may only be made from profits from concerts and events, and not from session subscriptions, in accordance with the decisions of Choir Members.
- g) In line with the current bank mandate, online payments will be actioned by the treasurer and approved by another designated Steering Group member, and two designated Steering Group members/signatories are required to sign cheques.

9) REHEARSALS

Rehearsals shall be held weekly and at such other times as the Choir and the Conductor/Director of Music shall determine.

10) HEALTH AND SAFETY

Raise Your Voices is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for all those involved in musical activities it organises.

The Steering Group will ensure the conditions of hire are met for venues used for RYV concerts and events, particularly with regard to health and safety. If required, a risk assessment, with appropriate mitigating actions, will be provided and implemented by the Steering Group, to reduce the risk of harm to individuals and property. However participants at choir hosted events will be advised to take responsibility for their own safety and that of those around them.

The Choir has a current Public Liability Insurance Policy in place, which is renewed annually.

The Choir has a Privacy Policy in place and adheres to the UK General Data Protection Regulation [GDPR] introduced Post Brexit, which works alongside the EU Data Protection Act 2018.

11) GENERAL MEETING

Within three months of the end of each financial year the Members shall hold an Annual General Meeting of which at least 14 days' notice shall have been given.

12) ACCOUNTS

The financial accounts shall be independently examined and then submitted to the Choir Members at the Annual General Meeting.

13) ALTERATIONS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The constitution may be altered by a majority vote of at least 30 Members, including proxy votes, submitted by those present and voting at any General Meeting provided that fourteen days notice of the proposed alteration has been sent to all Members.

14) DISSOLUTION

In the event of the Choir being wound up, any assets remaining upon dissolution, after the payment of proper debts and liabilities, shall be transferred to a charitable institution or institutions that will use these assets to help promote general health and wellbeing by offering opportunities for participation in singing and/or musical activities.