

Halesowen Orchestra Handbook

1. Introduction

The Halesowen Orchestra's (HO) constitution (available on website) contains the legal basis for the establishment and organization of the orchestra as an Unincorporated Charitable Organization. According to section 12(1)), the charity Trustees (Committee) are allowed to "make rules or bye-laws for the conduct of their business". This Handbook comprises those "rules and bye-laws", describing how HO is organised and run.

This Handbook is available to all HO members via the orchestra's website. Changes can only be made by the orchestra's trustees, after consultation with members. It must be consistent with the provisions of the orchestra's constitution and should be reviewed at least every two years.

Comments from members on the Handbook are always welcome. Please email to: secretary@halesowenorchestra.co.uk and any comments received will be taken into account when the Handbook is revised.

2. Purpose

The orchestra exists:

- i. To enable a group of local amateur musicians to gather and play as an orchestra, for the development of expertise.
- ii. To advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of the art and science of orchestral music in all its aspects by the presentation of public orchestral concerts.
- iii. For such other purposes as shall be exclusively charitable as the Trustees may from time to time decide.

3. Membership

- i. The members of HO are the Orchestral Players who have paid the termly subscription at the appropriate rate, as determined and announced by the Trustees. All subscriptions are payable two weeks after the email announcement.
- ii. The Trustees have the power to refuse to accept the subscription, and hence membership, of any player for whom there is not a vacancy or who is not of a sufficiently high playing standard.
- iii. The Trustees have the power to exempt an individual member from the requirement to pay a subscription on grounds of hardship.
- iv. All members have equal voting rights.
- v. The Trustees have the power to give, from time to time, concessions to Orchestral Players as they may decide. These might be in the form of a reduced subscription rate for members joining part way through the year, for example.

4. Officers and Committee (Trustees)

- i. The management of HO is in the hands of a Committee consisting of Trustees: at least five members elected by and out of the Society's members

at the Annual General Meeting. At each annual general meeting a third of Elected trustees shall retire and be eligible for re-election, for up to 3 terms, each term being for up to 3 years (ie serve for a maximum of 9 years).

- ii. they shall hold office for up to 3 years, and be eligible for re-election at the next Annual General Meeting.
- iii. The Trustees will make its own arrangements for meetings, and will share out duties to suit its members. A chairman, treasurer and secretary will be appointed. Defined tasks or functions may also be delegated to other members of HO, who may be co-opted to the Committee of Trustees, or their sub-committees.
- iv. The Music Director is not a Trustee, but is entitled to attend all meetings of the Trustees except when his/her position is being discussed.

5. Management

All the arrangements for the concerts and other events and the control of finance shall be in the hands of the Trustees, whose responsibilities shall include:

- i. Proposal of changes to the Constitution
- ii. Appointment of Music Director, to be subject to a 1 year probationary period and then renewable year on year subject to a satisfactory outcome of an annual review under the conditions set out in the original application document.
- iii. Choice of repertoire, in consultation with the Musical Director
- iv. Setting subscription levels, authorising expenses, operating the orchestra's bank account
- v. Booking venues for rehearsals and concerts
- vi. Booking extras for concerts
- vii. Borrowing and hiring of music
- viii. Concert management, including front-of-house arrangements and refreshments at concerts
- ix. Marketing
- x. Production of publicity material
- xi. Press releases
- xii. Set up and maintenance of a web-site
- xiii. Maintenance of the database of members
- xiv. Appointment of leader
- xv. Confirmation or acceptance of new players
- xvi. Determination of seating positions
- xvii. Organisation of elections

6. Orchestral music parts

HO's librarian sources and hires orchestral parts, when available, from Royal Birmingham Conservatoire's Music Library (as she is alumni), from Library of Birmingham or directly from the publisher (the latter two incurring hire fees). When possible, music is made available in advance of the start of term, but players should only take their parts away after signing out for them. Players are urged to take good care of the music, as heavy fines may be incurred for missing or damaged music (and the orchestra's reputation is jeopardized). Hired parts are sometimes out of print. Music should be returned to the designated collection point immediately after each concert (or at the rehearsal beforehand, by any members unable to play at the concert), or, when circumstance preclude either of the above, to the librarian, as soon as possible, so that the complete sets can be returned to the library.

7. Equal Opportunities

- i. No individual shall be excluded from membership of the Society or debarred from any official Trustee role on the grounds of sex, race, colour, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability or political affiliation.
- ii. This does not remove the requirement for all playing members to be of a sufficiently high playing standard (see 3. Membership above).

8. Finance

- i. The Society shall receive donations, grants in aid, and financial guarantees. Tickets for any or all of its concerts and other events shall be offered for sale to the public.

9. Annual General Meeting

- i. Within 6 months of the end of each financial year the members shall be summoned to an Annual General Meeting of which at least 21 days' notice in writing shall be given to all members.
- ii. The Committee shall present to each AGM the report and accounts of the orchestra for the preceding year.
- iii. Nominations for Elected Trustees proposed and seconded by members of HO must be made in writing to the Secretary of the Trustees before the start of the AGM. If the number of nominations exceed that of vacancies, an election shall be held
- iv. The Trustees will be from both the string and the woodwind/brass sections of the orchestra.

10. Special (Extraordinary) General Meeting

A Special General Meeting (also known as an Extraordinary General Meeting) may be called for by the Trustees **or** upon written request to the Secretary signed by at least 10 members of the Society, with at least 21 days' written notice, stating the business to be discussed.

11. Procedure at General Meetings

- i. The chairman shall act as such at general meetings of the orchestra. If the chairman is absent, the members present shall choose one of their number to be chairman of the general meeting before any other business is transacted.
- ii. Every matter shall be determined by a majority vote of the members of the Society present and voting on the question, except that the chairman's own vote shall be reserved for use as a casting vote in the case of equality of the other votes cast.
- iii. The secretary or other person appointed by the Trustees shall keep a full record of proceedings at every general meeting of the Society.

12. Policies

The following policies are available in the Governance section of the orchestra's website:

- i. Privacy Notice
- ii. Safeguarding Policy

*Endorsed by a vote of members at an Extraordinary General Meeting
held on 20th March, 2023*

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