

The Wellbeing Community Choir



The Wellbeing Community Choir Constitution:

a not-for-profit community group based in Birmingham and Solihull.

1. Our Purpose

The Wellbeing Community Choir takes a holistic approach to promoting and maintaining good mental and physical health through singing and peer support. It is a choir open to the whole community, and particularly individuals suffering with, or recovering from, a mental illness or chronic medical disability. The choir also counts within its members: friends and family of those suffering with mental illness, carers, healthcare professionals, and any members of the community that can benefit by improving their health through song and social interaction.

2. Our objectives

Our objectives are:

- To nurture a supportive, friendly environment to aid mental and physical wellbeing for our members.
- To offer structure to our members' lives by having regular rehearsals and performances.
- To collaboratively create music under the direction of a professional choirmaster that members can work towards and feel proud of being part of.
- To provide a creative outlet for our members.
- To create a group open to all, where all of our members are treated equally, following the philosophy of 'every member counts'.
- To take song to places that have little to no access to live music, such as hospital wards and old people's homes.
- To raise mental health awareness by performing at public events.
- To reduce stigma around mental health by presenting it in a positive light to the wider community.
- To proactively recruit new members with mental health/health issues using our links within the community and advertising the benefits that the group can bring.
- To create a network to celebrate our individual and collective successes, such as milestones in recovery.
- To have fun and create music!

An additional strategic objective is to build momentum and become self-funding by 2017. Please refer to 'The Wellbeing Community Choir – 3 Year Plan' document.

3. Our membership

3.1. Members

Our membership is made up of:

- Current and recovering mental/physical health service users and those with chronic conditions.
- Friends and family of those suffering with mental/physical/chronic illnesses.
- Carers of those who suffer from mental/physical/chronic illnesses.
- Current and ex-healthcare professionals.
- Those with chronic health conditions
- ... and any members of the community that can benefit by improving their health through song...

in the Birmingham and Solihull area.

In short, anyone can join the wellbeing community choir, providing that they live, work or are receiving healthcare within the Birmingham or Solihull Local Authority.

The group will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sexuality, disability, religious or political belief, marital status or age.

3.2. Joining the choir

To join the choir, a new member simply has to turn up at one of our rehearsals at the times and venues below, and make themselves known to the choirmaster:

Mondays 5:30 – 7pm
The Fordbridge Centre,
Nineacres Road,
Fordbridge
Solihull
B37 5DD

Tuesdays 5:30 – 7pm
BSMHFT, Unit 1, B1 Building
50 Summer Hill Road,
Birmingham
B1 3RB

Alternatively, if a new member wishes to get in touch to discuss joining, they can contact The Wellbeing Choir via:

Email – thewellbeingchoir@outlook.com

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Wellbeing-Community-Choir-Birmingham-and-Solihull/225269190871260?fref=ts>

Phone/Text – Keely Anne Hill, Treasurer – 0784 192 4289

For new members that are nervous about attending, a buddy may be arranged to meet them prior to a rehearsal in order to accompany them on their first rehearsal.

All members are required to fill out a short form with their personal details. This is to keep on file and ensure that we have personal details of members if we need to contact them in an emergency.

Additionally, ad-hoc questionnaires and surveys may be asked in order to gather statistical data for use when applying for funding, research and business development.

3.3. Fees

- 3.3.1. There is no fee for being a member of the Wellbeing Community Choir.
- 3.3.2. Members are asked to give a small donation ('subs') of their choice upon attending a rehearsal if they are in employment and are comfortable to do so. The suggested amount is £3.
- 3.3.3. If members are on benefits/are unemployed, it is at their discretion as to whether they make a donation. This will be accepted unless the Treasurer feels that this is to the detriment of the member's wellbeing. If this is the case, the Treasurer will discuss this privately with the member to reach an agreement.
- 3.3.4. Members are treated equally whether they pay subs or not.
- 3.3.5. Members can pay subs in cash at rehearsals, or via setting up a direct debit to the choir's bank account.

3.4. Leaving the choir

Members are free to come to rehearsals as they choose and are under no obligation to attend any rehearsals that they do not want to. If a member chooses to leave the choir, they can request that their personal details be removed from our records. Only names will be retained for audit and monitoring purposes.

3.5. Ejection from the choir

If a choir member proves to be disruptive, abusive, inappropriate or behaves in a way that makes other members uncomfortable, upset, distressed, or acts in a way that goes against any of the overriding objectives as set out in section 2 above, they may be asked to leave the choir by the Chairman or the Treasurer.

Members have a responsibility to act appropriately at rehearsals and gigs, or at any other time when they are representing the choir, this includes online, for example on social media and forums. Members should read and understand the objectives set out in section 2 above and uphold these objectives at all times. Any members who do not adhere with the above, or whose activities may call into question the integrity, reputation and ethos of the choir, they will be asked to leave.

The decision to ask a member to leave is that of the Chairman and the Treasurer and their decision is final.

If the Chairman and the Treasurer cannot agree over a particular member, then the Choir's secretary will be asked to cast the deciding vote.

4. Committee and organizational structure

The choir is managed and governed by a committee, made up of a chairman, treasure and secretary. The committee is quorate if two out of the three members are in attendance.

Their roles, responsibilities, main duties and current incumbents are:

4.1. Role: Chairman

4.1.1. Responsibilities/main duties:

- Lead the committee to ensure that the choir is managed efficiently and effectively.
- Reviewing the Committee's performance and identifying and managing the process for renewal of the Committee through recruitment of new members (see 4.4)
- To represent the organisation as a figurehead.
- Makes ultimate decision regarding where and when rehearsals are run in conjunction with the availability of the choirmaster.
- Makes ultimate decision regarding which gigs/appearances the choir takes part in in conjunction with the availability of the choirmaster.
- Can decide to eject choir members.
- Joint responsibility (with the Treasurer) for the conduct and organisation of the choir.
- Joint responsibility (with the Treasurer) for the overall wellbeing of the choir members.
- Signatory on the community group's bank account.
- Deciding vote on the roles of Treasurer and Secretary in the event of a tie.

4.2. Role: Treasurer

4.2.1. Responsibilities/main duties:

- Oversee budgets, accounts, financial statements and financial health of the choir.
- Ensure that appropriate financial systems and controls are in place.
- Ensure that record-keeping and accounts meet the conditions of funders.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation.
- Signatory on the community group's bank account.
- Decision maker on expenditure.
- Decision maker on fees charged for gigs/appearances.
- Ensure use of funds complies with conditions set by funding bodies.
- Prepare and present budgets for new or on-going work.
- Advise on financial implications of strategic and operational plans.
- Present revised financial forecasts based on actual spend.
- Present accounts at the AGM.
- Manage bank accounts.
- Set up appropriate systems for book-keeping, payments, lodgements & petty cash.
- Ensure everyone handling money keeps proper records and documentation.
- Ensure proper records are kept.
- Ensure required insurances are in place.
- Act as a representative for the organisation.
- Can decide to eject choir members.

- Joint responsibility (with the Chairman) for the conduct and organisation of the choir.
- Joint responsibility (with the Chairman) for the overall wellbeing of the choir members.
- Deciding vote on the role of the Chair in the event of a tie.

4.3. Role: Secretary

4.3.1. Responsibilities/main duties:

- Liaising with the Chair to organise meetings, rehearsals and gigs.
- Keeping up-to-date contact details (i.e. names, addresses and telephone numbers) for the management committee and members of the organisation.
- Keeping a record of the organisation's activities.
- Keeping a diary of future activities.
- Ensuring organisation's activities are in line with its objectives.
- Act as a representative for the organisation.
- With other committee members, preparing a report of the organisation's activities for the year, for the Annual General Meeting.
- Assisting the Chair and the Treasurer with the general administration of the choir.
- Where the Chair and the Treasurer disagree, has the deciding vote in ejecting choir members.

4.4. Elections to committee roles

4.4.1. Members of the committee will be reviewed and voted upon by the wider management committee that includes; the Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Choirmaster and Fundraising and Engagement Lead.

4.4.2. The wider management committee may decide to open the vote to all choir members at the Annual General Meeting.

4.4.2.1. Expressions of interest for the roles of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary must be made to the Secretary no less than one month prior to the AGM date, including those of the current incumbents. Those wishing to stand must also declare expressions of interest.

4.4.2.2. The secretary must circulate these expressions of interest to all choir members with a supporting statement no less that two weeks prior to the AGM.

4.4.2.3. Members will vote, by a secret ballot, at the AGM who they wish to take the roles of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary. The person with the most votes will take up the post. Members may not vote for the role that they are standing for.

4.4.2.4. Members may vote by proxy if they are unable to attend the AGM. A voting form will be circulated with the expressions of interest and is to be handed to a nominated individual prior to the AGM. The nominated individual will be confirmed no less than two weeks prior to the AGM and must not be standing

for one of the committee positions.

4.4.3. The Chair must be voted for first. In the event of a tie for the role of Chair, the current incumbent of the Treasurer will have the deciding vote.

4.4.4. In the event of a tie for the roles of Treasurer and Secretary, the Chair will have the deciding vote.

4.5. Annual General Meeting

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held every July.

The financial accounts and performance of the year must be presented at this meeting.

Minutes will be taken at the meeting and published on the group's website within one month of the AGM taking place.

4.6. How decisions are made

All decisions, apart from those detailed above, are to be made by the Chair and the Treasurer. The Chair and the Treasurer may consult the Secretary, the wider management committee and the members if they wish, but they have the casting votes. Where the Chair and the Treasurer cannot agree, the secretary must cast the final vote.

5. Finances

All finances and financial aspects are controlled by the Treasurer (see 4.2.2.).

Finances of the group are held in a community bank account under the name of The Wellbeing Community Choir, for which the Chair and the Treasurer are signatories and hold a debit card for.

All money raised by or on behalf of Choir will only be used to further the objectives of the choir, as specified in item 2 of this constitution.

6. Financial Year End Reporting

The Treasurer will present the annual financial accounts and performance of the year at the AGM in July for the previous financial year (running April – March).

The annual financial accounts and performance of the year will also be published on the group's website.

7. Closing down the organisation

7.1. Decision to close

7.1.1. If the Chair, Treasurer and the Secretary all agree that the group should be closed down, they must call an extraordinary meeting with the members in order to receive a majority vote for its closure.

7.1.2. If a majority vote cannot be found, the committee are able to step down and their roles must be filled by another member wishing to proceed with the organisation

7.2. Closing the organisation when solvent

If the organisation is solvent, the committee must agree when the group is to close and communicate this to its members.

Any funds remaining after paying all debt is to be donated to a charity nominated by the members (majority vote). The funds may be split between a number of charities.

Any grant money must be returned to the funding organisation as per the funding organisation's terms and conditions.

Any assets remaining are to be donated to a charity nominated by the members (majority vote). The assets may be split between a number of charities.

7.3. Closing the organisation if insolvent

Professional legal advice must be sought by the committee should the group owe and are unable to pay any debts.

Any unpaid earnings should be chased and received in order to mitigate the financial impact.

Signature
Name
Role Chair

Signature
Name
Role Treasurer

Signature
Name
Role Secretary

This constitution will be published on the group's website with public access. Please contact the Wellbeing Community Gospel Choir (see section 3.2.) if you would like a copy of this document in large print, or would like assistance in reading this document.