



# MEMBERS HANDBOOK

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## **SECTION 1: MEMBERS INFORMATION**

### **1. AIMS**

*Lauderdale Community Choir* is a musical, social, community organisation, established in 2010, based in Lauderdale in the Scottish Borders. It aims to present choral music to local audiences by promoting its own concerts and participating in events organised by others. These may include concerts, guest spots, competitions, church events and the like.

### **2. ORGANISATION**

2.1 The choir is a voluntary organisation consisting of members and managed by a committee consisting of a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer as detailed in the constitution. Other roles may be filled by non-committee members and all roles are detailed within this handbook. Committee members are elected at each AGM and new members of the choir are encouraged to stand for election.

2.2 The choir is a full member of the national umbrella organisation for voluntary and amateur music – Making Music.

### **3. CHOIR MEMBERSHIP**

3.1 Membership of the choir is open to anyone over 16 with the enthusiasm and a desire to sing. Under 16's welcome if a parent (or person with parental responsibility) is already a choir member. We don't hold auditions and you don't need to be able to read music. As an organisation, the choir is committed to treating all our members fairly and is compliant with current UK Equalities Act (2010)

3.2 Members leaving the choir are requested to inform the Membership Secretary and to return all choir music and folders. The choir reserves the right to charge for any unreturned music.

3.3 Please refer to the constitution for more detailed membership rules.

### **4. DATA**

4.1 All members are required to submit contact information, usually an email address and telephone number, which is securely stored by relevant members of the committee and will be used to communicate choir information only, and is subject to, and compliant with, current data protection laws. There is also an informal WhatsApp group, which choir members may voluntarily join. For the sake of clarity, the WhatsApp group is not an official group run by the committee, and as such is not covered for any data protection breaches

4.2 By joining the choir, it is assumed that all members consent to having their image shared through photographs and videos for promotional and publicity use by the choir. It is also assumed that members consent to the audio recording of the choir for the same purposes. If consent is NOT to be granted, please let the Membership Secretary know.

4.3 The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) gives people the right to know what personal information an organisation has about them. You can ask the Membership Secretary at any time about what private information we hold about you. Only the following people may ask for access to personal information.

- The person who the information is about

- Someone acting on behalf of the person who the information is about

## 5. FINANCE

5.1 All new members are asked to pay a joining fee and subsequent annual membership fee, which becomes due in January. We don't ask for this immediately; new members can try us out for free for two weeks to be sure they enjoy coming first! New members joining after our summer break should only be asked to pay half the joining fee, and from December they should be encouraged to join in January. In addition, all members are asked to pay an attendance fee per week when they attend practice. If you have trouble paying these fees, please speak, in confidence, to the Chair – we do not wish to exclude anyone on the basis of affordability.

5.2 The choir is insured for public liability through the “Making Music” scheme.

5.3 The choir discharges its PRS (Performing Rights Society) responsibilities through the “Making Music” scheme.

## 6. REHEARSALS

6.1 Weekly rehearsals are held on Thursday evenings between 7.30 - 9.00pm. Members are requested to arrive in time to commence singing promptly at 7.30pm. Regular practice encourages improvement so members are encouraged to attend regularly. Rehearsals are normally held in Lauder Public Hall. Any change of venue will be notified to members by email, and will be posted on the website.

6.2 Members should always bring their music to rehearsal, along with a pencil (not a pen!) to mark the music. Books of songs/music issued by the choir belong to the choir and any marks in pencil can be rubbed out and thus used again. The committee reserves the right to charge for any music marked with a pen.

6.3 Members are requested to assist with the setting out chairs at the beginning, and clearing them away at the end of rehearsals as required

6.4 Holidays. The choir normally takes breaks at Christmas, Easter and in the summer, as determined by the committee

6.5 All committee members and the Musical Director are keen to hear ideas from choir members and are usually available at each rehearsal to engage with members. In addition committee members contact details are available on the website in case of any queries

## 7. RECORDINGS

7.1 It is the choir's policy that **NO** recording (audio or video) shall be made of any rehearsal or performance without the prior agreement of the Musical Director.

7.2 Any recordings permitted by the Musical Director are for educating the choir and, where appropriate (for copyright free music), to share clips on social media – any other use may be a breach of copyright laws

## 8. WEBSITE

8.1 The website address is: [www.lauderdalechoir.org.uk](http://www.lauderdalechoir.org.uk)  
You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.

8.2 There is a member's page on the website which is password protected (new members please ask the Membership Secretary for the password) which gives details of rehearsals and also contains audio aids to learn voice parts of current music (learning lines). Choir members are encouraged to use this resource between rehearsals in order to practice and to be able to gain maximum rewards from group rehearsals. The learning lines are particularly useful for those who don't read music

## **9. MUSIC**

9.1 Music will be provided to all members but will remain the property of Lauderdale Community Choir. All printed sheets stamped "Lauderdale Community Choir" are also the property of the society. Each member will be issued a copy of the music we are working on by the Librarian, which should be kept for your own use until we have finished with that piece and the Librarian requests its return.

9.2 Some music may be provided as an email attachment or similar and the member is then responsible for printing their own copy. These sheets then belong to members. As the choir has its own printer it is anticipated that this will be kept to a minimum. Any copies printed by the choir can be retained by members (and marked up with singing notes) for a small fee.

9.3 Please note that it is unacceptable to photocopy and distribute commercially published music as this contravenes the copyright laws (unless an already purchased copy is being photocopied purely for ease of fitting in the choir A4 ring binder)

9.4 In concert, singers are expected to present their music in a black A4 type ring binder. These will be issued by the Librarian, and remain the property of Lauderdale Community Choir and should be returned promptly after use.

## **10. UNIFORM**

10.1 Usually, ladies are asked to wear black trousers or a long black skirt, black shoes and a bright, single coloured top. Ladies are also encouraged to wear dress jewellery. Gentlemen are asked to wear black or dark trousers, black socks and shoes and a single coloured shirt with no tie. Members are expected to provide their own uniform.

## **11. SPONSORSHIP**

The society has a "Friends of Lauderdale Choir" scheme which allows supporters to be able to pay an annual fee to enhance choir funds. In return they will get the opportunity to receive a free ticket to an annual concert. They may choose to have an acknowledgement in any promotional material (such as concert programmes). Businesses are encouraged to support the scheme and to take advantage of the publicity. Please ask the current "Friends" secretary for details on how to support the choir in this way.

## **12. COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

12.1 Please advise a member of the committee if there is any item you would like included on a committee meeting agenda. The committee is always happy to review and update choir issues as and when they arise.

12.2 If any member would like to see the minutes of Choir Committee Meetings, please email the Secretary. It is anticipated that future minutes will be posted on the members section of the website.

## **SECTION 2: COMMITTEE AND JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

The committee is made up with elected members and co-opted members (as required). Please see the constitution for more details on eligibility and election. The choir members must elect a Chair, Secretary and Treasurer, and any other committee members to a maximum of ten. The term of office is two years, after which any committee member may choose to stand down, or to stand for re-election. All committee members must abide by the general code of conduct:

### **Code of Conduct for Management Committee Members**

The key principles upon which this Code is based are the Seven Principles of Public Life. These are:

#### **Selflessness**

You should take decisions solely in terms of the Society's interest. You should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, or your friends.

#### **Integrity**

You should not place yourself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might, or might be perceived to, influence you in the performance of your official duties. You must declare any interests and relationships that could create a conflict of interest

#### **Objectivity**

In carrying out Society business, including awarding contracts and recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, you should make choices on merit using the best evidence, without discrimination or bias.

#### **Accountability**

You are accountable for your decisions and actions to the Society and must submit yourself to whatever scrutiny is appropriate for your office.

#### **Openness**

You should be as open as possible about the decisions and actions that you take. You should give reasons for your decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

#### **Honesty**

You have a duty to declare any private interests or relationships relating to your Society duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest. You must be truthful.

#### **Leadership**

You should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

**Job title:** Chair, Lauderdale Community Choir

**Reports to:** The Committee

**Tenure:** 2 years

**Overall purpose:**

To provide leadership and direction to Lauderdale Community Choir and ensure the choir is managed in line with its vision, mission and objectives (as described in the constitution) and in the best interests of its members and the local community.

**Duties:**

- Lead the choir and carry out the duties of chair in line with the choir constitution
- Ensure the committee members carry out their duties in accordance with the Chair's instructions, the job descriptions (where available) and choir constitution
- Preside as chair at choir committee meetings
- Set the date and agenda for committee meetings
- Where necessary, organise extraordinary/additional meetings of the committee
- In discussion and agreement with the committee members, appoint new members to the committee
- Organise the appointment of new remunerated positions within the choir (ie Musical Director, Accompanist) as necessary, arrange new contracts, and update existing contracts and rates of pay (in discussion and agreement with the committee members) as necessary
- Set the policy and ethos of the choir
- Ensure all Health and Safety matters are properly attended
- Revise the choir constitution as required and present to committee for discussion and to the members for approval
- Set the date, venue and times of choir practice
- Work closely with the Musical Director and other committee members to co-ordinate the choir's performance calendar
- Support the Musical Director in ensuring the choir fulfils its potential and musical ambitions
- Ensure the financial stability of the choir and the proper investment of the choir's funds in conjunction with the Treasurer
- Be willing to be a signatory (together with the Treasurer and/or other committee member as necessary) for cheques or other disbursement of choir funds
- Ensure that the choir complies with any relevant legislation, eg, Data Protection Act
- Represent and be the key ambassador for the choir in the community and in the wider arena
- Organise, with the help of others, fundraising and public relation events
- Be responsible for the ongoing development, marketing and promotion of the choir
- Handle internal conflict, if necessary, as it arises in a fair and transparent way
- Provide support and encouragement to the choir and its individual members
- Ensure choir members are kept informed of activities and rehearsal schedules by regular emails
- Ensure that the Members Handbook is periodically updated to reflect any permanent changes or approved members' feedback

**Job title:** Treasurer, Lauderdale Community Choir

**Reports to:** Chair

**Tenure:** 2 years

**Overall purpose:**

To manage the finances of Lauderdale Community Choir in accordance with the Constitution and as directed by the Chair.

**Duties:**

- Perform the duties of Treasurer in line with the job description and the choir constitution
- Ensure the proper investment of the choir's funds
- With the Chair's support, prepare the annual accounts for external auditing for presentation at the choir's AGM
- Organise valid signatories for all cheques or other disbursement of choir funds
- Perform any duties required for digital banking procedures
- Record weekly choir fees from the membership and annual membership fees and to make sure these are banked (including providing BACS details for members wishing to make a block payment)
- Keep financial records of other monies collected, eg, from fundraising events, "Friends" subscriptions, concert ticket sales, and to make sure these monies are banked
- Ensure subscription to Making Music as kept up to date, as well as any insurance policies
- Be responsible for bookkeeping and accounting record-keeping
- Prepare and present financial updates at committee meetings, as appropriate and/or when requested by the Chair
- Alert the Chair when funds are running below an agreed level (amount to be agreed)
- Liaise with Musical Director, Librarian and other committee members about spending choir funds on musical material
- Ensure that the choir complies with all relevant financial legislation
- Prepare grant applications with the help of the Chair and committee
- Represent and be an ambassador for the choir in the community and in the wider arena
- Help with fundraising and public relation events
- Raise awareness and promote the choir
- Provide support and encouragement to the choir and its individual members

**Job title:** Secretary, Lauderdale Community Choir

**Reports to:** Chair

**Tenure:** 2 years

**Overall purpose:**

To manage the administration of Lauderdale Community Choir as directed by the Chair.

**Duties:**

- Perform the duties of Secretary in line with the job description and the choir constitution
- Maintain contact details of all committee members as required under the constitution
- Record any conflict of interest from among committee members
- Maintain and record minutes of committee/other meetings and circulate
- Liaise with the committee to ensure the smooth running of the choir administration
- Prepare formal reports as requested by the Chair and circulate
- Prepare any correspondence as requested by the Chair
- Custodian of committee records
- Effective management of the choir's administration
- Communicate with the choir membership in relation to meeting dates
- Ensure that rehearsal and concert venues are booked
- Help with the logistics of choir performances
- Represent and be an ambassador for the choir in the community and in the wider arena
- Help with fundraising and public relation events
- Raise awareness and promote the choir
- Provide support and encouragement to the choir and its individual members

**Job title:** Membership Secretary, Lauderdale Community Choir

**Reports to:** Chair

**Tenure:** 2 years

**Overall purpose:**

To manage the administration of the membership of Lauderdale Community Choir in accordance with the Constitution and as directed by the Chair. This role may be held by one or more persons and may be delegated to a choir member outwith the committee

**Duties:**

- Maintain accurate membership information including joining dates, leaving dates, contact details etc
- Maintain and regularly update the email list, to add new members and to delete lapsed members
- Share the above email list with the Chair (or other delegated person) in order for weekly emails to be issued
- Maintain accurate attendance records and provide facility for cash weekly fees to be paid
- Circulate membership information regularly to committee members
- Report choir membership status at each AGM
- Welcome new members at rehearsals, ensuring they have all paperwork (membership form, membership information and handbook)
- Liaise with the Librarian to ensure new members have music
- Be a "Point of Contact" for all membership enquiries
- Help with the logistics of choir performances and co-ordinate the choir membership
- Support the Chair in promoting the choir and its activities
- Represent and be an ambassador for the choir in the community and in the wider arena
- Help with fundraising and public relation events
- Raise awareness and promote the choir
- Provide support and encouragement to the choir and its individual members

**Job title:** Vice Chair, Lauderdale Community Choir (Optional)

**Reports to:** Chair

**Tenure:** 2 years

**Overall purpose:**

To support the Chair in all matters in managing the organisation.

**Duties:**

- Learn and understand the duties and responsibilities of the Chair and act for the Chair in their absence
- Provide support to the Chair and take on any duties that might be delegated by the Chair
- Represent and be a key ambassador for the choir in the community and in the wider arena
- Organise, with the help of others, fundraising and public relation events
- Be a point of contact for dealing with queries from members of the choir
- Support the Chair in promoting the choir and its activities
- Represent and be an ambassador for the choir in the community and in the wider arena
- Help with fundraising and public relation events
- Provide support and encouragement to the choir and its individual members

**Job title:** Librarian, Lauderdale Community Choir

**Reports to:** The Committee

**Tenure:** 2 years

**Overall purpose:**

To ensure that all choir members are issued with the correct music for practice and rehearsals. This role may be held by one or more persons and may be fulfilled by a choir member outwith the committee

**Duties:**

- Ensure appropriate scores are available for rehearsal each week
- Ensure that any printed copies have been printed and are available
- Keep an up-to-date guest folder for guest attendees use
- Keep an accurate record of all music in the library
- Monitor recording sheets and issue returns requests (liaising with the persons responsible for issuing emails and the members page of the website)
- Make sure all issued music is returned when requested and keep records of any outstanding scores/printed copies
- Liaise with the Treasurer for all music purchases as agreed by the committee
- Ensure all choir music is stamped with choir name
- Store and organise music in the designated space (currently at Lauder Public Hall)
- Be a point of contact for dealing with music score enquiries from members of the choir
- Ensure the on-line music library (liaising with the person responsible for website updates) is kept up to date and ensure all members know how to access it.

### In addition, all committee members should

- **Support the Chair and the other committee members in promoting the choir and its activities**
- **Be willing to accept delegated duties from office bearers as required**
- **Represent and be an ambassador for the choir in the community and in the wider arena**
- **Help with fundraising, concerts and public relation events**
- **Provide support and encouragement to the choir and its individual members**

Other roles (which need not be carried out by committee members) which are a requirement for the choir to function efficiently and effectively are:

**Publicity Officer** – to ensure that choir activities are promoted following instructions from the Chair, including poster design, concert programme design, ticket printing, “write-ups” in media publications, social media posts and website content. This may be a shared post, and contributions from other choir members are always welcome.

**Friends of Lauderdale Choir Secretary** – to promote and administrate the “Friends” scheme, acting under direction from the Chair, including recruiting members, keeping contact details, inviting renewals, keeping track of free tickets issued, ensuring the Treasurer has received, banked and recorded payments made.

**Website Editor** – to make sure all content of the website is kept up to date, including the on-line music library (in conjunction with the Librarian) and the rehearsal schedule (in conjunction with the Musical Director or Chair). This post may be held by more than one person

**Archivist** – to keep and store all non-committee choir material, such as concert programmes, press clippings, posters and photographs, for future choir reference

**Printer** – to print out copies of music for choir members as decided by the Musical Director, using the choir’s printer, and to hand them to the Librarian for distribution

All members are asked to assist with other tasks, such as setting up the choir’s keyboard, opening up the hall, helping with practical tasks involved with concerts (eg providing refreshments), ticket sales and anything else reasonably required to run an active and happy community choir.

If any members feel they have skills to contribute to the smooth running of the choir, please feel free to chat to any committee member about how they can help.

You are warmly welcomed to the Lauderdale Community Choir, and we hope you have fun singing with us and making new friends.