

# The English Chamber Choir

## Policies

### Social Media Policy

In 2018 it was estimated that over 1/3 of the global population now use social media, and it has become an incredibly important tool for organisations, such as ours, to spread the word about what we do, and reach new audiences.

However with this additional exposure comes additional reputational risk to us as an organisation. This document provides some guidelines, specific to our business, that are designed to keep the English Chamber Choir safe, while still encouraging everyone to be proactive ambassadors for the Choir.

### Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all Members of The English Chamber Choir. The policy concerns all social media and digital content creating/sharing mediums.

### Key Point

- The key point in a musical context is to take great care with copyrights, embargos and other people's content.
- Sharing content that is already on social media is great, but be careful about using recordings which may have rights attached, or sharing information that isn't yet in the public domain. When in doubt, ask!

### Do's and Dont's

**DO** mention the Choir on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram - you have some little biography spots where you can add some info. Why not mention your connection to us?

**DO** use email and social media to promote our concerts – share our marketing materials, invite friends to come, update them on what's happening and help us build audiences.

**DO** take pictures at our own rehearsals, recordings and concerts where appropriate and share them to generate interest in upcoming concerts.

**DON'T** take pictures at rehearsals, recordings and concerts involving other performers without getting their permission first.

**DON'T take or post video recordings at rehearsals without getting permission first. This includes posting to our own social media sites such as Whats app.**

**DON'T ever take video recordings involving orchestra players - this is a breach or copyright and there are very strict rules governing filming which we must abide by.**

**DON'T share any personal information about other choir members on social media.**

**DON'T share pictures of any young people (below age 18) involved in our concerts**

### Some things to remember

- Always be diplomatic: Sometimes we can blur the realms of personal and professional on our public social media.
- Try to avoid posting anything on our own ECC channels, for example our announce and discussion sites and whats app group, that could cause offence or put off a potential supporter or member. Topics which you should avoid include: politics, religion, and gossip.
- When you are promoting the choir and therefore speaking as a choir member on social media remember you are representing the choir. Therefore pause and use your judgement. Always take a few seconds before posting anything to make sure you are 100% comfortable with what you are about to share with the world via the ECC media. If it makes you uneasy in the slightest, check it with someone else.

## Health and Safety Policy

The English Chamber Choir does not own estate and hires its rehearsal and performance venues. The Choir has public liability insurance through Making Music.

1. The Directors are accountable for the health and safety of the Choir and delegate this responsibility to the Choir Manager and appropriate members of the Choir. However, this policy recognises that everyone in the Choir is responsible for contributing to a healthy and safe environment.
2. The Choir has a duty to assess and review the following environmental areas: security, accessibility, sound safety, and use of equipment. We must also ensure that we are aware of the individual venue procedures to manage these both for our performers and members of the public attending our events.
3. ECC will take all reasonable measures to prevent accidents and incidents from occurring by ensuring that it is aware of potential risks in the areas listed above, individual venue risks, relevant policies, evacuation points and that it works to mitigate with reasonable measures any risks that it is aware of.
4. As it would be an added benefit which might enhance our ability to manage H&S, ECC will identify people within the membership who have the first aid training and fire warden training and seek to utilise them when other expertise is not available (e.g. during normal rehearsals).
5. The choir will purchase and maintain a first aid box and incident book for logging and investigating and reporting any incidents.
6. The Choir will take all reasonable measures to work with individuals who have either informed us of a disability, or where we are aware of a physical difficulty, to ensure that any additional risks posed by their situation are safely managed.
7. Other than own promotions and rehearsals, responsibility for fire/evacuation rest with the promoters. ECC will inform singers at these events to follow the instructions given by the designated safety officers at those events.

However it is important that all members understand their own responsibilities which are:

- To identify any hazards to the Choir Manager or if not available to a Director.
- To be responsible for the security of their own possessions and to take all reasonable care of those items belonging to ECC, including hired music.
- To ensure that if they agree to carry out a task for the Choir that they are fit to do so.
- To let the organisation know if they need assistance due to a health or disability problem .
- To listen to and comply with any directions given by or on behalf of ECC (e.g. promoters) in order to maintain health and safety and security.

Any incidents will be logged by the Choir Manager and reported to the Directors at Board Meetings unless there is a major incident which will be reported to Directors immediately. This will be an incident where a) a medium or severe injury has occurred to someone or b) a medium or severe risk to the organisation has occurred.

### **Sound safety**

Sound safety is of particular importance in the context of rehearsals and performances with orchestras and bands. ECC takes the responsibility of protecting the hearing of members seriously. We will:

- Ensure there are open lines of communication for individuals to raise concerns about hearing.
- Take concerns seriously; work to find ways to minimise risk.
- Take into account the protection of our members' hearing when designing or liaising on stage and audience layout for concerts.
- Provide suitable ear defenders to anyone who asks.

## **Safeguarding Policy Statement**

The English Chamber Choir (ECC) is committed to ensuring safe environments for children and vulnerable adults and believes that it is always unacceptable for a child or vulnerable adult to experience abuse of any kind. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard the welfare of all children and vulnerable adults, by a commitment to adopt good practice which protects them.

This policy applies to our Board of Directors, paid professionals engaged by the ECC, volunteers and ECC members having contact or working with children or vulnerable adults under the auspices of the ECC.

### **We recognise that:**

- The welfare of the child or vulnerable adult is paramount.
- All children or vulnerable adults, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity, have the right to equal protection from all types of harm or abuse.
- Working in partnership with children, vulnerable adults, their parents, carers and other agencies is essential in promoting their welfare.

### **The purpose of the policy:**

- To provide protection for the children and vulnerable adults who participate in our concerts and other activities, including the children of choir members.

### **Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy, ECC defines a child as a person who is under the age of 18. And a vulnerable adult as:

1. An individual over the age of 18.
2. Who lacks the capacity to take care of him or herself (i.e. at risk of neglect).
3. Who may be unable to keep him or herself safe from the risk of significant harm, abuse or exploitation.

### **We will seek to safeguard children and vulnerable adults by:**

- Valuing them, listening to and respecting them.

- Adopting and implementing this Safeguarding Policy.
- Making sure that all relevant people receive information and advice on safeguarding issues as appropriate for their role within the choir.
- Making sure that all relevant people know the named individual(s) to whom safeguarding concerns should be reported.
- Maintaining central records of any safeguarding concerns and any referrals made as a consequence.
- Avoiding situations where a child or vulnerable adult is alone with another adult (other than one of its parents) to which this Policy applies and cannot be seen by other adults.
- Only providing transport for children or vulnerable adults in a suitable, insured vehicle with an appropriate driver and escort.
- Sharing information about concerns with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children and vulnerable adults appropriately.
- Allowing young people aged 16 and 17 to participate in concerts, recordings and other activities, provided their parents have given explicit permission and contractual or other requirements permit.
- Requiring that the specific, minuted approval of a validly constituted board meeting is given in respect of the participation in concerts, recordings and other activities of children and young people below the age of 16, again provided their parents have given explicit permission and contractual or other requirements permit.

#### **Dealing with safeguarding disclosures and concerns**

If you receive a safeguarding disclosure or have a safeguarding concern about a child or vulnerable adult you must make a referral to Simon Archer the designated safeguarding lead (or other member of the Board of Directors if the concern involves him). Simon will refer to Social Care Services and/or the Police as appropriate.

If you have an **immediate and significant** concern for a child or vulnerable adult's **immediate safety**, you may refer the matter directly to the Police or Social Care Services.

### **Equal Opportunities Policy**

The English Chamber Choir is an auditioned choir with the aim of fostering public knowledge and appreciation of choral music by publicly performing such music to the highest possible musical standards and to the widest possible audiences.

1. ECC is committed to offer everyone who supports this aim an equal opportunity to be part of our membership, to work with us or be part of our audience. Membership is limited of necessity only in terms of musical ability, voice quality and the need to maintain a balance of voice-parts in order to perform to the highest musical standard.
2. The Choir aims to be an inclusive group which provides a safe and welcoming atmosphere for everyone and in doing so does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, nationality, religion, disability, sex/gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic status and or political beliefs.
3. All members will be treated in a fair and equal manner and we will organise ourselves and share information and instructions in formats which are accessible equally to all.

## Conflict of Interest Policy

All members, Directors and those hired by the English Chamber Choir will strive to avoid any conflict of interest between the interests of the Choir on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual conflicts of interest as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

1. The purpose of this policy is to protect the integrity of the Choir's decision-making process, to enable everyone to have confidence in our integrity, and to protect the reputation of members.
2. In the course of meetings or activities, members will disclose any interests in a transaction or decision where there may be a conflict between the Choir's best interests and the best interests of the person involved, or a conflict between the best interests of two organisations that a member is involved with.
3. Any such disclosures and the subsequent actions taken will be noted in the minutes.
4. Examples of potential conflicts of interest could include: a director or member who is also involved with another organisation that is competing for the same projects or funding; where a director, member or those hired by the Choir may make personal financial gain; where someone is related to a director, member or those hired by the Choir and there is a decision to be taken which may involve them.

## Data Protection Policy

ECC will only keep data on individuals that is justified for the purposes of establishing or maintaining membership or support for The English Chamber Choir and/or providing or administering other activities in order to fulfil the established purpose of the charity.

1. Permission to do so must be given explicitly by the individual concerned, either through signing on to an email distribution list or offering ECC specific information with the knowledge of how it will be used. Note that individuals must opt in.
2. The information we keep may relate to information about individuals who are either members of ECC or who have regular contact with the organisation.
3. We will restrict any disclosures, other than those made with the consent of the individual, to those third parties which are necessary to fulfil the above purposes.
4. We will not keep personal data once the need has become either obsolete or after the relationship between ECC and the individual ends, unless it is necessary to do so to comply with legislation (e.g. company register).
5. We will be open with individuals about what information is kept about them.
6. Individuals will have the right to view the information kept about them in order to correct any factual inaccuracies.
7. If we wish to collect keep what is classified as sensitive data (*sensitive data is anything we may record about racial, ethnic origin, beliefs, health, sexual orientation and criminal convictions that can be identified back to an individual*) about an identifiable individual we will seek explicit permission from them to do so. We will only collect such information where it is justifiable to do so, e.g. in order to provide appropriate support to the member during choir activities for health and safety reasons.
8. Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken to secure data against unauthorised or unlawful access and processing.
9. If performing abroad, we will not transfer personal data to other countries (except names of singers if required) unless it is necessary for travel/visa purposes.

## Whistleblowing policy

The English Chamber Choir encourages all members to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the organisation in relation to any suspected instances of fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing. The ECC Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures sets out the ECC's position in these matters and lays out a procedure for individuals to raise any concerns and how those concerns will be dealt with.

### Policy

It is important that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing is reported and properly dealt with. We ask all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others at the ECC or the way in which the organisation is run. This policy sets out the way in which individuals may raise any concerns that they have and how those concerns will be dealt with.

### Principles

1. Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing. Everyone working with or for the ECC should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that they become aware of to one of the Directors or the Chair.
2. Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the person who raised the issue.
3. No member will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure.
4. Victimisation of an individual for raising a qualified disclosure is unacceptable and will be dealt with appropriately.
5. If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure appropriate action will be taken. Maliciously making a false allegation is unacceptable and may incur the person making the false allegation in civil liability.
6. An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself completely unacceptable. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a Director, you should not agree to remain silent. You should report the matter to the Chair.

## Complaints Policy

The English Chamber Choir view complaints as an opportunity to learn and improve for the future, as well as a chance to put things right for the person that has made the complaint. (A complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction, whether justified or not, about any aspect of English Chamber Choir). Our policy is:

1. To provide a fair complaints procedure which is clear and easy to use for anyone wishing to make a complaint
2. To make sure all complaints are investigated fairly and in a timely way
3. To make sure that complaints are, wherever possible, resolved and that relationships are repaired
4. To gather information which helps us to improve what we do

### Resolving Complaints

1. Overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation lies with the Directors of The English Chamber Choir

2. If the complaint relates to a specific person, they will be informed and given a fair opportunity to respond.
3. Complaints will be acknowledged by the person handling the complaint within a week. Complainants will receive a definitive reply within four weeks. Whether the complaint is justified or not, the reply to the complainant will describe the action taken to investigate the complaint, the conclusions from the investigation, and any action taken as a result of the complaint.
4. NOTE: The Directors may vary the procedure for good reason. This may be necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, for example, a complaint about the Chair should not also have the Chair as the person leading a review.

On behalf of the Directors  
Robert Moffat, Chairman, English Chamber Choir.  
March 2019