



WOKING AMATEUR OPERATIC SOCIETY **CONSTITUTION AND RULES**

1. Title

The Society shall be called WOKING AMATEUR OPERATIC SOCIETY.

2. Objects of the Society

The object of the Society is to educate the public in the operatic and dramatic arts, and to further the development of public appreciation and taste in the said arts; to assist and further such charitable institutions and charitable purposes as the Committee shall from time to time determine; and in furtherance of this object, but not otherwise, the Society, through its management Committee shall have the following powers:

- a) To promote operettas, opera, drama, comedies and other operatic and dramatic works of educative value.
- b) To purchase, acquire and obtain interests in the copyright of or the right to perform or show any such operatic or dramatic works.
- c) To purchase or otherwise acquire plant, machinery, furniture, fixtures, fittings, scenery and all other necessary effects.
- d) To raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donation and otherwise, provided that the Society shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds.
- e) To do all such other things as shall further the objects of the Society.

3. Membership

The Membership of the Society shall consist of those who have paid appropriate fees, and consist of Acting and Non-Acting Members, and the following:

- a) Student Members - Members of the Society who are aged 16 years or over and in full time education.
- b) Junior Members - Members of the Society who are under 16 years of age.

Concessionary Membership may be available at the discretion of an Officer of the Committee and the Membership Secretary.

Membership fees shall be set by the Society at the Annual General Meeting.

The Society is committed to encouraging equality and diversity among its members and in all areas of its activities. The Society will not tolerate discrimination of any kind, and is particularly opposed to unlawful discrimination. The Society will afford equal treatment to all its members without regard to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality (including citizenship), ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

4. Patrons

Any persons or persons interested in promoting the Society who have provided contact details to the Committee and made an appropriate annual contribution to the Society funds.

5. Life Members

Life membership of the Society may be granted to any member or person at the discretion of the Committee. A Life Member has the same rights as a paid-up Member of the Society.

6. Eligibility for Membership

Membership shall be given to all those having sympathy with the objects of the Society and desiring actively to further it and to pay the subscription fees determined by the Society, subject to ratification by the Committee. Those Members wishing to perform may be required to satisfy the Committee as to their appropriate ability.

7. Subscriptions

The subscription to the Society for all classes of membership shall be determined from time to time at the Annual General Meeting of the Society. Subject to their subscription being paid, all members, except those aged under 18 years, shall be entitled to vote at General Meetings of the Society.

8. Non-Payment of Subscriptions

Any Member failing to pay his or her subscription shall not take part in any of the Society's activities except at the discretion of the Committee.

9. Expulsion of Members

Any Member of the Society who, in the opinion of the Committee, shall be guilty by his or her actions of misusing the privileges of the Society, persistently neglecting the work undertaken by the Society or of otherwise bringing the Society into contempt or disrepute, may be suspended or expelled from the Society. This includes the way WAOS social media sites are used.

10. Management

The Officers of the Society shall consist of a Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Business Manager. The Society shall be managed by a Committee consisting of the Officers and at least 3 other Committee Members.

The Committee shall have power to appoint sub-committees as they shall deem necessary. The decisions of any such sub-committee shall be subject to the approval of the Committee.

11. Committee's Powers

The Committee shall have power to decide any questions arising out of these Rules and all other matters connected with the Society (other than and except those which can only be dealt with by the Society in General Meeting).

12. Financial Year

The financial year of the Society shall commence on 1st June.

13. Funds of the Society

- a) The funds of the Society shall be applied solely towards the stated objects of the Society.
- b) No member of the Society shall receive payment directly or indirectly for services to the Society or for other than for legitimate expenses incurred, subject to approval by the Committee.
- c) All monies payable to the Society shall be received by the Treasurer or such other officer appointed to receive the same.
- d) All funds of the Society (except such petty cash and score and libretti deposit monies as shall be kept at the discretion of the Committee, subject to such financial controls as the trustees shall prescribe) shall be invested and/or kept in a banking account in the name of the Society. The disposition of such funds shall be at the discretion of the Committee.
- e) All cheques or withdrawal of sums from such investments or accounts shall be signed or appropriately authorised by at least two named members of the Committee.

14. Liability of the Committee

Nothing in these rules shall be deemed to imply that members of the Committee or sub-Committees shall be solely or collectively responsible for any financial losses to the Society or its members, or any act of commission or omission of any Committee Member, Committee or Agent thereof, provided that the Committee Members shall be liable for their acts and obligations to the same extent as other Acting and Non-Acting Members.

15. Annual General Meeting

The annual General Meeting of the Society shall be held as soon as possible after 1st June but no later than 31st July when the Report of the Committee and the Accounts for the past year, duly independently examined, shall be presented. Members of the Committee shall be elected and all general business transacted.

16. Election of Officers and Committee

The Committee shall retire annually but shall be eligible for re-election at the Annual General Meeting. The names of the candidates for these positions shall be submitted to the Secretary in writing prior to the Annual General Meeting. Election shall be by ballot if necessary.

The Committee may from time to time co-opt additional Committee members in order to carry out specific functions or duties. Such co-option must be by majority vote of the Committee. Any co-opted Committee member will retire at the next annual General Meeting after their co-option.

17. Notice of General Meeting

Notice in writing of every General Meeting shall be sent to each member of the Society at least 14 days prior to the date fixed for such meeting.

18. Extraordinary General Meeting

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society may be called at any time at the discretion of the Committee or within 21 days following receipt by the Secretary of a requisition in writing signed by at least eight Members of the Society. Every such requisition shall specify the business for which the meeting is to be convened and no other business shall be transacted at such meeting.

19. Resolution at General Meeting

Unless otherwise provided by these Rules all resolutions brought forward at a General Meeting shall be decided by a bare majority of the votes properly recorded at such meeting and in the case of an equality of votes the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

20. Quorum at General Meeting

No business other than the formal adjournment of the meeting shall be transacted at any General Meeting unless a quorum be present and such quorum shall consist of 40% of the membership eligible to vote.

21. Selection of Shows and Production Team

The Committee shall decide the shows to be produced and shall appoint a Director, Musical Director, Stage Manager and, where necessary, a Choreographer for each show.

22. Selection of Cast

The cast for any production shall be chosen by a selection panel which shall consist of the Director, Musical Director, and the Choreographer where appropriate, for that production with the assistance of at least one Member of the Society who is not seeking selection for a principal part.

The Committee shall have the power to fill any parts not cast by the Audition Panel, to revise the cast from time to time if any member to whom a part has been assigned shall, in its opinion, prove unsuitable for the part, and to recast any part becoming vacant for any reason whatsoever.

23. Responsibility of Acting Members

Acting Members shall play the parts assigned to them to the best of their ability, whether principals or chorus, and will attend rehearsals regularly. Any Acting Member who consistently avoids rehearsals or otherwise acts in a manner which may, in the opinion of the Committee, prejudice the standard of the production may be precluded from taking further part in that production.

24. Payment for Tickets – Advance Booking Facility

So long as advance booking facilities are available to members, all tickets must be paid for by those members to whom they have been allocated. Such payment must be made in full prior to theatre get-in of show week.

25. Grievances

Any Member desiring to bring forward any complaint or grievance shall do so according to the Disciplinary and Grievance Policy, which will be made available by the Committee.

26. Dissolution of the Society

The Society shall only be dissolved by resolution passed by a majority of at least 75% of the Members present and voting at an Extraordinary General Meeting called for the purpose of considering such dissolution. In the event of dissolution any balance of cash remaining in hand after the realisation of assets and payment of debts shall not be distributed among the members of the Society but shall be applied for charitable purposes similar to those of the Society or be paid, distributed or transferred to such charitable institutions or institution having objects similar to the objects of the Society as the Committee with the consent of the meeting shall determine

27. Merger with other Societies

A resolution to merge with another Society may be put forward in writing by the Committee or at least eight Members of the Society.

The resolution must then be put forward to the full Membership at an Extraordinary General Meeting. A majority of least 75% of the Membership shall be required to agree to the merger.

28. Alterations to Rules

- a) No alteration of these Rules shall be made except at a General Meeting nor unless 21 days prior to such meeting a written notice of the proposed alteration or of one substantially to the like effect shall have been given to the Secretary who shall give 14 days notice thereof to the members and the resolution embodying such proposed alteration shall be carried by at least two thirds of the votes recorded thereon at the meeting.
- b) No alteration may be made to Rules 2, 26 and 28 without the approval of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales or other authority having charitable jurisdiction from time to time and no amendment shall be made which would cause the Society to cease to be a charity at law.

29. Insurance

The Committee shall effect and maintain insurance cover in the name of the Society. The extent of such insurance shall be at the discretion of the committee but must include Third Party Public Liability cover and loss of or damage to property owned by or held in trust by the Society and for which it is responsible together with loss of cash or other monies held by the Treasurer or any other officer or person appointed to receive the same.