



BIRMINGHAM FESTIVAL CHORAL SOCIETY

Established 1843

www.bfcs.org.uk

President:
THE LORD MAYOR OF
BIRMINGHAM

Patrons:
JOHN JOUBERT
DAVID LAWRENCE
ELIS PEHKONEN

Music Director:
DAVID WYNNE

Registered Charity No. 510847

BFCS EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT AND POLICY 2018

STATEMENT

Birmingham Festival Choral Society (BFCS), which incorporates a community-based choir, aims to offer equality of opportunity to anyone wishing to join in its activities or enjoy its concert performances, irrespective of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

As a registered charity the Society aims to 'promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by the presentation of public concerts and recitals and by such other ways as the Society, through its Committee, shall determine.' (*Ref: Constitution of Birmingham Festival Choral Society paragraph 2 'Objects'*).

BFCS acknowledges that discrimination exists in many areas of society – both directly and indirectly – and is committed to playing its part in reducing its effects within the scope of its activities and available resources.

POLICY

1. In the management of the Society BFCS will:

- Elect an executive Committee from its whole membership
- Make agendas and minutes of general and Committee meetings readily available to its members
- For members who do not use the internet, ensure there is access to paper copies of correspondence issued electronically
- Make all printed documents available in large print when requested
- Actively consult its members about major issues
- Actively invite members' suggestions and comments and act on them as appropriate

2. In making accessible the aims of the Society, in the public education and appreciation of music, BFCS will, as far as is practical:

- Provide maximum possible access for disabled people in all venues used for concert performance and rehearsals
- Organise choir seating to make it accessible for wheelchair users in all voice sections at rehearsals and performances
- Ensure that anyone addressing the choir in rehearsals or other meetings takes responsibility for enabling people to hear them, either by speaking loudly and clearly, or by using the

microphone provided. Sound systems or induction loops will be used where they have been installed in any venue used by the choir

- Ensure suitable seats at concerts are made available for audience members with disabilities
- Have an Access Officer for rehearsals and concerts: currently the Committee is responsible for access at rehearsals and the Concert Manager for access at concerts
- Respond to the special needs of members
- Ensure that rehearsals take account of the range of singers' musical understanding and skills
- Make all publicity material available in large print on request
- Include a brief statement about venue accessibility in concert publicity material

3. In making charges for its activities and services BFCS will:

- Annually review and publicise its membership fees and ticket prices with their concessionary rates, in line with the policy of the Society and changing needs
- Apply lowest rate membership fees to full-time students and wheelchair users plus one companion (if applicable); higher concessionary rate to people who are retired or unwaged
- Offer half price tickets to anyone under 16 and full-time students. All other tickets will be at one standard price, but anyone with a disability who needs an assistant with them, will be entitled to an additional ticket free of charge

4. In recruiting members to the Society BFCS will:

- Advertise the availability of membership, within its available resources, to as wide a constituency of people as possible throughout the West Midlands Region. Any person is eligible to join the Society as a non-singing member
- Make singing membership available to any person who passes a singing test conducted by the Music Director
- Include in publicity material a statement that BFCS operates an Equal Opportunities Policy and that further details can be obtained on request

5. In the choice of choral music to be studied and performed BFCS will:

- Reflect a broad diversity of musical styles aiming to appeal to and benefit a wide age group and variety of musical taste/aesthetic awareness. This diversity will include sacred and secular choral music, both well-known and less familiar, from a variety of world cultures, and promote new and recently composed works
- Maximise participation in a wider spectrum of choral music by collaborating with other groups of singers and instrumentalists

6. In monitoring and reviewing its practice in relation to Equal Opportunities BFCS will:

- Involve its members in the development of the policy
- Ensure the policy reflects current legislation
- Review the policy at least annually at the AGM
- Make it clear that any concern about Equal Opportunities issues can be addressed to the Equal Opportunities Representative or any member of the Committee in confidence, either in person or in writing

July 2018