

Aylesbury Choral Society

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy (EDI)

Last updated: June 2025

Introduction

The Aylesbury Choral Society (“the Society” or “ACS”) is a music group that offers membership and provides musical activities for men and women over the age of 16*. Membership and activities are open and welcoming to everybody entitled to become a member.

We are committed to being against unlawful discrimination in providing activities / services / facilities to members, the public and anyone connected to or involved with the group.

We will not unlawfully discriminate, as laid down by the Equality Act 2010, taking regard of the protected characteristics of:

- Age (beyond the minimum age limit of 16) *
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The Society is also committed to promoting equality of opportunity, regardless of class and socio-economic background.

This policy applies to every connected to ACS. This includes, but is not limited to: members, volunteers, staff, individuals engaged in providing a service (e.g. freelancers), individuals applying to volunteer or work with us, supporters, members of the public accessing our services or attending our events.

Aims

The Society aims to:

- Provide and promote equality of opportunity and equitable treatment for everyone;
- Make our activities accessible and inclusive by removing barriers to entry as far as it is within our power to do so;
- Encourage, celebrate and value diversity and inclusion;
- Ensure that every member feels respected and able to give of their best;
- Eliminate unlawful direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

Responsibilities

Inappropriate, violent or abusive behaviour or otherwise offensive and inflammatory remarks and behaviour are not acceptable. These constitute harassment and have no place in the Society.

ACS will support our members, volunteers, staff, freelancers and supporters in tolerating any inappropriate, violent or abusive behaviour from other group members, volunteers, colleagues, freelancers, other organisations or customers.

Removing barriers

The Society is committed to making sure its activities are accessible and inclusive.

We recognise that there may be a range of barriers that could stop individuals accessing our activities or feeling included in them. These barriers may not always be obvious or visible, and could be:

- Physical
- Practical
- Cultural

ACS will work to identify any such barriers and take reasonable measures to remove them.

Dealing with complaints

- If any member, volunteer, staff, freelancer or supporter feels that they have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised, they should raise it with the EDI lead (the ACS chairman). If the complaint is regarding this person, it should be raised with another committee member.
- The committee will take complaints of discrimination and harassment seriously.
- The committee will investigate the complaint, listening to all parties involved:
 - If the complaint is against a committee member, that member will not take part in conducting the investigation.
 - If the complaint is against an individual, that individual will have the opportunity to express their point of view in a safe environment and accompanied by a friend or relative.
 - The person making the complaint will have the same opportunity.
- If a complaint is found against Aylesbury Choral Society, the committee must work to ensure that such discrimination, harassment or victimisation is not repeated in the future, and must inform the members of how they propose to do this.
- If a complaint is found against Aylesbury Choral Society, the committee should work to resolve the complaint in a manner which is acceptable to the person who was subject to discrimination.
- If a complaint against Aylesbury Choral Society is not upheld, the committee might wish to address issues which may have led to the complaint in the first place, e.g. lack of communication, to prevent similar situations in the future.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Society's committee. Members of the Society will be informed of any changes to the policy and be invited to comment.

* Please note that there may be some limitations to membership of ACS for young people between the ages of 16 and 18 for safeguarding reasons. These are covered and detailed in the Society's Safeguarding Policy, which can be found at <https://www.aylesburychoral.org.uk>.

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