Constitution of Oxford Proud Voices

This document was accepted by the Founding Members on 26/01/2025.

1. **Name:** Oxford Proud Voices

2. **Structure**: Oxford Proud Voices is an unincorporated community organisation.

3. **Purpose**:
    a. Oxford Proud Voices is an open-access, no-audition community choir. It provides a queer safe place for LGBTQIA+ people and their allies to come together, to sing for equality, solidarity and joy.
    b. We do this by
        i. Bringing together people from across Oxford and Oxfordshire at weekly choir rehearsals, meeting during term time for 10 – 12 rehearsals each term
        ii. Performing at our own events and those of others whose mission and objectives align with our own.
        iii. Raising awareness of the choir so that as many people as possible can share in the joy and purpose
        iv. Raising funds to support our purpose
        v. Linking with other queer choirs in the UK and Europe
        vi. Organising a programme of social activities, open to OPV members and their families and friends, to offer a queer safe place during holiday periods
        vii. Espousing and living our values, including inclusion, respect for all people and active promotion of human and queer rights

4. **Membership**:
    a. Membership is open to anyone over 18, whether they have been singing for years or are new to singing, whether they read music or not, and however they choose to identify their gender, sexuality or self.

b. New singers attend free of charge for up to 4 weeks, after which they are asked to pay a monthly subscription.

c. There are three tiers of membership, £12.50 / £25 / £37.50 a month. Members choose to pay what they can afford; we do not request proof of income etc.

d. Financial hardship is never a barrier to attending rehearsals or participating in any OPV activities. Any member who needs to attend free of charge is able to do so. A confidential conversation with the treasurer/s will enable this arrangement.

e. The finance committee will review these annually and make recommendations to the Board; any changes will be at the discretion of the Board

f. Membership ceases when an individual's subscription lapses or if they have not attended any session in the term after they first attend.

5. **Governance and management structure**

The governance structure that was adopted in January 2025, when the choir was 3 months old, continues to evolve. Terms of office have yet to be finalised, but currently committee members are elected to serve for one year in the first instance. OPV has plans to apply for charitable status in 2026; the governance arrangements were designed to mirror the structure you would see in a charity. Therefore we have two layers of governance:

a. **A Board,** currently made up of the two founding members and our Musical Director. Included in its functions are to:

i. set the overarching vision for the choir
ii. delegate authority to the management committee
iii. be the guardian of the choir's values
iv. be the ultimate escalation point for disputes and discipline
v. set remuneration for the musical director and approve major expenses/liabilities
vi. be a "critical friend" to the management committee.

The Board meets once a term as a minimum. The terms of office and size of the Board are to be decided over the coming year, but it is anticipated to be for a period of 3 years.

b. A management committee. This committee lives the vision of the choir through the day-to-day management of the choir. Most roles are job-shares. This approach aims to involve as many people as possible and to strive for rich representation of our membership. It consists of:

i. Co-chairs
ii. Co-treasurers
iii. Co-secretaries

iv. Co-membership secretaries
v. Co-welfare officers (safeguarding, diversity, equity & inclusion)
vi. Events coordinator (external events)
vii. Co-social activity coordinators
viii. Social media
ix. IT and website

The management committee meets approximately every 6 weeks.

c. Sub-committees: these contribute to OPV's smooth and effective running:

i. Finance committee (board members, chairs and treasurers), which ensures that the choir maintains appropriate insurance and retains reserves in line with the choir's agreed reserve policy
ii. Music committee, whose responsibilities include selection of songs that will resonate with our members, be congruent with our aims and appropriate for an a cappella, non-audition choir
iii. Funding and grant-application sub-group, responsible for working on funding bids to support our growth and the opportunities we offer to LGTBQIA+ people
iv. These sub-groups report to the management committee and meet as frequently as necessary.

Members are elected to the management committee at our AGM. Music and funding sub-committee members are volunteers.

AGM

a. Our Annual General Meeting is held in September each year. Our first AGM was held on 16th September 2025.
b. Our AGM is open to all members

6. Financial Management

a. Please note on Finance sub-committee at (c.i) above
b. We have a bank account into which all subscriptions, donations and future grant funding is paid. All funds paid out must be approved by two signatories.
c. Our treasurer(s) provide regular financial reports to our board
d. Our chairs sign off on our annual accounts each year.
e. In the event of the choir having to cease to exist, any assets held by the choir would be donated to an organisation whose objectives match our own and this would be decided by the board.

7. **Political Affiliation** - Oxford Proud Voices has no political affiliation.

Revised 25.10.03, ratified by the committee on 25.10.06