RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. **Membership admission rules**

* SCS is a non-audition choir and is open to anyone from the age of 16 upwards. (see separate comments on **Young Members)**
* New members should complete a membership form, providing contact details (address, telephone number) In addition an email contact is preferable but optional.
* The membership form includes details of Data Protection (GDPR) outlining how the contact details provided will be used. The form and policy also provides options for members who do not wish to be informed of social / wider events and/or who do not wish to have their image posted on the SCS website or facebook page (see GDPR Policy document)

**Young Members (under 18)**

* The Membership form for members who are under 18 years of age when joining SCS requires parental permission and contact details to safeguard young people who are attending rehearsals and concerts.

1. **Subscription fees and other payments to be made by members**

* The SCS season runs from 1st September to the end of the following July
* Annual subscriptions are due in September, payable by cheque payable to Stafford Choral Society. The payment can be made in 2 instalments, September and January if preferred but a nominal administration cost will be applied.
* Members joining the society in January or later will only be liable to pay half of the annual subscription for that season.
* New members are welcome to attend up to 4 rehearsals before deciding to join formally, at which time their full or half subscription will become due.
* Should a member choose to leave SCS before the end of a season they are not entitled to a subscription refund. However, if a refund is requested in writing, the trustees will consider the appeal. Their decision is final.
* In order to make SCS more accessible for younger members there will be no subscription charge for members under the age of 21 or for members under the age of 25 who are in full time education.
* The aim of subscriptions is to cover the cost for the season of the rehearsal venue, including room hire for full committee and planning committee meetings; payment of the MD and accompanist; music hire for rehearsals; miscellaneous costs and expenses pertaining to rehearsals and membership.
* Where possible members should endeavour to Gift Aid their subscriptions.

1. **What members can expect as part of their membership**

* A central rehearsal venue with good facilities and seating for all members, including wheelchair access.
* Rehearsals will last for 2 hours to include an interval, with the option to purchase refreshments
* Rehearsals will be led by a Musical Director, appointed by the trustees or by an appointed deputy.
* Members will be kept informed of rehearsal dates through notices at rehearsals, email and on the SCS website.

1. **What is expected of members (rehearsals)**

* To attend rehearsals regularly, informing the Membership Secretary or Chair of SCS if there is likely to be an extended absence due to personal circumstances, illness, holidays etc
* To make every effort to arrive punctually for rehearsals. Due to the entrance restrictions at Entrust, members arriving more than 10 minutes late may not be able to gain entry to the building unless they have informed the Membership Secretary in advance.
* To show respect for other members and whoever is leading the rehearsal, in particular listening attentively without talking or disrupting the rehearsal in any way.
* To come prepared for rehearsals with music that has been issued, a pencil and eraser. Where possible to prepare for rehearsals and concerts by practising at home.
* To make new members welcome. Members should not expect to have a specific seat reserved for them and should be prepared to move to accommodate new members or if the MD wishes to make seating changes in the best interests of the choir.

1. **What is expected of members (concerts)**

* To make every effort to attend the afternoon rehearsal on concert days.
* To abide by the concert dress requested by the committee.
* To make guest performers and members of the audience welcome
* To behave in a way that promotes SCS in a positive light.

1. **Music for rehearsals and concerts**

* Members will be provided with scores for rehearsals and concerts. If they opt to purchase music through the Society’s Librarian, any group discount applicable will be passed on to purchasers.
* Given the rising cost of music hire and the need for the Society to purchase copies when hire copies are not available, members will be expected to contribute to costs.
* Members using hire copies should only mark scores lightly, in pencil. Scores should be returned as soon as possible following a concert or at the end of a concert if requested. Where possible, markings should be erased and copies returned as clean copies in an acceptable condition.

1. **Concert costs**

* The cost of putting on up to 4 concerts a year is not met through subscriptions. However, it is not possible to estimate income and outgoings accurately in advance for the choral season so any surplus from subscriptions will be used to support concerts for that year. In this event subscriptions for the following year will be revised accordingly.
* Concerts are funded mainly through ticket sales, donations, sponsorship (eg by SDAC Stafford District Arts Council) and fund-raising by members. Fund raising may include some or all of the following:

SCS 200 Club

Raffles

Events eg our Annual Quiz and Summer Garden Party

Profits from rehearsal and concert refreshments

Easyfundraising payments

It is hoped that all members will participate and contribute to fund-raising in order that we can continue to employ talented performers for our concerts.

* As a Charity we are expected to hold at least one Charity event each year. For SCS this traditionally is our Christmas concert of Messiah. Any profit after expenses is used to support young singers in Staffordshire, either through Fosym or through SCS bursaries. The trustees are responsible for deciding how the money should be used and informing members.