Heart of England Singers

Registered Charity No. 1041780

President: Margaret Croucher: B.Ed, Cert.Ed, A.Mus.L.C.M., Cert. Mus Ed T.C.L, L.T.C.L

Musical Director and Conductor: Michelle Norton

Website: www.heartofenglandsingers.org.uk

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy 2025

Introduction

Heart of England Singers is a music group open to all. We are committed to encouraging equality, diversity, and inclusion in our music group.

We are committed against unlawful discrimination in providing activities / services / facilities.

We will not unlawfully discriminate because of the Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics of:

- age
- 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

Heart of England Singers is also committed to promoting equality of opportunity regardless of class and socio-economic background.

This policy applies to everyone connected to Heart of England Singers. This includes, but is not limited to members, volunteers, staff, individuals engaged to provide 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

Heart of England Singers aims to:

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

Responsibilities

- The Chairperson is the EDI lead and responsible for providing advice and guidance on equality, diversity, and inclusion issues, and to ensure the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy is kept up to date.

General practice

Heart of England Singers will treat everyone equally regardless of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, class, and socio-economic background.

Heart of England Singers will promote equality of acces, to membership and musical activities and opportunities.

We will ensure no one receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by the criteria and characteristics set out in the introduction. This includes but is not limited to:

- Individuals accessing membership within the membership criteria.
- Individuals accessing musical activities and opportunities.
- Volunteers, employees, or people engaged to provide a service (e.g. freelancers)
- Individuals applying to volunteer or work with (including freelancers) Heart of England Singers

We acknowledge our responsibility to make reasonable adjustments to our activity to enable access under the Equality Act 2010

We will select candidates for volunteering or paid opportunities based on their skills, qualifications, and experience.

Heart of England Singers commitment to anti-discriminatory practice relates to all kinds of discrimination:

- Direct discrimination, where someone is treated less favourably than another because they have a protected characteristic.
- Indirect discrimination, where a requirement or a condition is applied that has a detrimental effect on a particular group or individual. This applies even if there was not a deliberate intention to discriminate.
- Associative discrimination, where direct discrimination against someone occurs because they associate with another person who has a protected characteristic.
- Perceptive discrimination, where direct discrimination against someone occurs because others think they have a protected characteristic even if they do not possess that characteristic.
- Harassment, where unwanted behaviour related to a protected characteristic occurs that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. This applies even if the conduct is not directed at the individual or if they do not have the protected characteristic.
- Third party harassment, which recognises potential liability for the harassment of someone connected to the group by external contacts.
- Victimisation, when someone is treated badly because they have made or supported a complaint, or it is thought that they have done so.

Inclusion and respect

- Heart of England Singers will:
    - treat everyone in a respectful manner and ensure they are made to feel equally welcome and included in all activities.
    - provide an environment in which the contribution and needs of everyone are fully valued and recognised.
- All members, staff, freelancers, volunteers, supporters, and those representing Heart of England Singers are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity and ensure activities are welcoming and inclusive for all.

- Inappropriate, violent, or abusive behaviour or otherwise offensive and inflammatory remarks and behaviour are not acceptable. These constitute harassment and have no place in Heart of England Singers will support our members, volunteers, staff, freelancers, and supporters in not tolerating any inappropriate, violent, or abusive behaviour from other group members, volunteers, colleagues, freelancers, other Removing barriers organisations, or customers.

Heart of England Singers 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

We 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 they have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised, they should raise it with the EDI lead / the EDI sub-group / the Chair/other role]. 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 be part of 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.
    - The person making the complaint will have the same opportunity.
- If a complaint is found against Heart of England Singers, the committee must work to ensure that such discrimination, harassment, or victimisation is not repeated in future and must inform the members of how they propose to do this.

- If a complaint is found against Heart of England Singers, 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 is against Heart of England Singers is not upheld, the committee might wish to address issues which might have led to the complaint in the first place, e.g. lack of communication, to prevent similar situations in future.

Policy review

The policy will be reviewed every two years by the board of trustees/management committee. Members of Heart of England Singers will be informed of any changes to the policy and be invited to comment.

Adopted - March 2025

Reviewed - March 2027