



WATFORD PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION POLICY

Overview

Watford Philharmonic Society is a registered charity (No 272393) whose mission is to promote the art of music by the study and public performance of choral and orchestral works of the highest quality.

We aim to treat all our members, volunteers, paid professionals and supporters equally regardless of their age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, disability or socio-economic background. In furtherance of our charitable objectives, we will consider offering assistance to people with limited financial means, whether as members of the Society or members of the public wishing to attend our performances.

As trustees, members of the Society's management committee are responsible for providing and disseminating advice and guidance on EDI issues and for ensuring that the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy is kept up to date.

Membership

Subject to maximum numbers as determined by the committee, membership of the Society is open to all singers and instrumentalists who can satisfy the Director of Music as to their musical ability to sing or play their chosen instrument to the required standard.

For singers, this will involve a simple voice test. Orchestral players are expected to have achieved Grade 8 (or its equivalent) or above, and usually play with the orchestra for a few rehearsals before a decision as to membership is made.

Annual membership subscriptions are payable at the beginning of the season. For those preferring to spread the cost, the subscription can be paid in instalments. The Society's membership secretary will respond in confidence to individuals seeking financial assistance.

Access

We will seek to ensure safe access to all facilities used by the Society for its concerts, rehearsals and social activities.

Wherever possible we will try to make use of facilities that can be accessed by anyone with a physical disability by use of ramps, grabrails and space for mobility aids such as wheelchairs.

Currently, we offer concessionary or complimentary tickets to some categories of concert goer, including family-friendly ticket pricing for under 19s. Full details are given in our **Complimentary Tickets Policy**. Carers are also eligible for free tickets when accompanying a vulnerable or disabled person.

Diversity

We will seek to create a diverse environment in which we welcome the widest range of people from the community, recognising, respecting and celebrating each other's differences.

This may include selecting music for practice and performance drawn from an array of cultural traditions, both religious and secular, and embracing a variety of languages.

Inclusivity

The Society values all members, paid professionals, volunteers and supporters and will do all it can to ensure that they are treated with respect and dignity and made to feel equally welcome and included in all its activities.

We do not tolerate harassment, bullying, inappropriate, violent or abusive conduct and consider all offensive and inflammatory remarks or behaviour to be unacceptable.

We will use paper based and digital media to disseminate information about the Society as widely as possible, both to encourage membership and to promote our concerts.

Recruitment and engagement of professional musicians

As an employer, the Society aims to promote equality and inclusivity.

We offer annual contracts for professional services to our Director of Music; Leader, and Choir Rehearsal Accompanist and we employ professional soloists and additional orchestral players to perform at individual concerts. Occasionally, we may also commission works from living composers.

Our recruitment and selection processes for all such appointments are conducted without discrimination on grounds of disability, ethnic origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation or socio-economic background. Selection will be based on the candidate's demonstratable skills, qualifications and experience.

Responding to complaints

Responsibility for responding to complaints raised in relation to this policy rests in the first instance with the Chair of the management committee. Please contact chair@watfordphilharmonicsociety.co.uk

We take such complaints seriously and will investigate them when brought to our attention, first approaching them by listening to all parties concerned and attempting to reach an acceptable solution.

If the complaint is found against the Society, the committee will work to ensure that corrective action is taken and that members are informed accordingly.

Review

This Policy will be reviewed **every two years** by the Society's management committee and adjustments made in accordance with changes in legislation or recommendations. Members of the Society will be advised of any such changes.

Policy originated:	Next review:	Signed off by:
July 2023	July 2025	
	July 2027	

NOTE

This Policy Statement is based on a template provided by Making Music (the National Federation of Music Societies) www.makingmusic.org.uk of which Watford Philharmonic Society is a member. See also Watford Philharmonic Society's **Health & Safety Policy** and **Complaints Policy**.

1st August 2023