**Health and Safety Policy**

Key details

* Policy prepared by: Main Committee
* Approved by Board/committee on: 13/08/2023
* Next review date: 13/08/2026

## Preamble

Chester Orchestral Society owes a duty of care to

* Its members
* Individuals – conductors and performers – whom it engages on a contractual basis
* Visiting musical groups e.g. choirs with which it mounts joint concerts.
* Its Volunteers - including stewards and programme sellers
* The general public whom it invites to its events and who pay to attend its concerts
* The organisations from which it hires premises and equipment

This Statement sets out the Policy by which it will achieve this objective

## Definitions

**Main Committee:** the Committee that has overall responsibility for running the orchestra, and that is elected/appointed at the AGM.

**Music Committee**: the Committee appointed to deal with musical programming activities.

**Volunteer:** any individual, whether or not a member of the Society, who has agreed to perform tasks requested by and on behalf of Chester Orchestral Society.

## General Statement

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety is that of the Main Committee of Chester Orchestral Society. It is our policy to:

* Provide adequate control of the health and safety risks arising from our activities;
* Consult with our Members and Volunteers on matters affecting health and safety where appropriate;
* Provide information, instruction and supervision for Members and Volunteers as appropriate;
* Ensure all Volunteers are competent to do their tasks, and give them adequate training;
* Prevent accidents;
* Review and revise this policy as necessary at least once every three years;
* Operate within appropriate legislative frameworks

## Responsibilities

All Volunteers are required to:

* Cooperate with the Committee on health and safety matters;
* Not interfere with anything provided to safeguard the health and safety of persons engaged in the Society's activities;
* Report all health and safety concerns to the Chairman or Society officer .

## Risk Assessment

The Chairman will oversee the carrying out of risk assessments in respect of the activities of the Society. These risk assessments will establish what needs to happen and will cover all foreseeable hazards. This is a practical exercise that will lead to the implementation of necessary improvements in the design of our activities and the way in which we organise them.

We will review our health and safety risk assessments at least every three years to ensure that they remain relevant to the needs of our Members and Volunteers, organisation and legislative requirements.

## Training and Information

The Chairman will oversee the delivery of health and safety training. A key element to achieving safe work practices is knowledge and information. All Members and Volunteers will receive health and safety instruction appropriate to the tasks they are asked to undertake by the Society.

If a Volunteer is asked to undertake a task for which he or she feels they are not competent and where health or safety might be put at undue risk they are required to report this immediately.

## Accident Reporting

All Members and Volunteers are required to report any accident or other incident that may have health and safety implications to the Chairman or another Society officer

Signed on behalf of Chester Orchestral Society..............................................

Date.................................

**Every Orchestra member has a personal responsibility to be aware and mindful of health and safety issues both for theirself and for the well- being of others.**

**RISKS**

**1. FIRE**: A key risk at all times to those for whom we have a duty of care. At our rehearsals Committee members are in attendance, and at our concerts CPO volunteer stewards are on duty (alongside the Cathedral vergers during performances at Chester Cathedral). All these personnel should be aware of the location and efficacy of fire extinguishers, fire alarms and all fire exits and, if no venue representative is present, should phone 999 in the event of fire.

**2. SLIPS AND TRIPS:** A major risk to those for whom we have a duty of care. There can be hazards at floor level, on steps and on tiered staging.

**3. HEAVY LIFTING:** A risk for allmembers and volunteers who are frequently involved in lifting musical instruments (particularly heavy/awkward percussion equipment), furniture (tables, chairs and stage furniture) and carrying heavy boxes (of music, publicity material and refreshments). Any member/ volunteer should seek help (or decline to lift altogether) if they are not confident to do so.

**4.** "**WORKING" at height:** A risk for all performers using staging, particularly with respect to tiered staging used by visiting choirs. Members and visiting performers must be given suitable advice over using such staging.

**5. ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT:** A risk to those for whom we have a duty of care. Equipment should only be used for its original purpose. An updated list of items/assets owned by the orchestra is kept by the Treasurer. At the present time this does not include any electrical equipment (which should be tested and tagged regularly).

**6. MEDICAL:**  A risk to those for whom we have a duty of care. At rehearsals an updated list of nominated first-aiders from within the orchestra should be maintained and, if necessary, training should be provided. At concerts, the Cathedral Vergers will be in attendance and can provide assistance in first aid. If in any doubt over a medical emergency, Committee members or volunteer stewards should phone 999 for assistance.

**7. FOOD:** A risk to those for whom we have a duty of care if food is provided. Thus, if food preparation is linked to any event the caterer/provider should have a Food Safety Hygiene Certificate.

***FOR THE ATTENTION OF ALL ORCHESTRA MEMBERS***

**DO**

* Tell a member of the Committee of any concerns you may have concerning safety.
* Be aware of any trip hazards (steps, trailing cables, etc.)
* Exercise special caution when using raised staging.
* If you are involved with hot liquids (interval refreshments etc), take normal precautions. Do not put any of your colleagues at risk.
* Ask the Stage Manager about the location of emergency exits, fire extinguishers and fire alarms at both rehearsal and performance venues.
* Report any accident or other incident that may have health & safety implications to either the Chairman or other Society officer or committee member

**DO NOT**

* Lift anything heavy - unless you are absolutely certain you can do so safely. If you have any doubts, seek help or ask someone else.
* Obstruct passages, steps or aisles.
* Go on and off the tiered staging except by the steps provided.

***RISK ASSESSMENT REVIEW: 2014***

| **What are the risks?** | **Who might be harmed and how?** | **What are you already doing?** | **What further action is necessary?** | **Action by whom?** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| FIRE | ANYONE in attendance at rehearsals or concerts, i.e. audience members, soloists & visiting musicians (e.g. choir) and orchestra members.  **Fire in building** | **1**. Checking position of alarms & extinguishers.  **2**. At concerts, Cathedral vergers, supported by CPO volunteer stewards supervise all exits and doors.  **3.** Keeping performers well informed. **4**. Liaison with representatives of the Hirer present at venue and also abiding by the H&S Policy of the venue. | Regular checking of alarms & extinguishers  at each visitwith duty staff (rehearsals) & Cathedral Vergers (concerts).  To call 999 in the event of fire at any event where venue staff are not present. | Nominated persons : **Chairman/Secretary** (rehearsals)  **Stage Manager/ Front of House/ volunteer stewards** (concerts) |
| SLIPS/ TRIPS | ANYONE in attendance at rehearsals or concerts, i.e. audience members, soloists & visiting musicians (e.g. choir) and orchestra members.  **Hazards/obstacles at floor level** | **Visual check** of hazards at floor level (cables etc.)and stage level especially if the tiered choir staging is in use.  **Alerting performers** to the danger (to others) of leaving bulky items on the staging, including music folders on tiered choir staging. | more of the same ; steady reminders and checks | **Chairman**  **Stage Manager**  **Front of House/ volunteer stewards** (at concerts) |
| HEAVY LIFTING | ANY choir member/ volunteer **lifting musical instruments, furniture, stage items, music boxes etc.** | Ensure that lifting tasks etc. are only done by those who are confident /competent to do so. | Ensure that arrangements for moving heavy instruments are all in place, particularly wrt personnel required for moving percussion. Formal training not required. | **Chairman**  **Stage Manager**  **Committee members**  **All CPO members** |
| "WORKING" at height | ANY orchestra members on **raised staging**.  ANY member of visiting Choirs singing on the **tiered staging** | Regular reminders of hazards associated with the staging, especially when high-loaded. The importance of choirs using the steps & NOT clambering between levels. | more of the same ; steady reminders and checks | **Chairman**  **Stage Manager** |
| ELECTRICAL | ANYONE in attendance at rehearsals or concerts, i.e. audience members, soloists & visiting musicians (e.g. choir) and orchestra members.  **Electrocution from faulty venue appliances & any "brought-in " appliances** | Check safety tags on venue appliances etc.  2 sets of stage lights are jointly owned with CMS. These are stored at the Cathedral.  Stage Lights are regularly hired from Vale Royal String orchestra . | PAT testing of stage lights to be organised in conjunction with CMS.  Pat testing of VRSO lights carried out in Autumn 2022. | **Chairman/Secretary** |
| MEDICAL | ANYONE in attendance at rehearsals or concerts, i.e. audience members, soloists & visiting musicians (e.g. choir) and orchestra members **if they become ill.** | Cathedral vergers in attendance at concerts  Call 999 in the event of a medical emergency. | Set up a list of nominated **First Aiders** (from membership) to assist at rehearsals | **Chairman**  **First Aiders** |
| FOOD HYGIENE | ANYONE in attendance at rehearsals or post concert events where fresh food is prepared that could lead to **food poisoning.** | Check that any caterer has an up-to-date Food Hygiene Certificate. If fresh food is prepared by members, ensure suitable food hygiene arrangements are followed. | Individual members who provide fresh food occasionally encouraged to read aware of guidelines on serving food at charity events | **Chairman** |