

# **Equality and Diversity Policy Bradford Festival Choral Society**

## **Aims**

Bradford Festival Choral Society (BFCS) is a music group open to all.

We aim to treat our members, volunteers, contracted staff and supporters 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.

- The Chair, or designated trustee, is responsible for ensuring that BFCS provides equal opportunities and promotes inclusion in every aspect of its activities and to ensure the Equality and Diversity Policy is kept up to date.

## **Equality of opportunity**

BFCS aims to:

- promote equality for its members and potential members in access to membership and musical activities and opportunities, within the membership criteria.
- ensure no member or potential member will receive less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by the criteria and characteristics set out in the introduction within the membership criteria.
- ensure no individual wishing to volunteer or work for BFCS will receive less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by the criteria and characteristics set out in the aims.

## **Inclusion and respect**

- BFCS values its members, contracted staff, volunteers and supporters and will treat them in a respectful manner and ensure they are made to feel equally welcome and included in all activities.
- BFCS will provide an environment in which the contribution and needs of everyone are fully valued and recognised.
- All members, staff, volunteers, supporters and those representing BFCS are expected to treat each other with respect and ensure activities are welcoming and inclusive for all.
- preferred personal pronouns should be used in conversation with individuals. Written communication should either be gender neutral or use the preferred personal pronoun for the individual (See appendix 1)

## **Accessibility**

- BFCS will use venues that are accessible to all for rehearsals, concerts and any other activities or events for which it is responsible.

## **Employment practices – general**

- BFCS aims to promote equality and inclusivity as an employer and shall ensure that no volunteer, employee, person engaged to provide a service (e.g., freelance) or job/volunteer applicant receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by the characteristics set out in the aims of this policy.
- BFCS selects all candidates for paid employment based on their skills, qualifications, and experience.
- Selection and recruitment, and training practices, will be subject to review to ensure that they comply with the Equality and Diversity Policy.

# Equality and Diversity Policy

## Bradford Festival Choral Society

### Dealing with Complaints

- If any member, volunteer, staff or supporter feels they have been discriminated against they should raise it with any of the trustees, either directly or with another support from another person.
- 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 the complaint is found to be true, or substantially true, the committee will ensure that such discrimination is not repeated and inform those concerned. BFCS will take note of any issues arising from such investigations even if the detail of a complaint is not found.
- Serious or persistent acts of discrimination, abuse, harassment, victimisation or bullying of members, contracted staff, volunteers, colleagues, and partners may be grounds for withdrawal of membership or non-renewal of contract.

### Availability, action, and review

- this policy will be shared with members and made available on the BFCS website
- the lead trustee, will report issues arising from the policy at least once each year
- the committee will amend or change existing practice or policies in the light of issues arising or following developing best practice.
- this policy will be reviewed no later than 16.01.2026

Approved by BFCS trustees on 16 January 2023

# Equality and Diversity Policy

## Bradford Festival Choral Society

### Appendix 1

For further information on use of pronouns see

The Law Society - Use of Pronouns in the Workplace,

<https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/topics/hr-and-people-management/using-pronouns-in-the-workplace>

and

SPARK updates,

Best Practices for Using Pronouns in the Workplace and Everyplace! Stephanie Egan

<https://www.adp.com/spark/articles/2021/06/best-practices-for-using-pronouns-in-the-workplace-and-everyplace.aspx>

### Appendix 2

#### Request for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks for current and potential members, staff and volunteers – with reference to ex-offenders

##### General:

- In assessing applicants' suitability for positions which are included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order using criminal record checks processed through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). BFCS complies with the code of practice and undertakes to treat all applicants for positions fairly.
- BFCS supports equality of opportunity for all, with the right mix of talent, skills and potential and welcomes applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records.

##### Request of DBS checks

- An application for a criminal record check is only submitted to DBS after a risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned.
- Where a criminal record check is identified as necessary, all application forms, job adverts and recruitment briefs will contain a statement that an application for a DBS certificate will be submitted in the event of the individual being offered the position.
- BFCS can only ask an individual to provide details of convictions and cautions that BFCS are legally entitled to know about, and where a DBS certificate at either standard or enhanced level can legally be requested (where the position is one that is included in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 as amended, and, where appropriate, Police Act Regulations as amended).
- BFCS makes every subject of a criminal record check submitted to DBS aware of the existence of the code of practice and makes a copy available on request.

##### Outcome of check and selection process

- BFCS undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a criminal record check on the basis of a conviction or other information revealed.
- BFCS undertakes to discuss any matter revealed on a DBS certificate with the individual seeking the position before withdrawing a conditional offer of employment.
- In an interview or separate discussion BFCS will:
  - only ask an individual about convictions and cautions that are not protected
  - ensure an open and measured discussion takes place on the subject of any offences or other matter that might be relevant to the position.
- Failure to reveal information that is directly relevant to the position sought could lead to withdrawal of an offer of employment or temporary contract.

##### Responsibilities

The trustees will ensure that those who are involved in the recruitment process are:

- aware of the BFCS equality and diversity policy.
- aware of when and what type of DBS check is appropriate.
- have read the Making Music guidance on safeguarding and DBS checks.
- have read any other guidance deemed appropriate by the BFCS trustees.