



EHOS MEMBERS' HANDBOOK

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V1.0 Amended August 2017

Table of Contents

<u>Rules of EHOS</u>	<u>Page 3</u>
<u>Addendum to Rules</u>	<u>Page 7</u>
<u>EHOS Code of Conduct</u>	<u>Page 8</u>
<u>Grievance Procedure</u>	<u>Page 10</u>
<u>Committee Standing Orders</u>	<u>Page 14</u>

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Current EHOS Committee

CURRENT RULES OF EHOS

From the Original Constitution: 2nd June 1960

1. The Society shall be called the **EAST HERTS OPERATIC SOCIETY (EHOS)**.
2. The object of the Society is to educate the public in the dramatic and operatic arts, to further the development of public appreciation and taste in the said arts, and to assist and further such charitable purposes as the Committee shall from time to time determine; and in furtherance of this object, but not otherwise, the Society through its management committee shall have the following powers:-
 - a. To promote plays, dramas, comedies, operas, operettas and other dramatic and operatic works of educative value.
 - b. To purchase, acquire and obtain, interests in the copyright of or the right to perform or show any such dramatic or operatic works.
 - bb. To acquire by purchase, lease, or otherwise, any land or buildings as may be deemed by the Committee likely to advance or benefit either directly or indirectly the interest of the Society and to manage, improve and maintain all or any part of such land and building and to demise, sell or otherwise deal with the same or any part thereof, subject to such consent as may be deemed necessary in law.
 - c. To purchase or otherwise acquire plant, machinery, furniture, fixtures, fittings, scenery and all other necessary effects.
 - d. To raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscription, donation and otherwise; provided that the Society shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds.
 - e. To do all such other things as shall further the objects of the Society.
3. The funds of the Society shall be devoted only to the stated objects and no payment either directly or indirectly shall be made to members for general services to the Society other than legitimate expenses in its work and the payment, in good faith, of reasonable and proper remuneration to any officer or servant or member of the Society in return for any services actually rendered to the Society and any payment of interest at a reasonable and proper rate on money lent or reasonable and proper rent for premises demised or let by any member to the Society.

4. The Society shall consist of a President and Vice-Presidents, four Trustees and Ordinary Members. Ordinary Members, in the first instance, shall be those who filled forms at the Inaugural Meeting held on 2nd June 1960: and thereafter anyone elected in accordance with RULE 6.
5. The President and Vice-Presidents shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting.
6. Membership shall be open to all those having sympathy with the objects of the Society and desiring actively to further it, and to pay the entrance fee and annual subscription prescribed by the Rules. Applications for acting and non-acting membership shall be made in writing, signed by the applicant, to the Secretary who shall submit the same to the Committee for its decision. Prior to election all candidates for Acting membership shall satisfy the Committee as to their histrionic and/or musical ability. The names and addresses of candidates for election shall be sent by the Secretary to each member of the Committee at least two clear days prior to the day of the meeting at which such applications for membership are to be considered by the Committee.
7. Two Honorary Auditors shall be appointed from among those who are not members of the Committee.
8. The Society shall be managed by a Committee consisting of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Business Manager, Publicity Manager, Social Secretary, Assistant Secretary and Librarian, Assistant Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Stage Manager and four other members, all appointed by the Annual General Meeting for one year. All members of the Committee shall be eligible for re-election. Seven members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. The Committee shall have power to fill any vacancy until the next Annual General Meeting.
- 8a. There shall be no more than four Trustees of the Society. The first Trustees shall be appointed by the Committee and the property of the Society (other than cash which shall be under the control of the Treasurer) shall be vested in them to be dealt with by them as the Committee shall from time to time direct by resolution (of which an entry in the Minute Book shall be conclusive evidence). The Trustees shall be indemnified against risk and expense out of the Society property. The Trustees shall hold office until death or resignation or until removed from office by a resolution of the Committee who may for any reason which may seem sufficient to a majority of them present and voting at any meeting remove any Trustee or Trustees from the office of Trustee.

Where by reason of any such death, resignation or removal it shall appear necessary to the Committee that a new Trustee or Trustees shall be appointed or if the Committee shall deem it expedient to appoint an additional Trustee or additional Trustees the Committee shall by resolution nominate the person or persons to be appointed the new Trustee or Trustees.

For the purpose of giving effect to such nomination the Chairman is hereby nominated as the person to appoint new Trustees of the Society within the meaning of Section 36 of the Trustee Act 1925 and he shall by deed appoint the person or persons so nominated by the Committee as the new Trustee or Trustees of the Society and the provisions of the Trustee Act 1925 shall apply to any such appointment. Any statement of fact in any such deed of appointment shall in favour of a person dealing bona-fide and for value with the Society or Committee be conclusive evidence of the fact so stated.

9. The Committee is empowered to appoint Sub-Committees for specific purposes. The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, ex-officio, shall be members of all Sub-Committees.
 10. The Annual Subscription shall be determined at each Annual General Meeting. Members taking part in a Production shall pay an additional sum (Show Fee) during the period of rehearsals. The amount of this sum shall be decided by the Committee.
 11. The Annual Subscription shall become due at the AGM.
 12. Any person wishing to resign membership shall send written notification to the Secretary and shall be liable for his subscription for the current financial year.
 13. In the event of any person being seriously in arrears with his subscription the Committee shall have power to declare him no longer to be a member.
- 13a.
- i. Any member of the Society who, in the opinion of the Committee confirmed by an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society, shall be guilty by his actions of misusing the privileges of the Society, or of otherwise bringing the Society into contempt or disrepute, may be suspended or expelled from the Society.
 - ii. The Committee may by a unanimous vote remove from the list of Members the name of any Acting Member who has persistently neglected the work undertaken by the Society and the name of any member whose conduct they consider likely to endanger the welfare of the Society.
14. The Financial Year shall end on 30th June. The Treasurer shall then prepare the Annual Statement of accounts which duly audited shall be presented at the Annual General Meeting.

15. The Society shall hold an Annual General Meeting within three months from the end of the Financial Year to receive the Report of the Committee and the Audited Statement of Accounts; to elect the President and Vice-Presidents, the Honorary Auditors, the Officers and members of the Committee and to transact any other business.
16. Candidates for all offices and for election to the Committee must be nominated by two members of the Society and nominations must reach the Secretary at least seven days before the Annual Meeting. Election shall be by Ballot.
17. A written notice of the Annual General Meeting, accompanied by a Statement of Accounts, shall be sent to each member at least fourteen days prior to the date of the meeting.
18. An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society may be called at any time at the discretion of the Committee or upon receipt of a request signed by not less than thirty members which shall specify the business for which the meeting is to be called. No other business shall be transacted at that meeting. Members shall receive at least seven days notice of an Extraordinary General Meeting.
19. No person who is not a member of the Society shall take part in any of the performances given by the Society except in an emergency at the discretion of the Committee.
20. Membership of the Society does not confer any right to appear in any production.
21. The casting of a production shall be carried out by an Audition Committee consisting of the Producer, Musical Director and a Chairman appointed by the Committee of the Society. Auditions shall be held for the principal parts and for such other parts or Chorus as the Producer and Musical Director may determine.
22. The Committee shall have power to take out of a production any member who is consistently absent from, or late at, rehearsals without satisfactory explanation being given to the Secretary.
23. In the event of a person chosen for a production being found, in the opinion of the Producer and the Musical Director, to be unsuitable, they may revise the casting.
24. No financial obligation or contract may be entered into in the name of the Society without the authority of the Committee.
25. All members, on joining, shall be handed a copy of the Rules of the Society to which, in accepting membership, they agree to conform.
26. The Society shall only be dissolved by resolution passed by a majority of at least five sixths of the Members present and voting at a Special General Meeting called for the purpose of considering such dissolution.

27. In the event of dissolution, any balance of cash remaining in hand after the realisation of assets and payments of debts shall not be distributed among the Members of the Society but shall be applied for such charitable purposes similar to those of the Society or be paid distributed or transferred to such charitable institutions or institution having objects similar to the object of the Society as the Committee with the consent of the Meeting shall determine.
- 28.
- a. No alteration of these Rules shall be made except at a General Meeting nor unless 21 days prior to such meeting a written notice of the proposed alteration or of one substantially to the like effect shall have been given to the Secretary who shall give fourteen days notice thereof to the members, and the resolution embodying such proposed alteration shall be carried by a majority of at least two thirds of the votes recorded thereon at the Meeting.
 - b. No alteration may be made to Rules 2, 26 or 27 without the approval of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales or other authority having charitable jurisdiction from time to time.

Addendum to Rules:

Change to Rule 8 as agreed at the AGM of 9th October 2007:

8. The Society shall be managed by a Committee consisting of a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Communications Manager, New Expressions representative and two other members appointed by the Annual General Meeting for one year. All members of the Committee shall be eligible for re-election. Four members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. The Committee shall have power to fill any vacancy until the next Annual General Meeting and the power to co-opt up to 3 additional Committee members.

Change to Rule 4 as agreed at the AGM of 6th October 2012:

4. Remove the word “30th June” replace with “31st August.”

EHOS Code of Conduct

Society Name: East Herts Operatic Society (Hereinafter called EHOS)

This document informs members of the above society of the requirements for safe participation in their society activities. Please read it carefully.

EHOS does not condone any activities outside the remit of this code of conduct and encourages individuals, in the interests of their personal safety, not to participate in activities not covered by this document.

Committee: The committee shall be elected democratically by the members of the Society at the Society's annual general meeting (AGM).

The Society committee shall:

1. Ensure the duty of care to their members within all activities undertaken by the society whilst working within the Health and Safety guidelines of EHOS.
2. Act in accordance with the principles of EHOS's Equal Opportunities Policy and not discriminate on any grounds including but not limited to sexuality, race, gender, age, ability or religion.
3. Make a commitment to providing a quality service to its members.
4. Promote and facilitate the activities and interests of the Society rather than their own interests and activities.
5. Act professionally and responsibly in all matters regarding EHOS.
6. The Committee has the right to rescind membership and refuse renewal of any member whose conduct or behaviour has, in the view of the Committee, been to the detriment of the EHOS's reputation.

The Society Members (ordinary and committee) shall:

1. Conduct themselves accordingly as representatives of EHOS.
2. Comply with EHOS's constitution and all other relevant EHOS policies.
3. Respect the rights and dignity of others and ensure that threatening or intimidating behaviour is not tolerated towards other members, contractors, volunteers, staff from all venues or the public.

Social Activity

1. The society's aim is to ensure that every member has an enjoyable time and no pressure be placed on any member to do anything they may not enjoy.
2. The members of the EHOS Committee are responsible for the welfare of all the members and will take necessary measures to ensure that an adequate level of safety is maintained.
3. It is each individual's choice if they attend Society socials. Non-attendance will not be a barrier to full participation in other society activities.
4. All members must respect the rights, dignity and worth of all other society members regardless of age, gender, ability, race, cultural background, religious beliefs or sexual identity.

Facilities

1. Members are required to abide by the rules and regulations of each and any operator of any external facilities used by the Society.
2. Members should leave the facilities in the condition that they found them in as far as is reasonably practical.

Health and Safety Responsibilities

1. Each individual member should ensure they familiarise themselves with the risks inherent in any activity undertaken and should take every recognised precaution to avoid risk to themselves and others as detailed in the society's risk assessment.

Accident Reporting

1. Any injuries/incidents or near misses must be reported to a member of the EHOS Committee, or in the absences of a Committee member, the current Director.
2. Once reported the injuries/incidents or near misses must be recorded in the Accident Report Book with 24 hours.

Commitment

1. Any Members who regularly has unknown absences from rehearsals can be removed from certain scenes or switched to smaller parts at the Director or Production Team's discretion. Repeated absence may result in the Member being removed from the production completely.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

STAGE ONE:

The grievance should be raised with the Chairman informally. The Chairman will convene meetings with relevant parties to look further into the grievance, if possible within 10 working days of receiving the request.

The Committee will decide if the grievance constitutes Misconduct or Gross Misconduct and if necessary what type of warning should be issued.

If the situation is a disciplinary one the disciplinary procedure will be followed.

STAGE TWO:

If the grievance is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant s/he must make a written request to the Chairman for stage two (the appeal stage of the grievance procedure.)

At this point the committee as a whole will convene a meeting to investigate the complaint.

If the grievance is against the Chairman, the complainant should speak to the society's Secretary about how to propose a motion of censure or no confidence at a General Meeting of the society.

Note: *Whilst every care has been taken in the preparation of this factsheet it is not intended to be a complete guide to the law.*

INFORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Complaints where appropriate will be dealt with informally, by discussion with:

- The person concerned, or
- The complainant and the Chairman.

The Chairman may take the matter up with the person concerned if requested to do so by the complainant.

Such informal discussions will not be officially recorded and do not form part of the official grievance procedure.

Support:

At any stage during this process the complainant can seek support from the Chairman.

This might be to:

- Listen and offer moral support;
- Explain any bit of the procedure;
- Help identify the options open to the complainant;
- Help draft a letter.

Misconduct

This is conduct which is sufficiently serious that it requires disciplinary action. In order to warrant dismissal, misconduct must be extremely serious, or repeated on more than one occasion.

Misconduct can include persistent lateness, repeated un-notified absence and failure to meet known work standards, smoking in non-smoking areas, misuse of props etc.

Gross misconduct

This is the term used for serious misconduct, which may lead to instant dismissal (that is, summary dismissal). Acts that constitute gross misconduct are those resulting in a serious breach of Society rules.

They include the following:

- Theft, fraud or deliberate falsification of records.
- Physical violence.
- Serious bullying or harassment.
- Sexual harassment or assault.
- Serious insubordination.
- Serious incapability brought about by alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Endangering others through deliberate breach of Health & Safety procedures.

Types of Warning

- **First Oral Warning:** In the case of a minor infringement the person may be given a formal oral warning. They should be told of the reasons for the warning, that it is the first step in the disciplinary process and that they have the right of appeal.
- **First Written Warning:** If the infringement is regarded as more serious, the person may be given a formal written warning, giving the details of the complaint, the improvement required, the timescale allowed for this and the right of appeal. The warning should also state that a final written warning might be considered if the desired change doesn't occur.
- **Final Written Warning:** Where there is failure to improve the behaviour, or an infringement which is considered sufficiently serious, the person may be given a final written warning. This should include details of the offence and that failure to improve may result in dismissal and the right of appeal.
- **Dismissal or other sanction:** If the behaviour remains unchanged then the sanction imposed may include suspension, dismissal or immediate banning from the Society. The decision to dismiss must be taken by the a majority vote of Committee Members, and the person should be informed as soon as is reasonably practicable and told how to make an appeal. The decision to dismiss must be confirmed in writing and the person has the right on request to have a written statement of the reasons for dismissal.

Recording

The society will ensure that a record is kept of all written warnings.

However, any disciplinary action taken (other than dismissal) will be disregarded after a specified period of time dependent on the severity of the action taken.

- Warnings for minor offences will be valid for two productions.
- Final warnings will remain in force for three productions.

Once the time limits have been passed, warnings will be disregarded in any further disciplinary proceedings. These records will be kept confidential and retained in accordance of the disciplinary procedure.

Committee Standing Orders

1. The General Management Committee to meet monthly to review the Society's affairs, and receive the reports of the officials and of the Chairmen of Sub-Committees, where appropriate.
2. Outside of Committee meetings the General Management Committee and Sub-Committees may converse, organise and arrange details of the Society's affairs via e-mail, messenger or social media platforms however any decisions taken are to be ratified at the next properly convened meeting.
3. All Committee members to receive at least fourteen days' notice of meetings called, but where this proves impossible, any decisions taken are to be ratified at the next properly convened meeting. Notification of meetings shall be accompanied by a copy of the Minutes of the previous meeting.
4. Any official of the Society unable to be present at a meeting is to provide the Secretary with a comprehensive report with which the Committee may be updated, and must specifically detail all commitments made on behalf of the Society since the previous meeting.
5. Since by Rule no commitment may be made on behalf of the Society without full Committee sanction, where time does not permit this, the official is to seek the agreement of the Secretary or Chairman, and the matter confirmed at the next full Committee meeting, as in 3 above.
6. No Committee member shall arrange the supply of goods or services to the Society, where he/she has a personal interest and any such personal interest which may arise from time to time shall be immediately disclosed to the next full Committee meeting. In such circumstances, full details and documentation shall be given to every Committee member, and any breach of this order shall result in the resignation of that member from the Committee. The whole profit of such transactions must pass to the Society.
7. As Trustees of the Society's affairs and good name, Committee members are expected to ensure that their actions either inside or outside the Society do nothing to damage the Society's position, reputation, or ability to continue its activities. This requirement goes beyond the requirement of Rule 13A(i) of the Society. Any Committee member who feels he/she is in breach of this order shall immediately discuss the circumstances with the President and Chairman of the Society, who will, if necessary bring the matter to the next full Committee meeting.

8. All discussions and opinions expressed at Committee meetings are privileged and therefore may not be quoted verbatim outside the Committee membership. Also the decisions of the Committee when taken are binding on all members of the Committee who must support them in general discussion; the alternative of resignation from the Committee is available to all members.
9. The above order 7 is not intended to stifle Committee members from general discussion of Committee policy and their personal opinions, with the membership.

