



## Feedback Policy

We warmly welcome and actively seek out feedback in order to know what we are doing well and what we could do better. Feedback from people involved in the choir and from people outside the organisation are both essential to the long term success of Steel City Choristers. Even when it is hard to hear, feedback is valuable because it helps us to be the kind of organisation we aspire to be as described by our values and our policies. It helps us to understand and meet the needs of the people we work with and the communities we serve.

This policy describes three of the main ways in which we expect to gather or receive feedback and provides guidance to people on how they can let us know what they think, including if necessary making a formal complaint.

### 1. Informal feedback

Our aim is to build a community that values, trusts and empowers people. This means building good relationships across the organisation and fostering a strong sense of working together towards the same goal. We encourage people to be reflective and to consider what's going well and what could be better. We want people to feel free to talk to each other in a constructive way about how things are going, and to feed this back to us as part of an ongoing process of continuous learning and improvement. We aim to foster a culture in which everyone trusts each other's good intentions and so expect everyone to communicate at all times with respect, politeness and due regard to our organisational values.

We hope that through good relationships and ongoing open discussion, you will feel able to raise any issues you have early so that they can be addressed before they cause you any significant concern. If helpful, our Pastoral Care Lead, Joy French, is independent of the trustees and available to talk informally and confidentially.

We are also committed to building strong and authentic relationships with our partners and the communities we sing for. Our hope is that they too will be open and frank about their experience of working with us, so that we can deepen our working relationship with them by more fully understanding their needs and the extent to which we are meeting them.

You can provide feedback by speaking to any of the trustees or the Director of Music. We will listen carefully to your thoughts, and let you know about any changes we plan to make in response. The person you speak to may, as appropriate, tell other trustees or officers of the organisation about your ideas.

Alternatively, you may prefer to provide feedback in writing, for example if you feel this will help you set out your thinking clearly and communicate it directly to all of the trustees. This is best done by emailing one of the Trustees, the Director of Music, or [enquiries@steelcitychoristers.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@steelcitychoristers.org.uk).

A feedback box will also be available at rehearsals into which you are welcome to post feedback, anonymously if you wish.

## **2. Inviting feedback**

The trustees may from time to time actively seek feedback from key stakeholders, including choristers, changing voices, clerks, parents, Friends, host communities and partner organisations. This may involve, for example, inviting people to respond to questions in a survey or to attend a discussion.

Our aim may be to understand what people think about one or more specific topics, or to provide a more open-ended opportunity for people to tell us about their experience of Steel City Choristers. This could include any aspect of our activity, including rehearsals, youth work, socials, performances and projects.

We will seek to tailor any specific questions we ask, and the means by which we gather people's feedback, to be relevant and appropriate to each group of stakeholders.

All of the feedback gathered in this way will be collated, summarised if necessary, and shared with the trustees to help them take stock of recent activities and to identify achievements, lessons, and priorities for the future.

## **3. Formal Complaints**

We recognise that in any organisation or community there is the possibility of things going wrong. In these situations people may wish to make a formal complaint so that they know their concern will be heard and dealt with appropriately by the trustees.

### ***Making a complaint***

Formal complaints can be made to the Chair of Trustees via email: [kate@steelcitychoristers.org.uk](mailto:kate@steelcitychoristers.org.uk).

Your email should be clearly identified as a complaint, by using the words 'Formal Complaint' in the email subject line. Your email should clearly and concisely state what the situation or issue of concern is, and give as much relevant detail as possible. If you have an idea of how you would ideally like to see the situation resolved then it would also be helpful for you to explain this.

### ***What happens next***

We will acknowledge your complaint as soon as possible after receipt - usually within a week.

The Chair of Trustees will consider your complaint and consult with the other trustees.

If the trustees feel they have enough information to agree on how to respond to your complaint, then we will communicate our response to you in writing and take action as soon as reasonably possible. Your complaint and the action we have taken will be minuted for the record at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Alternatively, the trustees may decide that they need to understand more fully the nature of your complaint and how you would like to see the situation resolved. We might do this for example by requesting to meet with you or other individuals or by taking external advice. In this situation, the trustees will agree the process by which they will handle your complaint and communicate this to you. The process will also be minuted for the record. Once the trustees feel they have enough information to agree on how to respond to your complaint we will communicate this to you in writing and take action as soon as reasonably possible. Your complaint and the action we have taken will be minuted for the record at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees.

The amount of time it takes us to make a decision about your complaint will depend on its nature. However, we will aim to make a decision about your complaint (whether upheld or rejected) within two months. If this is not possible for any reason, we will reply within this period to give you a more definite timescale for what will happen.

Our response to your complaint will include a description of any action that will be taken as a result, although some details may be withheld if they relate to other individuals. Any changes we make to our policy or practice will be entirely at the trustees' discretion.

If you are not satisfied with our response to your complaint, you may appeal within a month of us writing to you. The trustees will seek a second opinion on how we responded to your complaint, and in light of this, decide whether they will take any additional or alternative actions to those originally proposed. Their decision will be communicated to you in writing and minuted for the record at the next meeting of the Board of Trustees. Any outstanding actions will be taken as soon as reasonably possible and then the matter will be considered closed.

### ***Specific situations***

If your complaint is related to a safeguarding concern, you should follow the procedures in the Steel City Choristers Safeguarding Policy: <https://steelcitychoristers.org.uk/policies>.

If your complaint relates to the behaviour of the Chair of Trustees it should be made to another trustee.

If your complaint concerns the behaviour of the chair or another trustee, then they (and any other trustees with a conflict of interest) will be excluded from all discussions relating to your complaint.