

TOWCESTER CHORAL SOCIETY

ARCHIVES POLICY

1. Purpose

The archive of Towcester Choral Society (TCS) will be a working collection. While the recording of its history is intrinsically valuable, the archive is capable of much more and these capabilities will be exploited to the full – as a source of articles for the newsletter, or as a record of works performed, for instance. Databases will be compiled from the source material where these will be helpful. More specifically, the purposes of the archive are:

- To record the history of the Society;
- To act as a source of information on any aspect of the activities or management of the society;
- To provide information on works performed and other factual data;
- To enable research into the history or activities of the Society.

2. Scope

- 2.1 The archive will include material in printed, photographic, digital, recorded or any other appropriate format, covering all aspects of the Society's activities. Typical records might include concert programmes, press reviews, publicity material, accounts, Committee minutes, choir photographs and recordings of performances.
- 2.2 The main aim is to record the Society's activities in Towcester and Northamptonshire. Participation in events further afield, such as ABCD or Really Big Chorus, will be included where the event can reasonably be regarded as having been organised by the Society, rather than as an activity undertaken by a number of individuals, but this will not be the main focus.
- 2.3 Wider musical activity in Towcester or Northamptonshire will be included only if it impinges significantly upon the Society.
- 2.4 Participation in community activities in and around Towcester will be included where these can reasonably be interpreted as Society events.
- 2.5 The outside activities of individual members will not be included in the archive unless they impact significantly on the Society. However, biographical information on very prominent members may be included if this is likely to be of long term interest.

3. Custody and access

The archive will be held at the home of the Archivist unless a more secure and convenient location is available. The archive will be available to members of the Society. Requests for access from historians, journalists or others will be considered on their merits and will be allowed at the discretion of the Committee.

Physical access to the archive will be by arrangement with the Archivist.

4. Management

The archive will be managed by the Archivist in accordance with the principles set down in this policy. He or she will organise, file and house it in the most practicable manner, bearing in mind the need for access and security.

Within the constraints of the time available, the Archivist will create and maintain such databases and indexes as will be helpful in retrieving information or material. Assistance in the management or exploitation of the archive will be welcome, but at the discretion of the Archivist or Committee.

5. Acquisition

To improve quality and minimise cost, material will be acquired at source wherever possible. Where a press review or other record originates outside the Society, photocopies or other reproductions will be acceptable.

Single copies only will be retained except where multiple copies will be useful or are required for security reasons.

Donations will be accepted at the discretion of the Archivist. Once donated, an item will become the property of the Society and will be managed in accordance with the principles set down in this policy, unless otherwise agreed with the donor. Donations with conditions will not normally be accepted.

In exceptional circumstances, items will be accepted on long or short term loan. This is at the discretion of the Archivist and will only be entertained where the items are of great significance or scarcity. The conditions of any loan will be agreed in writing before the material is accepted.

6. Disposal

Archived items will not normally be disposed of except where existing items fall outside the scope of the collection or where multiple copies are no longer required. Where articles are to be withdrawn, their fate will be at the discretion of the Archivist.

Loan items will be returned to their owners, if required, in accordance with the terms of their loan.

7. Budget

It is not anticipated that the archive will require substantial funding. However, expenses will be incurred from time to time for stationery, storage materials, volunteers' expenses and other items, and these will be reimbursed by the Treasurer upon presentation of satisfactory evidence. The establishment of a regular budget will be at the discretion of the Committee.

More significant expenditure may be required from time to time, typically for conservation purposes. Such expenditure may not be undertaken unless a costed proposal has been presented by the Archivist and approved by the Committee.

8. Revision

This policy will be reviewed as necessary, and no less frequently than once every five years, to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the Society, and revised if appropriate. Revisions will be presented to the Committee for adoption.

9. Dissolution of Towcester Choral Society

In the event of the dissolution of the Society, the archive will be offered to the Northamptonshire Records Office, Towcester Museum, Towcester Historical Society, or other appropriate body. Should no suitable home be found for it, the archive will be disposed of at the discretion of the Committee.

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