



# Equality Code of Conduct



The British Association of Barbershop Singers  
Registered Office: 29-30 Fitzroy Square, Fitzrovia, London W1T 6LQ A  
Charitable Incorporated Organisation | Registered Charity No: 1080930

#### Purpose

The British Association of Barbershop Singers ("BABS") believes that no Club member or visitor should experience less favourable treatment, discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of the protected characteristics in law of sex, race (including colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), religion or belief, age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation or marriage and civil partnership.

BABS recognises and actively supports its Club members' and visitors' right to be treated with dignity and respect and we do not condone any form of bullying.

We are committed to promoting equal opportunities and diversity and we take a zero tolerance approach to breaches of the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct also applies to online/social media activity and covers online harassment and cyber-bullying.

The highest standards of conduct are required of all Club members regardless of seniority. All Club members should be sensitive to the individual rights and feelings of other Club members.

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to ensure that Club members understand our guiding principles.

By integrating individual strengths, we will maximise efficiency and creativity, and deliver the highest quality of singing.

#### Aims

We will work to ensure that BABS Club members are:

- Treated fairly and not subject to discrimination, harassment or victimisation because of any protected characteristic and not subject to bullying during their membership, commencing with the recruitment process.

- Fairly appraised for personal contributions to the organisation, taking into account internal and external influences.
- Able to rehearse and perform in a healthy and safe environment free from hazards.
- Able to access opportunities for improvement to develop to their full potential.
- Treated with dignity and respect in a fair and consistent manner in an environment where inappropriate, objectionable or offensive behaviour is not acceptable.

## Definitions

### *What is Harassment?*

Harassment is a situation where someone engages in unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic which has the purpose or effect of violating another person's dignity, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual. Condoning such conduct may be harassment in itself. A single incident can amount to harassment if sufficiently grave. It should also be remembered that the perception of the person being harassed will be very important and Club members should not assume that conduct, which they may find acceptable, would also be acceptable to others.

A person may be harassed because of one or more protected characteristics. A person may be harassed even if they were not the intended "target" where the harassment creates an offensive environment for that person.

Harassment can occur where the person being harassed does not have one of the characteristics specified, but is mistakenly thought to have such a characteristic, is known not to have such a characteristic or is associated with another person having one of these characteristics.

Harassment may take many forms. For example:

- Sexual harassment includes unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect set out above including, but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances and unwelcome physical conduct.
- Racial harassment covers any unwanted conduct having the purpose or effect set out above, which is related to colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origins.
- Sexual orientation harassment includes, but is not limited to, outing or threatening to out someone as gay, lesbian or bi-sexual or telling offensive jokes about someone's sexual orientation.

### *What is Bullying?*

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour involving the misuse of power that can make a person feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated, undermined or threatened. Examples of bullying include verbal abuse and derogatory remarks, insulting or threatening behaviour, ridiculing an individual, spreading malicious rumours about an individual, embarrassing and humiliating an individual in public.

### *What is Victimisation?*

Victimisation is treating someone badly because in good faith they have (or it is believed that they are going to) made a claim or complaint of discrimination; or helped someone else to make a claim; or made an allegation that the Club or BABS is in breach of the Equality Act 2010 or done anything else in connection with the Act.

If a member is treated less favourably because they have taken such action, then this will be victimisation.

## Roles and responsibilities

We are committed to promoting equality for all. If a Club member feels they have been subject to discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying which is in direct conflict with our commitment to equality of opportunity and with the Code of Conduct, they should raise this with a member of the Club's Management Committee. See the Complaints procedure below.

The Code of Conduct applies to all Club members including officers, directors and Board of Trustees, students and visitors or anyone involved in the activities of BABS.

All Club members have a responsibility to ensure that the principles and requirements of the Code of Conduct are complied with thereby helping to foster a culture of dignity and respect.

All visitors will be informed that the Code of Conduct is in operation and that they are bound to comply with its principles and requirements.

Each Club will issue a copy of, or make available, a copy of the Code of Conduct to all their Club members and visitors and will review it and endorse it annually at their Annual General Meeting. At the time that Clubs submit their annual membership return to BABS, they will be asked to confirm that they have reviewed this Code in the last 12 months and that it is in active use in the Club.

It is expected that those representing BABS or their Club in an external capacity will endeavour to ensure that equality and diversity principles and practices are adhered to in accordance with this Code.

## Complaints

We take a zero-tolerance approach to breaches of the Code of Conduct. • Any complaint by a Club member arising from breach of the Code of Conduct should be made in the first instance to an unconnected member of the Management Committee of the Club, who will consider the matter with one other senior member of the Club, and respond within 14 days. All complaints will be thoroughly investigated in an independent and objective manner.

- If a Club member is uncertain whether an incident or series of incidents amounts to discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying or constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct, they should seek confidential assistance and clarification from an unconnected member of the Management Committee of the Club.
- The response to the complaint may be in the range from finding unfair treatment has occurred and correcting that, to finding that the complaint is not upheld. In cases where it is found that unfair treatment has occurred, the Management Committee will consider sanctions which may include verbal or written warnings, temporary or permanent loss of membership.
- If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, they may appeal the decision to the Club Chairman, who will consider the matter with the Management Committee, whose decision will be made within 28 days of the appeal to the Chairman. This decision will be final.
- BABS will not be involved in the complaints process which will be dealt with at Club level. However, any complaint about a Council Member of BABS, arising from a breach of the Code of Conduct whilst exercising Council Member duties will be dealt with by the Chairman of BABS who will consider the matter with one other member of the Board of Trustees and respond within 14 days.
- BABS Trustees and volunteers are equally bound by the Code and any complaints regarding a breach of the Code should be addressed to an unconnected member of the

Trustee Board, who will consider the complaint with one other Trustee and respond within 14 days. In other respects, procedures will operate similarly to those at Club level.

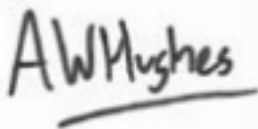
- Confidentiality is an important part of the complaints process. Every effort will be made to keep the complaints process confidential. Individuals not involved in the complaint or the investigation should not be told about it. Details of the investigation and the names of the complainant and the person accused must only be disclosed on a "need to know" basis. Breach of confidentiality constitutes a breach of the Code of Conduct.
- Club Members who make complaints or who participate in good faith in any investigation must not suffer any form of retaliation or victimisation as a result. Anyone found to have retaliated against or victimised someone in this way will be deemed to have breached the Code of Conduct and the Management Committee will consider sanctions which may include verbal or written warnings, temporary or permanent loss of membership. The Club member is entitled to complain to the Club Chairman or any other member of the Management Committee.
- Before, during and after an investigation into a Club member's complaint, the Club will collect, hold and use information and evidence relevant to the allegation in question, including for example, information from third parties, such as other Club members. This will include personal information about the complainant and potentially "special categories" of information, both of which are regulated by data protection legislation. The information will be retained securely, for as long as it is considered necessary in accordance with current data protection legislation.

#### Monitoring and Evaluation

We will regularly evaluate our services and the effectiveness of the Code of Conduct.

#### Review of the Code of Conduct

Our commitment to equality and diversity is an active one. The Code of Conduct will be reviewed on a regular basis and will be amended when appropriate. We will seek to keep up to date with new developments in equality and diversity best practice and actively seek information on this issue.

Signed	Name & Position	Date
 for BABS	<b>Alan Hughes</b> Chair	<b>9th July 2021</b>
Name of Club		
for Club	Chair	