

Aldworth Philharmonic Orchestra Rules and Regulations

Updated January 2025

The following document details the rules and regulations governing the operation of Aldworth Philharmonic Orchestra (APO) as defined in clause 12 of the constitution. These rules are subservient to the constitution and in case of conflict the constitution takes precedence.

1. Principles of Membership (further clarification of constitution clause 3.2)

1.1 The trustees will consider the following principles when considering whether to approve an application for membership with regards to acting in the best interests of APO.

- The member is expected to meet the playing standards of APO. This is demonstrated through the initial attendance at rehearsals and is based on a recommendation from the music director made to the trustees. If it is determined the member does not meet the required playing standards, any voluntary donation paid will be refunded.
- While APO does not explicitly exclude membership to those ages under 18, the trustees would need to be confident that appropriate safeguarding measures are in place before accepting the application (See APO Safeguarding Policy for general guidance).
- Membership is normally limited to regular players in APO and hence for a new application to be accepted, an appropriate vacancy needs to exist within APO. If no such vacancy exists and the application is still accepted the member will be informed of any arrangements to allow their participation prior to the payment of any donation.

1.2 Every member must exercise their membership rights only in the interests of APO, and not for any private interest they may have.

2. Practice / preparation expectations

2.1 Because APO starts rehearsing so close to the event, there's little time to 'assimilate' the music, so all members playing in an event should:

- before the first rehearsal, listen to the works in the programme to 'get into them' and,
- have a look through parts available on the Internet or in extract books.

2.2 It is expected that all members playing in an event should practise as much as possible.

2.3 Members must ensure they return all music borrowed for practising at home, and that if they are not able to attend rehearsals they must ensure that their music is provided for the rehearsal.

3. Fixing process

3.1 Whether playing in a small chamber ensemble or a huge orchestra/choir, every playing member is vital, even in large sections such as the strings. APO therefore

advocates a 'full attendance' policy, underpinned by intelligent rehearsal scheduling and a thorough fixing process.

- 3.2 As dates are provided in advance, it is expected that all players will prioritise attending all rehearsals – having all players at every rehearsal makes such a vast difference to the quality of the rehearsal and your enjoyment of the APO playing experience.
- 3.3 Events are added to the APO website around 9-12 months in advance. An online fixing form for each event is sent out several months before it. This form also details future dates for the diary, with rehearsal schedules for these published on the website.
- 3.4 If, having fixed, a member finds they are unavoidably unable to attend a rehearsal or event then they need to let their section coordinator/principal know as soon as it becomes apparent.
 - Strings Coordinator – strings@apo.org.uk
 - Wind and percussion – sectional principal (or MD team)

4. Wind/Percussion

- 4.1 Each section will have an appropriate number of regular pool players who are asked first when fixing is undertaken by the principal (or the music director, if no principal is appointed). Where possible, part allocations (either within or between concerts, depending on individuals'/section preferences) must be shared fairly, subject to the relevant competencies (again, it does not necessarily follow that a wind principal will always play the first part).
- 4.2 A list of reserve players will be kept for occasions when there are insufficient pool players for an event. This will be ordered by who gets asked first, though in urgent circumstances all reserves can be asked simultaneously. If this is the case communications to the reserve list must indicate this by using the term 'asking elsewhere'.
- 4.3 All players in the pool and on the reserve list will have access to a document detailing the wind pool and reserves (this document will not include any personal details other than names). Notes on specific competencies (i.e. able to play 1st parts/specialist in related instruments/2nd parts only/low parts only) will be included in this document. The music director will discuss the competencies assigned to each individual player with them, in line with section 7, below.
- 4.4 The music director will discuss with the relevant players and make decisions about membership of the wind pool in the event of:
 - A pool player being unable to commit such that a reserve player is playing more regularly than them, with a view to the reserve taking their place in the pool, with the existing pool player becoming a reserve.
 - A pool player being unable to maintain their playing competence to the general standard, especially if a suitable reserve is in a position to take their place in the pool.
- 4.5 Section principals are appointed by the music director. Wind principals must:
 - Be an experienced orchestral player with an advanced level (post grade 8/diploma) of instrumental technique. This includes being able to play with confident sound and tuning across the instrument's range, but particularly in the higher parts.

- Have rhythmic discipline, a strong inner pulse and musical awareness that supports connection with the wider ensemble.
- Have an appropriate level of assurance and poise, helping the section to play securely, using breathing and gesture to lead, when appropriate.
- Be able to analyse their performance to have an awareness of limitations, being able to work on them without undue stress and anxiety.
- Have a positive relationship with your section, other players and the conductor, choosing the right moment and communication method to flag any issues and offer feedback, during and outside rehearsals.
- Set an example by being well prepared for rehearsals, coordinating preparation and practice activities with their section, be available for most rehearsals and coordinate the section so that there is consistency of rehearsal attendance, with well-prepared depts booked well in advance
- to cover unavoidable absences.

4.6 The music director makes the final decision on part allocations, but wind principals are responsible for fixing their section and allocating parts in a timescale that suits the players, according to the wind pool and reserves list process,

4.7 Wind and brass players who are unable to attend a rehearsal are expected to arrange a suitable dep, in conjunction with their section principal.

5. String principals and seating

5.1 String principals are appointed by the music director. Their role is to provide leadership and support within the string section, often leading a section, but also sitting within and towards the back of sections and moving around during rehearsals to provide support for less confident players.

5.2 The criteria for becoming a string principal are that they must be a member of technical and musical standard to be able to lead the section (including the orchestra, in the case of the violins), and be a regular participant in APO events, attending most rehearsals.

5.3 The music director team and string principals try to rotate the string seating from concert to concert, taking into account all stated preferences as far as possible. No inference should be drawn from any individual placement – a player on the back desk is just as important as the front. Front desk players, particularly section leaders, are selected from the more confident players and, generally speaking, only if they can attend all or the vast majority of rehearsals. Players of all abilities and confidence are equally mixed throughout the rest of the sections.

5.4 Section principals are expected to liaise closely with the leader to coordinate bowings and other aspects of string technique, to achieve a unified sound. A working bowing should be made available to each section no less than one week before the second rehearsal.

6. Musical development

6.1 Where possible, members are strongly encouraged to take lessons with a suitable teacher. It is vital that players continually strive to develop their capabilities. Teachers will also be able to identify bad habits players have grown into, as well as offer their experience on specific repertoire.

6.2 When funds allow, the orchestra seeks to engage professional tutors to take sectionals for each concert and during additional workshops/masterclasses.

7. Standards and feedback

7.1 The music director will be open and honest with any player who does not meet the standard required to participate in public performances. In this case, there are a number of options for development that the music director may suggest, including:

- playing in rehearsals but not performances
- playing in other local ensembles which offer a better chance of development from the player's current standard
- playing in smaller chamber ensembles to develop specific skills

7.2 While membership of APO is determined by the trustees, the music director shall have the final say on musical matters, including whether members are part of the ensemble for any given activity or event.

8. Code of conduct

8.1 All members have a right to enjoy rehearsals in an atmosphere of friendship and cooperation. Members must obey the following code of conduct, which has been devised for the benefit of all members:

- With regards to social media:
 - Except for members of their own family, adult members must not interact with members who are younger than 18, including connecting with their social media accounts ('friending'/'following' etc.);
 - When interacting with other members on social media, comments must be in the best interests of all members;
 - As APO is an apolitical organization, members must not post or make comments of a political nature on APO social media pages/groups;
- Members must refrain from any unwanted sexual attention/behaviour, including staring;
- Members must not approach or engage with members under the age of 18 unless the latter is known to them;
- Members are asked to arrive, as far as possible, in good time for rehearsals and concerts, so as to cause no disturbance to other members;
- Members are requested to refrain, as far as possible, from talking when the conductor or leader is speaking to the orchestra;
- No member shall cause distress to other members through any means;
- No member shall use foul language or otherwise abuse another member;
- As far as is practical, members are asked to assist with tidying rehearsal and concert room spaces after activities; and
- Members must act in a safe and responsible way at all times¹.

8.2 All members will appreciate that serious breaches of the rules for decent, respectful behaviour could necessitate the committee issuing warnings that could, if unheeded, theoretically lead to expulsion. However, note that such situations are considered unlikely to arise.

9. Concert dress

9.1 APO has adopted a gender and ethnicity neutral policy to concert dress. Each event has a different dress code, appropriate to the type of event being put on, but it is usually 'black formal'. Members playing in a concert will be informed of the concert dress by email in advance of the concert.

10. Voluntary contributions

¹ APO holds third party liability insurance and employer's insurance.

- 10.1 APO is self-financing through membership contributions, ticket sales and fundraising activities.
- 10.2 APO does not charge a subscription but does ask members for a small donation (£35 per person, or whatever a member is able to afford, which could be zero) for each event.
- 10.3 The voluntary donation can be paid online for the season or by concert via the link on the booking form, on the APO website, by cash, PayPal, contactless or chip and pin during rehearsals. As a registered UK Charity, members are also able to Gift Aid their contributions.

11. Ticket sales

- 11.1 It is vitally important that all members engage in activities to sell tickets for all of APO's paid-for events, whether that be encouraging family / friends / colleagues / neighbours to attend, or posting on social media, or supporting APO in producing publicity materials.
- 11.2 APO aims to play to large audiences to (a) spread the participation in classical music, and (b) provide ticket income to support APO financially.
- 11.3 To encourage people who've never been to an orchestral concert to give it a try, APO has a 'Concert Virgin' scheme which offers free tickets to newcomers to classical music. The scheme runs on a goodwill basis.

12. Equity, diversity and inclusivity

- 12.1 APO tries to be inclusive in everything it does. To function as a musical ensemble, it's necessary to be selective in terms of musical standards, but beyond this reasonable practicality our aspiration is to welcome everyone to enjoy our activities, whether they be members (and there is plenty of scope for being an active member beyond being a musician and/or playing in the ensemble) or audience. Anyone who feels this aspiration is not being met by the organisation or a member(s) is encouraged to alert the chair or a committee member, who will address the matter in confidence.
- 12.2 In particular, APO seeks to break down the barriers to participation in and enjoyment of classical music. It is not enough to do this passively and the committee welcomes ideas and initiatives, within the scope of what the organisation can realistically achieve, to reach out to persons and communities who perceive that classical music is not for them, in order to achieve a diverse membership and audience and improve access to our musical community. APO members are strongly encouraged to engage in such initiatives.
- 12.3 In addition to musical inclusivity, APO recognises the importance of language in supporting diversity and ensuring that no one - members and audience alike - is made to feel unwelcome or uncomfortable. As an organisation we commit to the following principles of inclusive language, and encourage our members to do the same.

We will not:

- Use language that reinforces stereotypes or contains derogatory terminology
- Use language that patronises or trivialises the actions or experiences of a group of people
- Use language that groups people within certain social categories
- Make assumptions such as gender, sexuality or relationships with other people

We will:

- Be proactive in our adoption of inclusive language
- Use gender neutral language where appropriate
- Adopt individuals' preferred terms
- Acknowledge when mistakes are made, and take responsibility for educating ourselves appropriately

13. Social media

13.1 In order to maximise the visibility of APO's events, APO will engage in social media activities (via Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn and the APO website). Any members not wishing to feature in these materials should inform the chair at chair@apo.org.uk.

14. Communication Methods

14.1 The committee will communicate with members primarily over email, using the email addresses on the members list. Emails will usually come from chair@apo.org.uk and md@apo.org.uk, or the fixer emails (strings@apo.org.uk, wind@apo.org.uk and percussion@apo.org.uk). Members should ensure that the domains aldworthphilharmonic.org.uk and apo.org.uk are 'whitelisted' to avoid APO emails going into spam/junk, or rules set to deliver to the main inbox of an email account, otherwise they tend to be filtered to sub folders ('updates' on Gmail, for example).

14.2 Members can sign up to receive WhatsApp 'broadcast' messages from committee members, which provide an extra means of alerting them to important APO announcements. Members can send an email to info@apo.org.uk if they want to opt in or out of this service.

14.3 All members will also be added to APO's event mailing list stored on Mailchimp, unless they expressly request not to be added by informing the secretary via secretary@apo.org.uk.

15. Leadership and management (further clarification of constitution clause 5)

15.1 APO is a registered charity managed and administered by a committee comprising trustees elected from and by the charity's members. At the AGM each year, the committee for the next 12 months is elected, and the constitution requires that any committee member who has held a position for three years must stand down, although they are allowed to offer themselves for re-election for a maximum of three times.

15.2 The members of APO's committee have a duty to follow the constitution and uphold APO's rules and ethical practice. The committee members are the charity trustees in law, and have important obligations to exhibit complete integrity in executing tasks on behalf of the society. For this, they must be fit and proper persons, honest in character and free of unspent convictions of certain offences, such as deception or money laundering, and not have committed certain other barring misdemeanours.

15.3 The music director and assistant music director roles are exempt from the requirement to serve a maximum of three terms of three years and they can remain a

trustee for the duration of their appointment. Both roles can be appointed by the Committee. If the committee decides to remove the music director or assistant music director from their role and they are an elected member of the committee, they may remain on the committee for the rest of their term fulfilling a general committee role or any other role that has been designated to them.

15.4 The committee puts on events, fundraises, organises rehearsals and engages with local communities to encourage participation in classical music.

15.5 The committee shall hold at least 2 ordinary meetings each year, and meet approximately six times a year, covering a range of operational matters that are required to put concerts on, as well as more strategic discussions around future repertoire, fundraising initiatives and audience diversification.

15.6 Members of APO are welcome to attend committee meetings or suggest items for the committee to discuss. Please contact the chair on chair@apo.org.uk for either.

15.7 The committee is comprised of the following roles:

- **Chair** (chair@apo.org.uk) - Responsible for chairing committee meetings, managing committee workload and ensuring APO's compliance with APO's constitution as well as with all legal / financial regulations.
- **Secretary** (secretary@apo.org.uk) - Arranges and minutes committee meetings and is responsible for keeping records including lists of members, players and patrons. They also arrange the AGM and are responsible for distributing papers in line with APO's constitution.
- **Treasurer** (finance@apo.org.uk) – The treasurer is responsible for preparing APO's year end accounts and performing financial analysis for each concert along with receipt of cash and payment of suppliers.
- **Outreach and Patrons Officer** – The aim of the outreach officer position is to enable APO's aim of widening the reach and diversity of their audience and encourage the local community to engage more with classical music. They oversee the Concert Virgin programme as well as building community links and running the Patron scheme.
- **Music Director** (md@apo.org.uk) – The MD is responsible for all aspects of APO's music-making, as well as being a general committee member.
- **Assistant Music Director** – The AMD leads the team of string principals and carries out many of the same duties as the music director, including directing rehearsals, workshops and performances. The AMD is also a general committee member.

15.8 In addition to the committee roles, APO benefits from a number of non-committee roles as follows:

- **Strings Coordinator** (strings@apo.org.uk) – The Strings Coordinator organises the strings players for rehearsals and concerts.
- **Librarians** (librarian@apo.org.uk) – The Librarians are responsible for ordering the music required for each rehearsal and concert, and ensuring that it has been distributed to the players.
- **Box Office** (boxoffice@apo.org.uk) – The Box Office are responsible for administering tickets for each concert and selling tickets on the day of the event.
- **Visual Media Artist** – The Visual Media Artist is the creative force behind all our visual media, designing art work for concerts and other events, as well as creating member, patron and APO Young newsletters.
- **Tech Support** – The Tech Support is responsible for our behind the scenes techy stuff such as updating the website and online ticketing.

- **Stage Manager** – The Stage Manager is responsible for all aspects of concert day, from ensuring the lighting and staging is right to getting volunteers to help on the box office and selling programmes.
- **Social Secretary** – The Social Secretary is responsible for organising orchestra social events.
- **APO Young Support Officer** – The APO Young Support Officer provides support and advice for the APO Young Crew.

16. Making Music

16.1 APO is affiliated to Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies. Making Music provides a convenient vehicle for certain administrative tasks, such as obtaining insurance for the society and payment of Performing Rights Society fees, as well as providing advice and guidance on various issues

17. APO policies

17.1 APO's Privacy Policy and Safeguarding Policy are stored on the APO website in the 'Contact and Policies' section.

17.2 APO's Rules and Regulations document will be reviewed by the Committee annually and presented to members at the AGM. It will be stored on APO's website.