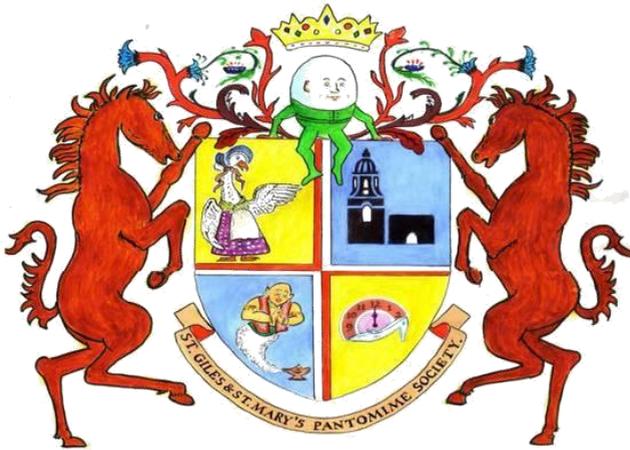


**St Giles with St Mary's  
Pantomime/Theatre Society  
Pontefract**



**Members  
Handbook**

(Issued Summer 2015)

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# Introduction to the Society

**The Society was formed in 1949 by the then Vicar of St. Giles Church, The Reverend Jack Peel. The principle aim of the Society was to draw people of all ages and differing abilities into a 'splendid fellowship'.**

Since that time the Society has gone from strength to strength bringing live theatre to Pontefract and the surrounding district by way of the annual pantomime and occasional Summer productions. The number of members (both on and off stage) have increased and the shows have become more professional year on year. Scripts have become more challenging not only for the performers, but also in terms of music, scenery, sound, lighting props, costumes and make-up all of which add to the overall experience for the audience. **Every year we aim not only to achieve, but to exceed the audience expectations.**

People can sing, dance and play music, but that is not all, there are also those who do stage work, sound, lighting, make costumes, help with make-up, book seats and do the many other jobs. There may be a crowd of performers onstage, but you can be sure there are just as many behind the scenes.

Everyone enjoys being part of the Society and the performance week is only the climax of weeks and months of preparation.

Each September when the main production begins we see most of the regular performers plus several new members all eager to begin rehearsing and as a Society we are proud to have a number of families where there are three generations either onstage or involved front of house, backstage or in an administrative capacity. **Everyone involved in the show is a volunteer and there are no paid roles in the Society.**

**The Pantomime usually consists of around 70 performers from the principal players down to the junior members, and our Honorary Secretary has a waiting list for new members of all ages.**

# Society Mission Statement

To encourage individuals of all ages and abilities to come together in a safe environment to develop their personal skills and at the same time provide light entertainment for the local community.

## Pantomime Prayer

Father we praise you for all your gifts to us  
For the fun and fellowship we share together  
Help us to value one another and to work for the good of all  
May we give of our best and so bring joy to others  
Accept our efforts and give us your blessing  
In Jesus' name.  
Amen

The Prayer is read at the beginning of each chorus/full rehearsal and backstage before each show commences. It is also read out at the Saturday Afternoon Tea (between the Matinee and Evening performances) - see details on page 22.

## The Management Committee

**This is made up of a team of willing volunteers to oversee the administration and day to day running of the Society.** Any member of the Society can be nominated for a position on the Management Committee at the AGM and in the event of there been more than one nomination a secret ballot will take place amongst the members present with the person with the highest number of votes being appointed.

## Positions on the Management Committee are as follows:

### Three Year Appointments

- Chairman
- Vice Chairman
- Honorary Secretary
- Treasurer

## **Annual Appointments**

- Membership Secretary
- Ticket Secretary
- Social Secretary
- Assistant Treasurer
- 3 x Committee Members
- Publicity Officer
- Child Protection Officer
- Health & Safety Officer
- Social Media Officer

In addition to this, **the Committee can co-opt a maximum of two members with full voting rights** (usually the Producer and Musical Director of the Pantomime).

**Further members can be co-opted with voting rights for their own specialist area** (e.g. Website, Wardrobe and Choreography etc.). These positions are voted upon by the Management Committee at the first meeting of the fiscal year.

**The President of the Society is the Vicar of St Giles Church**, Reverend Robert Cooper (Father Bob), who is also a member of the Management Committee.

Although they are not an official member of the Management Committee the Society does appoint an Auditor each year to verify the accounts and again this can be any member of the Society who is willing to have their name put forward.

**Further information about the Management Committee, including Job Guidelines and nomination procedures can be obtained from the Secretary.**

# Society Membership

Due to insurance restrictions Performing Members of the Society can be between the age of 5 and 80. However being a performing member is only one way of being part of the Society. **Individuals can become involved by helping back-stage, front of house, supporting the production team or simply by becoming a Patron of the Society.**

Regardless of the level of membership you not only help to support the Society financially, but gain the benefits of being a member/patron such as being included in all mailings of the Society, including social events (e.g. Annual Dinner and Dance) eligibility to attend the A.G.M. and give your views on matters affecting the society, be recognised as a supporter in the programme for the show and have the opportunity to attend a priority booking night where you can obtain tickets for the shows before they go on sale to the general public.

## Membership is categorised as follows:

- Foundation Life Members
- Honorary Life Members
- Patrons
- Members
- Junior Members

Life Membership is awarded by the Society in recognition of outstanding service and there are no dues payable. All other categories carry the following dues:

- |                               |   |       |
|-------------------------------|---|-------|
| • Patrons                     | - | £5.00 |
| • Members                     | - | £3.00 |
| • Junior Members <sup>1</sup> | - | Free  |

## All membership fees are due on 1<sup>st</sup> April each year.

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<sup>1</sup> Junior Membership is only available to those who are performing in the show. All Junior members must have a parent/guardian who is a paid-up member of the Society and who agrees to take the associated responsibility for the Junior Member. To be a Junior Member the individual must be under statutory school leaving age when the show takes place.

All members are required to pay fees regardless of the role they play and anyone who has not paid by the pre-show meeting<sup>2</sup> will not be eligible to take part in the upcoming show.

**When paying your membership you will be asked to provide your full contact details i.e.**

- Full Name
- Postal Address (including Post code)
- Telephone Number
- Mobile Number (if available)
- Email address

**This information will be held on file by the Membership Secretary and used by members of the Management Committee to contact you as and when required.**

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<sup>2</sup> See page 20 for further information

# Expectations of the Society on Members and Helpers

**All members and helpers of the Society are expected to abide by the following:**

- Society Constitution (approved by the AGM and the Church PCC) - See Appendix I
- Society Rules (approved by the AGM) – See Appendix II
- Code of Practice – See Appendix III
- Social Media Policy – See Appendix IV
- Child Protection Policy & Procedures – See Appendices V & V1
- Health & Safety Policy – See appendix V11

## Active Members

**(i.e. those involved in any production - on/off stage)**

Everyone involved in a production, be it on or off stage, is expected to take an active role in the activities of the Society and abide by the Society Rules and Code of Practice at all times.

Your involvement should not only provide you with 'something to do,' but should make you feel part of the 'Panto Family' and provide you with an opportunity to develop your own personal skills as well as opening up a whole new circle of friends. Our aim is to ensure that everyone gets personal satisfaction from being part of the Society, but it is a well-known fact that ***'the more effort you put in to something the more satisfaction you will get out of it!'***

The continued success of the Society is something we are all proud of, but this can only be maintained (and improved upon) if we continue to promote the shows and maximise our ticket sales which will in turn ensure we have sufficient funds to continue in years to come.

Every year the Society appoints a Publicity Officer and Ticket Secretary at the AGM. Nominations are requested on an annual basis and any member of the Society can stand for the positions. However this does not mean that they are the only people responsible for promoting the shows and selling the tickets. **It is everyone's responsibility to help with publicity and ticket sales**, whether it be

by distributing posters and fliers, manning the booking office or taking part in a specific event to promote the show e.g. turn on of the Christmas lights.

**Posters, fliers and block booking forms will be made available at all rehearsals** so don't wait for someone to hand them out, be pro-active and come and collect them from us. Likewise there will be **a rota for the booking office which operates from St Giles Church in Pontefract Town Centre from November - January.**

**The opening hours are:**

Wednesday	-	10:00am – 1:00pm
Friday	-	10:00am – 1:00pm
Saturday	-	10:00am – 12:00pm

Ideally we require there to be two people present at all times. A rota sheet will be available at rehearsals in September and we will ask for volunteers for each session, but be aware **if we don't get sufficient volunteers we will come round and ask those who have not volunteered to man a session which has not been covered.**

**Block Bookings** are crucial to our ticket sales so if you have any ideas, suggestions or contacts for us to target, please let the Ticket Secretary know so we can send a personalised invitation to them.

## Performing Members

**All performing members must attend rehearsals regularly and promptly** and must be prepared to work hard to make the show a success.

Everyone is required to sign in at the rehearsal venue and if for any reason you leave prior to the end of the rehearsal you must also sign out.

If in the opinion of the Producer any member fails to attend regularly without good reason<sup>3</sup>, or fails to give of their best during rehearsals, they may be approached by the Producer and warned that if there is no improvement, they may be asked to leave the current production.

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<sup>3</sup> i.e. fails to appear for two consecutive rehearsals without notifying the Producer

For each production you will be provided with a schedule of dates which will include rehearsal dates, venues and times plus any additional dates such as publicity photos, priority ticket sale nights etc.

**Rehearsals usually commence the first week in September** at St Mary's Community Centre, Chequerfield. The first rehearsal is at 7:30pm for everyone and thereafter the times are split as follows:

Sunbeams	-	Monday 6:30pm – 7:00pm
Juniors	-	Monday 7:00pm – 7:45pm
Adult Chorus	-	Monday 7:45pm – 9:30pm <sup>4</sup>
Principals	-	Friday 7:00pm – 9:00pm

**From mid-December rehearsals move to the Town Hall** and the full cast join together. These rehearsals start at 7:00pm prompt and alternate between Act 1 and Act 2.

**A detailed rehearsal schedule will be provided for each production.**

**Costumes:** Most costumes will be provided by the Society, however **you may on occasions be asked to provide some basic items yourself** e.g. shirt/t-shirt, socks/tights, scarves etc. If you are required to provide any items details will be given out at rehearsals, but please ensure that you adhere to any specific styles/colours etc. requested (e.g. if you are asked for a t-shirt do not assume a sun top is ok and if you are asked for a plain colour do not assume a pattern will be acceptable). **If you have any doubts please speak to the Producer.**

**Society costumes will be given out at various intervals throughout the rehearsals and you are expected to try them on as soon as you receive them.** If you are unsure as to how something is to be worn (e.g. whether an opening is at the front or back etc.) or if an item doesn't fit properly you should speak to a member of the Wardrobe team immediately. It is too late to decide there is a problem when we get to the Dress Rehearsal.

**When costumes are handed out you will be told if there are any trimmings and fastenings etc. required and what colours should be used.** Please ensure that all costumes are suitably trimmed and pressed for the Dress Rehearsal as this adds to the overall effect of the show. **If for any reason you need to alter**

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<sup>4</sup> Finishing time may vary week to week but should not be later than 9:30pm

**costumes to make them fit properly, please speak to a member of the Wardrobe team first.** Any alterations made should be temporary so that the costumes can be restored to their original state without any permanent damage. Under no circumstances should any material be cut without permission from the Wardrobe Team.

Ladies should provide their own natural coloured tights and gentlemen long white socks.

**Unless advised otherwise you will be expected to provide your own black shoes/slipperettes.** Plimsolls may be worn but no trainers are allowed.

**At the end of the show you will be advised of the date (and venue) when costumes should be returned.** All trimmings should be removed and outfits washed and packed ready to be put away. It is also helpful if you put your name on outfits as this will help with sizing if we re-use the items in future years. **If for any reason you are unable to return your costumes at the specified time please ensure you speak to a member of the wardrobe team to make alternative arrangements.**

***Dress Rehearsal:*** The dress rehearsal is the first ‘real’ performance of the week however this does not mean that anyone can come along to watch it. Only those people invited by the Producer will be allowed in the hall. This may include:

- A dedicated panel of individuals to watch the show and provide a constructive critique in terms of sound, lighting, costumes, singing, dancing etc
- Members of the Management Committee
- A limited number of Front of House Staff
- Parents of our Junior Members taking part in the show

When you arrive at the Town Hall for the dress rehearsal you should make your way back stage to the appropriate dressing room.

Gentlemen’s Chorus	}	Immediately behind stage
Principals	}	- Top of stage door staircase
Ladies Chorus	}	Downstairs from stage
Sunbeams & Juniors	}	- 1 <sup>st</sup> landing of back stage stairs

You will be advised what time the doors open and you can access the building via the stage entrance (on the side of the Town Hall between the Town Hall and the Horse Vaults Pub). If for any reason you use the main Town Hall entrance you may not be able to get back stage to the dressing rooms as **it is our Society's tradition that once the curtains are closed on stage no-one can cross them in either direction.**

**You can leave costumes and other personal belongings in the dressing rooms for the week of the show.** However neither the Town Hall or the Society accept any responsibility for your belongings and therefore we recommend that valuable items are removed at the end of each performance.

**We recommend that you bring light refreshments eg a sandwich and a drink with you to the dress rehearsal** as once we have completed the performance you will be asked to get changed back into your normal clothes and then come and sit in the main body of the hall. There will be a short break for everyone to have a sandwich and drink before the Producer goes through the panel's comments and repeats any parts of the show as necessary.

***Make-up:*** The Society provide appropriate stage make-up and artists if required. However if you prefer to provide your own make-up we are happy for you to do so but please remember that you are on stage and therefore in order to look effective under the lighting all make-up needs to be darker and heavier than you would normally wear.

***Show Week:*** The Town Hall doors usually open 1 hour before the performance commences and as with the dress rehearsal you are encouraged to use the stage entrance. Only performing members, and helpers (e.g. chaperones, stage crew etc.) are allowed back stage without authorisation from the Producer or Chairman.

# Junior Members

(i.e. those under Statutory School Leaving age)

Any person who is statutory school leaving age when the show takes place is a Junior member regardless of whether they are in the Children's Chorus (Sunbeams), Junior Dancers or Adult Chorus.

Junior members and their parent/guardian are expected to take an active role in the activities of the Society and abide by the Rules and Code of Practice at all times.

St Giles Pantomime Society recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Child (Performances) Regulations 1968, the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000. In order to ensure we keep up to date with the requirements, **the Society has a dedicated Child Protection Officer who is responsible for ensuring that we fulfil our obligation by looking after our younger members and ensuring they are in 'safe hands' throughout the rehearsals and performances for each show.**

**In order to help us achieve this we have a number of guidelines which parents/guardians need to be aware of:**

1. ***Child Performing Licences:*** Under current legislation there may be a requirement for all those under statutory school leaving age when the show takes place to have a **Child Performance Licence**. Please speak to the Society's Child Protection Officer to clarify if a licence is required and if so the procedure for obtaining this.

If a licence is required the Society must receive a copy prior to the show otherwise your child may not be allowed to perform on stage.

2. ***Rehearsals:*** Usually commence the first week in September at **St Mary's Community Centre, Chequerfield**. The first rehearsal is at 7:30pm for everyone and we expect parents/guardians to participate in this

rehearsal as specific information and dates relating to the production may be given out.

**Future rehearsal times will then be split as follows:**

Sunbeams	-	6:30pm – 7:00pm
Juniors	-	7:00pm – 7:45pm
Adult Chorus	-	7:45pm – 9:30pm <sup>5</sup>

**You will be provided with a schedule of rehearsal dates.** However please note that this is a generic list and there may be occasions when Sunbeam and Junior Dancers rehearsals are cancelled if we know that there are going to be insufficient numbers present e.g. during School holidays etc so please check with the Choreographers if in doubt.

**Likewise if you know your child is going to miss a rehearsal for any reason, please advise the Choreographers' as soon as possible.** In the case of illness or last minute non-attendance, please advise the Choreographers of your child's absence by telephone.

If in the opinion of the Choreographers & Producer any member fails to attend regularly without good reason<sup>6</sup>, or fails to give of their best during rehearsals, they may be approached by the Choreographers and warned that if there is no improvement, they may be asked to leave the current production.

**From mid-December rehearsals move to the Town Hall** and the full cast join together. These rehearsals start at 7:00pm prompt and alternate between act 1 and act 2. The Sunbeams and Junior Dancers will be allowed to leave the rehearsals once they have done all their dances in the specific act (subject to the Producers' approval).

**Although parents are not allowed in the rehearsal room at St Mary's there is a comfortable foyer area where you can sit and wait.** The Management Committee encourages you to do this as this is the time when we give out any special notices relating to the Society and more specifically individual productions e.g. Costume requirements, social events, ticket sales etc.

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<sup>5</sup> Finishing time may vary week to week but should not be later than 9:30pm

<sup>6</sup> i.e. fails to appear for two consecutive rehearsals without notifying the Choreographers

**Once the rehearsals move to the Town Hall, parents are again encouraged to stay at rehearsals and sit in the main body of the hall** along with the cast and production team etc. However it must be remembered that this is a rehearsal for the show and therefore noise in the hall must be kept to a minimum so please do not bring along unnecessary friends and family who are not involved in the production in any way.

3. **Drop-off & Pick-up:** In the event that you are unable to wait at rehearsals we do expect all parents to bring children into the rehearsal/performance venue and report to a Chaperone to make them aware that their child has arrived safely. Once the rehearsal has started children will not be allowed to leave the room without an official Chaperone and at the end they must be collected from inside the building by a parent/guardian. **If for any reason your child is being collected by another nominated person who is not known to the Society you must inform a Chaperone in advance.** This is for the safety and protection of your children.
  
4. **Dress Rehearsal:** When you arrive at the Town Hall for the Dress Rehearsal you should use the stage entrance (on the side of the Town Hall between the Town Hall and the Horse Vaults Pub). Although the official Chaperones will take care of our Junior Members throughout the rehearsal (and the public performances following) you are encouraged to go upstairs where you will be met by one of the Chaperones who will show you which dressing room to go to. **Once you have been allocated a space for costumes etc. you will be expected to leave your child under the supervision of the Chaperones and then at the end of the performance return back stage to collect them from the Chaperones.**

**Although we treat the dress rehearsal as the first performance from a cast point of view this does not mean that anyone can come along to watch it.** The Society does however recognise that as a parent/guardian of a Junior Member you may prefer to remain at the Town Hall rather than going home and coming back at the end of rehearsal and as such **you will also be allowed to sit in the audience** (and provide the appropriate audience participation throughout). However this invitation does only apply to parent/guardians and **under no circumstances will additional family members/friends be allowed in to the hall.**

We recommend that everyone brings light refreshments e.g. a sandwich and a drink to the dress rehearsal as once we have completed the performance everyone gets changed back into their normal clothes and then comes to sit in the main body of the hall. There will be a short break for everyone to have a sandwich and drink before the Producer goes through the panel's comments and repeats any parts of the show as necessary.

5. **Costumes:** Costumes will be handed out at various intervals throughout rehearsals and you will be asked to sign for these when received. You will also be told of any fastenings and trimmings you need to add yourself. **Please ensure all costumes are tried on as soon as possible to make sure they fit properly.** If you are unsure of anything about the costumes, please speak to a member of the Wardrobe Team as soon as possible.

**You may on occasions be asked to provide some basic items yourself** e.g. socks, tights, white shirts (for boys), but if you have any difficulty with this, please do speak to the Wardrobe Team who will try to help. **You will also be expected to provide black shoes/slipperettes for your child.** Plimsolls are acceptable, but not trainers.

**At the end of the show you will be advised on the date (and venue) to return all costumes.** Please ensure any trimmings are removed and that they are washed and ready to be packed away. **If for any reason you are unable to return them on the specified date, please speak to a member of the wardrobe team to make alternative arrangements** as we have limited access to the costume store and therefore it is important that we have everything returned by the required date.

6. **Make-up:** The Society provides stage make-up and part of our Chaperone team are dedicated make-up artists. However if you are aware of that your child has any allergies, please feel free to provide your own make-up for the Chaperones to use on your child.
7. **Show Week:** The Town Hall doors usually open 1 hour before the show commences and as with the Dress Rehearsal **you will be expected to take your child to the dressing room and advise a Chaperone they have**

**arrived. At the end of the performance you will be expected to return to the dressing room to collect your child.** Please note it is a tradition of our Society that **no-one should cross the house curtains on the stage when they are drawn.** So if you are helping (or watching) front of house you will need to exit the Town Hall via the main entrance and re-enter back stage via the stage door.

**Traditionally those performing in the show have bought small gifts for others in their group** and handed them out at the Saturday Matinee performance. Although there is no obligation please feel free to join in with this tradition and if you are unsure how many there are in the group, please check with the Chaperones.

**It is also customary that a collection is held to buy a token gift for the Sunbeam and Junior Choreographers.** Parents will normally organise this between themselves and then the gifts are presented by the children at the Saturday Matinee Tea (see page 22 for further information).

The Society also buy a small gift for each of the children and these are presented in the main Assembly Hall immediately after the Saturday Matinee Tea. The children will be allowed to take the official Society gift on stage for the Finale of the Saturday night performance.

**Should you have any queries regarding the show week, please speak to one of the Chaperones as soon as possible.**

# Non-playing Members and Helpers

Although the cast of a show are important we could not do a production without all the helpers Front of House and Back Stage so **we are always looking for volunteers to support us particularly during the week of the show:**

**Front of House:** The Society have an obligation to provide a minimum of 8 stewards in the main hall for every performance. The stewards are there to check people's tickets on arrival and show them to their seats, then to sit in designated seats in the hall during the performance to ensure there are no problems arise. At the end of the show the Stewards ensure everyone leaves the hall safely and work with the Front of House Manager to check round the hall and ensure all fire doors are closed.

**In addition to the Stewards we also require:**

- Show Ticket Sellers - before each performance
- Raffle Ticket Sellers - before and during the interval of each performance
- Programme Sellers - before each performance
- Refreshment Sellers - before and during the interval of each performance  
(Tea, Coffee, Soft Drinks, Crisps, Sweets and Ice-Creams)

**Back Stage:** In order to help with the smooth running of the show we require 8-10 stage hands for each performance. There are usually 6 – 8 scene changes per performance and a typical scene involves a back cloth plus 4 large flats so it can involve some heavy duties.

**In addition to the stage hands we also require:**

- Make-up assistants
- Props assistants
- Call Person
- Children's Chaperones (must be registered with the Local Authority area in which they live)

***Specialist roles:*** There are also a number of specialist roles to fulfil for a production, some of which require involvement prior to the week of the show.

**These roles include:**

- Wardrobe Assistants (Seamstress')
- Props Maker
- Prompt
- Official Photographer
- Video Production
- Sound and Lighting Assistants (particularly follow spot operators)
- Musicians (Pianist, Drummer etc)

**If you think you may be interested (or know anyone else who may be) please speak to a member of the Committee as soon as possible.**

# Other Useful Information

Each production usually consists of seven live performances which will include up to two 2 Matinees. Before committing to perform in a production, **please check that the dates of the performances as you must be available for all shows.**

***Pre-show Meeting:*** A pre-show meeting will be held during the summer for all existing members (including Sunbeams and Juniors) who want to take part in the forthcoming production plus any new members invited by the Production Team.

If for any reason you are unable to attend you must notify the Producer/Chairman as soon as possible otherwise it will be assumed that you do not wish to take part in the forthcoming production and your place will be allocated to someone else.

***Refreshments:*** During rehearsals at St Mary's refreshments (tea, coffee and orange squash) are provided free of charge for the adult chorus rehearsal only. Once the full cast join together for rehearsals at St Mary's and the Town Hall you will be responsible for providing any refreshments you require yourself. **During the week of the show limited refreshments are available during the interval for the cast etc back stage.** Tea, coffee and orange squash are provided free of charge (however to minimize the risk of any burns etc hot drinks will not be available for Junior members). **Pop and Crisps are also available at a small charge**, so please ensure you have money with you in the dressing room if you want to purchase these.

***Purchasing Tickets:*** As a member or Patron of the Society you are eligible to purchase tickets for the show prior to them going on sale to the general public.

**Priority booking dates for Patrons and Members will be announced at rehearsals and in the Society newsletter. Please note that no tickets can be reserved without full payment on priority booking nights.**

**Refer to the Society Rules and Constitution<sup>7</sup> to confirm how many tickets you are eligible to purchase.**

Once the priority booking nights have taken place you can purchase as many tickets as you require for any performance (subject to availability). However please note that in the event of you reserving tickets without payment they will be held for a maximum of two weeks and if not collected and paid for within this time they will be released for sale again.

**Block Bookings:** These are available for parties of 10 or more persons, and forms can be obtained from the Ticket Secretary. Please note that if you make a block booking your seats will not be allocated until after the priority booking nights are complete and although you can request a preferred area for seating we can-not guarantee to be able to accommodate this.

**Raffle:** During the week of the show we run two separate raffles:

**Front of House:** A raffle is held at each performance and ideally we give three prizes on each occasion. Tickets are sold in the foyer and the main hall and the winners are drawn at the interval.

**Back Stage:** A separate raffle is held back stage for members and helpers. If you wish to take part there will be a set charge for the week which will allow your name to be included in the Adult or Children's draw as appropriate. At each performance a name is drawn out of each and a prize will be given. Once your name has been drawn out it does not go back in again so no person will win more than one prize during the week.

**Raffle Prizes:** The Society are always pleased to receive any donations of raffle prizes. Where possible they will be used for the raffles during the week of the show so please if you have any unwanted gifts, please feel free to bring them along to rehearsals. Any prizes which are not suitable for use during the week of the show will be held over and used at the Annual Dinner and Dance where we also provide a raffle.

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<sup>7</sup> See Appendix I & ii

***Saturday Matinee Tea:*** For those involved in the performances there is a break of approximately 1 – 1 ½ hours between the matinee and evening performance during which time **everyone is encouraged to remain at the Town Hall for Tea as this is the time when we give out important information which you need to know and we also make a number of official presentations including:**

- Society Long Service Awards (25 years +)
- Society Junior Awards (5 & 10 year)
- Society gifts to the Producer & Musical Director
- Children's Gifts to Choreographers

**Everyone is responsible for providing their own food for tea but the Society will provide tea, coffee or squash to drink.** The Social Secretary will ask in advance for numbers attending so we can ensure that there are sufficient chairs available. **Please do make sure you give your name in if you plan to stay.** Even if they are not directly involved in the show we do expect there to be a parent/guardian present at the tea with our Junior Members as the **Society Chaperones are not responsible for them during this time.**

***After Show Party:*** Once the last performance has ended everyone involved in the show is invited to the **After Show Party.** Additional family and friends who have been at the Saturday night performance may also come along to the party providing you book a place for them in advance. Details of the party together with the costs involved will be circulated by the Social Secretary in December – so please remember to book your places. **Junior Members of the Society who wish to attend must be accompanied by a parent or guardian as the Chaperones are only responsible for our younger members during the actual performances.**

**Please ensure that you take all your belongings out of the dressing rooms and bring them into the main hall prior to the party starting** as once the dressing rooms are empty of people, the stage curtains will be closed and all back stage areas will be out of bounds for the remainder of the evening in order that de-rigging of the set can commence.

**Photography/Recording of the show:** Providing legislation allows **the Society will produce an official DVD of the production which can be pre-ordered and purchased for a nominal charge.** Orders will be taken during rehearsals in December and full pre-payment is required with the order.

**Official publicity photos are also taken** (usually in September/October) and these are used in the programme and newspaper advertising as well as on the website etc. It is assumed that anyone who is part of the cast is agreeable to their photos being publicised unless they notify the Producer/Chairman otherwise.

Only those authorised by the Management Committee can take photographs or recordings of any production and if taking photos back stage, please remember not to use a flash in the stage area as the effect of this may be seen by the audience.

**Photographs/recordings taken off stage must be in line with the Society's Social Media Policy** (see appendix IV). Please note that **no photos of Junior members can be taken at any time without prior approval from their parent/guardian.**

**Annual Dinner and Dance:** The dinner dance is usually held in February/March each year and is open to **Members, Patrons, family and friends of the Society age 18yrs and over.** Booking forms for the dinner dance will be circulated at rehearsals or alternatively you can obtain details direct from the Social Secretary.

**Social Calendar:** The Society holds a variety of other events throughout the year for both adults and children including, theatre trips, barbecues and children's summer outings. Details of these will be circulated by the Social Secretary throughout the year so please ensure they have your contact details (email/ mobile phone number where possible) to keep in touch.

**Social events are an important part of the Society's calendar** as we firmly believe they help to strengthen the family spirit and build upon the **Camaraderie** within the Society. **So if you have any ideas or suggestions of events you would like us to arrange or take part in** (e.g. theatre trips, children's days out etc.), please do pass your ideas to the Social Secretary who will look into the details.

**Annual General Meeting:** This takes place in April/May each year and is the time when you not only get to vote in the new Officers and Management Committee for the coming year but also to have your say in the running of the Society including costs involved and also the rules and regulations by which we ask you to abide. For further information about the Committee refer to page 4.

**Awards:** The Society are keen to recognise dedication and commitment from individuals and one way in which we do this is by the presentation of awards. Currently the Society recognises the following lengths of service by presenting a Society Long Service Award.

**Junior Members:**

- 5 Years (presented during their 6<sup>th</sup> Pantomime)
- 10 years (presented during their 11<sup>th</sup> Pantomime)

**Performing Members:**

- 25 Years (Presented during their 26<sup>th</sup> Pantomime)
- 50 years (presented during their 51<sup>st</sup> Pantomime)

**Helpers (eg Front of House, Back Stage etc):**

- 25 Years (Presented during their 26<sup>th</sup> Pantomime)
- 40 years (presented during their 41<sup>st</sup> Pantomime)

**In addition to Society awards there are also a number of NODA<sup>8</sup> Long Service Awards for which individual members can apply.** For these awards not all service has to be with our Society, however if the award you apply for does not wholly relate to our Society you may be asked to pay for a proportion of the award yourself and supply documentary evidence of your membership of other Societies, usually verified by that Societies Secretary. **Full details of the awards available and the process for applying can be obtained from the Society Secretary.**

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<sup>8</sup> National Operatic and Dramatic Association – a National Body representing Amateur Societies

**Website and Social Media:** The Society's website can be found at [www.stgilespanto.co.uk](http://www.stgilespanto.co.uk). All the latest information about the Society and its productions can be found here as well as historical information going back to when the society first started.



In order to try and promote the Society and its productions to a wider audience **there is a Facebook page (St Giles Panto Society)** which is open to the public and is used to promote official Society business.

**There is also a Facebook Group which is a closed group for Society members only** and can be used as a quick and easy means of internal communication. Please feel free to find us on Facebook and join the group as well as liking our page.



We also have an official 'Tweeter' so if you are not already following us search for **@stgilespanto** to find out what we are up to.

**. . . and don't forget to follow the antics of our very own Panto Dame** on both Facebook (Panto Dame) and Twitter (@panto\_dame)

The society recognises that Social Media is an important part of everyday life and **we therefore have a dedicated Social Media Officer** who is responsible for publicising the Society and it's shows through all Social Media avenues and also for monitoring the activity on our Social Media sites to **ensure we adhere to the Society's Social Media policy<sup>9</sup>**, so if you have queries please do not hesitate to ask.

**Newsletter and Updates:** The Society produces a newsletter at regular intervals (usually Sept/Oct, Jan/Feb, June/July) to keep you updated with all the latest news and information so **please ensure our Membership Secretary has your full contact details i.e.**

- Full Name
- Postal Address (including Post Code)
- Telephone Number
- Mobile Number (if available)
- Email Address

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<sup>9</sup> See appendix iv

In order to keep costs down the newsletter will be sent out by email, however for those who do not have access to an email account we will post a copy to you. **If there are any urgent updates from the Society these will also be sent by email or for those who are not on email you will receive a text message or phone call.**

***Waiting List:*** The number of people we can have on stage for a performance is limited. Therefore we operate a waiting list for new people wanting to take part. To add a name to the list please ask the Society Secretary for a form to complete.

***... and finally:*** If at any time you have any problems or queries relating to a production or the Society in general, please do not hesitate to contact the Producer or a member of the Management Committee who will be more than happy to help. **We hope you enjoy being part of St Giles with St Mary's Pantomime/Theatre Pantomime Society and look forward to you been part of the family for many years to come.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Morgan', written in a cursive style.

**Jeannette Morgan  
Chairman  
June 2015**

# Appendix I: Constitution

As approved at the AGM April 2015

## **NAME OF THE SOCIETY**

St Giles' with St Mary's Pantomime Theatre Society.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE SOCIETY**

To promote fellowship among our members, provide light entertainment and foster the arts for the benefit of the wider community of Pontefract & District.

To seek to contribute financially to St Giles' Church and/or St Mary's Churches from any profits accrued by the staging of the annual Pantomime.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership of the Society shall consist of Founder Life Members, Honorary Life Members, Patrons, Members and Junior Members all eligible to serve in all offices by election or by constitution, provided they are over Statutory School Leaving age. Junior Members must have a parent/guardian who is a paid-up member of the Society and who agrees to take associated responsibility for the Junior Member.

## **PRESIDENT**

The Vicar of St Giles' Church shall be the standing President of the Society.

## **OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY**

The Officers of the Society shall be Chairman (with a casting vote only), Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, all with full voting power. The Officers shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting for a period of three years or less. Existing Officers can stand for re-election.

## **MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

To consist of;

President

The four Officers (Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer)

A Church representative (if appointed by the PCC)

Eight Officials (Asst Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Publicity Manager, Child Protection Officer, Health & Safety Officer, Ticket Secretary, Social Media Officer and Social Secretary) to be elected annually.

A maximum of three Committee Members to be elected annually.

The Management Committee shall meet at least nine times per annum with at least seven days notice given; minutes and agenda to be issued in advance of each meeting. All Sub-Committees shall be elected by the Management Committee may include the Chairman at his/her behest.

Life Members are entitled to attend committee meetings as observers and/or receive minutes at their request.

### **CO-OPTIONS**

That the Management Committee may, at their discretion, co-opt (as a full member) any person whose expertise would be seen to be of value to the previously mentioned Committee. At no time should there be more than two such co-optees.

The Management Committee shall continue to co-opt as a non-voting member any person it feels appropriate. (Such persons being allowed to vote only on their own specialisation).

### **QUORUM**

The Management Committee is quorate when two Officers of the Society and any three serving Committee Officials or members are present.

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

When a Management Committee meeting is impracticable, then an Executive Committee consisting of any two Officers, plus one Committee member/Official may act on behalf of the Management Committee.

All decisions or actions taken to be reported to the Members of the Management Committee as soon as is practicable and subject to confirmation at the next Management Committee Meeting.

### **RELATIONSHIP OF THE SOCIETY TO THE PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC)**

The Society is part of St Giles. The Management Committee is responsible on behalf of St Giles for the function of the Society and for upholding of the Constitution. Any change in the Constitution of the Society must be ratified by the PCC.

The Constitution is to be reviewed by the Management Committee every three years.

### **FINANCE**

The financial year to be April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>. All accounts will be closed by the last day of March and the Annual General Meeting (AGM) must be held within the six weeks following the closure of the accounts.

All monies collected by or on behalf of the Society shall be paid to the Treasurer or Asst Treasurer to be banked in the Society's bank account.

All members' subscriptions are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> April.

No member shall incur any expense to the Society without the permission of the Management Committee.

Additional performance fees may be imposed upon those members appearing on stage in a performance as agreed by the AGM.

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)**

The Annual General Meeting must be held within six weeks of the closing of accounts with a minimum of two weeks notice to be given to Members. The business of the AGM shall be:

To receive changes of constitution, rules,

To receive the accounts for the previous financial year

To receive the annual reports

For elections of new Officers and Officials for the Management Committee

Any other business which has been notified prior to the meeting, in writing to the Secretary and is included on the Agenda.

### **EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL MEETING**

An Extraordinary General meeting may be called at any time at the discretion of the Management Committee. An extraordinary general meeting shall be called within 21 days after receipt by the Secretary of the requisition in writing to the effect, signed by at least 20 members of the Society. Every such requisition shall specify the business for which the meeting is convened and no other business shall be transacted at such a meeting.

### **VOTING**

All members over statutory school leaving age shall be allowed to vote at the Annual General Meeting. All voting papers shall be checked and issued only to active Members<sup>1</sup> of the Society. Two tellers shall be appointed at the meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Active members are those who are involved in the current or most recent production or have missed a production due to health or educational need, but have maintained contact with the Society

## **PAPERS FOR NOMINATION**

Papers for nominations for Positions that are due for election on the Management Committee will be made available prior to the Annual General Meeting. On completion they are to be handed to the Secretary or other Officer.

## **CHILDREN IN THE THEATRE**

The Society will seek to ensure all legislation and guidance around issues relating to Child Protection are adhered and the Society's Policies are under constant review.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

The Society will seek to ensure all legislation and guidance around issues relating to Health & Safety is adhered to and is under constant review.

# Appendix II: RULES

As approved at the AGM April 2015

## PRODUCER/PRODUCTION TEAM LEAD

To be appointed by, responsible and accountable to the Management Committee.

Any Producer/Production Team Lead must be prepared to work within the constraints laid down by the Management Committee.

Nominations for Producer/Production Team Lead or scripts for consideration may be handed to an officer in writing.

## COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- (a) Ex-officio members can only vote on their own subject and will be co-opted as and when required.
- (b) Observers are allowed at the discretion of the Management Committee.
- (c) A resume of the minutes will be available for inspection from the Secretary.
- (d) Items for discussion by the Management Committee must be notified to the Secretary in advance for inclusion on the Agenda.
- (e) The Management Committee shall award expenses as appropriate.

## SUB-COMMITTEES

- (a) Casting Committee shall include the Producer and an Officer of the Society.
- (b) Costing Committee shall include the Producer and the Treasurer.
- (c) Constitution Sub-Committee shall include the offer of a representative of the PCC to attend.
- (d) Health & Safety Sub-Committee shall be led by the Health & Safety Officer
- (e) Production Team shall be led by the Producer/Production Team Lead and include the Health & Safety Officer

## MEMBERSHIP

**Founder Life Members** - This membership has been awarded to those members whose service and dedication enabled the establishment of the Society and such members are eligible for priority booking (equal to that of a Patron) for any show staged by the Society.

**Honorary Life Members** - This may be granted at the discretion of the Committee to any person who in their consideration has given outstanding service to the Society over a period of time and such members are eligible for priority booking (equal to that of a Patron) for any show staged by the Society.

**Patronage Membership - over statutory school leaving age** - A Patron is eligible for priority booking for any show staged by the Society.

**Membership - over statutory school leaving age** - A member is eligible for second priority booking for any show staged by the Society.

**Junior Membership - under statutory school leaving age** - is only available to those who are performing on stage

**The Management Committee reserves the right to expel from the Society, or debar from future functions, any person or persons who behave in an unacceptable manner.**

### **SUBSCRIPTIONS**

**Patrons** - £5.00 *Option to book a maximum of 6 tickets on specified priority booking nights*

**Members** - £3.00 *Option to book a maximum of 4 tickets on specified (anyone over statutory school leaving age) priority booking nights*

**Junior Members**- free *Option to book a maximum of 2 tickets on specified (anyone under statutory school leaving age) priority booking nights*

(The Patrons category includes Founder Life Members and Honorary Life Members, who are not expected to pay any subscriptions in recognition of their dedicated and exceptional service)

### **PERFORMANCE FEE**

In addition to the above subscriptions all members wishing to perform in the Pantomime must pay a performance fee as detailed below prior to or at the pre-rehearsal meeting. Anyone who fails to pay before this date (without prior agreement) will not be allocated costumes, a part or positions in the routines and it will be anticipated that they do not wish to perform.

Adult Performers (over statutory school age) - £10.00

Junior Performers (still in statutory education) - £ 5.00

### **PRE-REHEARSAL MEETING**

All existing and new performing members will be expected to attend the pre-rehearsal meeting, the date for which will be sent out after the AGM. If for any reason you are unable to attend you must notify the Production Team Lead/Chairman in advance. Anyone who is not present at the meeting and has not notified the Production Team Lead/Chairman of their absence will be removed from the cast list for the forthcoming production without any further notice.

## **COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS**

**Party Bookings:** For every 10 tickets booked 1 free place will be allocated (eg if you book 10 tickets only 9 will be charged for) providing the booking is made using the appropriate block-booking form for which seats are allocated by the Ticket Secretary.

**Complimentary tickets** will be issued to advertisers at the following rate; 2 free tickets for a small or medium advert. 4 free tickets for a large advert.

Other complimentary tickets will be issued at the discretion of the Management Committee.

All new programme Advertisers (beyond August 2004) can only reserve their free seats on Monday -Thursday nights.

## **PRIORITY SEAT RESERVATION**

**Patrons and members** will be informed of the time/venue for priority seat reservations by the Management Committee.

**Patrons** will initially be allowed to reserve a maximum of 6 seats per Patron in their immediate family until other Patrons present have made their priority reservation. Thereafter Patrons may reserve seats for other Patrons in strict rotation.

**Members** will initially be allowed to reserve a maximum of 4 seats per member in their immediate family until other members (including Juniors) present have made their priority reservation. Thereafter Members may reserve seats for other members in strict rotation.

**Junior members** will initially be allowed to reserve a maximum of 2 seats each until other members present have made their priority reservation. Thereafter members may reserve seats for other Junior members in strict rotation.

**Note:** For the purpose of Priority Seat reservations Life Members will be treated as Patrons.

**Where an individual falls into two categories of membership they will only be entitled to 1 allocation of tickets under the priority seat reservations.**

## **CODE OF PRACTICE**

The Code of Practice that has been drawn up by the Management Committee shall be followed by all Society Members and helpers who will also adhere to the following rule of behaviour;

Whilst an important aim of the Society is for its Members to have a good time, performers, front of house staff and the backstage team should not, under any circumstances, take part in or organise practical jokes which may affect the

production, performers or any member of the production team on or off stage during the week of the show.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The Social Media Policy has been drawn up by the Management Committee and shall be followed by all Members and helpers of the Society.

### **CONDUCT DURING PRODUCTION WEEK**

(a) All mobile phones are to be turned to flight mode or switched off during performances and must not be used unless permission is given by the Production Team Lead/Stage Manager).

(b) No one is allowed to cross over the stage when the house curtains are drawn. This applies before, during and after the performance.

**NB: For the purpose of the Rules the Committee has determined that the dress rehearsal is considered a performance.**

### **AWARDS**

#### **Junior Awards: Five and Ten Year Society Awards**

These are awards given to any Society member with the relevant years service up to and including the age of 20 providing the service from the age of 16 is continuous. Under the age of 16 the service may be broken. (Presented during the 6<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> Pantomime though the member does not have to perform in the 6<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> Pantomime).

#### **Senior Award: Twenty-five and Fifty Year Society Award**

To be made to any person who has given the relevant years' service to the Society. (Presented during the 26<sup>th</sup> or 51<sup>st</sup> pantomime, though the member does not have to perform in the 26<sup>th</sup> or 51<sup>st</sup> pantomime).

#### **NODA Awards**

NODA long service medals, badges and studs will be awarded by the Society for any current playing members who are entitled to such awards. The Society will pay the cost of the Award covering the relevant proportion of Service with the Society. (Presented on stage during the Pantomime immediately following the completion of the complete calendar year enabling entitlement to the award). **Any member who considers that they qualify for an award must submit a claim accompanied by the necessary evidence.**

Service from the age of 11 is counted for NODA awards in accordance with NODA arrangements. **Only the Management Committee can approve such awards.**

## **RECORDING**

No unauthorised recording of Society productions will be allowed.

## **DRESS REHEARSAL**

Only the Management Committee, the Producer and those individuals invited by the Producer may be present and view any dress rehearsal.

## **REHEARSALS**

All members and visitors are required to sign in at the rehearsal venue. Any member leaving prior to the end of the rehearsal must notify the Production Team Lead (or their representative) prior to departure. No Junior member shall be permitted to leave the rehearsal or performance venue without being accompanied by a parent/guardian and only after notifying the Production Team Lead (or their representative, and the Chaperones.

If for any reason a Junior member is being collected by someone other than a parent/guardian the Production Team Lead (or their representative) and Chaperones must be notified in advance of the name of the person who is responsible for collecting them.

It is the responsibility of all parents/guardians to ensure that they come into the premises (and do not wait outside) to collect Junior members as they will not be allowed to go out of the building to see if anyone is there to collect them.

## **TICKET SALES**

Written Guidelines for Ticket Sales will be available for anyone working in the Booking Office.

The Ticket Hotline/answerphone must be available from September.

Block Booking forms should be issued during the first week in September and payment or deposits should be secured so the Society can guarantee places reserved.

Any reserved tickets must be paid for two weeks after booking unless an agreement is reached with the Management Committee.

Up to two weeks prior to the show a block booking may be allowed to return a maximum of 10% of their tickets and request a refund for the same

Blank tickets should be removed from the books of tickets.

Those who are approved by the Management Committee to work on the priority Ticket Sales night are entitled to buy their priority seats allocation (ie 6 tickets for a Patron, 4 tickets for a member) in advance of the booking office opening as a token

of the Societies appreciation. **NB This applies to the individuals allocation only and does not include any allocation for immediate family**

### **ANY SOCIETY EVENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH GENERAL LICENSING LAWS**

Over 18 years of age may attend unaccompanied and may consume alcohol.

Ages 16 - 18 may attend unaccompanied, but must not consume alcohol.

Ages 14 - 16 must be accompanied by a parent/guardian and must not consume alcohol.

Under 14 years of age may not attend.

These limits may be modified for individual events at the discretion of the Management Committee.

### **AMENDMENTS**

Any changes in the rules of the Society must first have been ratified at the Annual General Meeting.

# Appendix III: Code of Practice

By accepting membership of the Society it is assumed that the member accepts, willingly, the responsibilities that go with it. One of the aims of the Society is to seek true fellowship amongst its members, where jealousies are set aside and true friendships are formed.

The Society frowns on members who seek personal gain through agitation and expects that despite personal faults its members can meet together with goodwill and mutual understanding.

Where a member continually acts in such a way that the Society is felt to be disadvantaged, then after careful consideration by the Management Committee, such membership will be withdrawn.

It is also expected that when a member fails to appear for two consecutive rehearsals without notifying the Producer, or when attendance is regarded as unsatisfactory, membership for the current production may also be withdrawn. It is hoped that every member can gain satisfaction and enjoyment from belonging to the Society and the Society can gain from the talents and good works of its members.

All members must attend rehearsals regularly and promptly and must be prepared to work hard to make the show a success. If any problem should arise it should be brought to the attention of the Producer or a member of the Management Committee.

If in the opinion of the Producer any member fails to attend regularly without good reason, or fails to give of their best during rehearsals, they should be approached by the Producer and warned that if there is no improvement, they will be asked to leave the current production.



Jeannette Morgan  
Chairman - April 2015

N.B. Membership of the Society costs £3.00 for all those over statutory school leaving age. For those under statutory school leaving age membership is free. Patronage costs £5.00 per person.

The Membership fee or Patronage is due on 1st April each year and should be paid to the Membership Secretary as soon as possible after the due date.

# Appendix IV: Social Media Policy

The Management Committee are pleased that people are proud to be members of the Society and encourage any chance to share the enjoyment of members with others. However, photographs/images included on Social Media sites or published in any way must appropriately represent the Society and the individuals involved.

Photographs/images posted on such sites taken at Society events and productions must include members of cast fully dressed and in appropriate costumes. Anyone using photographs/images that include any members under statutory school leaving age must have the express permission of the child's parent/guardian. Parents/guardians are also asked to check the sites of the children they are responsible for and discuss with them the appropriateness of any images included that may upset/embarrass their friends.

Anyone posting images of members of the cast not fully dressed or where the costumes have been dramatically altered will be denied future Membership of the Society.

The Management Committee is delighted that the Society has a friendly approach across generations. The Society can take a huge sense of pride from bringing people of all ages, with varying degrees of experience, together in a positive way and the Society will continue to foster this intergenerational working. However the onset of modern technologies brings new challenges to these friendships in that it takes the relationships away from the open rehearsal atmosphere to the less public space of the internet where others, outside of the Society, may also view the discussions and chats taking place leaving exposed those who are vulnerable.

Adult members of the Society may only be 'on-line friends' in social networking groups with any member of the Society under statutory school leaving age when they have been given the express permission of the child's parent/guardian. Anyone seeking to be friends with a junior member should first approach the parent/guardian to ask for their consent. Where someone under statutory school leaving age approaches an adult to be a 'friend' in a social networking group then again the adult involved must approach the child's parent/guardian before accepting.

Anyone failing to adhere to this will be asked to leave the Society.

April 2015

# Appendix V: Child Protection Policy

## As agreed at the AGM 2015

St Giles with St Mary's Pantomime/Theatre Society recognises its duty of care under the Children and Young Persons Act 1963, the Child (Performances) Regulations 1968, the Protection of Children Act 1999 and the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000.

The Society recognises that abuse can take many forms, whether it be physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. The Society is committed to practice that protects children<sup>1</sup> from harm. All members of the Society accept and recognise their responsibilities to develop awareness of the issues that cause children harm.

### **The Society believes that:**

- the welfare of the child is paramount;
- all children, whatever their age, culture, disability, gender, language, racial origin, religious beliefs and/or sexual identity have the right to protection from abuse;
- all suspicions and allegations of abuse should be taken seriously and responded to swiftly and appropriately;
- all members of the Society should be clear on how to respond appropriately.

### **The Society will ensure that:**

- all children will be treated equally and with respect and dignity;
- the welfare of each child will always be put first;
- a balanced relationship based on mutual trust will be built which empowers the children to share in the decision-making process;
- enthusiastic and constructive feedback will be given rather than negative criticism;
- bullying will not be accepted or condoned;
- all adult members of the Society provide a positive role model for dealing with other people;
- action will be taken to stop any inappropriate verbal or physical behaviour;
- it will keep up-to-date with health & safety legislation;
- it will keep informed of changes in legislation and policies for the protection of children;

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<sup>1</sup> The Society recognise all those under statutory school leaving age as children

- it will undertake relevant development and training;
- it will hold a register of every child involved with the Society and will retain a contact name and number close at hand in case of emergencies.

The Society has Child Protection Procedures that accompany this Policy. This Policy should also be read in conjunction with the Society's Health & Safety Policy.

The Society has a Child Protection Officer, Amanda Lovell who is in charge of ensuring that administration around the Child Protection Policy and Procedures is adhered to.

This Policy will be regularly monitored by the Executive Committee of the Society and will be subject to annual review.

# Appendix VI: Child Protection Procedures

**Agreed by the Management Committee June 2015**

**To be approved by the 2016 AGM**

## **Responsibilities of the Society**

At the outset of any production involving children the Society will:

- undertake a risk assessment and monitor risk throughout the production process;
- identify at the outset the person with designated responsibility for administration round issues of child protection;
- engage Volunteer Chaperones and other individuals with responsibility for children, including appropriate vetting in consultation with the Local Education Authority (LEA);
- Comply with the requirements of the LEA to secure a 'body of person exemption' or individual licences as required under the provisions of the 'CHILDREN & YOUNG PERSONS ACT 1963 37(3)(b) Children employed in entertainment to which the public are admitted by payment' and The Children (performances and Activities) regulations 2014. See WMDC Guidance attached
- ensure that children are supervised at all times;
- know how to get in touch with the Local Authority Children's Services, in case it needs to report a concern.

## **Parents**

- The Society believes it to be important that there is a partnership between parents and the Society. Parents should be a member of Patron of the Society. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the activities of the Society and to share responsibility for the care of children. All parents will be given a copy the Society's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.
- All parents have the responsibility to collect (or arrange collection of) their children after rehearsals or performances. It is NOT the responsibility of the Society to take children home. During the week of the production parents are responsible for ensuring that an emergency contact is always available and notifying the Volunteer Chaperone of any changes to the usual emergency contact details.

## **Unsupervised Contact**

- The Society will attempt to ensure that no adult has unsupervised contact with children.
- There will always be two adults in the room when working with children.
- If unsupervised contact is unavoidable, steps will be taken to minimise risk. For example, work will be carried out in a public area or in a designated room with a door open.
- If it is predicted that an individual is likely to require unsupervised contact with children, he or she will be required to obtain a criminal record disclosure.

### **Physical Contact**

- All adults will maintain a safe and appropriate distance from children.
- Adults will only touch children when it is absolutely necessary in relation to the particular activity.
- Adults will seek the consent of the child prior to any physical contact and the purpose of the contact shall be made clear.

### **Managing Sensitive Information**

- The Society has procedures for the taking, using and storage of photographs or images of children.
- Permission will be sought annually from the parents for use of photographic material featuring children for promotional or other purposes.
- The Society's web-based materials and activities will be carefully monitored for inappropriate use.
- The Society will ensure confidentiality in order to protect the rights of its members, including the safe handling, storage and disposal of any sensitive information such as criminal record disclosures.

### **Suspicion of abuse**

- If you see or suspect abuse of a child while in the care of the Society, please make this known to an Officer of the Committee.
- Please make a note for your own records of what you witnessed as well as your response, in case there is follow-up in which you are involved.
- If a serious allegation is made against any member of the Society, volunteer chaperone, venue staff etc., that individual will be suspended immediately until the investigation is concluded. The individual will be excluded from the theatre, rehearsal rooms etc. and will not have any unsupervised contact with any other children in the production.

### **Disclosure of abuse**

- If a child confides in you that abuse has taken place:
- Remain calm and in control but do not delay taking action.

- Listen carefully to what has been said. Allow the child to tell you at their own pace and ask questions only for clarification. Don't ask questions that suggest a particular answer.
- Don't promise to keep it a secret. Use the first opportunity you have to share the information with an officer of the Management Committee. Make it clear to the child that you will need to share this information with others. Make it clear that you will only tell the people who need to know and who should be able to help.
- Reassure the child that 'they did the right thing' in telling someone.
- Tell the child what you are going to do next.
- Speak immediately to an Officer of the Committee. It is that person's responsibility to ensure that liaison takes place with the relevant authorities, usually social services or the police.
- As soon as possible after the disclosing conversation, make a note of what was said, using the child's own words. Note the date, time, any names that were involved or mentioned, and who you gave the information to. Make sure you sign and date your record.

### **Recording**

- In all situations, including those in which the cause of concern arises from a disclosure made in confidence, the details of an allegation or reported incident will be recorded, regardless of whether or not the concerns have been shared with a statutory child protection agency.
- An accurate note shall be made of the date and time of the incident or disclosure, the parties involved, what was said or done and by whom, any action taken to investigate the matter, any further action taken eg. suspension of an individual, where relevant the reasons why the matter was not referred to a statutory agency, and the name of the persons reporting and to whom it was reported.
- The record will be stored securely and shared only with those who need to know about the incident or allegation.

### **Rights & Confidentiality**

- If a complaint is made against a member of the Society he or she will be made aware of his rights under the Society's disciplinary procedures.
- No matter how you may feel about the accusation, both the alleged abuser and the child who is thought to have been abused have the right to confidentiality under the Data Protection Act 1998. Remember also that any possible criminal investigation could be compromised through inappropriate information being released.
- In criminal law the Crown or other prosecuting authority has to prove guilt and the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

## **Accidents**

- To avoid accidents, volunteer chaperones, parents, guardians and children will be advised of “house rules” regarding health and safety and will be notified of areas that are out of bounds. Children will be advised of the clothing and footwear appropriate to the work that will be undertaken.
- If a child is injured while in the care of the Society, a designated first-aider will administer first aid and the injury will be recorded in the venue’s accident book.
- If a child joins the production with an obvious physical injury a record of this will be made in the accident book. This record will be counter-signed by a member of the Management Committee. This record can be useful if a formal allegation is made later, and will also be a record that the child did not sustain the injury while participating in the production or rehearsals.

## **Criminal Record Disclosures**

- Where the Management Committee of the Society believes it is in its best interests to obtain criminal record disclosures through the DBS process for Volunteer chaperones or other personnel the Secretary will inform the individual of the necessary procedures and the level of disclosure required. The Committee has agreed that where a disclosure is to be pursued it will be at the enhanced level.
- The Society will adhere to NODA’s code of practice for the handling of disclosure information.
- The Society will ensure that information contained in the disclosure is not misused.

## **Volunteer Chaperones**

- Volunteer Chaperones will be appointed by the Society for the care of children during the production process.
- Potential Chaperones will be well known to the Society and will undertake an enhanced DBS check or other checks as required by WMDC.
- Only Volunteer Chaperones may accompany the children outside of the dressing room including onto the stage.
- A schedule of Volunteer Chaperones will be collated 2 months in advance of the Production.
- Volunteer Chaperones will be made aware of the Society’s Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

**WMDC CHILDREN IN ENTERTAINMENT**  
**Body of Persons Licence Guidance Information**

**Updated August 2012 (from WMDC website 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2015)**

**Background**

The Children & Young Persons Act 1963 gives a local authority under Section 37(3)(b) the power to issue a licence to a **Body of Persons** e.g. a group of responsible adults - youth organisations, amateur dramatics, etc. (**but not usually professional companies**) to enable them to engage children in non broadcast and recorded performances without the need to apply for separate licences for each child for each production.

**The Body of Persons** must then provide the Local Authority with the following information in advance:

- The names, addresses and dates of birth of all the young people who will be performing;
- The venue and dates of performances;
- The names and addresses of the adults forming the Body of Persons.

Applicants should apply for this licence not less than 21 working days prior to the first performance provided they can meet the following criteria.

**Approval can be granted providing**

- The child performers receive no payment other than expenses;
- The performance is for a stage production;
- The performances all take place within the Wakefield MDC area;
- The child performers are supervised by licensed chaperones;
- The organisation complies with the regulations on days and permitted hours of Performance contained in the Children (Performance) Regulations 1968;
- That the Child Employment Team agreed that the rehearsal/performance venue(s) are suitable places for children to perform;
- The organiser/Body of Persons have ensured appropriate arrangements are in place to transport child performers to and from the venue and released into the care of an appropriate person;
- The organiser/Body of Persons will not allow the children to take part in performances that may be dangerous;
- The organiser can demonstrate that it can meet any health, safety and welfare conditions set by the local authority;
- The organiser has obtained from each child's parent a medical consent form saying the child is fit to take part in the performance;

- The Body of Persons has a Child Protection Policy in place and has supplied a copy to the Local Authority;
- The Body of Persons/Organiser allow access to an authorised member of the Local Authority to carry out an inspection at both dress/technical rehearsals and productions;
- No child of compulsory school age requires any absence from school for a rehearsal or performance (Full licence applications are required where absence from school is required).

**The holders of the licence must ensure that they keep records of each young person's performance as required by Schedule 3 Children and Young Persons, The Children (Performances) Regulations 1968.**

Approval can only be granted for young people who perform solely for the holder(s) of the Body of Persons Licence.

An individual child can only be included in one Body of Persons Licence in any six month period.

### **The Applicant**

The chair person or secretary of each society is normally the person who applies for the Body of Persons Licence and must complete an appropriate application form.

### **The Application**

The application must be made on the appropriate application form. The application form asks for details of the society/company that is running the production together with details of the performance dates, times and venue.

The licence applicant must provide a list of the names, dates of birth and addresses of the children taking part in the performance.

Medicals are not required for each child, but the licence applicant should ensure that each child's parent has signed a form declaring that the child is fit and healthy and that participation in the performance will not impact on his health.

The applicant must also provide the names and addresses of the adults who are to be named as part of the Body of Persons and Licensed Chaperones

**Wakefield MDC grants a Body of Persons licence on a single production basis, however the right is reserved to withdraw a licence if it is felt the above conditions are not being met.**

## **Body of Persons licence – do's and don'ts**

The following relates to children who are part of a Body of Persons licence which is only applicable to stage productions.

### ***Payment***

Children must not receive payment for any performance, other than expenses.

### ***Education***

Children who are part of a Body of Persons are not individually licensed therefore they are not allowed to take time off from their education for a performance. For this reason, no child must perform or rehearse at a time when they should be in school.

### ***Place of performance***

The place of performance is defined as the area backstage that includes the stage, wings, dressing rooms and green room.

All performances must be within the jurisdiction of the Wakefield MDC to whom the Body of Persons has applied to for a licence.

### ***Supervision***

All children must be chaperoned by their own parent/s or a licensed chaperone with a regulatory requirement of a ratio of 1 adult to 12 children.

Good Practice, recommends that a male and a female chaperone is available to enable gender issues to be accommodated as well as allowing for continued supervision of the children should it be necessary for a chaperone to deal with individual issues when they arise.

Unless the parent is a licensed chaperone they cannot chaperone other children.

### ***Number of performances***

A child cannot take part in a rehearsal or a performance on more than 6 days in any period of 7 days (note that in this context rehearsal is defined as one taking place during the life of the licence).

If in the life of a Body of Persons Licence a child is additionally called upon to take part in or rehearse for another production other than that that is covered by the Body of Persons Licence then the child cannot take part on more than 5 days in any period of 7 days.

### ***Length of time performing***

- A child must not take part in a performance that lasts for more than 3.5 hours.
- A child's appearance in each performance must not exceed 2.5 hours.

- A child must not take part in more than 2 performances or one rehearsal and one performance in a day.
- A child must have a break of 1.5 hours between 2 performances or rehearsals in the same day. This break of 1.5 hours can be reduced to 45 minutes on 2 days in a week as long as the child is not at the same place of performance for more than 6 hours.
- If a child performs or rehearses on consecutive days there must be a break of 14 hours or more between each day that they are performing. e.g. if there is a performance with an end time of 10:00 pm then the child cannot take part in another rehearsal or performance until 12:00 noon the following day.

### ***Permitted hours for stage performances***

After each performance the regulations allow 30 minutes after their performance for the children to shower and change, therefore standard start and finish times are:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Earliest start time</b>	<b>Latest finish time</b>	<b>Latest departure time from theatre</b>
A child aged younger than 13 years	10:00 am	10:00 pm	10:00 pm
A child aged 13 years and over	10:00 am	10:30 pm	10:30 pm

The latest finish time may be extended by 30 minutes on a maximum of 3 evenings in any one week at the discretion of the Local Authority (LA) this then means that finish times and theatre departure times could be:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Earliest start time</b>	<b>Latest finish time</b>	<b>Plus discretionary 30 minutes</b>	<b>Latest departure Time from theatre</b>
A child aged younger than 13 years	10:00 am	10:00 pm	10:30 pm	10:30 pm
A child aged 13 years and over	10:00 am	10:30 pm	11:00 pm	11:00 pm

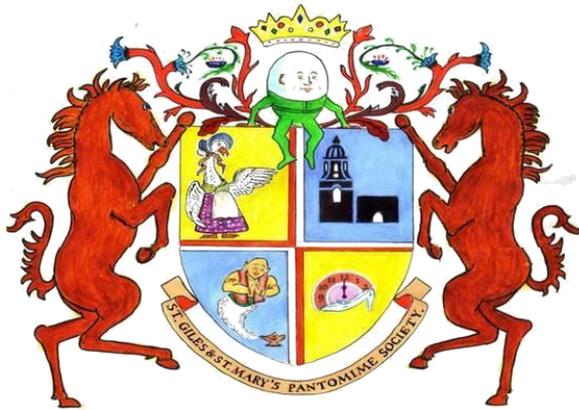
***Information/records to be retained***

A record must be kept by the Body of Persons applicant on each child's performance, for 6 months after the last performance of each production, for inspection if called upon.

**Queries**

Any queries should be addressed to the Child Employment Officer for Wakefield MDC on telephone number 01924 307413

# Appendix VII: Health & Safety Policy



Updated Summer 2015