

WORCESTER OPERATIC AND DRAMATIC SOCIETY  
HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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**Change Record**

Issue number	Date of issue	Description of changes
1.0	November 2013	First issue following review of all documents

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Overview**

The Group known as Worcester Operatic and Dramatic Society (WODS) is a registered charity. The applicability of health and safety legislation does not necessarily cover charities or the voluntary sector as it concentrates on the roles of employer, employee and self-employed and only with these definitions do responsibilities ensue under criminal legislation. WODS does not have staff employed under formal permanent employment contracts and all members, including the executive committee, give their time on a voluntary basis.

Nonetheless the executive committee (the Trustees) as those responsible for the actions of the Group have a duty of care to those who use the Society's premises and partake in its activities. The Executive Committee has therefore decided to implement best practice in terms of health and safety and is fully committed to the Health and Safety and Welfare of all members and those affected by the undertakings of the Group's activities. This commitment extends beyond health and safety legislation and embraces moral and ethical issues of caring for the members and others as friends and colleagues.

This document (i) outlines the Society's Health and Safety Policy, (ii) explains the roles and responsibilities of various members in relation to health and safety and (iii) outlines the key documentation necessary to implement and monitor compliance with this policy.

### **1.2. The Basis of this Policy**

WODS is seeking to provide a concise plan to cover the key health and safety issues relating to attendance at both its Rehearsal Premises, St. Mary's Hall, Northfield Street, Worcester and the production of shows which are normally at the Swan Theatre, Worcester or in the Rehearsal Premises. The plan aims to identify Health and Safety issues and detail action to control and manage them.

## **2. General Policy Statement**

The Trustees of the Worcester Operatic and Dramatic Society are committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of our members, so far as is reasonably practicable. We are fully committed to protecting others who may be affected by our activities.

Our members will be given such information, instruction and training as is necessary to enable the safe performance of their activities with us. It is the duty of the committee to ensure that our facilities and systems of work are designed to take account of health and safety and are properly supervised at all times. The specific responsibilities and duties are detailed in the Society's Health and Safety Manual.

Arrangements are set out in the Society's Health and Safety Manual to ensure that members are able to bring to our attention matters of health and safety that need to be addressed.

Competent persons are appointed to assist us in meeting our statutory duties as described in Section 3 of this document, including where appropriate external specialists and contractors.

Every member, visitor and affected member of the public is encouraged to co-operate with us to ensure that our statutory duties are met. All members are reminded of their obligations to take care of their own health and safety, and for the safety of other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

This policy will be audited at appropriate intervals to ensure that our health and safety objectives are achieved and maintained. It will also be reviewed whenever there are changes to health and safety law or organisational changes which affect health and safety.

Our main aims are to:

- provide safe working conditions and a healthy environment for our members
- ensure that equipment and systems of work used by our members are safe
- provide training and information to our members as necessary
- ensure that the public at large are protected from danger or risks to health as a result of our activities.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis in the light of changes to H&S legislation and any issues arising from H&S inspections or from the concerns of members of WODS.

Signed:

Name:

Position:

Date:

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

This section outlines the key roles in WODS relating to Health and Safety and their responsibilities.

#### 3.1. WODS Executive Committee

The Committee is responsible for the content of this Policy document and for ensuring that it is being implemented throughout the Society. To this end, the Committee appoints a Health and Safety Officer and reviews Health and Safety issues at each of its monthly meetings.

#### 3.2. WODS Health and Safety Officer

The WODS Health and Safety Officer is appointed by the Executive Committee to implement this Policy and to provide regular reports back to the Committee. The main responsibilities are:

- Ensuring that all H&S documents as described in Section 4 are kept up to date
- Carrying out regular inspections of the premises to ensure compliance with this H&S policy
- Liaising with others who have specific H&S roles (such as Show Directors, Stage Managers, Event Organisers) to ensure that they are fully aware of their responsibilities
- Produce monthly reports to the Executive Committee

#### 3.3. Show Director

The Show Director is appointed by the Executive Committee for each production. As necessary, the Health and Safety Officer or his/ her nominated representatives will instruct the Director in their responsibilities. Records of such instructions are kept by the Health and Safety Officer or his/ her nominated representative.

The main H&S responsibilities of the Director are:

- ensuring that props and other stage furniture used during rehearsals are safe for use
- instructing cast members on the appropriate clothing and footwear for rehearsals
- ensuring that any high risk activities such as falls, fights are rehearsed in a safe manner, consulting with the H&S Officer or the Stage Manager if necessary

#### 3.4. Stage Manager

The Stage Manager is appointed by the Executive Committee for each show. The Stage Manager will attend rehearsals and liaise with the Show Director to ensure that the production at the chosen theatre venue takes place in a safe manner. If necessary, the Stage Manager will ask for advice from the WODS H&S Officer.

The main H&S responsibilities of the Stage Manager are:

- Carrying out a risk assessment of the presentation of the show at the selected theatre venue covering the get-in, the running of the show performances and the get-out.

- Liaising with the technical staff at the venue to discuss and agree the risk assessment
- Ensuring that the risk mitigation measures described in the Risk Assessment are carried out during the show
- Ensuring that all cast members are briefed on the fire prevention and evacuation procedures at the venue. This is normally done immediately prior to the Technical Rehearsal at the venue
- Reporting any incidents or accidents during the show to the WODS H&S Officer and the theatre management

### 3.5. Production Secretary

For each show, the Executive Committee will appoint a Production Secretary to assist the Show Director.

The main H&S responsibilities of the Production Secretary are:

- To ensure that all cast members attending rehearsals sign in/out on the register
- To ensure that all cast members receive communications and instructions from the Show Director

### 3.6. Activity Organisers

The WODS Hall is used from time to time for activities other than show rehearsals. This includes the performance of shows, the renting of the hall for meetings, work by contractors, set/props construction, maintenance of the Hall etc. In each case, a member of WODS or a competent person who is leading the activity, should be present to act as the Activity Organiser. This person shall have the following H&S responsibilities:

- Informing those present at the activity or event of the evacuation procedure, the location of all fire exits and the assembly point.
- Ensuring that all fire exits and escape routes are open and unobstructed throughout the event
- Ensuring that all contractors are briefed, supervised and have a safe work method statement
- Ensuring that at the end of the activity, the hall is left in a safe condition
- Reporting any accident, however trivial, in the accident book kept in the kitchen.

A set of guidance notes is available for those using the hall.

## 4. Documentation

In order to monitor compliance with this policy a number of documents are used as follows. The current copies of these documents are kept in the H&S folder in the Kitchen area.

### 4.1. WODS H&S Policy

This document is the WODS Policy document. It is reviewed regularly by the H&S Officer and any changes will be approved by the Executive Committee. The current version of the Policy is published on the WODS web-site and a paper copy displayed in the main Hall.

#### 4.2. H&S Handbook

The H&S Handbook outlines the procedures and processes by which this H&S policy is implemented. It is reviewed regularly by the H&S Officer and any changes are approved by the Executive Committee.

#### 4.3. Risk assessments

The H&S Officer will produce a risk assessment covering the WODS Hall Building and all the activities normally carried out in the Building. The risk assessment will identify the generic risks, quantify the magnitude of the risk and record the measures to be taken to mitigate the risk. The Risk assessment document will be reviewed regularly by the H&S Officer and any changes are approved by the Executive Committee.

#### 4.4. Accident Book

The Group uses the Health and Safety Executive's Accident Book B1 510 to record all incidents that happen during events that are organised by the Group and in which members of the Group participate. Incidents are recorded which involve a member of WODS, a sub-contractor or members of the public at any event organised by WODS.

In those cases where the accident is considered to be reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995), then the Health and Safety Officer or his/her nominated representative completes the HSE Form: F2508 "Reporting of an injury or dangerous occurrence".

#### 4.5. H&S Records

The following activities will be carried out on a regular basis and the records kept.

- Portable Appliance Testing (every 1 or 2 years depending on the risk associated with the appliance)
- Gas boiler maintenance
- Fire Alarm system – there are weekly, monthly and annual checks of the operation of the fire alarm system
- Fire extinguisher testing
- Emergency lighting testing
- H&S walk-round audits carried out by the H&S Officer and the Secretary
- Fire evacuation drills