Dartford Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society

President: The Worshipful The Mayor of Dartford

Constitution, Rules & Objects

1. Name

The Society shall be called The Dartford Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society (hereinafter called "the Society").

2. Objects

The objects of the Society shall be to promote the advancement and improvement of general education in relation to all aspects of the Art of Theatre and Drama and the development of public appreciation of such art.

3. **Powers**

In furtherance of this Object but not otherwise, the Society through its management committee shall have the following powers:

3.1. Management of the Society
The objects and management of the Society shall be vested in an Executive Committee which shall comprise of:

3.2. Officers
The Officers of the Society shall be: a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer, an Assistant Secretary and an Assistant Treasurer, who shall be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting (hereinafter called the A.G.M.). Retiring Officers shall be eligible for re-election.

3.3. Executive Committee Members
The Executive Committee shall consist of the above Officers and six (6) other members of the Society, each of whom shall serve a period of two years. Three of these six retire annually in rotation, but may be eligible for re-election at the A.G.M.

3.3.1. The Executive Committee shall have the power to co-opt persons to fulfil a specific purpose.

3.3.2. The Executive Committee shall have the power to appoint a House Manager, Box Office Manager, Publicity Officer, Patrons' Secretary and a Membership Secretary annually, and to make an appointment to fill any office that becomes vacant during the year.

3.4. The Executive Committee shall have the power to promote plays, drama, comedies, operas, operettas and other dramatic and operatic works of entertainment and educational value.

3.4.1. The Executive Committee shall have the power to purchase, acquire and obtain interests in the copyright of or the right to perform or show any such dramatic or operatic works.

3.4.2. The Executive Committee shall have the power to purchase, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property for the use of the Society.

3.4.3. Subject to such consents as may be required by law, to sell, mortgage, let or exchange any property or funds belonging to the Society.

3.4.4. To raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscriptions, donations and otherwise; provided that the Society shall not undertake any permanent trading activities in raising funds.

3.4.5. To do all such other things as shall further the objects of the Society.

3.5. As appropriate from time to time, to appoint Sub-Committees to deal with specific matters, provided that all acts and proceedings of any such Sub-Committee shall be reported back to the Executive Committee regularly and as soon as possible. The Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall be ex-officio members of any Sub-Committee.

3.6. To meet as and when required; at all committee meetings, five (5) shall be a quorum. A quorum for any Sub-Committee shall be determined when such a Sub-Committee is appointed.

3.7. All contracts, orders and requisitions on behalf of the Society may be made by members with the written permission of an Officer of the Society. Any Member, whether in office or not, shall be personally responsible for any commitment made without such permission.

3.7.1. All contracts shall be signed by the Secretary.

4. Property of the Society and Duties of Trustees

4.1. The property of the Society shall be held as follows:

4.1.1. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer of the Society shall hold cash or monies deposited with any Bank, Building Society or National Savings Bank.

4.1.2. All other investments including freehold and leasehold property of the Society shall be held by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer for the use and benefit of the Society.

4.2. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall take such steps as may be necessary to vest in the Official Custodian for Charities all freehold and leasehold lands and other property at any time belonging to the Charity.

4.3. The Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer shall have the power to sell, lease, mortgage or pledge any of the Society's leasehold or freehold property for the purposes of raising or borrowing money for the benefit of the Society, subject to any statutory requirements imposed as a result of the Society being a Charity.

5. Finance

5.1. The financial year of the Society will be from 1st June to 31st of May.

5.2. The Treasurer shall present a statement of account and an audited balance sheet at the AGM. The accounts shall be audited by an Independent Examiner as required by the Charities Commission. The Independent Examiner shall be appointed annually at the AGM.

5.3. All cheques shall be signed by any two officers of the Executive Committee, one of whom must be the Treasurer.

5.4. Remuneration

5.4.1. Members of the Society other than provided for in 5.4.2 below shall not receive payment, either direct or indirect, for their services other than legitimate expenses incurred in its work.

5.4.2. Notwithstanding the prohibition in 5.4.1 the Executive Committee is empowered to appoint and remunerate a person on such terms as the Executive Committee shall think fit including salary to undertake the day-to-day care of the Society's premises but that whilst the employee may be a Member of the Society the employee must not be a Member of the Executive Committee.

5.5. If, for any reason, the Society shall find itself insolvent, an equal call shall be made upon all members to raise a sum sufficient to liquidate outstanding liabilities.

6. Membership

6.1. Membership of the Society shall be open to all those having sympathy with the objects of the Society and desiring actively to further them.

6.2. Prospective members (with the exception of Patron Members) shall complete an application form and applicants for active membership wishing to take part in Orchard Theatre productions shall satisfy the Executive Committee as to their acting, singing, dancing ability, by audition, which shall be arranged by the Executive Committee.

6.3. Applications for all types of membership shall be approved by the Executive Committee which reserves the right to refuse any application or re-application for membership.

6.4. Membership shall be divided into the following categories:

- Junior Membership - 16 to 17 (in Academic Year 12 or 13 when joining)
- Student Membership – Full Time education
- Full Membership - 18 to 64
- Senior Membership - from 65
- Patron Membership

6.4.1. Patron Members wishing to transfer to full membership would be required to complete a new member’s audition as in Rule 6.2 Junior, Student, Full and Senior Members may take part in productions at the Orchard Theatre. Only Junior, Student, Full, Senior and Patron Members may take part in productions at Heathfields Hall or in any entertainment group connected with the Society.

6.4.2. All members once elected may attend rehearsals.

6.4.3. Prospective applicants may attend but not participate in rehearsals.

6.4.4. Only Members and Patron Members are allowed as spectators at auditions.

6.5. The Executive Committee shall have full power to expel from the Society any Member whose membership is, in their opinion, prejudicial to the interests of the Society, at such notice and upon such terms as the Executive Committee may decide, subject to the Member first being invited to appear before the Executive Committee, and, if so desiring, to address a General Meeting. Whilst the matter is under investigation by the Executive Committee the Member will be suspended from the Society.

6.6. Honorary Membership

6.6.1. The President of the Society shall be appointed annually by the Executive Committee.

6.6.2. Honorary Life Membership shall be the highest honour within the gift of the Society and shall be awarded only in respect of outstanding service to the Society. Such an award, which may be to a person outside the Membership of the Society, shall be approved at an AGM, upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee.

6.6.3. The Executive Committee may recommend the award of Honorary Patron member for special services to the Society. This award to be proposed at an AGM for approval by the membership. Honorary Patrons will not be subject to Rule 5.4.1

6.6.4. Upon the recommendation of the Executive Committee, a person or persons outside the Society Membership, who have clearly indicated their support of the Society and its aims and who are willing to allow their name to be used to indicate this support, may be elected to the honorary office of Vice President(s).

7. Subscriptions

7.1. All categories of Member shall pay such annual subscriptions as shall be determined for each category at the AGM. All shall be due at 1st June in each year (or at the date of election, in the case of new members), and shall be paid by 30th June. Patron Members should observe the same due payment dates.

7.1.1. New Members have the option to pay their initial Subscription Fee as follows: 25% of the fee payable prior to the main show auditions, followed by three equal monthly payments.

7.2. The Executive Committee shall have the power by ordinary resolution to suspend any Member whose subscription remains unpaid after 30th June in any year from exercising all or any of the privileges of membership until their membership fees are paid.

7.2.1. Where the membership subscriptions of any Member of any class remain unpaid after 30th September in any year then their membership will be deemed to have lapsed. They will then be required to re-audition as in Rule 6.2

7.3. Only fully paid up members may be entitled to vote at an AGM.

7.4. New members subscriptions paid after 1st April, shall be valid for the following financial year.

7.4.1. Persons joining the Society at the October/November new member's intake in any year will only be required to pay 50% of their membership subscription for that year only.

7.5. If a Member is in full-time education at an Institute of Further or Higher Education a reduced subscription, to be determined by the Executive Committee and approved by an AGM, and reviewed from time to time, would be available, on production of the Member's student card.

7.6. If a transfer of membership from one class to another (e.g. Junior to Full) is requested, there shall be no increase in fee for the current financial year. Should a Patron wish to transfer to Full membership the balance of the current fee shall be paid, unless the amount of the donation should be equal to or greater than the current Full membership fee.

7.7. A show fee to be agreed at the AGM will be payable by each Member appearing on stage in an Orchard production. All members wishing to take part in the production must submit an audition form. The show fee shall accompany the audition form. Any Member not paying a show fee will be unable to audition or take part in the production. Should a Member wish to withdraw from the production they must write to the Executive Committee within 6 weeks of the first rehearsal after auditions, requesting a refund of their show fee. The Treasurer will refund the money at the earliest opportunity. Any Member withdrawing from the production after these 6 weeks will forfeit their show fee. Persons invited into a production will be asked to pay a show fee but will not be subject to any other conditions of this Rule.

8. Productions

8.1. Show selection for productions at The Orchard Theatre shall be carried out by a Sub-Committee of 4 members, elected at an AGM, each Member to serve for a period of two years. Two shall retire each year in rotation, but being eligible may stand for re-election. Their duties are to be responsible for choosing shows for the Autumn and Spring productions. The selections shall be presented to the Executive Committee for its approval no later than 1st July for the following Spring and no later than the 1st of January for the following Autumn production. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that these deadlines are met.

8.2. Each Society production shall be managed by the Executive Committee, who shall be responsible for the selection and appointment of the Director, Musical Director, Choreographer (if required), Stage Director and Wardrobe Mistress for each production, with due consideration of Members' suggestions.

8.2.1. Proposals for productions at Heathfields Hall shall be submitted to the Executive Committee. All proposals should be made in writing and accompanied by a completed application form. No production shall take place without prior permission of the Executive Committee.

8.3. All parts in any Orchard Theatre production shall be allocated by a Casting Committee of five consisting of the Director, Musical Director, Choreographer (if appointed) and two/three members appointed by the Executive Committee. These Members who shall not be eligible to take a principal part in the production for which the auditions are being held, should, if possible, possess theatrical knowledge and should be prepared to advise as to eligibility and personality of those auditioning. The Director shall have a casting vote.

8.4. All Members wishing to take part in the particular Orchard Theatre production must satisfy the Casting Committee that their subscriptions are fully paid to date and, by audition, of their suitable qualifications for a part. They should also be prepared to ensure their commitment to regular and punctual attendance throughout the rehearsal period.

8.5. The allocation of parts shall be approved by the Executive Committee and announced as soon as possible after the auditions by the Executive Committee. The Casting Committee shall have the power to limit the number of persons appearing on the stage in an Orchard Theatre production. The Casting Committee may alter the cast at any time, if it is considered necessary for the good of the production, subject to approval of the Executive Committee.

8.5.1. Any Member once cast in an Orchard production will serve a six weeks probationary period for suitability for the role. If for any reason any Member is deemed to be unsuitable for the role in which they have been cast, the Casting Committee will make suitable recommendations to be approved by the Executive Committee.

8.6. In the event of there being a part or parts for which no suitable Society Member can be cast, the Executive Committee shall have power, subject to the advice of the Casting Committee, to appoint a person or persons outside the Society to take part.

8.7. All moneys due from Members in connection with the production shall be accounted for and paid to the Treasurer a minimum of 7 days prior to the opening night.

9. Proceedings and Conduct of General Meetings

9.1. The AGM shall be held within one calendar month of the approval of the accounts by the Independent Examiner and at least seven days clear notice shall be given to each Member. The Agenda, Annual Reports, Accounts, Nominations and details of any proposed alterations to Rules shall be sent with the Notice.

9.2. Nominations for Officers and all Committee(s) must be served on the Secretary not later than 1st June. Each nomination must be signed by the Proposer and Seconder, and indicate the nominee's consent. In the case of an Officer or Member of a Committee retiring and being eligible for re-election, such persons shall be deemed to have been duly nominated, unless they specifically indicate to the contrary. A notice shall be sent to every Member of the Society not later than 1st May, calling attention to this Rule and indicating which

Officers and Members of the Committee(s) retire and whether or not retiring Officers and Members are seeking re-election.

9.3. The Agenda for an AGM shall comprise:
- Minutes of the previous AGM and any other General Meeting(s) that may have been held.
- Treasurer's Report
- Executive Committee's Report
- Schedule of other items of business to be considered
- Election of President and Officers
- Election of Executive Committee and any necessary Sub-Committee members
- Election of Auditors

9.4. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called
(i) If the Executive Committee consider it necessary
(ii) On receipt by the Secretary of a requisition signed by no less than twelve members of the Society. The requisition shall state the business for which the meeting is required and the meeting shall be held within twenty-eight days of the receipt of the requisition. Notice shall be given as for an AGM, and no matter other than that for which the meeting is called shall be discussed.

9.5. No business shall be transacted at any Annual or Extraordinary General Meeting unless a quorum of Members is present at the time when the meeting proceeds to business. 30 Members of the Society present in person and entitled to vote shall be a quorum. The signing of an attendance book shall be evidence of numbers present at any such meeting.

9.6. Every Member shall have one vote. No Member may vote by proxy.

9.7. Resolutions shall be carried or lost by a simple majority on a show of hands. In the case of equality of votes, the Chairman shall have a casting vote.

9.8. Officers and Executive or Sub-Committee members may be elected or re-elected by a simple majority on a show of hands. In the event of there being more candidates for any position than there are vacancies, the Chairman shall cause a ballot to be held; 2 scrutineers shall be appointed to conduct the ballot and to declare the result to the AGM.

10. Youth Theatre Group

10.1. Dartford Amateur Operatic & Dramatic Society has its own youth theatre group. The organisation will be known as DAODS Youth Theatre Group (DYTG) and shall be affiliated to the adult Society.

10.2. The group shall have its own rules (as Appendix 1) but will adhere to the Society rules if an issue arises that is not encompassed within the DYTG rules.

11. Rules & Alteration

11.1. Alterations to these Rules shall receive the assent of two-thirds of the Members present and voting at an AGM or an Extraordinary General Meeting. A resolution for the alteration of the Rules must be received by the Secretary of the Society in writing not later than 15th May or at least twenty-one days before the Meeting at which the resolution is to be brought forward. Provided that no alteration to Rule 2 (Objects) or Rule 12 (Dissolution) or this Rule shall take effect until the approval in writing of the Charity Commission has been received, and no alteration shall be made which would cause the Society to cease to be a Charity at law.

11.2. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the interpretation of these Rules and its decisions on any question of interpretation or upon any matters affecting the Society and not covered by these Rules, shall be subject to confirmation by the majority of Members present at the next AGM after which it shall be final and binding upon all Members.

11.3. Every Member shall be entitled to a copy of these Rules.

12. **Dissolution**

The Society may be dissolved by a resolution passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at an Extraordinary General Meeting convened for the purpose, of which twenty-one days' notice in writing shall have been given to the Members. Such resolution may give instructions for the disposal of any assets held by or in the name of the Society, provided that, if any property remains after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, such property shall not be paid to or distributed among the Members of the Society, but shall be given or transferred to such other charitable institution or institutions having similar to some or all of the objects of the Society as the Society may determine and if and in so far as effect cannot be given to this provision, then to some other charitable purpose.