



Constitution

Different Voices. One Song.

12th May 2026

1. Name

The name of the group shall be Different Voices. One Song.

2. Legal status

Different Voices. One Song. is a not-for-profit unincorporated association.

The group is not established for private profit. Any income, grants, donations or assets must be used only to further the aims of the group.

The group is not a company, charity or incorporated body unless and until the committee formally agrees to change its legal structure.

3. Aims and objectives

The aims of the group are:

- To bring people together through community singing, creativity and shared purpose.
- To support mental health awareness, inclusion, confidence and connection.
- To provide a safe, welcoming and accessible environment for neurodivergent people and others affected by mental health challenges.
- To rehearse, record and release one community song around World Mental Health Day 2026.
- To celebrate neurodivergent minds and amplify different lived experiences through music and storytelling.
- To benefit residents of Sandbach and the wider Cheshire community.

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4. Powers

To achieve its aims, the group may:

- Organise rehearsals, workshops, recording sessions, meetings, events and community activities.
- Recruit participants, volunteers, creative contributors and project partners.
- Apply for grants, donations, sponsorship and other funding.
- Open and operate a bank account in the name of the group.
- Buy or hire services, materials, equipment, insurance, venue space and professional support needed for the project.
- Work with musicians, recording studios, venues, community groups, charities, councils, media and other partners.
- Promote the project through PR, social media, local media and community channels.
- Collect participant information, consent forms, attendance records and feedback for safe delivery, evaluation and reporting.
- Take any lawful action needed to further the aims of the group.

5. Membership and participation

For simplicity and good governance, the formal members of the association shall be the committee members.

Singers, musicians, creative contributors and other people involved in the choir or campaign shall be registered participants rather than formal members of the association.

Participation in the project shall be open to people aged 16+ who support the aims of the group and who complete the required registration and consent process.

Participants aged 16 or 17 must provide their own consent and must also have consent from a parent or carer before taking part.

The project will aim to be inclusive, accessible and welcoming to people of different voices, backgrounds, confidence levels and lived experiences.

The group may refuse or withdraw participation where a person's behaviour places others at risk, breaches the group's values, or undermines the safe running of the project.

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6. Equal opportunities and inclusion

The group will not discriminate on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, neurodiversity, mental health experience, socio-economic background or any other protected or personal characteristic. The group will make reasonable efforts to remove barriers to participation, including considering access needs, communication preferences, sensory needs and confidence levels.

7. Committee

The group shall be managed by a volunteer committee of at least three people.

The first committee shall be:

Role	Name
Chair / Project Lead	Sheila Manzano
Treasurer	Diane Noble
Secretary / Participation Lead	Laura Crane
Safeguarding / Wellbeing Lead	Sheila Manzano
Music Lead	To be advised

The committee shall be responsible for project delivery, finance, insurance, risk management, safeguarding/wellbeing processes, reporting and ensuring that any grant funding is used properly. The Safeguarding / Wellbeing Lead may be the same person as the Chair / Project Lead, provided this remains manageable and the committee keeps safeguarding/wellbeing matters under review. If the project expands, or if the number of under-18 participants increases, the committee should consider appointing a separate Safeguarding Lead.





8. Committee meetings and decisions

The committee shall meet as needed to manage the project. Meetings may take place in person, online, by phone, or by written agreement/email where appropriate. A minimum of two committee members shall be required for formal decisions.

Decisions shall be made by agreement where possible. Where a vote is needed, decisions shall be made by a simple majority of those present and eligible to vote. A written record shall be kept of key decisions, particularly decisions relating to funding, spending, safeguarding, insurance, venues, suppliers, recording rights and conflicts of interest. Where a decision relates to safeguarding, finance, payment to an individual, or a conflict of interest, the committee should make reasonable efforts to involve all three named officers: Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

9. Finance

All funds received by the group shall be used only to further the aims of Different Voices. One Song.

The group shall open a bank account in the name of Different Voices. One Song.

The Treasurer shall keep clear records of income and expenditure. Receipts, invoices and payment records shall be kept for all spending. The authorised bank signatories/account approvers shall be:

Bank role	Name
Signatory / approver 1	Sheila Manzano
Signatory / approver 2	Diane Davis

Two bank signatories/account approvers shall be sufficient, provided that payments require approval by both where the bank allows this. No committee member shall be paid for their committee role or for professional services supplied to the project. No committee member, participant or volunteer shall receive private profit from the group’s funds.

Reasonable project expenses may be reimbursed where they are agreed in advance, necessary for the project, and supported by receipts. Any grant funding received shall be used only for the purpose for which it was awarded. A simple income and expenditure statement shall be prepared at the end of the project and provided to funders where required.





10. Grants, donations and sponsorship

The group may apply for grants, donations or sponsorship to support the project. Funding must only be accepted where it is consistent with the aims and values of the group. Any restricted funding must be used only for the purpose agreed with the funder. The group shall provide monitoring, feedback, receipts, evidence of spend and outcome reporting where required by funders.

11. Expenses and payments

Committee members and volunteers may claim reasonable out-of-pocket expenses, provided these are agreed in advance where possible and supported by receipts.

No member of the committee will be paid by the project for their committee role or for professional services.

Any payment to an external individual, freelancer, supplier, studio, musician, venue or contractor must be agreed by the committee and recorded. Where any person connected to the project could benefit from a payment, the conflict-of-interest process must be followed.

12. Conflicts of interest

All committee members, volunteers and project leads must act in the best interests of Different Voices. One Song and must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest as soon as they become aware of it. A conflict of interest may include, but is not limited to:

- A committee member being connected to a funding body.
- A committee member, family member, business or close associate being considered for paid work or reimbursement.
- A committee member having a role with a venue, supplier, sponsor, funder or partner organisation.
- A committee member being involved in a decision where they may receive personal, professional, financial, political or reputational benefit.
- Any situation where an outside person could reasonably think the committee member's judgement may be influenced.

Where a conflict of interest exists, the person concerned must declare it before the matter is discussed. The declaration must be recorded in the meeting notes or project records. The conflicted person must not take part in the decision-making process for that matter and may be asked to leave the discussion while the decision is made. They

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must not vote on the matter or influence other committee members. All decisions involving a conflict of interest must be made by the non-conflicted committee members, recorded clearly, and supported by receipts, quotes, written notes or other evidence where relevant.

Specific declaration: Laura Crane is a Sandbach Town Councillor and is involved in Different Voices. One Song. in a voluntary/community capacity. She will declare this connection in relation to any Sandbach Town Council grant application and will not take part in any Sandbach Town Council decision relating to the grant. She will also not use her position as a councillor to influence the outcome of the application.

13. Insurance and risk management

The group shall obtain appropriate insurance before rehearsals, recording sessions or public activities begin.

This may include public liability insurance, volunteer cover, equipment cover, personal accident cover, or other insurance as advised by the insurer.

The group shall complete basic risk assessments for rehearsals, venues, recording sessions and any associated activities.

Any accidents, incidents or near misses shall be recorded and reviewed by the committee.

14. Safeguarding and wellbeing

Different Voices. One Song. is a community music and mental health awareness project. It is not a clinical mental health service, counselling service or crisis support service.

The group will aim to create a safe, respectful and supportive environment. The group may provide signposting to appropriate services but will not provide medical advice, therapy, diagnosis or crisis intervention.

Because the project is open to people aged 16+, the group will treat all participants aged under 18 as children/young people for safeguarding purposes. Participants aged 16 or 17 must have parent/carer consent to participate.

The group will keep emergency contact details for all participants.

The group will consider safeguarding needs, wellbeing risks, access needs, emotional safety and appropriate boundaries throughout the project. A separate safeguarding and wellbeing policy for participants aged 16+ shall be prepared and adopted by the committee.

If safeguarding concerns arise, they will be recorded and handled appropriately, including seeking advice or making a referral where necessary.



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15. Participant registration and consent

All participants shall be asked to complete a registration form before taking part.

The registration form may include:

- Name and contact details.
- Date of birth.
- Emergency contact.
- Parent/carer consent for participants aged 16 or 17.
- Local connection.
- Access needs.
- Relevant health or safety information.
- Consent preferences.
- Photography/video consent.
- Audio recording and song-release consent.
- Agreement to the project's participation guidelines.

Participants must provide separate consent for their voice, image, story, quote or creative contribution to be used publicly.

Participants aged 16 or 17 must have parent/carer consent for participation, photography/video, recording, publicity and any media/storytelling activity.

16. Data protection

The group shall collect and use personal information only where needed for project administration, safety, consent, communication, reporting and evaluation.

Personal information shall be kept securely and accessed only by those who need it for project purposes.

The Chair / Project Lead shall hold participant documents and project records.

Documents shall be stored securely using Microsoft OneDrive.

Personal information shall not be shared outside the project unless necessary for safety, safeguarding, insurance, legal, funder-reporting or consented publicity purposes.

Photos, video, audio, quotes and stories shall only be used with appropriate consent.

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17. Copyright, recording and release

The group may record and release a song as part of the project. At the time this constitution is adopted, the intention is that Different Voices, One Song, will own and/or control the final recording. Any change to ownership or control of the final recording must be approved by the committee and recorded as an amendment to this constitution or as a separate written agreement.

The committee shall take reasonable steps to ensure the correct permissions, licences and agreements are in place for the recording, distribution and release of the song. Participants contributing to the recording shall be asked to sign a consent/release form confirming how their voice or contribution may be used.

The project shall obtain written confirmation from any recording studio, producer, distributor or other creative partner confirming who owns and controls the final master recording, what rights are being granted, and whether any further fees, royalties or permissions apply.

18. Publicity and media

The group may promote the project through local media, social media, PR, community channels and partner networks. Participants shall not be required to share personal stories publicly, but they may choose to do so.

Any participant stories, photographs, videos, recordings or quotes used for publicity shall require consent.

For participants aged 16 or 17, parent/carer consent shall also be required for publicity, photography, video, media interviews, quotes, personal stories and use of their voice or image. The group will take care when sharing stories relating to neurodivergence, mental health or lived experience.

19. Behaviour and participation expectations

Participants, volunteers and committee members are expected to:

- Treat others with kindness, dignity and respect and avoid behaviour that is abusive, intimidating or disruptive.
- Support an inclusive and non-judgemental environment and respect confidentiality and personal boundaries.
- Follow reasonable safety instructions.
- Avoid behaviour that is abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or disruptive.

The committee may ask someone to leave a session or withdraw from the project if their behaviour creates risk or seriously undermines the group's aims.

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20. Changes to the constitution

This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority of the committee. Any change must be consistent with the not-for-profit aims of the group. Any changes shall be recorded in writing and kept with the group’s records. Where a proposed change affects funding conditions, safeguarding, recording ownership, or the use of grant money, the committee shall check whether funders, insurers or partners need to be informed.

21. Duration of the group

Different Voices. One Song. is intended to operate as a short-term project from planning and recruitment through to completion, release, reporting and evaluation after World Mental Health Day 2026. At the time this constitution is drafted and adopted, the project is expected to end by 31 December 2026, unless new opportunities arise from the release of the record that are not known at this time. The committee may agree to continue the group beyond 31 December 2026 if there is a clear community purpose, suitable governance, appropriate resources and a recorded committee decision to continue.

22. Dissolution

The group may be closed by agreement of the committee. If the group closes, any remaining funds or assets shall first be used to settle outstanding project costs. Any remaining restricted grant funding shall be returned to the funder where required by the grant conditions. Any other remaining funds or assets shall be transferred to a not-for-profit community, music, mental health, neurodiversity or wellbeing project with similar aims. No surplus funds or assets shall be distributed to committee members, participants or volunteers for personal benefit.

23. Adoption of constitution - Date adopted: 12th May 2026

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair / Project Lead	Sheila Manzano		12 th May 2026
Treasurer	Diane Noble		12 th May 2026
Secretary	Laura Crane		12 th May 2026

