



Steel Valley Beacon Arts

Company No: 12845448
Charity No: 1192514



Hardship Policy

The **Mission** of Steel Valley Beacon Arts is to offer the opportunity to anyone in our area to develop their performing arts skills in a safe inclusive environment in order to create quality theatre productions for our community.

The **Vision** of Steel Valley Beacon Arts is to be an excellent example of community theatre; working together, building individual and group confidence and self-esteem to provide quality entertainment in the community.

The purpose and scope of this policy statement

The purpose of this policy statement is to set out the overarching principles that guide our approach to supporting members experiencing hardship to continue their participation in the organisation's events and activities.

We recognise that members, and their families, can experience financial hardship from time-to-time and need additional assistance and flexibility.

The policy applies to all members, and their families, of Steel Valley Beacon Arts.

We believe that

- participation in performing arts allows everyone to develop their creative passions, helping people to communicate effectively with others with confidence.
- performing arts are all about self-expression, exploring alternative options and embracing individuality
- everyone in our community should be able to access our services and their financial circumstances should not be a barrier to their participation

Hardship

We consider hardship as those members who are willing to meeting their membership obligations, but do not have the financial capacity to do so. There are two kinds of hardship: short- and long-term hardship.

Short-term hardship is where a member, or their family, are experiencing temporary financial difficulty and are having trouble paying their monthly membership fees.

Long-term hardship is where a member, or their family, are experiencing long-term financial difficulty and are having trouble paying their monthly membership fees.

We know that there are a number of reasons why a member, or their family may be finding it difficult to pay their membership fees. These may include but not limited to:

- loss of or change in income
- serious illness, disability or death in the family
- separation, divorce or other family crisis, or
- other personal reasons.

Eligibility

All members, or their families, are eligible to apply for a reduction in or waiver of their membership fees.

Hardship support is only provided with respect to the monthly membership fees. Members, or their families, cannot apply for hardship support with respect to the annual membership charge.

Making an application

Applications for a reduction in or waiver to monthly membership fees must be made to the Artistic Director, either upon application to become a member of Steel Valley Beacon Arts or as soon as a member, or their families, financial circumstances change.

The Artistic Director has the delegated authority from the Board of Trustees to agree arrangements with members, or their families, on the organisation's behalf.

The Artistic Director will share details of the arrangement with the Treasurer and / or Finance Officer for accounting purposes. The Treasurer / Finance Officer will confirm by email the length and duration of the hardship arrangements to the member, or their family.

We understand that it can be difficult to discuss your financial circumstances, but your application will remain confidential.

If you are unhappy with the decision made on a hardship application by the Artistic Director, you can make an appeal to Board of Trustees through our **raising a concern procedure**.

Contact details

Artistic Director

Name: **Amanda Aitken**
Phone/email: 07966 054959 / manyja@hotmail.com

Treasurer

Name: **Barbara Caswell**
Phone/email: caswbrb@sky.com

We are committed to reviewing our policy and good practice annually.

This policy was last reviewed on 16th September 2020

Signed: *Barbara Caswell*

Date: 16th September 2020