

Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of the Bournemouth Symphony Chorus 2021-2022 season

This time last year the assumption was that within a few months our operations would return to normal. We were somewhat optimistic in that view, with a new lockdown just after Christmas 2021 until the Spring, with some restrictions continuing up until May 2022.

The new season began positively though with detailed arrangements for a return to in-person rehearsals for both BSC and BSYC. Full Risk Assessments and elaborate precautions with masks, social distancing, timed entrances for each voice part meant that increasing numbers of the BSC and BSYC felt confident enough to return to rehearsing together and the Zoom element was discontinued.

The continued support of Lighthouse and their Covid-safety arrangements made large scale rehearsing and concerts possible. Morale was boosted enormously by the concert given in Christchurch Priory in July 2021 after the 2021 AGM. In the Autumn, continuing uncertainty about choral concerts nationally, and with the BSO, made planning somewhat limited. Most rehearsals were still undertaken in masks and with social distancing in place. Members were also required to declare a negative Lateral Flow Test before attending rehearsals or concerts. The successful vaccination programme, especially the booster campaign last Autumn was another game changer. At that time Chorus feedback indicated a growing confidence and that singing with mouth and nose visors or masks would be acceptable.

Concerts resumed in September and these are covered elsewhere but at Christmas the BSC and BSO were on stage together for the first time in more than 18 months with Gavin Carr conducting the BSO, BSC and BSYC in the popular Family Carols concert. The BSO Carols was followed by further BSO concerts with David Hill in February and Kirill Karabits in May. Concert promotion was happening in an environment of rising infection rates, new variants, a fuel shortage through media induced panic buying. The Trustees were extremely grateful for the self-discipline and co-operation displayed by the BSC and BSYC. This was the most significant factor in the ability to continue rehearsing and performing. The Trustees especially thank Vice Chair John Martindale for his input and application to making all this possible and in creating a safe singing environment for our members.,

The 110th Anniversary concert in November was a challenge to programme. However, it was a great success with the BSC on excellent form. The programme included an item composed by Chris Dowie and referred to below, along with GC's energetic composition for the occasion – Music. Audience feedback was excellent and was led by the 100% standing ovation after the Armed Man. The Chorus morale was high and the anniversary of the Chorus' formation was honoured very effectively. Colin Howard wrote a fulsome review which was submitted to the Daily Echo. Tickets sales reflected the cautious environment but did exceed 600 which looked respectable in the stalls.

The invasion of Ukraine in the spring was particularly significant for the BSC given that our Chief Conductor is a Ukrainian national. This was and is a very anxious time for any Eastern European and Karabits has family members in Kyiv which was under horrendous bombardment. The BSO asked if the Chorus could be encouraged to attend the concert on 16th March as they were very keen for KK to feel supported by the BSO audiences. At least 75 BSC members and their partners attended that concert where Karabits received a prolonged standing ovation..

This year saw the retirement of a number of longstanding members who extended their tenure in order to participate in the Dream of Gerontius tribute concert to Sandrey Date who at the time of his death was the longest serving member of the BSC. Retiring members were thanked for their contribution to the BSC over many years. One of these members, Lisa Pierce who has assisted Derek Pilling the Membership Secretary with Auditions administration for many years, was elected an honorary member at the AGM. Recruitment continued during the season with around 20 new members joining the chorus. Some auditions were conducted by Zoom and where they could safely be managed, in person. This has been an exacting exercise for both Gavin Carr and Derek Pilling and their hard work in maintaining recruitment is acknowledged here.

Partnerships are important to the BSC and were considerably disrupted by the Coronavirus Pandemic restrictions. There are two important partners to our work. Firstly our relationship with our orchestra, the BSO. We were able to perform with members of the BSO orchestra during the first half of the season in our 110th Anniversary Concert on November 13th 2021 at Lighthouse. The actual founding of the Bournemouth Municipal Choir was on 14th November 1911 by Dan Godfrey. That celebratory concert allowed the BSC at last to pay tribute to Christopher Dowie, elected a

Vice President at last year's AGM, who was assistant Director & Accompanist for thirty years, retiring in 2020, by performing *Lux Beata Trinitas* from his major work *From Darkness to Light*.

The other most important partner for the Chorus is Lighthouse, Poole's Centre for the Arts. The BSC is Resident Chorus at Lighthouse, which provides both Chorus and Youth Chorus with our home and also great support for what we do. The foresight shown in investing in the building infrastructure several years ago meant that Lighthouse was one of the safest venues in which to perform during this pandemic. This, and the willingness and flexibility of Lighthouse staff meant that the BSC and BSYC were able to continue to work, rehearse and give concerts during the year and at a time when most choirs were not meeting. The Trustees record their gratitude to Elspeth McBain and her team for facilitating the operations of our orchestra and especially the Choruses during a very bleak time for the arts.

The Lighthouse/BSC BIG Sing was held with a Scandinavian focus featuring Grieg, Sibelius and ABBA. This event attracted over 185 guest registrations which was remarkable given the infection levels at that time. Rosemary & Nigel McDonald organised the logistics on the day with their usual and excellent efficiency. Lighthouse was delighted that we managed to promote the event during restrictions.

Partnership projects planned with the Leeds Festival Chorus and The Philharmonia Chorus were under review during the year and new dates set for both events, with the Leeds Festival Chorus joint concert in Winchester Cathedral planned and performed in late April 2022. A joint piano rehearsal had proved too difficult to arrange and so a reception at Winchester College for all performers allowed the singers to get to know one another. The concert was a great artistic success.

The RPO/Philharmonia Chorus Mahler 8 Partnership Project was rescheduled for October 2022.

Partnerships in Commissioning also developed during the year. The BSC joined three other choirs : The English Arts Chorale, Bath Minerva Choir, and a chamber choir based in Dallas, Texas to commission Paul Carr's Four New Seasons. Lighthouse joined the BSC as a co-commissioner of Winter. The BSC premiere accompanied by the BSO will be on July 16th prior to the AGM , with a recording planned for 30/31st July 2022. The recording and concert have both received generous sponsorship.

Fundraising

The BSYC Patrons generously continued to support the important work of the BSYC and small fundraising opportunities were taken i.e. donated tickets for BSO concerts in favour of the BSYC funds, on line Christmas Raffle in support of the BSYC Malcolm Burdett Fund. All fundraising for this specifically supports the BSYC. The Malcolm Burdett Fund was established in the memory of the Founder Accompanist of the BSYC and a very accomplished and popular musician. It provides very valuable support to the BSYC where it is used to help individual members, music purchase etc.

BSC Benefactors continued their support and a Benefactors Reception was held after the 110th Anniversary Concert. In April and May two separate individual sponsors promised or actually donated significant amounts of money in sponsorship for specific projects one for the Four New Seasons concert and recording in July 2022, and the other for a new commissioning project in 2023/4.

The Winchester Concert attracted over £5500 in sponsorship and advertising which reduced the overall loss significantly. This approach proved successful on this occasion with most of the soloists costs sponsored.. The Trustees record their thanks to those who helped to secure the funding and invite any members who think that they may have contacts or be able to help with this to come forward with any ideas..

Donations continued for the Sandrey Date Choral Scholarship Fund (SDCSF) which increased as the result of a planned tribute concert originally planned for June 2021 but rescheduled due to the restrictions on singing for September 2021. This concert featured a remarkably moving performance of the *Dream of Gerontius* and also *Echo* a work composed in memoriam for Sandrey by Richard Blackford. Most orchestral players were members of the BSO and who had given their services, as did Conductor and soloists. The concert was affected by rising infections and the fuel crisis raging at that time but still raised sums for both the SDCSF and, in recognition of the BSO players involvement, for the BSO Benevolent Fund.

Our Fundraiser for Lighthouse as part of our residency agreement was held in February where three young professionals joined the BSC, BSYC, members of the BSO and conducted by Gavin Carr, in Carmina Burana. The BIG Sing although on a smaller scale than normal, also raised worthwhile funds for Lighthouse

Working with Young People

The focus for our work during the year has been our very much valued BS Youth Chorus. An exciting plan to engage with school age members of the Armonico Academy based in the North East from was developed but deferred to next season for logistical reasons.

The second lock down caused a complete disruption to the operations and development of the two BSYC groups – the Children's Choir & Youth Chorus but they coped with this very well indeed, which is a tribute to their highly talented Director, Victoria Gray. She, assisted by Katherine Wills has continued to support and encourage young singers at a difficult time for many with all the disruption to their education due to the Pandemic and during a very busy concert programme. The support and encouragement of the BSC adult singers to younger colleagues was very much appreciated, especially the tenors and basses who have welcomed and supported the BSYC tenor and basses into their sections for at least three concerts as well as the Brahms earlier in the year.

The Trustees aim is that BSYC members will sing either with the BSC or other adult choirs and these opportunities allowed them to build on their experiences and understanding of the demands of performing as part of a large symphony chorus with an expectation of excellence in performance. The repertoire is larger scale than much children's choral repertoire and an exciting eye opener..

As already mentioned, the BSYC was very busy during the year, with high profile performances mostly with the BSO in November, December, February, two concerts in April and ending the BSO Series at Poole with Henry V with the BSC, BSO and Kirill Karabits. The younger members of the BSCC were invited to perform in English Touring Opera's La Boheme. As part of the preparation for the production a member of the ETO came to rehearse with those taking part and it was wonderful to see members responding enthusiastically to stage direction etc. Both BSCC members and their parents expressed their gratitude for the rare opportunity they had to perform in the opera.

With 3 performances so close together (in less than 5 weeks) it was challenging for BSYC members, but they have continued to work hard to learn the music and prepare for each concert. Numbers for the Henry V concert were particularly low in part due to it clashing with the start of the exams for our older BSYC members and illness amongst remaining members but the performance was excellent. The BSYC also gave a concert in Wimborne Minster in July rounding off their season with a an outstanding performance which drew many plaudits from those present.

BSYC membership has remained constant but needs to grow, and now that things are opening up it may be possible to focus on recruitment to both the Children's Choir and the Youth Choir. To this end Sara Kemp, BSYC Secretary has developed a Social Media Strategy in the Spring, which was supported by the Trustees.

The Board records its thanks to BSYC Secretary Sara Kemp for her efficiency in managing the administration of the two groups. The encouragement that she conveys to the members is essential in ensuring that both rehearsals, concert engagements and music score management run smoothly and that the necessary supervision and safeguarding is in place. The Board is also indebted to BSYC VP Margaret Burdett for the unstinting support she has given to Sara Kemp, to BSYC VP Elizabeth Nayler for her directing and accompanying work with the BSYC when needed, and at very short notice on occasions, and to all those who support our work with young singers.

The Board also acknowledges the contribution of others who support the work of the BSYC; Joan Ingarfield the BSC Treasurer and John Martindale BSC Vice-chair and BSYC Lead and other BSC members who help with chaperone duties and other duties in this very important work.

Governance

The Board of Trustees continued to adopt a flexible approach to Coronavirus Restrictions always adapting to current conditions. During the year the Delta and Omicron variants caused high levels of infections which affected rehearsal attendance and concert audiences. The Board also agreed to be flexible about attendance policies with a number of members still isolating to protect themselves or their families. The membership was consulted on two occasions

about the health & safety requirements for attendance firstly in September 2021 and latterly in March 2022. The Board used this information as part of the ongoing Risk Assessments and the feedback from members attending, was that they felt they were in a safe environment.

The Trustees met on six occasions both in person and on Zoom, with prevailing conditions dictating the approach and the Finance Sub Committee met three times, once in person and twice by Zoom.

The Board also agreed to make an Appointment of Benefactors Membership Secretary with Lisa Pierce appointed to this role to support the Fundraising & Sponsorship Manager with the administration of the Benefactors Scheme.

During the year the Trustees reviewed the Safeguarding Policy and also agreed that it would be an agenda item at each Board Meeting. The Trustees also agreed an Equalities Policy and reviewed the Code of Conduct to extend its scope.

Board of Trustees acknowledgements

The Board of Trustees record their appreciation and thanks to our Chorus Director Gavin Carr, for his energy and commitment to the Chorus in rehearsal and in our operations. He has more than risen to the ongoing challenges for members in rehearsals and promoting concerts, and is an excellent motivating force on and off the podium. His ability to develop the technique of all members is a huge benefit especially when rehearsals were limited. He has also generously given his services on a number of occasions during the year, in the Dream of Gerontius and Carmina Burana concerts, to help raise funds for the Chorus, BSO Benevolent Fund and Lighthouse. The Chorus fully appreciates his qualities and recognises that we are fortunate to have him as Chorus Director.

Gavin Carr is supported by Sam Hanson in his second season as Assistant Chorus Director & Accompanist. He is recognised by all as a huge asset to our music making and the Trustees appreciate his contribution and support for both BSC and BSYC when needed. The quality of accompaniment support in rehearsals makes a huge contribution to the rehearsal process. Sam is an excellent pianist and organist and together with Christopher Dowie had a starring role in Carmina Burana. His remarkable organ playing in The Armed Man was greatly applauded. The Chorus acknowledges and appreciates his input and musicianship.

The Board of Trustees has already noted the work undertaken by John Martindale and also records its thanks to John Pattison for his important and useful work on the website functionality. He also manages the contract with the Hosting Company and supports Trustees and Members in their development and use of the website.

The Board acknowledges the huge amount of work carried out to support individual officers by other members of the Chorus - Tim Arnold for his work on Grapevine, programme design and other publicity, Sue Braunton and Joyce Hatchard for their work on our social media accounts, and Wendy Southam for co-ordinating transport. Also acknowledged are those who help with BSYC registration and chaperones, stage layout and concert management, publicity and ad hoc fundraising. The Board of Trustees particularly appreciates the positive input, action and teamwork of the membership in the operations of the Chorus and during the challenges of the pandemic.

The Board also wishes to thank Section Leaders Nigel McDonald & Alison Chopping who retire at this AGM for their work in that position and for the very practical support that they have both offered members in the tenor and alto sections during that time. Alison will continue to support Trustees in her Music Administrator role.

Carolyn Date MBE
Secretary & Chorus Manager
Bournemouth Symphony Chorus
June 2022

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus
Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March 2022

2021

INCOME (including BSYC)			
£	£	£	£
19475 Subscriptions from members			19,991
4052 Performance Fund			4,100
6818 BSYC Patrons			3,220
3690 Income tax recoverable			3,518
17 Investment Income (Deposit A/cs interest)			2
	Gross	Expenses	
0 Concert Income/ (Expense)			
BSYC Wimborne	194	0.00	194
Priory	3,463	2,813	650
Dream of Gerontius (surplus to SDSF)	10,521	10,521	0
Armed Man	13,336	12,095	1,241
Carmina Burana	<u>2,672</u>	<u>3,609</u>	(937)
	<u>30,186</u>	<u>29,038</u>	
791 Recording & Broadcast Income/(Expenses)			
Radio3	0	0	0
Atmosphere	3,125	0	3,125
Pieta CDs	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>	10
	<u>3,135</u>	<u>0</u>	
613 Fund Raising			
Weddings & Funerals	0	0	0
Workshop Days Cakes & CD Sales	370	0	370
Bournemouth Lottery (BSYC)	440	0	440
Amazon Smile	<u>22</u>	<u>0</u>	22
	<u>832</u>	<u>0</u>	
0 Tours & Workshops			
Big Sing	3,344	2,544	800
<u>35,456</u>			<u>36,746</u>
EXPENDITURE (including BSYC)			
	Gross	Sales	
1109 Rehearsal accommodation			4,579
20644 Fees: Chorus Directors & Accompanists			22,188
(99) Purchase/Hire of music & stocks used	2,910	4,016	(1,106)
449 Printing, postage, stationery, phone, gratuities			530
0 Publicity & Recruitment			769
707 Subscriptions & Insurance			726
61 Miscellaneous Admin			262
2592 Website			<u>1,242</u>
			29,190
Excess of Expenditure over Income (deficit)			
9993 Excess of Income over Expenditure (surplus)			7,556
<u>35,456</u>			<u>36,746</u>

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus
Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2022

2021				
£	ASSETS		£	£
	Cash in hand and at bank			
61218	Bank Accounts		89,182	89,182
8730	Sundry debtors and prepayments			8,819
	Stock on hand			
	Music and folders		1,795	
	Long service glasses		268	
2153	CDs		90	2,153
72,101				100,154
	LIABILITIES			
3592	Sundry creditors and advance receipts			11,696
	Special Funds			
222	H S Turner Memorial Fund	222	222	
265	Alverna Trust Bursary	265	265	
8992	Sandrey Date Memorial Scholarship Fund			
	As at 1 st April 2021	8,992		
	Plus Donations (incl Dream Surplus)	6,980	15,972	
	Future Projects Fund			
	As at 1 st April 2021	13,384		
13383	+ net donations from Benefactors	4735	18,119	
2742	BSYC Malcom Burdett Memorial Fund			
	As at 1 st April 2021	2,742		
	Plus Raffle Minus BSYC music	677	3,419	
42905	General Fund			
	As at 1 st April 2021	42,905		
	+ excess of Income over Expenditure	7,556	50,461	
				88,458
72,101				100,154

J E Ingarfield, Hon Treas , 12th May 2022

I have examined the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March 2022 and the Balance Sheet at that date with the books and information supplied to me, without carrying out an audit, and have found them to be in accordance therewith.

A.J.Agnew FCA