

Annual Report of the Board of Trustees of the Bournemouth Symphony Chorus 2022-2023 season

When the new season began in September 2022 the Trustees assumed that the Coronavirus restrictions would diminish reasonably quickly. With further vaccination programmes and a gradual lessening of restriction over many months, it wasn't until early May 2023 that the World Health Organisation (WHO) announced that the Corona Virus Pandemic is redefined as an established ongoing health issue which no longer constitutes a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC). Although C-19 still presents a threat it is a decreasing trend with reduced hospitalisations and deaths combined with an increasing immunity within communities. The vaccination process is now to be incorporated into a longer term management.

None of the BSC or BSYC concerts or rehearsals were cancelled as a result of cross infections and the Trustees believe that the air quality controls in our rehearsal spaces has played a huge part in reducing cross infections. The Trustees commend the membership for the co-operative and helpful way that they have conducted themselves in BSC events and activities during a very challenging period.

The death of Elizabeth II at 96 years in September was marked with many tributes. The BSC tribute to her Majesty was a loud rendition of Parry's I was Glad plus Vivats followed by God Save the King at the following rehearsal. Most people do not remember any other monarch but in Charles III we have a King interested and engaged with the Arts. At his coronation there were 13 new works commissioned from contemporary composers and prominent classical musicians performed within the service.

Another external event has had an impact on what we do. The BSO Principal Conductor Kirill Karabits is Ukrainian and the conflict in his home country has held special significance for the BSO and BSC. Seventy five members of the BSC and their families attended a concert which co-incided with the first anniversary of the invasion of Ukraine, to show their support for him and those he cares about. The loss of Ukrainian and Russian lives since this began, is shocking and very few people are not moved by the terrible waste of all, but mostly young, lives. In February the BSC sang Taneyev's St John of Damascus also known as the Requiem to great acclaim under Karabits, judging from the feedback we have received since.

Our President Richard Blackford continues to offer very visible support to the Chorus and Youth Chorus. There have been several performances of Pieta since lockdown eased most notably at the Three Choirs Festival in Summer of 2022. We are currently arranging a celebration concert noting his 70th year and which will take place in Bath on January 13th 2024.

Partnerships are important to the BSC and were very much in evidence from our programmes during the year. There are two very important partners to our work and the first of those is our relationship with our orchestra, the BSO. We were performing normally with the BSO from December 2022 with the first performance of Messiah since 2019. The BSO, BSC with funds from Lighthouse jointly commissioned a large-scale carol from Darius Battiwalla for our December Family Carols Concert with the BSO. The BSYC featured prominently in that work and as with Battiwalla's arrangements, brought the house down. In April the BSO management offered a complimentary year's BSO Membership for singers who join the BSC as a thank you in their first year for doing so, and to welcome them to the organisation. All members were offered this in May 2023 to launch the scheme.

The other very 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. As Resident Chorus we aim to encourage and perform new music, and Lighthouse has joined with us on commissions, the most recent being the Carr Four New Season and the Battiwalla Carol. 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 and the BSC has not experienced any significant infections during a very challenging period, probably due to the impressive ventilation and monitoring systems in place at Lighthouse. This, and the willingness and flexibility of Lighthouse staff means that the BSC and BSYC are able to work, rehearse and give concerts in a very supportive environment. 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 difficult time for the arts.

The Lighthouse/BSC BIG Sing was held with a return to the numbers of participants we saw prior to the pandemic. Over 400 BIG Singers joined the BSC and some members of the BSYC in January for a We Will Rock You Queen workshop, which also featured two Handel Coronation Anthems; Zadok the Priest and The King Shall Rejoice.

Rosemary McDonald managed the application process with her usual efficiency and she and Nigel McDonald organised the logistics on the day with their excellent organisational skills. Elspeth McBain was delighted to see the large numbers returning even though the pandemic was by no means over at that time.

Partnership projects were planned with other choirs during the season. The first was the performance in collaboration with The Philharmonia Chorus of Mahler's mighty Eighth Symphony with the RPO and Vassily Petrenko in October 2022 at the Royal Albert Hall. This was a rescheduled event from 2020 and the BSC was committed to providing 200 singers for Choir II. In order to achieve this an approach was made to the Waynflete Singers who provided 45 members to help reach that number. Many BSC members and the Waynflete Singers stayed in London for various combinations of nights in accommodation at hotels, with friends and family members or in their London properties or Clubs. The daily coach schedule was extremely challenging and the Trustees record their thanks to Wendy Southam for managing what proved to be a very difficult process with only one coach arriving in time for rehearsals. Interestingly that driver was resting actor Guy Henry – Pius Thicks the Minister of Magic from the Harry Potter films who proved to be a very entertaining and resourceful driver. The reviews were excellent and complimentary about the choral singing of both choirs (Gavin Carr was Chorus Master for both) and BSC members taking part in this concert considered this a highlight of the season making the demanding logistics worthwhile.

The second high profile event was the partnership with the Los Angeles based professional choir Pacific Chorale which is touring the UK as part of a wider European Tour. The BSC was specifically approached for this collaboration, and the BSO will play in the concert. The concert will take place after our AGM date and the BSC and Pacific Chorale will sing the Haydn Nelson Mass under Rob Istad, the Pacific Chorale Director which will be followed by the BSC singing Pieta in the second half under our Director, Gavin Carr.

Partnerships in Commissioning included as mentioned above a new carol by Darius Battiwalla, and an agreement to commission a major new work for SATB Chorus, Children's Choir, Tenor soloist and full orchestra; Awakening by Paul Carr. It will be premiered in Lighthouse on June 9th 2024 with a second performance in Salisbury Cathedral on 22nd June 2024. This is another joint commission with the Salisbury Musical Society and the BSC is the lead Commissioner. In Spring 2023 Salisbury Musical Society agreed to assist the July 2023 concert by providing Box Office services to the BSC through their website.

Fundraising

Fundraising is important and supports the BSC concert programme and work with young people. Audiences have not yet recovered from the impact of the pandemic and this has put much pressure on the BSC finances this year. Raising funds from donors and sponsors is increasingly important with so much competition for public funding. The BSC does not receive any grants from funding bodies, so our activities in this area are constant.

The Trustees acknowledge with gratitude the generosity of many BSC members, BSYC Patrons, Benefactors and donors for their ongoing support for the BSC and BSYC in a difficult economic climate. The BSYC Malcolm Burdett Fund and the BSC Sandrey Date Scholarship Fund supported our work with young people during the year.

The Trustees appreciate and acknowledge the significant support of two donors during the 2022/3 season: Steve Brosnan who generously sponsored the premiere and recording of Four New Seasons; Stephen Feltham & Choral Ficus which committed in 2022 to support the commissioning from Paul Carr of a major choral work for adult and youth choirs, tenor soloist and orchestra and two performances of Awakening in June 2024. Both Steve Brosnan and Stephen Feltham have committed to projects in the 2023/24 season and beyond.

The Board thanks Andrew Parrish, the Trustee responsible for Fundraising & Sponsorship, and Lisa Pierce who is the Benefactors Membership Secretary for their management and contribution to fundraising activities during the year.

The BSC and BSYC have an important role in supporting our Residency at Lighthouse. The Lighthouse Fundraiser in 2023 is scheduled for October. The Trustees also acknowledge the willingness of our professional musicians Gavin Carr, Sam Hanson, Victoria Gray and Katherine Wills and for their contribution to BSC and BSYC fundraising, by repeatedly giving their services to such events.

Working with Young People

The focus for our work during the year has been our very much valued BS Children's Choir and BS Youth Chorus collectively called the BSYC. There have been many challenges for our Youth Chorus Director and members during the season, with the impact of lockdowns still affecting young people of school age and their studies.

The BSYC gave a very successful concert in Wimborne Minster and also at St James', Poole in 2022, with opportunities for some of the Youth Chorus members to demonstrate their vocal and instrumental talents. The BSYC also had a prominent role in the BSO Carols Concert in December 2022 which gives them an important profile. Unfortunately, the BSYC and the Children's Choir has not increased in numbers since the first lockdown. Given the importance of this work, Trustees are developing a Strategic Plan for future development of both choirs.

Christopher Monks and the Armonico Academy continued their relationship with the BSYC by inviting them to take part in the June 2023 performance of Monteverdi's Vespers.

Victoria Gray has worked tirelessly with the BSYC during a difficult year, with the impact of past lockdowns still being felt in music groups of young people. She is an inspirational conductor who has great commitment to work with young people. The impact of her work can be clearly seen in the tone, quality, musicianship and discipline in the BSYC's performances. The Board acknowledges how much she brings to her role during one of the most challenging periods of the BSYC's history.

The Board records its thanks to BSYC Secretary Sara Kemp for her efficiency in managing the administration of the BSYC. The commitment she shows to this work and the encouragement that she conveys to BSYC members is an important part of the support structure for the Director and accompanist. BSYC music score management now runs smoothly and 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 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 less visibly; 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 variants continued to circulate and cause high levels of infection in the community. The Board continued its flexibility about attendance policies with a number of members still isolating to protect themselves or their families. The membership was consulted on one occasion about the Easter Concert in April 2023. The Board used this feedback to inform future planning for Easter scheduling.

The Trustees met on eight occasions both in person and on Zoom, with prevailing conditions dictating the approach and a 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. Julie Vidler also assisted Membership Secretary Derek Pilling during the season, in the first year in her new role supporting new members to integrate and settle into the BSC.

Steve Brosnan who has generously supported a number of fundraising initiatives was invited and agreed to become the BSC Patron in May 2023. He has also indicated that he will support professional artists costs in the planned tour to Japan in 2025, when the BSC and local artists will perform Britten's War Requiem at Hiroshima.

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 reviewed the Equalities Policy and Safeguarding Policies in the Spring, agreeing to combine the two into a new *BSC Inclusion Policy*.

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 encouraged members in rehearsals and in

preparing new music for concerts, and is excellent at motivating singers to give of their best. His weekly rehearsals develop the vocal technique of all members and is a major factor in the ongoing improvement of the BSC in performance. He has also generously given his services on a number of occasions during the year, helping to raise funds for the BSC and Lighthouse. The Chorus recognises that we are fortunate to have him as Chorus Director.

Gavin Carr is supported by Sam Hanson in his third season as Assistant Chorus Director & Accompanist. He is recognised by all as a great asset to our music making and the Trustees appreciate his contribution and support for both BSC and BSYC when needed. The quality of accompaniment in rehearsals makes a huge contribution to the rehearsal process. Sam is an excellent pianist and organist and support to Gavin Carr in his role. The Trustees appreciate the support given by Christopher Dowie when needed, working with or in the absence of Sam Hanson.

The Board of Trustees has already noted the work undertaken by John Martindale and also records its thanks to him for his work and good humour when managing attendance during the season, and for dealing with stage management issues so that BSC members have clarity in what is expected of them at venues and concerts. Trustees also acknowledge John Pattison for his very helpful (and patient) manner with members as WebMaster on ICT issues and maintenance. He also manages the contract with the Hosting Company and supports Trustees and officers in their development and use of the website. Alison Chopping has been working as Music Administrator during the year, and the Trustees acknowledge her efficiency and reliability in this important role.

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. The Board records its appreciation of the work of Wendy Southam for co-ordinating transport, especially the very challenging schedule for Mahler 8. Also acknowledged are those who help with BSYC registration and chaperones, stage layout and concert management, music distribution, 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 season.

The Board also wishes to thank Section Leaders for their work during the season, and managing the challenges of the ongoing effect and impact of the Coronavirus. The Trustees also thank all those who retire or resign from the Chorus at the end of the season, and wish our student members success in their university or college studies.

Carolyn Date MBE
Secretary & Chorus Manager
Bournemouth Symphony Chorus
June 2023

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus
Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March 2023

2022

INCOME (including BSYC)			
£	£	£	£
19990 Subscriptions from members			19,816
4101 Performance Fund			4,222
3220 BSYC Patrons			3,308
3518 Income tax recoverable			3,018
2 Deposit A/cs interest			29
	Gross	Expenses	
1148 Concert Income/ (Expense)			
BSYC Wimborne	318	464	(146)
St Matthew Passion (April'22)	7169	19081	(11912)
4 New Seasons (incl sponsorship)	48286	40934	7352
Pieta (Winchester) (incl sponsorship)	12664	19274	(6610)
BSO Carols	<u>0.00</u>	<u>425</u>	(425)
	<u>68437</u>	<u>80178</u>	
3135 Recording & Broadcast Income/(Expenses)			
Radio3	250	0	250
Atmosphere	1323	0	1323
Pieta CDs	<u>89</u>	<u>0</u>	89
	<u>1662</u>	<u>0</u>	
832 Fund Raising			
Weddings & Funerals	1101	0	1101
Workshop Days (Cakes,music,CDs),	360	0	360
Bournemouth Lottery (BSYC)	241	0	241
Amazon Smile	<u>28</u>	<u>0</u>	28
	<u>1730</u>	<u>0</u>	
800 Tours & Workshops			
RAH Mahler8	24634	24325	309
Big Sing	6686	5486	1200
<u>36,746</u>			<u>23,553</u>
EXPENDITURE (including BSYC)			
	Gross	Sales	
4579 Rehearsal accommodation			4,950
22188 Fees (Directors, Accompanists, extras)			25,250
(1106) Purchase/Hire of music & stocks used	3320	2170	1150
530 Printing,postage, stationery,phone,gratuities			436
769 Publicity & Recruitment			963
726 Subscriptions & Insurance			738
262 Miscellaneous Admin			530
1242 Website			<u>648</u>
			34,665
			Excess of Expenditure over Income (deficit)
			(11,112)
7556 Excess of Income over Expenditure (surplus)			
<u>36746</u>			<u>23,553</u>

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus
Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2023

2022				
£	ASSETS		£	£
	Cash in hand and at bank			
89182	Bank Accounts		66,569	66,569
8819	Sundry debtors and prepayments			23,881
	Stock on hand			
	Music and folders		1,795	
	Long service glasses		228	
2153	CDs		90	2,113
100154				92,563
	LIABILITIES			
11696	Sundry creditors and advance receipts			12,666
	Special Funds			
222	H S Turner Memorial Fund	222	222	
265	Alverna Trust Bursary	265	265	
15972	Sandrey Date Memorial Scholarship Fund			
	As at 1 st April 2022	15,972		
	Plus Donations minus expenditure	(4,452)	11,519	
	Future Projects Fund			
	As at 1 st April 2022	18,119		
18119	+ net donations from Benefactors	6414	24,533	
3419	BSYC Malcom Burdett Memorial Fund			
	As at 1 st April 2022	3,419		
	Plus Raffle Minus BSYC music	589	4,008	
50461	General Fund			
	As at 1 st April 2022	50,461		
	+ excess of Expenditure over Income	(11,112)	39,349	
				79,897
100154				92,563

J E Ingarfield, Hon Treas , 9th May 2023

I have examined the Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March 2023 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