

## EXETER FESTIVAL CHORUS

### ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

#### A. Reference and Administration Details

The Exeter Festival Chorus is a registered Charity, No 1040565, and is governed by its Constitution. The address of the Secretary is Rangitoto, Littlemead Lane, Exmouth Devon, EX8 3BU

The following were members of the Committee for the year 2023-24:

Jillian Nickels, (Chair re-elected Jan 2024) *Trustee*

Kate Holt (Treasurer elected Jan 22) *Trustee*

Bridget Baines (Secretary elected Jan 2023) *Trustee*

Nigel Crane (Vice Chair, stepped down in September 2023)

Tam Jackson (Elected 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024 Vice Chair from 13<sup>th</sup> May 2024)

Nike Hariades (Membership Secretary re-elected Jan 2023) *Trustee*

Charlie Lane (Artistic Planning elected Jan 2021) *Trustee*

Judith Drury (Committee Member elected Jan 2021) *Trustee*

Louise Roberts (Concert Manager elected Jan 2021) *Trustee*

Caroline Fewkes (Marketing Team elected Jan 2023)

Simon Bates (Scholarship and Outreach elected 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024) *Trustee*

The Musical Director, Andrea Brown, is an ex officio member of the Committee but not a Trustee.

Bankers: CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4JQ; HSBC, 9 St Thomas Centre, Cowick Street, Exeter, EX4 1DD

Independent Examiner: Nicholas Kellagher, Rest Harrow, Green Lane, Exton, EX3 0PW

**B. Structure, Governance and Management**

Copies of the Chorus's Constitution are available from the Honorary Secretary on request. See Section C below for extract concerning the objectives of the Chorus.

Every member of the Chorus's Committee is a Trustee of the Charity and is elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee meets between six and eight times each year and the Annual General Meeting is held each January.

The Constitution requires that the Committee should comprise no fewer than eight members of the Chorus. There are currently eight members on the Committee, however, the Committee would always welcome new members who may wish to contribute to the Chorus through Committee work.

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Review of major risks *(to be reviewed by Chair)*

Risk	Mitigating Actions
1. Loss of Musical director	Seek a replacement as soon as possible
2. Cancellation of concert	Covered by an abandonment clause in insurance policy
3. Financial Loss	Reserves policy in place

### C. Objectives and Activities

The objectives of the Chorus, as set out in the Constitution, are as follows:

“To promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of choral music in all its aspects by the presentation of public choral concerts and by such other ways as the Chorus may from time to time decide.”

### D. Achievements and Performance

The new term in September 2023 began with Exeter Festival Chorus taking part in the Exeter Cathedral concert in support of ABF, The Soldiers' Charity. EFC joined forces once more with St David's Singers, directed by Mark Perry, in a varied programme for the charity gala.

Our first EFC season concert was 'Northern Lights', which was designed to capture the spare and mysterious qualities of a Scandinavian Yuletide. The sell-out concert meant that we had to close online bookings on the day and adapt seating arrangements for a number of tickets sold on the door.

We were very lucky to have the generous services of Chris Wilson who provided the transformational and atmospheric lighting. We enjoyed Peter Adcock's Arctic Romance by Bo Nilsson and the Divertimento String Ensemble provided accompaniment for Mårten Jansson's Missa Popularis among other works. The surround sound achieved in the Ola Gjeilo Serenity (O Magnum Mysterium) was wonderful. The range of works, (Gjeilo's Unicornis Captivator; Jan Sandström, Arvo Pärt, Gustav Nordqvist's Jul, Jul, Strålande Jul) with an a capella finale of Eriks Ešenvalds' Stars, made the evening such a memorable EFC occasion and the Glögg enjoyed in the interval topped the Scandinavian festive feel.

Exeter Festival Chorus rang in the New Year with our annual choral workshop day led by Andrea in the Mint Church. The day was a sell-out, because of the popularity of the work being studied (Bach's *B minor Mass*) and, of course, the reputation we have as a choir under Andrea Brown's meticulous and passionate musical direction. The work was performed at Baroque pitch (as indeed was the summer concert) with Peter Adcock meeting the demands of playing for a full choir and accompanying the soloists in the cameo performance, whilst transposing at the keyboard from its orchestral pitch. Amanda Dodds and Kate Kelly, with the proficient and experienced EFC team, made sure the day ran smoothly and successfully. Our young soloists

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were secured from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and they added their skilful and stirring performances to the day.

At the workshop, as well as our usual EFC singer recruitment drive, after a successful collaboration with Exeter Philharmonic Choir (when we were offered free places to perform in their March concert), EFC promoted a first free summer term for new Lower Voices who could meet the standards of the choir. This was initiated on the workshop day and the singers who took that up performed in our summer concert- Bach *Mass in B Minor* in Exeter Cathedral.

Exeter Festival Chorus was sought out via Andrea to sing in Carlos Acosta and Laura Rodriguez's dance production in Theatre Royal, Plymouth, at the end of February. A small group of EFC singers took part in rehearsals and two performances. The singers performed Mårten Lauridsen's *O Magnum Mysterium*, which was a prestigious coup for us, with Andrea conducting both evenings.

'Of Music and Invention' was an ambitious Spring concert programme performed in St. Peter's Church, Tiverton and sponsored by Heathcoat Fabrics Ltd. It featured music spanning over 1000 years, from Hildegard von Bingen, Purcell, Lotti, Pearsall, Jan Sandström and Jessica Curry. 'Of Music and Invention' had a main focus on Cecilia McDowall's *Da Vinci Requiem* and Eric Whitacre's innovative and emotive virtuoso piece *Leonardo Dreams of His Flying Machine*. This challenging programming covered a broad spectrum of music, with demanding vocal techniques skilfully obtained from the choir by Andrea.

In preparation for the summer concert, a new venture this year was an appeal through Just Giving (thanks to Paul Rosser who set up the project and to everyone else in the 'external funding' group who did so much towards its launch) which raised £1,647. The use of this platform was a new departure for us and represents another method to appeal for funds from our supporters who feel that they want to contribute in this way. It was very much a project to facilitate EFC to maintain the high standards we enjoy; stage bold and high-quality concerts which are often costly to undertake; continue to develop our repertoire; use top musicians and hugely benefit audiences and EFC members themselves. We also had continuing generous contributions from The Bryan Foster Charitable Trust as well as loyal individual patrons and the further expansion of innovative financial focuses is set to be developed into the future as much as we can.

The Bach Mass in B minor attracted a large audience in Exeter Cathedral. The evening started with a spoken tribute to Nigel Perrin, who led EFC for over 20 years as MD. He imparted a transformation built on the original premise and ambitions for the choir and he passionately championed EFC whilst bringing us a new audience and an excellent reputation.

The complexity of the scoring and the length of the work, which requires pace and stamina, is demanding for choral singers. Our five soloists were Elizabeth Drury, Bethany Partridge, John Upperton, Timothy Dickinson and Benjamin Irvine-Capel (alto) and we had the always excellent Devon Baroque. This combination of musical forces meant that Andrea's vision for the work was perfectly realised. Andrea's clarity and expressiveness of conducting made the experience of singing Bach's

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work inspiring. We were also successful in attracting an additional seven guest lower voices for the summer concert who were recruited from our Lower Voice publicity. Exeter Festival Chorus is, of course, still committed to growing its reputation among audiences, continuing with ambitious repertoire and attracting the finest choral singers in our area. The committee works very hard to achieve this and EFC also relies on our essential central membership non-committee roles: Voice Reps; Librarian team; social occasions and catering teams; ticketing and marketing; EFC annual workshop teams; social media and input on the crucial external finance which are the keystone to our success.

Our striving for vocal balance in the choir is an ongoing focus for us and this year we have been working to establish links with Exeter University in the expectation that we recruit and support young singers by developing the EFC scholarship system, with an inbuilt financial and tuition element initiated, which is in current development by Simon Bates.

Our focus on musical development means that we continue to offer opportunities for EFC singers to perform solo and in small groups.

Our spotlight on charitable causes each concert raises substantial donations – our last concert raised £611.85 for FORCE.

We are also committed to continue and further engage links with young people in Devon, as evident in this season's collaboration with Devon Youth Jazz Orchestra and pupils from schools in Exeter.

Our reserves at the end of the financial year showed a surplus of £5,152, leaving our accumulated fund holding at £36,956

Jill Nickels  
Exeter Festival Chorus Chair

### **E. PUBLIC BENEFIT**

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers and duties.

## F. Financial Review

FY 23/24 was another excellent year for Exeter Festival Chorus resulting in surplus of £5,152

General operating income and costs are in good shape:

- General income came in £4k higher than budget.
- Income from Membership came in at £16.2K, £1K higher than budget and an increase on £2K from the prior year due to the increase in Subscriptions for FY 23/24.
- Gift Aid exceeded the budget by £800.
- Our fundraising efforts raised over £2k with an expanding array of initiatives including coffee, raffles, table sales, silver clay workshops and the sale of cards as well as post-concert parties. Sincere thanks go to Kate Kelly, Carol and Nigel Hewitt, Nike Westman, Tam Jackson, Lucina Swain and Caroline Fewkes for leading these activities and to the team who support them.
- Loans from our music library increased again this year generating £388. Thanks to Janet Bowdler and Susan Gameson for their hard work in managing our library.
- Income from Friends and Patrons was on the budget at £985.
- We continue to benefit from higher interest rates with bank interest yielding £600.
- General costs came in lower than budgeted by £4k, mainly due to lower than budgeted conductor costs.

Three concerts made profit in 23/24:

- Our collaboration with ABF at the start of the year made a profit of £415.
- Northern Lights made a profit of £1k. This was due to very successful ticket sales of £4.7k plus receipt of £977 in sponsorship from Run by Singers for the purchase of Missa Popularis. Some members also purchased their own scores for the Missa Popularis. Both these initiatives helped to offset the high music purchase costs for this concert.
- The January workshop made a profit of £721 which was lower than the budget by £95

Three concerts were loss-making:

- The Lower Voices Workshop made a loss of £401. The committee has decided to discontinue this workshop in future and return its focus to growing our main January workshop.
- Our Spring concert in Tiverton – Of Music and Invention – made a loss of £851 against a budgeted loss of £328. Income was higher than the budget by £1k due to high ticket sales at £1.9k, sponsorship from Heathcoat Fabrics of

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£1.5k and this concert's allocation of the music hire income of £1.3k. However, costs came in £1.6k higher than the budget due to soloists' fees, the unbudgeted cost of hiring a piano, and high music costs of £1.2k.

- Our July concert –the Bach B Minor mass at Exeter Cathedral– lost just £2.5k against a budgeted loss of £6k. Income was £4.6k higher than budget at £15.7k. This was comprised of £12k in ticket and programme sales, £1.5k in sponsorship from the Bryan Foster Trust, and £2.1k in donations from Ros Beetham and from the Just Giving campaign. Costs came in at £18k, which was £1k higher than the budget. The orchestra cost was £2.5k higher than budgeted. Savings were made against other cost lines such as publicity, catering and programmes which offset this overspend.

Special acknowledgement must go to Paul Rosser and Charlie Lane for their work in establishing the External Finance subcommittee. This subcommittee is dedicated to raising external finance for EFC through sponsorships, trusts and crowdfunding initiatives such as the Just Giving campaign for the Bach B Minor Mass Concert. Their efforts, along with the support of others on the subcommittee, have generated a total of £3,489 this year.

We are also grateful for the ongoing support of our generous Friends, Patrons and The Bryan Foster Charitable Trust. Their total contribution this year was £2,485

The Choir's cash balances as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 stand at £35,467

**G. Financial Statements****Exeter Festival Chorus Accounts 2023-2024****Statement of Financial Activities****Year Ending 31st August 2024**

<b>Financial activities</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Incoming resources</b>		
Concert income - tickets, programmes etc	22,315	23,523
Member subscriptions	19,178	15,882
Sponsorship, friends, patrons and other donations	5,594	9,680
Fundraising	2,047	1,603
Gift Aid	3,854	4,183
Affiliate income	1,148	889
Bank Interest	610	251
Other income	388	210
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<b>55,134</b>	<b>56,221</b>
<b>Resources expended</b>		
Concert costs - performers	18,044	21,646
Concert costs - venue, music, publicity, staging etc	13,252	12,466
Rehearsal costs	15,534	16,217
General publicity	565	485
Insurance & Making Music subscription	655	634
Postage, stationery & other general costs	1,882	1,788
Bank Charges	50	60
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<b>49,982</b>	<b>53,296</b>
<b>Total Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>5,152</b>	<b>2,925</b>



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## Exeter Festival Chorus Accounts 2023-2024

### Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2024

<b>Balance Sheet</b>	<b>31 August 2024</b>	<b>31 August 2023</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Debtors & payments in advance	833	227
Stock	1,955	2,084
Cash at Bank	35,467	29,848
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>38,255</b>	<b>32,159</b>
<b>Less</b>		
Creditors & receipts in advance	1,299	355
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>36,956</b>	<b>31,804</b>
<b>Funds of the charity</b>		
Unrestricted funds	36,956	31,804
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>36,956</b>	<b>31,804</b>

Signed :



**04/12/2024**

Name: Jillian Nickels - Chair of trustees on behalf of the trustees

Approved by the trustees on

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## H. Statement of Cashflow

Exeter Festival Chorus has no investing or financing activities

### ***Exeter Festival Chorus Accounts 2023-2024***

#### ***Cashflow worksheet***

	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2022/23</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<i>Net income/(expenditure) for the reporting period</i>	5,152	2,925
<i>(Increase)/decrease in stocks</i>	129	(1,058)
<i>(Increase)/decrease in debtors</i>	(606)	(82)
<i>Increase/(decrease) in creditors</i>	944	(285)
<i>Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities</i>	5,619	1,500

## I. Notes to the Financial Statements

### 1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on an accruals basis in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) effective from January 2015.

### 2. Accounting Policies

**Reserves** - To achieve its objectives the Chorus needs to promote concerts, programmed up to two years in advance, which could result in financial deficits as a result of receipts failing to meet costs. The Trustees consider that the reserves at each year-end should be at least £20,000. Should this level of reserves not be achieved, the Trustees will arrange future concert programmes with the aim of returning to the required level of reserves.

**Incoming Resources** - All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when the Charity is entitled to the income, its receipt is sufficiently certain and the amounts can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

**Resources Expended** - All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

**Stock** –.Stock consists of a library of music purchased and owned by the Chorus; it is held at the lower of cost and net realisable value. 50% of the cost of new music purchased is charged to the first concert at which the music is performed. The stock of music is depreciated at 10% on a reducing balance basis. This is a change of accounting policy from previous years. Stock is available for hire to other choirs.

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### 3. Trustees Expenses and Related Party Transactions

The Trustees receive no emoluments and any expense claims must be made within the terms of the Charity's Trustee Expenses Policy.

There have been no related party transactions in 2023/24.

<b>Nature of Expense</b>	<b>2023/24 £</b>	<b>2022/23 £</b>
Technology costs	329	598
Concert costs	440	0
Charity Donations and fundraising	238	203
Choir development		32
Advertisements		270
Travel, Subsistence and General costs	444	436
<b>Total amount paid</b>	<b>1,451</b>	<b>1,539</b>
Number of Trustees paid expenses	6	5

### 4. Analysis of Debtors

All debtors fall due within one year

	<b>31 August 2024 £</b>	<b>31 August 2023 £</b>
Trade debtors		
Prepayments	833	227
<b>Total debtors</b>	<b>833</b>	<b>227</b>

### 5. Analysis of Creditors

All creditors fall due within one year

	<b>31 August 2024 £</b>	<b>31 August 2023 £</b>
Trade creditors	871	355
Deferred income	428	
<b>Total creditors</b>	<b>1299</b>	<b>355</b>

*Deferred income was subscriptions received in advance from three members.*

# EXETER FESTIVAL CHORUS

## EXETER FESTIVAL CHORUS

### **Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees and members of Exeter Festival Chorus (Charity no: 1040565)**

I report on the accounts of the Chorus for the year ended 31.08.2024

#### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility:

- to examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

#### **Basis of independent examiner's statement:**

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

#### **Independent examiner's statement:**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- a) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met or
- b) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed :



Date :

6/12/24

Name JNB Kellagher FCA

Address. Rest Harrow, Green Lane, Exton, Devon EX3 0PW

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### **Declaration**

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees:

### **Signatures:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jillian Nickels." The signature is written in a cursive style with a period at the end.

**Full names:** Jillian Mary Nickels

**Positions:** Exeter Festival Chorus Chair

**Date:** 04/12/2024