

LEWISHAM CHORAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS for the year to 31 August 2023
Registered Charity Number: 1040570

Charitable objects

To promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of the art and science of choral music in all its aspects by the presentation of public choral concerts and recitals, and to advance such other charitable purposes as the Committee may from time to time decides.

Governance arrangements

Lewisham Choral Society (LCS) is governed by its constitution, last updated in September 2016. Membership of LCS is by payment of the annual subscription. LCS is managed by a committee consisting of the chair, honorary business secretary, honorary membership secretary, honorary treasurer and up to twelve other members, who are the trustees of the charity. Committee members are elected or re-elected annually at the AGM.

Trustees

Brenda Scanlan (Chair)
Jon Banks (elected October 2022)
Penny Champion (Librarian)
David Dennis (resigned October 2022)
Elizabeth Glasser (elected October 2022)
Trevor Jarvis
Lara Ruffle-Coles
Rosemary Savinson
James Toohill
Anne Wheeler (Treasurer)
Emily Williams (Membership Secretary)

Public Benefit

In planning activities for the year, the trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Activities and achievements

Our 2022/23 season has been highly successful. Our membership numbers increased significantly, boosted by the range of repertoire throughout the season. We also were pleased to welcome back several "returners" to the choir who had not been signing since the pandemic.

All our concerts were successful this year with audiences at near or full capacity. We were particularly pleased that our joint concert with Hackney Singers at the Royal Festival Hall in April: *Verdi's Requiem* was fully sold.

Our performing season began earlier than usual with a performance in early October of *Haydn's Nelson Mass* at the Blackheath Halls. This concert was a collaboration with the Frisian Chamber Orchestra (FKO) who also played *Mozart's Overture to the Magic Flute* and *Schubert's Unfinished Symphony*. The FKO were in London for a long weekend with a number of LCS members hosting guests whilst a programme of social events was also arranged. Later in the month, a group of around 40 LCS members and their supporters travelled to Leeuwarden in the Netherlands for a further joint performance of the Nelson Mass and the orchestral works.

We were particularly appreciative of the detailed planning that went into the two concerts by our respective Directors: Dan Ludford-Thomas and Ronald Slager who conducts the FKO. Feedback by members of both organisations about this partnership has been very positive and we are now in early discussion with the FKO about a future collaboration. Lewisham was London's Borough of Culture in 2022 and following on from our performances earlier in the year, this Autumn concert was included as part of the Council's programme of events.

Our Christmas concert this year included *Britten's St Nicolas* as the main work. We were very well supported by a trio of Pickled Boys from Dulwich College, a group of LCS sopranos and altos who formed the chamber choir, along with tenor, Sam Harris, as the adult Nicolas. As well as carols for choir and audience, the concert also included pieces for

the choir, one of which was *Morten Lauridsen's O Magnum Mysterium* which sounded atmospheric in the church's acoustic.

Moving ahead to the spring term, we rehearsed *Verdi's Requiem* in depth for our joint concert with Hackney Singers at the Royal Festival Hall, where we were accompanied by the London Mozart Players. Because this is a deservedly popular work, we decided to offer the opportunity for non-members to join for the term if they wished to sing in the concert: several people did this and very positively, some have continued as LCS members. The attention to detail that Dan gave to our preparation was key to the choirs' confident and exhilarating sell-out performance.

The final concert of the season was our first at St John's Smith Square and also the first time we have performed on a Sunday evening. The repertoire comprised *Handel's Dixit Dominus* and the *Coronation Anthems* along with *Henry Purcell's Funeral Sentences*. For this concert, we were joined by soloists Elizabeth Weisberg and Helen Meyerhoff. We also welcomed singers from Vox Next Gen, a new group, launched in April, to support and encourage young people from diverse backgrounds to gain experience and confidence in choral singing with the potential for some to continue their careers in the music industry. Two of their singers, Miles Dahan and Antonio Olivera sang the Tenor and Bass solo lines in *Dixit Dominus*. Vox Next Gen also performed two pieces of their own: *Maurice Greene's: Lord, let me know mine end* and *Rebecca Clarke's: Music when soft voices die*. Special thanks go to Clodna Shanahan, our accompanist, who did a sterling job on the organ throughout the concert. The evening was exceedingly warm so LCS had to find sufficient energy for the performance, especially the challenges of *Dixit Dominus*. Our previous hard work paid off and the concert was very well received with 300 people in the audience.

There have been a number of other activities throughout the year. One of the most well-supported by members is charity carol-singing during the Christmas season. This year, there were three separate sessions and overall, 50 members took part, raising around £900. We very much appreciate having support from one of our Basses, who has conducted our charity carol-singing over several years.

Towards the end of the season, the committee initiated a project to help support the choir's ongoing development. A Marketing Action Plan (MAP) will be developed to help deliver LCS's vision, values and goals. The project has begun by issuing a survey document to all LCS members to ascertain their views, what they see as LCS's strengths and where they feel any improvements could be made. The survey response rate has been high at around 60% of active members. Much of the analysis and any "next steps" will be undertaken in 2023/24. The committee would like to thank one of our members for his considerable input and support to the committee with this project.

Throughout the season we have been very well led by our Music Director, Dan Ludford-Thomas, who has enabled the choir to improve their skills and also build confidence in their ability to perform at a high level. Since Nico de Villiers left for his new post at the RNCM at the end of last season we were initially supported by Chad Vindin as our interim accompanist and more recently by Clodna Shanahan.

Finally, looking ahead, our future repertoire plans for the new season include an all-Mozart concert, a performance of Poulenc's *Stabat Mater*, sections from Rachmaninov's *All Night Vigil* to celebrate his 150th anniversary and a performance of 20th century and contemporary works.

Financial review

Income for the year was £79k and expenditure was £58k. Income and expenditure both significantly increased this year. Our membership subscriptions income increased by 38%. Concert income and associated costs were exceptionally high due to the fully sold spring concert at the Royal Festival Hall; the accounts include 50% of the income and expenditure from this concert which was a joint undertaking with the Hackney Singers. Income also includes a Gift Aid claim for the prior year, which was received after the year end, as well as this year's Gift AID claim.

LCS achieved a surplus for the year of £20k which has strengthened total funds and gives us a strong base to plan for future activities. Total funds at 31 August 2023 were £43,642. The Committee's reserves policy is to hold sufficient funds in reserves to cover the costs of the next two major concerts. At 31 August 2023, reserves met this requirement.

Signed on behalf of the trustees



Brenda Scanlan, Chair

Date 18 October 2023

LEWISHAM CHORAL SOCIETY**Receipts & Payments Account for the year to 31 August 2023**

	2022/23 £	2021/22 £
RECEIPTS		
Subscriptions	£22,228	£16,100
Gift Aid claim	£6,921	£0
Music sales / hire	£6,069	£3,430
Rehearsal refreshments	£707	£308
Donations / other income	£299	£270
Concert income: tickets & refreshments	£42,331	£9,298
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£78,555	£29,406
PAYMENTS		
Music Director / Asst Music Director	-£11,395	-£11,081
Rehearsal venue	-£2,430	-£2,835
Refreshments	£294	
Concerts: venues, facilities, other	-£20,436	-£6,375
Concert professional fees	-£15,708	-£12,940
Advertising	-£166	-£159
Music purchases / hire	-£5,983	-£4,171
Making Music subscription & insurance	-£780	-£436
Website / other	-£729	-£973
TOTAL PAYMENTS	-£57,921	-£38,970
NET RECEIPTS/-PAYMENTS	£20,634	-£9,567
Brought forward funds	£23,008	£32,574
Funds carried forward	£43,642	£23,008

Assets and liabilities at 31 August 2023

	£	£
Bank	£43,278	£22,837
Cash / cheques in hand	£364	£172
Total cash funds	£43,642	£23,008

Signed



Brenda Scanlan, Chair

Date 18 October 2023

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Lewisham Choral Society

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Lewisham Choral Society (the Society) for the year ended 31 August 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of Lewisham Choral Society you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Society's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



John Howard FCA
Chartered Accountant
Thornwood Road
Hither Green
London SE13

Date: 18 October 2023