

# BATH BACH CHOIR

## AGM MINUTES

7.00 pm on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024  
King Edward's School Bath - Gymnasium

### 1. Apologies for Absence

**Choir members:** Hannah Rees, Katie Taylor, Stephen Hammerton, Peter Edwards, David Blunt, Hilary Oliver, Cobie Mills, Kate Patrick, Henrietta Samler

### 2. Minutes of the last AGM held on 23rd January 2023

No comments or corrections received, therefore signed on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2024 as an accurate account.

### 3. Matters Arising

N/a

### 4. Musical Director's Report

I think one year in, it's been a pretty resoundingly successful year musically getting to know how I work and what I'm interested in and to start making some of the long term progress that I am here to make. From little things about pitch, consonants, and punctuation, to trying to enliven the sounds and all that sort of stuff. I am beginning to see and feel some changes, which is great.

We have done a range of repertoire successfully, responding to all these challenges and we're going to keep doing that. So that's nice. I think the thing I'd maybe like to spend my two minutes doing is talking about the workshop which is this week and every January for the foreseeable future.

The plan is as 2023 was the 300th anniversary of Bach turning up to Leipzig for his job, we are going to plot his first year there singing all of the cantatas that he wrote slowly in order. So we're doing his two audition cantatas this year. The next one will be the colossal one that he did for his first Sunday on the job. The plan is to sort of build and develop a reputation for "Bath Bach Choir does Bach". See if we can build our reach and build our reputation. We're in preliminary discussions with the Oxford Bach soloists who are based in Oxford which isn't that far away, and a fortnight ago did their Christmas Cantata (the epiphany bits of it) in London, which got a fab full page write up in The Observer "this is the way that you should be doing Bach; this is the future; this is really exciting; go and listen to these guys."

And so the plan is that we will develop a relationship with them whereby both our stocks will go up in equally exciting measure and the link is that my brother is spending the year

singing with them. So he is going to come and do the solo bits and bobs when we sing through the cantata on Saturday.

And hopefully, the one after that will use their range of soloists, maybe see if we can lure in their band. And as we get more people coming and paying for the workshop, the budget for how much of them we can hire in and develop goes up. If I leave the job in 33 years or whatever we will just about have got to the end of Bach's first year in Leipzig.

But if I leave before then there will be this reputation that this is a really cool thing to do. You go and sing one or two Bach cantata and at the end some of the hottest Bach performers and instruments in the country come and play with you. That's the vision there and going out and sort of selling that is going to be a really cool thing. So there you go. I look backwards and forwards.

## **5. Chairman's Report**

This time last year Benedict had just joined us; we had high expectations and we've not been disappointed. What has followed has been a significant year of transition, and Benedict has earned huge praise from the choir itself and our audiences for his general approach, his programming, his rehearsal methodology and much else besides. We are fortunate to have him.

First a quick reminder of what didn't change in 2023. We kept to St Mary's Bathwick for the January workshop and Spring concert; the July concert remained our major, Abbey block-buster, marshalling significant solo and orchestral forces; the Pump room remained the venue of choice for the Carols by Candlelight concerts, with invited soloists and a collection taken for two charities. In between these some of us sang at other events including two funerals and Sunday evensong in the Abbey.

However, there have been a number of new initiatives. As many of you will remember, at last January's workshop, we were split into two groups and were jointly led by Benedict and Voces8's Katie Jeffries-Harris for the rehearsal phase. In April we sang a completely unaccompanied programme with the main works split up and spread across the evening; the same idea carried over into the November concert where the movements in Parry's Songs of Farewell were interspersed with Bass and treble solos and organ interludes. This was adventurous programming. For Carols by Candlelight we followed a new format – four one-hour concerts, two an evening. Tight time management, but many said it worked well.

We have also moved ahead on some potential collaborations – the one with Bath Symphony Orchestra for March 2025 with a performance of Beethoven's 9th has been gestating for

some time; the other with Bury Bach Choir is new and is slated for mid-2026. On top of this, at this Saturday's workshop we will launch a major new project, exploring over the next few years many of Bach's famous Leipzig cantatas with well-known singers and conductors which hopefully lead to further long-term collaborations.

Also acting on your feedback, we have changed the venue for this November's concert from Bath Abbey to the more intimate St Mary's which will work better for an unaccompanied music programme. On the other hand, we have moved away from St Mary's for this coming Saturday's workshop as St. Swithin's will offer greater seating flexibility.

Behind the scenes, with Benedict living some distance away and with a very full calendar of musical commitments elsewhere, we have needed to adapt our working model. Happily, adjustments have been easily accommodated, with Benedict able to attend some committee meetings in person and others by zoom.

At the beginning of the year we asked the choir for some blue-sky thinking on ideas for the committee and Benedict to explore. Here is where we have got to.

First, improving communication. We now have a system of Voice Reps, one for each section a model that seems to be working well.

Second, Dress code can be an emotive subject in many a music ensemble. At Carols by Candlelight we trialled men not wearing jackets; for major concerts in 2024 we are trialling different options, including the wearing of floor length skirts or black dress trousers.

Touring: a survey of choir members showed that we most definitely wanted to go touring again. We are now looking at 3 possibilities for 2025 and beyond: Belfast, Alkmaar in the Netherlands one of Bath's twin cities and a return to Aix-en-Provence, another twin, which holds a major music festival in May.

Music repertoire. While we are led by Benedict as MD, choir members have contributed a number of their own suggestions. We have already voted on the piece to accompany

Beethoven's 9 next March; the choir will also be involved in deciding on the programme for our collaborative concerts with Bury Bach Choir in 2026. We welcome your ideas.

Rehearsal venue: There is a regular request to use the Wessex room for Monday rehearsals. The Committee doesn't ignore it but we haven't altered our response for now; changing to the Wessex room doubles our costs; moreover, and you might think this rather counter-intuitive, the poorer acoustics of the Gym in fact helps us focus in rehearsal.

Lastly, Recruitment: we are increasingly on the look out for ways to attract the under-30's and students, although not at the expense of us older types. We already offer discounts on workshops and concerts and on membership subscriptions but still need to further investigate scholarships for 6th formers or music students who might find us a useful training ground.

Generally we are doing well on recruitment. We have enlisted 14 new singers since the last AGM and can now boast 98 in all. Through natural turn-over we lose some each year. We want to make this summer's picnic on Sunday July 7th, a big social event (last year we could only offer a truncated picnic sandwiched between rehearsal and evensong in the Abbey) but this time include a number of former members who were with us for many many years and whom we do not want to lose touch with.

As we are all very aware, we have sadly just lost Brian Woodford, who passed away 10 days ago after many decades as a much loved member of the choir and our great supporter. We have been asked by his family to sing at his Thanksgiving service.

- Dust off Brahms requiem

I hope everyone who joins the choir feels welcome from the moment of your arrival and throughout your stay.

Before closing I want to pay tribute to those who have made significant contributions over the last year. Let me first ask my fellow committee members to stand so we can thank you. You do far more than your titles and roles suggest. Suffice it to say the choir owes you a lot for your commitment, skills, time and creativity. We have held 11 monthly meetings and between a huge amount carried out through emails, phone calls, meetings.

Victoria (Westwood), Abi McGillvray , Helen (Roberts), Paul (Edwards) , Richard (Hunt) – who has just taken on the new role of safeguarding officer -- Steve Machell and my two fellow

officers Doris Ward, who took over from Kathrin Cockhill during the year and Will Acton. Thank you, each one of you.

Secondly, the following roll call shows how much the Committee relies on those outside its ranks. I am going to mention 22 names and state your role so we remind ourselves of how many are involved in making the choir what it is.

We start of course with Marcus Sealey, our accompanist; then the six Voice Reps who are not on the committee: Hilary Oliver, Caroline Grumbley, Jo Addison, Sue Cook, Andrew Clarke, and John Banby (who is also responsible for keeping us in the loop on the wider choral music scene. Thank you.

Sara Foster (social media and workshop manager); Priscilla Bishop (programme notes and text); Ursula Steinhoff (Design), Katie Taylor (database and mailings manager and working group member for the collaboration with Bury Bach Choir); Paul Forte (Tour officer); Jane Paton (the music library); Tony Thornburn (Archivist, resourcing and 3rd-party websites); Janet Read (Secretary to the Patrons and Friends) Sue Murray (workshop manager); Fr Peter Edwards (our St Mary's Bathwick host); Di Shelley and Peter Woodward (the workshop raffle); Mark and Pam Brierley (Refreshments), Harriet Feilding, our Auditor;

There are other non-choir members who help out regularly as stewards, with our website or we take on as concert managers or who run our bar and much else besides. They deserve our thanks too.

Let me finish by reiterating the obvious: the choir is successful because it loves singing to a high standard and enjoys coming together on a regular basis. The Choir fills an important part in our lives and many have formed great friendships over the years amongst its membership. We operate best as a unit both in terms of our singing and in how we organise ourselves behind the scenes.

In this regard the committee regularly needs new blood so is on the lookout for bringing on board those who perhaps have not been committee members before or had the opportunity to contribute in some way from outside the committee itself. So if you have been with the choir for two years or more and feel you could help us spread the load, please do get in touch, don't be shy!!

And on that note I hand over to Will – thank you for your attention.

## **6. Treasurer's Report and presentation of accounts for year ending 31 July 2023**

[See separate accounts]

**7. Appointment of the Independent Examiner for the accounts** - To approve and appoint an independent examiner of the CBBC accounts

Harriet Feilding to be independent.

No objections

**8. Subscriptions** - To approve Singing Members' annual subscriptions.

Vote to keep Subs at £180

Proposed: Mary George, seconded: Mervyn Harris. Unanimously agreed.

Vote to accept the accounts

Proposed: Janet Read, seconded: Richard Young. Unanimously agreed.

**9. Friends and Patrons** - Report, and approval of change in subscriptions

So just quickly to say that if you are a patron, you spend £50 and you get a regular newsletter from me, which is exciting and interesting. And you get a priority booking through the choir for all our concerts and invitations to occasional social events.

Then for the extra £150, you get a free ticket for each concert.

Most gold members only use a few of their free tickets.

And this year we were into the net £3,000 from our subscriptions towards the November concert.

I'm not quite sure what happened to the other concert but it goes towards the choir.

So, that's it.

Thank you.

## **10. Election of Officers and Committee**

- Helen Roberts
  - Proposed: Abi McGillivray, seconded: Janet Read. Unanimously agreed.
- Richard Hunt
  - Proposed: Steve Machell, seconded: Sara Foster. Unanimously agreed.
- Will Acton
  - Proposed: Andrew Clark, seconded: Paul Edwards. Unanimously agreed.

Victoria Westwood has completed 6 years on the Committee and therefore is standing down. The Chair thanked her on behalf of the committee and whole choir for her excellent work. She has been co-opted onto the Committee for this coming year while a new member is elected onto the committee and trained up.

Asked to co-opt her to the committee for a year or until such time as we can transition.

We will need an EGM to fill the final member of the committee. Publicity & Fundraising role will need filling as Steve Machell will fill Victoria Westwood's role.

**11. AOB**

*There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 19:41 by Simon Ingram-Hill.*

# Bath Bach Choir

## Balance sheets

	Notes	31-Jul-23	31-Jul-22
<b>Assets</b>			
Bank Balance		1,023	5,313
CCLA Investments	1	37,789	49,302
Friends' bank balance	2	3,033	3,681
Total cash and investments		41,845	58,296
Accrued income	3	7,275	4,250
Total assets		49,120	62,546
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Accounts payable		450	284
Accrued expenditure			2,894
Net Assets		48,670	59,368
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Friends' account	2	3,033	3,681
Retained surpluses	4	45,637	55,687
		48,670	59,368

*I hereby certify that the accounts are in accordance with the financial records of the Bath Bach Choir, and that I obtained all the information and explanations required by me as an independent examiner in accordance with the general directions*

Harriet Feilding MA

14 January 2024

## Balance Sheets – Previous Years

	31 Jul 2022	31 Jul 2021	31 Jul 2020
<b>Note 1 (CCLA)</b>			
Opening balance: 31 July 2022	49,302		
Transfer from bank onto deposit -	12,000		
Revaluation at year end	486		
Closing balance: 31 July 2023	37,789		
<b>Note 2 (Friends)</b>			
Opening balance: 31 July 2022	3,681		
Subs and donations	2,852		
Donation to choir -	3,500		
Closing balance: 31 July 2023	3,033		
<b>Note 3 (accrued income)</b>			
Accrued gift aid 2021-22	3,150		
Accrued gift aid 2022-23	4,125		
	7,275		
<b>Note 4 (Income &amp; Expenditure)</b>			
Opening balance: 31 July 2022	55,687		
Total income (over)	78,453		
Total expenditure (over)	- 88,503		
Closing balance: 31 July 2023	45,637		



## Bath Bach Choir

Income and Expenditure - year ended 31 July 2022

	General	Gala dinner	Autumn concert	Spring concert	Summer concert	Carols	Workshops	Total 2022-23	Total 2021-22	Total 2020-21
<b>Income</b>										
Ticket sales			10,648	3,304	7,441	14,111	2,652	38,155	33,421	9,994
Subscriptions	14,817							14,817	13,811	11,792
Gift aid	4,125							4,125	3,150	2,520
Donations	280		7,500			1,525		9,305	2,050	-
Donation from Patrons and Friends								-	-	2,500
Programme advertising								-	700	-
Music sales and rentals	1,843							1,843	683	-
Other revenue	147	8,171	970					9,288	522	144
Revaluation of investments	486							486	981	6,145
Jigsaw sales								-	-	728
Raffles							433	433	400	-
<b>Expenditure</b>										
Total income	21,699	8,171	19,118	3,304	7,441	15,635	3,085	78,453	55,718	33,823
Music Director & Repetiteur	11,400		1,550	1,075	1,175	2,650	375	18,225	16,610	13,275
Venue hire and other costs	3,895	14,734	2,959	606	4,083	7,591	879	34,746	17,141	4,917
Solo singers and instrumentalists			12,740		11,003	340	250	24,333	15,793	150
Donations re Carols collections	230					1,300		1,530	1,000	-
Programmes, printing & stationery			2,178		537	235	139	3,088	1,109	-
Advertising and marketing	3,645							3,645	1,678	703
Music costs	1,731							1,731	1,063	-
Music Storage	570							570	498	456
Insurance	634							634	622	497
Jigsaw puzzles								-	-	540
Total expenditure	22,106	14,734	19,427	1,681	16,797	12,116	1,642	88,503	55,474	20,538
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	- 407	- 6,563	- 309	- 1,623	- 9,356	- 3,519	- 1,443	- 10,050	-	-
									244	13,284

How your subscriptions will be spent 2023-2024

Proposed Annual Subscription 2024 - 2025 **£180**

### Expenses

Hall Hire	£2,400
Musical Director	£7,200
Accompanist	£3,600
Choir Promotional Budget	£3,500
Tea and Coffee	£120
Choir's Managed Music Library	£450
Website Maintenance	£500
Insurances & Memberships	£650
<b>Total</b>	<b>£18,420</b>

### Income

Subscriptions	£16,200
Tax Rebate (Gift Aid)	£3,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>£19,800</b>

## Online Banking

Please only use the following references unless told otherwise.  
You DO NOT need to add you name as that is done automatically by your bank

### Description

Subscriptions  
Tickets  
Carols Tickets  
Workshop  
Music Hire  
Coach Travel

### Reference

SUBS  
TICKETS (used for all except Carols)  
CAROLS  
WORKSHOP  
MUSIC  
COACH

# Bath Bach Choir

## Balance sheets

	Notes	31-Jul-23	31-Jul-22
<b>Assets</b>			
Bank Balance		1,023	5,313
CCLA Investments	1	37,789	49,302
Friends' bank balance	2	3,033	3,681
Total cash and investments		41,845	58,296
Accrued income	3	7,275	4,250
Total assets		49,120	62,546
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Accounts payable		450	284
Accrued expenditure			2,894
Net Assets		48,670	59,368
<b>Represented by:</b>			
Friends' account	2	3,033	3,681
Retained surpluses	4	45,637	55,687
		48,670	59,368

*I hereby certify that the accounts are in accordance with the financial records of the Bath Bach Choir, and that I obtained all the information and explanations required by me as an independent examiner in accordance with the general directions*

Harriet Feilding MA

14 January 2024

## Balance Sheets – Previous Years

	31 Jul 2022	31 Jul 2021	31 Jul 2020
<b>Note 1 (CCLA)</b>			
Opening balance: 31 July 2022	49,302		
Transfer from bank onto deposit -	12,000		
Revaluation at year end	486		
Closing balance: 31 July 2023	37,789		
<b>Note 2 (Friends)</b>			
Opening balance: 31 July 2022	3,681		
Subs and donations	2,852		
Donation to choir -	3,500		
Closing balance: 31 July 2023	3,033		
<b>Note 3 (accrued income)</b>			
Accrued gift aid 2021-22	3,150		
Accrued gift aid 2022-23	4,125		
	7,275		
<b>Note 4 (Income &amp; Expenditure)</b>			
Opening balance: 31 July 2022	55,687		
Total income (over)	78,453		
Total expenditure (over)	- 88,503		
Closing balance: 31 July 2023	45,637		

## Bath Bach Choir

Income and Expenditure - year ended 31 July 2022

	General	Gala dinner	Autumn concert	Spring concert	Summer concert	Carols	Workshops	Total 2022-23	Total 2021-22	Total 2020-21
<b>Income</b>										
Ticket sales			10,648	3,304	7,441	14,111	2,652	38,155	33,421	9,994
Subscriptions	14,817							14,817	13,811	11,792
Gift aid	4,125							4,125	3,150	2,520
Donations	280		7,500			1,525		9,305	2,050	-
Donation from Patrons and Friends								-	-	2,500
Programme advertising								-	700	-
Music sales and rentals	1,843							1,843	683	-
Other revenue	147	8,171	970					9,288	522	144
Revaluation of investments	486							486	981	6,145
Jigsaw sales								-	-	728
Raffles							433	433	400	-
<b>Expenditure</b>										
Total income	21,699	8,171	19,118	3,304	7,441	15,635	3,085	78,453	55,718	33,823
Music Director & Repetiteur	11,400		1,550	1,075	1,175	2,650	375	18,225	16,610	13,275
Venue hire and other costs	3,895	14,734	2,959	606	4,083	7,591	879	34,746	17,141	4,917
Solo singers and instrumentalists			12,740		11,003	340	250	24,333	15,793	150
Donations re Carols collections	230					1,300		1,530	1,000	-
Programmes, printing & stationery			2,178		537	235	139	3,088	1,109	-
Advertising and marketing	3,645							3,645	1,678	703
Music costs	1,731							1,731	1,063	-
Music Storage	570							570	498	456
Insurance	634							634	622	497
Jigsaw puzzles								-	-	540
Total expenditure	22,106	14,734	19,427	1,681	16,797	12,116	1,642	88,503	55,474	20,538
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	- 407	- 6,563	- 309	1,623	- 9,356	3,519	1,443	- 10,050	244	13,284

How your subscriptions will be spent 2023-2024

Proposed Annual Subscription 2024 - 2025 **£180**

### Expenses

Hall Hire	£2,400
Musical Director	£7,200
Accompanist	£3,600
Choir Promotional Budget	£3,500
Tea and Coffee	£120
Choir's Managed Music Library	£450
Website Maintenance	£500
Insurances & Memberships	£650
<b>Total</b>	<b>£18,420</b>

### Income

Subscriptions	£16,200
Tax Rebate (Gift Aid)	£3,600
<b>Total</b>	<b>£19,800</b>

## Online Banking

Please only use the following references unless told otherwise.  
You DO NOT need to add you name as that is done automatically by your bank

### Description

Subscriptions  
Tickets  
Carols Tickets  
Workshop  
Music Hire  
Coach Travel

### Reference

SUBS  
TICKETS (used for all except Carols)  
CAROLS  
WORKSHOP  
MUSIC  
COACH