

Chairman's AGM Report – Grange Choral Society 14 July 2025

Good evening, everyone.

It's been another busy, rewarding and occasionally breathless year for the Grange Choral Society. Our three concerts this season were Messiah in December, A Sea Symphony in April and a French Music programme in July. Each brought its own musical challenges, logistical juggles and the usual low-key panic... but also immense satisfaction.

The timing of Messiah this year worked in our favour as it gave us more rehearsal time to tackle A Sea Symphony in the spring. As you all know, this piece is not for the faint-hearted – for choir, soloists or orchestra! It required a large ensemble of players, many of whom had never performed it before. Despite the scale, they all threw themselves into it and, dare I say, seemed to enjoy it almost as much as we did (or at least pretended convincingly).

Financially, the Messiah concert showed a very small loss but more importantly not a huge loss, which helped cover the significant costs of Sea Symphony. Thankfully, the performance drew a good audience and we even earned an excellent review in the Bournemouth Echo. That kind of feedback always helps justify the hours spent in rehearsals.

Our summer concert had a distinctly French flavour, featuring music that Simon was very familiar with. True to the original cathedral settings of many of these pieces, he suggested we make use of not one but two organs (with the help of some extremely clever software). There were moments in rehearsal when we weren't quite sure whether it was all going to come together but the final result was spectacular. Audience numbers were

strong, and Simon was genuinely delighted with the performance – a high note on which to end the season, if you'll pardon the pun.

Now, on to committee matters. Two of our valued committee members are stepping down this year. Hazel Bayliss, our dedicated Secretary, is currently away, presumably somewhere far more relaxing than a choral AGM. She'll be succeeded by Sheila Walker, who is currently taking the Minutes – and doing a fabulous job of pretending this is all completely normal (thank you, Sheila). Also stepping down is Michael Norton, our Bass Rep. Many thanks to him for all his support – and congratulations to Ed Musial who will be taking over. All other committee members are bravely staying on – either out of dedication or because we didn't let them leave. We couldn't put on such excellent concerts without them and all that goes on behind the scenes. So please thank Jan, Elisabeth, Linda, Pauline, Donna and Brenda. Voice reps Anne, Val, Michael, Gareth and volunteers Isabel and Marion on publicity and Chris Main and Hilary Martin on programmes and flyers.

Thanks as always to our Sponsors and Friends whose support is greatly appreciated.

I must now record our appreciation of the work done by Chris Dowie both in rehearsals and concerts. His knowledge and good humour lift our rehearsals. His playing on Saturday was amazing and it was lovely to know that it was in Christchurch Priory as a young boy he was inspired by the then organist, Geoffrey Tristram, who allowed Chris to sit next to him on the organ seat. He was spellbound and never forgot the experience. I'm sure that Chris himself has been the inspiration of many young musicians. Thank you Chris.

Of course, no review of our year would be complete without a heartfelt tribute to Simon, our Musical Director. His musical brilliance, calm leadership and quietly persuasive style continue to bring out the best in us.

Simon has a rare gift for making even the most complex pieces feel within reach – or at least not terrifying. His rapport with players and soloists is clear, and the respect he commands from all corners is well deserved. He's also a constant presence behind the scenes, offering thoughtful input to the committee and invaluable support to me personally. We genuinely couldn't ask for a better guide on this musical journey.

BUT as Simon would say – I am now going to have a little gripe. Your committee work hard to try and run things with minimum disruption. We do, from time to time, have to impart information to you all – important information about such things as rehearsal locations, timings, dates and concert information. We send this out via email which is convenient. We do not send out unnecessary emails and we only ask that you please READ THEM. If you do not have access to an email then please, please let us know and we will get things to you in another format.

Looking ahead to our 2025–26 season, we're excited to begin rehearsals again on Monday 15th September. Our first concert will feature Britten's St. Nicolas and Rutter's Magnificat on 10th January 2026 – a pairing that promises drama, sparkle and perhaps just enough Latin to keep us on our toes. The programme for our 18th April 2026 concert is still to be confirmed, and likewise the 11th July summer concert.

As ever, thank you to everyone – singers, committee, Simon, and our loyal audience – for keeping the music alive and the spirits high. Here's to another year of singing, laughter, and occasional moments of wondering what on earth we signed up for.

Sheila Bird

14 July 2025

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 May 2025

<u>Income</u>	<u>2024-25</u>	<u>2023-24</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>2024-25</u>	<u>2023-24</u>
Charitable income			Charitable expenses		
Concert income	13,026	12,024	Concert expenses	22,474	17,039
General subscriptions	17,075	17,055			
Friends subscriptions	595	630	MD fees	5,530	5,233
Income tax refunds	2,363	5,664	Accompanist fees	3,615	4,070
Donations	2,500	2,105	Rehearsal hall	1,512	2,406
Fund-raising	317	588			
	35,876	38,066		33,131	28,748
Charitable trading			Charitable trading		
Sale Music/Folders	1,263	1,263	Purchase music/fldrs	1,909	1,909
		812			376
Other income			Other expenses		
Bank interest	218	236	Subscriptions	700	675
	218	236	Accountancy fees	125	100
			Print, post, stationery	547	920
			Website	109	130
			Donation		550
			Sundry expenses	376	247
			Bank charges		71
				1,857	2622
Total income	37,357	39,114	Total expenses	36,897	31,746
Surplus expenditure over income			Surplus income over expenditure	460	7368
	37,357	39,114		37,357	39,114

RECONCILIATION OF RESERVES

Balances 31/05/24			Balances 31/05/25		
Lloyds Current a/c	6,364		Lloyds Current a/c	7,106	
Lloyds Hi-Interest	19,755	26,119	Lloyds Hi-Interest	19,473	26,579
Plus surplus income over expenditure		460			
		26,579			26,579

Accounts prepared on an Income and Expenditure basis in accordance with Charity Commission SORP (Revised 2005) Appendix 5.1.2.

Elisabeth Senior, Treasurer



Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

Grange Choral Society

31st May 2025

**Charity no
(if any)**

1045490

Set out on pages

1 (one)

**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 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities 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 Commission. 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 the 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
1. 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 Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
 2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Date:

27 June 2025

Name:

David Cannings

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

ACIB

Address:

6 Preston Way, Highcliffe, BH23 4QT