

East Sussex Bach Choir

Annual report

Concert Schedule 2023-2024

December 2023 - **Advent music: Bach and Charpentier** in Alfriston

January 2024 - **A celebration of the music of Mr Handel** in Lewes Town Hall

March 2024 - **Bach St John Passion** in Lewes Town Hall

July 2024 - **Workshop on Purcell The Fairy Queen** in Firle Parish Church

This year has been challenging, both musically, as we would expect, and financially, as we have come to expect. While we have recovered well from the problems of lockdown in terms of our music-making, and the loyalty of our audiences, the impact of financial issues is a concern for the future as all of our costs continue to rise, with a 13% increase in the Musician's Union rate for orchestral players, and a similar increase in the hire costs for both concert and rehearsal venues. At the same time, it is difficult to increase revenue either from member subscriptions or from audiences because of the general cost of living increases.

Each of our concerts involve professional musicians and soloists and while this results in exceptional quality in the music that we offer to audiences, it is inevitable that each of our concerts run at a significant loss. However, in order to maintain our schedule of high-level performances for our audiences in Sussex, as well as maintaining our commitments to support young singers and performers, we are actively engaged in fund raising and trying to attract longer term sponsorship.

Members of the committee continue to show total commitment to maintaining very high standards and sustaining a rewarding programme of events for our audiences. We continue to work to try to expand audience engagement, particularly with a view to involvement of a younger and more diverse audience in order to sustain the contribution of the Choir to the musical life of the community in the future.

In particular, with the stimulus of the St Matthew concerts next spring, we have introduced a fund raising group which is developing a programme of events to engage the wider community, and especially young people. To this end, we have also asked a small group of members to work with schools and other groups to encourage the engagement of young people in the music we love.

Overall, our financial management is sound and, with careful planning, we succeed in maintaining a solid footing for our continuing activities.

Membership of the choir remains strong, and we are delighted to receive applications from a number of new members - we hope we will continue this with a nationwide hunt for tenors!

We had the sad occasion in November hearing of the death of Peter Wylie, former chair and loyal choir member, and also of the death of Val Winslade, long term secretary to the choir.

The Choir are, as always, grateful for the exceptional contribution made by our Music Director, John Hancorn, in sustaining and developing our standard of performance and in creatively leading us through the pathways of Baroque music. We have also welcomed the supportive presence of our regular accompanist, Claire Williams, whose own knowledge and experience has enhanced the rehearsal process.

Thank as always to all members of the committee for their support, commitment and wisdom in sustaining all that we do – Val, Maria, Helen, Maggie, Jenny, Liffey, David and Jannine. We also thank Ollie for his poster designs, and his ongoing work on the choir website.

And we thank all members who, in so many ways, make the choir what it is.

Mike Dawney, Chair, East Sussex Bach Choir

Income					Expenditure		
Subs			£9,856.50	Rehearsal Venue Hire			(£176.25)
Gift Aid			£2,020.12	Rehearsal Fees			(£6,170)
Donations			£3,250	Making Music			(£581.00)
Concert	Alfriston		£2,277.96	Concert	Alfriston		(£4,149.85)
	January		£5,340.34		January		(£8,503.85)
	Spring		£7,498.75		Spring		(£8, 665.03)
	Summer		£731.98		Summer		(£1,350)
	St Matthew	Advert	£50.00		St Matthew	Deposits	(£737.50)
					General *		(£459.17)
					* Bank charges, score hire, course fees, running costs		
Total Income				£31,025.65	Total Expenditure		(£30,792.65)
					Year End Total		£233.00

E A S T
S U S S E X
B A C H
C H O I R

Balance as at August 31 2023		
Balance Current Account		£12,113.24
Balance Reserve Account		£11,109.34
Balance as at August 31 2024		
Current Account		£12,346.24
Reserve Account		£11,326.40
Current Account Surplus		£233.00
Reserve Account Surplus		£217.06
Choir Funds Total as at August 31 2024		£23,672.64

I have examined, without carrying out an audit, the attached accounts with the books and accounting record supplied by the Hon. Treasurer and confirm that they reflect the true financial position for the year ended August 31 2023.

Signed

Date



20/9/2024.

John Gower

Signed

Date



20/9/24

Jannine Jones Treasurer East Sussex
Bach Choir