

## **Trustees' Annual Report 2024-25**

**Charity Name:** Bishop's Stortford Sinfonia

**Registered charity number:** 1093196

**Principal address:** 50 Ross Close, Saffron Walden, Essex, CM11 4AY

### **Trustees:**

The trustees who served during the year were:

- John Bruce-Jones (Chair)
- Margaret Webb
- Simon Gilliver

### **Structure, Governance and Management:**

Bishop's Stortford Sinfonia is a registered charity governed by a board of trustees, who are responsible for the strategic direction and oversight of the organisation.

Trustees are appointed by the board and are selected based on the skills, experience and commitment required to support the effective governance and development of the charity. The charity seeks to appoint trustees with an interest in music and the arts, and with strong connections to the local community.

Day-to-day activities, including concert planning and delivery, are managed by the Artistic Director and core organising team, supported by the trustees.

### **Objectives and Activities:**

The charity's objective is to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of the art and science of music in all its aspects, in particular by the presentation of public concerts and educational activities.

The Bishop's Stortford Sinfonia continues to deliver high-quality orchestral performances for local audiences, while also supporting the development of young musicians and contributing to the wider cultural life of the community.

### **Activities and Achievements:**

During the year, the Sinfonia delivered a full programme of orchestral performances and collaborative projects.

#### Concert Season

The orchestra presented three main public concerts during the 2024-25 season:

- **October 2024:** *An Evening of Fairytales*, featuring works by Ethel Smyth, Grieg (*Peer Gynt Suite No. 1*) and Rimsky-Korsakov (*Scheherazade*), performed at Bishop's Stortford College.

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**SINFONIA**

- **January 2025:** *Spotlight on the Flute*, including works by Tarrodi, Vivaldi and Mendelssohn, with soloist Matthew Featherstone, performed at St John's Church, Stansted.
- **April 2025:** *Spotlight on the Trombone*, featuring Rossini, Dani Howard's Trombone Concerto (soloist Peter Moore), and Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition*, performed at Bishop's Stortford College.

These concerts continued the Sinfonia's commitment to ambitious and engaging programming, combining well-known repertoire with contemporary works and professional soloists.

**Collaborative Work:**

In addition to its own concert series, the Sinfonia supported other local music organisations by providing orchestral players for:

- Amici Cantate (30 November 2024)
- Bishop's Stortford Choral Society (7 December 2024)

These collaborations are an important part of the charity's role in supporting the wider musical ecosystem in the area.

**Education and Community Engagement:**

The Sinfonia remains committed to supporting young musicians and broadening access to orchestral music.

During the year, the orchestra delivered a side-by-side concert in partnership with Bishop's Stortford College and local students in May 2025. This project gave students the opportunity to rehearse and perform alongside experienced musicians in a full orchestral setting, providing valuable practical experience.

In October 2024, the Sinfonia also held an open rehearsal, supported by Arts in East Herts, which invited members of the local community to observe the orchestra at work. The session was designed to be welcoming and accessible, particularly encouraging attendance from groups who may face barriers to attending traditional concerts, including older people and families with young children.

In addition to its concert activity, the Sinfonia runs a series of monthly Sunday Listening Cafés, which are free to attend and open to all. These informal sessions, led by members of the orchestra, provide an opportunity for audiences to explore and discuss a wide range of music in a relaxed and accessible setting. The Listening Cafés form an important part of the charity's ongoing work to broaden engagement with classical music and to create inclusive opportunities for participation within the local community.

**Additional Performances:**

The Sinfonia also presented a smaller-scale chamber orchestra performance at Little Hadham Hall in May 2025, expanding its reach to new audiences and venues.

**Financial Review:**

The charity's financial position remains stable. Income is derived primarily from ticket sales, performance fees, grants and donations.

Expenditure is largely associated with the delivery of concerts, including musician fees, venue hire, conductor and soloist costs, and associated production expenses. Across the year, the orchestra continued to prioritise paying musicians for their time and expertise, while managing costs carefully.

The charity also successfully claimed Orchestral Tax Relief in respect of eligible performances, supporting its financial sustainability. The charity has no significant debts or liabilities at the year end.

**Reserves Policy:**

The charity currently operates with limited reserves, reflecting its project-based model and focus on delivering concerts and outreach activity within available resources.

The trustees recognise the importance of building financial resilience and are working to increase the charity's level of reserves over time. The initial aim is to establish reserves of approximately £5,000, equivalent to the typical cost of delivering a single concert. This will provide a buffer against unexpected costs or fluctuations in income and support the sustainable delivery of future activities.

**Public Benefit:**

The trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty under the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to public benefit guidance.

The charity provides public benefit through:

- the presentation of accessible, high-quality orchestral concerts
- opportunities for young musicians to participate in orchestral performance
- collaboration with local music groups and organisations

These activities contribute to the cultural life of the local community and support musical education and participation.

**Plans for the Future**

The Sinfonia will continue to build on its established concert series while expanding its outreach and educational work, including further side-by-side projects and collaborations with local partners.

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The trustees remain focused on ensuring the long-term sustainability of the organisation while maintaining the quality and ambition of its artistic programme.

**Trustee Declaration**

The trustees declare that they have approved this report and have authorised it to be signed on their behalf.

Signed:

Name:

Date:

*John Bruce-Jones*  
John Bruce-Jones  
26/4/26

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## Charity Commission Annual Return 2025

BISHOP'S STORTFORD SINFONIA LTD.

Charity registration number: 1093196

**Most of the information you give in this form will become publicly available on the Register of Charities. Any field that the Charity Commission will not display will be clearly marked.**

**This document is a record of the information provided in the Annual Return 2025.**

### PART A - Charity information

#### Financial period

**Financial period start date**

01/07/2024

**Financial period end date**

30/06/2025

#### Income and spending

**Income £**

£ 41,501

**Spending £**

£ 28,570

#### Number of contracts from government

**How many contracts (other than grant agreements) did your charity receive from central government or a local authority during the financial period for this return?**

0

#### Number of grants from government

**How many grants did your charity receive from central government or a local authority during the financial period for this return?**

1

#### Value of grants from government

**What was the total value of the grants received from central government or a local authority during the financial period for this return?**

£ 1,000

## Income breakdown

### Donations and legacies (excluding Endowments Received)

£ 19,724

### Charitable activities

£ 1,159

### Other trading activities

£ 20,618

### Investments

£ 0

### Other

£ 0

## Grantmaking

### Is grant making the main way your charity carries out its purposes?

No

## Recipients of grants

Please round all figures to the nearest pound (do not enter decimal points or commas).

### Individuals

£ 0

### Other charities

£ 0

### Other organisations that are not charities

£ 0

## Trustee payments

Excluding out of pocket expenses, for what were any of the trustees paid during the financial period for this return?

☒ e. None of the trustees have been paid

Did any of the trustees resign and take up employment with your charity in the financial period of this return?

No

## Income from outside the UK

Did your charity receive income from outside of the United Kingdom in the financial period of this return?

Yes

### United States

Governments or quasi government bodies outside of the United Kingdom (including European Union)

£ 0

Charities, Non-Government Organisations or Not for Profits outside of the United Kingdom

£ 0

Private Companies outside of the United Kingdom

£ 0

Individual donors resident outside of the United Kingdom

£ 14,768

Unknown

£ 0

## Methods of overseas funding

**How was income from outside of the United Kingdom received by your charity in the financial period of this return?**

**(Tick all that apply)**

Businesses authorised to provide 'Payment services'

## Delivering activities outside the United Kingdom

**Did your charity deliver charitable activities outside of the United Kingdom in the financial period of this return?**

No

## Spending outside of the United Kingdom

**Did your charity spend funds outside of the United Kingdom in the financial period of this return?**

No

**Total Spending outside of the United Kingdom**

£

## Trading subsidiaries

**Does the charity have any trading subsidiaries?**

No

## Employment contract types

**People were permanently employed by your charity**

0

**People were on fixed-terms contracts with your charity**

0

**Self-employed people were working for your charity**

100

## Total overseas employees

**How many of the people above work on behalf of your charity outside of the United Kingdom?**

0

## Total employee payroll

**What was the total amount spent on employee payroll during the financial period relating to this return?**

£ 20,805

## Employees' salaries

**Did any of your charity's employees receive total employment benefits of £60,000 or more in the financial period of this annual return?**

No

## Governance policies

**Internal charity financial controls policy and procedures**

No

**Safeguarding policy and procedures**

No

**Financial reserves policy and procedures**

Not applicable

**Complaints policy and procedures**

Not applicable

**Serious incident reporting policy and procedures**

Not applicable

**Internal risk management policy and procedures**

Not applicable

**Trustee expenses policy and procedures**

Not applicable

**Trustee conflicts of interest policy and procedures**

Not applicable

**Investing charity funds policy and procedures**

Not applicable

**Campaigns and political activity policy and procedures**

Not applicable

**Bullying and harassment policy and procedures**

Not applicable

**Social media policy and procedures**

No

**Engaging external speakers at charity events policy and procedures**

Not applicable

**Safeguarding****Has your charity provided services to children and/or adults at risk in the financial period of the return?**

No

**Serious Incidents****Has your charity reported all Serious Incidents (including any historical incidents) that the charity became aware of during the financial period of this return?**

There were no incidents to report

**External risk and impact****Donations**

Negative

**Other income - grants**

No impact

**Other income - contracts**

Not applicable

**Other income - investment**



Not applicable
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**Expenditure on charitable activities**

No impact
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**Expenditure on overheads**

Negative
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**Number of volunteers**

No impact
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**Number of employees**

No impact
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**Number of trustees**

No impact
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**Fundraising activities**

Negative
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**Capacity to deliver services**

Unknown
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**Total service demand**

Unknown
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## Volunteers

Excluding trustees, provide an estimate of the number of volunteers who carried out charitable activities on behalf of your charity in the United Kingdom during the financial period of this return?

3
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## Privacy statement

Any information you give us will be held securely and processed only in accordance with the rule on data protection. We will not disclose your personal details to anyone unconnected to the Charity Commission unless:

- you have consented to their release; or
- we are legally obliged to disclose them; or
- we regard disclosure as either (a) necessary so that we can properly carry out our statutory functions or (b) necessary in the public interest.

We may share and disclose information about you with relevant public authorities, regulatory bodies and agencies, outside the Charity Commission but only if:

- we can lawfully do so; and
- we decide that disclosure is necessary for national security, crime detection, prevention, and law enforcement, or other issues in the public interest

Information we collect about you

We will use this information:

To enable us to carry out our statutory functions and duties;

This will include the following actions:

- (a) update, consolidate, and improve the accuracy of our records;

**(b) undertake crime detection and prevention and law enforcement and assist the third parties specified above to investigate or prevent crime and carry out law enforcement;**

**(c) data analysis, testing, research, statistical and survey purposes**

**Information we receive from other sources.**

**Information we receive from other sources**

**We may combine this information with information you give to us and information we collect about you.**

**We may use this information and the combined information for the purposes set out above (depending on the types of information we receive).**

**We will ensure that any such disclosure and use is proportionate; considers your right to respect for your private life; and is done fairly and lawfully in accordance with the data protection principles of the Data Protection Act.**

**The Data Protection Act 1998 regulates the use of 'personal data', which is essentially any information, however stored, about identifiable living individuals.**

**As a 'data controller' under the Act, the Charity Commission must comply with it. Any changes we may make to our privacy statement in the future will be set out in the replacement version of this form.**

**Please check back frequently to see any updates or changes to our privacy policy.**

#### **Declaration**

**This annual return has not been submitted and no Declaration has been made**