



**President: Bob Chilcott**

**Director of Music: Brian Kay**

**Chorus Master: Hilary Tadman-Robins**

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From: The Chairman, Burford Singers

## **Annual report 2022/23**

This report covers the financial year when the choir has been able to perform its usual pattern of concerts in autumn, spring and summer.

The committee met formally on five occasions during the year.

### **Situation post Covid**

Throughout the season the choir continued to hold full-scale rehearsals and concerts. Concerts were well attended and, with an attractive programme of music, generated excellent audience attendance with a return to pre-Covid ticket sales.

Members continued to self-test where appropriate and there were no reports of significant or worse than average Covid issues arising from the choir's activities.

### **Events**

As indicated above, the committee agreed a programme of three major concerts for the 2022/23 season. Choir, full orchestra and an exceptional group of soloists featured throughout the season.

Our November concert was a celebration of the music of the composer and arranger John Rutter, including his well-known setting of the *Gloria* and his arrangement of seven spirituals, *Feel the Spirit*. The concert required substantial orchestral forces and featured the mezzo-soprano Melanie Marshall for whom the arrangement of spirituals was written.

The April concert consisted of two well-known works for choir: the Fauré *Requiem* and Haydn *Nelson Mass*. The *Requiem* was performed using John Rutter's edited version which restored the composer's version of the work with instrumental ensemble that remained unpublished and unperformed in his lifetime. The performance featured top-class soloists Sarah Power (soprano), Emily Gray (mezzo-soprano), Peter Martin (tenor) and Jon Stainsby (baritone).

For our June concert we performed an all-Mozart programme, starting with his lively and uplifting setting of *Regina Coeli* (K276), followed by a performance of the *Horn Concerto No. 3* for which we were extremely fortunate to engage the outstanding horn soloist Ben Goldscheider. The second part of the programme featured the *Requiem in D minor*, with excellent soloists Lucy Knight (soprano), Angharad Lyddon (mezzo-soprano), Peter Martin (tenor) and Freddie Long (bass).

All three concerts took place in Burford Parish Church and were accompanied by the Cotswold Chamber Orchestra.

These concerts proved to be very successful and achieved (or exceeded) our target audience numbers.

## **Membership**

By the beginning of September 2022, choir membership had fallen by just over 10% compared to end of financial year 2020/21. Anecdotal evidence is that it seems to be a typical figure for most choirs in our area post Covid-19.

However, we continued to receive applications for membership and numbers slowly recovered through the year. The Associates membership scheme continues to give us flexibility to enable applicants to be assessed as soon as possible after we receive their applications, and we continue to receive interest from potential new joiners in the area.

## **Preparation for handover of Director of Music**

At the beginning of October 2022 Brian Kay announced his decision to step down from the position of Director of Music with effect from December 2023. Brian has been a much loved and respected conductor and music mentor for 21 years. Not only has he continued to attract new singers and build an excellent reputation for the choir, but his work and reputation has brought to us a range of highly respected professional soloists - often who perform for a heavily discounted fee. He will be much missed, although he intends continuing to live in the area and hopefully will maintain links with the choir.

The committee was therefore presented with a significant challenge to find a suitable successor. The task involved setting up a recruitment process, which included opportunities for choir members to experience short listed candidates conducting a rehearsal before taking part in a members' secret ballot for their preferred candidate.

I am very pleased to report that Will Dawes, Director of Music at Somerville College, Oxford, has accepted our offer to take over as our new Director of Music at the beginning of January 2024.

## **Finance**

The committee increased subscriptions by 4% for FY 2022/23 in anticipation of increased costs and potentially lower revenues. Although this kept our subscriptions at a relatively low level compared to similar choirs in our area, we were also hoping that the concert programme would attract large audience numbers to all three concerts and therefore help to meet our outgoings. Our cash reserves were at a healthy level at the time in accordance with our Reserves Policy.

As things turned out, despite good audience figures, we were faced during the financial year with a number of substantial increases in costs in common with the performance of the economy generally. The committee reviewed our financial performance in April and were very concerned about the losses we were incurring. In particular, the inflation of concert costs (rather than professional fees) was particularly worrying – and unlikely to come down in the foreseeable future.

After a significant amount of work by the Treasurer and members of the committee, we decided to complete the concert programme as planned, but implement a significant uplift in subscriptions in FY 2023/24. We left any uplift in ticket prices for the time being as they appeared to be roughly in line with similar events in our area. We calculated that we should be able to meet our commitments for the 2022/23 season, any shortfall being met from reserves.

Financial details are available in the Treasurer's Report, but I am pleased to state that, overall, the results at the end of the financial year are in line with the revised prediction. The Trustees are satisfied that the choir remains financially viable and our reserves are in good shape.

## Outlook for 2023/24

The committee held meetings during summer 2023 to decide how to meet the impact of rising inflation. The committee also noted that with a new MD joining, who we assumed would live further away from Burford than Brian Kay, there would be a rise in MD fees and costs.

We therefore decided to raise subscriptions for the new financial year by 40%, to a level which we believe is in line with other choral groups in our area. We undertook to hold a fund-raising activity at the start of September 2023 to help meet our forecast expenditure. We have also agreed with our new Director of Music to take a somewhat cautious approach to implementing the future concert programme, which will include a concert for the Finale of the Burford Festival in June 2024, but will not include orchestral accompaniment.

I am very pleased to report that the majority of existing and new members have accepted the new subscription rates and as at July 2024 we received over 90 membership applications for the coming year.

We now have confidence in planning Handel's *Messiah*, which will be Brian Kay's 'farewell concert' and Haydn's *The Creation* which will be Will Dawes' first concert with us at the end of March 2024. Both of these concerts will be accompanied by the Cotswold Chamber Orchestra.

## Safeguarding Policy

Our Safeguarding Policy is published on our web site. Sian Snelling (choir member) has taken over from Jo Glyde as our Designated Person. Full Members and Associates should ensure that they take time to update their understanding of the policy – see our members' web page [www.burfordsingers.org.uk/members](http://www.burfordsingers.org.uk/members).

## Thanks

I must take this opportunity to thank Brian Kay for devising and delivering such an exciting programme of music this year and to Robin Baggs for all his hard work as our hugely admired and valued accompanist.

I also thank everyone involved in planning and delivering our events. Planning and executing the rearrangements in a busy working church with three Sunday morning services in time for a Sunday evening concert is not a trivial exercise. My thanks to the Vicar and Parochial Church Council for helping to achieve this.

Special thanks also to my fellow committee members, especially those who are standing down from the committee at the forthcoming AGM: Judy Banks (Friends Secretary) and Patricia Hedges (Ticket Manager). I am also stepping down from the committee at the end of my second term as Chairman. This is therefore my last address to the members. It has been a privilege to serve on such an able and supportive committee and in association with a very special Director of Music.

Best wishes to everyone.



Peter Moran

Chairman

**THE BURFORD SINGERS (Charity No.1096043)****STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES - Year Ended 31st August 2023**

	<b>2023</b>		<b>2022</b>	
	£	£	£	£
<b><u>INCOMING RESOURCES</u></b>				
Membership Subscriptions	16,640		11,735	
Income Tax Recovered (Gift Aid)	7,218		3,398	
		23,858		15,133
Ticket Sales - future	950		425	
Ticket Sales	15,618		12,481	
		16,568		12,906
Other Sponsorship		300		590
Grants, Donations & "Friends"		5,478		4,823
Bank Interest		354		23
Fund Raising		7		5
Sale of Goods		30		64
Workshops		100		0
October Function		4,180		
Members' purchase of scores		0		310
Misc. receipts		78		60
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>		<b>50,954</b>		<b>33,913</b>
<b><u>OUTGOING RESOURCES</u></b>				
<b><u>Direct Charitable Expenditure</u></b>				
Concert Expenditure	44,298		34,933	
Subscription (Making Music)	365		365	
Ex Gratia Payments				
Insurance	269		257	
Capital Purchases				
Performing Rights Licence/Fees				
Ticketing Costs	86		45	
Singday	370		300	
October Function	2,040			
Previous financial year concert costs	58			
Goods & music purchased for resale				
Future Concert costs	552		1,293	
IT Support	11		11	
		<b>48,049</b>		<b>37,204</b>
<b><u>Administration</u></b>				
Postage, printing, stationery, telephone	55		61	
Bank Charges	76		122	
Misc. payments	358		159	
Audit & Accountancy				
Committee Meeting venue hire	148		84	
Professional Fees				
Staging Storage	800		600	
		<b>1,437</b>		<b>1,026</b>
<b>Total Outgoing Resources</b>		<b>49,486</b>		<b>38,230</b>

Net Inflow / Outflow of Funds	1,467	-4,317
Cash Fund Brought Forward	41,744	46,061
Cash Fund Carried Forward	43,211	41,744

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**THE BURFORD SINGERS (Charity No.1096043)**

**BALANCE SHEET As at 31st August 2023**

	2023	2022
<b><u>ASSETS</u></b>		
<b>Non Current Assets</b>		
Concert Staging	12,247	13,608
Rehearsal Piano	1,703	1,892
Trailer	2,038	2,264
	15,988	17,764
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Bank	43,211	41,744
	43,211	41,744
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>59,199</b>	<b>59,508</b>
<b><u>LIABILITIES</u></b>	0	0
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>59,199</b>	<b>59,508</b>
<b>FUNDS</b>		
<b>Opening Balance</b>	59,508	65,799
Movement in Cash Fund	1,467	-4,317
Movement in Asset Fund	-1,776	-1,974
<b>CLOSING Balance</b>	<b>59,199</b>	<b>59,508</b>

The financial statements were approved by the Members at meeting held on .....2023

and signed on their behalf by :-

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## EXAMINER'S UNQUALIFIED REPORT

### INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE BURFORD SINGERS

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 August 2023, which are set out on pages 2 and 3 of this report.

#### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees 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 charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 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 match the accounting records;

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.



Joanne Tuffill BSc (Hons) ACA  
Chartered Accountant  
6 Wheelwrights Court  
Buckland  
Faringdon  
Wilts SN7 8QA

22/09/23

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The financial statements were approved by the Members at meeting held on 26 October 2023

and signed on their behalf by :- Peter M Moran  
chairman.