

Farnham Youth Choir

Annual Report and Accounts (Financial Year ended 31st August 2022)

Registered charity no. 1145358

1. Aims and Objectives

Farnham Youth Choir (FYC) is committed to promoting, improving and developing the musical education of young people in the Farnham area. This is pursued through the creation and maintenance of a youth choir of the highest musical standards. FYC's activities include the presentation of public concerts, tours both in the UK and abroad, the production of recordings and participation in choral competitions.

The public benefits of the organisation are three-fold:

- i. Young people in the Farnham area can participate in choral activities to a musical standard which may not be available to them within mainstream education. The ethos of FYC throughout its existence has been to ensure that no child is barred from accessing this opportunity purely on the grounds of affordability.
- ii. As a community-based choir, a significant proportion of FYC's public concerts are centred on the Farnham area, thus ensuring that the local population can benefit from attending youth choral concerts of the highest international standard.
- iii. Both FYC members and the local community benefit from the fact that FYC makes Farnham a destination of choice for other leading youth choirs from around the world.

2. Financial Position

The FYC annual accounts for the year ending 31st August 2022 are presented on pages 6 to 7 of this report. A excess of receipts over payments of £6,586 is reported compared to an excess of £18,277 in the previous year. The balance sheet shows total assets less current liabilities of £79,039 (up from £72,453) with £75,139 (up from £68,553) in the bank account as at 31st August 2021.

The 2021-22 financial year has seen the choir return to a normal level of rehearsals and performances with a consequential increase in both income and expenditure. In September 2021 we implemented an increase in subscription levels across all three choirs to reflect operating cost increases faced by the choir in recent years although we continue to rely on the generosity of our patrons and other donors to fund these activities.

FYC currently has eight separate funds:

1. a general fund for the day-to-day operation of the choir; current value £35,247;

2. a fundraising and marketing fund to develop FYC's fundraising and marketing proposition; current value £8,598;
3. The Friends of FYC fund to support FYC tours; current value £14,100;
4. A vocal coach fund, gifted by The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust, to provide vocal coaching for the choir for the 2022/23 season; current value £2,446;
5. The Big Give bursary fund which funds singers across all three choirs who are facing financial disadvantage; current value £10,398;
6. In 2021/22 the Community Foundation for Surrey (CFS) awarded FYC £3,737 to create a bursary fund to support singers who are facing financial disadvantage, £975 was used during 2021/22; current value £2,762;
7. A tour fund which allows us to manage cash flow issues associated with large budget tours and also to provide an overall subsidy for tours where required; current value £4,804; and
8. A schools workshop fund, gifted by The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust and a private donor, to enable members of the FYC music team to offer workshops to local Farnham schools; current value £1,404.

3. Activities Report from Patrick Barrett

The past year has thankfully seen a return to more normal conditions for the choir with weekly rehearsals and in-person concerts. After the disruption of the past two years, it has been so refreshing to get back to what we do best and to hear the choirs bounce back both artistically and socially.

March saw two fantastic concerts from our choirs with the Junior and Training Choirs performing on the 19th and the Senior Choir performing on the 26th. Both were well received and gave us a good platform from which to work from for the rest of the year.

In June, we held a day of auditions on the 12th through which we were able to welcome a number of new faces to the choir. This was followed by our Summer Concert on the 18th in the fantastic acoustic of the Menuhin Hall. It was a very special day which brought all three choirs together and saw the première of three specially commissioned songs from our Composer in Residence Russell Hepplewhite and writer Helen Eastman. Financing of these new pieces of music came from the Mansell fund.

We've since gone on to record these commissions alongside the rest of Russell and Helen's The History Express which will be released in 2023. These sessions were made possible with the support of Alton School who allowed us to use their spaces for the recordings.

Throughout the year, our Training Choir conductor Claire Robins, has been running singing workshops in local schools to introduce our work to new audiences and hopefully bring in new singers to the choirs. These sessions culminated in the inaugural FYC Singing Spree event on 28th June at Farnham Maltings which saw the schools join together to perform the music Claire had taught them alongside a performance from our Senior Choir. This was the first time we've done this and it was a real success.

Leading on from the schools' workshops, we are delighted to welcome Leigh Barnett to the team as our first Community Engagement Officer. She'll be working to boost our profile within local schools and community groups and help drive recruitment for the choirs and the Training Choir in particular.

Over the Summer, the Senior Choir headed off to Cornwall on their first tour since the pandemic. Staying at the University of Falmouth, we had a fantastic week exploring the region and performing in some of its most iconic locations including the Minack Theatre, Land's End and St Michael's Mount. The tour also saw a joint concert with Cornwall Youth Choir – an event that highlighted the impact of the social aspects of choral music just as much as the musical ones.

I'd like to acknowledge Helen Cole who has worked tirelessly for our organisation as our Chair of Trustees. We were so lucky to have had her as our Chair and I know I speak for everyone in saying a huge thank you. Please do not be a stranger to us all at FYC.

It has been so heartening seeing the choirs thrive again after the impact of the pandemic and to see us embark on new recording and recruitment projects to help expand our work in future. Thanks so much to all those who make this happen – it's a real team effort and I feel very lucky to be working alongside you on this!

4. Future Plans from Helen Cole

It's a pleasure at last to be able to reflect on a year that wasn't dominated throughout by Covid-19! The virus still makes its presence felt in daily life but has at least loosened its grip on the UK during 2022. Thinking back to October 2021 and the first FYC concert of the new academic year, it's almost an effort to remember that all windows and doors at St Peter's Church in Woking had to be kept wide open for ventilation and the audience wrapped up against the cold. This time last year, the 2022 World Choir Games were still in theory scheduled to go ahead in South Korea, but a postponement was almost inevitable and FYC instead started to plan a Senior Choir summer tour to Vienna. In the event, both were casualties of the Covid pandemic. I do want to take a moment to reflect on the hardships that FYC's singers have faced owing to Covid, and to pay tribute to all at FYC who have coped with everything from inconvenience and disappointment to personal loss.

I'd like to start by celebrating a return to one of the key things that really gives FYC its fizz and its sense of purpose: going on tour. August's Senior Choir tour really summed up that sense of gingerly getting back to life as it used to be pre-Covid. We were lucky to have picked dates that fell between two spells of extreme heat, but even so, Cornwall was sizzling! As with every FYC tour, the valiant team of adult volunteers watched proudly as FYC's young people surged in confidence during those few days away. I was lucky enough to be at a memorable concert at St Mylor near Falmouth, where FYC joined forces with the young singers of Cornwall County Choirs. In front of a full house, the choirs showcased their different styles and then came together to sing 'Cornwall my Home' which they'd been rehearsing together that afternoon: the characteristic discipline of FYC's performance flexed to let in some raw emotion at that point! Working with or alongside other choirs is a transformative experience and that's why the prospect of the Hull International Choir Competition in April is so exciting for the Senior Choir. We all cross our fingers, too, for the Junior Choir as they work towards entering the Barnardo's National Choral Competition 2023: if they are lucky enough to be selected for the Final, an extraordinary experience at Birmingham Symphony Hall beckons for these younger singers.

As well as getting back to some traditions, 2021-22 has been memorable for a number of 'firsts': here are a just few of them.

At the beginning of each year the race is on to knit the new choirs together, and it's a joy to watch it happen. For the Senior Choir we set aside an autumn weekend to facilitate this, and in 2021 we trialled taking the Seniors away to Braeside, an education centre set in a rambling Edwardian house in Wiltshire. FYC took over the whole house and garden, and for two days the emphasis was on learning together and making friends. It was a great success and one that we've repeated this October; with spiralling hire and travel costs we just have to hope that it will be possible in 2023.

The Big Give Christmas Challenge has been on FYC's radar for some time, but we've never given it a try before. Its great attraction is that if you're lucky enough to find a supporter among the Big Give's stable of donors, that supporter will match the money you raise, once you've got past a certain target. We decided to go for it in 2021. With help from an extremely generous individual supporter, we qualified for match-funding, secured a Big Give donor (the Lake House Charitable Foundation) and used the platform to raise a remarkable £11,700 (including Gift Aid) from the public, friends and patrons. Thanks to a substantial donation from a very kind and engaged private donor via the Community Foundation for Surrey, FYC was able to launch a formal bursary scheme for 2021-22 that our Big Give proceeds will then fund for 2022-23 and beyond, supporting individual children whose circumstances make it difficult to pay membership fees and other costs. Existing choir members are being supported by bursaries right now and our task is to get the word out so that no-one assumes they can't join FYC because they can't afford it. It's timely to be able to offer this financial help as the cost of living crisis unfolds.

In a year still tinged with the pandemic, it's been really beneficial to structure much of the choirs' activity around another positive and purposeful initiative: our work with Russell Hepplewhite, FYC's first composer-in-residence. Russell teamed up with lyricist Helen Eastman to produce a set of songs for FYC, one for each of our choirs. Inspired by great female figures in the history of science, the set is called The Herstory Songs. Children far and wide got the chance to learn one of these, Comet Crazy, thanks to a primary-school education pack available online and created with generous support from Farnham Town Council. Choir members were able to grill Russell and Helen about the songs and about their work generally, as they both visited our rehearsals during the year. The Herstory Songs were premiered at FYC's summer concert at the beautiful Menuhin Hall, and a related group of songs by Russell and Helen called The History Express has also been recorded by our choirs. FYC's History Express recordings will be accessible via a QR code printed on the score, so it's great to think of all the musicians, schools and choirs worldwide who will encounter FYC's voices thisway. We haven't heard the recordings yet, but Russell has – and he reports that our singers and fantastic music team have created something to be truly proud of.

Perhaps the biggest change there has been for FYC in 2021-22 is an emphasis on engaging directly with the Farnham community via regular primary-school workshops and the Singing Spree that we trialled in the summer. The first workshops were part of the 2021 re-launch of our Training Choir that was so generously funded by the D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust, but they have since taken on a life of their own. Thanks to the energy and skill of our Training Choir conductor Claire Robins and further funding support from the D'Oyly Carte, we continue to use these workshops to encourage recruitment into our Training Choir and to further the music education of local children – one of FYC's charitable objects. In contrast, the

Singing Spree happens just once a year! It's a joyous, spirited occasion that brings together primary-school children and FYC's own singers for a morning of music-making at the Farnham Maltings. Our 2022 Spree guests were the whole of year 2 from two Farnham primary schools we've got to know through our workshops, but in 2023 we plan to expand the number of invitees. The aim is to encourage as many children as possible to join our youngest choir, as the number of 'Trainers' hasn't yet stabilised after the post-pandemic re-launch and remains a concern. So on 23 rd June 2023, if you live anywhere in or near the town, as you go about your business you might well catch the sound of Farnham's school-children raising the Maltings' roof!

Other roofs we have raised in 2021-22 are the Music School and Chapel at More House School in Frensham and the Drama Studio at Alton School, both made available to FYC without charge, for which we are profoundly grateful. We continue to rehearse weekly at the Spire Church in Farnham but we watch with interest as renovation works look set to begin soon. The outcome of the renovations will be a fantastic set of spaces for the use of organisations like FYC, but there will be some unavoidable inconvenience in the short term: prepare to be patient and flexible!

Every week in termtime, I have had the privilege of not only talking with FYC parents/carers and volunteers, but also eavesdropping on FYC's rehearsals. It's one of life's best pleasures to listen to FYC's singers hard at work under the direction of Patrick Barrett, Margaret O'Shea, Claire Robins and Sally Hollyer – magicians all – and to enjoy the musicianship of Susan Holmes and Matthew Rickard, FYC's quiet heroes! The background beat to all this is the volunteer activity that makes everything tick. From the choir singer-and-parent team organising carol singing in aid of FYC to the singers and adults who ran a charity tea-tent on a summer afternoon, not forgetting the ranks of parents and carers who qualify as chaperones each year and others who take on the responsibilities of trusteeship: FYC couldn't do any of this without you. But all of us would be in a pickle without the organisational skill and endless resourcefulness of Liz Chapman, now joined for 2022-23 by FYC's first Community Engagement Officer, Leigh Barnett. Thank you is hardly enough, but thank you all.

5. Structure, Governance and Management

FYC is a registered charity and all activities are planned and implemented under the control of a Management Committee. This includes all arrangements for rehearsals, concerts, tours, recordings and control of finance and expenditure. The Committee usually meets twice every term. It comprises a Chair, Treasurer and other trustees, supported by a paid Operations Manager. The trustees are joined by Management Officers who are appointed to specific roles and provide support and feedback to the trustees.

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Statement of receipts and payments - year ended 31 August 2022

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021/22 Total £	2020/21 Total £
Receipts				
Subscriptions	36,157	(975)	35,182	25,010
Gift Aid Receipts	1,327	-	1,327	-
Concerts (net)	3,401	(612)	2,789	1,178
Fundraising	646	7,237	7,883	14,550
Donations	4,685	10,808	15,493	8,035
Sponsorship	1,500	-	1,500	500
Patrons	2,175	-	2,175	2,130
Miscellaneous	-	-	-	-
	49,891	16,458	66,349	51,403
Payments				
Fees (Directors and Accompanists)	24,081	1,747	25,828	15,797
Singing Spree & workshops	1,476	480	1,956	-
Rent	2,289	-	2,289	1,135
Uniforms, net of receipts	455	400	855	(7)
Bank charges	1,251	-	1,251	745
Administration	17,745	-	17,745	17,430
Music & Commissions	1,156	2,150	3,306	488
Marketing	-	2,429	2,429	979
Tours (net)	1,723	2,100	3,823	-3,997
Equipment	13	-	13	202
Miscellaneous	268	-	268	354
	50,457	9,306	59,763	33,126
Net receipts / (payments)	(566)	7,152	6,586	18,277
Transfers to/(from) funds	(4,084)	4,084	-	-
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	(4,650)	11,236	6,586	18,277

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Statement of assets & liabilities - year ended 31 August 2022

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2021/22 Total £	2020/21 Total £
Funds reconciliation				
Cash at bank 1.9.21	35,997	32,556	68,553	50,276
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	(4,650)	11,236	6,586	18,277
Cash at bank 31.8.22	31,347	43,792	75,139	68,553
Current assets				
Equipment			1,900	1,900
Music library			2,000	2,000
Cash at bank			75,139	68,553
			79,039	72,453
Unrestricted funds				
General fund			35,247	39,897
Restricted funds				
Development fund			-	586
Marketing fund			8,598	9,021
Mansell fund			-	2,150
Friends of FFYC fund			14,100	16,140
Vocal coach fund			2,446	1,700
D'Oyly Carte			-	2,959
Big Give bursary fund			10,398	-
CFS bursary fund			2,762	-
Tour fund			4,084	-
Schools workshops fund			1,404	-
			79,039	72,453

On behalf of FYC Committee
Clare Wingfield BSc ACA MBA
Hon. Treasurer



ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Farnham Youth Choir

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Farnham Youth Choir ('the Trust') for the year ended 31 August 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust 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 Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the 2011 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.

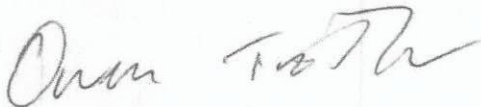
Independent Examiner's Statement

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 Trust as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with those 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 to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Name: OWEN TROTTER

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies:

member of
the Institute
of Chartered
Accountants
of England
and Wales

Address: 8 South Parade, York

Date: 3/7/2023