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LICHFIELD
GOSPEL CHOIR

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Lichfield Gospel Choir

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Annual Report

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On Reflection - Gerbo Huisman



I am delighted to write the introduction to our Annual Report, which reflects and celebrates another very successful year. Inevitably “Wigmore Hall” will get a mention elsewhere in this report. And yes, standing on the stage previously occupied by the likes of Arthur Rubenstein, Benjamin Britten and Ivor Novello (to name a few) joined as we were by the Imbube Singers was special, as was looking out over a sold-out Wigmore Hall and note even some dancing in the aisles (some strategically placed LGC members might have helped).

To me though nothing beats the feeling of joy and pride singing at our home venue, for our home audience, which I would choose anytime above any other stage, even in London. This feeling is closely matched by the delight of attending our weekly rehearsals, with the opportunity to socialise before and after (and a bit in between), polishing up old material (with occasionally some Gabriella refinement added) and learning new material (and wasn't it great having time for this?).

In the prime, central position of the Basses the sounds experienced can be spine-tinglingly (is that a word?) beautiful. Observers have reported that during rehearsals we move even more freely, are more expressive, more ourselves. I always find it quite intriguing to observe how new members in their first weeks are a little taken aback by the amount of movement and our willingness to throw ourselves into any shape or position asked for by our MDs, but also how their initial very hesitant efforts to join in soon enough become fully fledged LGC movement patterns and facial expressions.

I think what I am really trying to say is: I love the rehearsals, which tend to be amongst the highlights of my week, distract me from daily stresses and worries and I'd be pretty happy if that's all I do within the choir.

With all this activity, rehearsals and performances, enjoyable social events, a (pro-) active, highly skilled and always dedicated Committee (their contributions richly reflected in this AR) and being blessed with our two wonderful Musical Directors (you'd consider yourself lucky with one of them!) the Choir is in good health.

Above all, we have our lovely and always enthusiastic members who turn up week after week, look out for each other, share their talents, do as they are told (I mean taught) and always manage to create that special atmosphere, that expressive movement and most of all that unmistakable beautiful LGC sound.

I am very proud to be part of this Choir and delighted to serve it as its Chair.

Keeping In Touch - Kate Slater



Our main channels of choir communication are the website, Instagram and Facebook, and as always I'm very grateful for your continued engagement with everything there. I've recently updated the home page of the website to focus on our concert with the Imbube Singers and direct visitors to buy tickets. This is the first time we've used an external platform, Ticket Tailor, to sell tickets, which seems to be working well and should keep things running smoothly on the night!

I've been focussing more on direct email too, and we now have over 440 people subscribed to our mailing list (we use Mailchimp) and are planning to send a few more emails before the concert. Of course we also have the flyers and posters which I know have been enthusiastically distributed!

Our new members have hopefully already discovered the resources in the Members' Area of the website. The diary is usually as up-to-date as it can be (we rarely plan very far ahead!) and the Members' Gallery is handy if you're trying to remember new names (I'm a bit behind with this at the moment as there's been so much concert admin to do, but perhaps by the time you're reading this I'll have sorted it!).

It's also worth highlighting that the learning tracks are a relatively recent addition, mostly dating from around the pandemic; although there are now about 20, the library certainly doesn't contain our full repertoire. Zoom rehearsals began for the same reason; a lifeline when we were all stuck at home, they continued to support those who weren't yet ready to return in-person. It wasn't long til everyone became so used to being able to join on Zoom or catch up on YouTube that we decided to keep it going, but, as I'm sure you're all aware, it's not without its hiccups! Sound quality is never going to be perfect, although I understand it's usually better live on Zoom before it's compressed by YouTube.

A success of the past year has been the Whatsapp Community announcements group. We use this almost exclusively for last minute updates (like delayed trains), and only admins (Gerbo, Emily and I) can post in there. If you aren't in this group and would like to be, please ask one of us.

We're grateful for your patience with all the surveys (Emily and Gerbo have recently started doing some of these too!) With over 100 members they're a necessary piece of the admin puzzle, especially when we're trying to plan concerts. You should now receive an email confirmation when you've completed a survey.

Finally, a huge thank you to Phil Barnes for all his wonderful photos. I still have some from St Editha's I haven't yet shared...

You can find us:
www.lichfieldgospelchoir.co.uk/members (password: gospelchoir)
Instagram: [@lichfieldgospel](https://www.instagram.com/lichfieldgospel)
Facebook: [Lichfield Gospel Choir](https://www.facebook.com/LichfieldGospelChoir)

And please do encourage your friends to sign up to our mailing list online [here](https://www.lichfieldgospelchoir.co.uk/members).

Concerts Review - Andy Paterson



We enjoyed a diverse range of Concerts during the year, with the prestige of performing in July at London's Wigmore Hall as part of their African Concert Series. With a small stage, we were limited in the number of singers but a coachful of intrepid performers made landfall in the capital to enjoy an amazing collaboration with the African Imbube Singers. Under Themba & Gabriella's guidance, we took the normally-staid venue by storm with aisle-dancing, rip-roaring applause and a standing ovation to conclude our now legendary performance.

Such was its success that it has now brought about our most ambitious concert to date. With the Imbube Singers and a full complement of singers, we're looking forward to a sell-out reprise in our own Cathedral in October, where we'll celebrate 15 years of Lichfield Gospel Choir.

In October, the familiar surroundings of Ss Peter & Paul Church hosted our concert in aid of Mercy Rescue Trust where we performed to full pews and raised a healthy contribution for Themba's sister Jedidah's Kenyan charity.

November brought us a challenging performance at St. Editha's church in Tamworth where their failed heating and an unexpected dressing of Christmas trees kept us all on our toes and looking lively as we warmed up the appreciative audience with a festive repertoire.

And as if freezing indoor temperatures weren't enough, a month later and in true festive spirit, we joined a collaboration of singers at the National Memorial Arboretum for a sparkling session of outdoor carols and a selection from our own African repertoire, ably led by our gloved, scarved and hatted Musical Directors.

Finally, thanks must go to Janet Giboon and Ian Weetman for ongoing storage and transportation of all our staging components and - of course - to Themba & Gabriella for their indomitable leadership and inspiration throughout another wonderful year of joyful singing. Long may it continue.

Musical Directors' Review

Themba Mvula & Gabriella Liandu



This has been a very special year for the choir. With slightly fewer concerts in the diary than usual, our focus was largely on preparing for our performance at Wigmore Hall. This gave us the opportunity to learn lots of exciting new repertoire. Songs including *Hlohonolofatsa*, *Abanije* and *Kaya Sililo* have stretched us in new ways and expanded the range of our repertoire.

The Wigmore Hall project—initiated by the African Concert Series—also introduced us to the Imbube Singers. They have been a real source of inspiration, introducing us to new choir favourites such as *Shasholozo* and *Thula Thula*, but also wowing us with the powerful voices and electric dance moves! The workshop they led was extremely memorable, and sharing the Wigmore Hall stage with them was an unforgettable experience (one we're incredibly excited to bring to Lichfield later this year).

Another highlight was our October concert in aid of Mercy Rescue, which was a huge success and raised a significant sum. It further strengthened our relationship with Ray Prince and Ian Reed who always add so much to our performances. And finally, there was the workshop at Birmingham University for Shaping The Arts, where we were joined by members from the Gospel Revisited Project Choir and the Birmingham University Gospel Choir. The sense of mutual appreciation between the groups was palpable, and we very much hope this will lead to future collaborations.

We continue to be immensely proud of the choir and delighted with how we are developing musically. We look forward to another exciting year ahead!

Financial Report - Michael Jones



The income that the Choir received in the financial year 2024/25 was £28,556.10 and the expenditure that the choir paid out was £25,453.29.

This means that at the 31st March 2025 the choir held a surplus of £7,406.37, (starting balance carried forward was £4,303.56)

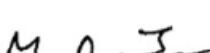
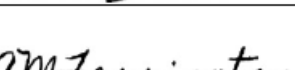
During the last twelve months we have seen monthly subscriptions rise from £12 to £18 halfway through the year to cover against rising expenditure levels.

The current levels of choir membership mean that at present we are able to cover all our monthly expenditure.

The surplus which we held at the end of the financial year was helped by a successful gift aid claim which highlights the importance of this income stream moving forward.

Details of all income and expenditure can be seen in the balance sheet contained within the report.

Once again, we are grateful to Kate Farrington who kindly agreed to act as Honorary Independent Examiner for the choir's accounts this year.

LICHFIELD GOSPEL CHOIR			
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - 12 Months ended 31 March 2025			
INCOME		EXPENDITURE	£
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD			
Opening Cash	0.00		
Opening Bank	4,303.56		
Gifts	29,450.00	Material Director Expenses	18,485.00
Gift Aid Refunded	2,827.01	Renewal from other	2,267.00
Ticket Sales	4,254.74	Administration Fees for Concerts	154.00
Concert Fees from	960.00	Donations	1,295.00
Concert Fees from Wigmore Hall	960.00	Cash Hire	482.00
Interest Income	33.49	Stationery	254.00
Bank Interest		Printing, Advertising & Website	218.00
		Travel Subscriptions & Bank	207.00
		Making Music for Subscribers	337.00
		Closing Cash & Bank from reconciliation	7,406.37
	<u>30,008.66</u>		<u>30,008.66</u>
I approve these Accounts as correct and adopted by the Committee			
	M. Jones		
I certify these Accounts as maintained by me:			
	C. Farrington		

Committee & Charity Trustees



Above: Gerbo Huisman, Chair. Emily Bacon, Secretary. Michael Jones, Treasurer. Kate Slater, Digital Media Officer.

Below: Iona Chisholm, General Officer. Andy Paterson, Events Officer. Kate Courage, Social Events Officer. Hilary Ford, General Officer. Henry Drake, General Officer



2025 Election Schedule

Terms of Office & Election Schedule					
Name	Responsibility/Office	Elected In	To serve until	Available for re-election	Post open for elections
Gerbo Huisman	Chair	2024	2027	n/a	No
Emily Bacon	Secretary	2024	2027	n/a	No
Michael Jones	Treasurer	2022	2025	Yes	Yes
Kate Slater	Digital Media	2023	2026	n/a	No
Andy Paterson	Concerts	2022	2025	Yes	Yes
Kate Courage	Social Events	2023	2026	n/a	No
Iona Chisholm	General	2024	2027	n/a	No
Hilary Ford	General	2022	2025	No	Yes
Henry Drake	General	2023	2026	tbc	tbc

Secretary:
112 Gaia Lane
Lichfield
WS13 7LS

Treasurer:
38 Bracken Close
Lichfield
WS14 9RU

Bank:
Lloyds TSB Bank plc
Burton-on-Trent branch
PO Box 1000
BX1 1LT

Registered Charity No:
1153553

If you would prefer a hard-copy of this Annual Report, please request one from any member of the Committee or email lichfieldgospelchoir@gmail.com

Lichfield Gospel Choir is a Registered Charity No: 1153553

<http://www.lichfieldgospelchoir.co.uk>



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LICHFIELD GOSPEL CHOIR

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - 12 Months ended 31 March 2025

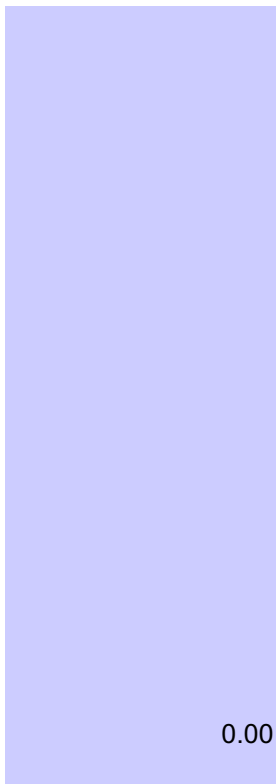
INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
	£		£
BALANCE BROUGHT FORWARD			
Opening Cash	0.00		
Opening Bank	4,303.56		
Subs	19,432.00	Musical Directors Expenses	19,105.89
Gift Aid Relaimed	2,527.01	Accompanists Fees for Concerts	434.30
Ticket Sales	3,059.63	Room hire	2,382.50
Concert Fees	2,745.11	Donation	1,396.36
Coach Fares	0.00	Coach Hire	950.00
Miscellaneous	1,270.86	Sundry	551.69
Bank Interest	33.49	Equipment	257.10
		Printing, advertising & website	358.45
		Zoom subscription & data	192.00
		Making Music Subscription	337.00
		Closing Cash & Bank from reconciliation	7,406.37
	<u>33,371.66</u>		<u>33,371.66</u>

I approve these Accounts as correct and accepted by the Committee

M Jones

I certify these Accounts as examined by me.

C Farrington



0.00



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Income

Income

Date	Ref	Details	Paid In Date	Value	Opening Funds from Floats
01.04.24		standing order subs April (? x £12)		1320.00	
01.05.24		standing order subs May (? x £12)		1260.00	
01.06.24		standing order subs June (? x £12)		1212.00	
01.07.24		standing order subs July (? x £12)		1260.00	
01.08.24		standing order subs Aug (? x £12)		1230.00	
01.09.24		standing order subs Sept (? x £18)		1698.00	
01.10.24		standing order subs Oct (?x £18)		1936.00	
01.11.24		standing order subs Nov (? x £18)		1878.00	
01.12.24		standing order subs Dec (? x £18)		1914.00	
01.01.25		standing order subs Jan (? x £18)		1878.00	
01.02.25		standing order subs Feb (? x £18)		1842.00	
01.03.25		standing order subs March (? x £18)		2004.00	
		Interest on Savings		33.49	
		ST CHADS		500.00	
		LICHFIELD FESTIVAL		1295.11	
		REFRESHMENTS FROM CONCERT		226.86	
		WIGMORE HALL REFUND HIRE OF COACH VIA THEMBA MVULA		950.00	
		Sale of Scarves		94.00	
		Ticket Sales Mercy Rescue Trust Concert		1882.81	
		HMRC Gift AID		2527.01	
		Card Sales Mercy Rescue Trust Concert		336.00	
		Cash Ticket Sales and Refreshments Mercy Rescue Trust Concert		840.82	
		St Ediths		950.00	
				0.00	
				0.00	
				0.00	
				0.00	
				0.00	
				0.00	
		Total		29,068.10	0.00

29,068.10

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Expenditure

Date	cheque no	Payee	Details	Value	Float paid into bank
9/4/2024 P		Emily Bacon	Material for Scarves	106.70	
19/4/2024 P		Gabriella Liandu	Recording Tracks	287.90	
19/4/2024		Andy Paterson	Microphone	79.00	
1/5/2024 P		Gabriella Liandu	Singing Day	205.30	
2/5/2024 P		Gabriella Liandu	APRIL	419.92	
2/5/2024 P		Themba Mvula	APRIL	1,536.47	
20/5/2024 P		Holycross	APRIL	305.00	
21/5/2024 P		Kate Slater	Data	66.00	
3/6/2024 P		Themba Mvula	MAY	809.09	
7/6/2024 E		Gabriella Liandu	MAY	501.90	
18/6/2024 E		Holycross	MAY	172.50	
24/6/2024 E		City Life	ADVERT	10.00	
7/3/2024 !!!		Holycross	MARCH	230.00	
1/7/2024		Michael Jones	Cups/Plates for concert	33.62	
1/7/2024 E		Themba Mvula	JUNE	643.28	
8/7/2024 E		Holycross	JUNE	172.50	
8/7/2024 P		Michael Jones	Coffee/Tea/Milk for concert	7.76	
9/7/2024 E		Andy Paterson	Staging	178.10	
10/7/2024 E		Gabriella Liandu	JUNE	249.70	
16/7/2024		Gabriella Liandu	ST CHADS	385.20	
16/7/2024		Themba Mvula	ST CHADS	406.05	
10/7/2024 E		LA TRAVEL	Coach Wigmore Hall	950.00	
1/8/2024 E		Woodhouse Farm	Picnic	50.00	
2/8/2024 E		Holycross	JULY	230.00	
5/8/2024 E		Kate Slater	Data	71.00	
5/8/2024 E		Kate Slater	Cards	9.00	
7/8/2024 E		Gabriella Liandu	Festival	334.65	
13/8/2024 E		Themba Mvula	JULY	1,826.66	
14/8/2024 E		Andy Paterson	Flowers	35.00	
27/8/2024 E		Gabriella Liandu	JULY	494.70	
13/9/2024 E		Holycross	AUGUST	30.00	

13/9/2024 E	City Life	Advert	10.00
9/9/2024	J Clarke	Refund of Subs	12.00
23/9/2024 E	Themba Mvula	SEPTEMBER	1,133.84
30/9/2024 E	Gabriella Liandu	SEPTEMBER	554.93
8/10/2024 E	Holycross	SEPTEMBER	172.50
21/10/2024 E	Lichfield Community	Advert Concert	66.00
22/10/2024 E	Gabriella Liandu	October (part)	695.93
28/10/2024 E	Kate Slater	Flyers for Concert	37.65
29/10/2024	Kate Slater		32.00
31/10/2024 E	Gabriella Liandu	october (part) and Concert	564.20
1/11/2024 E	Themba Mvula	OCTOBER	1,509.19
1/11/2024 E	Ian Reid		212.60
1/11/2024 E	The Principal		221.70
11/11/2024	Mercy Rescue	Surplus from Concert	1,396.36
14/11/2024 E	Andy Paterson		50.00
18/11/2024 E	Holycross	OCTOBER	362.50
22/11/2024 E	Gabriella Liandu	OCTOBER	822.85
6/12/2024 E	Making Music		337.00
11/12/2024	Emily Bacon		75.00
12/12/2024 E	Themba Mvula	NOVEMBER	1,684.07
20/12/2024 E	Holycross	NOVEMBER	172.50
20/12/2024 E	Gabriella Liandu	NOVEMBER	642.85
8/1/2025 E	Themba Mvula	DECEMBER	397.43
15/1/2025 E	Holycross	DECEMBER	57.50
23/1/2025 E	Gerbo HUISMAN	15th PARTY	30.99
23/1/2025	Gerbo HUISMAN	15th PARTY	64.65
23/1/2025 E	Kate Slater	Website	244.80
23/1/2025 E	Kate Slater	DATA	55.00
30/1/2025 E	Themba Mvula	January	775.47
3/2/2025 E	Gabriella Liandu	Concert NMA	375.70
3/2/2025 E	Gabriella Liandu	January	350.00
11/3/2025 E	Gabriella Liandu	FEBRUARY	751.24
13/3/2025	Michael Jones	Printer Paper	7.00

25/3/2025 E	Holycross	FEBRUARY	230.00	
28/3/2025 E	Andy Paterson		102.97	
3/3/2025 E	Themba Mvula	FEBRUARY	747.37	
4/3/2025 E	Holycross	JANUARY	172.50	
			0.00	
			0.00	
			0.00	
			0.00	
			25,965.29	0.00
			25,965.29	

Musical Directors Expenses	Accompanists Fees for Concerts	Room hire	Making Music Subscription	Donation	Sundry	Equipment	Coach Hire	Printing, advertising & website	Zoom subscription & data
287.9					106.70				
						79.00			
205.30									
419.92									
1536.47									
		305.00							
									66.00
809.09									
501.90									
		172.50							
								10.00	
		230.00							
					33.62				
643.28									
		172.50							
					7.76				
						178.10			
249.70									
385.20									
406.05									
							950.00		
					50.00				
		230.00							
									71.00
					9.00				
334.65									
1,826.66									
					35.00				
494.70									
		30.00							

1,133.84
554.93
172.50
695.93
564.20
1,509.19
212.60
221.70
822.85
1,684.07
642.85
397.43
57.50
775.47
375.7
350
751.24

10.00
12.00
66.00
37.65
32.00
50.00
362.50
75.00
172.50
337.00
30.99
64.65
244.80
55.00
7.00

1,396.36

230.00

102.97

747.37

172.5

19,105.89	434.30	2,382.50	337.00	1,396.36	551.69	257.10	950.00	358.45	192.00
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Reconciliation (Input in yellow cells only)

£

Opening Bank (current account & saving account)	4,303.56
Opening Cash	0.00
Add Income	29,068.10
Less Expenditure	25,965.29
Theoretical closing bank (current account & saving account)	7,406.37

Actual bank

Per bank statements 31/03/2025	5,574.61
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Add

Monies paid in not on bank statement

Date	£
Total	0.00

Less

payments due not yet on bank statement

details	£

date cleared

Total	0.00

Bank restated 5,574.61

Difference to theoretical balance -1,831.76

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Lichfield Gospel Choir (Charity Number 1153553)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Lichfield Gospel Choir (the Trust) for the year ended 31 March 2025.

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 in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: 

Name: Catherine Farrington

Address: 101 Gillway Lane, Tamworth, Staffordshire, B79 8PJ

Date: 8 September 2025