

The Fourth Choir
Trustees Annual Report
and Accounts
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021
Charity Number 1156769

The Fourth Choir
Trustees' Annual Report
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021

Chair Report

This report covers our ninth year as a choir and our eighth full reporting period as a charity.

In a second year dominated by the Covid pandemic, we began the season hopefully, holding our first in-person rehearsals again since the first lockdown at a larger venue: at the Siobhan Davies Dance Studios in Lambeth. Singers were socially distanced, wore masks and had their temperature taken on arrival and we procured screens to shield our Musical Director. With changing guidance over time, we had a significantly increased workload to respond to the necessary measures to arrange rehearsals – whether in person, online or hybrid – and needed to build back up options into all our future planning in case of tighter restrictions.

The ongoing limitations on public performances in the latter half of 2020 and start of 2021 meant that we focused our time on recording projects, both at home and in our rehearsal space when measures allowed.

We were extremely proud of the results and hugely positive public reception of our *Lighten Our Darkness* and *Home* music videos filmed and edited by David Jones of Sonus Audio and directed by Seamus Rea. Our joint *Earth Song* music video with Canada's Cor Flammae choir and our virtual participation in The Globe's Christmas film were also extremely rewarding collaborative projects for our members.

In late 2020 we also made our first ever applications to grant-making organisations to support a collaborative project we had begun planning with a group of Deaf professional musicians led by Paul Whittaker OBE. We would like to thank Trustee Jill Pett for her work in managing the funding applications, which resulted in awards from both The National Lottery Community Foundation and The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust. Securing funding meant that we were able to commit to developing the concept with Paul and his team. We ran a British Sign Language and signed song workshop with the choir in April 2021 and began planning for a concert to be held in October 2021. The funding also allowed us to commission both a Deaf poet (DL Williams) and a contemporary composer (Kate Whitley) to create an innovative choral composition based on a sign language poem.

In March our founding Artistic Director, Dominic Peckham, announced that he would be moving on from the choir to begin a role with Aldeburgh Voices. We are enormously grateful to Dominic for his artistic leadership in our first eight years, helping us to build a choir that has attracted wonderful singers, delighted audiences and attracted collaborations with fantastic artists and venues. We were sorry that our last rehearsal with Dominic had to be an online rehearsal but were able to invite a wider number of former members (including several from overseas) to share memories of working together and thank him for his time with the choir.

After learning of Dominic's intention to depart, the Trustees agreed to work with a series of guest Musical Directors until the end of 2021 while also advertising a role for a permanent appointment. After shortlisting a number of conductors who we were keen to work with, we were delighted that Esther Jones, Nicholas Chalmers and Hilary Campbell agreed to lead the choir for our Summer, Autumn and Winter concerts.

In March, we were also thrilled to be invited by the charity Donne UK to be one of their Ambassador organisations promoting women in music. As well as supporting their campaigning and education work, our founder Kathleen Holman, member Ché Ramsden and former Associate Conductor Andrea Brown took part in a livestream discussion about inclusivity in choral settings in June.

Our Summer Term with Esther Jones marked the first real return to normality with the choir, rehearsing in person once again, finally auditioning and admitting new members for the first time in over a year and a rehearsal period that culminated in a real live (though socially distanced) performance. The concert was enormously impactful for the choir and audience, both musically and emotionally, and allowed us to reflect on the challenges and losses of the previous year.

Finally the Trustees would like to express our gratitude to James Guy, who chaired the choir until the end of 2021, for his dedication, thoughtfulness and perspective. James steered the choir through an extremely challenging period while still managing to provide a vital service to our members, audiences and collaborators.

Edward Long
Chair, The Fourth Choir

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Objects and Organisation

The objects of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation are:

1. The education of the public in the art of choral music through the presentation of concerts, public recitals and other such means as the Trustees shall decide; and
2. To promote equality and diversity for the public benefit with particular reference to the LGBT+ community and, in particular but not exclusively,
 - a. Advancing education and raising awareness in equality and diversity;
 - b. Promoting activities to foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds; and
 - c. Cultivating a sentiment in favour of equality and diversity, in particular through celebrating diversity of the LGBT+ community.

Values

Prior to advertising a vacancy for a new Musical Director, we ran two workshops with choir members to agree a value statement for the choir to ensure that our members, conductors and collaborators understand our ethos. The agreed values are:

- We are proud to be a choir of LGBT+ singers and allies
- We are passionate about musical excellence, about improving our skills and having fun
- We nurture an inclusive space and celebrate diversity
- We are creative, collaborative and ambitious
- We are a supportive, big-hearted and welcoming community

Achievements and Performance

We are delighted and proud of the choir's achievements in this, our ninth year. These achievements include:

- continuing to provide community and belonging through ongoing national lockdown due to Covid-19
- continuing to have a public profile at a time when no public performances were possible, through the use of virtual recordings and social media
- putting in place a plan to begin a series of engagements with leading guest conductors to re-introduce the choir to public performance, broaden our musical learning and re-engage with our audiences
- returning to public performance for the first time in a year and relaunching auditions
- successfully securing funding from two grant-making organisations for a collaborative project with a group of Deaf professional musicians
- commissioning new works of sign language poetry and a choral composition

Performances and Events

(in chronological order)

Lighten our Darkness (recording) - November 2020

During a short period of fewer restrictions, we took the opportunity to record a video performance of Ben Parry's *Lighten our Darkness* in our rehearsal space at the Siobhan Davies Dance Studios with recording engineer David Jones of Sonus Audio. Singers were socially distanced and wore facemasks while singing. Parry, the composer, wrote:

Oh my! This is a beautiful video. I hadn't realised when I wrote the piece how resonant the words would be in these bleak times. Thank you to all the choir members for doing this lovely film.

The recording was released on Youtube.

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Christmas at the (Snow) Globe (film) - December 2020

After the success of the previous year's collaboration with Sandi and Jenifer Toksvig and Shakespeare's Globe on their family Christmas show, we were delighted to be invited to contribute for a second year. Due to safety restrictions, the show was filmed for on-demand viewing and Fourth Choir members recorded audio and video clips at home which were edited into the film. The film was available to stream from The Globe's website from 21 December 2020 to 5 January 2021.

Home - a sanctuary in times of peril (recording) - January 2021

In December 2020 we recorded a further two pieces with David Jones. Reflecting the time that we had all been spending at home, we chose two pieces that represented Home as a place of refuge: an arrangement of the traditional Hebrew song *Shomer Yisrael* arranged by Benjamin Till and *The Road Home* by Stephen Paulus. The recording was released to celebrate the New Year on 1 January 2021.

Earth Song (joint recording) - April 2021

In Spring 2021 we arranged a joint recording project with Canadian queer ensemble Cor Flammae from Vancouver. We selected *Earth Song* by Frank Ticheli and members from both choirs recorded their parts led by Cor Flammae's conductor Peggy Hua on video. We also created a music video with shots filmed around London and Vancouver featuring a masked figure in urban and natural locations. The video was released on Youtube on 22 April to mark Earth Day.

The Breath of Life - St Augustine's Kilburn, July 2021

In our Summer Term we returned to our first public performance since the start of the pandemic, with our first guest Musical Director Esther Jones. We sang the *Requiem of 1603* by Tomás Luis de Victoria, interspersed with pieces by contemporary composers: *Songs of Sorrow* by Sheena Phillips, a lament for the war in Syria; Jessica Curry's *Home*, a setting of a poem by Warsan Shire that became famous during the refugee crisis ("No one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark"); and a setting for double choir by William H. Harris. The rest of the concert consisted of songs of hope by James MacMillan, Joanna Marsh, Eric Whitacre, Ēriks Ešēvalds and Cecilia McDowall's *Regina Caeli* with its thrilling opening exultation of "Alleluia".

The concert was dedicated to former choir member Alvin Chua and Simon de Winter, husband of choir member Sarah de Winter, who passed away in 2020 due to Covid.

Impact of Covid-19

The year from 2020-2021 was characterised by uncertainty and a rapidly changing situation in terms of public health risk, government responses to risk and guidelines issued to performing arts organisations.

Where government guidance was unclear, the choir had to make challenging decisions to protect our singers while still providing them a service. We are grateful to Making Music for their work in clarifying and helping to communicate best practices for rehearsal and performance in a rapidly changing situation.

- After returning to rehearsing together in person in September 2020 we were again forced to run rehearsals remotely from home in November and December as cases rose and our hope of performing a Christmas concert was not realised, though we were grateful to contribute to the Globe's Christmas film
- Once again we were not able to run our annual residential workshop for choir members at Kench Hill, Kent
- Our *Breath of Life* concert was performed with a reduced capacity seating plan so that audience members could be socially distanced

Public Benefit

Our charity's purposes include the education of the public in the art of choral music through the presentation of concerts. Although we were only able to perform once in public in this season due to Covid restrictions, we were also proud to release several recording projects and to be part of The Globe's Christmas film, which reached a considerably larger audience than our usual concerts. Our collaboration with a Canadian choir and link to Earth Day also helped us to reach a wider number of people.

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Trustees' Annual Report For The Year Ended 31 August 2021 - continued

Our charity's purposes also included the promotion of equality and diversity for the public benefit with particular reference to the LGBT+ community. After securing grant funding, we were delighted to begin an engagement with several Deaf performers – a community that we have not had the opportunity to work closely with before – and provide opportunities both for professional work and creative development.

In our shortlisting of guest conductors and composers for our commission, we prioritised under-represented groups and were pleased that two of the three guest conductors we engaged were women and that we worked with a female composer and nonbinary poet for our commission.

Our participation in Donne's livestream in June also gave us a platform for us to share issues related to inclusivity in choral settings with other musical leaders less accustomed to working in a majority LGBT+ environment, as well as reflecting on how we can still invest more in nurturing inclusive environments.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governance

The Fourth Choir was constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 22 April 2014; before that date, the choir existed as a non-registered body established on 1 September 2013. The accounts for the fourth period of trading of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation commence on 01 September 2017 and run until 31 August 2018.

The trustees who have served during the period and since commencement are set out on page 1. None of the trustees, nor any person connected to them, has received any paid remuneration from the Charity in the period to 31 August 2018.

The power to appoint trustees is vested in existing trustees. Apart from the first Charity trustees, every trustee must be appointed for a term of three years by resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the Charity trustees. All major decisions, including those of a financial nature, are made by the Board of Trustees at their meetings.

Method of Election of Trustees

Trustees are appointed through the unanimous voting of the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is made up of choir members who demonstrate the commitment and ability to contribute valuable skills towards the running of the choir. Trustees are appointed for 3 years. The first trustees were appointed for 2, 3 and 4 years to ensure continuity of leadership.

The key skills covered by the trustees include: financial management and planning; day to day running of the choir, including rehearsals, membership and communications; events planning and external liaison; events management and supervision; fund raising; and secretarial roles.

Finance

The attached financial statements show the current state of the Choir's finances which the committee considers to be sound.

Reserves

The Board of Trustees has determined a rolling policy of reserve maintenance, with a target of £7,000 to be held as a rapidly available credit balance in the principal choir bank account. This reserve exists to provide financial stability and mitigate against any unexpected expenses, and is developed through the setting of clear budgetary targets at the beginning of the year and meeting regularly to review performance.

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Trustees' Annual Report For The Year Ended 31 August 2021 - continued

Future Plans

For the 2021/22 season the Board of Trustees plans to continue to build on the achievements of the choir's first nine years by:

- Continuing to work with guest Musical Directors with a view to appointing a permanent MD in the longer term
- Continuing to organise, promote and perform self-promoted concerts
- Begin to pursue professional engagements again
- Creating further performance opportunities throughout the year to promote, support and develop the choir and its charitable objectives
- Building on our success in securing funds from national grant-making charities and arts organisations with further applications for more ambitious projects
- Forming new relationships, and developing existing ones, with sponsors, benefactors, charities, composers, professional musicians, arts promoters and LGBT+ organisations.

The Fourth Choir

Trustees' Annual Report For The Year Ended 31 August 2021 - continued

Reference and Administration Information

Charity Registration Number: 1156769

Trustees:

Chair – Dr Edward Long	
Trustee – Kathleen Holman	
Trustee – James McGreener	
Trustee – Dr Finn Schulze-Feldmann	(Appointed 13.12.21)
Trustee – Sarah De Winter	(Appointed 13.12.21)
Trustee – Eleanor May Dragonetti	(Appointed 13.12.21)
Trustee – Catrin Haf Jones	(Appointed 13.12.21)
Trustee – Joseph Kelly	(Appointed 13.12.21)
Trustee – Sophia Josephine Allen	(Appointed 13.12.21)
Trustee – Jill Pelt	(Resigned 13.12.21)
Trustee – Laura Cioffi	(Resigned 13.12.21)
Trustee – James Guy	(Resigned 13.12.21)

Principal Contact Address: Flat 5
19 Percy Circus
London
W4X 9EE

Website: www.thefourthchoir.com

Bankers: HSBC
Lion House
25 Islington High Street
Islington
London
N1 9LJ

Independent Examiner: Mrs D J Lockwood FCA FCCA ATT(Fellow)
Haines Watts Chartered Accountants
Cliffe Hill House
22-26 Nottingham Road
Stapleford
Nottingham
NG9 8AA

Declaration

We declare in our capacity as trustees that the Trustees have approved this report and that we have been authorised to sign.

Signature 
Full Name EDWARD LONG
Position CHAIR
Date 01-06-22

Signature 
Full Name FINN SCHULZE-FELDMANN
Position TREASURER

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
the Fourth Choir ('the CIO')
For the Year Ended 31 August 2021

I report to the Charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the CIO for the year ended 31 August 2021.

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

As the Charity Trustees of the CIO 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 CIO's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 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 as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
- 2) The accounts do not accord with those records.

I confirm that there are no matters to which your attention should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

D. J. Lockwood
Mrs D J Lockwood FCCA FCA ATT(Fellow)
Chartered Accountant

Dated 8.6.2022

Haines Watts
Chartered Accountants
Cliffe Hill House
22-26 Nottingham Road
Stapleford
Nottingham NG9 8AA

The Fourth Choir
Receipts and Payments Accounts
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021

	<u>Notes</u>	<u>2021</u>		<u>2020</u>	
		<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>		<u>Unrestricted Funds</u>	
		£	£	£	£
<u>OPENING BALANCES</u>					
HSBC Bank		9,149		11,375	
Cash in Hand		1,253		398	
PayPal		2,095		1,353	
			12,497		13,126
<u>RECEIPTS</u>					
Bank Interest		-		-	
Grant Income		9,985		-	
Activities for Generating Funds:					
Service Sales		1,000		8,000	
Special Events		-		351	
Product Sales		-		558	
Charitable Activities:					
Concert Sales		728		9,521	
Voluntary Receipts:					
Donations and Gift Aid		19,720		18,939	
Transfer of Fund Balance	5	-		-	
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>			31,433		37,369
<u>PAYMENTS</u>					
Fundraising Costs:					
Advertising and Marketing Costs		-		158	
			-		(158)
Cost of Charitable Activities:					
Equipment Hire and Purchase		329		149	
Performers		-		11,850	
Venue Hire		2,976		5,173	
Commissions and Scores		566		2,653	
Subscriptions		587		972	
Product Costs		385		1,325	
Grants Payable		-		-	
Donations	5	-		-	
Travel Costs		68		94	
			(4,911)		(22,216)
Support Costs:					
Professional Fees		10,146		14,558	
Insurance		497		132	
Printing, Postage and Stationery		146		748	
Bank Charges		163		186	
Miscellaneous		122		-	
			(11,074)		(15,624)
<u>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</u>			(15,985)		(37,998)
Excess Receipts Over Expenditure			15,448		(629)
Closing balances:					
HSBC Bank Balance		25,590		9,149	
Cash in Hand		53		1,253	
Paypal		2,311		2,095	
			27,954		12,497

Signature.....Chair

Signature.....Treasurer

Name.....Date: 01-06-22

Name.....Date: 1/6/22

The Fourth Choir

Statement of Assets and liabilities at the end of the year

		<u>Unrestricted</u> <u>Funds</u>	<u>Total</u> <u>Funds</u> <u>2020/21</u>	<u>Total Funds</u> <u>(All</u> <u>Unrestricted)</u> <u>2019/20</u>
Cash Funds -	HSBC Bank Balance	£ -	25,590	9,149
-	Cash in Hand	-	53	1,253
-	Paypal	-	2,311	2,095
Amounts – Receivable (debtors)		£ -	-	15
Amounts -	Payable (Creditors)	£ -	-	-
-	Payable (Accrued charges)	690	690	690

Notes to the Accounts

1. Basis of Preparation and Assessment of Going Concern

The accounts (financial statements) have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) Issued 1st January 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102), and the Charities Act 2011. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102.

The trustees' consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

The accounts are presented in Sterling £.

- a) Income
This is accounted for on a receivable purpose in the period which it is received.
- b) Payments
These are accounted for as paid.

2. Accountancy Charges

Independent Examination following accounts preparation £690.

3. Taxation

The Charitable Trust is exempt from Corporation Tax on its charitable activities.

4. All monies currently held are unrestricted in their application.

The Fourth Choir

Statement of Assets and liabilities at the end of the year – continued

5. No donations were made in the year.

6. Emoluments of Trustees

No emoluments were received by the Trustees in their capacity as Trustees.

There were no other emoluments or expenses paid to any charity Trustees or person connected with such a Trustee directly or indirectly from the funds of the charity.

7. Reimbursement of Trustees Expenses paid in the period in the normal course of the work of the charity.

Laura Cioffi	-	£274	For programme printing, catering supplies and publicity material.
James Guy	-	£49	Flowers
Edward Long	-	£41	Flowers

8. The Trustees confirm, in accordance with the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (General) Regulations 2012, that at year end the Charitable Incorporated Organisation did not have any outstanding guarantees to third parties nor any debts secured on assets of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

9. Trustee Donations

The charity received a total of £1,194 donations from trustees in the year (2020: £810).

10. Related Party Transactions

There are no related party transactions