



Southend Boys' Choir and Southend Girls' Choir Trust

Report of the Trustees for the year ending 31 August 2024

Registered Charity Number: 1161752
Principal address: Rosemary Pennington – PO Box 6, Civic Centre,
Victoria Avenue, Southend on Sea, Essex SS2 6ER
Email: Southendchoirs@gmail.com
Website: www.southendchoirs.org.uk
Trustees: Jackie Mullan (Chair), Julie Cushion, Emer McNeela, Christine Wallen
(Treasurer), Roger Davis, Cllr Anne Jones (Council Rep)
Bankers: CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill Avenue,
Kings Hill, West Malling ME19 4JQ

What the charity does

Southend Boys' and Girls' Choirs are amongst the leading youth choirs in the country, each choir rehearsing and performing in its own right as well as in joint performances.

The formal objectives of the CIO are to:

- a) promote, improve, develop and maintain public appreciation and education of choral music and related activities in all aspects by the presentation, of public concerts, recitals, broadcasts, recordings or at the invitation of promoters and other artistic bodies; and
- b) educate and enhance the skills and enjoyment of all members of the choirs through a range of performances and musical opportunities, in the UK and abroad.

The Choirs recruit from all schools in the borough and beyond. There are no joining or subscription fees for choir membership, so the Choirs draw on a very wide range of backgrounds, as well as a big age range - singers may enter our boys choir at 8 and girls choir at 10, but, although our Little Singers group closed this year, our Step-Up Choir continues to provide an early introduction to the enjoyment of singing from age 6. Members may stay until university and beyond via our offshoot choirs – the Southend Young Men's Chorus for male voices and the Chorus Sirenum for female voices. We work hard to promote a friendly, inclusive and welcoming culture for members to feel accepted, safe and happy. Additionally, there is no entry requirement to read music or to have had any previous music training. Consequently, the Choirs are open to everyone and our membership is diverse.

Public benefits

The trustees consider the CIO's activities benefit the public through the provision of high quality, creative musical concerts and opportunities for young people, irrespective of their families' means, to develop their musical skills and interests positively and to give regular performances for public enjoyment.

Activities during the year

Highlights this year

- At the "Our Planet" concert held in October we were joined by the composer Russell Hepplewhite to premier a work commissioned by the choirs, 'From Mountains to Valleys'. This was composed with the help of school children around the city to celebrate our environment

and we were joined by singers from many of the schools involved. Later in the year we were asked by Russell to take part in a professional recording of the piece

- During the summer holidays we trialed a new venture, a week long Musicals Week offering singers the opportunity to perform scenes from a selection of musicals. This year we had 45 singers join the activity with a sold out end of week performance. The week was offered free of charge to choir members and opened to other young people in the city.
- We have been able to offer our singers many varied opportunities over the year. Alongside performances in events such as the Holocaust Memorial Service, the Mayor's Charity Concert and concerts in Southend singers have also taken part in concerts at major London venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, the Royal Festival Hall and the Actors Church, St Paul's in Covent Garden. In addition, 26 singers took part in a seven day tour of Germany's Rhineland with performances at the Altenberger Dom and Maria Laach Abbey. As well as the concerts, the singers enjoyed a river cruise, a chocolate tour and a visit to Phantasialand.
- Thanks to The Birn Trust we have also been able to add an additional payment of £250 to the current £500 from the English Speaking Union to support local young musicians who are continuing their musical studies at a recognised institution of higher education. We delayed the award of the fourth annual bursary to better fit in with applicants' study schedules. The closing date for applications is 30th September 2024.

Financial Review

Each quarter the Trustees receive and consider a detailed statement of the CIO's current financial position. During the current year, the adequacy of reserves has been regularly monitored. The Trustees consider that the financial position remains satisfactory following the period of recovery from the pandemic when the Choirs' activities and income had been limited. Trustees are actively looking at ways to enhance the CIO's fundraising efforts as we return to a full programme of activities (and expenses), but remain firmly committed to there being no subscription or other charge for choir membership. To this end we applied for grants from ROSCA, Essex County Council Cultural grants, Richard Cherry Foundation and the Community Investment Fund. All applications were unsuccessful in this instance, but we continue to make applications to appropriate funds. In addition, our Artistic Directors have continued to request that they are paid at a significantly reduced rate.

Volunteers

Our volunteers are definitely 'key workers' for the Choirs' operation, whether they undertake direct roles at choir activities or get involved behind the scenes in areas such as fundraising or publicity. They are DBS checked to ensure safeguarding is at the centre of choir work, with the choir's specific policies on safeguarding and child protection regularly reviewed to reflect current guidance and any government policy changes. All volunteers and helpers undertake specific safeguarding training - some volunteers are also Southend Council registered chaperones, ensuring a high degree of regard for the welfare of the choristers when they are with the choirs. The Trust are hugely grateful to the team of volunteers that carry out the considerable work needed to run the Choirs.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Southend Boys' and Girls' Choirs registered with the Charity Commission in 2007 and reconstituted in May 2015 as a Charitable Incorporated Association ('CIO'). This is a legal form

enabling a charity to enter into contracts as a corporate body, rather than, with non-corporate status, trustees bearing individual liability for any contracts they enter into on behalf of the charity.

Trustees are expected to show an active interest in the work and benefits of the choirs, and nominees for appointment are given full briefing about these before being considered. In making successor appointments, Trustees have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience offered towards achieving the effective administration of the CIO.

Trustees held frequent meetings over the current year (4 meetings in addition to the AGM). Trustees had previously taken the decision to temporarily recruit 2 additional Trustees, as permitted by the CIO's Constitution in "exceptional circumstances", increasing the complement to 9. This was reviewed at the 2023 AGM and the 2024 AGM, to return to the normal complement of 7 which means we are one trustee to recruit.

Signed on behalf of Trustees:



Chair of Trustees

02.12.2024

Date

Southend Boys' and Southend Girls' Choirs

Summary of accounts for 01/09/23 - 31/08/2024

	<u>Expenditure</u>		<u>Income</u>		<u>Total</u>	
Balance B/F					£	51,324.41
<u>100 Club</u>	£	670.75	£	1,455.00	£	784.25
<u>Admin</u>	£	95.00	£	1,425.50	£	1,330.50
<u>Bursary</u>	£	-	£	5,000.00	£	5,000.00
<u>Concerts</u>					£	1,121.32
St Paul's	£	1,850.00	£	1,267.70	-£	582.30
Christmas Carol	£	550.00	£	852.14	£	302.14
Spring Concert	£	150.00	£	1,138.59	£	988.59
Summer concert	£	350.00	£	762.89	£	412.89
<u>Donations</u>	£	-	£	7,349.24	£	7,349.24
<u>Engagements</u>					£	5,187.74
Sandon	£	-	£	250.00	£	250.00
Carmina Burana	£	895.00	£	850.00	-£	45.00
Langbourn Ward	£	-	£	450.00	£	450.00
Butcher's Hall	£	620.00	£	600.00	-£	20.00
Claridges	£	2,881.67	£	6,795.40	£	3,913.73
Treasurers Dinner	£	-	£	350.00	£	350.00
Carmina Burana RFH	£	662.40	£	700.00	£	37.60
St Matthew's Passion	£	96.33	£	172.74	£	76.41
Choral Society	£	71.76	£	171.76	£	100.00
Wedding	£	75.00	£	150.00	£	75.00
<u>Fees - R&R</u>	£	4,325.04			-£	4,325.04
<u>General</u>					-£	5,759.87
Hall hire	£	2,442.50			-£	2,442.50
music	£	32.29			-£	32.29
sundries	£	3,030.50	£	287.70	-£	2,742.80
website	£	887.88	£	345.60	-£	542.28
<u>Jack Petchey</u>	£	1,900.00	£	2,500.00	£	600.00
<u>Little Singers</u>	£	679.50	£	1,000.00	£	320.50
<u>Musicals week</u>	£	1,325.00	£	1,170.69	-£	154.31

<u>Schools project</u>	£	200.00	£	443.97	£	243.97
<u>Step Up</u>	£	1,486.00	£	-	-£	1,486.00
<u>Theatre Trip</u>	£	869.75	£	1,150.00	£	280.25
<u>Tour 2023</u>	£	200.00	£	1,799.43	£	1,599.43
<u>Tour 2024 The Rhine</u>	£	32,949.11	£	30,251.00	-£	2,698.11
<u>Tour Funds</u>	£	1,805.43	£	306.58	-£	1,498.85
<u>Uniform</u>					£	995.16
Girls	£	87.84	£	595.00	£	507.16
Boys	£	-	£	168.00	£	168.00
Hoodies	£	-	£	267.00	£	267.00
pre-loved	£	-	£	53.00	£	53.00
<u>TOTAL</u>	£	61,188.75	£	70,078.93	£	8,890.18
Brought forward					£	51,324.41
Balance in Bank					£	60,214.59
Cash					£	20.00
Total	£	-	£	-	£	60,234.59

<u>Ringfenced areas</u>		<u>B/F</u>		<u>2023-2024</u>		<u>Balance</u>
Arts Council	£	21.45			£	21.45
Bursary	£	3,500.00	£	5,000.00	£	8,500.00
Chorus Sirenum	£	506.25			£	506.25
Jack Petchey	£	1,788.36	£	600.00	£	2,388.36
Little Singers	-£	288.00	£	320.50	£	32.50
Tour 2023	-£	1,599.43	£	1,599.43	£	-
Tour 2024			-£	2,698.11	-£	2,698.11
Tour Funds	£	9,713.62	-£	1,498.85	£	8,214.77

<u>Funds Available</u>	£	40,571.26
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Payments outstanding

General includes termly hall hire, music, gifts etc

Admin includes postage, bank fees etc

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of
The Southend Boys' Choir and Southend Girls' Choir Trust

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act), and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that

- proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 41 of the Act); and
- accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or

2. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed



Date

5/2/2025

G. Atcock

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER