



# **ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021**

**Charity number 1162618**

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## About Lace City Chorus

The only barbershop chorus for women in Nottinghamshire was founded in 1992 by a group of teachers and students at Arnold Hill Comprehensive School. After two years of lunchtime rehearsals at the school, there was a need to take it all rather more seriously and the Lace City Chorus was born.

The chorus now has 70 members from all over the East Midlands ranging in age from 14 to 78. Women of all ages, backgrounds and all musical abilities join together to sing, have fun and make lifelong friendships. Our members are from a variety of backgrounds and hold jobs such as sales manager, accountant, nurse, doctor, solicitor, chemist, social worker, student, executive director, and teacher - as well as being wives, partners, mothers, grandmothers and aunts.

These days the chorus is highly regarded as one of the premier barbershop choruses in Europe, having won the regional championships (UK, Ireland and the Netherlands) a total of six times. These successes have led to the chorus competing at the [Sweet Adeline's](#) International Convention (the world championships of Barbershop) in Detroit in 2005, Calgary in 2007, Nashville in 2009, Houston in 2009, Las Vegas in 2015 and St Louis in 2018. At the International contests in 2015 and 2018 we were ranked 16<sup>th</sup> in the world.

## Our charitable aims

Lace City Chorus is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered with the Charities Commission as Registered Number 1162618. The Chorus is also a member of the Sweet Adelines International organisation with complementing governance arrangements.

### Objectives

The objectives of the CIO are:

- 1) To advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of barbershop music in all its aspects by any means the trustees see fit, including through the presentation of public concerts and recitals.
- 2) To further such charitable purpose or purposes as the trustees in their absolute discretion shall think fit but in particular through the making of grants and donations.

## Board of Trustees (Management Team)

*Table 1: Board of Trustees / Management team for the period April 2020 to March 2021:*

Name	Position
Deborah Pollard	Team Coordinator / Chair of Trustees
Tash King	Chorus secretary / Trustee
Eleanor Blackeby	(Interim) Musical Director / Trustee
Elizabeth (Liz) Clunie	Treasurer / Trustee
Carole Bowman	Trustee
Jane Hammond	Trustee
Alyson Chaney	Trustee
Maureen Walker	Trustee

## Directing Team

*Table 2: Chorus Directing Team for the period April 2020 to March 2021:*

Name	Position
Eleanor Blackeby	Interim Musical Director
Helen Abbott	Assistant Director / Choreographer

Following the retirement of Glenn Chaney as Musical Director in January 2020, an interim team was established to take over the musical leadership of the chorus with Eleanor (Ellie) Blackeby being appointed as interim Director in May 2020. Ellie has been with the chorus since her early teens and has gained international renown as a member of the 2007 Rising Star quartet champions 'Luminous'.

# Structure, Governance and Management

The Charity is governed by its chorus constitution which describes the charitable aims, how the chorus elects the trustees and how members are involved in the governance of the charity and chorus. The Constitution lays out the governance and decision-making powers the structures that sit beneath the Board of Trustees have. The Sub Teams are expected to report regularly to the Board of Trustees making recommendations for approval at Board meetings.

The Chorus is a member of an International Barbershop organisation called Sweet Adelines International. This membership requires the Chorus to be compliant with their respective governance rules and regulations largely translated for choruses into a document called the 'Standing Rules'. When the CIO was established the leadership team ensured alignment between the two documents (Charity Constitution and Standing Rules).

## Membership of the CIO

### Eligibility

Membership of the CIO is open to women aged 14 and upwards interested in furthering its purposes, and who, by applying for membership, has indicated her agreement to become a member and acceptance of the duty of members.

### Admission Procedure

The admission procedure is laid out in both the Chorus Constitution and the Chorus Standing Rules which contain the detail of the music and performance level that needs to be attained before admission is recommended to the Trustees.

### Duty of Members

The duty of members is also laid out in both the charities governing documents (Constitution and Standing Rules). This is usually described in the Sweet Adeline International by laws as being in 'good standing'.

### Membership Fees

The monthly fees are set by the Trustees and voted on by the CIO.

### Member decisions

Most decisions are made by a simple majority vote including the appointment of Trustees.

### Trustees

The Board of Trustees is constituted by up to a maximum of 9 trustees. During the period of this report the Board was made up of 8 Trustees. Half of the Trustees stand down each year on rota by those longest standing on the board subject to re-election or substitution. Trustees are voted for at the chorus Annual General Meeting (AGM). The arrangements for the AGM and elections are detailed in the Constitution.

## Priorities for 2020/2021

Our priorities were impacted by the Covid19 pandemic, which meant that the chorus was unable to meet in person for most of the year. Instead, the chorus took to 'Zoom' to run weekly rehearsals and participate in educational events virtually. Our priorities, however, continued to be:

1. To strive for excellence in everything we do, whether in rehearsals, performances, competitions, show planning, rehearsals, music learning and section work.
2. To recruit excellent new members through singing courses and open evenings and to further develop a high-quality Public Relations function which makes full use of social media platforms.
3. To develop our skills by training our members in a variety of different ways (individual and collective vocal lessons, developing visual and performance skills including emcee work, blending rehearsals, and by developing and expanding the song evaluation process) and enlisting the help of high-quality coaches.
4. To enhance our members' own skills by encouraging attendance at regional educational workshops.
5. To build our reputation and increased our target audience.
6. To strengthen our finances.

## Meeting our charitable aims

### Weekly rehearsals

Normally, our weekly rehearsals are held at the Colonel Frank Seeley school, Calverton, Nottinghamshire every Wednesday from 19:15 to 22:00. During the Covid19 pandemic we continued our rehearsals online. Rehearsals feature:

- Physical and vocal warmups and mental check-in to prepare members for a productive rehearsal.
- Song learning, although members are expected to use the learning media provided to learn the songs at home before rehearsals. During rehearsals the aim is to bring all the voices together into a well-blended unit.
- Skills building (vocal, mindset and visual) during the development of songs for performance and competition facilitated by a team of in-house coaches and the director.
- Section rehearsals facilitated by section leaders during which section unity is developed. Section rehearsals are also part of the process for learning new songs.
- Teaching and practising of visual plans for selected repertoire and competition songs.
- Preparation (vocal, visual and mental) for performance and competition depending on where we are in the annual cycle.
- Vocal and visual evaluations in the lead up to competition.

## Coaching and education

We bring in a variety of coaches every year to help us develop our skills and understanding of our music. During the year, the chorus received online coaching from renowned vocal coach, Nicky Salt in August 2020 and again in February 2021.

Additional coaching was received on breathing technique from Nicola Mills in October 2020 and from Simon Arnott in August 2020, where he coached the chorus on his arrangement of 'This is me' from the Greatest Showman.

We were also joined at our rehearsal on 28 October 2020 by the Chair of the International Board of Directors of Sweet Adeline International, Joan Boutilier. She brought positivity ideas and fun as we compared Halloween traditions and shared experiences of chorus life during the pandemic.

Many of our members also benefitted from online personal vocal instruction from member Alyson Chaney, who is a member of the Sweet Adelines International Faculty, as well as from members of the music team.

In January 2021 we ran a 'Love your voice' campaign, which encouraged individuals to appreciate the uniqueness of their own voice and how it contributes to the whole. This included a virtual 'singing course', which attracted over 70 singers over three weeks.



## Shows, performances and special events

Due to the Covid19 pandemic, the chorus was unable to participate in any in-person performance during 2020-21. We did, however, learn several new songs and shared these via our YouTube channel.

We are particularly proud of our virtual performance of '[Can't buy me love](#)', which we used to raise funds for the Nottingham based 'Wish upon a Star' charity. Ellie Blackeby, Interim Musical Director of Lace City Chorus said:

*"This year has been a challenging time for lots of people. We've all experienced our own personal struggles during the pandemic but for Lace City Chorus, singing has helped to keep us connected. It's been difficult not seeing each other every week but we've connected via Zoom and learnt new songs, including Can't Buy Me Love, which we're delighted to dedicate to When You Wish Upon A Star. Creating this video and knowing that we're able to raise some money for such an amazing charity has been inspirational."*



# Financial position 2020/21

## Summary

A surplus of just under £2,000 was generated during this financial year. Both income and payments were roughly 50% of what they were during the previous year. The impact of the pandemic is responsible for this. Members' subscriptions were reduced as rehearsals moved to being online and costs reduced greatly, for the same reason.

## Income

Total income was just under £15K. £10k of this was from subscriptions and a further £3k from Gift Aid. Some other income (£285) did come from an online singing course as well as fundraising from the online sales through Easyfundraising (£289). There was £460 income into the Angel Fund, but this was repayment for money which had been previously loaned to members to help fund convention expenses.

## Expenditure

Expenses were just under £13k. There was very little expenditure on rehearsals as they were held online, via Zoom, for the entire financial year. We spent money on publicity (£636) to advertise the things that the chorus was able to do during lockdown, such as the online singing course. We also spent £1,063 on new music to keep members motivated during the remote rehearsals. Learning new music was something that the chorus could benefit from during lockdown. Regional and international dues had to be maintained throughout the lockdown

## Reserves

The chorus has reserves of £17,589 at the end of the 2020-21 financial year This will provide a good foundation for expenses which will be incurred once we are back to in-person rehearsals and other 'normal' activities, such as attending convention

## Future finance considerations

- Appropriate use of reserves to benefit all chorus members, such as support for costumes and convention.
- Fundraising activities need to resume once risks of Covid are reduced.







## Receipts and payments account

For the period from	04/01/2020	To
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### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>			
Members' Dues	10097		-
Donations	6		-
Grants			-
Happy Birthday recordings			-
Singing Course	285		-
Easyfundraising	289		-
Other Fundraising			-
Show Revenue			-
Performances			-
Funeral Singouts			
Riser Hiring Out			-
Visitors Fees	350		-
Bonus Ball			-
Interest	9		
Water Sales			-
Sundry Income			-
Social Events			-
Angel Fund	460		-
Convention Hotel			-
Annual Dinner	28		-
Deposits			-
Sundry			-
SAI			-
Sundry Creditors			-
Gift Aid	3331		-
			-
			-
			-
<b>Sub total</b> (Gross income for AR)	<b>14,855</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>			
<b>Costume Sales</b>		-	-
	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>14,855</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>			
Show Costs			-
Publicity	636		-
UK Convention			-
Costume			-

International Convention			-
PRS Fees	150		-
Website	380		-
Sundry Items	68		-
Gifts	157		-
Rehearsal Venue	0		-
Risers Pay Men			-
Riser Transport			-
Director Compensation	2800		-
Director Expenses			-
Training & Education	200		-
Music Purchase	1063		-
Printing, Stationery & Postage	8		-
Making Music fees	48		-
Social Events	28		-
Annual Dinner			-
Accountancy & Audit Fees			-
Committee Meetings			-
Charter	105		
Regional Dues	1820		
SAI subscriptions	4487		-
Accruals	780		-
Convention Hotel			-
Telephone/Internet	240		-
Prepaid			-
			-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>12,970</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>			
Costume		-	-
Equipment		-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

<b>Total payments</b>	<b>12,970</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
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<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>1,885</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>		<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>15,704</b>		<b>-</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>17,589</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Nat West	17,509
	Petty Cash	80
		-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>17,589</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £
		-
		-
		-
		-
		-
		-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs
	Office equipment	
	Costumes	
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates

Signed by one or two trustees on  
behalf of all the trustees



Signature

Print N



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ounts

03/31/2021

CC16a



Total funds

Last year

to the nearest £

to the nearest £

10,097	20,992
6	44
-	
-	40
285	
289	455
-	577
-	1,233
-	525
-	125
-	
350	766
-	400
9	13
-	
-	
-	61
460	770
-	
28	333
-	
-	74
-	
-	
3,331	4,100
-	-
-	-
-	-
14,855	30,508

-	16
-	-
-	16

14,855	30,524
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-	880
636	27
-	- 25
-	

-	
150	
380	421
68	152
157	154
-	3,614
-	1,940
-	150
2,800	4,300
-	
200	1,944
1,063	124
8	30
48	686
28	
-	361
-	100
-	
105	99
1,820	1,330
4,487	5,337
780	2,214
-	
240	
-	- 200
-	-
12,970	23,638

-	40
-	
-	40

12,970	23,678
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1,885	6,846
-	-
15,704	8,858
17,589	15,704

the period

Restricted funds	Endowment funds
to nearest £	to nearest £
	-
	-
-	-
-	-
OK	OK

Restricted funds	Endowment funds
to nearest £	to nearest £
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-

Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-

Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
-	793
-	3,826
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-
-	-

Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
-	
-	



-	
-	
-	

lame	Date of approval