



# **ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024**

**Charity number 1162618**

## Contents

About Lace City Chorus	3
Our charitable aims	3
Board of Trustees (Management Team)	4
Structure, Governance and Management	5
Membership of the CIO	5
Eligibility	5
Admission Procedure	5
Duty of Members	5
Membership Fees	5
Member decisions	5
Trustees	6
Priorities for 2023/2024	6
Meeting our charitable aims	7
Weekly rehearsals	7
Shows and performances	7
Coaching and education	8
Special events	8
Financial position 2023/24	8
Summary	8
Expenditure	8
Reserves	8

## 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 over 80 members from all over the East Midlands ranging in age from 14 to 80+. 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 eight times. These successes have led to the chorus competing at the [Sweet Adelines](#) International Convention (the world championships of Barbershop) in Detroit in 2005, Calgary in 2007, Nashville in 2009, Houston in 2011, Las Vegas in 2015 and St Louis in 2018 and most recently in Kansas City 2024, where we ranked 9<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 2023 to March 2024:*

Name	Position
Deborah Pollard	Team Coordinator / Chair of Trustees
Angela Dickson	Secretary
Eleanor Blackeby	Musical Director / Trustee
Liz Clunie	Treasurer / Trustee
Carole Bowman	Trustee
Heather Ankers	Trustee
Sara Grant	Trustee
Lynn Woods	Trustee
Sue Wheeldon	Trustee

## Directing Team

*Table 2: Chorus Directing Team for the period April 2023 to March 2024:*

Name	Position
Eleanor Blackeby	Musical Director
Helen Abbott	Assistant Director / Choreographer
Jo Bird	Assistant Director

The team are supported by a Music Team consisting of Section Leaders and Assistant Section Leaders.

# 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 9 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 2023/2024

Our priorities for the year included:

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 increase our target audience.
6. To strengthen our finances.

# Meeting our charitable aims

## Weekly rehearsals

Weekly rehearsals are held at the Colonel Frank Seeley school, Calverton, Nottinghamshire every Wednesday from 19:15 to 21:30. 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 practicing 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.

## Shows and performances

In May 2023 we were thrilled to win our regional competition with a groundbreaking 'Fosse' set featuring 1920s costumes and front row choreography incorporating dancing on chairs! As a result, the chorus qualified to represent the UK and Netherlands at the international championships in Kansas City in October 2024.

Performances during the year included fundraising events for the Air Ambulance, Nottingham Pride and the Museum of Timekeeping in Upton. We also spread Christmas cheer at local businesses (Experian and Specsavers) and at community events at Woodthorpe and Southwell. We ended 2023 with our Christmas Show 'Joy'.

Also, during 2023, we introduced our 'singing in the community' events with a small group of singers entertaining residents at local residential care homes with communal singing of popular songs. These events continue regularly as a high point of the month for residents and staff.

## Coaching and education

We bring in a variety of coaches every year to help us develop our skills and understanding of our music. We continued to work with our regular coach, Nicky Salt in April 2023 and again in January 2024. We welcomed David Sangster, director of Forth Valley Chorus for a weekend in November 2023 to help develop our music in preparation for the International Competition the following year.

## Special events

The opportunity to build relationships and work well as a team were strengthened this year by holding a chorus retreat in Derbyshire where members were able to get to know each other better and to attend workshops to develop their vocal and visual communication skills.

In September we held our first 'scratch quartet' contest bringing together members of other local choruses to compete for the prize of most entertaining ensemble. This was a great opportunity for individuals to build their performance confidence and as a result several new quartets were born.

## Financial position 2023/24

### Summary

Our total income for the year was £49,977, which was an increase on the previous year. Fundraising income increased significantly as we started to build up towards the chorus's trip to the International Competition in Kansas City in October 2024.

£22k of the income came from subs. We received £4k in donations and around £10.5k in various strands of fundraising, including *Easyfundraising* and our bonus ball competition. We had also received nearly £9k from members as deposits for convention costs for May 2024.

### Expenditure

Expenditure was £34,924. This was a fall from the previous year. This was mostly due to a much lower cost recorded for the convention hotel than had shown in the previous year. This also reflects the increased income from members' contributions for the convention.

Many of our other costs had increased such as rehearsal venue, regional and Sweet Adelines dues.

### Reserves

Our reserves increased from £18k to £33k due to fundraising income being held until it was needed for the International Competition in October 2024.





CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Lace City Chorus

1162618

## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period  
from

01/04/2023

To

31/03/2024

### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Members' Dues	22119		-	22,119	20,803
Donations	4183		-	4,183	
Grants			-	-	10
Happy Birthday recordings			-	-	295
Singing Course	60		-	60	144
Easyfundraising	391		-	391	443
Other Fundraising	5392		-	5,392	2,843
Show Revenue	570		-	570	375
Performances	105		-	105	
Funeral Singouts			-	-	650
Riser Hiring Out	960		-	960	322
Visitors Fees	955		-	955	
Bonus Ball	800		-	800	
Interest	66		-	66	6
Water Sales			-	-	
Sundry Income			-	-	
Social Events			-	-	
Angel Fund	482		-	482	
Convention deposits	8980		-	8,980	16,293
Annual Dinner	33		-	33	
Deposits			-	-	21
Sundry			-	-	764
SAI			-	-	848
Sundry Creditors	1630		-	1,630	1,993
Gift Aid	3136		-	3,136	
			-	-	
			-	-	
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>49,862</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>49,862</b>	<b>44,282</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
Costume Sales	116	-	-	116	523
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>523</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>49,977</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>49,977</b>	<b>44,805</b>

**A3 Payments**

Show Costs	2691	-	-	2,691	1,472
Publicity	407	-	-	407	
UK Convention	2083	-	-	2,083	2,488
Costume	73	-	-	73	2,015
International Convention	1215	-	-	1,215	
PRS Fees		-	-	-	
Website	585	-	-	585	439
Sundry Items	130	-	-	130	44
Gifts	210	-	-	210	290
Rehearsal Venue	4967	-	-	4,967	2,585
Risers Pay Men	1570	-	-	1,570	2,090
Riser Transport		-	-	-	85
Director Compensation	3750	-	-	3,750	3,675
Director Expenses	492	-	-	492	34
Training & Education	1962	-	-	1,962	2,540
Music Purchase	732	-	-	732	596
Repairs & maintenance	186	-	-	186	54
Telephone/Internet		-	-	-	34
Printing, Stationery & Postage	7	-	-	7	13
Making Music fees	71	-	-	71	53
Social Events	123	-	-	123	202
Angel Fund		-	-	-	251
Accountancy & Audit Fees		-	-	-	50
Charter	128			128	
Regional Dues	2085			2,085	1,430
SAI subscriptions	7097	-	-	7,097	5,791
Convention Registration	2265	-	-	2,265	1,830
Convention Hotel	2095	-	-	2,095	18,198
		-	-	-	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>34,924</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>34,924</b>	<b>46,259</b>

**A4 Asset and Investment purchases, (see table)**

Costume		-	-	-	
Equipment		-	-	-	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

<b>Total payments</b>	<b>34,924</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>34,924</b>	<b>46,259</b>
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<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>15,053</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15,053</b>	<b>- 1,454</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>18,054</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18,054</b>	<b>19,508</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>33,107</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>33,107</b>	<b>18,054</b>

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Nat West	33,107		
	Petty Cash			
		-	-	
	<b>Total cash funds</b> (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	33,107	-	
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>			-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Office equipment		-	293
	Costumes		-	1,888
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	





# CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

LACE CITY CHORUS

On accounts for the year  
ended

31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2024

Charity no  
(if any)

1162618

Set out on pages

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2023.

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 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 (other than that disclosed below \*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

Date:

15/1/25

Name:

PAUL JEFFERY

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

Address:

6 INHAM FIELDS CLOSE

GUTHORPE

NOTTINGHAM

NG14 7FH

### Section B

### Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.