



# **ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025**

**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 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 aunties.

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.

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.

## Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty under section 4 of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when exercising their powers and duties. The activities described in this report are carried out for the public benefit in furtherance of the charity's objectives.

## Board of Trustees (Management Team)

Table 1: Board of Trustees / Management team for the period April 2024 to March 2025:

Name	Position
<b>Deborah Pollard</b>	Team Coordinator / Chair of Trustees
<b>Marisa Parrington</b>	Secretary / Trustee
<b>Eleanor Blackeby</b>	Musical Director
<b>Liz Clunie</b>	Treasurer / Trustee
<b>Heather Ankers</b>	Trustee
<b>Sara Grant</b>	Trustee
<b>Lynn Woods</b>	Trustee
<b>Carole Bowman</b>	Trustee

## Directing Team

Table 2: Chorus Directing Team for the period April 2024 to March 2025:

Name	Position
<b>Eleanor Blackeby</b>	Musical Director
<b>Helen Abbott</b>	Assistant Director / Choreographer
<b>Jo Bird</b>	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).

The Trustees regularly review the major risks to which the charity is exposed, including financial sustainability, safeguarding, and operational continuity. Systems and procedures are in place to mitigate these risks, including budget monitoring, safeguarding policies, and appropriate insurance cover.

## Membership of the CIO

### Eligibility

Membership of the CIO is open to women (including transgender women) and non-binary people assigned female at birth, 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. membership is open to women

### 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 bylaws 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 2024/2025**

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. Recruiting new members through singing courses and open evenings.
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 through enhanced PR.
6. To strengthen our finances.

# Meeting our charitable aims

## Weekly rehearsals

Weekly rehearsals are currently held at Carlton Junior Academy in Nottingham, 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

Throughout the year, we brought our music to a range of events, from fundraising performances for the Air Ambulance and Gedling Borough Council's summer fair to special appearances at the Museum of Timekeeping in Upton. We were also delighted to support community celebrations in Woodthorpe and Southwell, sharing harmony and joy with local audiences.

We kicked off 2025 with a hugely successful four-week singing course, welcoming women from across the area. This initiative not only broadened our community reach but also strengthened our charitable purpose: to advance, improve, develop, and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of barbershop music.

## Special events

October 2024 was a truly unforgettable milestone for us. We were honoured to represent the UK and the Netherlands on the international stage in Kansas City, Missouri, performing our high-energy 'Fosse' set complete with 1920s glamour and front-row chair choreography. The chorus was thrilled to break into the top 10 for the very first time, earning us a spot in the final where we proudly showcased *A Nightingale Sang in Berkeley Square* alongside vibrant contemporary a cappella arrangements of *Perfect* (Ed Sheeran) and *Hold My Hand* (Jess Glynne). Securing 9th place overall was an extraordinary achievement for our chorus and our region and a moment we will cherish.



In September we held our second '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.





## 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 as we prepared for the international competition and also worked with David Sangster, director of Forth Valley Chorus for a weekend in June 2024 to help develop our music in preparation for the International Contest the following year.

## HEADLINES 2024-25

- ❑ **9<sup>TH</sup> PLACE INTERNATIONAL!!**
- ❑ **Vida Loca** 1<sup>st</sup> place and represented the region at International 
- ❑ **Fundraising** - £25,000 to support our international campaign
- ❑ **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Scratch Quartet Contest** – won by “Aving a laugh!”
- ❑ **Coaching** with Nicky Salt and David Sangster
- ❑ Attendance at **regional workshop** with Erin Howden
- ❑ January **open rehearsals** – leading to 12 new members!
- ❑ Great **new contest set** – music and costumes 

## Financial position 2024/25

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards.

### Income and Expenditure

Our income for the year was **£52k**, representing a modest increase compared to the previous financial year. At the year end, the organisation was holding funds in respect of advance deposits for hotel accommodation and registration fees for the UK Convention scheduled for May 2025. Member subscriptions remained the principal source of income, contributing approximately **£25k**, with a further **£7k** generated through targeted fundraising activities in preparation for the international trip.

Outgoings for the year totalled **£67k**, an increase of almost 100% compared to 2023/24. This variance is primarily attributable to costs associated with attendance at the International Convention in Kansas City in October 2024. Of this expenditure, **£15k** was distributed directly to members, and a further **£7k** was applied to subsidise members' contest registration fees. These costs were fully supported by designated fundraising undertaken specifically to enable member participation in the International Convention.

All other areas of expenditure remained broadly consistent with the prior year, except for additional costs incurred to cover the director's travel and accommodation for the Kansas City convention.

The deficit for the year reflects planned expenditure associated with international competition activity and was anticipated and approved by the Trustees. The Trustees consider the financial position at year end to be satisfactory, with adequate controls in place and fundraising plans established to support future activity.

### Trustee expenses and related party transactions

During the year, the Musical Director was also a serving Trustee of the charity. A stipend and reimbursement of expenses were paid in respect of her role as Musical Director. Following review, the Board recognised that trustees should not receive payment for services, and the individual subsequently stepped down as a Trustee to ensure compliance

with charity governance best practice. No trustees received payment for their role as trustees during the year. The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate steps have now been taken to prevent a recurrence.

## **Reserves Policy**

The Trustees maintain a reserves policy intended to ensure the charity can meet its ongoing commitments and manage unforeseen expenditure. At the end of the year, unrestricted reserves were held primarily to support continuity of rehearsals, governance costs, and forward planning for major events. The Trustees review the reserves position annually considering planned activities and financial commitments.



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Lace City Chorus

1162618

## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period  
from

01/04/2024

To

31/03/2025

### 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	25466		-	25,466	22,119
Donations	790		-	790	4,183
Grants			-	-	-
Happy Birthday recordings			-	-	-
Singing Course			-	-	60
Easyfundraising	951		-	951	391
Other Fundraising	7592		-	7,592	5,392
Show Revenue			-	-	570
Performances	1305		-	1,305	105
Funeral Singouts			-	-	-
Riser Hiring Out			-	-	960
Visitors Fees	90		-	90	955
Bonus Ball	555		-	555	800
Interest	104		-	104	66
Water Sales			-	-	-
Sundry Income			-	-	-
Social Events			-	-	-
Angel Fund	945		-	945	482
Convention deposits	8168		-	8,168	8,980
Annual Dinner			-	-	33
Deposits	2396		-	2,396	-
Sundry			-	-	-
SAI			-	-	-
Sundry Creditors			-	-	1,630
Gift Aid	3395		-	3,395	3,136
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
			-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b> (Gross income for AR)	51,757	-	-	51,757	49,862
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
<b>Costume Sales</b>	103	-	-	103	115
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	103	-	-	103	115
<b>Total receipts</b>	51,860	-	-	51,860	49,977

**A3 Payments**

Show Costs			-	-	2,691
Publicity	455		-	455	407
UK Convention	3411		-	3,411	2,083
Costume	74		-	74	73
International Convention	33373		-	33,373	1,215
PRS Fees			-	-	-
Website	413		-	413	585
Sundry Items	1355		-	1,355	130
Gifts	351		-	351	210
Rehearsal Venue	4074		-	4,074	4,967
Risers Pay Men	1790		-	1,790	1,570
Riser Transport	100		-	100	-
Director Compensation	3825		-	3,825	3,750
Director Expenses	2008		-	2,008	492
Training & Education	4612		-	4,612	1,962
Music Purchase	365		-	365	732
Repairs & maintenance			-	-	186
Telephone/Internet	166		-	166	-
Printing, Stationery & Postage	30		-	30	7
Making Music fees	74		-	74	71
Social Events	56		-	56	123
Angel Fund			-	-	-
Accountancy & Audit Fees			-	-	-
Charter	128			128	128
Regional Dues	2238			2,238	2,085
SAI subscriptions	8092		-	8,092	7,097
Convention Registration			-	-	2,265
Convention Hotel			-	-	2,095
			-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>66,990</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>66,990</b>	<b>34,924</b>

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

Costume	456	-	-	456	-
Equipment	174	-	-	174	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>-</b>

<b>Total payments</b>	<b>67,620</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>67,620</b>	<b>34,924</b>
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<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>-15,760</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-15,760</b>	<b>15,053</b>
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<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
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<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>33,107</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>33,107</b>	<b>18,054</b>
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<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>17,347</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>17,347</b>	<b>33,107</b>
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Report to the trustees/ members of

Charity Name

LACE CITY CHORUS

On accounts for the year ended

31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2025

1162618

Set out on pages

1 to 3

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/03/2025.

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:

1\* accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or

2\* 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:

3/1/26 Date:

Name:

PAUL JEFFERY



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

--

Address:

6 INHAM FIELDS CLOSE
GUNTHORPE
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.**

A large, empty rectangular box with a black border, occupying the right half of the page. It is intended for the user to provide details of items for disclosure as requested in the text to the left.