

Board of Trustees Annual Summary Report: 2021

Content and Purpose

This report summarises the work of the Board of Trustees of the German Choir of London ("the Choir"), including changes to the Board and key achievements. It serves to inform all associate members of the Choir of the work going on 'behind the scenes' to create transparency and a sense of ownership. The summary is based on the minutes kept of all Trustee meetings. Any associate member can request to view the meeting minutes (written in English) by emailing any Trustee at any time. Associate members are also permitted to attend the Board Meetings upon request. This is the 7th summary report since the registration of the Choir as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in 2015.

Period covered

January – December 2021

Author

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Content

1. List of events in the reporting period
2. Changes to the Board of Trustees in the reporting period
3. Summary of Trustee work in the reporting period
4. Summary of the Annual General Meeting of Associate Members
5. Financial Summary
6. Acknowledgements
7. Upcoming concerts and events currently planned for 2022

1. Events in the reporting period

Main choral events:

January-April:

- **Virtual Zoom Rehearsals**

This included:

- o vocal warm-ups & vocal exercises
- o exercises for sight reading, singing techniques and rhythm
- o learning of new pieces followed by recording them individually at home (Schubert Mass in E flat Major). Those recordings were then combined for a full choir sound.
- o Talks by choir members about music history and musical theory about the Fuge, Schubert, Weelkes etc.
- o Virtual Pub Socials to meet after rehearsals

- In addition to the repertoire for the whole choir, **some pieces were offered for Soloensemble**, where each voice is being sung by only one singer. The pieces had to be learnt alone at home and then recorded. The individual recordings were mixed together by the Music Director and shared with the choir. The recorded pieces were Schubert's "Erlkönig" and three pieces by Thomas Weelkes: "Farewell, my joy", "My tears do not avail me" and "My Phillis bids me". Two of the Weelkes and the "Erlkönig" were also produced as a video and uploaded to YouTube.

- Further video contributions to the project **Voices.Europe**
A project coordinated by the Goethe-Institut about the past, present, and future of Europe with music by composer Michael Langemann. Together with other international choirs the DCL recorded the music individually and some members also recorded some video material which was all edited together.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w56tGSmlWFs&t=111s>
- **9 April: DCL's first Virtual concert** with videos and audio recordings of excerpts of Schubert's Mass No 6 in E-flat major and some pieces by smaller ensembles from within the choir (such as "Erlkönig"), as well as several of our Corona Commissions, by Ben See, Luke Styles, Sarah Rimkus, Ian Stephens, Michael Cryne, Jenni Watson, Carol J Jones and Donna McKevitt. The concert also included our Voices against Violence video, in which we take a stand against domestic violence, and our lockdown version of Rheinberger's "Abendlied", which was shortlisted for best virtual concert video by Making Music. Barbara Höfling led through the concert, which also included a live interview with composer Ben See.

The concert was a big success with approximately 270 people watching live online and a further 220 people watching the concert in the two weeks following the concert. 240 GBP were received as donations during the concert.

Some of the videos can be seen here:

Abendlied – Rheinberger:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mgRtTw8msU>

So many Uses for Solitude – Ben See

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H5IDp3zY3Rc>

Unruhige Träume - Ian Stephens

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dq6aqwHorp8>

Fear – Donna McKevitt

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lr1uWl1kunM>

Fear no more – Michael Cryne

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3T678dHXINY&t=3s>

Erlkönig - Schubert

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpJI1TG8rn0>

- **Further Soloensemble extra project:** For a small extra fee members of the choir could learn and record a Soloensemble piece and get personal feedback from the Music Director. This project was also accessible for former members who no longer live in London, as it was happening online exclusively. The individual recordings were mixed together by the Music Director and shared with the choir. The Soloensembles recorded two works by Schubert: "Gretchen am Spinnrade" and "Der Zwerg", as well as Gershwin's "Summertime".

May:

- **Outdoor rehearsals in Hyde Park.** From May, when the weather allowed it, we rehearsed a few times outdoors in Hyde Park, so that we could all rehearse together,

despite Covid restrictions and social distancing. The choir rehearsed Mendelssohn's "Sechs Lieder, Im Freien zu singen"

- **Live rehearsals in person from 18 May** in different venue (Bishopsgate Institute in Liverpool Street) to accommodate social distancing. At first only in smaller groups of six people each, later on for the whole choir. We rehearsed works by Bruckner, Hassler and Rheinberger.

June:

- **We returned to Christuskirche in Knightsbridge for rehearsals.** We rehearsed in a bigger space upstairs in the actual church and continued to rehearse socially distanced and with masks. We started rehearsals for our tour to Rome in October (repertoire: Stanford, Gjeilo, Bruckner, Hassler and Rheinberger) and started with some Chorals of Bach's St. Matthew Passion.

July:

- Our **Treasurer and long standing choir member Thomas Hegel passed away** unexpectedly on July 6.
This had a big impact on all choir members, including many former members, who were all shocked by the news. We hosted a virtual call for the choir to give room to talk about Thomas' sudden death and to share memories about him.
- Given the high Covid cases we **continued to sing with masks** during rehearsals.

August/September:

- **Regular Tuesday rehearsals in the Christuskirche** with preparations for the trip to Rome
- Occasional **rehearsals outside in Hyde Park**, weather permitting
- **Zoom call** for all former members outside London who were joining us in Rome to rehearse the repertoire required

October:

- **Concert tour to Rome:** October 1-3. The choir participated in the mass in St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican and sang a concert at Santa Maria dell' Anima. Big turn-out of current and former choir members who joined us in Rome.

The repertoire for Rome included:

- o Gjeilo - Ubi Caritas
- o Hassler – Sanctus & Benedictus
- o Rheinberger – Abendlied
- o Stanford – Beati Quorum
- o Bruckner – Tantum Ergo
- o Bach – two Chorals from St. Matthew Passion
- o Mendelssohn - Richte mich Gott
- o Mendelssohn – Herr nun lässest Du
- o Tomkins – When David heard
- o

The choir organised a dinner for everyone on the first night and a guided tour through the city for all members. The trip was definitely the highlight of the year 2021.

A video with photos of the trip was put together and shared on YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOqRbAgxEC8>

- **Memorial Service for Thomas Hegel** in the Christuskirche on 19 October
The service was hosted by the choir, for his family, friends and colleagues. The choir contributed musically (Purcell Funeral Sentences, Bach, Mendelssohn, Rheinberger) and choir members remembered Thomas with speeches and messages.

November:

- The **concert dates for the St. Matthew Passion were announced for March 2022** in London Southwark cathedral and Coventry Cathedral and the concept of the Sophie Scholl passion was presented to the choir. Rehearsals for the Passion intensified. This included sectional rehearsals led by individual choir members for their voice group to learn some of the more difficult pieces of the Passion.
- **Auditions for Soloists** of the St. Matthew Passion were held on 20 November and four great soloists were chosen for the project.
- **Covid questionnaire** was sent to choir members to check the current mood and safety concerns in terms of rehearsal venue. Based on the questionnaire the choir announced Covid guidelines valid until January 2023

December:

- **Recording of Advent season chorale “Es kommt ein Schiff geladen”** in an arrangement especially commissioned by the choir during the pandemic as part of the Corona Commissions. On 7 December the choir recorded the piece with a professional sound engineer and the Music Director created a video which was uploaded to YouTube and shared as an online musical Christmas card. The video was a retrospect of the year 2021 and showed the highlights of the choir. The video also asked for donations for the charity organisation “Shelter”.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_SwILILEsM
- The **AGM on 14 December** had to happen online via Zoom due to current government Covid restrictions

Trustee Meetings:

- 2 February 2021 (on zoom)
- 17 March 2021 (on zoom)
- 27 May 2021 (in person)
- 23 July 2021 (on zoom)
- 11 October 2021 (on zoom)

Annual choir member meeting

14 December 2021, on zoom due to current government guidelines
Full meeting (AGM) of the choir members to conclude the year 2021, during which the Trustees and the Musical Director gave an update, section leaders were elected being followed by questions and discussions from/with choir members.

2. Changes to the Board of Trustees in the reporting period

January 2021- 27 May 2021: Board of Trustees and areas of responsibilities:

- **Melanie Allmendinger:**
Chair of the Board of Trustees, integrating new members, assisting the treasurer
- **Thomas Hegel:** Treasurer - finance and legal
- **Christian Anders:** events coordinator including trips abroad
- **Richard Loeser:** Marketing (website, posters etc), finding new members
- **Susanne Thiele:** Marketing (social media, posters etc), minutes, creating concert programmes, Christuskirche newsletter

On 27 May 2021 **Rebecca Dittrich** became an additional trustee with the responsibility to look after new members and issuing the weekly newsletter

On 6 July 2021 the Treasurer Thomas Hegel passed away.

From 6 July 2021 until the end of 2021 the Trustees were:

- **Melanie Allmendinger:**
Chair of the Board of Trustees, writing report for Charity commission, assisting the treasurer
- **Christian Anders:** events coordinator including finding concert locations and trips abroad
- **Richard Loeser:** Treasurer - finance and legal, ticket sales, new website etc.
- **Susanne Thiele:** Marketing (social media, posters etc), website, minutes, creating concert programmes, Christuskirche newsletter
- **Rebecca Dittrich:** new members, weekly newsletter

3. Summary of Trustee work in the reporting period

Marketing:

- The marketing team was very active on social media with many posts on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, advertising our (online) rehearsals and recordings and videos which the choir produced, with a big success online.
 - We added several new videos (amongst them the Corona Commission videos) to our YouTube platform which received many views and likes.
 - Our Rome trip video reached 218 views, and our Christmas card "Es kommt ein Schiff geladen" reached 262 views on YouTube.

- o On social media there were strategic posts distributed evenly over the week. The choir was using regular hashtags like #DCLnews, #DCLfreundship, #DCLfun
- o We continued our series on all social media channels to introduce individual Choir members who had recently joined the choir with a profile and photos. #MeetTheChoir. There were also videos asking choir members why they joined the choir and what the choir means to them.
- o We started the series "Throwback" and shared highlights of the choir from the past years like our gig at Piccadilly Circus, our Blessed are the Peacemakers Cathedral tour and our Las Canals trip
- o Social media series "bored of..." where we motivate new choir members to join us after lockdown, being bored of their sofa, tracksuits and computer games
- o There was a lot of activity in preparation of the virtual concert and during the concert with live comments and questions on YouTube.
- o We promoted the video of the Voices.Europe project in cooperation with the Goethe-Institut London
- o The social media team was very active during the trip to Rome, sharing many videos and photos under #DCLOnTour #DCLinRome #singinginrome and also had a series #kofferpacken showing what choir members were going to pack for Rome to create excitement ahead of the trip.
- o We started posts to advertise the St. Matthew Passion Scholl project with hashtags #stmatthewpassion #sophiescholl
- o The concept for the new website was developed and progressed towards the go-live event.

Covid measures:

- The trustees made sure that the everchanging Covid rules and guidelines and what those meant for the choir were communicated to the choir. The trustees and the music director had to be very flexible and creative to react to the unusual circumstances.
- Several planned projects during the period had to be cancelled, changed and reorganised.
- Once the choir was able to rehearse again in person, the trustees had to find new and bigger venues where the choir could rehearse socially distanced
- Strict Health & Safety measures were introduced by the trustees such as:
 - o Risk assessments were produced for each venue
 - o Covid questionnaire were filled out by all choristers ahead of every rehearsal
 - o Opening windows and doors of the rehearsal venue
 - o providing hand sanitizer and masks for choristers to use when entering the rehearsal venue
 - o Staggered entry and leaving the venue
 - o Keeping chairs socially distanced and keeping a seating chart to show who sat where during the rehearsal

- o Mask wearing in all rehearsals
- o Shorter rehearsals & more breaks
- The trustees worked hard to keep morale high during the difficult period of lockdown. The choir reacted well to the online rehearsals and the virtual concert. It brought the choir together and we managed not to lose any members, except people who left the UK for personal reasons.
Everyone was very appreciative when the choir could finally rehearse again in person.

4. Summary of the Annual General Meeting

The AGM (General Meeting of Associate Members) on 14 December 2021 had to take place on zoom, as in person meetings of a bigger group were not allowed at this time. 30 members attended.

The choir approved the work of the Trustees, elected section leaders for 2022, and discussed a number of ideas relating to rehearsals and the running of the choir. Minutes of this meeting are available (in English).

All points were discussed by the Board and the Musical Director and have been implemented as far as possible.

- The Trustees thanked choir members who volunteer their time to the choir
- Musical Director presented a review of all choral activities of 2021
- The Trustees gave a review about all Marketing and Social media activities in the past year
- The Treasurer reported about the financial health of the choir
- The Trustees informed the choir about the need for Mandatory tickets (=Pflichttickets) for the St. Matthew Passion to fill the church and to balance the books
- (re)elected section leaders
 - o **Sopranos - Nathalie Nötzold (Cover: Amadea Heitmann)**
 - o **Altos - Marianne Rencken (Cover: Elisabeth Minkner)**
 - o **Tenors* - Eckart Marchand (Cover: Felix Richter)**
 - o **Basses – Paul Dichtl (cover: Michael Erras)**

**election postponed to January due to not enough tenors present*
- Musical Director updated the choir on plans for 2022
- Approval of trustees board by members and updates:
All trustees (Melanie Allmendinger, Christian Anders, Susanne Thiele, Richard Loeser and Rebecca Dittrich) were approved and re-elected
- discussion points and feedback from members (see AGM minutes for reference)

5. Financial summary

Please see separate document for details.

- **Receipts** this year were approx. £13,200, of which £7,711 associate membership fees (at the end of 2021 we had 50 paying, registered choir members). In 2021 we did not receive any donations from sponsors.
- **Payments** this year were approx. £12,600, of which £8,800 for Musical Director remuneration, £360 rent for the rehearsal space in Liverpool Street and £2,360 for marketing including our new website.
- In 2021 there was **no increase to the associate membership fee**, which therefore was held at £20 per month (£10 discount for students and singers without regular income).
- At the end of 2021 we had £36,613 **savings**. We expect that some of these savings will be used to finance concerts next year. £15,000 were donated by the Schröder Bank in the past and will be used for the St. Matthew Passion/Sophie Scholl project in 2022. The Trustees also like to keep a sound level of savings as we never know how membership numbers develop over the years – especially with the impact from the pandemic and Brexit.
- Solo ensemble, section and technical rehearsals will continue to be financed by the whole choir as these contribute to the quality of the choir as a whole.

6. Acknowledgements

Aside from the Trustees, several associate members have significantly contributed to the development of the choir during 2021 as volunteers which we wish to acknowledge:

- **Margarete Falk:** prepares the attendance register and reviews attendance
- **Uta Bergner-Sington:** responsible for ordering the music for the choir and providing midi files which help the members rehearsing at home
- **Julia Jennings/Jenny Eckner/Charlotte McDonough:** social media posts
- **Johannes Steinweg:** help with creating new website
- **Nathalie Nötzold/Amadea Heitmann:** section leader soprano
- **Marianne Rencken/Magdalena Lippingwell:** section leader alto
- **Eckart Marchand/Felix Richter:** section leader tenor
- **David Schröder/Ben Krueger:** section leader bass
- **Simone Maassen-Krupke:** help with organising the trip to Rome
- **Renate Kemp:** pianist for St. Matthew Passion rehearsals

7. Concerts and events currently programmed for the future

- **17 March 2022 - St Matthew Passion in Southwark Cathedral**, London to honour the 100. Birthday of Sophie Scholl. Together with Coventry Cathedral Choir. Sponsored by BayernLB and Schroeder Bank.
- **19 March 2022 - St Matthew Passion in Coventry Cathedral**
- **15 July 2022 – A Cappella Summer Concert at St. Mary-at- Hill**, with works by Bach and Rheinberger and Solo Ensembles by Schubert and Mahler
- **23 October 2022 – Mass at German Catholic Church St. Boniface**
- **28 October 2022 - The Lethal Requiem at St. Mary-at- Hill**, Mozart Requiem and selection of the Corona Commissions (Stephens, Cryne, McKevitt)
- **27 November 2022 – Advent singing at Christuskirche**
- **3 December 2022 – Carol Singing at German YMCA**
- **13 and 15 December 2022 – Carol Singing at Tube Stations for Charity**
- **6 December 2022 – AGM and Christmas Party**

GERMAN CHOIR OF LONDON
(REGISTERED WITH
CHARITY COMMISSION NO: 1162894)

Accounts

31 December 2021

GERMAN CHOIR OF LONDON
Receipt and Expenditure account
for the year ended 31 December 2021

	2021	2020
	£	£
Receipts		
Member subscriptions	7,711	11,899
General donations	5,390	5,398
Grant income	-	1,000
Concert ticket sales	98	160
CD/Music sales	-	1,181
Interest income	4	37
	<u>13,203</u>	<u>19,675</u>
Payments		
Conductor fees & rehearsals	8,781	6,590
Venue Hire	360	1,415
Travel, subsistence and accommodation	-	1,359
Instrumentalists	200	-
Solo singers	-	4,040
Marketing, events & other expenses	2,361	5,149
Accountancy fees	900	960
	<u>12,602</u>	<u>19,513</u>
Expenses		
Total expenses	<u>12,602</u>	<u>19,513</u>
Surplus of receipts over expenditure	<u>601</u>	<u>162</u>
Unrestricted Fund:		
At 1 January 2021	<u>36,012</u>	<u>35,850</u>
Surplus of receipts over expenditure	<u>601</u>	<u>162</u>
At 31 December 2021	<u>36,613</u>	<u>36,012</u>

GERMAN CHOIR OF LONDON
Balance Sheet
as at 31 December 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Current assets			
Cash at bank and in hand		36,613	36,012
Net current assets		<u>36,613</u>	<u>36,012</u>
Net assets		<u>36,613</u>	<u>36,012</u>
UNRESTRICTED FUND:			
Fund Balance	2	36,613	36,012
Total funds		<u>36,613</u>	<u>36,012</u>

Signed by two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature: *R. Loeter*

Print Name: RICHARD LOETER

Date 29/10/2022

Signature: *M. Allmendinger*

Print Name: MELANIE ALLMENDINGER

Date 29/10/2022

GERMAN CHOIR OF LONDON
Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 31 December 2021

1 Accounting policies

Basis of preparation

The Accounts are drawn up on a cash basis.

2 Unrestricted Fund:

	2021
	£
At 1 January 2021	36,012
Excess of receipts over expenditure for the year	601
At 31 December 2021	<u>36,613</u>