

**CONCERTS AT CRATFIELD CIO
2023 ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS**

Annual Report and Financial Statement for the year ended 31st December 2023

**Independent Examiner's Report to the members of Concerts at Cratfield for the year ended
31st December 2023**

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023

Respective responsibilities of Trustees of Concerts at Cratfield and the Independent Examiner:

The Trustees note that neither an audit nor an independent examination is required by the Charity Commission but take the view that an independent examination is desirable.

It is my responsibility to

Examine the accounts under Section 145 of the Charities Act (2011)

Follow the procedures laid down by the Charity Commission under the Act

State whether particular measures have come to my attention

Basis of the Independent Examiner's Statement

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

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matters have come to my attention:

1. Which give me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
To keep accounting records in accordance with Section 145 of the Act
To prepare financial statements which accord with the accounting records have not been met; or
2. To which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.

**L Taylor
Red Lodge Barn, Middleton Moor, IP17 3LN**

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

My predecessor noted the sense of cautious optimism at the start of the 2022 Season, our first full season since the problems we faced during the pandemic. When I took over as Chairman in October 2023, our sense of optimism about the future had strengthened significantly. At the outset of 2023, we could still not be certain of the long-term viability of Concerts at Cratfield. 2022 had been a success in artistic terms, but we had seen a further fall in the level of our reserves. If we could not reverse the decline, we could not be confident of our future sustainability.

As it turned out, the 2023 Season was a triumph, thanks in great part to the steady hand of Peter Baker, our outgoing Chairman. Peter had assumed the role of Chairman in 2020 and had combined it with his continuing role of Concert Organiser. The programme he put together was a huge success, with enormously positive feedback both from our audiences and, strikingly, from the musicians who came to play. Our audiences responded warmly to the high quality of both the playing and the programming; and our visiting musicians were unanimous in praising the quality of the Cratfield acoustic and our knowledgeable, enthusiastic and respectful audience: 'a listening audience' was how more than one of our visitors described it.

Following the success of the spring concert at The Cut in Halesworth in 2022, we once again mounted a concert there, this time a little later, in April. Chamber Music Box, who had proved popular when they visited for one of the special concerts mounted in 2021, once again drew a healthy audience, and although we did not quite cover our costs we came close to breaking even—and provided a useful launchpad for the main summer season.

The summer season delivered everything we could have hoped for: high quality playing, a roughly two thirds increase in ticket sales and an appreciative audience, some of whom became Friends and, in a few cases, very generous Patrons.

We also saw a marked increase newcomers to Cratfield; we estimate that about half of those who bought tickets in 2023 had not bought tickets since our new ticketing scheme was introduced in 2021, so were almost certainly new to our concerts; several of our newcomers were among our new Patrons and Friends (but not all—some longstanding regulars decided to become supporters). Our ticketing system also enables us to monitor the geographical spread of our audiences, which is surprisingly wide,

The result of this wave of enthusiasm is reflected in our accounts which show a dramatic reversal in our reserves position (see the financial report below) and leaving us feeling overwhelmingly positive about the future; this was amply justified given the success of the 2024 Season which, as I write, has just ended.

Peter Baker's final report as Chairman hinted at forthcoming changes in the Board of Trustees. At the AGM in October 2023, Peter retired as a Trustee; he was as delighted as we all were that he was standing down at a time of increasing optimism after a last season brilliantly programmed by him. We also said a reluctant goodbye to our longest serving Trustee (and former Treasurer) Clare Web and to Michael Taylor whose impressive knowledge of the chamber music repertoire had been so helpful; both Clare and Peter were also stalwarts of the concert preparations on Sunday mornings. We miss them all (although they have not forsaken Cratfield).

I took over as Chairman, adding that role to my communications work; Graham Ingham took over the primary work on concert planning alongside his duties as Treasurer. We welcomed a new Trustee, Victoria Bennett-Hall in early 2024.

Although this report is meant to cover 2023, I cannot let the passing of Don Peacock in early 2024 go unremarked. Don, as the immediate neighbour of St Mary's church and a former churchwarden was the staunchest supporter of Concerts at Cratfield we could ever have wished for. His loss is a personal one for his family and many friends; it is also an institutional loss for all of us at Cratfield.

Jonathan Birt
Chairman, Concerts at Cratfield CIO

INTRODUCTION TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT

I write this with hindsight, since the 2024 Season has just ended on a high note. But so too did the 2023 Season which took place at a time when we were far more anxious about our financial sustainability. The financial outlook at the end of 2023 was distinctly rosier.

We made a loss of just over £3000 in 2022, depleting our reserves significantly and we embarked on 2023 wondering whether we could start to build up reserves again, or if we would see a further drain and bring our financial viability into question. Our anxiety turned out to be misplaced.

We had decided once again to mount a concert at the Cut judging that the prospect of attracting some concertgoers perhaps not familiar to Cratfield and also launching publicity for the summer season made the financial risk worthwhile. This paid off: we came close to covering our costs.

But when we started to sell tickets for the main season we realised that the financial outlook was changing dramatically for the better. Tickets sales (including those for The Cut concert) were up by around 66% compared with 2022. Some of this reflected the increase in ticket prices, of course, but it is worth noting that the price increase did not discourage our audiences, many of whom liked the introduction of season tickets offering a discount.

Our supporter base increased even more dramatically. Income from membership subscriptions rose by almost as much, reaching almost £6500. We saw an increase in donations and of a similar size. Even our modest mug sales meant that the cost of purchasing the mugs in 2022 had been more than covered. And bank interest more or less quintupled, admittedly from a very low base. We also received nearly £3000 in Gift Aid relating to earlier years.

On the expenditure side, many of our costs remained stable or declined. Musicians' fees were comparable with 2022, We spent nothing on advertising beyond the cost of printing posters, nothing on postage. Website costs were slightly down, as was the hire charge for toilets. Piano hire costs rose sharply (we had more pianos than 2022, in part because one concert involving a piano that year had to be switched), printing costs were up by around 17%; and the hire costs of The Cut concert (charged as a percentage of ticket revenues) and the revenue donated to the church (again a share, 10%, of ticket revenues) both rose as a consequence of the much improved ticket sales. Although the costs of using the church have risen substantially it is worth noting that overall this arrangement has helped us: a fixed hire cost during 2021 and 2022 could have crippled us financially.

Although the numbers for 2024 have yet to be crunched, it would appear that tickets sales and membership subscriptions have continued to increase (even though ticket prices were held flat), and it looks as if our reserves will have increased further by the year end.

For ease of reference the 2022 accounts summary is also appended to this report.

**CONCERTS AT CRATFIELD CIO
ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2023**

INCOME

Membership subscriptions	£6,518
Ticket sales	£19,806.26
Gift Aid	£2,947.56
Donations	£2,340.66
Sponsorship	£700
Mug sales	£60
Bank interest	£161.78
TOTAL	£32,534.26

EXPENDITURE

Musicians fees	£16,000
Piano hire and tuning	£1,974
Church payment	£1,600 ¹
Printing	£1,481
Making Music incl insurance	£666.31
Website	£404.90
Financing charges (inc refunds)	£602.61
Hire of The Cut for April concert	£339.20
Toilet hire	£1,810.29
Artists lunches	£202.35
Car park payment	£138.98
Retirement Gifts for departing Trustees	£210.85

¹ Payment on account

AGM catering costs	£36.82
Friends refund (double payment)	£30
AGM Village Hall hire	£48
Examiner's fee	£200
Administration costs	£204.99
TOTAL	£25,950.30
Balance at year end:	£6,583.96

Cash float January 1, 2023	£38.40
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Cash float December 31, 2023	£29.55
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Reserves at end 2022: Bank	£13002.27
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Petty cash	£38.40
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Reserves at end 2023: Bank	£19595.08
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Petty cash	£29.55
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Total change in reserves	£6,583.96
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**CONCERTS AT CRATFIELD CIO
2022 ACCOUNTS**

INCOME

Membership subscriptions	£3,959
Ticket sales	£11,877.50
Funding from Dutch embassy	£2,150
Donations	£944.40
Bequest	£1,000
Bank interest plus Amazon smile	£27.33
Mug sales	£230
Total	£20,188.23

EXPENDITURE

Musicians' Fees	£15,943.27
Piano Hire and tuning	£761
Church	£1,080
Printing	£1,264
Postage	£67.67
Making Music	£661.79
Website	£427.05
Financing charges	£225.11
Cost of The Cut (for February concert)	£144
Toilet Hire	£1,833.45
Artist lunches	£156.91
Car park payment	£95