

THE CARICE SINGERS

Registered Charity Number 1170689

TRUSTEES'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2024

CONTENTS

Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisers

Trustees' report

Independent examiner's report

Statement of financial activities

Balance sheet

Statement of cash flows

Notes to the financial statements

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Trustees

D HODGES (resigned 23 July 2024)
O HUGH-JONES (joined 23 July 2024)
C KING
N MERCIECA (joined 23 July 2024)
G PARRIS
J SYNGE
M TATTERSALL

Charity registered number

1170689

Charity registered address

Fexloe House, Main Street, Oxhill, Warwickshire, CV35 0QR

Charity staff

George Parris – Artistic Director
Will Wright – Singer Representative
Karen Malim – Fundraising and Development Consultant

Honorary Treasurer

James Synge

Independent examiner

John McKail

THE CARICE SINGERS

TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

The trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024. The Trustees confirm that the Annual Report and financial statements of the charity comply with the current statutory requirements for charities. The financial statements have been reviewed by an Independent Examiner as required by statute.

Objectives and Activities

a. Policies and objectives

The objectives of the charity are for the public benefit:

To advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in the arts and in particular the appreciation, promotion and practice of choral music by means agreed by the trustees, including through the presentation of concerts, the provision of workshops, the commissioning of new works and the production of recordings.

Values

The operations, policies and practices of The Carice Singers are guided by a value framework that shapes our approach and drives the work we deliver, embodying a commitment to building something that outlasts us all. They include:

- **Excellence** - inspiring through sound, precision, imagination, and ambition
- **Curiosity** - combining an infinite mindset with a meaningful effort to explore
- **Generosity** - listening to and learning from everyone we engage with; sharing our thoughts and ideas with each other and the wider sector, for the benefit of all
- **Transparency** - responsible leadership and respect for the well-being of all
- **Positivity** - finding the lessons, fulfilment, and humour in everything we do

Mission Statement

The Carice Singers envisions a new, outward-facing approach to being a professional choir: one that is not only dedicated to enriching lives, but also to pushing artistic boundaries, and fostering an inclusive environment that encourages meaningful musical exploration by audiences and artists. At a time when the industry is increasingly risk averse, The Carice Singers emerged from the Pandemic as a collaborative ensemble (and the first non-salaried professional choir to offer its freelancers sick pay) where performers have the resources, direction, and space to master complexity, perform with conviction, and produce a world-class sound.

Background

Founded in 2011 by Artistic Director George Parris (then 18 years of age) with a group of young singers, but active in a professional context since 2018, over the last twelve months the choir has gained acclaim for its "clarity and beauty and balance of sound" (Oliver Soden), "unique precision" (Paweł Łukaszewski), and "exquisite, bold programming" (Royal Philharmonic Society). The ensemble is not only making a significant contribution to the UK's

THE CARICE SINGERS

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

cultural landscape, but is also indispensable as a beacon of excellence, variety, and freshness in the UK choral scene.

b. Strategies for achieving objectives

1. To inspire our audiences with work of the highest artistic calibre
2. To provide our audiences with pre-concert talks and workshops which contextualise our chosen repertoire and encourage them to draw their own interpretations from the music
3. To cultivate new audiences for choral music by undertaking our work in an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere
4. To undertake projects which enable the ensemble to travel out of the metropolis and bring our performances to areas of the UK that normally do not have access to a high level of music-making
5. To develop policies and procedures which safeguard all those who work with us, and communicates what we stand for to our partners, audiences, and members of the public
6. To develop an ethical and environmentally sound approach to all aspects of our work

c. Main activities undertaken to further the charity's purposes for the public benefit

The Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing their aims and objectives and planning future activities. Below is a record of the public benefit activities for 2024.

The Carice Singers undertook 9 public engagements during the year, including the New Voices Academy (a week-long education scheme for early-career composers at the Three Choirs Festival).

The main project in 2024 was a celebration of Gustav's Holst 150th Anniversary, which included three 'Stargazers' concerts with harpist Olivia Jageurs at St Martin-in-the-Fields, Lichfield Cathedral, and St James' Church, Chipping Campden, in Gloucestershire. The project also featured a new commission supported by the Vaughan Williams Foundation – *Weaving Stars* by Electra Perivolaris – which was performed at each of the concerts. A video recording of the premiere performance was also uploaded to YouTube.

The Carice Singers also made significant steps in its commitment to contemporary choral music, collaborating with Riot Ensemble to perform a memorial concert for the revered Finnish composer Kaija Saariaho on the first anniversary of her passing at Kings Place, commissioning *Weaving Stars* from Electra Perivolaris, giving a platform to new vocal music at the Spitalfields Music Festival, and providing tuition to early-career composers during the New Voices Academy. The group also appeared on an EP of new music called *A Moment of Deathlessness*, featuring work from the composer Jean-Loup Pinson, which was released in November 2024.

THE CARICE SINGERS

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

Achievements and performance

a. Key financial performance indicators

The accounts are prepared on the accepted basis of receipts and payments. The overall cash flow was £602 negative, on a total income of £66,893. This compares with £2,665 positive and £75,676 respectively in the prior year.

Income received from engagements remains a core element of the charity's financial stability. In 2024, this figure made up 60% of total income, against 62% the previous year. Ticket income made up 4% of total income this year. Donations given by individuals or Trusts and Foundations supported 32% of the charity's total yearly income, bringing in a total of £21,353 (without Gift Aid).

In terms of expenditure, total direct costs of all events totalled 93% of total expense.

For the detailed financial statements please see the end of this report.

Review of activities

2024 was an exciting year of significant further exploration for The Carice Singers, involving performances at new locations along with more regular venues which gained very positive feedback from our audiences as well as critical acclaim.

Our celebration of Gustav Holst's 150th anniversary saw us resurrecting unjustly forgotten choral works from this quiet visionary of British music. Our concert programme, 'Stargazers', aimed to contextualise and promote an appreciation of Holst's far-reaching eclecticism which included English folksong, ancient Indian texts, and cosmic landscapes.

Commissioning *Weaving Stars* from Electra Perivolaris, with the generous support of the Vaughan Williams Foundation, strategically aligned with Gustav Holst's creative vision and added another work to the repertoire for choir and harp. Electra described the collaboration as "particularly enriching", as "it is united by our shared interest in Nordic/Scottish musical traditions and expression of the natural works and landscape in choral music, enabling me to explore new compositional techniques which express the tensions and resonances between human life and nature." Artistic Director, George Parris, added that "Electra's vocal music, as it develops, requires a certain degree of repetitive rehearsal and therefore muscle memory, and from this physicality the listener gains an impression of sound that is deeper, personal, and very expressive. For this reason I find her music compelling and very beautiful – richly rewarding to perform – and the atmosphere she has created in *Weaving Stars* has made this work particularly special, as well as very enthusiastically received by our audiences."

Our sold-out memorial concert for Kaija Saariaho, "Into the Light", saw us team up with Riot Ensemble at Kings Place to honour her significant contribution to choral music and her limitless, iridescent imagination. Saariaho's final, powerful choral work *Reconnaissance* (2021) was the concert's centrepiece, already described as "the most important choral work composed on this side of the turn of the millennium" (*MusicWeb International*). This was still

THE CARICE SINGERS

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

one of its early performances. The programme also included the UK Premiere of Lotta Wennäkoski's *Valossa* and Jonathan Harvey's final work, *Plainsongs for Peace and Light*. Feedback from audience members ranged from: "Exquisite, bold programming that should be heard again" (James Murphy, Royal Philharmonic Society), to "I am increasingly in awe at what you achieve — a clarity and beauty and balance of sound, in such daring and valuable repertoire"; "It was a vast learning curve, and certainly my first atonal event! Once I had got my surprised ear into the right mode, I was full of admiration for their clarity and extraordinary skill"; "So moving and so beautiful"; and "f**king bonkers!".

"High-vis vest and hard hat, judge's wig and gown, hoodie and skateboard aren't the usual uniform for a choir", wrote Rebecca Franks in *The Times*. And yet, this is what members of The Carice Singers cheerfully donned to bring out the levity and everydayness of Luciano Bero's Seventies vocal soundscape *Cries of London* at the Spitalfields Music Festival in July, "engaging sung and...sounding fresh as ever". Marking the third year of a partnership between Spitalfields Music and Cheltenham Music Festival Composer Academy, *Cries of London* was presented together with the London premieres of six works created at 2023 Composer Academy, with each composer present to introduce their work and meet invited industry professionals at a post-concert reception.

Later in July, The Carice Singers were invited to be the ensemble in the inaugural New Voices Academy held at the Three Choirs Festival. NVA is a new education scheme for early-career composers providing workshop, showcase, recording, and networking opportunities with Course Director Daniel Kidane. It was established with the advice of a number of music creators and industry professionals, to be a scheme that responds to the most urgent needs of today's emerging composers. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, for example: "It was a real joy and a pleasure to be a part of ... a really special and momentous experience." David Wordsworth, a conductor who attended the showcase, wrote afterwards that NVA was "a completely invaluable experience for any composer, let alone one at the start of their career" and Darren Xu, a composer who attended the showcase, posted on X: "@thecaricesingers are monsters. In the sense that they devour lots of new music in no time and spit out amazing performances."

THE CARICE SINGERS

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

Membership and Support

The Carice Singers is enormously grateful to its many Friends, Benefactors and other donors whose support is vital to realising artistic ambitions and helping to secure the future. In 2024, the number of our supporters was 40.

Along with donations from individuals, the charity is extremely grateful to the Trusts and Foundations who supported the charity in 2024.

Financial Review

a. Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

b. Investment policy and performance

Under the Charity's Constitution the charity has the power to invest in any way the Trustees see fit.

The charity has so far not made any major investments nor does it plan to in the foreseeable future.

Financial risk management objectives and policies

The financial objective of The Carice Singers is to raise sufficient annual income to cover the expenditure of the year whilst generating surplus funds to maintain reserves at levels which match potential future liabilities and risk so that the financial viability of the charity is assured.

The charity aims to spread financial risk across the main sources of income including performance fees, ticket sales, philanthropic donations, and money from Trusts and Foundations. The charity continues to regularly review its plans to increase these levels of income, across all main sources, as well as further economising on expenditure where possible.

a. Principal risks and uncertainties

The principal risks facing The Carice Singers include:

- The expense of putting on events and making recordings, together with the accompanying costs involved with being a professional vocal ensemble which is larger than most others (e.g. singers' fees, transportation, accommodation)
- Financial uncertainty related to Brexit particularly with regard to the impact on securing engagements in Europe (which are often more financially generous than in the UK) as well the impact on financial support from individual donors

THE CARICE SINGERS

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

- Financial uncertainty related to the long-term impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic with regard to the continued caution or volatility preventing the charity's activities from taking place (either as a whole or in their fully realised versions) and the general recovery of the cultural sector as a whole
- Competition from other arts organisations, in particular professional vocal ensembles, that could impact the number of engagements, donations, ticket sales, and the availability of musicians
- Practicalities of working with musicians at the beginning of their careers, with regard to the prospect of financial strains and or other professional hardships facing these persons, made all the more uncertain by the recent volatility of the cultural section in general.

b. Reserves policy

Reserves are generally no more or less than the bank and cash balance, although certain income received is restricted for use towards specific purposes. If funds have been received for specific purposes then such amounts will be shown in the accounts as used or held as restricted. The trustees are working towards building up the charity's unrestricted reserves over the next few years in order to ensure that at least 6 months of overheads can be afforded at any one time.

c. Principal funding

The principal funding sources for the charity include a) funds received from music festivals or music venues/societies who wish to engage the charity for a performance for an agreed amount b) revenue collected as ticket or CD sales which comes from the general public at the charity's own events c) donations given by individuals or Trusts and Foundations d) Gift Aid received as a result of these donations.

Structure, governance and management

a. Constitution

The Charity, also referred to as 'the Charity' is registered as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) whose only voting members are its charity trustees. The Charity was incorporated on 12 December 2016 and commenced trading on that date. The principal objects of the CIO are for the public benefit: to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in the arts and in particular the appreciation, promotion and practice of choral music by means agreed by the trustees, including through the presentation of concerts, the provision of workshops, the commissioning of new works and the production of recordings.

b. Method of appointment or election of Trustees

The management of the Charity is the responsibility of the Trustees who are responsible for the appointment or election of new Trustees under the terms of the Constitution.

THE CARICE SINGERS

TRUSTEES' REPORT (continued) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

c. Policies adopted for the induction and training of Trustees

New Trustees receive a copy of the current version of the Constitution as well as a copy of the Charity's latest Trustees' Annual Report and statement of accounts before his or her first appointment or trustees' meeting. Thereafter, the new trustee is introduced to key employees and other Trustees and is invited to upcoming performances given by the charity.

d. Organisational structure and decision making

The Trustees are responsible for the overall governance of the charity and all key decisions affecting direction of the charity. The Board of Trustees delegates the day to day management of the charity to the charity staff members including the Artistic Director, Projects Administrator, and the Treasurer.

e. Pay policy for staff

The remuneration of staff is reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees and is kept in line with other similar arts organisations.

f. Connected persons

In his role as Artistic Director, George Parris received artistic fees of £4,755 in 2024 as well as a fee of £2,000 for general administration as agreed by the trustees and as per clause 6. 2. a. of the Charity Constitution.

Olivia Hugh-Jones, who became a trustee in July 2024, received artistic fees of £1,134 in 2024 as agreed by the trustees and as per clause 6. 2. a. of the Charity Constitution.

Nathan Mercieca, who became a trustee in July 2024, received artistic fees of £527 in 2024 as agreed by the trustees and as per clause 6. 2. a. of the Charity Constitution.

g. Trustees' indemnities

If the CIO is wound up, the charity trustees have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities.

Plans for future periods

The trustees' main aim is for the quality of the charity's work to keep increasing, together with the scope and reach of its projects, and to continue forging a meaningful approach to how it engages with people, continues to collaborate with other musicians, and provides opportunities for learning and development.

The charity's artistic vision will continue developing to find ways in which it can focus its programming of repertoire, where disparities can be strategically presented together, and opportunities where stories and contexts behind the music can be unwrapped for listeners in a way that is compelling. It will be presenting a major project marking the 90th birthday of

Arvo Pärt in 2025 with these aspects of storytelling and compelling experiences. The trustees plan to continue developing the charity's support of early-career composers and singers, not so much because they might be the next generation, but because the trustees believe that fresh creativity and originality is well worth facilitating and celebrating at this moment in our history.

THE CARICE SINGERS

[Charity no. 1170689]

Receipts & Payments Account For The Year Ended 31 Dece

	2024
Receipts	£
Engagement Fees	40,228
Tickets and Programmes	2,204
CD Sales	10
Friends and Benefactors	11,735
Other Donations	9,618
Gift Aid Recovery	3,098
Total	<u>66,893</u>

Payments	
Artists fees & expenses	51,027
Venue Hire	2,851
Printing/Stationery/Website	994
Advertising	390
Music & Materials	2,071
Commissioning fees	1,900
Bank Charges	62
Fundraising and Stewardship	4,471
Administration and Production expenses	3,730
Total	<u>67,495</u>

Net Cash Surplus/(Deficit) For The Year	<u>(602)</u>
--	---------------------

Cash Funds Brought Forward Last Year	5,566
Cash Funds Carried Forward This Year	4,964

[illegible]

CARICE SINGERS 2024

Receipts and Payments basis
#VALUE!

EVENTS/PROJECTS															
Jan-Dec 2024	56 Funeral	57 Holst	58 Saariaho	59 Martin	59a Pinson	60 Cries of	61 Naunton	62 Holst	63 3 Choirs	63a John	64 Stargazers	65 McGarth	<none>	Total	
	21.2.24	18.4.24	K.Place	Randall	EP 25.6.24	London	Music 5.7.24	Lchfield	Worcs	Bennett 90th	Holst 150	Wedding			
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£			
INC1 Engagement Fees	2,640	3,000	2,146	5,202	1,385	4,250	5,500	5,250	7,200	1,670		1,985		40,228	
INC2 Tickets, programmes											2,204			2,204	
INC4 Grants/specfic (Crowdfunding)		100	7,518										2,000	9,618	
EVENT INCOME group	2,640	3,100	9,664	5,202	1,385	4,250	5,500	5,250	7,200	1,670	2,204	1,985	2,000	52,050	
EXP1 Choir Fees	-1,440	-5,147	-8,520	-2,630	-1,040	-3,576	-1,750	-2,800	-6,320	-1,346	-2,691	-1,000		-38,260	
EXP2 Instrumentalists/soloists	-266	-415	-1,521					-312			-277	-240		-3,030	
EXP3 Conductor	-240	-475	-700	-425	-275	-600	-275	-310	-1,000	-320	-215	-240		-5,075	
EXP4 Sheet Music		-604	-597	-14		-573			-218	-30		-34		-2,071	
EXP6 Venue/equipment Hire		-540	-1,425	-160		-240			-120	-96	-270			-2,851	
EXP7 Fixer	-60	-124	-874	-78	-70						-124			-1,330	
EXP9 Printing & Postage											-75			-75	
EXP11 Travel	-620	-311	-283	-277		-114	-352	-711	-461		-760	-168		-4,058	
EXP12 Catering			-294						-211		-100			-604	
EXP14 Advertising		-240									-150			-390	
EVENT EXPENDITURE group	-2,626	-7,856	-14,213	-3,584	-1,385	-5,103	-2,377	-4,133	-8,330	-1,792	-4,662	-1,682	0	-57,744	
NET CASH FLOW FROM EVENTS	£14	-£4,756	-£4,549	£1,618	£0	-£853	£3,123	£1,117	-£1,130	-£122	-£2,458	£303	£2,000	-£5,694	

GENERAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE				Balances	31.12.23	30.12.24	Movemnt
Jan-Dec 2024					£	£	£
Class	Net Income	Net Expenditure		Bank	5,506	4,661	-845
	£	£		Cash	60	303	243
OI1 CD Sales	10			TOTAL	5,566	4,964	-602
OI2 Donations	263						
OI3 Friends	1,942						
OI4 Benefactors	9,531						
OI5 Gift Aid Tax recovery	3,098						
GENERAL INCOME group	14,844	0					
GE1a Fundraising/stewardship		-4,471					
GE2a Other admin/office		-2,400					
GE7 Printing & website		-805					
GE8 Stationery/Other		-114					
GE9 Bank charges		-62					
GE10 Commissions		-1,900					
GENERAL EXPENDITURE group	0	-9,752					
NET CASH FLOW - GENERAL	£5,092						
Cash flow - Events as above	-£5,694						
Net cash flow to agree monthly accounts	-£602						



**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**

The Carice Singers

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st December 2024

**Charity no
(if any)**

1170689

Set out on pages

Page headed "Receipts & Payments Account"

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2024

**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:

25 - MARCH - 2025

Name:

J M F McKail CA

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

Chartered Accountant

Address:

Brambles, Back Lane

Oxhill

Warwickshire CV35 0QN