

Walsall Symphony Orchestra (Charitable Incorporated Organisation Reg. No. 1173311)

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Trustees and Members
held 7.30pm on Monday 1st December 2025**

- 1. Present:** eighteen members and Clive Allsopp
Apologies for absence: Naomi Shaw, Tim Forster, Will Tingle, Sue Whalen, Judith Slater, Norma Mills, Nelly Gerighty.
- 2. Minutes of the last meeting**
The minutes of the AGM on 2nd December 2024 were approved. Proposed: Caroline Moore, seconded: Stephanie Watkins.
- 3. Trustees' report – Dawn Watson (Chair) gave a verbal report.**

Concerts:

Dawn reported that all three concerts in the last year, as listed below, went well. We were made very welcome at all three venues.

24th November 2024. St James' Church, Brownhills. Special reference was made to the great audience participation during Sway 24. We have booked the venue again for June 2026.

25th March 2024. Aldridge Parish Centre. All enjoyed playing at this venue and we had a larger audience than usual with of over one hundred in attendance. We are hoping to book this venue again for our November 2026 concert.

28th June 2024. All Saints Church, Streetly. As usual we were really well looked after and refreshments provided. We have booked this venue again for March 26.

We are gathering a database of deputies who seem to enjoy supporting us and we enjoy their company and support. We received an incredibly positive e-mail from Charlene, double bass, who joined us for our concert last Saturday. She was very complementary about the warm welcome she received, said that we were a very friendly orchestra and how much it had been a pleasure working with us.

Membership: We have had two new members this year Elliott on 2nd violin and, Elizabeth on trumpet. Catherine has rejoined us after a few years break and Faye has returned after a short break, both 'cellists.

Peter (violin), Ros (percussion) and Emily (violin) have all left us in the last year. Owen, bass has also gone abroad for an indefinite period.

4. Treasurer's Report for year ending 31st August 2025 – Caroline Moore

We still have a healthy bank balance with total funds on 31st August 2025 of £8352.91. This is down from £8681.14 in the previous year, so we had a deficit of £328.23. Our income is similar to last year, but we have had slightly higher expenditure on things like advertising, insurance, conductor fees, music purchase and we donated more to the churches we played at.

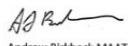
We are again extremely fortunate to have so many willing deputies' help at our concerts, most of whom decline the offer of expenses.

HMRC's contribution to our funds was £485. Thank you to everyone for gift aiding their subscription, as you can see this is a considerable amount.

Andrew Birkbeck once again conducted an independent financial review free of charge and I'm glad to be able to pass on our thanks through Catherine, for his continued support.

Caroline also verbally explained that we usually agree with venues beforehand to either pay them for room hire or we share the profits with them, after expenses are taken.

Report for year ending 31st August 2025

Walsall Symphony Orchestra Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 31st August 2025			
INCOME			
Subscriptions	£	2,288.00	
Gift Aid (2023-24)	£	445.00	
Tickets/Raffle/Refreshments	£	2,139.30	
St. James Nov. 24 - £375			
Aldridge Mar. 25 - £979.40			
All Saints June 25 - £784.90			
Donations	£	0.98	
Donation to test card reader	£	26.17	
Bank interest dep. acc. (st. 405-415)	£	237.56	
Bank interest money Mkt. (st. 411 - acc. 61471627)	£		
Total General Income	£	5,137.01	
Total General Expenditure	£	5,465.24	
Surplus/Deficit	-£	328.23	
Funds end of year 31.08.25			
Money Market	£	6,145.45	
Deposit Acc 61471627	£	1,486.71	
Current Acc 61471619	£	720.75	
Total funds	£	8,352.91	
Bank start of year 01.09.24			
Money Market	£	5,907.89	
Deposit Acc 61471627	£	1,460.54	
Current Acc 61471619	£	1,312.71	
Total funds	£	8,681.14	
Surplus/Deficit	-£	328.23	
EXPENDITURE			
Conductor	£	2,145.00	
Insurance/societies/PRS	£	377.54	
Website	£	93.59	
Room hire	£	1,275.00	
Church hall hire - Aldridge 29.03.25	£	150.00	
Bank charges	£	62.30	
Advertising	£	240.00	
Donations to concert venues	£	722.00	
St. James Nov. 24 - £115			
Aldridge Mar. 25 - £360			
All Saints June 25 - £247			
Printing	£	108.00	
Misc Refreshments	£	9.53	
Other exp. Card reader	£	82.80	
Misc Gift Naomi Shaw	£	19.50	
Music Purchase	£	179.98	
Total General Expenditure	£	5,465.24	
Auditor's Report			
I have examined the accounts of Walsall Symphony Orchestra for the year ended 31 August 2025, from the books, records, information and explanations given to me and confirm that they are in accordance therewith.			
		19 October 2025	
Andrew Birkbeck MAAT		Date	

5. Conductor's Report – Clive Allsopp, gave a verbal report.

6.

Clive reported that we have had three really good concerts this year. The spring concert rehearsals were quite challenging because there were so many people missing for a variety of reasons, including illness. Despite this all of the concerts have been great.

Clive has been selecting a variety of musical styles for concerts and this has been successful. He praised Dawn's solo in Serenata and commented that Egmont was played really powerfully last Saturday too and that a member of the audience had commented on it, too. He explained that instead of going off between pieces, like professional orchestras, following Lady Gaga's advice that there should ideally be a period of 55 seconds between pieces, and he talks to the audience to give everyone the chance to reset their mindset ready for the next piece.

Someone had asked Clive about not thanking deputies during the concerts. He explained that he considers them to be part of the orchestra for the concert. However, he ensures that he thanks each deputy personally, usually after the concert.

Orchestra Etiquette

Clive accepts that a certain amount of banter is acceptable and that sometimes amateurs will tell him what he should be doing. Sometimes, they are right and sometimes they are wrong, but it is fine, we can all learn from each other.

He went on to explain what he expects as good orchestra etiquette.

- a) Arrive at 7.15pm ready to start rehearsal at 7.30pm
- b) When the conductor stops the music, stay quiet until he has said what needs to be said and instructions given – do not chat or play your instrument in the meantime. If you need to ask anything, raise your hand and he will respond as soon as possible.
- c) Pay more attention to tuning. Clive recommended tuners that clip onto your instruments or to your music stand – apparently this is acceptable even with professional musicians nowadays.

Clive thanked the committee members for all that they have done this year and Mike for his hard work as librarian.

Most Improved Player of the Year Clive recognised how far Elizabeth, trumpet, has progressed since she first joined us and how she has grown in confidence. He rewarded her with one of his recordings.

7. Election of Trustees and Officers

All of the current trustees and officers were happy to be put forward to continue in their roles for the next year.

Election of Trustees

Chairperson - Dawn Watson. Proposed by Ros by Jacom, seconded by Caroline Moore

Secretary – Linda Dumont. Proposed Angela Cooper, seconded by Stephanie Watkins

Treasurer – Caroline Moore. Proposed by Keith Walton, seconded by Byron Wedgwood

Confirmation of Committee Members

In addition to the above:

Angela Cooper

Naomi Shaw

Kate Bouckley

8. Any other business.

Audience numbers

It was noted that there has generally been a reduction in the audience numbers. There was discussion around how we can advertise better. Faye Watson will continue to update re concerts and recruitment on the Facebook/ Website. Linda has said that she will add the flyers on as many local Facebook sites as possible and create Facebook events at the same time. Everyone will share flyers with friends, family and on their social media sites if possible.

Recruiting New Members

Faye will add a recruitment request to the website and Facebook again. It was also suggested that we contact Walsall College, the Walsall Music Hub, The Conservatoire and any other organisations that may know of suitable and willing people. Catherine Richards will discuss how we can work with the Walsall Music Hub when she meets them tomorrow.

Meeting ended 7.30pm

Linda Dumont

2nd December 2025

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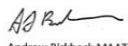
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