

THE GUSTAV HOLST SOCIETY

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2025

HOLST
THE
SOCIETY



Charity number: 1175057

THE GUSTAV HOLST SOCIETY

YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2025

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

REGISTERED CHARITY:	1175057
HONORARY PRESIDENT:	Martyn Brabbins
HONORARY VICE PRESIDENTS:	Alan Gibbs Colin Matthews Adrian Partington
TRUSTEES:	Chris Cope, Chairman John Wright, Vice Chairman John Graham
OFFICERS/ MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE:	Chris Cope, Chairman and Editor of Newsletter John Graham Marina Moore Vacant: Treasurer Vacant: Secretary
PRINCIPAL OFFICE:	Hammetts, Kings Nympton, Devon EX37 9ST Tel: 01769 580041
BANKERS:	Lloyds Bank plc, PO Box 1000, White Hart Street, High Wycombe, Bucks BX1 1LT
WEBSITE:	www.holstsociety.org
ACCOUNTANTS:	Azets Lime Court Pathfields Business Park South Molton Devon EX36 3LH

THE GUSTAV HOLST SOCIETY

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND OUTLOOK FOR THE YEAR 2025/26

Membership

The Society had 127 members at 31st May 2025 (a slight decrease on 2024 – 128) which included 23 (18 – 2024) honorary members. Our honorary membership includes the President, the Vice Presidents, the Holst Victorian House, St Paul's Girls' School, the English Music Festival, the Ralph Vaughan Williams Society and the Thaxted Festival, together with professional musicians who have supported Holst's music. In addition, in October 2024, the trustees decided that the overseas secretaries should be granted honorary membership, because a number had encountered difficulties paying their subscription due to exchange control issues. We offer our thanks to all our members for their continuing support.

Planned recordings

For the year 2025/26, the Society has just one planned recording. The Choral Hymns from the Rig Veda (H97, H98, H99 and H100) are in four groups. The first and third groups date from 1908/09, the second was composed in 1910 and the third in 1912. There are three hymns in the first group, three in the second, four in the third and four in the fourth. Altogether, the music runs to about 50 minutes.

There is an incomplete recording dating from 1985 with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Royal College of Music Chamber Choir conducted by Sir David Willcocks. Unfortunately, the recording of the four hymns is incomplete. The third hymn in the first group and the first and fourth hymns in the fourth group were omitted. I have been trying to establish the reason for this, but without success. Our vice president Colin Matthews was a musical adviser to Sir David, but he does not have any recollection as to why three of the Hymns were not recorded. However, I note from the liner notes that the recording took place at All Saints' Church Tooting in London on 4 and 5 December 1984. I suspect that they simply ran out of time. It would not have been cost-effective for the RPO to return on a third day in order to record the missing three hymns. The recording also includes the Hymn to Dionysus and the Two Eastern Pictures.

Since 1985, there has been no complete recording of the Hymns. I have been unable to trace a more up-to-date recording of the Hymn to Dionysus. However, the Two Eastern Pictures have been recorded in recent years.

The trustees believed that it would be a worthwhile project to record the complete Hymns, together with the Hymn to Dionysus. That would ensure that, in future years, anyone wishing to hear these works would be able to do so, either by securing the CD or listening to the music on Spotify.

In 2023/24 there was a proposal to record the complete Hymns on the SOMM label. It was planned that the Two Eastern Pictures and the Hymn to Dionysus should also be included, together with some unison songs, if there was sufficient space. The plan was that the British Sinfonietta or the BBC National Orchestra of Wales would be engaged, together with the BBC National Chorus of Wales conducted by Adrian Partington. The venue was to be the Hoddinott Hall in Cardiff. The project was costed at £66,580. Fortunately, there was a well-wisher who was prepared to underwrite the entire cost. Sadly, he then became seriously ill and had to withdraw. That was, effectively, the end of the project.

Not wishing to be discouraged, I then approached Will Vann, the director of music at the Royal Hospital Chelsea who was enthusiastic. Again, the plan was to record on the SOMM label. Siva Oke who runs the label was also very enthusiastic.

In order to reduce costs, it was planned to use a group of singers numbering about 25, as opposed to a full-scale choral society. Similarly, the plan was to reduce the orchestral parts so that the recording would be using a chamber orchestra. That way, the costs were reduced to an estimated £41,000.

Included within the costings is the fee for the arranger of the orchestral music which would be £1,500. As things presently stand, no work has been carried out on the arrangement. Furthermore, no commitment has been made with regard to when the recording will take place, although there is a plan to work towards a date sometime this autumn.

The challenge is to raise over £40,000.

As members may be aware, the Vaughan Williams Society produces a substantial number of recordings on the Albion label. These are largely funded through the membership which is approximately 1,000, considerably more than the Holst Society. It is clear that the Holst Society itself cannot raise a sum anywhere near £40,000 from its membership and therefore grants would have to be obtained.

The most popular of the four hymns is the third set. This is for SSAA and harp. It runs to about 13 minutes. There are frequent performances. These often take place in conjunction with the Two Eastern Pictures which run to about four minutes. They too are scored for SSA and harp.

Your chairman has completed a whole series of courses on obtaining grants for charitable organisations. The Society is ready to begin the process of making grant applications which need to be submitted before the end of March as grant applications tend to be considered on an annual basis running from April to March inclusive.

The trustees believe that obtaining a substantial grant towards this particular recording is likely to be difficult to achieve. One of the important factors that was highlighted in the various courses that your chairman attended was that most applications pose the wrong question. The application is normally submitted on the basis of 'why the society needs the grant', as opposed to 'what does the maker of the grant hope to achieve by acceding

to the application?' The obvious question will be 'Why does the Holst Society need to record three missing hymns if they are rarely, if at all, performed today?'

The reason why the trustees are including so much detail with regard to this recording is to enable the membership to decide whether it wishes to proceed with the recording.

There is an alternative point of view, namely that were the Society to raise a sum of £40,000, it may be better use of that money to make a whole series of grants towards the live performance of Holst's music. For example, a grant of £500 would be well received by many amateur orchestras and choral societies and no doubt, professional groups as well. Such a sum would enable the Society to assist in the live performance of Holst's music in no less than 80 concerts.

One of the objectives of the Holst Society is to promote recordings of music by Holst, hitherto unrecorded. In this digital age, fewer and fewer people are purchasing CDs. Those interested in classical music, are much more likely to turn to Spotify or Apple Classical iTunes or the like. It must follow therefore that the Society cannot expect to sell very many CDs if it goes ahead with the recording. Whereas it is true that a recording should enable the public to hear the music on Spotify, the Society has no control over whether an organisation such as Spotify may agree to include the recording in its library.

The good news is that virtually all of Holst's music dating from after 1900 has now been recorded. There are some gaps, with particular regard to the solo songs. In addition, the operas have, largely, not been recorded, but to do so, would be a very expensive project. It is, though, good news that the recording of the recent German production of Sita is likely to appear in the next year or so on the EM label. Accordingly, the trustees believe that the job of recording Holst's music, hitherto unrecorded, is now largely done. In future years, the emphasis will almost certainly be in connection with grants towards live performance.

Events in the year to 31 May 2025

The Society publishes a bi-monthly newsletter. The following information is taken from the six issues which appeared during the year.

July 2024. Issue No 40

Elgar Society

The Council of the Elgar Society decided to go ahead with reciprocal membership of the Holst Society, but was only prepared to extend the arrangement to the first year of membership. In the second and subsequent years, Holst Society members will have to pay the full subscription. Nevertheless, the trustees have agreed to go ahead with the arrangement, largely because the Holst Society stands to gain more than the Elgar Society which is over six times the size of the Holst Society.

Thaxted Festival

Ran from late June to mid-July and included a number of works by Holst including the Fugal Concerto, the Lyric Movement, the Brook Green Suite and the new arrangement of the First Choral Symphony for reduced forces. The choir numbered 25 and the orchestra just 23. The arrangement was made by Joe Fort (an honorary member) who showed me the score which ran to 195 pages. The Society is greatly indebted to Joe for all the hard work that he has carried out on this project. The performance was impressive. One was able to hear so much more of the words and the music which is so often lost in performances and recordings of the original work.

Vaughan Williams Society

In its accounts to 31st March 2024, the VW Society had a membership of 1,048. Recording costs were £34,353, but sales only £18,531.

September 2024, Issue No 41

An important issue as that coincided with Holst's 150th birthday which fell on the 21st. Unfortunately, the joint programme organised by Cheltenham Borough Council and the Holst Victorian House scheduled for the 21st in Cheltenham had to be postponed, due to adverse weather.

There were a number of concerts taking place on the 21st to mark Holst's 150th. In particular, trustee John Wright organised an event at All Saints' Church in Cheltenham. There was an evening concert at Romsey Abbey featuring Holst's Fugal Overture and The Planets, which your chairman was able to attend. Earlier that day, your chairman was at choral evensong at Chichester Cathedral. The music featured Holst's Nunc Dimittis and two of his hymns. Your chairman read the lesson and laid a wreath at Holst's memorial stone.

Michael Short

We reported that Michael Short, one of the Society's vice presidents and who wrote the leading biography of Holst, had died. Michael was 86. The newsletter paid tribute to the enormous contribution that Michael had made with regard to Holst's life and music. He will be sorely missed.

New recordings

Two new recordings were issued. These were 'Romance and Reverie' – music for violin and piano/harp. Also released was 'Holst at 150 – A brass celebration' which included works by Holst and his daughter Imogen as recorded by the Tredegar Town Band. Both recordings continue to be available from the Society.

Three Choirs Festival

The programme including no less than 18 works by Holst in celebration of his 150th anniversary. We paid all due credit to Alexis Paterson (then chief executive) and Sam Hudson (director of music at Worcester Cathedral) for the programming.

BBC Proms

Somewhat disappointing to report that to mark Holst's 150th anniversary, the BBC Proms only included four works by Holst, namely The Planets (as usual), The Cloud Messenger (a rare performance), Hammersmith and The Evening Watch.

The newsletter pointed out that in 2014, the BBC celebrated Richard Strauss 150 with no less than 17 works by the composer.

Finnish symposium

Your chairman was invited to introduce (online) the symposium which took place in Turku in Finland on 28 August. I greeted the delegates in Finnish and then quickly went on to introduce the audience to the music of Holst in a nine-minute presentation in English. The organiser's plan is to introduce a movement from The Planets at the symposium over the next seven years and started that year with Mars.

Freiburg

Society member Klaus Simon, the founder and director of the Holst Sinfonietta, gave a concert devoted to the music of Holst in Freiburg on 14 July.

November 2024, Issue No 42

Sita

We reported the world's first performance of Holst's three-act opera Sita on 12 October given by the Saarland State Theatre in Germany. There were seven further performances. There is to be a recording (see above).

Taiwan

Member Chu-Yu Yang reported that to mark Holst 150, there had been five concerts in just over six months in Taiwan, featuring Holst's music.

SPGS CD

We reported that the recording of all the music that Holst composed whilst director of music at St Paul's Girls' School had been recorded on the EM label and issued.

The late Rudolf Kempe

On being appointed principal conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, Mr Kempe said that there would be plenty of Bruckner, Mahler, Strauss, Stravinsky and Bartok under his

baton, but went on to say 'I shan't neglect British music, but one shouldn't make a fetish of it'.

That seems to be the policy presently adopted by the BBC.

January 2024, Issue No 43

Opera Factory Freiburg

We reported a recording which had appeared in 2024 given by SWR Vokal Ensemble and the Holst Sinfonietta under their conductor Klaus Simon. The recording featured a performance of Holst's opera Savitri, together with the Four Songs (H132) and Four Songs from the Vedic Hymns (H90) arranged for chamber ensemble by Klaus Simon. The recording concluded with four of the 12 Humbert Wolfe Songs, again arranged for chamber ensemble. This recording is available from the Society.

March 2024, Issue No 44

The AGM was due to take place at the Chapter House at Gloucester Cathedral on 22 March. Prior to that, there was a one-hour recital given by violinist Leora Cohen accompanied at the piano by Adrian Partington, a vice president of the Society. There were three works by Holst, namely Invocation, Song of the Night and Lyric Movement, all performed in arrangements for violin and piano.

In addition, there were performances of Coleridge-Taylor's Violin Sonata and William Hurlstone's Four English Sketches.

After the recital, there was Choral Evensong in the Cathedral which included Holst's Nunc Dimittis, the Short Festival Te Deum and the hymn Sheen.

Community event in Cheltenham

Postponed from September 2024, this duly took place on 29 March. On this occasion, the weather was fine. There were events throughout the afternoon. The celebrations in respect of Holst 150 were concluded at an evening concert in the Pittville Pump Room, which included works by Holst.

May 2024, Issue No 45

English Music Festival

Due to take place at Dorchester Abbey in late May. The concerts on Sunday 25 May included a number of works by Holst.

Vocalescence Singers Ensemble

This is a choral group based in Minnesota. The artistic director is Philip Brunelle, a member. He founded the group 56 years ago. Philip has written to say that over the years, the group has performed no less than 21 works by Holst.

The late Raymond Head

In the November issue, No 48, we reported the death of Raymond Head, composer, Holst scholar and vice president of the Society. Raymond died on 1st September 2025. Raymond spent a lifetime studying and performing Holst's music for which the Society is eternally grateful. Raymond published a number of books and articles on Holst, with particular regard to Holst's Sanskrit period. He will be sorely missed.

Concert listings

In each issue of the Holst Society newsletter, we include concerts in the UK and abroad featuring Holst's music. As members will have noticed, the number of concerts featuring Holst's music continues to increase, no doubt due to the public and musicians becoming more familiar with Holst's music as a result of his 150th anniversary. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Society to thank Karen Fletcher, our publicist, who puts together the complex listings every issue. This is an invaluable service to the Society and I am sure that members will have taken advantage of the listings to attend concerts in their locality.

THE GUSTAV HOLST SOCIETY

TRUSTEES' REPORT

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the charity for the year ended 31st May 2025. The trustees confirm that both the report and the financial statements comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charity's governing document and the provisions of Charities SORP FRS 102 Second Edition October 2019 – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1st January 2019). The Legal and Administrative Information on page 1 forms part of this report.

Objectives and activities

The Society's objectives are to promote public education and appreciation of the life and works of Gustav Holst.

The charity carries out these objectives by:-

- Sponsorship of public performances of music by Holst.
- Promotion of recordings of music by Holst, hitherto unrecorded.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is called The Gustav Holst Society and is registered with the Charity Commission as number 1175057. On a day-to-day basis, the charity trades under the name, The Holst Society.

The charity was formed in 2017 as an unincorporated association. It was re-registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in October 2017 and the current constitution can be found on the Society's website.

Trustees and officers of the Society who served during the year are detailed on page 1 of this report. Trustees are elected by members at the AGM, which is open to all members. New trustees are recruited generally by invitation, or by seeking volunteers at general meetings. Nominations of additional trustees may be made at or before the AGM, for consideration at that meeting. New trustees are briefed on their legal obligations under charity law, the Charity Commission Guidance on Public Benefit and are also made aware of the charity's constitution, decision-making processes and financial position. The trustees meet on a regular basis and are responsible for all operating decisions.

Achievements and performance

The review of activities commencing on page 2 forms part of this report.

Financial review

Income from subscriptions was 12% more than that for the preceding year at £4,398.

Bank balances decreased to £760 from £7,895, a year earlier.

Risks and reserves

The trustees have reviewed the risks to which the Society is exposed and consider them to be negligible. In the year 2025/26, the Society is likely to be incurring substantial expenditure with regard to the proposed recording of Holst's Hymns from the Rig Veda. The Society will be seeking external funding.

The trustees have agreed that before embarking upon any recordings, all anticipated funding is secured in advance. If not, the recordings will be deferred.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities/ accounting policies

1. Accounting Policies

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the notes to these accounts.

Accounting Convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

2. Reserves

The Trustees' objectives are to build up sufficient reserves to enable grants and donations to be made to activities relating to the works of Gustav Holst. They anticipate that future subscription income will enable it to continue as a going concern. The Trustees will continue to monitor the reserves policy and if necessary

make the required amendments to enable the Society to fulfil its objectives in this regard.

3. **Members' Subscriptions**

Subscription income for the year represents members' annual subscriptions received.

4. **Fees and Expenses**

No trustee received remuneration or fees during the year.

5. **Employees**

There were no employees during the year.

6. **Reserves Balances**

	£
Unrestricted funds	(6,796)
Restricted funds	56
	<u>(6,740)</u>

7. **Restricted Funds**

	Balance at 1 June 2024 £	Income £	Expenses £	Transfer between funds £	Balance at 31 May 2025 £
Recording of Holst's sacred music	7,737	4,897	(12,725)	147	56
	0	4,897	(12,725)	147	56

THE GUSTAV HOLST SOCIETY

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2025

	2025 Unrestricted funds £	2025 Restricted funds £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
INCOME				
Members' Subscriptions	4,398	-	4,398	3,921
Donations	110	1,897	2,007	4,737
Gift Aid	2,025	-	2,025	-
CD Sales	354	-	354	52
Book Sales	-	-	-	-
Grants	-	3,000	3,000	3,000
Lectures	490	-	490	150
TOTAL	7,377	4,897	12,274	11,860
EXPENDITURE				
Artwork	60	-	60	600
Subscriptions	100	-	100	200
Grants	2,865	-	2,865	1,300
Concert Listings	468	-	468	442
CD Purchases	521	-	521	191
Advertising	265	-	265	665
Sheet Music Purchase	10	-	10	19
Sheet Music Hire	-	-	-	210
Admin services	-	-	-	200
Accommodation	128	-	128	115
Travel expenses	112	-	112	40
Loan Interest	-	-	-	664
Concert Tickets	-	-	-	159
Musicians' Fees	51	3,321	3,372	-
Venue Fees	-	1,467	1,467	345
Web Development	100	-	100	100
Accountancy Fees	-	-	-	1,278
Postage	171	-	171	118
Printing	150	-	150	-
Course fees	120	-	120	-
Sound engineer fees	-	2,840	2,840	-
Contribution to recording	-	4,000	4,000	-
Payments to Bruno Lima	-	1,097	1,097	-
Bank Charges	64	-	64	68
TOTAL	5,184	12,725	17,909	6,714
Surplus/(Deficit) for the year	2,193	(7,828)	(5,635)	5,146
Transfers between funds	(147)	147	-	-
Net Movement in Funds	2,046	(7,681)	(5,635)	5,146
Total Funds Brought Forward	(8,842)	7,737	(1,105)	(6,251)
Total Funds Carried Forward	(6,796)	56	(6,740)	(1,105)

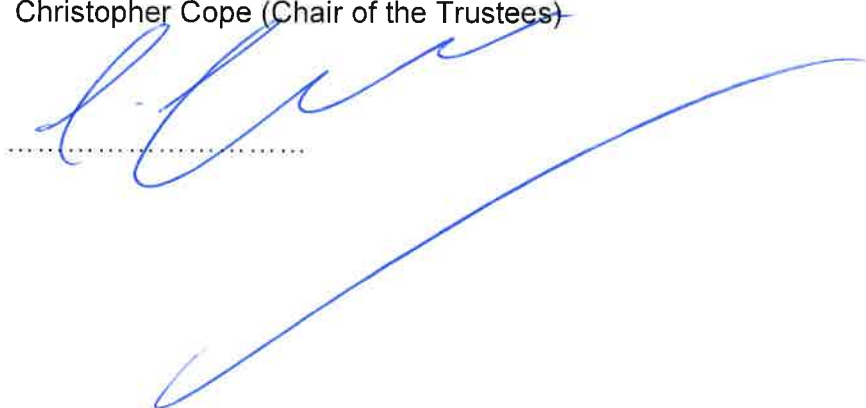
THE GUSTAV HOLST SOCIETY

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31 MAY 2025

		2025 £	2024 £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash at bank: -	Current	750	203
	Restricted	<u>10</u>	<u>7,692</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Loan		<u>(7,500)</u>	<u>(9,000)</u>
NET ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)		<u>(6,740)</u>	<u>(1,105)</u>
CHARITY FUNDS			
Unrestricted funds		(6,796)	(8,842)
Restricted funds		<u>56</u>	<u>7,737</u>
TOTAL FUNDS AT 31 MAY 2025		<u>(6,740)</u>	<u>(1,105)</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 2nd March 2026 to be signed on their behalf by:

Christopher Cope (Chair of the Trustees)



ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT

In accordance with the terms of our engagement we have prepared for your approval these financial statements of The Gustav Holst Society for the Year Ended 31 May 2025 from the accounting records and from information and explanations you have given to us.

As a practising member firm of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), we are subject to its ethical and other professional requirements which are detailed at [icaew.com/regulations](https://www.icaew.com/regulations).

Our work has been undertaken solely to prepare for your approval the financial information of The Gustav Holst Society and state those matters that we have agreed to state to you in this report in accordance with the guidance of ICAEW as detailed at [icaew.com/compilation](https://www.icaew.com/compilation).

Azets

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