

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus

TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT for the period 1st August 2024 to 31st July 2025

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus – Who we are and what we do

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus (SPC or the Chorus) is a local music making charity which presents choral concerts in Sheffield and beyond. It is a member of Making Music which supports music-making individuals and organisations nationally, and Classical Sheffield, a local umbrella organisation for classical music-making in Sheffield.

Our Constitution sets out our charitable objects *'to advance the education of the general public in choral music by the regular performance of such music from the widest possible repertoire and such means as the Committee think fit'*.

Positive reviews and audience feedback confirm that we present high quality and innovative performances that are pleasurable cultural experiences for both audience and participants, even when we select difficult works that extend everyone's musical knowledge. Concerts are open to everyone, with accessible venues and concession prices for young people and those in receipt of benefits. Chorus members greatly value the opportunity to engage in creative, enjoyable and fulfilling performances and recordings that help them to develop their vocal technique and musical repertoire. Singing membership is open to anyone who can sing to the required standard, and we do not exclude people on any other basis than their ability to sing. Registered blind people and wheelchair users are valued members of the Chorus, and we have ensured that members with limited mobility are able to sing from the rather steep City Hall choir risers by regularly using a stair-climber, which we obtained using Lottery funding. We offer special arrangements to those unable to pay the full subscription fee.

As can be seen from the Chair's Report, we presented a full season of concerts which, together with the evidence listed above, enables Trustees to be confident that our activities meet the public benefit requirements set out in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006.

SPC was an unincorporated charity (registration number 518073) until 17 October 2017 when it was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registration number 1175185. The unincorporated charity was wound up in accordance with the procedure required by the Charity Commission by the end of August 2022, with assets transferred in 2024

Our Constitution was agreed by the members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 15 November 2016. It is based on the Charity Commission's 'Association' model and can only be amended at a meeting of all the members, which last happened in November 2022.

Our Rules are not part of the formal Constitution but form an Appendix to it. The Rules include arrangements for appointing the Music Director and Accompanist and for auditions and re-auditions, minimum attendance requirements, concert procedure, and the Chorus dress code. The Rules were last updated in January 2025.

Our Trustees plan what we do, ensuring our activities benefit the public by meeting our charitable objects. Anyone can stand as a Trustee if they are eligible under Charity Commission requirements and have been a member of the Chorus for at least a year. Trustees are normally elected by the members at the AGM but may also be appointed by the existing Trustees.

The Trustees form a Chorus Committee, which meets approximately six times a year to plan and manage the charity's affairs. Trustees receive a Trustee Pack which includes guidance documents produced by the Charities Commission to help them understand and meet their responsibilities. A smaller Repertoire Planning Group led by the Music Director organises the programme for each season, and the Event Planning Group led by the Event Planning Officer follows through with the detailed planning.

The Trustees appointed in November 2024 were:

Chair: Jo Briddock	Vice-Chair: VACANCY
Administrator: Anne Adams	Finance Officer: Jane Parkin
Membership Officer: Marianne Grayson	New Members Officer: Sally Turnbull
Librarian: Alan Anderson	Rehearsals and Concerts Manager: Jim Monach
Minutes Secretary: Kathy Towers	Social Events Officer: Helen Kirk
Transport Officer: Paul Duffield	Education and Outreach Officer: Georgina Hulse
Member Representatives: Annie Park, Christine Pennington, Jenny Swann, Patrick Callaghan	

Our Professionals The Trustees are responsible for appointing the Music Director, Accompanist and Voice Coach, whose expertise and commitment play a huge part in enabling the Chorus to meet its charitable objectives. In addition, from time to time the general membership elects a President in recognition of their special contribution to the work of the Chorus, and in 2024 we appointed a Marketing and Publicity Officer.

During 2024-25 our professionals were:

President: Rachel Copley	Music Director: Darius Battiwalla
Accompanist: Rachel Fright	Voice Coach: Margaret McDonald
Marketing and Publicity Officer: Kirsty Christer	

Our Voice Representatives . The Chorus greatly appreciates the help and support of our wonderful team of voice reps, whose work is invaluable in supporting singers from each voice part and ensuring that everyone can meet the high standards expected by our Music Director.

In 2024-25 our voice reps were: Katrina Hulse, Jacqui Amos, Els Pearse, Nerissa Kisdon, Jane Baker, Jim Monach, Richard Salt and Allan Lacey.

Our helpers Both Trustees and other members helped the Chorus meet its objectives in various roles:

Equality Diversity & Inclusion Officer: Boo Spurgeon

Independent Examiner: Richard Pike	Archivist: Penny Webster
Website: Anne Adams, Matthew Morgan	YouTube channel: Matthew Morgan
Making Music Rep: Jim Monach	Classical Sheffield Rep: Anne Adams

The Trustees are most grateful for the work of these generous and committed individuals.

Bank Account: Co-operative Bank www.co-operativebank.co.uk/business/online-banking

Registered Office: The Circle, 33 Rockingham Lane, Sheffield, S1 4FW, England

The 2024-25 season – Chair’s Report

I am pleased to report that the Chorus is making good progress towards our strategic aims and targets. My report focuses on our goals and highlights some of the successes we have achieved this year.

Bigger: Continue to grow into a large, diverse and friendly chorus, equally strong in each voice part.

Targets: Expand and develop the Voice Exchange. Seek member views on ways to increase diversity.

In May we held our second Come and Sing event, in Upper Chapel. These events offer an opportunity for visiting singers and former members to join us and experience singing with a large choir with high quality musical leadership. This assists with recruitment and promotion because bring and sing events are advertised widely across the country.

We have widened our Voice Exchange to include other choirs and continued the Tenor Bursary Scheme. This has provided support and added to the overall development and quality of the choir. A comprehensive survey was developed via which member views will be collected in September 2025. Membership grew from 167 to 177.

Better: Build on our reputation as a high-quality chorus that sings a wide repertoire to a professional standard and responds to a range of projects with enthusiasm and reliability

Targets: Develop hire agreements for our professionals. Sing more works from under-represented composers

We continue to hold auditions for prospective new members and reauditions for existing members to maintain our standards. Attendance at rehearsals and concerts improved to 78% and 77% respectively; for further details please see the Membership Officer’s Report.

We are indebted to our music professionals. Every year the committee reviews the fees we pay our professional musicians to ensure that we are keeping pace with industry standards and that these are appropriate for the nature and profile of the chorus. A hire agreement is in place for the Chorus MD and other agreements are at an advanced stage of development.

We used part of the Stella Jockel legacy to launch an exciting new project, supporting a local young person seeking a career as a choral conductor. The recipient, Joe Banerjee, was provided with a year of valuable experience including mentoring from our MD. Both Joe and the Chorus benefitted greatly, and very much enjoyed working together.

This year we have performed works that were new, challenging, by female composers and underrepresented groups. In March we performed four world premieres of new works at the closing concert of the Classical Sheffield Weekend. We sang three new compositions by Stephen Johnson with texts by poet Fiona Sampson plus the winning entry in the Stella Jockel Young Composers Competition.

At the start of the season, we performed *Psalms 130* by Lili Boulanger, conducted by award-winning conductor Delyana Lazarova. Whilst this work was challenging to learn it was a very evocative piece to perform. At our Christmas Concert with the Black Dyke Band, we performed a new arrangement of *Christus Natus Est* by African- American composer Rosephanye Powell as well as a long-neglected carol by Barnsley composer, Arthur Godfrey. This concert was recorded for World of Brass and was accessible online to a wide audience.

Popular: Increase the numbers and diversity of our audience

Targets: Seek out a reviewer and add reviews and positive audience comments to our website. Make effective use of a paid marketing professional and increase social media presence and website engagement.

Whilst increasing the diversity of our audience is an ongoing challenge, we have performed some repertoire this year which attracted good audiences, particularly the Fauré *Requiem* in St Marie's Cathedral as part of the Classical Sheffield Weekend. We dedicated this performance to our former long-standing member Peter Miles who passed away shortly before the concert.

Our marketing output, social media presence and engagement with the website all increased substantially over the season due to Kirsty Christer's excellent work. Reviews and positive comments were added to the website, and engagement improved for the fifth year in a row, with 60,998 visits (clicks on a page) compared to 47,768 last year, an average of 5,083 visits per month (3,980 last year), an increase of 27%. The visits were from 9,877 individuals (unique devices) compared to 7,497 last year, an average of 823 individual visitors per month (625 last year), which is a 31% increase.

A concert reviewer is proving difficult to secure and this target will be rolled over. Our Come and Sing events are reaching a wide network of those interested in these types of events, which may cross over into other interest or support.

Secure: Develop sustainability, agility and resilience

Targets: Adopt a set of financial procedures. Set up a sub-group to focus on repertoire. Develop ways of using members to help trustees.

This year we have reviewed and revised the committee and trustee roles. Some roles have been amended, and new roles have been created. The aim of the changes is to ensure that all roles are doable and that responsibilities and accountabilities are clear. We set up the Repertoire Planning Group (RPG) to forward-plan future seasons; the group includes the Chorus Music Director as well as key trustees, plus two member representatives who are replaced every two years to ensure the involvement of the wider membership.

Our finances are in good order, and we continue to manage our commitments very prudently. For more details, please see the Finance Officer's Financial Report. We follow a set of financial procedures recommended by the Charity Commission; this is being worked into a formal document. Of concern going forward is the cost incurred by the chorus for concerts as part of the International Concert Series in the City Hall.

We have been fortunate to receive several donations to the chorus during the year. Two of these were anonymous, so I express my thanks here, on behalf of the Chorus. These donations supported the Tenor Bursary scheme, and tickets for refugees to the St Marie's concert under a scheme organised by the charity Sheffield City of Sanctuary.

We also received a donation to the choir from Jane Monach in memory of her husband Jim Monach who died in May. Jim was a very well-known, long-standing member of the chorus who carried out stage management responsibilities at our concerts and was a member of the committee. We intend to use this donation to continue to support the tenor bursary scheme.

And finally, I want to thank all the committee members and trustees who work to maintain and develop the chorus. In particular I want to record my thanks to our Administrator Anne Adams who is stepping down after ten years of outstanding work which has transformed our governance and increased our profile with initiatives such as the Stella Jockel Young Composers Competition.

Joanne Briddock, Chair

Plans and targets for the 2025-26 season

The 2025-26 season begins with a special choral and organ celebration concert in St Marie's cathedral, featuring Lili Boulanger's *Hymne au Soleil* and the rarely performed *Messe Solennelle* for choir and two organs by Jean Langlais, as well as the world premiere of *for music like the sea* by Cassie White, who came second in the Stella Jockel Young Composer Competition. In December the Chorus will sing the

soundtrack to the popular film 'Home Alone' at the City Hall with the Hallé – a first for the choir. This will be followed by our annual Christmas carol concert with Black Dyke Band, presented this year by Josie D'Arby from the BBC Proms.

In February we will sing Arvo Pärt's *Adam's Lament* with Manchester Camerata in the City Hall, and in March we'll be hosting our third Come and Sing in Upper Chapel. May sees the choir helping the Brigantes orchestra present a 'Last Night of the Proms' extravaganza in Sheffield cathedral, and the season ends in June with a much-awaited performance of Mendelssohn's *Elijah* with the Hallé in the City Hall.

In terms of targets, we aim to achieve the following:

1 Bigger: Continue to grow into a large, diverse and friendly chorus, equally strong in each voice part. In this second year we aim to continue to expand and develop the Voice Exchange, support two tenors and a bass via the Tenor and Bass Bursary scheme, and to continue to grow the membership and attract more younger singers.

2 Better: Build on our reputation as a high-quality chorus that sings a wide repertoire to a professional standard and responds to a range of projects with enthusiasm and reliability. Our year two targets are to expand the use of hire agreements to all our professionals, continue to seek out and make use of a reviewer for all our concerts, and support a second young conductor throughout the season, funded by the Stella Jockel legacy.

3 Popular: Increase the numbers and diversity of our audience. In 2025-26 we want to develop the use of reviews and positive audience comments on our website, continue to increase our social media presence and website engagement, and develop a strong working partnership with the marketing team at the City Hall with the aim of developing new audiences.

4 Secure: Develop sustainability, agility and resilience. In this second year we want to further develop the revised Chorus organisational structure with online documents and templates linked to key roles, continue to develop the Repertoire Planning Group, and ensure policies required by the Charity Commission are kept up to date.

Financial review

The accounts presented here reflect all the financial activities from 1st August 2024 to 31st July 2025 inclusive. The accounts are shown in two tables reflecting the style of account reporting appropriate for a CIO. The Summary of Fund Movements 2024-25 lists where all the funds are held and shows totals of all the movements during the financial period to 31st July 2025. The statement of all the financial activities between 1st August 2024 and 31st July 2025 shows a comparison of the income and expenditure categories between this financial accounting period and the previous one and where funds are being held or used for restricted purposes.

Income/costs for events have been grouped together to give individual concert income/expenditure information. For income this includes sale and hire of music, ticket and programme sales etc. Event costs include chorus master and accompanist attendance and concert fees, artistic costs, purchase and hire of music, printing and publicity etc. The Concerts Finance Summary shows the balance of income and expenditure for each of our concerts.

The same format has been used to develop a budget sheet for the current season and a predicted budget sheet across the next 3 seasons where information is known. Most amateur choirs make a loss on their concerts and this is the case for SPC.

Gift Aid

The amount shown as "Gift Aid received from HMRC" is the actual amount received in the year (relating to the previous year) while the amount shown as "Gift Aid tax income due" is the amount the accounting

system estimates is due for the current year. Where members are able to gift-aid this provides a significant additional income stream and helps keep subscription rates down.

Risk Assessment

For each self-promoted concert the Committee produces a risk assessment document which, amongst other factors, covers financial aspects of risk. Appropriate actions are taken depending on circumstances including taking out additional insurance cover when necessary.

Reserves

SPC has a reserves policy which recognises significant financial risks and aims to hold sufficient funding to cover all activities in the current season and any firm commitments in the following season. The current level of funding meets this reserves policy. At current rates of income and expenditure we need and have a reserve of around £10,000.

Income

The principal funding sources are generally membership subscriptions, friends, supporters and donations and people's extreme generosity ensures we can fund self-promoted concerts, with many members deliberately paying much more than is required. Some new members have joined this year and subscriptions totalled over £26,000 during the year; it is important that we try to maintain our membership level both for the ability to perform demanding works and to bring in an appropriate level of funding. In line with our policy of inclusion, members can choose a payment method which suits them best though we encourage them to use internet bank transfer or standing order. There is a concessionary rate for students and those that cannot afford the full amount.

Expenditure

Principal regular items of expenditure during the financial year include paying for the services of the Music Director, Accompanist and Voice Coach. Their fees are reviewed by the Committee annually and will be increased for the 25-26 season in line with increase in average annual earnings. The fee structures for the Music Director and the Accompanist include a retention element. The expenditure for room-hire includes the costs associated with rehearsals and auditions; this has increased considerably as we have moved to a new location with higher rates. Artistic costs for concerts can be significant with soloists for self-promoted concerts being chosen to meet the necessary artistic requirement and agreed budget availability. Such expenditure is added to the appropriate event costs. City Hall concerts provide a level of financial income to offset artistic costs dependent on a ticket sales formula, but year on year we seem to have to pay a greater contribution to each concert. There has been one SICS concert this year for which we have to pay over £5,000 for the artistic costs; this has not yet been paid which means that the total expenditure figure is underestimated. We have also not yet paid for the last 2 months' room hire. This year we used some of the general bequest from Stella Jockel to continue to fund the young conductor who was mentored by our Music Director and to run another young composer competition.

Subscription Rates

As costs are expected to increase significantly in the 2025-26 financial year, the committee has approved an 8.9% increase to £183 p.a. (less than £5 per week) but keeping the reduced rate at £42.

Thanks are due again to Richard Pike for providing the independent examiner function in a thorough and professional manner. We also wish to thank the previous Finance Officer, Graham Dawson, for stepping in when the current Finance Officer became ill. She is grateful to Committee members and all the membership for the support she has received during the year. It is much appreciated.

Jane Parkin, Finance Officer

TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT for the period 1st August 2024 to 31st July 2025

SPC CONCERT FINANCE SUMMARY 2024/2025 as at 31 July 2025

	Boulanger SICS Nov 2024	Christmas 2024	Young Composer Comp	Classical Sheffield March 2025	Come & Sing May 2025	Haydn Creation SICS June 2025	TOTALS
EXPENDITURE	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Instrumentalists				625.00	550.00		1,175.00
Conductor / Chorus Master	221.00			560.00	560.00	339.00	1,680.00
Soloists				1,000.00		Not yet paid	1,000.00
Venue hire				300.00	420.00		720.00
Purchase / hire music	1,011.18	464.56	99.00	1,051.21	1053.90	160.00	3,839.85
Publicity			310.00	93.00	77.07		480.07
Programmes / filming			1,680.00				1,680.00
Fees			1,050.00				1,050.00
Prizes			3,329.10				3,329.10
Totals	1,232.18	464.56	6,468.10	3,629.21	2,660.97	499.00	14,954.02
INCOME							
Ticket sales				4,487.96	1,360.00	1,715.98	7,563.94
Sale / hire music	770.10	498.92	189.70	615.71	610.34	144.00	2,828.77
Donations				1,740.00			1,740.00
Totals	770.10	498.92	189.70	6,843.67	1970.34	1859.98	12132.71
Income - Expenditure	-462.08	34.36	-6,278.40	3,214.46	-690.63	1,360.98	-2821.31

Note:

We have not yet paid soloists for the Haydn Creation concert. We were quoted and budgeted for £5,250 but when the invoice arrived it had an additional £1,050 VAT. This is being queried with the Halle.

TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT for the period 1st August 2024 to 31st July 2025

CHARITY 1175185 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES 2024-25 01/08/2024 to 31/07/2025				
	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total funds (£)	Previous year funds (£)
INCOME FROM				
Voluntary income				
Members subscriptions	26,449.71		26,449.71	23,488.83
Friends and supporters	240.00		240.00	190.00
Gift Aid received from HMRC	5,095.80		5,095.80	4,721.59
Donations		1,100.00	1,100.00	163.27
Gift and social donations		669.51	669.51	428.75
Fundraising income				
Folders and scarves	117.37		117.37	162.50
Book sales etc			0.00	80.00
CD sales	1,006.35		1,006.35	359.16
Easyfundraising income	55.95		55.95	17.33
Investment income				
Investment and interest	3,247.01		3,247.01	3,608.67
Charitable activities income				
Messiah cancellation refund			0.00	500.00
Event – Mahler Sep 23			0.00	560.00
Event – St Marks Oct 23			0.00	3,177.95
Event – Christmas 23			0.00	119.10
Event – Vic Hall Mar 24			0.00	2,685.32
Event – Haydn Creation Apr 24			0.00	1,856.90
Event – Mozart Requiem Jun 24			0.00	249.85
Event – France 24	716.00		716.00	4,919.00
BBC recording Jun 24			0.00	300.00
Event - Boulanger Nov 24	770.10		770.10	0.00
Event - Christmas 24	498.92		498.92	0.00
Event - YCC March 25	189.70		189.70	0.00
Event - Classical Sheffield Mar 25	5,103.67	1,740.00	6,843.67	0.00
Event - C&S May 25	1,970.34		1,970.34	0.00
Event - Haydn Creation Jun 25	1,859.98		1,859.98	0.00
Totals	47,320.90	3,509.51	50,830.41	47,588.22
Gift Aid tax income due	5,547.76			4,978.97

TRUSTEE ANNUAL REPORT for the period 1st August 2024 to 31st July 2025

CHARITY 1175185 STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES 2024-25 01/08/2024 to 31/07/2025				
	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total funds (£)	Previous year funds (£)
EXPENDITURE ON				
Fundraising costs				
Folders and Scarves			0.00	0.00
Voluntary Income costs				
Gifts and social	987.12		987.12	728.27
CDs	766.80		766.80	
Charitable Activities Costs				
Chorus Master	11,019.00		11,019.00	10,595.40
Accompanist	5,064.00		5,064.00	5,135.00
Voice Coach	2,575.50		2,575.50	1,964.00
Voice Training	400.00		400.00	120.00
Electives	350.00		350.00	
Event costs – St Marks Oct 23			0.00	2,574.29
Event costs - Mahler Monaco Sep23			0.00	560.00
Event costs - BD recording Nov 23			0.00	104.23
Event costs – Christmas 2023			0.00	523.56
Event costs – Vic Hall Mar 24			0.00	6,012.74
Event costs – Haydn Creation Apr 24			0.00	2,297.00
Event costs – Mozart Requiem Jun 24			0.00	5,674.92
Event costs – France 24			0.00	5,817.48
Event costs - Boulanger Nov 24	1,232.18		1,232.18	
Event costs - Christmas 24	464.56		464.56	
Event costs - YCC March 25		6,468.10	6,468.10	
Event costs - Classical Sheffield Mar 25	3,629.21		3,629.21	
Event costs- C&S May 25	2,660.97		2,660.97	
Event costs - Haydn Creation June 25	499.00		499.00	
Tenor scholarship	600.00		600.00	
Young conductor		500.00	500.00	500.00
Classical Sheffield	200.00		200.00	190.00
Insurance & PRS performing rights	700.00		700.00	675.00
Room hire	3,295.00		3,295.00	3,972.00
Marketing Officer	1,637.50		1,637.50	1,673.16
Admin and IT costs	1,613.09		1,613.09	2,267.76
Totals	37,693.93	6,968.10	44,662.03	51,384.81
Net income/(expenditure)	9,626.97	-3,458.59	6,168.38	-3,796.59

CHARITY 1175185
01/08/2024 to 31/07/2025
BALANCE SHEET: SUMMARY OF FUND MOVEMENTS 2024-25

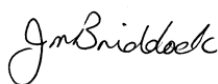

	Balances brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Balances carried forward
Fund Accounts	£	£	£	£
Co-operative Bank Account	26,614.20	50,830.41	-44,662.03	32,782.58
COIF Deposit Account	71,000.00			71,000.00
Balances Total	97,614.20	50,830.41	-44,662.03	103,782.58
Gift Aid due	4,978.97			5,547.76
Total Funds	102,593.17			109,330.34

CHARITY 1175185 SUMMARY OF STELLA JOCKEL LEGACY FUNDS

Year	Activity	Expenditure (£)	Remaining funds (£)
			35,000.00
2022-23	Young Composer Competition	5,579.80	29,420.20
2023-24	Young Conductor scheme	500.00	28,920.20
2024-25	Young Conductor scheme	500.00	28,420.20
	Young Composer Competition	6,468.10	21,952.10

Trustee Declaration

On behalf of the SPC trustees, we declare that we have approved this Annual Trustees' Report.

Signed by the Chair:	
Date:	28.08.2025
Signed by the Finance Officer:	
Date:	28.08.2025

Independent Examiner's report

Please note that the Independent Examiner's duty is to report to Trustees; a copy of his report follows. Thanks are due to Richard Pike for providing the Independent Examiner function in a thorough and professional manner.

Independent Examiner's report to the trustees of Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus ('the Trust') for the year ended 31 July 2025.

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 all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

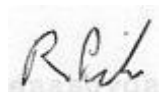
Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that in any material aspect:

- *accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or*
- *the accounts do not accord with those 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.

Signed:



Richard Pike

23rd August 2025 195A Springvale Road, Sheffield S6 3NT

APPENDIX: Membership Report

2024-25 was yet another improving year for Chorus membership, as numbers increased again compared to last season, and concert and rehearsal attendance improved on last year.

At the end of the 2024-25 season there were 166 active singing members of the Chorus, up from 156 at the end of the previous season. There were an additional 11 people on Leave of Absence, making the total membership 177 (last season 167). The only less bright part of the picture, as in previous years, is that we made a net gain of only one tenor on our active list. Lower-than-average attendance in this section does not help, though tenor % attendance has improved this year.

Very sadly 2 active members died during this season, Peter Miles (Bass 2) and Jim Monach (Tenor 1). They are both sorely missed.

There were 3 resignations: 1 because the member was leaving Sheffield, 1 because of the pressure of other commitments, and 1 for retirement. 4 further members were removed from the active list because they had stopped attending.

17 new members joined during the season, the same number as last year. With departing members, the result was net gains in every section, though these are small in the lower voice sections.

Singing members	S	A	T	B	Total
2024-25	60	55	15	35	165
2023-24	56	53	14	33	156
2022-23	57	50	14	30	151
2021-22	55	49	14	30	148

Concert attendance

We held five main season performances (including our Come and Sing event) including three SICS concerts (Boulanger, Christmas and Haydn). Member attendance at these averaged 122 (77%) a distinct improvement on last year's 111 (72%). The best attended concert was Christmas (141) and the next were Boulanger and Haydn, both with 131 members singing. The lowest number attended the Come and Sing event, but attendance at this was still above 100 members (102).

Average attendance improved in the sopranos and (slightly) in the tenor section, though it is still lower than average in the tenors. The section is currently strong however, with 2 tenor bursary holders: one for the whole season, and one for the second 2 terms (after his Young Conductor position ended at Christmas 2024.). Although their bursaries only covered our main City Hall concerts, it was pleasing to note that they both attended all our concerts this season, and certainly made their presence felt.

	S	A	T	B	Total
Average concert attendance	78% (last season 76%)	76% (last season 84%)	62% (last season 58%)	72% (last season 81%)	122: 77% (last season 72%)

Rehearsal attendance

Average rehearsal attendance is 125 (78%), up from 118 last year, with the biggest percentage point attendance improvement in the tenors, though theirs is still the lowest percentage. Rehearsal attendance ranges from 109-139 members (last season: 98-130). The alto section had the highest percentage attendance.

Attendance was highest for Christmas (average 137) and lowest for Boulanger (average 120) but there is a smaller gap between the highest average and lowest average than there has been in the past; in other words, attendance is getting a little more consistent across the season than it has been in the past. (Boulanger:120, Christmas: 137, Fauré Finzi etc: 125, Come and Sing: 122, Haydn: 125)

	S	A	T	B	Total
Average rehearsal attendance	77%	80%	68%	77%	125: 78%
	(last season 76%)	(last season 84%)	(last season 58%)	(last season 81%)	(last season 77%)

Marianne Grayson, Membership Officer

New Members Report

This year 22 people auditioned for SPC. 17 were successful and passed. 3 of these were returning members. We also had two extra tenors who were part of the tenor bursary scheme. The other new members were 6 each of altos and sopranos, 3 basses and two tenors. The Come and Sing "Creation" the previous season had led to some of these new members, possibly 4.

Season	Auditions	New Members	Audition Pass rate
2024-25	22	17	77%
2023-24	21	17	81%
2022-23	15	8	53%
2021-22 (year after pandemic closure)	30	22	73%

There are currently (late July) seven people keen to try us in September. Two of these have been before but not yet auditioned. More interest is usually shown in late August.

This season's Come and Sing was too late to recruit immediately, but at least one person who was there is going to come in September. Hopefully, this season's earlier event will contribute more interest to audition.

I would like to thank everyone who helped welcome new visitors and with new members on concert days. We are constantly told what a friendly choir we are, even by the people who sadly are not successful at the audition. I may be asking for "Buddies" on a more formal basis, so will be asking for volunteers to help in the first few rehearsals for a visitor in a particular voice section.

Recruitment is vital for the future of the chorus and for maintaining standards and numbers when members leave or are no longer with us. Please keep up the good work of promoting us and inviting singers to come and try us. They won't know what they're missing otherwise!

Sally Turnbull, New Members Officer