

Trustees' annual report for the period



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Period start date Period end date

Charity name

Charity No
(if any)

Objectives and Activities

| | SORP reference | |
|--|--------------------|---|
| Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document | Para 1.17 | To advance, improve, develop and maintain public appreciation of the art and science of music in any way that the trustees see fit, including through public concerts and recitals. |
| Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts. | Para 1.17 and 1.19 | Type text here See attached sheet 'Summary of main activities'. |
| Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit | Para 1.18 | We confirm that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit in deciding upon the activities of the charity. |

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

| | SORP reference | |
|--|----------------|--|
| Policy on grant making | Para 1.38 | |
| Policy on social investment including program related investment | Para 1.38 | |
| Contribution made by volunteers | Para 1.38 | |
| Other | | |

Achievements and Performance

| | SORP reference | |
|---|---------------------------|---|
| Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole. | Para 1.20 | See attached sheet 'Summary of main achievements, and impact on beneficiaries and society'. |

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

| | SORP reference | |
|--|---------------------------|--|
| Achievements against objectives set | Para 1.41 | |
| Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set | Para 1.41 | |
| Investment performance against objectives | Para 1.41 | |
| Other | | |

Financial Review

| | SORP reference | |
|--|----------------|---|
| Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period | Para 1.21 | As at 31.12.23 HCO had funds amounting to £76,283 and a surplus for the year of £160. |
| Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held | Para 1.22 | HCO has no permanent employees or significant overheads. Current reserves policy is to ensure that no commitments are entered into that might leave the charity in deficit in the event of disappointing ticket sales or cancellation. This is made possible by the unpaid work of the trustees and other volunteers. |
| Amount of reserves held | Para 1.22 | The charity currently has (as at 14.9.24) funds of £76,182 held in a Bank. There is no specific reserve set but the trustees ensure funds held are sufficient to cover any conceivable loss on a performance. |
| Reasons for holding zero reserves | Para 1.22 | See above; HCO funds are readily realisable. |
| Details of fund materially in deficit | Para 1.24 | None |
| Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern | Para 1.23 | None |

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

| | SORP reference | |
|---|----------------|---|
| The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising) | Para 1.47 | HCO's principal sources of funding in 2023 were: -Ticket sales -Fundraising through Friends & Patrons scheme -Donations from private trusts & individuals |
| Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted | Para 1.46 | |
| A description of the principal risks facing the charity | Para 1.46 | The principal risk facing the charity is that a performance cannot happen or has disappointing ticket sales leading to a substantial deficit. This drives our caution in ensuring we have more than enough cash to cover this risk. |
| Other | | |

Structure, Governance and Management

| Description of charity's trusts: | SORP reference | |
|---|----------------|---|
| Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter) | Para 1.25 | Constitution |
| How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO) | Para 1.25 | CIO |
| Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees | Para 1.25 | Appointed by a meeting of trustees. A skills audit in 2021 has informed subsequent trustee selection. |

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

| | SORP reference | |
|---|----------------|--|
| Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees | Para 1.51 | |
| The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works | Para 1.51 | |
| Relationship with any related parties | Para 1.51 | |
| Other | | |

Reference and Administrative details

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Charity name | Hurn Court Opera |
| Other name the charity uses | None |
| Registered charity number | 1177609 |
| Charity's principal address | 83, Lower Road, Lower Bemerton, Salisbury, SP2 9NH |

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

| | Trustee name | Office (if any) | Dates acted if not for whole year | Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any) |
|----|--------------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Michael Hart | Chairman | | |
| 2 | Andrew Foot | Treasurer | | |
| 3 | RosieClay | Secretary | | |
| 4 | Joy Atkinson | | | |
| 5 | | | | |
| 6 | | | | |
| 7 | | | | |
| 8 | | | | |
| 9 | | | | |
| 10 | | | | |
| 11 | | | | |
| 12 | | | | |
| 13 | | | | |
| 14 | | | | |
| 15 | | | | |
| 16 | | | | |
| 17 | | | | |
| 18 | | | | |
| 19 | | | | |
| 20 | | | | |

Reference and Administrative details

(cont)

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

| Director name | | |
|---------------|--|--|
| N/A | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

| Trustee name | Dates acted if not for whole year | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| N/A | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

| | |
|---|-----|
| Description of the assets held in this capacity | N/A |
| Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects | N/A |
| Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets | N/A |

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

| Type of adviser | Name | Address |
|-----------------|------|---------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

| |
|-----|
| N/A |
|-----|

Other optional information

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)

| | |
|----------------|-------------------|
| <i>R. Clay</i> | <i>A. S. Foot</i> |
|----------------|-------------------|

Full name(s)

Rosemary Elisabeth Clay

ANDREW SAVILLE FOOT

Position (eg Secretary,
Chair, etc)

Secretary

Treasurer

Date

30.9.24

Hurn Court Opera

Summary of main activities 2023 in relation to our purposes for the public benefit

Opera – Puccini's La Bohème

11 April, Regent Centre, Christchurch

13 April, Blackledge Theatre, Godolphin School, Salisbury

15 April, Theatre Royal Winchester

Event details

- Three performances of a fully staged opera: nine solo roles and seven chorus parts were taken by emerging professional singers selected either through the HCO Singer of the Year Competition (see below) or by open audition.
- Production supported by an orchestra of 15 professional players.
- Production sponsors drawn from our Patrons, Friends and supporters.

Relevance to public benefit

The performances advanced and maintained public appreciation of music in the following ways:

- Over 1000 people attended across three largely sold-out venues.
- Performances took place in locations where there is little live opera, drawing in local people, some new to the art form.
- Ticket prices were affordable, ranging from £10-£34, making opera accessible for a wide group of people.
- By employing and fairly remunerating singers at the start of their careers, the performances helped a) to provide opportunities for young artists to develop their experience and b) to ensure a pipeline of talent for the future.

Masterclass

9 July, Merley House, Wimborne

Event details

- Conducted by Michael Chance CBE, international operatic counter-tenor and CEO & Artistic Director of The Grange Festival.
- Three young singers, either then at or recently graduated from conservatoires, took part. Each performed for Michael Chance who then worked with each in turn.
- Event sponsored by a Hurn Court Opera Patron.

Relevance to public benefit

The masterclass advanced and maintained public appreciation of music in the following ways:

- Event open to the public, and free to under-18s and those in full-time education, thus increasing understanding of classical vocal music and giving encouragement to young people interested in it.
- 40 people attended in a location where high-quality vocal masterclasses rarely occur.
- The participants gained from the experience of performing in a public masterclass and from the feedback given by an eminent member of the profession. Again, this contributed to the opportunities for young artists and helped to nurture talent for the future.

Prizewinners' Recitals

16 September, Medieval Hall, Salisbury

17 September, Merley House, Wimborne

Event details

Two prizewinners from the HCO Singer of the Year Competition 2022 were invited to deliver a recital before a public audience in two venues, showcasing their skills.

Relevance to public benefit

The recitals advanced and maintained public appreciation of music in the following ways:

- 95 people attended in two locations where high-quality vocal recitals are unusual.

- Admission was free to the under-18s and those in full-time education, so encouraging young people's interest in the art form.
- The performers gained from the recital-giving experience, which provided opportunities for young artists and helped to nurture talent for the future.
- Recitals help to develop the public's appreciation of the art song repertoire as well as of opera.
- These recitals were sponsored by a Hurn Court Opera Patron.

HCO Singer of the Year Competition 2023, in collaboration with The Grange Festival

Semi-finals and finals: 29 November, Bournemouth University

Event details

- An annual national competition open to emerging professional singers aged 20-29 years.
- Attracted 70 entries.
- Preliminary rounds judged from online recordings.
- Eight semi-finalists invited to attend the live semi-finals and finals held before a public audience and eminent judging panel.
- Thanks to our Patrons, over £5,000 in prizes was available. Winner of the First Prize also eligible for a place in The Grange Festival Chorus for 2024, subject to suitability.

Relevance to public benefit

The Competition advanced and maintained public appreciation of music in the following ways:

- Semi-finals and finals were open to the public, with free admission for under-18s and those in full-time education.
- An audience of 60 attended.
- The singers' programmes and the judges' adjudications increased the audience's understanding of vocal repertoire and the qualities required of a successful performer.
- Competitions are a key to advancement for young singers, so HCO adds to the opportunities available. The prizes and feedback for the singers present on the day, and the inherent opportunities for future performance, help to develop talent for the future.

Fundraising Christmas Concert

3 December, Church House, Wimborne

Event details

- Annual Christmas Concert performed by four young singers.
- Admission by donation.

Relevance to public benefit

The concert advanced and maintained public appreciation of music in the following ways:

- 93 people attended.
- Admission was free to the under-18s and those in full-time education, so encouraging young people's interest.
- The performers gained concert-giving experience. The event added to the opportunities for young artists, so helping to nurture talent for the future.

Hurn Court Opera

Summary of main achievements 2023, and impact on beneficiaries and society

Opera – Puccini's La Bohème

- Provided 16 professional performance opportunities to young singers who were selected either through HCO Singer of the Year competitions or by audition, roles having been advertised on Audition Oracle.
- The production was supported by a 15-strong professional orchestra.
- The opera fulfils our objective to provide young singers with quality performance opportunities.
- The performances attracted almost sell-out audiences in all venues, totalling approx 1000 local people. Reduced-price tickets were available to under-18s and those in full-time education.
- Production attracted an enthusiastic reception from all audiences, including new Friends and Supporters, and a donation from a family trust.

Recitals and Christmas Concert

- Three events in three different locations in Dorset and Wiltshire provided 8 professional performance opportunities for selected young singers, accompanied by well-regarded professional pianists. These included a pair of recitals for prizewinners in our 2022 Singer of the Year Competition.
- The recitals and concert fulfil our objective to provide young singers with quality performance opportunities.
- Two of the three events were sponsored by a Hurn Court Opera Patron.
- The recitals attracted an audience averaging 45 people, and the Christmas concert attracted a record 93 people. Free tickets were available to under-18s and those in full-time education.
- The events brought high-quality vocal performances to local people in areas where such events are unusual.

Masterclass

- Led in 2023 by international counter-tenor Michael Chance CBE, Artistic Director and CEO of The Grange Festival, the masterclass comprised three young singers, who were either then at or had recently graduated from conservatoires.
- The masterclass fulfils our objective to provide young singers with quality performance opportunities and assists in their professional development.
- The event was sponsored by a Hurn Court Opera Patron.
- It attracted an audience of 40 people. Free tickets were available to under-18s and those in full-time education.
- The masterclass brought high-quality vocal performances to local people in areas where such events are unusual and helped to advance public appreciation of music.

Singer of the Year Competition, October/November

- Semi-finals and finals held on 29 November at Bournemouth University. Competition attracted 70 entrants from across the UK. The preliminary rounds were held online, making entry available to as wide a group as possible.
- In 2023 the Competition was for the second successive year run in collaboration with The Grange Festival, a respected professional opera festival based at The Grange, Arlesford, Hampshire. The Grange Festival augmented the First Prize with

the offer of a place in the Chorus of The Grange Festival for 2024, subject to suitability.

- The three judges were Michael Chance CBE, Artistic Director and CEO of The Grange Festival (Chair), Sue Spence, Director of Askonas Holt arts management company and Scott Cooper, Director of Artistic Administration, The Grange Festival.
- Eight semi-finalists performed at the live Finals Day, held before a public audience.
- Over £5,000 in prizes, donated by Hurn Court Opera supporters, was awarded to the four finalists. All the singers would also be considered for future performance opportunities with Hurn Court Opera, and the winner for performance opportunities with The Grange Festival. Both the prize money and the chance of recital and/or opera work enhance opportunities for young singers in the UK.
- Audience day tickets enabled the audience to come and go through the day and hear the adjudications from the distinguished judges.
- Audience participation was encouraged through voting to choose the winner of the Audience Prize.
- Free admission for under-18s and those in full-time education was designed to encourage attendance by young people and especially those from the university.
- The Friends and Patrons of Hurn Court Opera were entertained to a complimentary lunch to recognise their support and engender a sense of community among the group.

Patrons and Friends

- The revised two-tier supporter scheme introduced in 2022 (Patrons - £500pa for one person/£750pa per couple; Friends £40/60pa) continued to attract new members.
- By the end of 2023 membership had increased to 30 Patrons and 74 Friends.

Fundraising

- £8650 was raised from individuals to sponsor roles in support of the 2023 production of La Bohème.
- £3400 was received from trust funds, including £2000 from the Fidelio Trust.
- Plans were made for an appeal to raise funds for our 2024 opera (Mozart's Don Giovanni), focusing on an event in early 2024.
- The Christmas Concert raised £20.

Communications

- The database comprising Patrons, Friends and Supporters (latter being those who sign up to receive our mailouts) was moved to the Mailchimp platform, enabling us to upgrade the quality of our communications, obtain feedback on how they are received, and improve data protection.

Page 1

Hurn Court Opera Company
113, Muddlehill Road

Registered Charity Number 1177609

MARCH 11, 2024

Dr Andrew Foot

RE: Examination of 2023-2024 Year end accounts for Hurn Court Opera Company.

Dear Andrew,

I have completed my examination.

I confirm that no matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- proper accounting records were not kept
- the accounts did 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 this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached. As in previous years, I was grateful for your assistance in producing clear and complete records for examination.

Warm regards,

S J Cowsill

Ms. Susan Cowsill MA

**6 Mallard Road
Wimborne
BH21 2NJ
03/06/2023**