Leighton Buzzard Festival Singers Season Report 2023-2024

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President

Mr Philip Stopford

Vice-presidents

We are grateful to the following for their continued support

as Vice-presidents during the 2023-2024 season

Mr P Dickens

Mr N Woolford

Mr R Watts

Annual General Meeting

To be held on Monday 23 September 2024
at 7.30pm at Barnabas Church

Agenda

1. To receive apologies for absence

2. To approve the minutes of the:

    i. 2023 Annual General Meeting held on 4 September 2023

3. To consider any matters arising from the above meetings

4. To note the appointments of:

    i. Paul Dickens as Chairman
    ii. Kathryn Emerson as Secretary
    iii. Ros Mennie as Treasurer

5. To receive a report from the Trustees

6. To approve the accounts for the year ending May 31st 2024

7. To consider subscriptions for the season 2023-2024

8. To confirm the election of the President and the Vice-presidents

9. To confirm as continuing Trustees:

    i. Richard Watts
    ii. Miriam Juviler
    iii. Leanne Morgan
    iv. Valerie Fielder
    v. Paul Dickens
    vi. Kathryn Emerson
    vii. Ros Mennie

10. To confirm the resignation of the following trustees:
    i. Roger Chapman
    ii. Kathy Guess

11. To confirm the continuation of the following as members of the Management Committee:
    i. Angela Felsom
    ii. Kathy Guess
    iii Jean Lawson
    iv. Pauline Lyons

12. To confirm the Trustee officers

    i. The Chairman
    ii. The deputy Chairman
    iii. The Secretary
    iv. The Treasurer

13. To consider electing additional Members of the Management Committee. Please consider whether you may wish to put your name forward.

14. To appoint a responsible person to examine the accounts for 2023-2024

15. Any other business

Minutes of the annual general meeting held at St Barnabas Church 4th September 2023

The meeting, the AGM for the year 2022-23 was held during the weekly rehearsal in St Barnabas Church, Linslade, attended by 36 members of the Festival Singers with Paul Dickens, the Chairman, in the Chair.

1. To receive apologies for absence
   Apologies were received from Anneke Amsden, Anne Chapman, Jacki Hillier, Graeme Lockhart, Margaret Oliver, Judith Watts, and Richard Watts, Janet Wearmouth.

2. To approve the minutes of the 2021-2022 Annual General Meeting held on March 27th 2023
   The Minutes of the Meeting held on March 27th 2023 were approved unanimously.

3. To consider any matters arising
   There were no matters arising that were not included in the Agenda

4. To receive the Annual Reports of the Trustees
   The Annual Report of Trustees was received and no questions were raised.

5. To approve, subject to receipt of a satisfactory report from the independent examiner, the accounts for the year ending May 31st 2023
   It was reported that Mary Hardy, as independent examiner, had provided a satisfactory report and it was:

   Proposed by: Kathy Guess
   Seconded by: Janet Miller

   And passed unanimously that the accounts be approved

   The meeting also noted their thanks to Ros for her work on the accounts and as treasurer through the year.

6. To propose that Roger Chapman, Paul Dickens, Kathryn Emerson, Valerie Fielder, Jean Lawson, Leanne Morgan and Richard Watts, all of whom have indicated their willingness to continue in post, be re-elected as Trustees

   Proposed by: David Bannister
   Seconded by: Bridget Watson

And passed unanimously

7. To consider electing further Trustees

Kathy Guess offered to be a Trustee and the meeting voted in favour unanimously

8. To confirm the re-election of the current President and the Vice-presidents
Proposed by: Kathy Guess
Seconded by: Jean Lawson

And passed unanimously

9. To appoint a responsible person to examine the accounts for 2023-2024
It was reported that Mary Hardy was willing again to act as the independent person responsible for examining the accounts.

The offer was accepted unanimously

10. To make members aware of the draft safeguarding policy
Members were made aware that LBFS now has a safeguarding policy, which will be available on the website.

11. Any other business

Valerie Fielder reported that Margaret Oliver is very ill in hospital.

Ros Mennie (Treasurer) reminded members that subs are now due - £150 for the year or £75 per term. She noted that bank transfers are now preferred, especially after 18th October as there will no longer be a bank branch in Leighton Buzzard. The secretary will send the bank details around in an email.

Leanne (Social Coordinator) asked if anyone would be prepared to bring some biscuits or cookies to have with the welcome tea and coffee on 23rd September at Come and Sing – please let her know if so.

Leanne also noted that some members would be going to the pub after the rehearsal, and that all were invited as a chance to socialise.

Bridget Watson asked if everyone could sign up to do the refreshments at one rehearsal – if everyone does, we should each only need to do one per term.

Roger Chapman (Membership Secretary) requested that members bring their name badges to wear to rehearsals, or ask for new one.

Paul Dickens (Chairman) welcomed the new singers who were trying the choir this evening.

The meeting was closed by the chairman at 7.50pm.

LBFS Members 2024

Anneke Amsden
Brian Bainbridge
Adrian Baluta
Nigel Bibbings
Jill Brace
Anne Chapman
Roger Chapman
Maurice Crowe
Paul Dickens
Louise Dove
Barbara Ellis
Helen Elves
Kathryn Emerson
Helen Ewles
Angela Fensom
Valerie Fielder
Edmund Flach
Dorothy Fletcher
Kathy Guess
Tim Hatton
Jacki Hillier
Mary Hirst
Liz Inglis
Sally Johnston
Miriam Juviler
Jean Lawson
Pauline Lyon
Stephanie Mann
Sarah Marsh
Ros Mennie
Janet Miller
Leanne Morgan
Peter Mundy
Christine Oliver
Margaret Oliver
Alan Perrott
Vincent Pirillo
Linda Plowright-Pepper
Elysia Pughe
Saffron Pughe
Martin Shrubsole
Anne Smart
Fay Smithson
Gill Tarbox
Clare Thompson
Philip Titcombe
Bridget Watson
Judith Watts
Richard Watts
Janice Wearmouth
Jo Ayres
David Bannister

Trustees' Annual Report

2023-2024

Trustees holding office during the year

Paul Dickens
Kathryn Emerson
Valerie Fielder
Miriam Juviler
Ros Mennie
Leanne Morgan
Richard Watts

Members of the Management Committee

Angela Fensom
Kathy Guess
Jean Lawson

Musical Director's report

Over the past year, my first full season with the choir, we have successfully put on a wide range of events: two large-scale concerts, a lighter summer concert, a 'Come and Sing' day, and a performance at the Leighton Linslade May Fayre.

The season began with our 'Come and Sing' day, which focused on opera and musical theatre choruses. While the day itself went well, attendance was lower than we had hoped: we'll need to plan similar future events carefully to ensure that we know exactly whom we're aiming to attract.

Our Christmas Concert at St Barnabas was based on JS Bach's Christmas Oratorio. The choir performed cantatas one and three from the Oratorio alongside smaller works and congregational carols. The Aurelian Ensemble provided accompaniment, and we were joined by four professional soloists. A special highlight was the encore, a new version of 'The Twelve Days of Christmas' in all twelve keys, composed by our President, Philip Stopford, which was an instant audience favourite.

In the Spring, we performed a concert featuring Fauré's famous Requiem. I was especially pleased that we were able to showcase talented local musicians in this concert: organist John Wearmouth and soloists Olivia Olleson, Richard Ball, and Saffron Pughe. We attracted a full house of around 200 people at St Barnabas, and I was impressed with how the choir handled some of the more obscure pieces in the first half of the concert.

Our performance at the Leighton Linslade May Fayre was also a success. Given the limited rehearsal time for this, we combined a selection of pieces from last year with a few new works, including my arrangement of Stanford's *The Flight of the Earls* and *Strange Adventure* from The Yeomen of the Guard.

The final event of the season was an hour-long light concert, accompanied by John Wearmouth on piano. The concert featured selections from G&S operettas, popular opera choruses, and Purcell's semi-opera King Arthur. I'm keen to programme a balance of sacred and secular music where possible, and the opera choruses provided a change from our usual repertoire. The concert was unticketed, and afterwards we celebrated the end of the season with a fantastic spread put on by the choir's members. In the future, we may consider ticketing similar concerts for logistical reasons, but I was very pleased with the event's basic format. Henceforth, we plan to alternate between cathedral visits and light concerts in the summer, with a cathedral visit once every three years.

This year also brought change as our accompanist, John Wearmouth, retired at the end of the season. I want to extend my thanks again to John for his dedication and support over the past 18 months since I joined LBFS. Becky Holt has been appointed as his replacement from a strong field of candidates, and I'm looking forward to seeing what she will bring to the choir in the coming years.

We have an exciting few months ahead as we round off 2024. Our Autumn/Christmas Concert on 30 November will feature music by British composers from the past 100 years. We will be accompanied by a quintet from Milton Keynes Brass, as well as harp, organ, and outstanding soloists Emily Rooke and Richard Decker.

Samuel Huston

Chairman's report

We started our 2023/24 season with magnificent performances of Parts 1 and 3 of Bach's Christmas Oratorio and Vaughan Williams' Fantasia on Christmas Carols. Also included in the programme were a couple of carols by Hector Berlioz (including his well-known Shepherd's farewell) and a superb arrangement (in 12 different keys) of the 12 days of Christmas by our own President, Philip Stopford. The church was full to overflowing and there were, deservedly, many complimentary comments from a knowledgeable audience. The concert was accompanied by the Aurelian Ensemble and John Wearmouth on the organ.

Our Spring 2024 concert, at St Barnabas Linslade, featured Faure's Requiem and Mendelssohn's Hear my Prayer with its famous "O for the wings of a dove" treble solo at the end, beautifully sung by Olivia Olleson, the Deputy Head Chorister at All Saints'. Again, the choir sang well under our Musical Director's excellent leadership, accompanied sensitively by John Wearmouth on the organ. The Mendelssohn is available to listen to on our website.

We sang again in the High Street for May Day and our Summer concert on July 13 featured a selection of opera choruses which went down well with a good-sized audience. Our accompanist, John Wearmouth, retired at the end of the year. We thank him for everything he has done for the choir over the years he has been in post and wish him well for the future.
Our membership has continued to increase over the year, and we look forward to our next season with confidence that the choir continues to go from strength to strength.

With my eternal thanks to our Musical Director, Sam, and to the many who take on volunteer roles
for the choir.

Paul Dickens
Chairman

Membership secretary's report

The singing membership of the Choir at the end of June 2024 was 52 (soprano 14, alto 23, tenor 7, bass 7), an increase from 6 over the previous 12 months. There has been a very welcome number of expressions of interest in the choir, most of which have translated into membership. However, recruitment is central to the future success, both musical and financial, of the choir, especially if we are to perform much of the standard choral repertoire

and the Management Committee will continue to look for opportunities of promoting the choir and all members are encouraged to look out for potential recruits. During the Spring and Summer term, the choir noticed a reduced number of Tenor and Bass members but we welcomed friends from other local choirs to boost these sections in the April concert.

Leanne Morgan

Treasurer's report for year 2023-2024

The choir had another successful year financially with income exceeding expenditure by over £1500. One reason for this was the large size of the audience for our two concerts. The concert in December 2023 did make a loss of £1827 (without taking concert specific grants into account) but this was well within expectations given the cost of the orchestra (£3159). I see no reason why the choir cannot continue to have one such 'expensive' concert every season. This loss was more than balanced by the Faure Requiem concert in April this year which produced a profit of £2630.

The second reason for the financial success was various grants we received, namely £500 from Leighton Linslade Arts Forum, £1000 from Osborne, Morris and Morgan and £1000 from the Wixamtree Trust. We are very grateful for these as they are an essential part of our income.

My thanks goes to the many members of the choir who have recently signed gift aid declarations (and thanks to Roger Chapman for organising this). As a result of these, I was able to claim over £500 back from HMRC for the tax year 2022-23 and will hopefully get a similar amount when I put in a claim for 2023-24. We have also made a saving of over £400 a year by removing our music stock from commercial storage – after some pruning the music is now being looked after by Richard Watts.

I am now more than happy with the financial situation that the choir finds itself in and hope that things will continue in this way to ensure a secure future.

Ros Mennie

LEIGHTON BUZZARD FESTIVAL SINGERS
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 2024

	Note	2023-24 Unrestricted Funds	2023-24 Restricted Funds	2023-24 Total Funds	2022-23 Unrestricted Funds	2022-23 Restricted Funds	2022-23 Total Funds
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources							
Subscriptions and donations							
Subscriptions from Members		5,975	-	5,975	5,590	-	5,590
Donations		1,040	-	1,040	856	-	856
Fundraising Events	2	22	-	22	23	-	23
Grants and Gift Aid		3,048	-	3,048	1,770	-	1,770
Coach Tickets		501	-	501	463	-	463
Concert tickets, programmes & other receip		7,357	-	7,357	6,570	-	6,570
Other		0	0	0	70	0	70
Total Incoming Resources		**17943**	**0**	**17943**	**15342**	**0**	**15342**
Resources Expended							
Hire of halls & rehearsal facilities		2,416	-	2,416	2,501	-	2,501
Music Hire and Purchase		544	-	544	82	-	82
Music Storage		0	-	0	415	-	415
Orchestra & Soloists		4,009	-	4,009	3,066	-	3,066
Musical Director		4,875	-	4,875	4,320	-	4,320
Rehearsal Accompanist		2,150	-	2,150	1,950	-	1,950
Insurance & Subscriptions		488	-	488	326	-	326
Sundry Concert Expenses	4	357	-	357	208	-	208
Postage & Printing		369	-	369	452	-	452
Other	3	1,141		1,141	1,090		1,090
Total Resources Expended		**16349**	**0**	**16349**	**14416**	**0**	**14416**
NET INCOMING RESOURCES		**1594**	**0**	**1594**	**926**	**0**	**926**

Note 1
Accounting Policies
The following accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items which are considered material in relation to the society's financial statements
Basis of accounts: The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention
Note 2
Fundraising receipts are payments from Easyfundraising
Note 3
Other expenditure includes depreciation; choir refreshments and coach hire

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THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 202

Incoming Resources			
Subscriptions and donations			
Subscriptions from Members			
Donations			
Fundraising Events			
Grants and Gift Aid			
Coach Tickets			
Concert tickets, programmes & o			
Other			
Total Incoming Resources			
Resources Expended			
Hire of halls & rehearsal facilities			
Music Hire and Purchase			
Music Storage			
Orchestra & Soloists			
Musical Director			
Rehearsal Accompanist			
Insurance & Subscriptions			
Sundry Concert Expenses			
Postage & Printing			
Other			
Total Resources Expended			
NET INCOMING RESOURCES			

Note 1
Accounting Policies
The following accounting policies
the society's financial statements
Basis of accounts: The account
Note 2
Fundraising receipts are paymen
Note 3
Other expenditure includes depre

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: THE YEAR ENDED 31 MAY 202

Incoming Resources

Subscriptions and donations
Subscriptions from Members
Donations
Fundraising Events
Grants and Gift Aid
Coach Tickets
Concert tickets, programmes & ot
Other

Total Incoming Resources

Resources Expended

Hire of halls & rehearsal facilities
Music Hire and Purchase
Music Storage
Orchestra & Soloists
Musical Director
Rehearsal Accompanist
Insurance & Subscriptions
Sundry Concert Expenses
Postage & Printing
Other

Total Resources Expended

NET INCOMING RESOURCES

Note 1
Accounting Policies
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Note 3
Other expenditure includes depre

LEIGHTON BUZZARD FESTIVAL SINGERS
BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MAY 2024

	Note	2024			2023		
CURRENT ASSETS							
Music Stocks valued by officers			**581**			**645**	
Debtors & Prepayments			**0**			**955**	
Cash in hand and at bank			**8,524**			**7,042**	
				9,105			**8,642**
CURRENT LIABILITIES							
Creditors & Accrued Income			**315**			**1,447**	
				-315			**-1,447**
ASSETS				**8,790**			**7,195**

GENERAL FUND	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	**Total**	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	**Total**
Balance 1 June 2023	7,195		**7,195**	6,270		**6,270**
Balance of Income over Expenditure	1,594	0	**1,594**	926	0	**926**
Balance 31st May 2024	8,790	0	**8,790**	7,195	0	**7,195**

GHTON BUZZARD FESTIVAL SINGE
LANCE SHEET
AT 31 MAY 2024

CURRENT ASSETS												
Music Stocks valued by officers												
Debtors & Prepayments												
Cash in hand and at bank												
CURRENT LIABILITIES												
Creditors & Accrued Income												
ASSETS												
GENERAL FUND												
Balance 1 June 2023												
Balance of Income over Expenditure												
Balance 31st May 2024												

GHTON BUZZARD FESTIVAL SINGE
LANCE SHEET
AT 31 MAY 2024

CURRENT ASSETS											
Music Stocks valued by officers											
Debtors & Prepayments											
Cash in hand and at bank											
CURRENT LIABILITIES											
Creditors & Accrued Income											
ASSETS											
GENERAL FUND											
Balance 1 June 2023											
Balance of Income over Expenditure											
Balance 31st May 2024											