

SURREY HEATH CHORAL CIO performing as SURREY HEATH SINGERS

Annual report for Charity Commissioners Sept 2024

BACKGROUND

We have an ongoing plan to achieve a lasting place in the life of our community and to reach a sustainability in financial, membership and audience terms that enables us to take on a variety of innovative projects each year with confidence.

This plan requires us to improve our music all the time and our reputation for performances, to achieve exposure in the community for both music and outreach, recruit new members and audiences, and to win soft and hard (financial) support from all aspects of our local community. Sometimes we can also achieve progress by innovative partnerships.

The strategic direction is clear and accepted, and was reaffirmed at the start of each year. While we retain our charitable and community focuses, we do everything to achieve goals that make our choir more sustainable. The management team is able to take on new challenges each year because everyone knows and accepts the model.

A REVIEW OF 2023-24

We have had a busy year, still trying to put the effects of the Covid lockdowns behind us.

We have acknowledged that it was not going to be easy for our choir to make a full recovery back to the vibrant health of before 2020 and that maybe many steps were needed to achieve this. Firstly, we have been trying hard to bring choir back to the social hub it was before.

We reinstated the coffee break, enabling members to chat and catch up. We held two social events, a quiz in March and the summer BBQ. We didn't quite manage a dinner out, but plans are already being made to hold a Christmas Dinner, open to our "Friends".

Mentioning "Friends of the Choir", we have revised what we offer them for the first time in a while and are planning to hold a pre-concert event for them, our loyal supporters, in April.

Our Outreach events: In December, we once again supported the Knights Foundation's children's party and also sang Carols at The Meadows in support of STEPBYSTEP a local charity working to prevent youth homelessness. We have begun to sing again at the local hospital Bereavement Services and held a collection after our Easter concert for the Mayor's charity supporting Surrey residents with sight and hearing impairments. For the future, we hope to go to local Care Homes to sing carols or other old songs at different times of the year.

As can be seen, the Financial Report shows that our outgoing costs have matched income. To achieve this we have had to tightly manage our concert expenditure.

Thus, recently there has been to have a big focus on recruitment as a means of increasing income. Having half the membership since before COVID has meant not only having half the subscriptions, but also smaller income from ticket sales and sometimes having to spend money on additional singers to support the singing in concerts, especially when members have been ill or unable to attend concerts. The CIO believes we have to continue to make large efforts to recruit, to make our choir attractive to join, if we are to survive long term.

The committee, with our Musical Director's support, decided to have a recruitment push this autumn. We were fortunate to have been given a donation to support this financially and were therefore able to create a campaign to recruit new singers at our series of autumn workshops.

We did this by advertising in the local magazines, by running a social media campaign on Facebook and Instagram, going into Camberley town centre on Farmers' Market days when there is a high footfall, engaging random members of the public as well as our usual leaflet distribution.

CONCERTS PERFORMED

The Choir performed four concerts during the 2023/2024 year, spanning 500 years of music. In November we performed a whole opera, Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, with professional soloists, paired with Vivaldi's rightly-popular Gloria. The Gloria was a particular success, and has become a staple for the choir. For Christmas we included Ronald Corp's tapestry of Christmas carols, A Christmas Mass, and performed popular Christmas carols and songs, including a joint anthem with the Wholenotes Choir in what was their third consecutive joint Christmas concert. For the new year, the Musical Director made expansive choices selecting an all-English programme that included Stanford's evocative Songs of the Fleet with baritone soloist Ian Helm, and Elgar's lesser performed "From the Bavarian Highlands". The latter was particular popular with the choir and was new to almost all. The theme for the Summer concert was 'madrigals', and music included intricate selections from Tudor composers, Rutter's atmospheric and jolly Birthday Madrigals and George Shearing's delightful Songs and Sonnets of Shakespeare. The choir worked hard consistently across the year and all concerts were received by audiences to good acclaim.

MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY

Through all the external challenges we have maintained a full and vibrant management team with a variety of skills and experience that actually grew by the end of the year. Led by our new Chair our management team has worked tirelessly to insure the success of the Choir. This was the sixth year as a new charitable organisation (Surrey Heath Choral CIO, No. 1179358) having converted from Surrey Heath Choral Society at the beginning of the 2018/2019 financial year. We are now recruiting new Trustees to join during years 24/25 as several existing Trustees will have reached their 6 years involvement by September. Our plan to move our existing finance support to a more automated environment has been transitioned during the year so this will make our financial reporting more detailed and flexible in the future.

BUSINESS LINKS

Stewart & Co, a local firm of accountants very much involved with local business and the re-construction of the town centre, act as our auditors indefinitely, on a pro bono basis.

QUALITY IN PERFORMANCE

Our feedback from audiences is actively solicited after every concert and a representative sample is posted on our website. For the last nine years, we judge that audience feedback has been unreservedly appreciative, and our regular audience say that the quality of performance has not been impacted by either a fall in membership or the impact of the pandemic.

SURREY HEATH CHORAL CIO
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT - YEAR TO 31 AUGUST 2024

| RECEIPTS | 2024 | 2023 | PAYMENTS | 2024 | 2023 |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Subscriptions | | | | | |
| Donations: | | | | | |
| Other donations | 7365 | 5935 | Hall | 1576 | 1488 |
| | | | MD | 4800 | 4770 |
| Friends | | | Pianist | 3510 | 3330 |
| Raffles | 2280 | 250 | Music | 1126 | 1095 |
| | | | October Concert | 0 | 1283 |
| October Concert | 325 | 235 | November Concert | 2671 | 0 |
| November Concert | 306 | 302 | Christmas Concert | 1153 | 1859 |
| Christmas Concert | 0 | 1453 | Spring Concert | 1786 | 1369 |
| Spring Concert | 1368 | 0 | Summer Concert | 1338 | 2034 |
| Summer Concert | 2339 | 1986 | Outreach | 0 | 0 |
| Late Concert Sales | 917 | 1235 | Admin/Publicity | 0 | 0 |
| Outreach | 1406 | 1547 | Making Music | 213 | 197 |
| | | | Sundries | 817 | 145 |
| Come and Sing | 190 | 190 | Subscriptions | 150 | 0 |
| Bank Interest | 0 | 0 | Come and Sing | 0 | 0 |
| Gift Aid | 2 | 5 | Quiz | 0 | 347 |
| Fund Raising: | | | Socials | 772 | 0 |
| HR Taylor Trust | 0 | 2449 | Donations | 180 | 0 |
| Lottery | 3000 | 2500 | | | |
| Easy Fundraising | 75 | 210 | | | |
| Quiz | 137 | 59 | | | |
| Teas | 1014 | 508 | | | |
| Sundries | 169 | 0 | | | |
| | 226 | 25 | | | |
| TOTAL INCOME | 21118 | 18888 | TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 20091 | 17917 |
| | | | EXCESS/SHORTFALL OF INCOME | 1027 | 970 |
| | 21118 | 18888 | | 21118 | 18888 |

SURREY HEATH CHORAL CIO
FINANCIAL SUMMARY - YEAR TO 31 AUGUST 2024

| | 2024 | 2023 |
|------------------|------|------|
| Business Premium | 0 | 3791 |
| Current Account | 4951 | 104 |
| Cash | 0 | 29 |
| | 4951 | 3924 |
| Cheques to clear | | 0 |

Signed
K.M.BROWN
Hon. Treasurer

K.M. Brown

I certify that I have examined the relevant books, bank accounts and vouchers for the CIO, and that to the best of my knowledge the foregoing is a true and accurate statement of the CIO's affairs.

L. Evans

L. EVANS FCA
Independent Examiner