

Polymnia

CIO 1181422

Trustees' Report

1 February 2022 – 31 January 2023

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the period from 1 February 2022 to 31 January 2023. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies and comply with the charity's constitution and applicable law.

Administration details

The principal address of the charity is currently 9 Ivy Lane, Newton Longville, Milton Keynes MK17 0DJ

The Trustees

Paul North (Chair)

Gina Johnson

Brian Coulstock

Chris Crispus Jones

Kate Atalay

Perry Williams (acting Treasurer)

The management committee

The Trustees together with Jessica Norton (Musical Director), Laurence Holden (incoming Treasurer) and Louise Norwood.

Accounts Examiner

David Johnson

Structure, governance, and management

Polymnia was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 4 January 2019 and is governed by a constitution adopted on 20 January 2019. Trustees are elected or re-elected at each Annual General Meeting and are eligible for re-election. At every annual general meeting of the members of the CIO, one-third of the charity trustees must retire from office.

Objectives

The objectives of Polymnia are to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by any means the trustees see fit, including through the presentation of public concerts and recitals.

Activities

Polymnia is a mixed chamber choir, rehearsing and performing mostly in Milton Keynes and the surrounding area. The choir enjoys considerable critical acclaim and typically performs several concerts a year. The choir of about 21 singers performs a wide-ranging repertoire. The requirements for prospective new members are good sight-reading skills, sufficient confidence to hold a line with only a small number of singers and the opportunity to work

on the music at home. There is an informal audition for all new members, and voice reviews may be conducted from time to time for the whole choir. Periodic rehearsals take place on occasional Friday evenings, usually at the Bow Brickhill Community Hall.

The success of Polymnia is underpinned by a committed membership with a range of musical expertise, a professional Musical Director and the support of family and friends. The choir is accordingly able to undertake exciting and ambitious choral programmes.

Membership

At the beginning of the year the membership of the choir was 20 singers and at the end of the year it was 21 singers.

Musical Director

Jessica Norton was appointed Musical Director in October 2021 and remains in post.

Achievements and Performances

Jessica created a programme for her first concert “Beginnings” featuring Aaron Copland’s most substantial choral work *In The Beginning* for mixed chorus and Mezzo Soprano solo. The programme followed the story of the Creation through a variety of styles and musical periods, from Bach and Gesualdo through to Jonathan Dove and Dolly Parton around the theme of the creation with the Copeland as the main piece. Chloe Latchmore was engaged as the Mezzo soloist, with Jonathan Kingston playing organ and piano.

Rehearsals were problematic with one being cancelled due to a big storm and Jess missing another following her own Covid infection.

However, with many fingers crossed we performed the concert at St Mary and St Giles on 3 April and it was well received by the small audience (a theme for the year, as like many other choirs and orchestras we found it difficult to sell many tickets in the post covid times)

We were delighted to be invited by MK Chorale to join their big concert “Crowning Glory” at the MK Theatre on Sunday 5 June, in celebration of Her Majesty The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. We sang some of the magnificent music heard by the Queen as she was crowned and Polymnia took the part of the semi-chorus in Walton’s *Coronation Te Deum*.

Our own concert on 9 July at St March And St Giles, Stony Stratford was also programmed by Jessica in recognition of the Jubilee and entitled “Rejoice”. The first half consisted of the fabulous Handel *Coronation Anthems* together with Purcell’s *Rejoice in the Lord Alway* and the National Anthem.

The second half was of a lighter tone including music reported to have been among The Queen’s favourites. These included the hymn *Praise My Soul the King of Heaven*, Richard Rodgers’ *You’ll Never Walk Alone* and Irving Berlin’s (very tricky) *Cheek to Cheek*. Jonathan Kingston once again accompanied us wonderfully and delighted the audience with a couple of organ solos.

29 October saw us return to St Barnabas Linslade for “Cloud Capp’d Towers”, our concert inspired by Vaughan Williams’ 150th anniversary. The music included songs such as *Linden*

Lea and his *Mass in G minor* alongside music from composers he inspired or drew inspiration from, such as Holst, Tallis and Parry.

Again rehearsals and the concert itself we badly affected by illness and in particular the *Mass* in the second half was not our best work although generally, again, the small audience were very appreciative.

A detailed review of the concert by the committee after canvassing the views of the singers produced some good suggestions to help the choir regain its confidence, which unsurprisingly had suffered through the pandemic. Future concerts will focus on some more familiar repertoire alongside any challenging new works, and we will engage an accompanist to help in some rehearsals.

Our final concert of the year was our postponed joint “A Choral Christmas” concert with Craig McLeish’s TGI Choir at St Georges, Wolverton. Each choir sang some pieces of the their own as well as some joint pieces, with Jessica and Craig sharing the conducting.

We sang the brilliant Carter arrangement of The *Twelve Days of Christmas* along with other favourites including *Bethlehem Down* and the rousing *Hodie* by Sweelinck. Once again Jonathan Kingston did the honours at the organ (which had a few moments of its own!)

This was our biggest audience of the year, who also enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies afterwards. The principle of a shared concert seems like a good option as it can improve audience size and reduce the amount performed by each group, and we hope to find other partnerships in the future.

Public benefit

The Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission’s guidance in deciding on the activities the choir undertakes. Activities for the public benefit have been demonstrated by:

- the provision of detailed programme notes for each concert and / or an explanation of the works during the concert by the conductor
- discounted subscriptions for students and those needing financial help
- tickets at reduced prices or free for children and students
- providing performance opportunities for young musicians
- maintenance of a website

Financial review

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the choir. Finances are discussed at all meetings. This enables the Trustees to ascertain the financial position of the choir and to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities legislation. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The choir finances itself by membership contributions, payable on an annual basis and agreed at an annual general meeting, and concert proceeds from sales of tickets and programmes. Other sources of income usually include:

- gift aid from donations and from members' contributions

- sales of online recordings
- revenue from weddings

The choir's direct income funds the full cost of running the choir and contributes towards covering the net cost of concerts in the event of a loss.

Income for the period from 1 February 2022 to 31 January 2023 totalled £6,321. Expenditure amounted to £7,530. Loss for the year was £1,209. On 31 January 2023, Polymnia had a cash balance of £1,478 held in the MetroBank Polymnia account and £80 in petty cash.

Reserves policy

Reserves are held to help fund major concerts and to acquire and maintain assets.

Risk management

The Trustees have a responsibility to identify, assess and manage risks. They keep abreast of legislation which may affect charities through the Charities Commission website and through the 'Making Music' organisation to which the choir is affiliated. They ensure that the choir complies with copyright and performing rights law. The choir's insurance is arranged through 'Making Music'.

Policies

The choir has policies regarding Safeguarding and Data Protection. Policies are reviewed annually and current policies may be viewed on the choir's website www.polymnia.org.uk.

Future Plans

At the time of writing, the situation with the Covid 19 epidemic has significantly eased and we are planning activities with a high degree of confidence. The 2023 schedule includes:

26 February: Choral Workshop, St Mary and St Giles in Stony Stratford. An opportunity for singers of all abilities to benefit from Jessica Norton's vocal training with a short performance by Polymnia at the end.

1 April: Choral Kaleidoscope, St Mary and St Giles in Stony Stratford. A concert featuring a selection of the most wonderful music by Barber, Lauridsen, Whitacre, Goodall, Gjeilo, Rachmaninov, Handel etc,

8 July: Summer concert at St Mary and St Giles, Stony Stratford

7-9 August: Three performances at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe

11 November: Autumn concert at St Barnabas, Linslade

2 December: Christmas concert at St Barnabas, Linslade

Approved by the Trustees on 10 February 2023

BALANCE SHEET

Notes		as at 31 January 2023	as at 31 January 2022
		£	£
	Current Assets		
	Bank	1,478	2,847
	Cash in hand	80	80
9	Debtors and prepayments	682	377
		<u>2,240</u>	<u>3,304</u>
	Current Liabilities		
10	Creditors and Accruals	395	250
	Net Assets	<u><u>1,845</u></u>	<u><u>3,054</u></u>
	Represented by:		
	Unrestricted Funds		
	General Fund	<u><u>1,845</u></u>	<u><u>3,054</u></u>

The notes on the attached pages form part of these accounts

Paul North - Chair

Date: 10 February 2023

Laurence Holden - Interim Treasurer

Date: 10 February 2023

For and on behalf of the Board

Statement of Financial Activities

Notes	2022 / 23 £	2021 / 22 £
Income		
2 Donations and legacies	2,751	2,321
3 Charitable activities	3,022	1,129
4 Other trading activities	15	12
5 Other receipts	533	332
	<hr/> 6,321	<hr/> 3,794
Expenditure		
6 Raising funds	186	40
7 Charitable activities	6,861	4,582
8 Other	483	285
	<hr/> 7,530	<hr/> 4,907
Surplus / (Deficit)	-1,209	-1,113
General fund b/fwd	3,054	4,168
General fund c/fwd	<u>1,845</u>	<u>3,054</u>

The notes on the attached pages form part of these accounts

Notes to the Accounts**1 Accounting Policy**

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice on Accounting by Charities (FRS 102, second edition)

	2022 / 23	2021 / 22
	£	
INCOME		
2 Donations and legacies		
Member subscriptions	2,344	2,168
Other member payments		
Other donations and legacies	407	153
Grants		
	<u>2,751</u>	<u>2,321</u>
3 Charitable activities		
Ticket sales }	3,022	1,067
Programme sales }		62
	<u>3,022</u>	<u>1,129</u>
4 Other trading activities		
Rehearsal refreshments	<u>15</u>	<u>12</u>
5 Other receipts		
Members purchases	474	328
Other	59	4
	<u>533</u>	<u>332</u>
EXPENDITURE		
6 Raising funds		
Publicity	<u>186</u>	<u>40</u>
7 Charitable activities		
Rehearsal and concert expenses		
Fees	5,189	2,723
Venue hire	1,038	965
Programmes	422	100
Vocal Training Fees		345
Administration costs }		35
Corporate subscriptions }	211	414
	<u>6,861</u>	<u>4,582</u>
8 Other		
Purchases on behalf of members	<u>483</u>	<u>285</u>
BALANCE SHEET		
9 Debtors and Prepayments		
Edinburgh 2023	418	
Rehearsal venue	223	
Subscriptions due		108
Music purchase due		269
Vocal Freedom Workshop fliers	41	
	<u>682</u>	<u>377</u>
10 Creditors and Accruals		
Donation in advance	180	
Music purchased in advance	215	
Room hire		250
	<u>395</u>	<u>250</u>