

Polymnia

CIO 1181422

Trustees' Report

1 February 2023 – 31 January 2024

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the period from 1 February 2023 to 31 January 2024. 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

The management committee

The Trustees together with Jessica Norton (Musical Director), Laurence Holden (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 22 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 21 singers and at the end of the year it was 23 singers.

Musical Director

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

Achievements and Performances

We began the year with a choral workshop on 26 February at St Mary and St Giles, Stony Stratford. The event, directed by Jessica Norton, with George Ireland accompanying on piano, was open to singers of any ability. The 55 singers who attended enjoyed a really fun, interesting and useful day and were treated to a short concert by Polymnia at the end.

Our first concert of the year, "Choral Kaleidoscope" was performed at St Mary and St Giles, Stony Stratford on 1 April 2023. Jessica programmed a real spread of musical styles and periods including music from Ešenvalds, Handel, Rachmaninov and Tavener. A particular highlight was the full suite of Lauridsen's Nocturnes beautifully accompanied by Craig Greene. For this concert, we trialled a start time of 4pm which went down well, giving us our biggest audience since the pandemic. In a rather emotional encore we performed Whitacre's Seal lullaby in tribute to John Byron, our founding musical director whose sudden death at the beginning of the year had come as a huge shock.

On the eve of the Coronation weekend, Friday, 5 May, we joined the Alina Orchestra for their celebration concert in St Peter's, Newport Pagnell, conducted by Hilar Davan Wetton. The programme included Handel's Zadok the priest (of course) along with Mozart's Agnus dei from the Coronation Mass. We also sang Wood's O most merciful unaccompanied. Being seated in front of the orchestra was helpful for the overall balance and we received many compliments from the audience during refreshments after the performance.

Once again we participated in the MK Choirs Festival in Campbell Park on 17 June. With low numbers of the choir available we agreed that this should be regarded as a scratch, fun performance. Our set was 5 pieces including Tallis, O sacrum convivium and Sibelius, Be still my soul. We also contributed to the "mass" performance of Song 8, composed as part of the celebrations of 250 years of Amazing Grace.

"Homecomings" was the title of our summer concert on 8 July, again in St Mary and St Giles, Stony Stratford, with the sub-title of "not all those who wander are lost". Jessica's programme included Bruckner, Locus iste; Gjeilo, Ubi caritas; Rheinberger's sublime Abendlied; Copeland, Boatmen's dance and Bill Withers, Lovely day. We finished with the

rather wonderful story-telling of Chilcott, Aesop's fables. Jonathan Kingston once again accompanied us. Jessica described our performance as having 'focussed energy'.

For the fourth time, the choir travelled to Edinburgh to perform in the Festival Fringe. Once again we chose the elliptical church of St Andrew's and St George's West. We performed the same repertoire each time, mostly of the music from the July concert and a few "old favourites" to decent sized, appreciative audiences. We also indulged in a spot of busking outside the church to encourage passers by!

With our autumn concert scheduled for 11 November Jessica programmed a concert including the Duruflé Requiem and entitled Repose. With additional items by Sumsion, Tavener, Gibbons and others, along with the Elgar Lux aeterna (Nimrod) made for a reflective evening in St Barnabas Linslade. Paul Carr joined us to play the organ which seemed to need most of its stops for the very specific directions in the Duruflé.

Our final concert of the year was a joint production "Classical Christmas" with the strings of the Alina Orchestra, again at St Barnabas, on 2 December. Jessica and Hilary Davan Wetton divided the directing in a programme mixing orchestral, a cappella and joint items, including the Vaughan Williams Fantasia on Christmas carols and our traditional rendition of the Carter arrangement of The twelve days of Christmas

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 training opportunities for local 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 2023 to 31 January 2024 totalled £18,031. Expenditure amounted to £17,610. Profit for the year was £421. On 31 January 2024, Polymnia had a cash balance of £2,053 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

The 2024 schedule includes:

13 April: Nature Awakens, St Mary and St Giles in Stony Stratford with Alex Aitken. A concert featuring the Gjeilo Sunrise mass along with a selection of the most wonderful music by Morley, Sting, Pearsall, Stroope and others.

1-2 June: A return tour to Mantua, Italy for 2 concerts.

6 July: Love's Journeys, Summer concert at St Mary and St Giles, Stony Stratford with Craig Greene

9 November: Autumn concert at St Barnabas, Linslade

1 December: Christmas concert at St George's, Wolverton

Approved by the Trustees on 23 February 2024

BALANCE SHEET

		as at 31 January 2024 £	as at 31 January 2023 £
Notes			
	Current Assets		
	Bank	2,053	1,478
	Cash in hand	80	80
9	Debtors and prepayments	288	682
		<u>2,421</u>	<u>2,240</u>
	Current Liabilities		
10	Creditors and Accruals	155	395
	Net Assets	<u><u>2,266</u></u>	<u><u>1,845</u></u>
	Represented by:		
	Unrestricted Funds		
	General Fund	<u><u>2,266</u></u>	<u><u>1,845</u></u>

The notes on the attached pages form part of these accounts

Paul North - Chair

Date: 15 March 2024

Laurence Holden - Interim Treasurer

Date: 15 March 2024

For and on behalf of the Board

Statement of Financial Activities

Notes	2023 / 24 £	2022 / 23 £
Income		
2 Donations and legacies	4,698	2,751
3 Charitable activities	8,006	3,022
4 Other trading activities	15	15
5 Other receipts	5,312	533
	<hr/> 18,031	<hr/> 6,321
Expenditure		
6 Raising funds	0	186
7 Charitable activities	13,147	6,861
8 Other	4,462	483
	<hr/> 17,610	<hr/> 7,530
Surplus / (Deficit)	421	-1,209
General fund b/fwd	1,845	3,054
General fund c/fwd	<u>2,266</u>	<u>1,845</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)

	2023 / 24	2022 / 23	2021 / 22
	£	£	
INCOME			
2 Donations and legacies			
Member subscriptions	3,658	2,344	2,168
Other member payments			
Other donations and legacies	838	407	153
Gift aid recovered	202		
	<u>4,698</u>	<u>2,751</u>	<u>2,321</u>
3 Charitable activities			
Ticket sales }	7,924	3,022	1,067
Programme sales }	82		62
	<u>8,006</u>	<u>3,022</u>	<u>1,129</u>
4 Other trading activities			
Rehearsal refreshments	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>12</u>
5 Other receipts			
Members purchases:music	1,037	474	328
Members purchases: tour facilities - Edinburgh	1,275		
Members purchases: tour facilities - Mantua	<u>3,000</u>	<u>59</u>	<u>4</u>
	<u>5,312</u>	<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	8,881	5,189	2,723
Venue hire	2,976	1,038	965
Programmes and other	700	422	100
Alina concert loss sharing payment	40		345
Administration costs }			35
Corporate subscriptions }	<u>550</u>	<u>211</u>	<u>414</u>
	<u>13,147</u>	<u>6,860</u>	<u>4,582</u>
8 Other			
Purchases on behalf of members: tour facilities	3,000		
Purchases on behalf of members: music & clothing	<u>1,462</u>		
	<u>4,462</u>		
BALANCE SHEET			
9 Debtors and Prepayments			
Edinburgh Fringe		418	
Rehearsal venue	288	223	
Subscriptions due			108
Music purchase due			269
Vocal Freedom Workshop fliers		<u>41</u>	
	<u>288</u>	<u>682</u>	<u>377</u>
10 Creditors and Accruals			
Donation in advance		180	
Music purchased in advance		215	
PRS fees due	115		
Balance of loss on Xmas to Alina	<u>40</u>		<u>250</u>
	<u>155</u>	<u>395</u>	<u>250</u>