



**'Sing Your Heart Out' (SYHO)**

**Charity Number 1185038**

## **Annual Report 2021 - 2022**

**Period covered by this report: 1 April 2021 - 31 March 2022 (*end date of reporting year*)**

### **Governance**

'Sing Your Heart Out' is a Foundation Model Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Its only members are the Trustees.

The Charity is managed by a Central Organising Group (COG) which at the end of this reporting period comprised 9 trustees.

The trustees and officers of 'Sing Your Heart Out' on 31 March 2022 were:

Julia Rumsby (Chair); Ruth Emerson (Treasurer) Jenny Ford (Secretary); Kate Platt (Vice-Chair); Carolyn Bain (Vice-Treasurer); Penny Holden (Systems Manager); Angela Mason; Sylvie Taylor; Maggie Wheeler

Two of our initial trustees left during the year. Roz Ross stepped down in June 2021 and Martyn Marshall - who was also our Treasurer - stepped down at the end of August 2021. We are grateful to them both for all their contributions to SYHO, particularly during the preparation and early stages of SYHO's transition to a single charity in 2019. Ruth Emerson has taken over as SYHO's Treasurer.

During 2021-2022 we held 11 full trustee meetings, all of which took place online because of Covid. This pattern of shorter, but more frequent, meetings works very well and has become a well-established way of managing our Charity efficiently and in a more eco-friendly way. Sub-groups also met mostly online, other than when Covid restrictions allowed small groups to meet together in person, such as when we interviewed for a new singing tutor.

In exercising their duties, and when making decisions or determining policies, the trustees take account of SYHO's charitable purposes. We have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on furthering these for the public benefit. For example, SYHO's workshops are inclusive and free of charge - participants are only invited to voluntarily donate what they can afford.

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### **SYHO's aims and purposes**

Sing Your Heart out promotes good mental health and wellbeing through singing workshops which enable participants to reap the known benefits of group singing in harmony. The sessions are carefully designed to encourage people who might normally feel unable to join more formal choir settings (often through mental ill health) can participate in the group singing without experiencing

discrimination, and can benefit from engaging in a social activity without the stigma associated with mental ill health.

Sing Your Heart Out's regular singing workshops are held in 5 locations across Norfolk so that people can access workshops in their local area. As from September 2021 the 5 SYHO groups are located in Norwich (SYHO Central), Kings Lynn (SYHO West), Hingham (SYHO South), Great Yarmouth (SYHO East) and Sheringham (SYHO North). We use venues with the broadest range of accessibility, including wheelchair access.

Sing Your Heart Out contributes to research into the benefits of group singing and also seeks opportunities to promote, educate and inform people about how such activity can improve mental health and wellbeing.

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## **SYHO's challenges and achievements of 2021-22**

After not running any 'in-person' workshops during 2020-21, we were delighted to be able to return to these as Covid restrictions eased. Between March and September 2021 we continued to offer regular live online workshops, but in July and August ran our first in-person sessions in outdoor settings near our usual venues. Then in September we returned to indoor workshops, which was a very special moment for everyone. We had some great comments from singers:

*"It's been so important to meet in person again and really gives everyone a boost! Since the live sessions have been going again I can feel my sense of well-being rising again! Although I have no serious issues with mental health the last couple of years have been challenging and lockdowns and isolation haven't helped so it's wonderful to go to SYHO each week and come out feeling SO much better than when I went in! Thank you so much to all those who lead sessions and organise behind the scenes!"*

*"I so look forward to my singing. I sometimes feel lonely since this pandemic and always look forward to our singing sessions. I sing slightly out of tune and off key but nobody minds and everyone is so friendly and supportive and I think I have improved. Thank you."*

*"I always come away feeling so much happier - it's a good start to begin my week with."*

*"We are new to SYHO. My husband has Parkinson's and dementia, and it does us both the world of good. It's now a highlight of our week. Thank you."*

Although in September the numbers of participants were lower than before Covid, these gradually increased over the Autumn, until the Omicron variant led us to return to online workshops during January 2022 before resuming our 'normal' programme in February. Yet despite these stop-start challenges SYHO ran a total of 112 workshops during the reporting year: 13 online, 10 in-person outdoors and 89 in-person indoors.

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It was important to provide safe, well-ventilated and spacious 'post-Covid' settings for our workshops, so we reviewed the 5 venues being used before the pandemic. Consequently 3 of our groups - SYHO East, SYHO Central and SYHO South - have moved to a different building within the same area.

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When planning for an eventual return to our normal workshop programme it was crucial to have sufficient capacity and flexibility within the teaching team to deliver it. So we set about finding a fourth singing tutor and were delighted to welcome Lindsey to SYHO in August 2021. We are very lucky to have such talented and lovely people who lead our sessions and who work so well as a team, guided and managed by Musical Director, Natasha.

During this time we also worked with Natasha to review and revise our SYHO songbook. By the time we returned in September all 5 groups had their own set of professionally produced, attractive songbooks.

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Technology plays an important role in the administration and management of our charity, but also in how we can inform others about SYHO and inspire the wider community. For example, in July 2021 Penny did a presentation about SYHO to the local mental health trust (Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust), as part of their programme of online 'Sharing and Learning' events.

As SYHO's main IT expert Penny also led a review and revamp of our website during 2021-2022, consulting SYHO's singers, trustees and tutors. A freshly designed website on a new platform was launched in Spring 2022. This is a project that will continue during the coming year.

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One of SYHO's aims and purposes is to contribute to relevant research and this year we were invited to recruit volunteers from our SYHO community to participate in a Covid-UK study of how the effects of the epidemic were negatively affecting people who already have mental health conditions. The project was led by Tom Shakespeare, Professor of Disability Research at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

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## **SYHO's Finances**

This was another challenging year for SYHO which receives no public funding and so relies heavily on grants and donations. For most of the year it was still impossible to hold local fundraising activities such as table-top sales, and raffles. But despite these limitations alternatives were organised, including a postal/electronic quiz. Our biggest event was in June 2021, when trustee Angela and singing tutor Natasha did a fundraising cycle ride. Over 3 days they cycled more than 200 miles around Norfolk, visiting each of the 5 SYHO venues along the way. Their magnificent effort and the generosity of SYHO supporters raised just over £4000, which was amazing!

In 2021 - 2022 we received a total of £18127 from grants. These were from the National Lottery Local Connections Fund (£2500), the Miss Smith and Mount Trust (£5000) and the Warming Wellbeing Fund (£10000). Smaller grants came from the research project mentioned above (£500), and from Archant Publishers 'Cash for Charities' fund (£127).

Our overall income was £31642 with the rest coming from donations, Gift Aid and fundraising activities.

Ideally, at any one time we would like to maintain a balance of funds sufficient to cover a year of SYHO's running costs ie - around £45K. However, our reserves policy aims at a minimum of £10K, in order to cover potential situations such as contingency, commitments, cashflow and closure.

As we were able to offer our programme of in-person indoor workshops for only 6 months of this financial year, our expenditure was less than in a 'normal' year. Overall expenditure was £20192, the main costs being to cover singing tutors' fees and travel (£17198) and hiring of venues (£1310). At the end of the 2021-22 financial year (31/03/22) SYHO's cash funds stood at £48077 compared to £36626 the previous year.

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## Looking ahead to 2022-23

As we enter the next year we plan to:

recruit new trustees or volunteers with IT skills, financial skills, admin skills;  
rebuild local fundraising activities;  
update our publicity leaflets;  
continue developing a new website;  
attend and re-engage with promotional and outreach events.

**The trustees declare that they approved the trustees' report above on 26 September 2022**

**Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:**

**Signature(s):** Julia Rumsby

Penny Holden

**Full name(s):** Julia Christine Rumsby

Sheila Penelope Holden

**Position (eg Chair, Secretary etc):** Chair

Trustee/Systems Manager

**Date: 26 September 2022**

# Independent examiner's report on the accounts



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Section A

## Independent Examiner's Report

Sing Your Heart Out

Charity Name  
Sing Your Heart Out

On accounts for the year ended

31 March 2022

Charity no  
(if any)

1185038

Set out on pages

1 - 3

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of independent examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention (other than that disclosed below \*)

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

NLL

Date:

02/09/2022

Name:

Nicola Fowler, NJF Accounts Ltd

<b>Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):</b>	Fellow of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants Associate of the Chartered Institute of Taxation
<b>Address:</b>	21 Springfields
	Poringland, Norwich
	NR14 7RG

Section B	Disclosure
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Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems.(E.g. accounting records have not been kept in accordance with s132 of the Charities' Act 2011 and those accounts do not comply with the requirements of the 2008 Regulations setting out the form and content of charity accounts; any material expenditure or action which appears not to be in accordance with the trusts of the charity; any failure to be provided with information and explanations by any past or present trustee, officer or employee; and any material consistency between the accounts and the trustees' annual report.)

**Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.**