

The Choral Evensong Trust

Charitable Activities and Accounts – 1 July 2020 – 31 Dec 2021

Introduction

The Choral Evensong Trust is a newly formed charity (No. 1190208) to promote the traditional Church of England service of choral evensong. Choral evensong is a unique British tradition and an important part of our cultural heritage, dating back to 1549 as set out in Archbishop Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer*. We formed the charity during the Covid pandemic, as it had silenced many of our cathedral and church choirs. It is of utmost importance to promote, preserve and re-generate this valuable tradition by encouraging and enabling attendance.

Evensong is important for four main reasons:



- *Encourages engagement with our heritage:* Evensong provides an ideal gateway for experiencing our church heritage and an appreciation of our historic religious buildings, introducing congregations to the beautiful 16th-century words of Cranmer's *Book of Common Prayer* and the many uplifting and beautiful musical settings of the Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis and Psalms.
- *Provides a spiritual and musical experience for free:* Evensong provides a high quality, free, musical and spiritual experience, inviting people of any and no religion to enter our magnificent cathedrals, chapels and churches (without an entry fee!) and spend a

moment of reflection and calm.

- *Maintains our strong choral tradition:* Its popularity and perpetuation benefit young choristers across the UK who learn its musical requirements and develop a life-long relationship with this part of our heritage, as well as becoming many of our leading professional musicians.
- *Improves wellbeing:* many studies show that choral singing has a positive impact on our personal wellbeing. The combination of beautiful music and language within inspiring surroundings away from our daily worries serves as a meditation and respite for many.

“Choral Evensong gladdens the heart, ravishes the ear, and restores the soul – my favourite way of spending an hour with glorious music in a glorious building.” John Rutter, composer and conductor

Our primary aim is to increase the number of people attending choral evensong and to this end we have set ourselves the aim of increasing attendance to choral evensong across Britain and Ireland.

Need

There are over 750 cathedrals, churches and college chapels in the UK that regularly sing evensong. These services are free to attend, even those that take place in major tourist

Choral Evensong

attractions such as King's College, Cambridge or Westminster Abbey. However, information about each institution's services is not always easy to find or necessarily top-of-mind to those unfamiliar with evensong.

Around 37,000 people attend a cathedral service each week (Church of England Research & Statistics, 2019), roughly half of those attending a midweek service (generally Evensong). Attendance to cathedral services has remained relatively stable over the last decade but we would like to see an increase.

A further 1.1m people regularly attend a church service each week (Church of England Research & Statistics, 2019). However, this represents a fall of an average of 3% between 2014-19, and by between 15% and 20% between 2009 and 2019. We would argue that high quality choral music, especially evensong, is a significant draw for many to attend a service who might not otherwise, because its music and poetic language appeals to those of any and no faith.

Needless to say, attendance across the 2020-21 period was severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, and choral music silenced for long periods. This important cultural tradition is endangered and the beauty of the music and language will be lost if we do not do all we can to educate the public and encourage engagement and thereby increase demand.

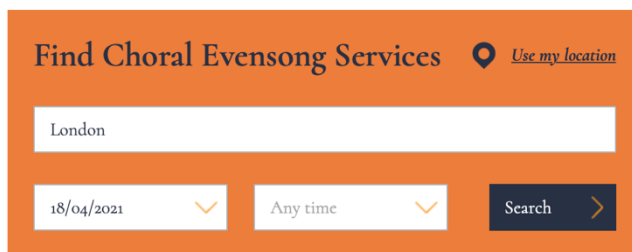
In addition, the service of Evensong can be an appealing entry point for people unfamiliar with what happens in churches, due to its greater emphasis on poetic words and music than other services.

"Choral Evensong" has been broadcast by the BBC for nearly 90 years and claims to be the longest running radio outside broadcast in the world. 250,000 people listen to the two transmissions each week and invariably we receive many messages of appreciation for the beauty of the music and the timeless quality of the words."

Stephen Shipley, BBC Senior Producer

Our work

Searchable listings website



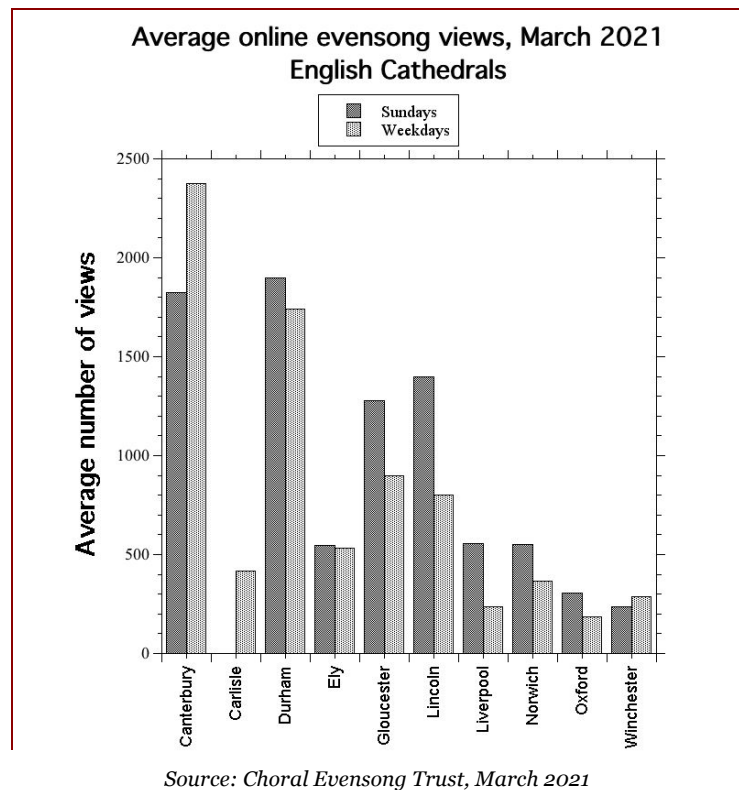
Our main activity is the [website choralevensong.org](https://www.choralevensong.org) which we first began developing in 2015 to address the lack of a central information resource around the timing and locations of evensongs.

We have so far engaged with over 700 churches and cathedrals whose service times are updated regularly on our

website by team of volunteers and by the venues themselves. The website provides a one-stop shop for the user to search for services near them or services that are being live-streamed from anywhere in Britain and Ireland.

Live-streaming of choral services

A recent innovation on our website is to list those services which will be live-streamed, linking the user to the cathedral or chapel's website, YouTube channel or Facebook page, enabling vastly more people to attend virtually than might otherwise attend in person. Analysis of online evensong views in March 2021 demonstrates the high numbers these services are reaching, in particular Canterbury Cathedral with well over 2000 views and Durham with well over 1500 views to its midweek services.



Invitation Evensongs + Reception

More recently, we have developed a model for outreach for any church or cathedral that wishes to participate; to provide a drinks reception following an evensong to which a targeted group of local people are invited. We have so far supported at least 12 Evensong Receptions in London, Cambridge, Leicester, Lancaster, Liverpool, Southwell, Maldon, New Alresford, and Winchester, where typically 150 or more people attended (many more than usual) and afterwards are encouraged to stay for a drink and a chat. Each of the venues who have hosted an Evensong Reception have been very pleased with the result.

One of the first Evensong Receptions was held at Queen's College, Cambridge. Amongst the invited guest list were political and civic leaders, the local press, schools, hotels, B&Bs, residents' associations, universities, historical preservation societies, other religious denominations, chambers of commerce, the local tourist offices and even doctor's surgeries. Guests attended evensong and then were invited to refreshments in the beautiful Long Gallery of the President's Lodge of Queen's College.

One guest representing a local hotel, said, *"... it has been a special night for me- beautiful music, a sublime atmosphere and lovely people to talk to. We will surely promote the events as I believe it is of a great interest to many of our guests, we only need to tell them about it."*

Local poster campaigns

We have developed a template for a local poster/flyer campaign to promote Evensong services which a participating church or cathedral can customise and distribute in their community in order to encourage attendance and broaden access. We provide a suggested layout and design of the flyers, advise on distribution and have paid for printing. This approach is particularly appropriate for small towns and village

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communities where older residents are more likely to see promotions in their local shops than to be reached online.

Partnerships and cross-promotion

We develop marketing partnerships with relevant organisations, such as those we have already developed with *Visit Cambridge*, *Visit London/Time Out* and *Experience Oxford* whose users are looking for things to do in those cities. We aim to promote attending evensong as an ideal way of visiting an historic religious building and experiencing our unique heritage, both architectural, musical and religious. (We are currently re-negotiating these partnerships, having had a presence on their websites for the last 3 years). We are also exploring other possibilities such as the British Pilgrimage Trust.

Press and Awareness Raising

We have worked hard to generate press interest and provide articles and interviews across a range of media including BBC Radio 4, the Independent newspaper and the global Religion News Service. (There is a full list to date on our website 'media' page).

Our impact

We are a young organisation and as such do not have extensive measurement and evidence of our impact yet. However, we currently have around 5000 unique visits to our website each month and have reached 1500 individuals so far through our Evensong Receptions.

We have taken advantage of a special Google Ads for Charities programme which provides up to \$10,000 of advertising per month, for free which we can use in a range of ways to promote our content and that of our partners. We also regularly run paid-for Facebook adverts: over an annual period we have reached 600,000 users and received 60,000 clicks through to our website as a result of these adverts. Across our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter channels we finished 2021 at close to 7000 followers.

Evaluation

We are planning to monitor our effectiveness in 4 ways:

- Year-on-year increase of attendance at choral evensong (Church of England Research and Statistics).
- Number of churches and cathedrals we directly engage with through one of our activities (Evensong receptions; flyer campaigns) and the number of people that attend as a result. This data is collected by the participating church.
- Number of partner organisations through whom we cross-promote and the reach/number of unique visits they receive per month.
- Unique visits to our website.

Fundraising

To kickstart this newly formed charity, a few individual donors created seed funding, but as we progress we will develop our fundraising strategy to ensure more sustainable income streams.

Contact

info@choralevensong.org (email) / @choralevensong (social media)



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name
THE CHORAL EVENSONG TRUST

No (if any)
1190208

CC16a

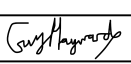
Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 01/07/2020	To	Period end date 31/12/2021
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	12,775	-	-	12,775	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	12,775	-	-	12,775	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	12,775	-	-	12,775	-
A3 Payments					
Fundraising costs	790	-	-	790	-
Advertising & Marketing	3,615	-	-	3,615	-
Website costs	2,499	-	-	2,499	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	6,904	-	-	6,904	-
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	6,904	-	-	6,904	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	5,871	-	-	5,871	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	5,871	-	-	5,871	-

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash at Bank	5,871	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	5,871	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details			
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details			
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details			
		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
			Guy Hayward	29-10-22