



**Annual Report and Accounts for the year
ended 31st August 2023**

Chair's report

We have seen a gradual return to normality during the season under review although the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II at the start of September 2022 led to the final cancellation of our previously postponed Italian Grand Tour concert, as the new date fell in the period of mourning. It was decided to wave goodbye to this repertoire by undertaking a private performance of the full programme at the intended venue in Sutton Parish Church on Thursday 15th September. We were delighted that Charne Rochford was able to take part and his larger-than-life solo items were indeed spectacular, ably assisted by Ralph Woodward on organ and piano. It was a great disappointment that this exciting and colourful event was destined never to be presented to an audience.

We then moved into a rehearsal period for our next concert at Chatteris Parish Church on Saturday 3rd December. Entitled 'Winter Songs', the programme included some challenging pieces for the choir including Durante's Magnificat, Elgar's 'O Wild West Wind' and 'Ring Out Wild Bells' by Jonathan Dove plus Hummel's Mass in B flat as the second half 'major work'. Although not specifically Christmas-themed, the extravagant Christmas lights in Chatteris and a good-sized and appreciative audience added seasonal warmth to the occasion. Kate, Roz, Andrew and Pippa formed the Arco String Quartet and accompanied the concert alongside our own Anne Reece. Together they performed an atmospheric instrumental piece, 'First Snow' by Ola Gjeilo.

Into the new year and rehearsals begin – at the Methodist Church and St John's School owing to the non-availability of the King's Ely Recital Hall this term – for our concert at the Cathedral on 18th March entitled 'The Gift of Life' after the principal work in the programme by John Rutter. Another varied programme devised by Matthew included 'Who Shall Separate Us' by Sir James Macmillan specially composed for the Queen's funeral service. Anne Reece succumbed to COVID just before the concert and we were very fortunate to obtain the services of Christopher Moore at the last minute. Ralph Woodward played the Cathedral organ and Rohan Platts on harp and Roger Bett on timps and percussion completed the instrumental line-up. A good-sized and enthusiastic audience was present in the Presbytery for the concert.

We returned to King's Ely for rehearsals in the Summer term leading to our concert at Burwell Parish Church on Saturday 24th June, another varied programme entitled 'A Celebration of Summer' with Ralph Vaughan Williams' piece 'Toward the Unknown Region' as the finale (featuring Matthew's specially-devised accompaniment to include our clarinet soloist for the evening, Claire Stevenson). Handel's 'The King Shall Rejoice' and 'A Summer Garland' by Alan Bullard were the principal works in the first half. Anne Reece rejoined us at the piano. Another good audience showed their appreciation.

I mention the RVW accompaniment in order to highlight the significant amount of additional work and dedication to the choir shown across the board by Matthew, besides directing rehearsals – he checks and devises instrumental arrangements, researches repertoire and fixes instrumentalists into the bargain. He remains as positive and encouraging as ever in

his direction, exuding infectious confidence to help us through our more challenging musical moments!

Anne has coped with an extraordinary number of notes on the piano in her huge contribution to our work as rehearsal pianist and concert performer. She has become a firm friend of the choir and her skills are much admired by all.

The management committee, now including the current five Trustees of the CIO (John, Roger, Liz, Nick and Caroline) as well as co-opted members Helen (Music Library) and Peter Lancaster and Angela Major (publicity and marketing) continue to make an invaluable contribution to the organisation of the choir 'behind the scenes'. We were relieved to return to face-to-face committee meetings in June thanks to hosts Roger and Helen. Forward planning, robust finance and compliance with CIO regulations as well as thinking carefully about our charitable role in general remain at the forefront of our discussions.

Some changes to the membership have taken place, with Jon Bradley and Philippa Mann returning to the choir, Michael and Alison Smedley joining us and David Gascoigne deciding to retire at the end of the year. We remain grateful to David for his contribution and in particular the work done for our memorable trip to the Loire Valley a few years back.

The economic climate remains tough in a world fraught with difficulties and it is so good to have our rehearsals, and the camaraderie of the choir to look forward to on Thursday evenings! The choir is in good financial shape and well administered and we can look forward to the future with confidence – however, audience-building remains a priority in times where concert attendance may not be a top priority for many, and we need to work hard to spread the word. We really are worth listening to!

John Simmons, Chair

Charitable objectives

The choir's charitable object, as set out in the Constitution is as follows:

"The objects of the CIO are to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of the art and science of choral music in all its aspects by the presentation of public choral concerts in East Anglia; and to make grants to support such general charitable purposes according to the laws of England and Wales as the trustees may in their absolute discretion determine."

Summary of the main activities undertaken for public benefit:

The activities of the charity are to:

- Perform public choral concerts throughout the year.
- Educate the general public in a wide variety of choral music across the ages both accompanied and unaccompanied including new compositions.
- Provide free or reduced membership costs for the disadvantaged and those in full time education.

- Provide a wide variety of rewarding volunteering roles to deliver the charity's activities.
- Provide free or reduced price concert tickets to young people and the disadvantaged.
- Provide occasional opportunities for school children to participate in concerts.

Musical Director's report

Our first performance of the 2022 - 2023 season was a bit different from usual. Having rescheduled our Italian Grand Tour concert to September after a postponement due to covid in July, we were thwarted once again by the death of the Queen a few days earlier. With another big concert looming for which we needed to start rehearsing, a further postponement was unrealistic, but it was actually rather fun to sing through the whole programme in an informal, yet full-blooded, performance in Sutton Church. Work then began on our programme for Chatteris; Durante's 'Magnificat' and Hummel's 'Mass in B flat' were our major works, combined with a number of 'winter songs'. Accompanied by string quartet, chamber organ and piano, this programme was very well received, along with an invitation to return which we gladly accepted.

The Spring Term saw us visit the Cathedral, for a performance which included John Rutter's 'The Gift of Life' as the main piece, accompanied by a small instrumental ensemble. This was a challenging work, in particular its central movement, 'Hymn to the creator of light' which divides the choir into multiple parts with some difficult tonality to navigate. After a lot of hard work in rehearsals, we gave a splendid account of this piece. It was also good to work on James MacMillan's recently published 'Who shall separate us', which was sung at the funeral of HM the Queen. It was very pleasing to sing to a full presbytery for this concert.

Our summer concert was in Burwell, and took the title 'A celebration of summer'; interpreted in various ways, this theme allowed us to re-visit (after very many years) some of the fine English pastoral part songs from the early twentieth century, perform Alan Bullard's relatively new and extended unaccompanied work 'A summer Garland', and give a nod to the coronation of King Charles III via Handel's Coronation Anthem 'The King Shall rejoice'. Ralph Vaughan Williams' 'Toward the unknown region' is normally the domain of large choirs singing with a large orchestra, but it was good to experience singing this early piece of RVW, which made a rousing finale to our season.

It has been a pleasure to work with another fine set of instrumentalists in each of our programmes: a string quartet, an ensemble of organ, piano, harp and timpani, and Claire Stevenson, the clarinettist who played a number of stunning solos in the summer concert. Most of all though, underpinning all of our performances and rehearsals, has been our fabulous accompanist Anne Reece. At the time of writing this report, Anne already feels so fully part of the group that it is hard to believe that the concert at the start of this season was her first performance with us. I am delighted to have her support in rehearsals each week, and know that you all really appreciate her playing too.

Thank you also to everyone on the committee; as you know they run things brilliantly whether publicly or behind the scenes; none of what we do would be possible without the hard work which goes into various areas, including finance, administration, venue booking and liaison, publicity, music hire, our own music library and lighting. It has been a most enjoyable season - thank you all!

Matthew Rudd, Musical Director

Treasurer's report

This report covers the period from 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023. Ely Consort performed four concerts during the year in Sutton Church, Chatteris Church, Ely Cathedral and Burwell Church.

Our financial objective is to break even during the year. We plan our budgets for subscriptions to pay for rehearsal costs and ticket sales to pay for on the day concert costs.

The choir operates four bank accounts. Three of these: a current account, a commission account and a reserve account are unrestricted accounts. The commission account shows money set aside by the Trustees from general funds in case they may wish to commission new works, but has the option to be used for general purposes. The fourth account, the tour account, is a restricted account to cover the cost of occasional singing tours undertaken by the choir. The day to day running costs of the choir are financed through the unrestricted accounts.

The first concert of the concert season was held in Sutton Church. This was a concert previously planned for July 2022 but subsequently postponed following a Covid outbreak in the choir. The concert was replanned for September 2023 but was unfortunately cancelled at the request of Sutton Church as it coincided with the mourning period for the death of Queen Elizabeth II. However, the church permitted the concert to take place without audience during the mourning period and at the request of members the concert was performed without audience on a rehearsal evening. The choir received no income from the concert but the soloist was paid in full.

The second concert was performed in Chatteris Church in December 2023. For this concert we agreed that the choir would share the financial details of the concert with the church and share any profit made once all costs and ticket sales had been taken into account. We hoped that this would encourage the church to sell tickets and jointly ensure success of the concert. This policy proved a success and we performed to a good audience and shared a small profit with the church.

The third concert was held in Ely Cathedral in March 2023. Although the Cathedral audience approached the level that would have been expected pre Covid we did not quite sell as many tickets as hoped. We made a small loss on the concert.

Our fourth concert was held in Burwell Church June 2023. After a strong marketing effort in Burwell we performed to a large audience and had a successful concert. The concert made a small profit.

Reduced price tickets were given to those unable to pay for full priced tickets at all concerts. Free tickets were given those under the age of 18, and for the Chatteris concert, five free tickets were made available to Ukrainian refugees.

Ely Consort gained charitable status as a CIO in June 2021 and applied to HMRC for Gift Aid for the years 2021-22 and 2022-23. A total payment of £1,723.99 was made by HMRC to Ely Consort CIO in August 2023.

Ely Consort CIO made a surplus of £1,905 for the 2022-23 financial year. Without Gift Aid the choir made a small surplus of £181 for the year. We expect to receive annual Gift Aid payments of about £900 in future years but expect most of this will be used to pay increased costs resulting from a current financial inflation rate of about 8%.

On August 31st 2023, the current account contained £3,028, the commission account contained £1,834, the reserve account contained £5,130 and the tour account contained £0.01. The total current assets of Ely Consort were £9,993 at the end of the year.

The tour account balance was reduced to £0.01 during the year following a refund to two former choir members who were unable to participate in the 2022 tour of Italy owing to the covid pandemic.

Roger Hill, Treasurer

ELY CONSORT CIO

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST AUGUST 2023

| Income | 2023 | | 2022 (15 months) | |
|--|------|---------------|------------------|--------------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Subs | | 5,064 | | 5,514 |
| Concert Receipts | | 4,211 | | 2,914 |
| Adverts Sponsors | | 80 | | 120 |
| Music Sales | | 0 | | 0 |
| Gift Aid / Misc. | | 1,724 | | 300 |
| Bank Gross Interest | | 25 | | 1 |
| | | <u>11,104</u> | | <u>8,849</u> |
| less Expenses | | | | |
| Music Hire/printing | | 683 | | 242 |
| Rehearsal Pianist | | 1,595 | | 1,993 |
| Soloists / Orchestra | | 2,575 | | 1,650 |
| Music Director | | 1,650 | | 1,760 |
| Venue Hire | | 1,390 | | 1,027 |
| Room Hire | | 680 | | 984 |
| Website | | 0 | | 77 |
| Misc. | | 308 | | 336 |
| Insurance Fees | | 318 | | 193 |
| Coach Hire | | 0 | | 0 |
| Post Stationery | | 0 | | 105 |
| | | <u>9,199</u> | | <u>8,366</u> |
| | | 1,905 | | 483 |
| Commissioned Music | | 0 | | 0 |
| EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE | | <u>1,905</u> | | <u>483</u> |

ELY CONSORT CIO
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST AUGUST 2023

| | 2023 | | 2022 (15 months) | | Notes |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|-------|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | |
| FIXED ASSETS | | | | | |
| CURRENT ASSETS | | | | | |
| Bank Accounts | 9,993 | | 9,171 | | |
| | <u>9,993</u> | | <u>9,171</u> | | 1 |
| CURRENT LIABILITIES | | | | | |
| Sundry Creditor | -1 | | -1,083 | | 2 |
| | <u>-1</u> | | <u>-1,083</u> | | |
| NET CURRENT ASSETS | | <u>9,992</u> | | <u>8,088</u> | 3 |
| REPRESENTED BY: | | | | | |
| General Fund | 8,088 | | 7,605 | | 4 |
| Excess Income Over Expenditure for | 1,905 | | 483 | | 5 |
| | <u>9,993</u> | | <u>8,088</u> | | 6 |

Notes

- 1 Total of Current, Tour, Commission, Reserve accounts
- 2 Tour account creditors
- 3 Total of Current, Commission, Reserve accounts
- 4 Total of Current, Commission, Reserve accounts previous year
- 5 Surplus/Loss for period
- 6 Total of Current, Commission, Reserve accounts current year

Declaration

The Trustees declare they have approved the Trustees' Report above.

Signed by the Chair of the Trustees, John Simmons, on behalf of the Trustees:

Signed: **John Simmons**

Date: 15th December 2023

Independent Examiner's report

The Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of Ely Consort CIO on the accounts from 1st September 2022 to 31st August 2023 is shown below.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Independent 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,
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- 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.

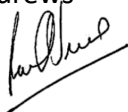
Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which:

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

Robert Andrews

Signed:



Date:

27 December 2023

Address: 3 Swards End, Wickford, Essex SS12 9PB

Relevant professional qualification:

Fellow of the Association of Charity Independent Examiners

Reserves Policy

The Accounts show unrestricted reserves of £9,992. Going forward, in accordance with our Reserves Policy, our level of reserves represents some 90% of our 2023/24 budgeted income of approximately £11,000.

We consider that this is sufficient in the event of any uninsured or unanticipated events such as insufficient concert ticket sales to cover venue hires, professional musician costs or uninsured concert cancellation by venue.

Structure and governance

Type of governing document: Constitution

How the charity is constituted: Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Trustee Selection: Co-opted

Trustees:

John Simmons, Chair

Roger Hill, Treasurer

Nicholas Barton

Elisabeth Mellor

Caroline Stanger

It is considered that all Trustees and any others who could be understood to be 'managers' in the activities and affairs of Ely Consort are deemed to be 'fit and proper' persons under the terms of the Finance Act 2010.

Musical Director:

Mathew Rudd

Reference details

Charity Name: Ely Consort CIO

Charity Registration Number: 1194693

Charity's principal address: 62, High Street, Haddenham, Ely, CB6 3XB.