

WINCHESTER COMMUNITY CHOIR

England & Wales · Charity number 1198281

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2022-03-17

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address 16 Peninsula Square
Winchester
SO23 8GJ

Phone 01962867407

Email membership@winchestercommunitychoir.co.uk

Website <https://winchestercommunitychoir.co.uk/>

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE (1) THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE ARTS, AND IN PARTICULAR THE ART OF CHORAL SINGING, BY PROVIDING AN ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY CHOIR FOR PEOPLE IN WINCHESTER AND ITS SURROUNDING AREA, BY PRESENTING CONCERTS AND IN SUCH OTHER WAYS AS THE CHOIR THROUGH ITS TRUSTEES SHALL DETERMINE FROM TIME TO TIME;(2) THE RELIEF OF THOSE IN NEED, BY REASON OF YOUTH, AGE, ILL-HEALTH, DISABILITY, FINANCIAL HARDSHIP OR OTHER DISADVANTAGE BY RAISING FUNDS FOR OTHER CHARITIES, NOMINATED BY OUR MEMBERS AND APPROVED BY OUR TRUSTEES, WHICH SERVE THE PEOPLE OF WINCHESTER AND ITS SURROUNDING AREA.

Activities: Winchester Community Choir rehearses weekly during school terms, led by its Music Director. The choir's website has a member area that includes resources (for example MP3 sound files) to help members learn the parts they are singing. The choir presents two concerts each year, typically at Christmas. The choir raises funds at public concerts and makes grants to other charities.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations
- **What:** Arts/culture/heritage/science, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Hampshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-02-28	£17,764	£15,408	-	-
2024-02-29	£15,044	£13,316	-	-
2023-02-28	£11,015	£9,278	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
David Arthur d'Arcy Hughes	Chair	2022-03-08
Denis Gibson		2021-02-09
Dr Malcolm Frank Hand		2026-01-06
Paul William Montgomery		2021-02-09
Wenda Moroney		2021-07-22

WINCHESTER COMMUNITY CHOIR

England & Wales - Charity number 1198281

Accounts

Winchester Community Choir

Registered Charity Number 1198281

Trustees Annual Report and Accounts

for the period from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025

Charity's name:	Winchester Community Choir
Charity registration number:	1198281
Registered office address:	16 Peninsula Square, Winchester, SO23 8GJ
Email address:	membership@winchestercommunitychoir.com
Website:	https://www.winchestercommunitychoir.com
Independent Examiner of Accounts:	Christopher Napier, Chartered Accountant
Bankers:	Lloyds Bank plc., 49 High Street, Winchester, SO23 9BU

Committee Members serving during the year:

The following trustees and committee members served during the reporting period:

Jim Benson	Trustee from 09-Jun-2023
Christel Buis	Committee Member from 18-Jul-2023
Hazel Chenhall	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022, re-elected 30-Apr-2024
David d'Arcy Hughes	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022
Annette Gibson	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022, re-elected 06-Jun-2023
Denis Gibson	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022, re-elected 06-Jun-2023
Paul Montgomery	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022, re-elected 30-Apr-2024
Wenda Moroney	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022

The following trustees served as officers of the charity:

David d'Arcy Hughes	Chair from 07-Jun-2022
Paul Montgomery	Secretary, from 17-Mar-2022, re-elected 30-Apr-2024
Wenda Moroney	Treasurer, from 17-Mar-2022

In attendance

Carolyn Robson	Music Director
----------------	----------------

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025

Chair's Foreword

The start of Winchester Community Choir's year was shrouded in uncertainty, with our Musical Director Carolyn Robson in recovery mode following a severe medical episode. The year ended on a high with the choir tackling a demanding repertoire for our 20th Anniversary Summer Concert under the watchful eye of Carolyn's talented successor, Zack Stephens. The great news that Carolyn would make a full recovery was tempered by the decision that, on medical advice, she had to reduce her workload and leave her role with us. Carolyn was only the second Musical Director of Winchester Community Choir having taken over in 2013 on the tragic death of her, and our, dear friend Sarah Morgan. And over eleven years she has taken us forward to the successful and enjoyable choir we have today. We owe a huge debt of thanks to Carolyn for the industry, expertise and enthusiasm she gave to us. We wish her all good fortune and look forward to seeing her regularly in the years to come.

The appointment of a new Musical Director, only the second time in twenty years we have had to undertake this task, proved to be less traumatic than we had feared. Zack Stephens, a virtuoso violinist and choral entrepreneur with a burgeoning local reputation stood in as our interim Musical Director and then accepted our invitation to take over the role permanently. After an initial culture shock on both sides it became clear that we had secured exactly the right person to direct us into the next stage of our journey and, in the immediate term, guide us through a busy and challenging programme to celebrate our twentieth year.

2024/25 was another year of varied events and performances which are detailed in the Activities and Achievements section of this Report. We continued to operate in line with our Charitable Objectives, providing an accessible choir for people local to Winchester, running social events and performances varying from large scale public concerts to small groups entertaining local Nursing Home residents and we raised some £2000 for two local charities, the Winchester Sea Cadets and the Winchester Hospice.

On the administrative side, we improved our website by adding facilities to cover the sale of songbooks and scores, a box office for ticket sales and an improved process for accessing sound files for home rehearsing purposes. We are fortunate to have in Denis Gibson a committee member who understands the technicalities of these innovations and keeps up to speed with the latest technological developments.

The choir numbers remain healthy with a good representation across the age groups and as can be seen from the Financial Review at the end of this Report we remain in a healthy state in financial terms and have achieved the targeted level of reserves to guard against future pandemics or other rainy days. Following a lively debate across the membership we introduced a Rehearsal and Performance Standards paper setting out some guidelines for membership without inhibiting our Charitable Objective of providing an accessible community choir for local people.

It remains to me to thank most sincerely the committee members listed at the head of this Report and other choir members who assist on an ad hoc basis, our Musical Director Zack Stephens and all those without whom there would be no choir. It takes a huge amount of work to manage a group of 90-odd people and we are fortunate to be able to call upon such an efficient and cheerful team to undertake it. In particular may I thank Christopher Napier who after many years of auditing our accounts is stepping down.

By the end of the period covered by this Report we had set off into our 20th year with its event-laden programme of varied activities. We are already meeting the challenge of learning two of the three songs commissioned to celebrate the anniversary and we wait with anticipation to receive *The River* by Oliver Tarney.

I can report with confidence that the Winchester Community Choir is flourishing, solvent and in good heart and voice at this time.

David d'Arcy Hughes, Chair of Trustees

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025

Governance

The choir is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and choir members are voting members of the charity.

Winchester Community Choir has a committee comprising the trustees and others in attendance, like the choir's Music Director and any co-opted committee members. The committee is responsible for administering the business of the choir, including arrangements for rehearsals and performances, and the award of grants from moneys raised by the choir's fundraising activities. There are three formal officers of the charity appointed by its members: the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Other committee members may be appointed by the committee to perform additional roles, for example the Membership Secretary. The committee met six times during the year.

As required by its constitution, Winchester Community Choir held an Annual General Meeting during the reporting period. The AGM took place on 30 April 2024.

The charity's governing document is a constitution for a Charitable Incorporated Organisation - the association model. The trustees are elected by the members of the charity or appointed by the trustees under clause 13(4) of the constitution.

Winchester Community Choir does not have corporate trustees. It does not own or lease property. It does not act as a custodian of the resources of any other charity.

Objectives

Winchester Community Choir has two charitable purposes. The objectives are:

- (1) the advancement of the arts, and in particular the art of choral singing, by providing an accessible community choir for people in Winchester and its surrounding area, by presenting concerts and in such other ways as the choir through its Trustees shall determine from time-to-time.
- (2) the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage by raising funds for other charities, nominated by our members and approved by our Trustees.

Delivering public benefit

The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. They declare that

- (1) Any member of the public may join Winchester Community Choir. We do not audition. We offer members opportunities to develop their skills as singers and to maintain their health and wellbeing through participation in community activity.
- (2) Our fundraising at public concerts benefits other charities, usually local charities committed to helping people in need because of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage. We give grants to charities nominated by our members and approved by our committee. Since the choir started in 2005, we have made 73 grants totalling £46,415.

Activities and Achievements

The year began with Zack Stephens as our locum Music Director, while Carolyn Robson recovered from a serious stroke she suffered in February 2024. Carolyn made a good recovery but took some sensible life-style decisions to ensure her future health. Unfortunately, her new resolutions included stepping down from community choirs in Petersfield and Winchester. Carolyn had been at the helm in Winchester Community Choir for a decade and we were so sorry to lose her. Choir members were extremely generous in their contributions to Carolyn's leaving gift – an arbour which now graces her lovely garden on the sandy soils of Farnham.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025

We were delighted when Zack Stephens accepted the offer to become our substantive Music Director in March 2024. Zack is a graduate in Violin Performance from The Royal Birmingham Conservatoire. He has a varied teaching career, giving masterclasses and workshops, teaching his own private classes, and he is on the faculty of Queen Mary's College in Basingstoke as professor of violin, music theory, and composition. He is also the principal conductor and director of two of Hampshire's most beloved choirs: the Andover Museum Loft Singers and us!

Rehearsals in the Spring Term focused on songs for our summer concert. We continued with pieces that Carolyn Robson had begun. Zack's first contribution to this repertoire was Paul Sartin's arrangement of The *Unst Boat Song* and his own arrangement of the hauntingly beautiful *I love my love*, which sadly did not make it from rehearsal to performance. The term ended with a post-rehearsal bring-and-share social event, with entertainments. Zack played for us - a beautiful performance of the *Allemande* from J S Bach's *Violin Partita No. 2 in D Minor* (BWV 1004).

In the Summer Term we consulted choir members on the important questions: 'What sort of choir are we?'; 'What standard should we aim for in rehearsal and in our public performances?' After very helpful feedback from the choir, we published our *Rehearsal and Performance Standards* in June 2024. This document sets out some important rules and aspirations for the choir, its committee and Music Director.

Also in the Summer Term, we launched a new service to provide music scores for readers who were happy to pay an additional subscription towards licencing costs for those works where we do not have permission to make copies free-of-charge. By the end of this reporting year about half the choir were subscribers.

In June we began to plan celebrations for our 20th anniversary in 2025, called for ideas and set up a sub-group of the choir committee to make detailed plans. The eventual outcome was a programme of 14 events and activities to take place in our anniversary year, including the commissioning of new choir arrangements, a workshop, lecture and social events, as well as two special concerts in the summer and at Christmas.

Our summer concert on 9 July was attended by Winchester's Lord Mayor, Councillor Russell Gordon-Smith. One of his charities, Sea Cadets Winchester, was a beneficiary of the retiring collection and a share of ticket revenues. The choir sang shanties and ballads about the sea, choir member Catherine Bussey played a selection of traditional maritime tunes on her tenor recorder, and Zack Stephens performed The Red Violin Caprice from a film score by John Corigliano.

Over the summer break 2024, the choir upgraded its website so that we could offer for sale scores and songbooks of choir arrangements made by our Music Directors past and present. The on-line store initially featured publications from the Sarah Morgan Foundation (SMF) and Reiver Music (Carolyn Robson's publisher). SMF generously contributed to the costs of the upgrade. The new site also provides a box office so that we can sell concert tickets in-house, with cheaper transactions costs than our previous ticketing service.

The autumn term was all about preparing for a busy Christmas programme. The choir sang at the Christmas Market in the Cathedral's Inner Close at the end of November, with the usual warming social event afterwards at The Stable in The Square. A record attendance of 40 singers this year. We sang carols in December at, Flowerdown Care Home, Sutton Manor Care Home and the Royal Hampshire County Hospital. And, of course, we held our Christmas concert – this year on 3 December. New to our seasonal repertoire were: Edgar Pettman's arrangement of the Basque carol *The Angel Gabriel*; the *Sans Day Carol* from Cornwall, arranged by Paul Sartin; and three of Zack's arrangements – *Sing Ivy* (a 'bonkers' folk song of 'marvels and lies' collected in the village of Easton just outside Winchester), the 17th century *Bodmin First Wassailing Song* and the lovely *Coventry Carol*. We gave our audience the chance to join in singing four congregational carols, with choir member John Ramage as accompanist on The United Church's new grand piano. And Zack Stephens played Charles Gounod's *Ave Maria*. The concert was a fundraiser for Winchester Hospice, nominated by choir and committee member Jim Benson. The hospice received a share of the ticket receipts and the whole of the retiring collection.

The Spring Term 2025 began with a rehearsal and social event which was well attended by members and new people trying the choir for the first time. We launched our anniversary photobook, *Winchester Community Choir – the first twenty years*, a collection of reminiscences from founder members and more recent joiners, historic and contemporary photos, and items from the choir archives.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025

Also at the first rehearsal of 2025, we published our programme of anniversary events. It is an ambitious programme supported by many friends of the choir and volunteers. Special mention is due to the trustees of the Sarah Morgan Foundation who have made a grant towards the cost of the new works we have commissioned; to Christine and Julian Arienns of SuperReal who have volunteered to record some of the songs from our summer repertoire; and to Beccy Read and trustees of the Martin read Foundation for permission to perform Martin's Winchester love song, *On the Steps of the Butter Cross*, at our July concert.

Rehearsals in January focused on learning two new works that are entirely home-grown. One is a new commission to fit with the theme of our anniversary concert in the summer, *Made in Winchester*. The commission from Zack Stephens and choir member Iris Gould is called *Sing for Winchester* and it is a celebration of the history, architecture and culture of our hometown. The introductory section is based on music from the 11th century, written down in one of two Cathedral songbooks called the Winchester Tropers. The other new work, *Moontide*, is also a collaboration by Zack and Iris. We give the premier performance of these two songs at our concert on 3 July 2025.

Other favourites from the choir's repertoire feature in our rehearsal schedule this term: *Harbour*, *Mingulay Boat Song*, *Shenandoah*, and *View the Land*. They are all arrangements by musicians who have a close individual or family tie to Winchester Community Choir. Appropriate, we think, for a concert that marks 20 years of singing their work.

The year ended with an experiment. For some time, it has been possible for electronics and software to produce the sound of musical instruments. But singing was limited to producing ah's and oo's. In February we trialled three products that produce, directly from a music score, a computer-generated voice singing lyrics. Each software application had some limitations, but the committee decided to invest in an application called Ace Studio for producing sound files for our new repertoire. It also decided to subscribe to SOUNDSLICE, an application that allows singers to hear sound files while a cursor scans through the scores or lyrics. We hope these resources will help our singers to learn a new and challenging repertoire in our 20th year.

Fundraising and grants

The choir's fundraising usually involves two concerts each year with retiring collections in aid of named charities. Grants made as a result of our fundraising efforts are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 Summary of grants to charities

Year	Charity	Type of charity	Grant	Total
Total brought forward from previous years				£45,186
2024	Sea Cadets, Winchester	Life skills for young people	£850	
2024	Winchester Hospice	End-of-life care	£379	
Total grants awarded in 2024/25				£1,229
GRAND TOTAL				£46,415

Here is the detail:

- (1) Our summer concert was a fundraiser for one of the Mayor of Winchester's charities, Sea cadets Winchester. A retiring collection and a share of ticket revenues allowed us to make a grant of £850;
- (2) As a result of our Christmas concert, we were able to make a grant of £379 to Winchester Hospice in addition to the retiring donations received from our generous audience and banked directly into the charity's account. Altogether, the concert raised £765 for the hospice. In Table 1 above, we only show the donations that passed through the choir's bank account.

Winchester Community Choir

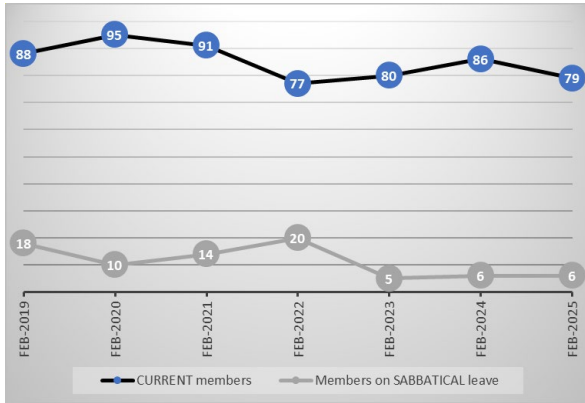
a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025

Membership

We were delighted to welcome new members who started with us in during 2023/24 and sorry to say 'Farewell' to those who left us. At the end of our financial year, our choir numbered 79 members with 6 people taking sabbatical leave. A time series showing choir membership over the last six years is in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1 Membership statistics, 2018 to 2025



Financial review

The trustees have prepared Receipts and Payments Accounts for the period from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025. See page 8-8. We have used the Charity Commission's optional Form CC16a as a checklist, omitting columns and sections that do not apply to us.

The trustees have reviewed the charity's financial position at the end of the period and wish to highlight the following:

- (1) All receipts, payments and cash funds are unrestricted.
- (2) We have no endowment funds. There were no asset and investment sales or purchases in the accounting period. We have no other monetary assets, no investment assets and no assets retained for the charity's own use.¹
- (3) The accounts show a surplus of receipts over payments of £2,356 for the period.
- (4) We pay for Music Director fees termly in arrears. The amount not paid in the accounting period for the Music Director's fees, amounts to £1,295 and is due to be paid in March 2025.
- (5) The trustees planned to build the charity's reserves during 2024/25 so that cash funds are at least £4,500 at the beginning of each term (i.e. at the end of the month in May, September and January, when termly membership subscriptions have been received). The trustees believe that would be sufficient to cover the liabilities arising in any academic term. Reserves at the end of 2024-25 amount to £6,907 (= net cash funds of £8,202 less liabilities of £1,295). The trustees are pleased with this level of reserves because our 20th anniversary programme of events in 2025/26 will result in some expenditure not usually incurred in an ordinary financial year.

The trustees are of the opinion that Winchester Community Choir is a going concern.

The principal risks facing the charity are not directly of a financial nature but would have financial consequences were they to materialise. The risks are:

- (1) the recruitment and retention of choir members. Membership has remained stable for the last year, averaging about 80 members;

¹ 'Assets retained for the charity's own use' would include land and buildings, motor vehicles, office and any specialised equipment, and shares in a charity's non-charitable company. We have none.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025

- (2) the availability of volunteers to administer the business of the charity.
- (3) the availability of skilled and qualified music director(s) and locums to ensure that rehearsals are always held, and the choir properly prepared for concert performances. We are fortunate in having Zack Stephens in the substantive role and have contacts should locums ever be required.

The choir has not received donations of a suspicious nature during this reporting period.

The charity's main expenditure items are:

- (1) Music Director fees and venue hire for rehearsals and performances which account for 67% of expenditure. This expenditure directly supports our first objective - the advancement of the arts, and in particular the art of choral singing, by providing an accessible community choir.
- (2) Grants to other charities which accounts for 8% of expenditure. This expenditure directly supports our second objective - the relief of those in need.
- (3) 6% of payments are for gifts and presentations – unusually high this year because of the generosity of choir members in contributing to Carolyn Robson's leaving gift.
- (4) 6% of payments are for administrative services that support the choir and its activities. This expenditure includes finance charges for processing membership subscriptions and ticket sales, public liability insurance, printing and stationery, website expenses.
- (5) The remaining 13% of expenditure covers the commissioning of new repertoire, payments for social events (offset by receipts from members who participated), and advance payments for events in the choir's 20th anniversary programme.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records and for preparing financial statements which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011. The trustees are not obliged by law to commission an independent examination of the accounts, but they believe it is a good way of assuring choir members and the Charity Commission that Winchester Community Choir is well run and that its financial affairs are transparent. The trustees are grateful to Christopher Napier for volunteering to be our independent examiner. His report is on page 10.

This Trustees Annual Report was approved by the Trustees and is signed on their behalf by:

David dArcy Hughes
Chair of the Trustees

Date

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England (No.1198281)

Winchester Community Choir

(registered Charity No.1198281)

Receipts and Payments Account

for the period from 1 March 2024 to 28 February 2025

		Unrestricted Funds	Last Year
	Notes	£	£
Receipts			
Membership subscriptions	1	9,956	9,652
Sales	2	3,581	3,011
Gift Aid		1,793	1,522
Donations	3	1,250	562
Miscellaneous income	4	1,150	5
Bank interest received		<u>34</u>	<u>22</u>
Total receipts		<u>£17,764</u>	<u>£14,774</u>
Payments			
Fees for Music Director		6,426	6,700
Hire of premises	5	3,873	3,025
Cost of items sold	6	1,489	0
Grants to charities	7	1,229	2,040
Gifts and presentations	8	895	59
Miscellaneous expenditure	9	750	0
IT and software	10	359	0
Stationery, printing & copying		163	319
Event expenses	11	128	808
Insurance		<u>96</u>	<u>96</u>
Total payments		<u>£15,408</u>	<u>£13,047</u>
Surplus of receipts over payments		2,356	1,727
Net cash funds at start of year		<u>5,846</u>	<u>4,119</u>
Net cash funds at year end		<u>£8,202</u>	<u>£5,846</u>

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 28 February 2025

		Unrestricted Funds	Last Year
	Notes	£	£
Cash funds			
Bank current account		3,585	3,258
Bank deposit account		4,612	2,578
PayPal account		<u>5</u>	<u>10</u>
		<u>£8,202</u>	<u>£5,846</u>
Liabilities			
Fees for music director	12	1,295	1,164
Hire of premises		<u>0</u>	<u>617</u>
Total liabilities		<u>£0</u>	<u>£1,781</u>

The notes referred to above form part of these accounts

Approved by the trustees on 29th April 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

Signature

Signature

Wenda Moroney

David d'Arcy-Hughes

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England (No.1198281)

Notes to the accounts

- A. Because the choir is doing more and selling more things, we have reorganised some of the categories under which we report receipts and payments. This is explained below for each of the categories affected. Last year's receipts and payments have been mapped onto the new categories. We have also simplified our reporting by showing net receipts for membership subscriptions and sales.
1. Membership subscriptions are net receipts after transaction fees charged by GOCARDLESS which manages Direct Debit charges to members. Last year we reported gross receipts and showed fees as a payment.
 2. Sales include receipts from the sale of concert tickets and charges for social events, which were reported separately last year. In addition, there are new types of sales made through the choir's on-line e-commerce platform, e.g. subscriptions for the use of music scores by choir members, the sale of the choir's anniversary photobook, the sale of songbooks and musical scores on behalf of our music directors (past and present). The sales are reported net after transaction fees charged by Wix (our e-commerce provider) and PayPal.
 3. Donations now include the amount given in retiring collections at concerts, where the choir (rather than the benefiting charity) is responsible for banking the receipts. Previously retiring collections were reported as concert receipts.
 4. Miscellaneous income comprises two grants from the Sarah Morgan Foundation: £850 to support the choir's 20th anniversary programme of events; £300 as a contribution to the cost of setting up the choir's on-line store which will sell (amongst other things) Sarah Morgan's songbooks, income from which will benefit the Foundation.
 5. Hire of premises comprises our ordinary expenditure on the hire of the United Church Winchester for rehearsals and concerts (£3,131), and extraordinary expenditure on deposits to secure venues for our anniversary events in the next financial year (£742)
 6. Cost of items sold includes ordinary in-year expenditure on licences to copy music for those who subscribe to scores (£157) and social events that are charged to members (£742). This line also includes the cost of printing our anniversary photobook (£440) and deposit payments for anniversary events that will happen in the next financial year (£150).
 7. Grants to charities includes all the donations given in retiring collections that are banked by the choir and which pass through our current bank account. For the first time this financial year, the charity we supported at our Christmas concert banked the retiring collection themselves and these donations do not appear in our accounts.
 8. Gifts and presentations comprise ordinary expenditure on gifts for our MD and performers at concerts (£75), and extraordinary expenditure on a leaving gift for Carolyn Robson, funded by member donations (£820)
 9. Miscellaneous expenditure is a deposit payment for the commissioning of a new work from Oliver Tarney.
 10. IT and software includes the cost of renewing our website builder and domain for two years.
 11. Event expenses comprise expenditure on social and other events that are not directly recouped by charging the participants (e.g. drinks at start-of-term socials). The cost of social events that are recharged to participants (e.g. Christmas supper at The Stable) are now shown under Cost of items sold.
 12. Liabilities represent the Fees for music director for rehearsals in January and February 2025 and Hire of premises for rehearsals in February 2025. They are due for payment by 31 March 2025.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England (No.1198281)

Report of the independent examiner to the trustees of Winchester Community Choir (registered charity no. 1198281)

I report to the trustees of the Winchester Community Choir ("the Trust) on my examination of the accounts of the Trust for the period 1 March 2024 to 29 February 2025, as set out on pages 8 and 8.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act, and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Christopher J Napier
Chartered Accountant
22 Arlington Place, Gordon Road,
Winchester, SO23 7TR

Date:

WINCHESTER COMMUNITY CHOIR

England & Wales - Charity number 1198281

Accounts

Winchester Community Choir

Registered Charity Number 1198281

Trustees Annual Report and Accounts

for the period from 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024

Charity's name:	Winchester Community Choir
Charity registration number:	1198281
Registered office address:	16 Peninsula Square, Winchester, SO23 8GJ
Email address:	membership@winchestercommunitychoir.com
Website:	https://www.winchestercommunitychoir.com
Independent Examiner of Accounts:	Christopher Napier, Chartered Accountant
Bankers:	Lloyds Bank plc., 49 High Street, Winchester, SO23 9BU

Committee Members serving during the year:

The following trustees were appointed when the charity was registered on 17 March 2022, by agreement of members at special general meetings on 22 January 2022 and 8 March 2022. Two trustees retired at the Annual General Meeting on 6 June 2023 and were re-elected, as permitted by the constitution.

Jim Benson	Trustee from 09-Jun-2023
Christel Buis	Committee Member from 18-Jul-2023
Hazel Chenhall	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022
David d'Arcy Hughes	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022
Annette Gibson	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022, re-elected 06-Jun-2023
Denis Gibson	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022, re-elected 06-Jun-2023
Paul Montgomery	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022
Wenda Moroney	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022

The following trustees served as officers of the charity:

David d'Arcy Hughes	Chair from 07-Jun-2022
Paul Montgomery	Secretary, from 17-Mar-2022
Wenda Moroney	Treasurer, from 17-Mar-2022

In attendance	
Carolyn Robson	Music Director

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024

Chair's Foreword

Winchester Community Choir experienced the full rollercoaster of life this reporting period in that a highly successful year which affirmed the choir's choral and financial recovery from the lockdown years was brought to something of a juddering halt, albeit temporarily, by the news that our iconic Musical Director, Carolyn Robson, had suffered a near-fatal stroke in mid-February. The good news is that Carolyn made a miraculous recovery and will, in due course, be able to resume her roles including, we trust, that of our Music Director. After a nervous interlude we were most fortunate to secure the services of another renowned local musical director, Zack Stephens, to step into Carolyn's shoes and the show was able to go on with only one cancelled rehearsal.

As will be seen from the **Activities and Achievements** section of this Report the choir was engaged in a number of varied events throughout the year including two highly successful concerts, appearances at the Winchester Christmas Market and care homes singing carols, and two especially memorable events, 'Singing with Owls' at the Hawk Conservancy and the Sarah Morgan Memorial Concert at the Theatre Royal Winchester, jointly with five other local choirs. The choir being dive-bombed by eagle-owls was not something I ever expected to see and the Sarah Morgan concert, masterminded by Carolyn Robson with huge input from our own Denis Gibson, was a truly special event showcasing the wealth and breadth of the local choral community of which we form part.

We continue to deliver on our charitable purposes by providing opportunities for the local community to engage in and attend choral activities and raising substantial funds for local deserving causes. Testament to this is the high proportion of choir members who attend our weekly rehearsals and the fact that our concerts tend to be sold out. We are regularly requested to perform at weddings, anniversary celebrations and the like and we accommodate such requests where we can. Our choir numbers continue to rise and are approaching 90. Our financial position is secure.

Maintaining an up-to-date website, providing current sound files of our complete repertoire of songs, preparing a weekly newsletter, handling accounts and subscriptions, observing our charitable obligations and organizing social events are just a few of the tasks involved in enabling our choir to flourish. These tasks fall to the members of the Committee listed at the top of this Report and I cannot thank them enough for the cheerful and efficient way they fulfil these duties. Thanks also to the increasing number of choir members (and sometimes their partners) who volunteer to steward at rehearsals and performances, organise our social events and set-up our concerts. As a result, I can report that the choir is in good heart and sound health and looking forward to another active and enjoyable year of music making.

David d'Arcy Hughes, Chair of Trustees

Governance

The choir is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and choir members are voting members of the charity.

Winchester Community Choir has a committee comprising the trustees and others in attendance, like the choir's Music Director and any co-opted committee members. The committee is responsible for administering the business of the choir, including arrangements for rehearsals and performances, and the award of grants from moneys raised by the choir's fundraising activities. There are three formal officers of the charity appointed by its members: the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Other committee members may be appointed by the committee to perform additional roles, for example the Membership Secretary. The committee met six times during the year.

As required by its constitution, Winchester Community Choir held an Annual General Meeting during the reporting period. The AGM took place on 6 June 2023.

The charity's governing document is a constitution for a Charitable Incorporated Organisation - the association model. The trustees are elected by the members of the charity or appointed by the trustees under clause 13(4) of the constitution.

Winchester Community Choir does not have corporate trustees. It does not own or lease property. It does not act as a custodian of the resources of any other charity.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024

Objectives

Winchester Community Choir has two charitable purposes. The objectives are:

- (1) the advancement of the arts, and in particular the art of choral singing, by providing an accessible community choir for people in Winchester and its surrounding area, by presenting concerts and in such other ways as the choir through its Trustees shall determine from time-to-time.
- (2) the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage by raising funds for other charities, nominated by our members and approved by our Trustees.

Delivering public benefit

The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. They declare that

- (1) Any member of the public may join Winchester Community Choir. We do not audition. We offer members opportunities to develop their skills as singers and to maintain their health and wellbeing through participation in community activity.
- (2) Our fundraising at public concerts benefits other charities, usually local charities committed to helping people in need because of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage. We give grants to charities nominated by our members and approved by our committee. Since the choir started in 2005, we have made 70 grants totalling more than £45,000.

Activities and Achievements

Our rehearsals in the summer term 2023 were a preparation for our July concert, *Hampshire and Beyond*. As the concert title suggests there were songs with a Hampshire connection, from inside the country and from our immediate Wessex neighbours - some quintessentially English songs by Vaughan Williams, Orlando Gibbons, Sarah Morgan and Paul Sartin. 'Beyond' took us far away to the United States. It was Independence Day, after all. So, we sang some shanties and blues from North America, and an Elvis favourite from Blue Hawaii. Our chosen charity to benefit from this fundraising event was the Southampton & Winchester Visitors Group – a local organisation that supports refugees and asylum seekers.

Our summer concert coincided with the implementation of Winchester City Council's decision to charge for evening parking in city centre car parks. Over the following months, the choir committee attempted to persuade the Council that this would adversely affect Winchester's cultural life and night-time economy. The Chair and Membership Secretary presented a petition to a Council meeting at the end of November 2023 objecting to these charges. Our efforts (and representations from other organisations in the city) led to some minor changes but choir members who travel to rehearsal by car and for whatever reason do not use free evening parking on the fringes of the city are still faced with a significantly bigger parking bill (at least £60 over a 12-month period).

In the autumn 2023 we set up an Events Team under the leadership of Hazel Chenhall to manage the increasing number of social and other events on the choir calendar.

December was a busy month. Winchester Community Choir was on the performance stage at the Christmas Market 2023. More accurately we were arranged around the stage because we could not all fit on it. Amongst many other things, the choir sang *In the bleak midwinter* - a carol from its Christmas repertoire and an apt description of the chilly weather conditions in the Cathedral's Inner Close.

We presented our Christmas Concert, *brr*, on Tuesday 5 December. It was such an enjoyable occasion. We kicked off with an old favourite from Hampshire - the rousing *Rejoice mankind and sing*. Then a couple of bluesy numbers before a carol, *Masters in this hall*, written by William Morris, a man more famous now for his wallpaper than his poetry. After some interval refreshments we returned with *The wonderful sucking pig* (a song of lies and marvels) and *Beautiful star of Bethlehem* by R Fisher Boyce, a farmer with 11 children who found peace and quiet on his milking stool to write this one.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024

We've gone carolling in local nursing and care homes in recent years and on 17 December we made a return visit to Flowerdown Care Home in Harestock. Many thanks to Cath Hart who led the singing. Normally there are two homes on our itinerary, but an outbreak of Norovirus amongst residents at our second venue put paid to that.

The Hawk Conservancy Trust is a charity with a mission to conserve birds of prey and their habitats. The Trust's annual *Christmas Carols and Owls by Moonlight* is one of the Trust's most popular and important fundraising events of the year. On 19 December, Winchester Community Choir sang carols in the open air alongside the Trust's free-flying owls in the moonlight in front of an audience of 300 people. Tom Morath from The Hawk Conservancy wrote, 'We have the most beautiful backdrop to this show in one of our three flying arenas at the Trust. It really was magical.' Indeed it was!

The beginning of Spring Term 2024 was a series of intense rehearsals for a concert at the Theatre Royal Winchester on Sunday 4 February, presented by the Sarah Morgan Foundation. The concert, titled *Rivers & Roads*, celebrated the lives and work of two Hampshire musicians, Sarah Morgan and Paul Sartin. Sarah Morgan founded Winchester Community Choir in 2005. She died in 2013 and the Foundation set up to continue her work marked (a little late) the tenth anniversary of her death. Six Hampshire choirs, including Winchester Community Choir, performed at the event, and many members of our choir and their partners were involved in organising the production. The Theatre Royal was packed with 200 singers and another 200 paying audience and was a very successful event.

We were at the launch event for *Sound Winchester* at The Arc on Saturday 17 February. *Sound Winchester* is a festival of community music making, due to happen in the city in June. The launch event was part of the build-up for the festival and was intended to introduce the Winchester community to the varied musical opportunities and talent on their doorstep.

Mid-February came with a shock. Our Music Director, Carolyn Robson, fell seriously ill and could not lead our rehearsals in the second half of the Spring Term. We are delighted that she is making a good recovery, and we hope to see her again in May when our summer term kicks off. Zack Stephens has filled the gap at short notice and continues to prepare us for our Summer Concert, to take place on Tuesday 9 July 2024.

Fundraising and grants

The choir's fundraising usually involves two concerts each year with retiring collections in aid of named charities. Grants made as a result of our fundraising efforts are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 Summary of grants to charities

Year	Charity	Type of charity	Grant	Total
Total brought forward from previous years				£43,146
2023	Southampton & Winchester Visitors Group	Support for refugees	£1,000	
2023	Winchester Beacon	Support for people experiencing homelessness or vulnerability	£950	
2023	Princess Royal Trust for Carers	Support for Carers	£90	
Total grants awarded in 2023/24				£2,040
GRAND TOTAL				£45,186

Here is the detail:

- (1) Our summer concert was a fundraiser for the Southampton & Winchester Visitors Group – a local organisation that supports refugees and asylum seekers. A retiring collection made £670. Through the generosity of our audience and a top-up contribution from ticket sales, the choir was able to make a grant of £1,000 to the charity;

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

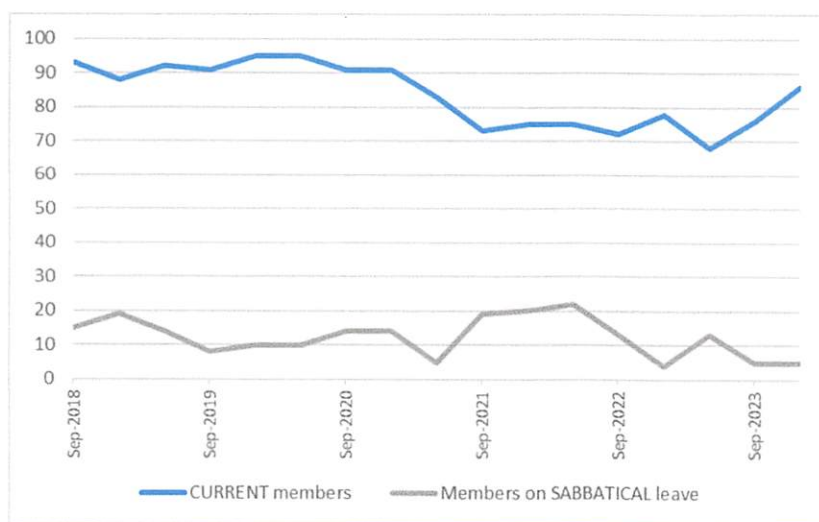
Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024

- (2) At our Christmas concert a generous audience donated £538 in a retiring collection. It went to our chosen charity - Winchester Beacon that supports homeless people in Winchester. We added a share of ticket sales so that our total grant to the charity is £950. Michele Price at Winchester Beacon emailed to say, 'Wow, that is just amazing. What a tremendous feat and very many thanks to the whole choir for choosing us as their charity to support this year. Please pass on huge thanks to each and every one.'
- (3) And an extra grant of £90 was made to The Princess Royal Trust, in lieu of a birthday gift to Jean Forster. Jean and her late husband, Jim, were founder members of the choir. Rather than a personal gift from the choir to mark her 90th birthday, Jean asked the choir committee to make a donation to the Princess Royal Trust for Carers in Hampshire.

Membership

Choir membership has made a good recovery post-COVID. We were delighted to welcome new members who started with us in during 2023/24. At the end of our financial year, our choir numbered 89 members – more or less on target in the plan we made when preparing our application to become a registered charity. We are gradually working our way back to the membership level we had pre-pandemic.

Figure 1 Membership statistics – Sep-2018 to Jan-2024



Note

The chart shows numbers at the beginning of each term in September, January and May.

Financial review

The trustees have prepared Receipts and Payments Accounts for the period from 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024. See pages 8-9. We have used the Charity Commission's optional Form CC16a as a checklist, omitting columns and sections that do not apply to us.

The trustees have reviewed the charity's financial position at the end of the period and wish to highlight the following:

- (1) All receipts, payments and cash funds are unrestricted.
- (2) We have no endowment funds. There were no asset and investment sales or purchases in the accounting period. We have no other monetary assets, no investment assets and no assets retained for the charity's own use.¹

¹ 'Assets retained for the charity's own use' would include land and buildings, motor vehicles, office and any specialised equipment, and shares in a charity's non-charitable company. We have none.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024

- (3) The accounts show a surplus of receipts over payments of £1,727 for the period.
- (4) The method of collecting membership subscriptions changed in January 2023 - from collection monthly by Standing Order, to collection at the beginning of each term by Direct debit. As a consequence, last year's accounts reported the receipt of 13½ months of membership subscriptions (17 March 2022 to 30 April 2023). This year's accounts report membership receipts for a 12-month period only. Therefore, this year's and last year's figures for membership subscriptions are not a like-for-like comparison.
- (5) We pay for Music Director fees termly in arrears and for hire of premises monthly in arrears. These liabilities not paid in the accounting period, amount to £1,781 and are due to be paid at the end of March 2024.
- (6) The trustees planned to build the charity's reserves during 2023/24 so that cash funds are at least £4,500 at the beginning of each term (i.e. at the end of the month in May, September and January, when termly membership subscriptions have been received). The trustees believe that would be sufficient to cover the liabilities arising in any academic term. Reserves at the end of 2023-24 amount to £4,065 (= net cash funds of £5,846 less liabilities of £1,781) and, it is estimated, will exceed £4,500 at the end of May 2024 once summer term membership subscriptions are received.

The trustees are of the opinion that Winchester Community Choir is a going concern.

The principal risks facing the charity are not directly of a financial nature but would have financial consequences were they to materialise. The risks are:

- (1) the recruitment and retention of choir members. Recruitment is on-track but there is a risk that membership will not increase at the rate we hope and plan for in 2024/25. On the positive side, even with a cautious projection of membership numbers next year, we anticipate a financial surplus which will enable us to rebuild our reserves;
- (2) the availability of volunteers to administer the business of the charity.
- (3) the availability of skilled and qualified music director(s) and locums to ensure that rehearsals are always held, and the choir properly prepared for concert performances.

The choir has not received donations of a suspicious nature during this reporting period.

The charity's main expenditure items are:

- (1) Music Director fees and venue hire for rehearsals and performances which account for 73% of expenditure. This expenditure directly supports our first objective - the advancement of the arts, and in particular the art of choral singing, by providing an accessible community choir.
- (2) Grants to other charities which accounts for 15% of expenditure. This expenditure directly supports our second objective - the relief of those in need.
- (3) 6% of payments cover social events in the choir's calendar, which are recharged to members (e.g. booking deposits for supper at The Stables following a performance at Winchester Christmas Market).
- (4) The remaining 6% of payments are for administrative services that support the choir and its activities. This expenditure includes finance charges for processing membership subscriptions and ticket sales, public liability insurance, printing and stationery, website expenses, gifts and presentations.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

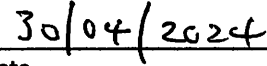
Trustees Annual Report for the period from 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records and for preparing financial statements which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011. The trustees are not obliged by law to commission an independent examination of the accounts, but they believe it is a good way of assuring choir members and the Charity Commission that Winchester Community Choir is well run and that its financial affairs are transparent. The trustees are grateful to Christopher Napier for volunteering to be our independent examiner. His report is on page 10.

This Trustees Annual Report was approved by the Trustees and is signed on their behalf by:



David dArcy Hughes
Chair of the Trustees



Date

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England (No.1198281)

Receipts and Payments Account for the period from 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024

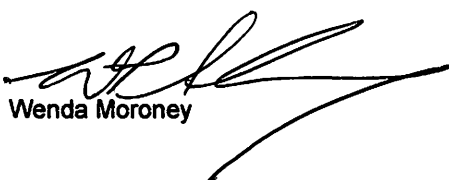
		Unrestricted Funds	Last Year
	Notes	£	£
Receipts			
Membership subscriptions	1	9,786	8,441
Concert receipts	2	2,996	2,211
Gift Aid		1,522	0
Social event receipts	3	689	260
Donations (unrestricted)		24	97
Bank interest received		22	1
Miscellaneous income		5	5
Total receipts		£15,044	£11,015
Payments			
Fees to Music Director		6,700	4,996
Hire of premises		3,025	2,409
Grants to charities		2,040	1,150
Social event payments	4	808	260
Stationery, printing & copying		319	98
Membership and ticketing fees	5	270	101
Insurance		96	96
Gifts and presentations		59	67
Website expenses	6	0	101
Total payments		£13,316	£9,278
Surplus of receipts over payments		1,727	1,737
Net cash funds at 1 March 2023		4,119	2,382
Net cash funds at 29 February 2024		£5,846	£4,119

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 29 February 2024

		Unrestricted Funds	Last Year
	Notes	£	£
Cash funds			
Bank current account		3,258	3,558
Bank deposit account		2,578	556
PayPal account		10	5
		£5,846	£4,119
Liabilities			
Fees for music director	7	1,164	1,074
Hire of premises	7	617	461
Total liabilities		£1,781	£1,535

The notes referred to above form part of these accounts

Approved by the trustees on 26 March 2024 and signed on their behalf by:


Wenda Moroney


David d'Arcy-Hughes

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England (No.1198281)

Notes to the accounts

- 1 **Membership subscriptions** are gross receipts before transaction fees charged by GOCARDLESS which manages Direct debit charges to members
- 2 **Concert receipts** are gross receipts from ticket sales (before ticketing fees) and receipts from retiring collections.
- 3 **Social event receipts** during this period (£689) are payments made by members for a restaurant meal after our performance at the Christmas Market. These receipts were marginally more than the payments made to the restaurant (£658).
- 4 **Social event payments** include charges for the Christmas restaurant meal (fully recovered from those attending), interval refreshments at concerts and beverages at end-of-term social events.
- 5 **Membership & ticketing fees** are fees taken by GOCARDLESS for the administration of membership subscriptions and fees taken by TicketSource for the administration of ticket sales.
- 6 **Website expenses** paid last year covered a two-year period
- 7 **Liabilities** represent the music director's fees for rehearsals in January and February 2024 and hire of premises for rehearsals in February 2024. They are due for payment by 31 March 2024.
- 8 **Last year amounts** relate to the period from 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England (No.1198281)

Report of the independent examiner to the trustees of Winchester Community Choir (registered charity no. 1198281)

I report to the trustees of the Winchester Community Choir ("the Trust) on my examination of the accounts of the Trust for the period 1 March 2023 to 29 February 2024, as set out on pages 8 and 9.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

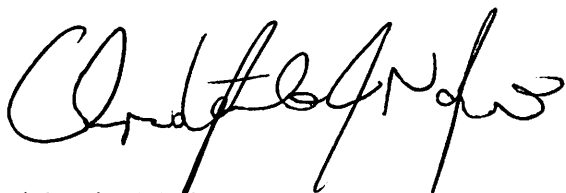
I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act, and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Christopher J Napier
Chartered Accountant
22 Arlington Place, Gordon Road,
Winchester, SO23 7TR

4 April 2024

WINCHESTER COMMUNITY CHOIR

England & Wales - Charity number 1198281

Accounts

Winchester Community Choir

Registered Charity Number 1198281

Trustees Annual Report and Accounts

for the period 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023

Charity's name:	Winchester Community Choir
Charity registration number:	119828
Registered office address:	16 Peninsula Square, Winchester, SO23 8GJ
Email address:	membership@winchestercommunitychoir.com
Website:	https://www.winchestercommunitychoir.com
Independent Examiner of Accounts:	Christopher Napier, Chartered Accountant
Bankers:	Lloyds Bank plc., 49 High Street, Winchester, SO23 9BU

Committee Members serving during the year:

The following trustees were appointed when the charity was registered on 17 March 2022, by agreement of members at special general meetings on 22 January 2022 and 8 March 2022:

Hazel Chenhall	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022
David d'Arcy Hughes	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022
Annette Gibson	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022
Denis Gibson	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022
Stephen (Syd) Meats	Trustee, 17-Mar-2022 to 31-Dec-2022
Paul Montgomery	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022
Wenda Moroney	Trustee from 17-Mar-2022

The following trustees served as officers of the charity:

David d'Arcy Hughes	Chair from 07-Jun-2022
Stephen (Syd) Meats	Chair, 17-Mar-2021 to 06-Jun-2022
Paul Montgomery	Secretary, from 17-Mar-2021
Wenda Moroney	Treasurer, from 17-Mar-2021

In attendance	
Carolyn Robson	Music Director

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023

Chairman's Foreword

Our first year with charitable status, has shown a most welcome return to something resembling normality in the choir routine after the turmoil of Covid. We managed a full year of choir practices and entertained the community with highly successful and well attended concerts and other performances, details of which appear later in this Report. Thanks to a subtle advertising campaign we have been able to repair the drop in member numbers arising from the lockdowns far more rapidly than I had anticipated and I am happy to report that, with around 80 members, we are back on track with our growth plans. It has been so good to see our many new members recruited from the local community making their contribution to the wonderful sounds Carolyn Robson, our Musical Director, teases out of us. Carolyn continues to provide inspirational leadership and boundless enthusiasm in steering us through a varied repertoire of folk and other songs of her selection.

I am happy to report that we are comfortably solvent even before we receive the tax refund boost via the Gift Aid Scheme in the coming financial year.

The preservation of our choir through the lockdowns and its rapid return to rude health is thanks to the tireless efforts of our Trustee committee members listed above, Denis, Wenda, Hazel, Annette and Paul. They have worked so hard to implement the charitable status requirements, regularise our payment structures and upgrade the website to mention but three major projects. We said goodbye to Syd Meats following his resignation due to time constraints. I thank each and every one of them most sincerely for their dedication and support.

We are now in good shape and looking forward to a busy and exciting year of varied activities as we move into the Carolean era. We will continue to attract new members and intend to increase the number of social activities around the choir but we will not take our eyes off our core activity of making beautiful music for the enjoyment of the choir members and our audiences.

David d'Arcy Hughes, Chair of Trustees

Governance

At the beginning of the year covered by this annual report Winchester Community Choir was an informal association governed by a constitution which required members to elect officers and a committee to manage its affairs. On 17-Mar-2022, Winchester Community Choir became a charity, registered in England, with a new constitution. The choir is now a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and choir members are voting members of the charity.

Winchester Community Choir has a committee comprising the trustees and others in attendance, like the choir's Music Director and any co-opted committee members. The committee is responsible for administering the business of the choir, including arrangements for rehearsals and performances, and the award of grants from moneys raised by the choir's fundraising activities. There are three formal officers of the charity appointed by its members: the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Other committee members may be appointed by the committee to perform additional roles, for example the Membership Secretary. The committee met five times during the year.

The charity's governing document is a constitution for a Charitable Incorporated Organisation - the association model. The trustees are elected by the members of the charity or appointed by the trustees under clause 13(4) of the constitution.

Winchester Community Choir does not have corporate trustees. It does not own or lease property. It does not act as a custodian of the resources of any other charity.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023

Objectives

Winchester Community Choir has two charitable purposes. The objectives are:

- (1) the advancement of the arts, and in particular the art of choral singing, by providing an accessible community choir for people in Winchester and its surrounding area, by presenting concerts and in such other ways as the choir through its Trustees shall determine from time-to-time.
- (2) the relief of those in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage by raising funds for other charities, nominated by our members and approved by our Trustees.

Delivering public benefit

The trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. They declare that

- (1) Any member of the public may join Winchester Community Choir. We do not audition. We offer members opportunities to develop their skills as singers and to maintain their health and wellbeing through participation in community activity.
- (2) Our fundraising at public concerts benefits other charities, usually local charities committed to helping people in need because of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage. We give grants to charities nominated by our members and approved by our committee. Since the choir started in 2005 we have made 68 grants totalling £43,146.

Activities and Achievements

We began the year in cloud with sunny spells. We were still in the shadow of the pandemic and war loomed in eastern Europe. Attendance at some rehearsals in the spring term 2022 were as low as 30 singers. Apologies due to illness, and especially Covid, were a common occurrence still, affecting even our Music Director, Carolyn Robson, and (then) Chairman, Syd Meats. Ysanne Bonner stood in for Carolyn at rehearsal in mid-March, and to dispel the cloud, we sang some new songs, including a beautiful Ukrainian lullaby, *Oi Khodyt Son Kolo Vikon*. Music has such power to express feelings and lift spirits at times of uncertainty, and to express some ageless truths. At our next rehearsal, with Carolyn restored to health, we sang *War begets poverty*, as true today as when it was written in 1701.

Also in mid-March, we heard from the Charity Commission that our application to become an Incorporated Charitable Organisation was successful.

The summer term began in April with a temporary relocation of our rehearsal room to St Barnabas church, for one night only because the United Church was unavailable. For this term, we down-graded our Covid precautions - no longer requiring singers to take a lateral flow test before rehearsal or wear a mask while moving around the venue. We kept some measure of social distancing and at the United Church, the ventilation system was still on full pelt. We kept the meet-and-greet stewarding arrangements (so we don't have to pass around the attendance sheet) and we stressed our long-standing advice that singers shouldn't attend rehearsal if they feel at all unwell.

Also in April, the BBC broadcast an episode of Songs of Praise, recorded at Winchester Cathedral the previous October. A small group of WCC members joined other local choirs in the congregation for a grand singalong in SOP's 60th year. The cameras lighted on a few familiar faces, including our current chairman and Marion Keen from the Tunes. Andrew Lumsden conducted the congregation and George Castle played the wonderful Harrison organ, pulling out the 32' stop for the line 'Hark! The songs of peaceful Zion thunder like a mighty flood.'

Our concert in July was the choir's first summertime performance since 2019. The concert was titled **Bushes and Briars**, after a song that featured on our programme. *Bushes and Briars* was the first folk song that the composer Ralph Vaughan Williams collected, and it was appropriate to showcase that piece in 2022, the 150th anniversary of his birth. The Deputy Mayor, Councillor Angela Clear, joined us for a wonderful evening of music and poetry.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023

The autumn was busy with preparations for our Christmas concert. Carols at rehearsal in September! We added Paul Sartin's arrangement of the *Sussex Carol* to our rehearsal schedule, to mark our fondness and respect for a musician who died this term, all too young. The concert in December was called *Sing Out*, a title borrowed from Sarah Morgan's lyrics in her arrangement of a tune by the early 19th century American composer Daniel Read. We were delighted that Councillor Derek Green, a former Mayor of Winchester, was able to join us. A good friend of the choir, Chris Brown, recorded the concert for us.

Other December activities included singing on the performance stage at Winchester Cathedral's Christmas Market and carol singing at nursing and residential homes - King Harold Court and Flowerdown Care Home.

The New Year saw our Music Director away in New Zealand, where she ran a music summer school near Hamilton on North Island. Ysanne Bonner and Freya Tabbush were locum MDs during the month, and we started to tackle a few pieces for our summer concert, as well as some songs just for fun.

Susannah Quick (Tunes) reported her survey of the autumn term's new members. The findings included: the choir was friendly and welcoming; value for money was good; socialising was very or quite important to most; repertoire was liked by some and not by others.

At the very end of February 2023 we launched our new website at <https://www.winchestercommunitychoir.com>

Fundraising and grants

The choir's fundraising usually involves two concerts each year with retiring collections in aid of named charities. Grants made as a result of our fundraising efforts are summarised in Table 1. Here is the detail:

- (1) Our summer concert was a fundraiser for the Mayor of Winchester's charities: Trinity Winchester, British Heart Foundation, Winchester Hospice. Through the generosity of our audience and choir members we were able to make a grant of £400 to the Mayor's charity fund;
- (2) Our Christmas concert raised funds for Trinity Winchester. Amelia Ashton, Trinity's Vice Chair, was there to tell us about the work her organisation does in the city to provide vital practical and emotional support to over 650 people each year who are experiencing the effects of homelessness or vulnerability. Their services are open to a wide range of people, from the most chronically excluded rough sleepers, to young people leaving the care system on low incomes needing support with housing, employment or training. The retiring collection at our Christmas concert raised £528 and the committee decided to add a portion of the ticket revenues to round this up to a total grant of £750 to Trinity Winchester.

Table 1 Summary of grants to charities

Year	Charity	Type of charity	Grant	Total
Total brought forward from previous years				£41,996
2022	The Mayor of Winchester's Charities	British Heart Foundation, Emmaus, Winchester Hospice	£400	
2022	Trinity Winchester	Support for people experiencing homelessness or vulnerability	£750	
Total grants awarded in 2021/22				£1,150
GRAND TOTAL				£43,146

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023

Membership

The number of choir members declined during lockdown as can be seen in the chart in Figure 1. Recruitment of new members to replace leavers was hampered by the (initial) limited programme of activities we were able to offer. Since Step 4 of the route map out of lockdown recruitment has improved. We are delighted to welcome new members who started with us in during 2022/23. Our choir now numbers 80 members

We have a scheme of sabbatical leave that allows members to take a break from the choir. At the beginning of the reporting period, some members had been on sabbatical for many years and were unlikely to return. During 2022/23 members on sabbatical leave were asked to pay a nominal subscription of £5 per term or transfer to the list of Friends of Winchester Community Choir as an alternative way of staying in touch with us. Most 'sabbaticals' opted to join the Friends mailing list. Only those likely to return to singing in the short term opted to pay the fiver. This can be seen in the declining numbers of 'sabbaticals' over the last 12 months.

Figure 1 Membership statistics – Sep-2018 to Feb-2023



One of the choir's founding members, Jim Forster, passed away in May 2022 after a long illness. Winchester Community Choir would not have got off the ground in 2005 without Jim and his wife Jean, who still sings with us in the Tunes. When the choir founders wanted to test whether there was any interest from the public in joining a Community Choir, Jim was the 'financial backer' who underwrote venue hire. The first choir committee meeting was held at Jim and Jean's home. He was an enthusiastic attender at all but two of our concerts over the years. He always did an informal concert critique for our Music Director, initially Sarah Morgan and then Carolyn Robson, both of whom he knew personally. Jean asked the choir to sing *Crossing the Bar* at Jim's funeral in June. The lyrics are by Alfred Lord Tennyson, and we sang them to music by Rani Arbo, in a lovely choral arrangement by Craig Morgan Robson. The poem is an extended metaphor, likening a journey at sea to the passage from life to death. It was a significant poem for Tennyson. Before he died, he told his son Hallam to 'put *Crossing the Bar* at the end of all editions of my poems.'

Naomi Honey retired in December. She ran the office at The United Church for longer than most members have been in the choir. The church has been the venue for our twice-yearly concerts and occasional workshops for several decades now. And with weekly rehearsals moving here after lockdown it now feels like our full-time home. Naomi has been a great friend of the choir for all that time. Nothing has been too much trouble for her when we've asked daft questions about the building or changed our minds about concert bookings or asked her for help. Not that we will miss her. Because she decided to join the choir this term and sings with the Tunes. We should say 'has re-joined the choir' because she sang with WCC in the early days. A well-deserved retirement gives her more time to return to singing with us.

Winchester Community Choir

a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England

Trustees Annual Report for the period from 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023

Financial review

In previous years, before becoming a registered charity, Winchester Community Choir published annual accounts on an accruals basis. The Charity Commission allows non-company charities with annual gross income less than £250k to produce receipts and payments accounts and the trustees have opted for this simpler accounting method.¹

The trustees have prepared Receipts and Payments Accounts for the period 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023. See page 8-9. We have used the Charity Commission's optional Form CC16a as a checklist, omitting columns and sections that do not apply to us.

The trustees have reviewed the charity's financial position at the end of the period and wish to highlight the following:

- (1) All receipts, payments and cash funds are unrestricted.
- (2) We have no endowment funds. There were no asset and investment sales or purchases in the accounting period. We have no other monetary assets, no investment assets and no assets retained for the charity's own use.²
- (3) The accounts show a surplus of £1,737 for the period.
- (4) The trustees increased the membership subscription in January 2022 and in January 2023 and membership recruitment has improved throughout the accounting period. These factors have significantly increased the choir's receipts this period, compared with 2021/22.
- (5) However, it is important to note that the method of collecting membership subscriptions changed on 1 January 2023. In 2022 (the first 9½ months of the accounting period) members were asked to pay subscriptions monthly by standing order. From January 2023 they were asked to pay by direct debit at the beginning of each term with subscriptions taken on the first banking day in January, May and September. Subscription receipts in January 2023 were for the four-month term January-April. Consequently, these accounts report the receipt of 13½ months of membership subscriptions (17 March 2022 to 31 April 2023). The 1½ additional months of membership subscription receipts amounts to £1,100 approximately. Without those extra receipts in 2023/24 the surplus would have reduced to about £600.
- (6) We pay for venue hire charges and Music Director fees termly in arrears. These liabilities not paid in the accounting period, total £1,535 and are due to be paid at the end of March 2023.
- (7) At their meeting on 12 April 2022 the Trustees agreed to adopt Standing Financial Instructions which require the charity to maintain a level of financial reserves sufficient to cover the liabilities arising in a typical academic term, then estimated at £2,900. It was recognised that it would take some time to build this reserve. Subsequently, the trustees have decided that the reserve needs to be recalculated, based on the longest term (autumn) and incorporating some increased costs. The Trustees plan to build the charity's reserves so that cash funds never fall below £4,500 at the beginning of each term (more precisely at the end of the month in May, September and January, when termly membership subscriptions have been received). The trustees believe that will be sufficient to cover the liabilities arising in any academic term. We are on track to achieve that level of reserves by the end of May 2023.

The trustees made a detailed review of the choir's finances in the autumn 2022. Their plan, to increase member subscriptions in January 2023 and to recruit more members, is on track. As a result the trustees, are of the opinion that Winchester Community Choir is a going concern.

¹ Receipts and payments accounts are a simpler reporting option only detailing cash transactions during the year whereas accruals accounting considers invoiced income and billed expenditure (whether paid or not).

² 'Assets retained for the charity's own use' would include land and buildings, motor vehicles, office and any specialised equipment, and shares in a charity's non-charitable company. We have none.

The principal risks facing the charity are:

- (1) the current high level of inflation. The trustees believed it was right to increase our Music Director's fees (the first time since September 2019) and travel expenses (for the first time ever). Whether our other largest expenditure (venue hire) will increase remains to be seen but is likely. These increases have been estimated in our 2023/24 budget;
- (2) Recruitment of choir members is currently on-track but there is a risk that membership will not increase at the rate we hope and plan for in 2023/24. Furthermore, the ratio of standard to concessionary subscribers is changing. We have a lower proportion of standard subscribers (who pay a higher subscription) than pre-lockdown. We based our initial budget estimates on historic membership data and these estimates have proved unreliable.

On the positive side,

- (1) Gift Aid will be a new income stream in the coming years. We will make our first claim at the beginning of the next financial year 2023/24;
- (2) Even with a cautious projection of membership numbers next year, we anticipate a surplus which will enable us to rebuild our reserves.

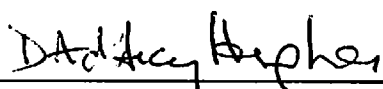
The choir has not received donations of a suspicious nature during this reporting period.

The charity's main expenditure items are:

- (1) Music Director fees and venue hire for rehearsals and performances which account for 80% of expenditure. This expenditure directly supports our first objective - the advancement of the arts, and in particular the art of choral singing, by providing an accessible community choir.
- (2) Grants to other charities which accounts for 12% of expenditure. This expenditure directly supports our second objective - the relief of those in need.
- (3) 3% of payments cover social events in the choir's calendar, that are recharged to members (e.g. booking deposits for supper at The Stables following a performance at Winchester Christmas Market).
- (4) The remaining 5% of payments are for administrative services that support the choir and its activities. This expenditure includes finance charges for processing membership subscriptions and ticket sales, public liability insurance, printing and stationary, website expenses, gifts and presentations.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records and for preparing financial statements which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011. The trustees are not obliged by law to commission an independent examination of the accounts, but they believe it is a good way of assuring choir members and the Charity Commission that Winchester Community Choir is well run and that its financial affairs are transparent. The trustees are grateful to Christopher Napier for volunteering to be our independent examiner. His report is on page 10.

This Trustees Annual Report was approved by the Trustees and is signed on their behalf by:



David dArcy Hughes
Chair of the Trustees



Date

Winchester Community Choir

(registered charity no. 1198281)

Receipts and Payments Account

for the period 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023

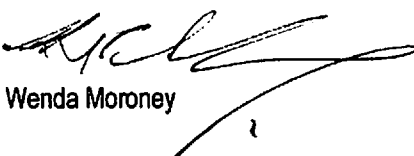
		Unrestricted Funds
Receipts	Notes	£
Membership subscriptions (net of refunds)		8,441
Concert receipts	2	2,211
Social event receipts	3	260
Donations		97
Miscellaneous income	4	5
Bank interest received		1
Total receipts		£11,015
Payments		
Fees for music director		4,996
Hire of premises		2,409
Grants to charities		1,150
Social event payments	3	260
Membership and ticketing fees	5	101
Website expenses		101
Stationery, printing and copying		98
Insurance		96
Gifts and presentations		67
Total payments		£9,278
Surplus of receipts over payments		£1,737
Net cash funds at 17 March 2022	6	2,382
Net cash funds at 28 February 2023		£4,119

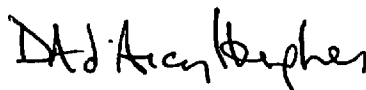
Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 28 February 2023

		Unrestricted Funds
Cash funds	Notes	£
Bank current account		3,558
Bank deposit account		556
PayPal account		5
		£4,119
Liabilities		
Fees for music director	7	1,074
Hire of premises	7	461
Total liabilities		£1,535

The notes referred to above form part of these accounts

Approved by the trustees on 18 April 2023 and signed on their behalf by:


Wenda Moroney


David d'Arcy-Hughes

Winchester Community Choir

(registered charity no. 1198281)

Notes to the accounts

1. The accounts of Winchester Community Choir (the Choir) have been prepared in accordance with the Receipts and Payments method of accounting. Amounts are stated to the nearest pound. As this is the Choir's first financial period as a registered charity, comparative figures are not required. All of the Choir's funds are unrestricted.
2. The amount shown as concert receipts includes amounts received from sales of tickets (before deducting ticketing fees but after deducting any refunds) and receipts from retiring collections.
3. The amount shown for social event payments represents deposit payments for restaurant bookings, equally matched by receipts from members. Some members overpaid and wished the excess payments to be donated to the Choir. These excess amounts are recorded as donations.
4. The amount shown for miscellaneous receipts arises from the sale of tracks from the Choir's CD *Come Walk With Me* via BandCamp (an on-line record store), which were credited to the Choir's PayPal account.
5. The amount shown for membership and ticketing fees represents the fees deducted by GOCARDLESS for the administration of membership subscriptions and the PayPal merchant fees for ticket sales.
6. The Choir was registered as a charity with effect from 17 March 2022. The Choir's previous accounts, made up to 28 February 2022, showed accumulated funds, calculated on the Accruals basis of accounting, of £1,663. This amount arose after deducting accrued expenses of £370 from cash funds of £2,033. In the period 1 to 16 March 2022, the Choir received membership subscriptions of £524 and paid music director fees of £175, giving a surplus of receipts over payments of £349. As at 17 March 2022, the total cash funds of the Choir were therefore £2,382.
7. The liabilities represent the music director's fees and hire of premises for six rehearsals in January and February 2023. They were due for payment by 31 March 2023, and are payable from the Choir's Unrestricted Funds.

Report of the independent examiner to the trustees of Winchester Community Choir (registered charity no. 1198281)

I report to the trustees of the Winchester Community Choir ("the Trust) on my examination of the accounts of the Trust for the period 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023, as set out on pages 8 and 9.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").


I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act, and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Christopher J Napier
Chartered Accountant
22 Arlington Place, Gordon Road,
Winchester, SO23 7TR

18 April 2023