

# **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

<b>Charity's name:</b>	Winchester Community Choir
<b>Charity registration number:</b>	119828
<b>Registered office address:</b>	16 Peninsula Square, Winchester, SO23 8GJ
<b>Email address:</b>	<a href="mailto:membership@winchestercommunitychoir.com">membership@winchestercommunitychoir.com</a>
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.winchestercommunitychoir.com">https://www.winchestercommunitychoir.com</a>
<b>Independent Examiner of Accounts:</b>	Christopher Napier, Chartered Accountant
<b>Bankers:</b>	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

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## 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.

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## 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.

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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



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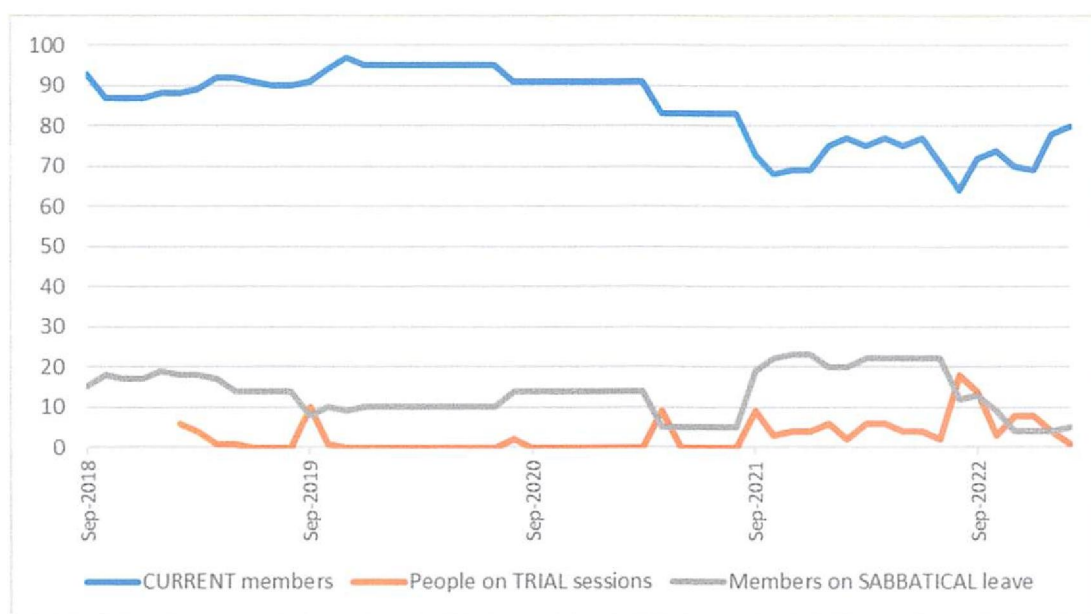
Trustees Annual Report for the period from 17 March 2022 to 28 February 2023

## 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 attendee 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.

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## 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.<sup>1</sup>

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.<sup>2</sup>
- (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.

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<sup>1</sup> 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).

<sup>2</sup> '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.

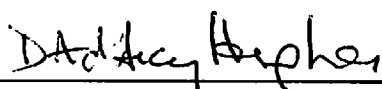
The choir has not received donations of a suspicious nature during this reporting period.

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

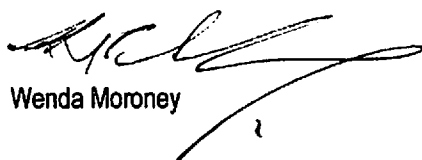
		Unrestricted Funds
	Notes	£
<b>Receipts</b>		
Membership subscriptions (net of refunds)		8,441
Concert receipts	2	2,211
Social event receipts	3	260
Donations		97
Miscellaneous income	4	5
Bank interest received		1
<b>Total receipts</b>		<b>£11,015</b>
<b>Payments</b>		
Fees for music director		4,996
Hire 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
<b>Total payments</b>		<b>£9,278</b>
<b>Surplus of receipts over payments</b>		<b>£1,737</b>
<b>Net cash funds at 17 March 2022</b>	6	<b>2,382</b>
<b>Net cash funds at 28 February 2023</b>		<b>£4,119</b>

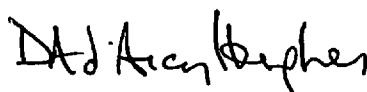
## Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 28 February 2023

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

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