

FRIENDS OF THE VOX

England & Wales · Charity number 1200317

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2022-09-09

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

Contact

Address 10 The Glebe
Yalding
Maidstone
Kent
ME18 6BF

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Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE:FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, TO ADVANCE, IMPROVE, DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN PUBLIC EDUCATION IN, AND APPRECIATION OF, THE ART AND SCIENCE OF CHORAL MUSIC BY MEANS OF, BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY:• THE PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC CONCERTS AND RECITALS;• NURTURING ONE (OR MORE) AMATEUR CHOIR(S) UNDER THE DIRECTION OF A PROFESSIONAL CHORAL CONDUCTOR TO PERFORM WORKS TO A HIGHER STANDARD OF ARTISTIC MERIT;• PROVIDING BURSARIES TO ENABLE YOUNG PEOPLE AND PEOPLE FROM DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS TO JOIN ONE (OR MORE) CHOIR(S) OR RECEIVE VOCAL LESSONS

Activities: The presentation of public concerts and recitals;Nurturing one (or more) amateur choir(s) under the direction of a professional choral conductor to perform works to a higher standard of artistic merit;Providing bursaries to enable young people and people from disadvantaged backgrounds to join one (or more) choir(s) or receive vocal lessons

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Provides Services
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Kent
- Throughout London

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-08-31	£26,879	£25,420	-	-
2023-08-31	£19,019	£19,788	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Laura Cloke	Chair	2022-07-01
Alexandra Jane Meaders		2022-07-01
Catherine Maria Booth		2022-07-01
Rebecca Jane Clifford BA Hons		2022-07-01
Simon James William Fowler		2024-03-09

FRIENDS OF THE VOX

England & Wales - Charity number 1200317

Accounts



Friends of the Vox
promoting new music around the world

Friends of the Vox Trustee Report 2023/2024

Friends of the Vox was established for the public benefit, to advance, improve, develop, and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of choral music. Friends of the Vox is passionate about the power of choral music to unite people from all walks of life. We strive to make a tangible difference in our local community and to foster connections on a global scale. Through our local initiatives, global connections, and the remarkable performances of our choirs, we aspire to make a difference in the lives of individuals and communities. We firmly believe in the transformative power of choral music, and hope that you will join us to support our vision. Together we can nurture a passionate and thriving musical community.

2023/2024 season performance review

The 2023/2024 season has seen Friends of the Vox continue to build community through choral music and this year we have reached a worldwide audience. Alongside the regular local concerts, the Emerging Composer initiative and collaboration with new choirs has seen our reach extend across the UK and overseas too.

Friends of the Vox Charity Launch Party and Christmas Fundraiser.

In December 2023, following a wonderful joint Christmas concert between Vox Populi and Vox Anima Chamber Choir, many of our choir and audience members travelled the short distance to Mereworth Winery to officially launch the charity.

We were delighted to be joined by so many people at this event. As well as an opportunity to thank our supporters, the night was also a chance for us to share our vision, as well as to talk about how we have already been making a change within the choral world. We heard from our Chair of the Trustees, Laura Cloke, our Artistic Advisor, James Meaders, and from music teacher and Vox Anima Chamber Choir's accompanist, Richard Hammond-Hall.

What was clear through these speeches was how much the charity has already achieved – multiple concerts within the local community, an American tour by one of the charity's choirs, hosting an American choir in Kent, providing outreach opportunities to local school children, commissioning new music to be written, and performing and collaborating with many professional musicians!

Emerging Composers 2024

In January 2024, we launched our inaugural competition for emerging composers in collaboration with the generous support of the Music of Dan Forrest. We invited composers to submit a new work to Friends of the Vox, to be adjudicated by James Meaders (Founder and Artistic Director, Vox Anima London) and Dan Forrest (Composer). The title "Emerging Composers" was chosen to allow potential participants to "self-select" enabling us to reach a larger cross-section of the composer population. The winning piece 'O Oriens' by Anna Roślawska-Musiałyzyk explores the "O Oriens" Antiphon, traditionally sung in the Catholic

Church on December 21, the shortest day of the year, and which speaks of God as the Rising Sun. The top three winning pieces selected by the adjudicators will be recorded by Vox Anima Chamber choir in May 2025. This recording will act as a platform for the emerging composers allowing their music to reach wider audiences locally and internationally.

Workshop at Surbiton High School

Artistic Advisor, James Meaders, led a workshop for students at Surbiton High School, supported by singers from Vox Anima Chamber Choir. Together, they explored “Everyday Wonders: The Girl from Aleppo” before being joined by composer Cecilia McDowall. This session was in preparation for the choirs to take part in an International Women’s Day concert at Cadogan Hall in March 2024.

The Mancunium Consort Summer Tour in Kent

We were pleased to support the promotion of “The Mancunium Consort’s” Summer Tour in Kent. Led by Harry Mobbs, who grew up in Tonbridge, Kent, they are a new and dynamic vocal ensemble. We can’t wait to hear more from this exciting group.

Vox Anima Chamber Choir

The chamber choir has continued to grow and develop its sound, taking part in three concerts across the year. ‘What delights me’ at St Dunstan’s Church in Cranbrook in November 2023 focused around “Everyday Wonders: The Girl from Aleppo” by Cecilia McDowall. In December the chamber choir joined Vox Populi for a Christmas concert, featuring the commissioned piece ‘In the Bleak Midwinter’ by Dan Forrest. In July 2024, the chamber choir returned to St Dunstan’s Church in Cranbrook to perform ‘Fly Higher’, a concert which featured a wide range of music from contemporary female composers and lyricists. Following the concert the choir had a weekend retreat at Frasers Barn, Egerton, which included reflecting on the last year, setting goals for the future, and singing together in a beautiful countryside setting.

Vox Populi

In 2023-2024 Vox Populi performed in 3 concerts, with some singers also participating in a concert at St John’s Smith Square, London. Repertoire has focused on larger works by contemporary composers including Dan Forrest, Sarah MacDonald, and Heather Sorensen. Vox Populi also collaborated with St Mary’s Church in West Malling, performing a joint concert with their Church Choir, Treblemakers (a music group for children), and the Choral Scholars. The Charity supported several singers who were unable to pay subscriptions to sing with Vox Populi.

Charity updates

The Trustees decided to engage the services of a consultant to enable the aims of the Charity to be advanced. This role has proved invaluable to the charity as it seeks to establish itself and much of the work this year would not have been possible without it. Hannah

Pinney-Thomson created a website, further developed the brand identity, and set up systems and processes to allow the charity to function in an efficient and professional way. Hannah secured a grant from the D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust which allowed a significant concert to be arranged in December 2024 (concert report on next year's Trustee Report). One trustee position remains open, and the board is assessing the skill set and person specification needed before recruiting into this role.

Funding

It has been identified that core choir activity is covered by our current funding model (subscriptions by members and sponsorship for the chamber choir) but to deliver bigger projects, additional funding is required. A donation from The Music of Dan Forrest (which was received as a direct result of the launch party) allowed the Emerging Composer initiative to be delivered. A similar sponsor will be sought for any such activity in the future.

The Vox Anima Chamber Choir sponsorship programme continues to be successful. All donors were thanked for their support in the 2023/2024 season and have been asked to continue to support the chamber choir for 2024/2025. Some new sponsors have been acquired and the choir and charity are continually looking for new opportunities to raise money.

The board are reviewing running costs, recognising that it is important to pay commercial rates for all professional musicians involved, and are developing a strategy to ensure we can meet these increased fundraising needs over the next 5 years.

Anthony Royle of Royle Accounting gave an independent review of the charity accounts. He had a full view of the charity bank statements, cashbook, and invoices for the year and was able to do an independent review as required by the Charity Commission. His report:-

1. All bank items have been included in Income and Expenses.
2. Opening and closing balances agree to bank statements
3. Change on bank agrees to net income & expenses for year

Anthony was thanked for his review which he donated free of charge.

Board of Trustees as at January 2025

Chair - Laura Cloke

Secretary - Cathy Booth

Treasurer - Alexandra Meaders

Member - Becky Clifford

Member – Simon Fowler

Artistic advisor - James Meaders

Development consultant - Hannah Pinney-Thomson (up to February 2025) and Laura Fowler (from February 2025).

Report written by Laura Cloke – 5th March 2025

Friends of the Vox (reg'd charity 1200317)
Income and Expenses from 1 September 2023 - 31 August 2024

	Income		Expenses	
Vox Populi				
	Subs 2023 - 2024	£4,977.87	General expenses	-£700.33
	General fundraising	£0.00	Accompanist	-£1,920.00
			Rehearsal venue	-£1,040.00
	Dec 2023 concert	£1,076.45	Dec 2023 concert	-£1,251.40
	May 2024 concert	£906.02	May 2024 concert	-£400.00
		£6,960.34		-£5,311.73
Vox Anima Chamber Choir				
	Subs 2023 - 2024	£2,280.00	General expenses	-£2,939.97
	Sponsorship	£2,300.00	Accompanist	-£1,520.00
	General income	£650.00		
	Nov 2023 concert	£1,339.46	Nov 2023 concert	-£781.20
	July 2024 concert	£680.01	July 2024 concert	-£557.50
	July 2024 Retreat	£2,000.00	July 2024 Retreat	-£3,190.00
		£9,249.47		-£8,988.67
FoTV general				
	Income	£3,926.65	Expenses	-£4,847.05
	FoTV launch party	£1,187.22	FoTV launch party	-£1,036.93
	Upper Voices Festival Nov 2024	£2,100.00	Upper Voices Festival Nov 2024	£0.00
	Composition Competition	£1,755.61		
	Joint VP / VACC HGS Dec 2024 concert	£1,700.00	Joint VP / VACC HGS Dec 2024 concert	-£1,035.87
		£10,669.48	Monthly Payments to J Meaders	-£4,200.00
				-£6,919.85
Total		£26,879.29	Total	-£25,420.25

Current account balance		£9,948.29	Opening balance	£8,489.25
Uncleared		£0.00	Monthly payments to Meaders	-£4,200.00
			FoTV I/E in year	£3,749.63
			VP I/E in year	£1,648.61
			VACC I/E in year	£260.80
Total		£9,948.29		£9,948.29
Split of funds	FoTV	£6,104.97		
	Vox Populi	£753.33		
	VACC	£3,089.99		
		£9,948.29		
Restricted funds	FoTV	£2,100.00 (Upper Voices festival)		
	FoTV	£1,755.61 (Composition competition)		
	FoTV	£664.13 (D'Oyly Cart Grant for Dec 2024 concert)		
	Vox Populi	£0.00		
	VACC	£1,214.24 (McDowall Commission balance)		
Available funds	FoTV	£1,585.23		
	Vox Populi	£753.33		
	VACC	£1,875.75		



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name: FRIENDS OF the Vox

On accounts for the year ended

31 AUGUST 2024 Charity no (if any) 1200317

Set out on pages

Summary of EXPENSES & Income 31/08/24

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/08/2024

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 2011 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

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. Delete [] if not applicable.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

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

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 3/3/2025

Name: Anthony Royle (Royle Accounting Ltd)

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body

[Empty box for professional qualification]

(if any):

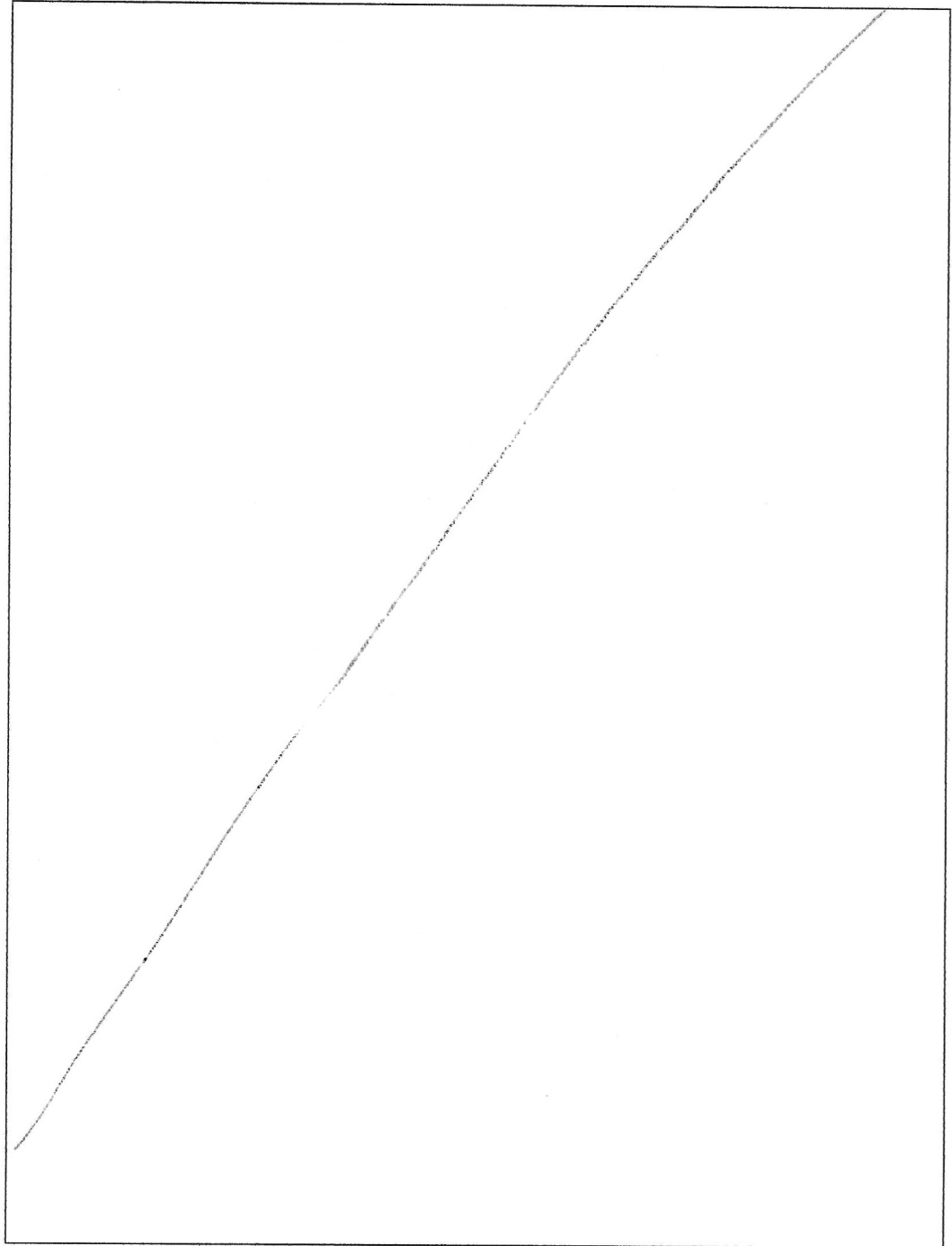
Address:

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

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



FRIENDS OF THE VOX

England & Wales - Charity number 1200317

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Friends of the Vox Trustee Report 2022/2023

Friends of the Vox was established for the public benefit, to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of choral music. Friends of the Vox is passionate about the power of choral music to unite people from all walks of life. We strive to make a tangible difference in our local community and to foster connections on a global scale. Through our local initiatives, global connections, and the remarkable performances of our choirs, we aspire to make a difference in the lives of individuals and communities. We firmly believe in the transformative power of choral music, and hope that you will join us to support our vision. Together we can nurture a passionate and thriving musical community.

2022/2023 season performance review

The 2022/2023 season has been a thrilling year of celebrating contemporary choral music in our local communities. Both Vox Populi and Vox Anima Chamber Choir have been involved in outreach programmes and celebrating the music of living composers. Vox Anima Chamber Choir has premiered three new pieces of music commissioned by them, and musical friendships have been formed around the globe.

October 2022

The World premiere of Dan Forrest's LUX for upper voices, commissioned by Vox Anima Chamber Choir was performed by the choir in Tonbridge chapel in October 2022. The commission was made possible by a platinum sponsor and it marks the first of what the choir hopes will be many commissions made possible by their sponsors.

Winter concerts

Vox Populi and Vox Anima Chamber Choir performed in a number of concerts in the winter period. Vox Populi performed John Rutter's Magnificat at St Mary's West Malling. The chamber choir put on a varied performance of music which featured the world premiere of Dan Forrest's arrangement of In the Bleak Midwinter, commissioned by the choir.

Vox Anima Chamber Choir USA Tour

February 2023 saw the chamber choir fly to the United States to take part in three concerts, in Macon Georgia, Atlanta Georgia, and culminating in a performance in New York. The choir stayed with hosts from the local churches and joined with 100 other singers to give the American premiere of Dan Forrest's LUX for upper voices, with the composer in attendance playing the piano.

Conducting workshop

In April 2023 Jamie Meaders taught the VIAT and St Mary's Scholars in a conducting workshop, with Vox Anima Chamber Choir providing the ensemble for them to conduct. Each student was able to practice what they had been learning with Jamie, with a live choir, and see the difference their actions as a conductor made to the performance of the singers. A great time was had by all, and one student is considering switching her university course choice to music.

May 2023 concert

In May 2023 Vox Populi joined with the VIAT choir and St Mary's West Malling church choir to give a joint concert featuring singers from ages 7 to 70. The programme featured Philip Stopford's Missa Deus Nobiscum and the choir were delighted at the end of the concert when Philip Stopford emerged from the audience.

June 2023 concert

Vox Anima Chamber Choir made their Southwark Cathedral debut in June 2023 as part of the Vox Anima London concert series. The choir performed Dan Forrest's LUX and supported the second part of the programme, singing the Benedictus from Philip Stopford's Missa Deus Nobiscum.

Concentus choir exchange

In July 2023 the chamber choir welcomed Concentus Women's choir from Rochester New York to Kent for a weekend of music making. Concentus and their friends and family were hosted by the chamber choir and had a wonderful weekend of music making together. The choirs joined Sutton Valence Choral society for a walk and sing through the Weald of Kent and the weekend culminated in a joint performance at Tonbridge Chapel. The concert included a new commission, Being Me, by Joanna Gill, which was commissioned to mark the occasion of the exchange. Joanna Gill was in the audience along with the chamber choir patron Cecilia McDowall. The choir have made firm friends with Concentus and are hoping they can arrange a return trip to Rochester in the future.

Charity updates

The Trustees identified that in order for the organisation to grow, a paid member of staff was needed to create a website and secure funding for new projects. A freelancer was employed for 1 day per week on a 6-month trial to develop the organisation and get some of the outreach projects off the ground.

One trustee has resigned, to take up the freelance role, so the organisation is currently actively seeking a new trustee.

Funding

The new freelance role is looking at the funding strategy for the organisation and is putting together details of projects for the 2023/2024 season, and going forward, that will require funding. The gift aid from choir subscriptions and other donations is being used to subsidise this role.

The Vox Anima Chamber Choir sponsorship programme was very successful in its first year, with many sponsors choosing to renew for a second year. The choir has been seeking and has secured new sponsors. Commissions funded by sponsors are being written and prepared for performance in the 2023/2024 season.

Trust Gross Income was under £25k (£19k) for the year and therefore an Independent Review was not required by the Charity Commission. The Treasurer approached Anthony Royle of Tax Assist Ashford and asked him to look over the charity accounts and advise as to any irregularities or errors / omissions. He had a full view of the charity bank statements, cashbook and invoices for the year and was able to do an independent review as required by the Charity Commission. His report:-

- 1.all bank items have been included in Income and Expenses.
2. Opening and closing balances agree to bank statements
3. Change on bank agrees to net income & expenses for year

Anthony was thanked for his review which he donated free of charge.

Board of Trustees as at October 2023

Chair - Laura Cloke

Secretary - Cathy Booth

Treasurer - Alexandra Meaders

Member - Becky Clifford

Member - Thomas Best-Shaw

Plus

Artistic advisor - James Meaders

Development advisor - Hannah Pinney

Report written by Laura Cloke - 13 October 2023

Friends of the Vox
Summary of Income and Expenses from 1 September 2022 - 31 August 2023

Income		Expenses	
Vox Populi			
Subs 2022 - 2023	£5,010.00	General expenses	-£366.51
General fundraising	£247.50	Accompanist	-£2,140.00
Dec 2022 concert	£850.10	Rehearsal venue	-£1,000.00
May 2023 concert	£770.77	Dec 2022 concert	-£181.99
		May 2023 concert	-£256.66
	£6,878.37		-£3,945.16
Vox Anima Chamber Choir			
Subs 2022 - 2023	£2,685.00	General expenses	-£3,112.37
Sponsorship	£3,450.00	Accompanist	-£3,040.00
General fundraising	£0.00	Oct 2022 concert	-£3,330.00
Oct 2022 concert	£1,914.13	Dec 2022 concert	£0.00
Dec 2022 concert	£477.00	July 2023 concert	-£845.00
July 2023 concert	£583.16		
US trip 2023	-£0.01		
	£9,109.28		-£10,327.37
Choirs shared items			
Shared income	£431.00	Shared expenses	-£1,071.00
		Monthly Payments to J Meaders	-£4,200.00
	£431.00		-£5,271.00
FoTV general			
Gift aid	£2,600.15	Development consultant and website	-£244.80
Total	£19,018.80	Total	-£19,788.33

Current account balance	£8,489.25	Opening balance	£9,258.78
Uncleared	£0.00	Shared expenses	-£4,840.00
		FoTV	£2,355.35
		VP I/E in year	£2,933.21
		VACC I/E in year	-£1,218.09
Available funds	£8,489.25		£8,489.25
Split of funds			
	VP	£1,204.72	
	VACC	£4,929.19	
	FoTV	£2,355.35	
		£8,489.25	