



SUFFOLK PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Annual Report & Accounts

16 months to 31 July 2024

**3 Rectory Meadow
Rattlesden
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP30 0RE**

Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra

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Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra

Charitable Incorporated Organisation, charity number: 1202492

Chair's report

This report is presented along with the Annual Accounts for the period 27 March 2023 to 31 July 2024.

On the evening of Sunday 26th March 2023, Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra gave its final performance under the organisational structure of a charitable trust, and the following day, Monday 27th March 2023, became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This year's report therefore covers a period in which the Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra transitioned from a Charitable Trust (Charity number 1148363) to a CIO (Charity number 1202492), and it reports against the charitable objects of the latter.

The Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra moved seamlessly through this change of structure, beginning its CIO era with an ambitious series of three major orchestral concerts at its core venue of Bury St Edmunds, each in March, May, and July 2023. The concerts, focusing on the music of Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, also showcased outstanding young soloists, some through the SPO's continuing association with the Young Classical Artists Trust (YCAT). Christian Barraclough, SPO's Principal Trumpet, was featured as soloist in Haydn's Trumpet Concerto, exemplifying the quality of SPO's regular principal players.

The orchestra is a beneficiary of financial support from donors whose generosity allows us to be ambitious in our programme of music and outreach. Andrew Speed of St Edmundsbury Wealth Management Ltd and Jill Willshaw are longstanding supporters of our concerts, with their early and enthusiastic backing often helping to galvanise our plans. During this reporting period, we are also grateful to Dipples Jewellers, New Zealand in Depth Ltd, Co-operative Community Cares Fund, and Suffolk Community Foundation for contributions which enabled us to realise our ambitions.

Strategic Focus

The charity's objects remain for the public benefit through the advancement of the art of music, and the advancement of education in the art of music, by:

- a) providing public orchestral concerts of the highest level of professionalism;
- b) providing music outreach activities in schools and colleges, and with children and young people generally;
- c) wherever possible and desirable working in partnership or collaboration with other charitable and non-charitable organisations in order to better serve the widest possible public;
- d) and through such other means as the trustees shall think fit.

The SPO aims to support these objects with a focus on three strategic priorities:

1. Performance

To make live performances of international quality. Making professional classical music regularly accessible to audiences in Suffolk and more widely in East Anglia, particularly in the more rural areas, through regular and frequent performances of orchestral music in the main centres of Suffolk, with players and soloists of the highest professional calibre.

2. Outreach

To perform free community concerts, normally lunch or 'tea-time' in smaller remote village localities, to grow new audiences particularly amongst the young and elderly, and to demythologise classical music for those for whom it is an alien world.

3. Education

To engage local people, especially the young through schools and colleges, with professional musicians, and to establish a fully developed programme of work with children and young people designed to trigger lifelong delight in orchestral music and the habit of concert-going. School visits are combined with each community concert.

Financial Overview

During the financial period ending 31 July 2024 Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra successfully managed its transition to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, moving funds from the charity it replaced on 18 December 2024, while maintaining a strong focus on financial stewardship. The annual accounts reflect careful management of expenditure in line with income, with core activities funded through a mix of ticket sales, individual giving, and charitable grants. The Orchestra invested in a programme of high-quality performances and laid the groundwork for expanded outreach and education activities in the following year. Notably, the organisation has continued to operate with a lean administrative structure, relying on a dedicated network of volunteers and strategic fundraising efforts to support its artistic mission and ensure long-term sustainability.

Progress against strategic priorities

In addition to the three major concerts at The Apex in March, May, and July 2023 the SPO's outreach and education work had substantial successes. In September 2023 and again in July 2024, SPO musicians visited schools in Beccles and Lowestoft—areas most remote from our concert base—offering primary-aged children their first exposure to world-class orchestral musicians.

Thanks to strong relationships with the Suffolk County Music Service and the Norfolk and Suffolk Music Hub, the SPO supported gifted young instrumentalists nearing the end of school-based learning. Selected students participated in SPO concert rehearsals, playing alongside professional musicians—a formative experience that inspired and motivated these emerging artists. During the reporting period, the Artistic Director held six meetings with Music Service staff and attended rehearsals of the County Youth Orchestra at Snape Maltings.

The SPO Board also undertook strategic planning to secure high-profile soloists for future concerts. This work culminated in two sell-out performances scheduled shortly after the reporting period, including a concert on 15 September 2024 featuring Sir Stephen Hough, and another on 21

November 2024 featuring a member of the Kanneh-Mason family. All preparatory work and fundraising for these events took place during this reporting year.

The Artistic Director met five times with West Suffolk Council's Head of Marketing, three times with Theatre Royal staff in Bury St Edmunds regarding a 2026 collaboration, and twice with Ann Osborn of the Suffolk Coffee Caravan to plan adult outreach activities addressing loneliness and isolation.

Governance

The charity's transition to CIO status provides an incorporated legal structure, enhancing our ability to enter contracts and own assets while limiting trustee liability—a key step towards strengthening our governance and trustee recruitment.

Operational management

Concert management continued under experienced leadership in preparation for the 2024/5 programme. Fundraising, marketing, graphic design, data, and web management were delivered by committed volunteers, with strategic and creative direction led by the SPO's founding Artistic Director.

Risks

The SPO continues to manage two main risks:

- a) Fundraising – While the loss of a dedicated fundraising role posed a challenge, this has been addressed by incorporating fundraising into the broader communications role.
- b) Trustee recruitment – Recruitment is focused on candidates with music management and fundraising experience to strengthen governance.

Mike Dawe

Chair

22 April 2025

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Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31 July 2024

	Unrestricted	Restricted	31/07/2024	2023
	Funds	Funds	Total Funds	Total Funds
Receipts				
Private donations	0	6500	6500	24,200
Commercial sponsorship	0	3250	3250	13,000
Supporters/donations	2488	0	2488	6,309
Tickets, bar & programmes	0	624	624	56,920
Gift Aid	529	1250	1779	6,052
Grants	0	10000	10000	5,000
Total receipts	3017	21624	24641	111481
Payments				
Performers	0	2930	2930	49,546
Venue & vehicle hire	0	1367	1367	10,174
Venue fees & VAT	0	72	72	9,802
Music hire & purchases	0	159	159	936
Marketing	20	437	457	13,933
Artistic Director	0	0	0	5,200
Event Manager	0	0	0	1,000
Fundraising	0	8505	8505	11,970
Programmes/bar	0	415	415	942
Hospitality	0	595	595	165
Equipment	280	0	280	126
Printing	0	165	165	118
Insurance	0	1054	1054	915
Office, stationery & postage	40	0	40	4,340
Subscriptions	1047	0	1047	1,136
Travel/subsistence	19	41	60	1287
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	400
Total payments	1406	15740	17146	111990
Surplus/deficit	1611	5884	7495	-509
Reserves brought forward	246	21291	21537	22046
Surplus/deficit for the year	1611	5884	7495	-509
Reserves at 31 July 2024	1857	27175	29032	21537

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Represented by;	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2023
Cash at bank	1857	27175	29032	21537

No trustee received payment for their professional services to the charity.

The trustees acknowledge with grateful thanks receipt of grants from:

Dipples	750
New Zealand in Depth Ltd	2500
Suffolk Community Foundation Private Fund JA	2000
Suffolk Community Foundation Port Fund	1000
Co-operative Community Cares Fund	5000
and several private donations	

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees, as the Directors,
and signed on the Board's behalf by:

M Dawe

Michael Dawe
(Chair)

L Olive

Leslie Olive (Trustee/Artistic Director)

Dated
4 December 2024

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of the Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra (the Trust) for the 16 months ended 31 July 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity Trustees of the Trust 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

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records

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.

Signed: **A Mann**

Name: Adrian Mann

Address: 13 Orchard Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 1EH

Date: 28 September 2024