



SUFFOLK PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Annual Report & Accounts

For the year to 31 July 2025

**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

Introduction

This report is presented along with the Annual Accounts for the period 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025.

The year to July 2025 was one of artistic strength and steady outreach delivery, despite a smaller programme than in previous years. The Orchestra presented two major concerts at The Apex with world-class soloists and extended its work with schools and communities across Suffolk. The reduced scale of activity reflected the practical difficulty of securing enough volunteers to support a wider programme, and this placed a great deal of pressure on our Artistic Director. Despite this, the concerts we presented upheld the highest standards of performance and continued to support our charitable objects in music and education. The trustees recognise these pressures and are taking active steps to strengthen the organisation. Plans to attract new trustees with experience in music administration and fundraising are progressing well, and we are confident that renewed trustee capacity will, in turn, support the recruitment of new volunteers and allow the Orchestra to grow its work in future years.

The trustees offer their sincere thanks to all donors and supporters whose generosity enables our work. We are especially grateful for the support received this year from Suffolk Community Foundation through the A R donation, from St Edmundsbury Wealth Management Ltd, from the Leslie Mary Carter Charitable Trust, and from private donors. Their contributions have played a vital part in allowing the Orchestra to present performances of the highest quality and to continue its outreach and education work across Suffolk. We also thank our Artistic Director and musicians for their dedication, and our committed volunteers whose work underpins every aspect of the Orchestra's activity. Finally, we thank our audiences and community partners for their continued support.

Strategic focus

The charity is run 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 wherever possible.

Financial overview

The financial year to 31 July 2025 showed careful management of income and expenditure, supported by ticket sales, individual giving and charitable grants. The Orchestra continued to operate with a lean administrative structure and with a strong reliance on volunteers. The Independent Examiner confirmed that the accounts presented no material issues and were prepared in accordance with the Charities Act. The trustees remain committed to sound financial stewardship to ensure long term sustainability.

Progress against strategic priorities

Performance

On September 15 2024, the SPO presented a world-class performance of the Grieg Piano Concerto by one of the most eminent pianists alive today, when Sir Stephen Hough appeared with Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra immediately following his televised appearance in the Last Night of the Proms at the Royal Albert Hall. Following tumultuous applause for the concerto Sir Stephen delighted the packed audience with his own virtuoso encore composition, an extended and fun fantasia on the theme tune of the film Mary Poppins. The full audience clearly also hugely appreciated the Orchestra's performance of Sibelius' Karelia Suite and Brahms Symphony Number One. On 21 November 2024 Jeneba Kanneh Mason and the SPO performed Rachmaninov Piano Concerto Number Two, with Linda Richardson singing Strauss Vier Letzte Lieder and the Orchestra performing Wagner Prelude and Liebestod from Tristan and Isolde described by one commentator as "worthy of any opera house you care to name." Both performances were conducted by SPO Artistic Director Leslie Olive and both events demonstrated the calibre of our musicians and attracted strong and enthusiastic audiences. Preparatory work for future concerts also continued throughout the year.

Outreach

Outreach work reached a wide range of pupils and communities. In November 2024 with the collaboration of Suffolk County Music Service SPO Artistic Director Leslie Olive presented pianist Jeneba Kanneh Mason at St Edmunds Sixth Form College, working with eighty students from schools across Suffolk. Students played the pieces they were working on in front of their classmates, and were much encouraged by expert technical advice from their famous visitor. Jeneba Kanneh Mason also played a spectacular solo and with Jeneba's help Leslie Olive introduced a game of "Spot the Downbeat", directly engaging the school students in understanding the relationship between a concerto soloist and a conductor. In February 2025 groups of the Orchestra's players visited three primary schools at St Edmundsbury, Hopton and Elvedon, playing in front of groups of children who asked questions and engaged with the players. In July 2025 musicians worked with

pupils at Bawdsey and Hollesley Primary Schools and presented a community concert at Hollesley Village Hall. These visits provided pupils with direct contact with professional orchestral musicians and brought live music to communities less able to attend our main events.

Governance

The CIO structure continues to provide a sound legal and governance foundation. Trustees oversaw the year's work with diligence and commitment. Focus remains on strengthening the trustee body through recruitment of individuals with experience in music management and fundraising. The membership of the trustee board did not change during the reporting period.

Operational management

Concert management remained strong, supported by skilled volunteers working in marketing, data, design and administration. The Artistic Director provided creative and strategic leadership across all orchestral, outreach and education activity. Preparations for the 2025 and 2026 programmes continued through the year.

Risks

The Orchestra continues to manage two principal risks. Fundraising remains a challenge and work continues to strengthen donor engagement. Trustee and volunteer recruitment remains a priority and efforts continue to attract individuals with relevant experience.

Mike Dawe

Chair

December 2025

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Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra

Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2025

Receipts and Payments Account for year ended 31 July 2025

	Unrestricted	Restricted
	Funds	Funds
Receipts		
Private donations	0	8000
Commercial sponsorship	0	5000
Supporters/donation	1953	0
Tickets, bar & programmes	0	41760
Gift Aid	423	2375
Grants	200	5000
Total receipts	2576	62135
Payments		
Performer	0	39698
Venue & vehicle hire	0	5140
Venue fees & VAT	0	10086
Music hire & purchases	0	530
Marketing	879	963
Artistic Director	0	3000
Event Manager	0	0
Fundraisg	0	0
Programmes/bar	0	499
Hospitalty	0	0
Equipmnt	0	0
Printing	0	0
Insurance	0	1217
Office, stationery & postage	186	348
Subs	1098	0
Travel/subsistence	0	96
Miscellans	0	0
Total payments	2163	61577
Surplus/deficit	413	558
Reserves brought forward	1857	27175
Surplus/deficit for the year	413	558
Reserves at 31 July 2025	2270	27733

Suffolk Philharmonic Orchestra

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds
Represented by; Cash at bank	2270	27733

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

The trustees acknowledge with grateful thanks receipt of grants from:

Suffolk Community Foundation A R donation
St Edmundsbury Wealth Management Ltd
Leslie Mary Carter Charitable Trust
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 M Wilde

Michael Dawe (Chair)	Michael Wilde (Finance Director)
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Dated	18- Nov- 2025
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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 year ended 31 July 2025.

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: 23 October 2025