

ABINGDON AND DISTRICT MUSICAL SOCIETY

England & Wales · Charity number 229073

Details

Other names A D M S

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 1963-12-17

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

Contact

Address 13 Anson Close
Marcham
Oxfordshire
OX13 6QF

Phone 01865391513

Email beth@robinandbeth.plus.com

Website www.adms.org.uk

Activities

Objects: TO FOSTER PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE AND APPRECIATION OF THE ART OF VOCAL AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC AND TO ENCOURAGE AND DEVELOP LOCAL AMATEUR MUSICAL TALENT BOTH CHORAL AND INSTRUMENTAL.

Activities: The aims of the society are to foster public knowledge and appreciation of the art of vocal and instrumental music to encourage and develop local amateur musical talent, both choral and instrumental.

Classification

- **How:** Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** ABINGDON AND DISTRICT
- Oxfordshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-06-30	£31,800	£31,797	-	-
2024-06-30	£29,816	£29,335	-	-
2023-06-30	£28,972	£25,121	-	-
2022-06-30	£19,558	£22,518	-	-
2021-06-30	£13,832	£8,206	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
David Charles Carless	Chair	2025-10-19
Dr TIMOTHY BUDD		2021-11-23
Elizabeth Frances Knight		2025-02-16
Penelope Anne Gresford		2023-09-11

ABINGDON AND DISTRICT MUSICAL SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 229073

Accounts



ADMS goes from strength to strength

As I look back on my third (and final) year as Chair, it seems to me that ADMS has had another very successful year – the 79th since it was founded in 1946. Our membership remains high, with 80 singers subscribing in the choir and 41 players in the orchestra, surely demonstrating that ADMS is providing a member experience that is enjoyable and fulfilling. Our concerts continue to be well patronised with audience numbers up 10% on the season, indicating that we have the choice of repertoire about right and (to judge from the warmth of their reception) provide enjoyment for our audiences. The programme committee has concluded that there is a strong link between audience numbers and familiarity of repertoire, and this has helped us plan future seasons – see separate AGM report with concert list.

<i>Year</i>	<i>November</i>	<i>Dec Xmas</i>	<i>March (orchestra)</i>	<i>March (choir)</i>	<i>June</i>	<i>Annual total</i>	<i>Friends</i>
24/25	151	172	104	62	167	656	(11)
23/24	111	151	117	98	121	598	(14)
22/23	147	**	129	115	139	530	(15)
21/22	99	**	114	140 *	47	400	(17)
18/19	130	**	120	90	100	440	(19)
17/18	129	**	113	60	110	412	(22)

* St Matthew Passion, included Wantage Choral Society

** not counted and not recorded as no tickets were previously sold

Members and venues

High membership numbers are the nirvana that all musical societies aim for, from the point of view of subscription income and facilitating ticket sales. However, while new members are always welcome, our size continues to cause challenges in fitting both choir and orchestra into any Abingdon concert venue, while preserving lines of sight to the conductor, enabling both choir and orchestra to hear and balance each other, and providing a good experience for members and audiences. While separate choir and orchestral concerts continue at St Helens Church as it is by far the least expensive venue to hire, after a trial run last year, the committee decided to try out Amey Theatre in Abingdon School on 14 June. The venue offers a number of benefits, but when reviewing venues a couple of weeks later, the committee was concerned about the ability to comfortably fit singers and players into the space. We particularly thought it unfair on singers to limit numbers of a growing choir to the 59 seats. Concerns were also expressed by a member of the orchestra with mobility issues that she felt overcrowded and at risk – so please do be considerate of giving space to those who need it when moving around venues, and please don't walk through the orchestra unless unavoidable.

Our past season produced some wonderful performances by choir and orchestra, separately and together. With our new style of afternoon family-friendly Christmas concert, we had another large audience and raised £741 net for PACT Charity – Parents and Children

Together (compare £386 net the previous year for the Samaritans). Please think of a good charity to support in December 2025.

Conducting arrangements

The society's biggest challenge at the beginning of the season, and the task which the committee and its conducting sub-group spent most time on, was to evolve conducting arrangements to fit in with Alex stopping conducting Thursday rehearsals. My research (through Making Music) amongst other joint societies clarified that there were two models in use – one where all conductors are equal, and another where a choral conductor supports the musical director – the latter being the usual approach in professional groups. We wanted the best of both worlds, and in particular to retain Alex while taking the opportunity to appoint a specialist choral conductor to take the choir forward on Thursdays and conduct at least the March choral concert. You will all remember the process of auditions early in 2025 where choir members ultimately made the decision on which conductor to appoint. We thus appointed Rob mid-way through rehearsals for the March concert – not an easy challenge for him, but one he rose to with great enthusiasm. Everyone I've spoken to in the choir feels that Rob has made a brilliant start, and there are already signs that choir membership is rising with Rob's popularity.

ADMS's Constitution has not previously needed to mention any conductor other than the Musical Director, so some changes are needed to rectify that. These small wording changes form another AGM paper, and members present at the AGM on 11 September will be invited to ratify them.

Financial position

Tim's brilliant financial reports indicate a break-even in ADMS's finances for the past season. Though some concerts sustained large losses, this was sometimes due to the number of soloists. Any concert account deficit is effectively supported by surpluses in the general account, and I've always felt that these two accounts together give a reliable indication of the society's health.

As well as a second generous bequest from the estate of late Tony Bradley, who played viola for many years and also served as Vice Chair, we've received a bequest from the family of David Handscomb, who played bassoon. The committee has agreed to use these bequests to organise workshops for both choir and orchestra, to be run by professional musicians – these should be starting in the autumn when a suitable subject piece from our repertoire is available. These would have started this last season but the committee necessarily prioritised putting in place our new conducting arrangements.

Our professional musicians

I believe that one of ADMS's great strengths is to have four professional musicians guiding and steering us, and spurring us on to greater levels of achievement. After David Bannister resigned, Michiyo Machida joined us in September 2024 as Accompanist, and we've already welcomed Rob Legg mid-way through the season. I'm sure all members will join me in extending our thanks to Michiyo and Rob, and of course to our long-serving Musical Director Alex Walker and Leader Kate Bailey, for everything they all do.

Concert programmes 2025/26 and beyond

Programmes for our forthcoming 80th season are already on the website with dates and venues – and included in the AGM pack – I hope all members will find many pieces of interest to rehearse and perform. The website www.adms.org.uk remains the master source of up to date information on concerts, rehearsals and many other aspects of ADMS.

Helping to run ADMS

I'd like to thank all committee members and the fleet of supporting (non-committee) volunteers, without whom the society could not function. Over 30 of you are listed on the "Contact us" page of the website www.adms.org.uk/contact-us/. Thank you for your positive and valued contributions to the running of ADMS.

Committee vacancies

As we look forward to the 2025/26 season, the committee has a number of vacancies.

Chair: I've decided that after three years as chair, I won't be standing again at this AGM. This is because of a desire – after 44 years as a member – to pursue new opportunities alongside my other commitments to running other orchestras. I'll still be playing though, and I've offered the new committee to continue with the tasks I was doing before joining the committee – chairing the repertoire planning group, writing orchestral programme notes, and managing the website.

Vice Chair of the orchestra: Sue Hurst has also decided to step down from her role, but luckily she is willing to continue producing our much-admired posters, and to undertake social media advertising of concerts.

Choir Representative and Choir Membership Secretary: Victoria Adams has resigned from these two roles, though they could be undertaken separately.

I emailed all members about these vacancies in late June, and Pen and I sent reminders in early August, but at the time of writing this, I have not heard of anyone coming forward. If you have time to help, please do consider whether your skills and experience would be helpful to the running of ADMS. My experience has been that the committee is very high-functioning, so you would be joining a smooth-running operation. If you would like more information, or to see a particular role description please let me know at chair@adms.org.uk.

The committee decided last October that in the interests of fairness, AGMs would in future alternate between choir and orchestra evenings, so the next one is on Thursday 11 September 2025 at 19.30 at our usual rehearsal venue: The Manor Preparatory School, Faringdon Road, Abingdon OX13 6LN. I hope as many members as possible will be able to attend, and look forward to seeing you there.

Geoff Bushell
Chair 2022/23 to 2024/25

ADMS Choir 2024/25

Report from the Vice Chair (Choir) Pen Gresford

The 2024-25 season has been as always full of uplifting and wonderful music making – both for the Choir and Choir and Orchestra together. More of that to follow. It has been a great year with some challenges which we've overcome with energy and determination. We all look forward to 25-26 with an exciting and stimulating programme.

However, the key outcome for this season has been the appointment of Dr Robert Legge as our Choral Conductor. A subcommittee was put together consisting of Pen Gresford (chairing the process), Tim Budd, Victoria Adams, Sue Hurst and Geoff Bushell. Through auditions with both Choir and Orchestra and anonymous voting with the opportunity to write free comments the subcommittee were able to come to this happy conclusion. Rob joined us in February 2025.

The process was challenging with a wide range of candidates to consider but Rob was a unanimous choice. We are so very lucky to have him.

Before that we were able to enlist two key 'deps' to take us through the Christmas concert and start to prepare us for March or until a new Choral Conductor was appointed. They were Michael Karcher- Young, who came all the way down from Rugby and was excellent in keeping us focussed and prepared and Malcolm Pearce who is always great to work with. This meant we confidently strode into the Christmas concert and then prepared for the March event.

All this was made easier by the confident and clear accompanying skill which Michiyo Machida brings to each rehearsal – guiding us through the tricky patches and gliding through the easier bits. Thank you, Michiyo.

16th November – joint Choir and Orchestra

Puccini: *Messa di Gloria*, Samuel Coleridge Taylor: *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*, Elgar: *Enigma Variations*.

What a Feast! Puccini's *Messa di Gloria*, Samuel Coleridge Taylor's *Hiawatha's Wedding Feast* and then all fourteen of Elgar's sublime *Enigma Variations*. Puccini was gorgeous with two wonderful soloists in Alex Aldren (tenor) and Efim Zavalny (baritone). Hiawatha gave some of us the giggles (definitely not a feast for vegetarians) but we enjoyed them both and tackling the contrast and sang our hearts out as usual. Having soloists of such quality enhances our own performance and we welcome them.

The Orchestra was in great form and it was marvellous to have the full Variations – some of them not so familiar though Nimrod of course was a great hit.

15th December Christmas concert

Orchestral pieces, Rimsky Korsakov *Christmas Eve Suite* and audience and choir carols and Christmas music.

Chorally, this was an interesting selection – but Michael and Malcolm guided us through preparing for Rimsky Korsakov's *Christmas Eve Suite* and we certainly rose to the challenge.

The concert altogether was a joyful, family affair with audience participation at its height particularly during *The Twelve Days of Christmas* and the Orchestra singing as well (were they Lords a Leaping or Geese a laying?). The extended interval was fun – yummy Christmas treats provided by the Orchestra and handed round through the audience and an opportunity for us to raise £741.00 for PACT, a local charity which was a terrific result. As usual the audience and choir carols were interspersed by marvellous orchestral pieces including the dreamy Rose Adagio from Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty*.

22 March Spring Concert

Britten: *Rejoice in the Lamb*, Rutter: *Gloria* and Kodaly: *Missa Brevis*

We did fantastically well in this concert considering we'd had different Choral conductors working with us (Michael and Malcolm) and these were not easy or familiar pieces for many. A challenging repertoire indeed. Rob took over in February and immediately sprang into action! We invited James Brown to accompany on the organ which he did with sensitivity and skill and was a huge support. He included some additional organ pieces which broke up the programme and provided even more variety and interest. There were many appreciative comments from the audience.

14th June Summer concert

Verdi: *Requiem*

Alex can have the floor!

'...Congratulations on an absolutely fantastic performance of Verdi's Requiem last night - what an achievement! I am sure you will agree that soloists were tremendous including a particularly dramatic (!) soprano (Jillian Finnamore).

The orchestra were on top form, brilliantly led as ever by Kate. The choir were sounding absolutely tremendous. Rob is clearly doing a magnificent job and the choir is blossoming under his leadership...'

The soloists were indeed a force and carried some drama with them! They also included Jessica Ouston, mezzo, Anthony Flaum, tenor and William Stevens, bass baritone.

We performed this in the Amey Hall – to see how this venue would work for our larger forces. Many people enjoyed this experience, but it is expensive and we are continually working to consider other venues or how we can perform joint concerts successfully in St Helen's Church with a larger Choir.

Keeping the show on the road.

As before, a lot of work takes place behind the scenes to enable our audience to have an enjoyable experience. Lois Smith and Ursula White as usual have been fantastic in charge of the all-important refreshments with a team of willing helpers.

Victoria Adams continued this year in her key Membership role and an enhanced and important role as Choir Rep. However she has decided to stand down to take effect from September 2025 and we will be looking for someone to take this on. Robin Knight has joined as choir rep which is excellent. Steve and Debbie Clarke are now dealing with tickets but thanks to Peter and Jane Smith for all their hard work over the years. Sue Hurst from the Orchestra has created some beautiful posters which truly help to publicise our concerts. Tim Budd continues as our careful and thoughtful treasurer, Cornelius Grotjan our librarian. Tina

Plendereith writes the scholarly and accessible programme notes with help from Geoff Bushell. We're also incredibly grateful to Kevin Mosedale (orchestra, trumpet) and Radley College for their generosity in providing the facility to assemble and print the programmes. Beth Knight – (alto) has joined the committee as Secretary, not a small undertaking and is a great support to all the committee.

Jeanette Thomas has worked tirelessly as our Concert Manager and many thanks to her for her meticulous preparation. Stephen Thomas oversees all preparations at St Helen's with great energy both before and after the concerts.

Thank you everyone.

Going forward – venues and audiences

As mentioned above, we are the ' victims of our success' – a larger Choir! We will continue to explore possibilities for joint concerts as well as successfully singing in St Helen's Church. All suggestions for alternative venues which could hold a larger choir with orchestra are welcome.

We do need to encourage friends and the public to come to our wonderful concerts – part of our success will always be measured by audience size, and it 'feels' so much more invigorating to sing to a good audience.

Membership

The choir continues to go from strength to strength – in no small part due to our appointment of Rob as our Choral Conductor. As always we welcome new singers. We have 81 members currently and some enquiries over the summer.

Vacancies

As this report is being written we have two key vacancies which affect the Choir – Chair of ADMS and Membership secretary. We hope that these will be filled by the close of the AGM on the 11th of September.

Pen Gresford
Vice Chair – Choir
ADMS.

Vice Chair (Orchestra) Report for AGM September 2025

A look back on our Season:

16th November

Puccini – Messa Di Gloria
Coleridge-Taylor – Hiawatha’s Wedding Feast
Elgar – Enigma Variations

15th December

Humperdinck – Hansel and Gretel – Overture
Delius – Sleigh Ride
Tchaikovsky – Sleeping Beauty: Rose Adagio
Rimsky-Korsakov – Christmas Eve Suite with choir
A selection of Christmas Carols

8th March

Beethoven – Leonora no 3 Overture
Dvorak – Violin Romance in F minor
Brahms – Symphony 4 in E minor

14th June

Verdi Requiem

This past year has been a real delight for me, with four fantastic concerts involving the orchestra that truly showed the strength and spirit of ADMS. Each performance has been a joy to be part of – not just for the music we’ve made, but for the way everyone has pulled together with such commitment and camaraderie.

Although I wasn’t there for the June concert, testing a new venue is always going to be a challenge but from the feedback I have heard, the orchestra and choir adapted to a new challenge very well and pulled off what I’ve heard to have been a fabulous concert. Whether Amey Hall is a venue we will use again remains to be seen but you all adapted to a different space very well and just got on with it.

I’m so proud of what we’ve achieved as a team, both musically and in the way we support each other. The orchestra feels stronger than ever, and it’s been a privilege to serve as Vice Chair alongside such talented and dedicated people.

I would like to pay special thanks to Jeanette Thomas for her superb organisational skills and attention to detail which we are all so lucky to have and also to Rosie Bruce for making librarianship look easy and for taking on other roles such as percussion and harp fixing and anything else asked of her, always with a smile. And to Geoff of course, who has been a fantastic Chair of ADMS and a real inspiration during his time on the committee, having navigated us safely through some testing times over the last few years. I have so much enjoyed working with you all. And to other unsung heroes such as Keven Mosedale who prints all our

programmes free of charge and to Kate Geary and John Bleach who supplies us with refreshments every Monday evening. You all make part of a great team.

I have decided to step down from the Vice Chair role and committee at the end of this season, and therefore we need a new Vice Chair of the Orchestra. I will continue to support the orchestra in every way I can – and I'm looking forward to enjoying many more wonderful performances in the years ahead. Looking forward to the November concert and Rachmaninov Symphony 1.

Huge thanks to Kate and to Alex for the work they do in helping us to perform quality concerts and in making ADMS the success it is. I will leave it to Pen in the choir side to talk about Choir achievements and the new Choral Conductor. From the Orchestra side, keep doing what you do best – coming together every Monday evening to create the wonderful orchestral experience we're all so lucky to share.

Sue Hurst

ADMS Annual Financial Report 2024-2025

Year End Financial Report

The finances of the society remain healthy. The attached Statement of Financial Affairs and Balance Sheet show a loss of £497.76 on our standard funds. Looking in more detail, our general fund, which covers the rehearsal costs and other regular outgoings, showed a gain on the year of £2428 and our concert fund showed a loss of £2,926. A £500 bequest brought the total for the year into balance (actually a profit of £2.24).

Our November concert made a small loss while both the Christmas concert and the March orchestra concert ran at a profit. However, the March choir concert and the June concert sustained large losses of £1,763 and £1,393 respectively. For the March choir concert this was the result of fees for 3 choral soloists, an organist, and a disappointingly small audience. The June concert had to cover the costs of 4 soloists plus the hire of the Amey Hall at over £1,000. We continue to rely on subscriptions to subsidise our concert programme. We would benefit from larger audiences and I encourage members to sell as many tickets as possible.

During the year we were very pleased to accept a bequest of £500 from the estate of David Handscombe.

The society reserves remain very healthy at over £21,000. The society has a reserves policy of maintaining a balance equivalent to 6 months turnover, which equates to £15,650.

Keeping the finances of the society in order is very much a team effort. I would like to thank Victoria Adams and Peter Smith in the choir and Alison Forrow and Nicola Gladwell in the orchestra who between them chase members for subscriptions and sort out advanced ticket sales for concerts. I would also like to thank everyone who has helped with tickets, programmes and drinks on concert days, and especially Jeanette Thomas for her help as concert manager. Finally, I must record my thank to Geoff Bussell for his help and advice during his three years as chair of the society.



Tim Budd

ADMS Treasurer

ADMS SOFA and Balance Sheet 2024-2025

	year 24-25	up to	30-Jun-25	Year 23-24 for comparison	
	£	£	£	£	£
Bequest Fund					
Fund at start of year			2000.00		1000.00
Income					
Bequest			500.00		1000.00
Expenditure					
Grants			0.00		
Result for year			500.00		1000.00
Fund at end of year			2500.00		2000.00

	year 24-25	up to	30-Jun-25	Year 23-24 for comparison	
	£	£	£	£	£
Balances					
Balance on funds at start of year			21,295.53		20,885.11
Result on general fund for year		2,427.95		2,065.12	
Result on concert fund for year		(2,925.71)		(2,654.70)	
Result on social fund for year		0.00		0.00	
Total Result for standard funds			(497.76)		(589.58)
Result on Bequest Fund			500.00		1,000.00
Funds at end of year			21,297.77		21,295.53
Assets and Liabilities:					
Stock (music, folders, wine, podium etc.)			412.07		470.83
Deposit Account			20,139.51		20,183.43
Current Account			546.19		441.27
Unpresented Cheques and Liabilities			0.00		0.00
Float and Petty Cash			200.00		200.00
Total Assets			21,297.77		21,295.53

Notes

- 1) These accounts are presented on a Receipts and Payments Account (RPA) basis.
- 2) Losses are shown in brackets i.e. (2925.71)
- 3) £741.81 was raised for PACT at the Christmas concert. This is not included in the society accounts.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Abingdon and District Music Society

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Abingdon and District Music Society (ADMS) for the year ended 30 June 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the ADMS 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 ADMS 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 ADMS 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.



Nicholas J Clarke CPFA

1 Lockton Barns Church Lane,
Harwell,
Didcot OX11 0EZ:

Date: August 11th 2025

ADMS Subscriptions 2025-2026

Subscriptions

Last year showed a small loss of £497 on our general and concert funds. In the coming year there will be a number of rises in our outgoings:

- Our hire costs for the hall at the manor school increased by 33% last January. This followed a review of income streams by the school in the light of the imposition of VAT on school fees.
- We have negotiated an increase in fees for our professional musicians based on an inflation figure of 2.8% in February.
- Other costs are likely to rise with inflation.

On the plus side:

- Our reserves are on the high side at £21,297.
- We are currently intending to hold all next year's concerts in St. Helen's church and (if this is ratified by the new committee) our concert costs will be less than last year.
- I am expecting a large legacy from Lesley Lovell's estate shortly. At the time of writing, I do not have the details but these may be available by the AGM.

In view of these factors the committee recommends a modest increase of £5 in the subscriptions for the coming year raising the full subscription to £185 and the discounted subscription rate to £170. This is about 3% which is in line with inflation. Further discounts for new and younger members will continue as now.

The committee recommends that the friends subscription remains at £85. I note that the number of friends has dropped in recent years and I encourage members to recruit new friends of the society. The guaranteed income is a great help to the society.

For members information, the committee has also agreed a £1 increase in concert ticket prices to £14 bought in advance and £16 at the door. and a 50p increase in the cost of a glass of wine to £4.

I invite the meeting to pass a resolution to set the full subscriptions for 2025-2026 at £185 for members with a discounted rate of £170 for payment before the November concert.

External Examiner

Nick Clarke our external examiner has recently indicated that he does not wish to continue in this role. Hence, we are unable to confirm our examiner for next year, as required by the constitution.

I invite members to suggest anyone that we might approach for the job of external examiner. For a society of our size the external examiner does not have to be a qualified accountant, but (to quote from the government web site) *"The examiner will need to demonstrate sufficient financial awareness, numeracy skills and relevant experience to carry out the work and make the judgements required"*. A charity treasurer would be a possibility as would anyone working in finance at an appropriate level.

ABINGDON AND DISTRICT MUSICAL SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 229073

Accounts



Looking back at our 2023/24 season

As I look back on my second year as Chair, it seems to me that ADMS has had another very successful year, both in providing enjoyment and musical fulfilment for members, and (to judge from the warmth of their reception) enjoyment for our audiences. As the host of the winner of the Abingdon Concerto Class, we also provide young people with the opportunity to perform a concerto with us – in March we were treated to a stunning performance of Ravel's Piano Concerto in G by Edward Harris-Brown.

Our past season produced some wonderful performances by choir and orchestra, separately and together. Together we performed a total of 31 pieces of repertoire – probably a record! At Alex's instigation, we evolved the 2023 Christmas concert into a family-friendly Sunday afternoon format, selling out and raising £386 net for the Samaritans – a charity nominated by Alex after the sad loss of his wife Larissa. Although The Abbey Cinema is unable to host us again, we plan to continue the format in December 2024 at St Helens Church.

As can be seen from the following table of audience numbers which Tim Budd has kindly provided, attendance at our four main concerts has fallen slightly compared to the previous season last year. This year we can add the Christmas concert numbers (previously free admission, so there was no easy audience count).

Year	November	Dec Xmas	March (orchestra)	March (choir)	June	Annual total	Friends
23/24	111	151	117	98	121	598	(14)
22/23	147	?	129	115	139	530	(15)
21/22	99	?	114	140 *	47	400	(17)
18/19	130	?	120	90	100	440	(19)
17/18	129	?	113	60	110	412	(22)

* St Matthew Passion, included Wantage Choral Society

Tim's financial reports indicate a near break-even in ADMS's finances for the past season. Separately this year, we've received a second generous bequest from the late Tony Bradley, who played viola for many years and also served as Vice Chair. The committee has agreed to use these bequests to organise workshops for both choir and orchestra, to be run by professional musicians – these should be starting in the autumn when a suitable subject piece from our repertoire is available.

During the year, the committee has agreed what level of reserves are sensible but not excessive for the society to maintain, and this gives the society confidence in being able to cope with the rising cost of venue hire (which could increase further as the new government's policy is to add VAT to independent school fees) and other expenses, which will hopefully stabilise now that inflation has fallen. As well as an inflation-linked review of our professional fees, we've also agreed a new tariff for soloists, depending on the duration of their performance and the preparation needed. Tim's reports detail all this.

Members and venues

Choir member numbers last season were 93, and orchestra 52 – a healthy increase on 2023/24 numbers. High membership numbers are a good thing from the point of subscription income and from ticket sales which members facilitate by inviting friends, family and colleagues along to concerts. However, while new members are always welcome, our size has continued to cause difficulties in joint concerts of fitting choir and orchestra into a concert venue, preserving lines of sight to the conductor, enabling both choir and orchestra to hear and balance each other, and providing a good experience for members and audiences. While separate choir and orchestral concerts will continue at St Helens Church for economic reasons, the committee has spent much time and made many site visits exploring alternative venues for joint concerts, as well as different layout options in St Helens. The only other Abingdon venue believed large enough is Amey Theatre, Abingdon School, and on 3 June we held a joint rehearsal there to explore its suitability for our future Verdi Requiem concert on 14 June 2025. Although neither choir nor orchestra were present at concert strength at that rehearsal, the committee has agreed that it makes sense to perform the Verdi Requiem there, especially considering the additional longer-term benefits offered by Abingdon School such as marketing and promotion of our concerts, box office provision, refreshments etc. However, our fit into that venue is not guaranteed, so please bear with us while we try to find ways to ensure an excellent member experience at joint concerts.

Our professional musicians

As every year, ADMS's 2023/24 success could not have been achieved without the massive contributions of our three professional musicians – our Conductor and Musical Director Alex Walker, Leader Kate Bailey, and Accompanist David Bannister. I know you will join me in sending my thanks to them.

David Bannister joined us as Accompanist in September 2023 but, owing to an increasing volume of work, resigned from June 2024, and we are delighted to welcome Michiyo Machida as Accompanist from September 2024.

Our most recent news is that Alex Walker has been appointed Music Director and Principal Conductor of Henley Symphony Orchestra. This orchestra rehearses on Thursdays, and in order to accept this appointment, Alex has resigned from conducting Thursday choir rehearsals with effect from 21 November. In response to this, the committee has agreed the principle of having two conductors, which many other joint societies do, and a subcommittee is currently working through the process of appointing a conductor for the choir.

Helping to run ADMS

During the year, we welcomed onto the committee Sue Hurst as Vice Chair Orchestra (after a long and valued contribution by Jane Carr), Rosie Bruce as Orchestral Librarian (after a long period of dedicated service by Penny Smith) and Jeanette Thomas as Concert Manager (after a shorter period run by Claire Giacometto). Many thanks are due to all committee members and also to a fleet of supporting (non-committee) volunteers, without whom the society could not function. Forgive me if over 30 of you are too numerous to mention individually, but all (I hope) are listed on the "Contact us" page of the website www.adms.org.uk/contact-us/. I want to extend my personal thanks to each and every one of you for your positive and valued contributions to the running of ADMS.

I'd also like to add a particular thank-you to Kevin Mosedale (trumpet) for volunteering at the last AGM to take on the coordination, compilation and production of concert programmes. Kevin has also agreed with his employer Radley College for them to undertake and fund the printing of programmes as a form of sponsorship – hence the Radley College advertisements you may have noticed.

The presence of such effective support has enabled me to take on a more strategic role, championing the member experience for all members, and looking to the future of the society. This coming season, I need to step further back from detailed operations.

Concert programmes 2024/25

Programmes for our forthcoming season are already on the website with dates and venues – and included in the AGM pack – I hope all members will find many pieces of interest to rehearse and perform.

As always, please think of the website www.adms.org.uk as the master source of up to date information on concerts, rehearsals and many other aspects of ADMS. I update the website whenever there's a change – including when I receive details of changes to rehearsal schedules.

AGM 9-9-24 and committee 2024/25

A discussion at June committee made me believe that all current committee members are willing to continue for our 2024/25 season. If this is not the case, please let me know immediately at chair@adms.org.uk.

According to our Constitution, any member is entitled to stand for election at the AGM, irrespective of whether a role is already occupied, or someone is already standing for a vacant role. If there is something you think you could and would like to contribute and/or are intending to stand for election, please email me before the AGM at chair@adms.org.uk.

The AGM is on Monday 9 September 2024 at 19.30 at our usual rehearsal venue: The Manor Preparatory School, Faringdon Road, Abingdon OX13 6LN. I hope as many members as possible will be able to attend, and look forward to seeing you there.

I hope you are all having a good summer. If there's anything on your mind – things you think are working well which we should keep doing, or things you think could make ADMS even more successful – please let me know.

Geoff Bushell
Chair 2023/24
chair@adms.org.uk
01235 818848

ADMS Choir 2023/24

Report from the Vice Chair (Choir) Pen Gresford

The 2023/24 ADMS season started with an incredible and terrible jolt as we learned of the death of Alex's wife Larissa at the beginning of September. How difficult it has been for Alex and Lev and the commitment Alex has shown – and the stoicism of Lev – has been remarkable. Our thanks and appreciation to them must not be underestimated.

We welcomed David Bannister as our accompanist, and also taking over the Choir conductor reins in many instances. He has been aided by some wonderful accompanists – David Hyland, Malcolm Pearce in particular – who've managed to step in when we've needed them. Very many thanks to them – and so we were able to keep things moving and singing.

Our concerts for the year have been very enjoyable and successful for both choir and orchestra with some terrific joint and choir alone music making. Audiences have been good and appreciative, and we have welcomed Jeanette Thomas as our new concert manager – thank you very much Jeanette.

A brief summary of concerts follows and then some additional and important developments relating to the **Choral Director and accompanist**.

November – joint Choir and Orchestra

What a feast – Brahms Song of Destiny, Bruckner Te Deum – both fantastic 'sings' and the cheerful and lyrical Dvořák 8th Symphony. As always we had the most wonderful soloists in Eleanor Broomfield (sop) Hannah Bennett (mezzo), Andreas Bigom (tenor) and Michael Temporal Darell (baritone). Having singers of such quality enhances our own performance and we welcome them.

Christmas concert

Here we tried a completely new format – and what a success. In the Abbey Cinema we saw families as well as our traditional audience converge to enjoy a lively concert of carols and storytelling with music – Peter and the Wolf and Coates Three Bears narrated by Neil Foster. It was ably hosted by the Cinema staff – huge fun for all. We will be doing something similar this year but in a different venue.

Spring Concert March – Choir)

This was a great walk around French 19-20C choral music with a bit of Mozart thrown in. Fauré, Duruflé, Saint-Saëns, Dupré all contributed to an eclectic and uplifting programme and finishing with the mesmerising Duruflé Requiem. The additional joy was the playing of James Brown with some magnificent organ interludes. The organ in St Helen's Church rang out with his brilliance and boosted us all to sing our hearts out.

Summer concert 8 June

Bravo!! An Opera Gala. What a treat to sing these glorious and familiar choruses from the repertoire – AND in Italian – and be supported by the most stunning soloists and the panache of the Orchestra. It was a lovely warm colourful evening, a truly engaged audience and we all had fun. Our soloists brought energy and humour – completely engaging in the spirit of the event and acting (with glasses raised) as well as singing. Andreas joined us again and Jillian Finnamore was glorious and glamorous. Though we may have smiled as we rehearsed Nessun Dorma, it was great to sing and not remotely football crowdish! And I'm sure we're all still marching along to Aida and swaying to Casta Diva. Thank you also Angela Rae for being our language coach.

Developments and new faces.

Accompanist.

Unfortunately, David Bannister has had to resign from his role as our accompanist after a happy and fruitful year. He has been offered a greater role as Choir and Music Director at St John's College, Oxford and felt he could no longer continue in his role with us. We have enjoyed his musicianship and skills and sensitivity as an accompanist and stand-in Choir conductor, and wish him well in the future.

Fortunately, we have been able to secure Michiyo Machido to take over the role. She is known to many of us, is a sensitive and most accomplished musician and pianist, and we welcome her into the ADMS fold. Thank you Michiyo.

Choosing a new Choral Director

You will have read in the Chair's report that Alex will be leaving his post directing and conducting the Choir. He has been appointed Principal Conductor and Music Director of the Henley Symphony Orchestra. From mid-November 2024 he will no longer be available to conduct Thursday choir rehearsals and consequently will have to be replaced in this role (at least) by that date. although he will continue working with and conducting the Orchestra.

A special meeting of the ADMS committee met following Alex's announcement and decided to retain AW as orchestra conductor and appoint a choral director.

A selection committee is now working on advertising and interviewing for the post. We aim to have the new director in place for the Christmas concert. There is quite a bit to work out. We will keep everyone informed.

Keeping the show on the road.

Lois Smith and Ursula White have been fantastic in charge of the all-important refreshments with a team of willing helpers.

Victoria Adams continues in her key membership role and an enhanced and important role as Choir Rep. Steve and Debbie Clarke are now dealing with tickets but thanks to Peter and Jane Smith for all their hard work over the years. Mark Peters is taking on a great role with publicity (and with Sue Hurst from the Orchestra), Tim Budd is our careful treasurer, Cornelius Grotjahn our librarian. Tina Plenderleith writes the scholarly and accessible programme notes. We're also incredibly grateful to Kevin Mosedale (orchestra, trumpet) for assembling and printing the programme. Thanks to all.

Membership

Choir membership at Summer Term 24:

Sops: 31

Altos: 17

Tenor: 15

Bass: 11

We had four new joiners in September, two in January, and one in April.

Choir numbers fluctuate as people sometimes choose not to sing for a term but then return (or sometimes not!). There has been one expression of interest over the summer break so far.

A great year with some challenges which we've overcome with energy and determination and some wonderful music making. We all look forward to 24-25 with all sorts of exciting music to sing and new musicians to take us forward.

Pen Gresford
Vice Chair – Choir
ADMS.

ADMS Orchestra 2023/2024

Report from the Vice Chair (orchestra), Sue Hurst

We opened our season with an excellent joint concert of Brahms, Bruckner and Dvořák. Our March orchestra concert was perhaps a little ambitious with the Ravel Piano concerto, but it was a great opportunity to be able to tackle such a challenging piece and the Orchestra performed with great gusto and energy. Our soloist Edward Harris-Brown was unbelievably talented and I'll never forget the encore he gave by improvisation on keys called out from members of the audience. He will go far and ADMS are part of his journey into greatness. Our Opera Gala concert was a wonderful, inspiring and very rewarding concert and the audience continue to show great enjoyment, support and appreciation of our concerts.

Since I've taken over from Jane as Vice Chair in November, I have been welcomed and supported by the committee and all members of the orchestra. Thank you for that. Our Christmas concert stands out as being very special last year. It was an experiment as I'm not sure we have put on a concert like that, at least not in my time with the orchestra, and it was a huge success. Not only did we bring in a new young audience, we played fun pieces and experimented with The Abbey Cinema as a venue. This concert took a huge amount of planning so thank you to especially Geoff and everyone else involved. It's a shame that the Abbey Cinema cannot be a venue we can use in the future, but it was a good experience to play in the venue and we have learnt that Children's concerts work, both in reaching out to a younger audience and also financially, so I'm really pleased to be able to say that we will be performing another Children's Christmas Concert this year – more details to follow.

Thank you to everyone who is involved in the running of the orchestra. Not just the committee but everyone whether you have a small or large part to play. Those who volunteer so readily to set up and put back on concert day, those involved with tickets, refreshments, publicity – running an orchestra is a team effort and ADMS have a great team. It's a very rewarding orchestra to play with and be a part of.

Thank you to Alex and Kate, Geoff and Patrick, and in particular Rosie who did an excellent job of getting the Opera Gala music to the players during one rehearsal. That was no mean feat! And Jeanette who has most recently taken on the job of Concert Manager.

We start our next season with Elgar Enigma Variations, Puccini and Coleridge Taylor. We have an exciting season including Brahms 4 and Verdi Requiem.

Rehearsals start on 2nd September at The Manor Prep.

I look forward to seeing you all there

Best wishes for the remainder of the summer

Sue

Vice Chair - Orchestra

ADMS Music Director's Report, 2023-2024

It has been a tremendously successful season for ADMs artistically. Having worked so closely with the society for so many years before, I will always be grateful to each and every member for the incredible support they have shown me during what has been the most difficult and testing of my life. Larissa was taken ill on Monday September 4th, 2023, the day of our first rehearsal, and died just three days later.

I owe a particular debt to David Bannister who, immediately on taking up the position of choir accompanist and keyboardist for the society, very kindly took on the burden of conducting the first few rehearsals of the first term from the keyboard. This allowed me to focus on the immediate aftermath of Larissa's death and to ensure that our son Lev's interests were very fully looked after. I am also grateful to Geoff Bushell for taking on some of the orchestral rehearsals, as Lev and I began to adjust to our new circumstances, trying to juggle childcare requirements and work.

The first concert of the season was a tremendous success. Choir and orchestra performed Bruckner's *Te Deum* with excellent soloists Andreas Warden-Bigom, Michael Darell, Hannah Elizabeth Bennett and Eleanor Broomfield, which was performed by all with great energy and panache. This was followed by Brahms *Schicksalslied*, and sharing this profound work with choir and orchestra in the presence of my son proved particularly cathartic for me. In the second half, we gave a jubilant performance of Dvořák's Symphony no. 8 with some wonderful woodwind solos, fantastic string sound and energetic brass and timpani playing.

For the Christmas concert, we tried a new formula, selling tickets and gearing the programme more specifically towards a family audience. Engaging Neil Foster from *Horrible Histories* and the Teddy Bear theme proved very successful amongst the audience. Performances of Peter and the Wolf and the Goldilocks and the Three Bears Suite proved extremely entertaining as did the choir's contributions of carols and Holst's rarely-performed *Christmas Day*.

In the Spring term, the choir turned its attention to Duruflé's extremely taxing *Requiem*. In addition to Mozart's profound *Ave Verum Corpus*, we prepared a number of shorter works by French composers, including Fauré's well-known *Cantique for Jean Racine* as well as some lesser-known works including Dupré's *Four motets, Op. 9*, and Saint-Saëns *Two Choruses*. We were joined for the concert by organist James Brown, who played with tremendous sensitivity and drew an extraordinary range of colour from the organ in St. Helen's church, as well as two excellent soloists: mezzo-soprano Hannah Elizabeth Bennett, who had performed with us in the Autumn, and baritone Michael Ronan. The repertoire was extremely taxing for the choir, and the tremendous sound they produced in the concert was an incredible achievement.

In its March concert, the orchestra was joined by the extraordinarily talented Edward Harris Brown. After an energetic and characterful performance of Coleridge-Taylor's *Ballade* by the orchestra, Edward joined us for a mesmerising performance of Ravel's G Major concerto. Famous for the virtuosity required of its wind parts, ADMS rose to the occasion giving very committed performance. After the performance our soloist dazzled the audience with jazz improvisations prompted by theme suggested by the audience. In the second half of the concert, the orchestra gave an incandescent performance of Tchaikovsky's fifth symphony, probably the best performance of a purely work we have given.

In June, we were again joined by tenor Andreas Warden-Bigom, along with soprano Jillian Finnamore, for an enchanting evening of music from the Italian operatic repertoire, including a great deal of music by Puccini, including substantial extracts from *La bohème* and *Tosca* as well as arias and choruses by Verdi in an evening that incorporated music that ranged from bel canto to opera verismo. The orchestra played flexibly, sensitively and colourfully and the choir performed with a real sense of theatre. It was an exhilarating evening and a fitting climax to the season.

Alexander Walker, 11th August, 2024.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Abingdon and District Music Society

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Abingdon and District Music Society (ADMS) for the year ended 30 June 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the ADMS 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 ADMS 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 ADMS 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.



Nicholas J Clarke CPFA

1 Lockton Barns Church Lane,
Harwell,
Didcot OX11 0EZ:

Date: 6th August 2024

ABINGDON AND DISTRICT MUSICAL SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 229073

Accounts

ADMS Annual Financial Report 2022-2023

Year End Financial Report

This has been a good year for the society. We have welcomed some 25 new members during the year (admittedly some for 1 term only) and we have seen a welcome increase in our audiences at every concert. The attached Statement of Financial Affairs and Balance Sheet show a healthy profit of £2850 on our standard accounts. This conveniently covers the loss of £2,960, sustained the previous year. Looking in more detail, our general fund, which covers the rehearsal costs and other regular outgoings showed a gain on the year of £4,243. Our concert fund showed a loss of £1,392. However, this loss is less than half the previous year's concert losses. If one takes into account the Friends' subscriptions, which include free entry to concerts the concert programme is quite close to breaking even.

During the year we were also very pleased to accept a bequest of £1,000 from the estate of Tony Bradley. This appears as a separate entry in the accounts and is to be used for the benefit of young string players, especially viola players, living in the Abingdon area.

Keeping the finances of the society in order is very much a team effort and I would like to thank especially Victoria Adams and Peter Smith in the choir and Alison Gater and Nicola Gladwell in the orchestra who between them chase members for subscriptions and sort out tickets and other details for concerts.

Tim Burd

ADMS SOFA and Balance Sheet 2022-2023

		2022-2023	year up to	30-Jun-23	2021-2022 for comparison		
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income							
General	Subs, Choir	9,302.50			5,551.00		
	Subs, Orchestra	5,705.00			4,215.00		
	Subs, Friends/Patrons	1,275.00			1,155.00		
	sub total		16,282.50			10,921.00	
	HMRC refund		1,679.41			1,664.76	
	Bank Interest		105.06			0.77	
	Sale of Stock	106.00			10.00		
	Stock Adjustment	456.85			(196.81)		
	sub total		562.85			(186.81)	
	Donations		13.00			111.00	
	Grants		0.00			0.00	
	Workshop		0.00			210.00	
	Miscellaneous		40.00			55.00	
				18,682.82			12,775.72
Concerts	Ticket sales		6,946.75		4,767.00		
	Refreshments		878.80		518.65		
	Programme Advertising		0.00		0.00		
	Programme Sales		460.60		327.00		
	Wantage Share of Costs		0.00		1,069.33		
				8,286.15			6,681.98
Social	Christmas Concert donations		983.34		0.00		
	Other		20.00		100.00		
				1,003.34			100.00
	TOTAL			27,972.31	TOTAL		19,557.70
Expenditure							
General	Rehearsal Hall		2,924.00		1,667.00		
	Conductor's rehearsal fees		5,800.00		5,280.00		
	Accompanist's rehearsal fees		2,817.50		2,885.00		
	Leader's rehearsal fees		1,875.00		1,740.00		
	Coaching fees		0.00		0.00		
	Making Music Subscription		299.00		412.00		
	Purchase of stock		577.29		113.19		
	Website		0.00		0.00		
	Petty cash Written Off		0.00		10.80		
	Workshop Cost		0.00		194.90		
	Bank Charges		146.54		51.50		
				14,439.33			12,354.39
Concerts	Concert hall hire		1,107.00		2,140.00		
	Concert fees - conductor		1,900.00		1,800.00		
	Concert fees - pianist/organist		480.00		450.00		
	Concert fees - leader		480.00		600.00		
	Soloist fees and expenses		1,400.00		1,750.00		
	Stiffening		1,350.00		1,324.00		
	Tickets/posters/programmes		501.66		324.00		
	Music hire		1,340.41		1,103.48		
	PRS fees		146.71		56.97		
	Instrument hire		160.00		150.00		
	Refreshment costs		590.72		272.11		
	Gifts		222.28		93.30		
				9,678.78			10,063.86
Social	Christmas concert church hire		154.00		0.00		
	Christmas concert expenses		69.91		0.00		
	Other		20.00		0.00		
	Donations to Charity		759.43		100.00		
				1,003.34			100.00
	TOTAL			25,121.45	TOTAL		22,518.25
Result for Year				2,850.86			(2,960.55)

ADMS SOFA and Balance Sheet 2022-2023

	year 22-23	up to	30-Jun-23	Year 21-22 for comparison	
	£	£	£	£	£
Tony Bradley Bequest Fund					
Income					
Bequest			1,000.00		
Expenditure					
Grants			0		
Result for year			1,000.00		
	year 22-23	up to	30-Jun-23	Year 21-22 for comparison	
	£	£	£	£	£
Balance on funds at start of year			17,034.25		19,994.80
Result on general fund for year	4,243.49			421.33	
Result on concert fund for year	(1,392.63)			(3,381.88)	
Result on social fund for year	0.00			0.00	
Result on Tony Bradley Fund	1,000.00			0.00	
Total Result for year			3,850.86		(2,960.55)
Funds at end of year			20,885.11		17,034.25
Assets and Liabilities:					
Stock (music, folders, wine, podlum etc.)			541.59		197.93
Deposit Account			19,741.36		10,636.30
Current Account			292.16		5,890.02
Unpresented Cheques and Liabilities			0.00		
Float and Petty Cash			310.00		310.00
Total Assets			20,885.11		17,034.25

Notes

- 1) These accounts are presented on a Receipts and Payments Account (RPA) basis.
- 2) Losses are shown in brackets i.e. (1392.63)
- 3) The society raised £784.43 for Abingdon Food Bank.
(£759.43 was put through the bank account, £25 was a CAF voucher made out to the food bank)
- 4) The Tony Badley Bequest Fund is a descretionary fund for the benefit of young local string players, especially viola players.
- 5) £20 recorded under the social account as "other" was part of a collection for Andrew Knowles on his resignation.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Abingdon and District Music Society

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Abingdon and District Music Society (ADMS) for the year ended 30 June 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the ADMS 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 ADMS 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 ADMS 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.



Nicholas J Clarke CPFA

1 Lockton Barns Church Lane,
Harwell,
Didcot OX11 0EZ:

Date: 25th July 2023