



Chairman's Report

Season 65 2023-24

As I reflect on another season with Derby Bach Choir I have been looking back through concert programmes and meeting minutes and am again surprised by how much we have accomplished over the course of the year. I am continuing to get to grips with my role as Chair and tapping into the wealth of knowledge and experience of our more experienced and long-standing members (which basically means trying to get into Jenny's brain!).

We opened the season at our regular venue of Derby Cathedral with our Autumn concert "For an Unknown Soldier". The choir rose to the challenge of learning this unfamiliar piece by Jonathan Dove, and performed it alongside Fauré's "Requiem". The Dove was new to many, audience and performers alike, but it left quite an impression on everyone. Sitting in the audience, I looked around at one point to see the entire audience captivated and enthralled by the power of the music, despite its raw emotion and the sometimes savage lyrics.

When James Foulds gave notices that he was standing down as Treasurer last year, he also told us that he would no longer be available to rehearse and conduct a Christmas concert, although he was still able and willing to run Come and Sing events. With limited time to find another conductor who could commit to rehearsals as well as a concert (and with usual venue St John's arranging their own event with another society on 1st December), the Committee made the decision to replace the concert with a Come and Sing, the choice of music being the festive "Messiah". This very popular fundraising event gave the choir a profit just short of £1,000, with 110 people in attendance (30 of whom were DBC members).

The choir returned to St Anne's in January to begin rehearsals for our March concert and a return to the more familiar repertoire of Bach's St John Passion. Sadly, James Oxley was unable to join us for this performance as we had hoped, due to a prior engagement, but we were instead joined by Mark Dobell in the role of Evangelist and other familiar faces including William Purefoy among the soloists. Mark wrote to us afterwards *"I meant to write before now to say thank you so much for a wonderful concert on Saturday. I thought the choir did a terrific job, especially all the 'cameos', and the band were fantastic, particularly for such a reduced number of players. Richard as always put together a very convincing narrative to the piece, so please pass on my thanks to him and to all*

concerned. Thanks for all the food and drinks and for looking after us so well. I really hope there is a next time, and soon. I very much enjoy working with you and DBC."

The concert was also reviewed by Mike Wheeler who wrote *"the work's dramatic shape was well sustained, culminating in a remarkable concentrated stillness in the climactic description of Jesus' death, a powerful moment that everyone in the building clearly experienced."*

In May we were again hosted by St George's Church in Ticknall for our second Come and Sing of the season, rehearsing and performing the Mozart Vespers and parts of the Coronation Mass. It was another successful fundraising event for the choir ably led by James and accompanied by the talented Tom Corfield.

Finally, in June we returned to St John's in Derby, this time to perform Parry's Blest Pair of Sirens (have to be careful when I say that...!) and the Nelson Mass. We were joined by local soloists for this summer celebration and it felt like a fitting way to close our 65th Season.

We are delighted to have welcomed the new members who have joined us throughout the last year, as well as those longstanding members who have returned year on year. We have also said farewell to some, and sadly these included Sheila Heathcote who passed away peacefully in June. Sheila had been a member of DBC since the early 1990s and was a talented musician, loyal participant, and a good laugh. A very special lady who is greatly missed.

Derby Bach Choir means something different to each of us. It gives us the opportunity to perform great works in the company of professional soloists and musicians, forge friendships and socialise with like-minded people from all walks of life. It would be easy to take all this for granted, but as I come to the end of my second year as Chairman I am more aware than ever of the incredible work that goes on behind the scenes to make it all possible. We rely heavily on volunteers and support from our members to keep going and are always looking for more people to offer their help, in whatever form that may take. Please do take the time to consider what you might be able to help us with, and speak to me or one of the committee members if you'd like to find out more.

The committee continue to plan future events and programming for the coming years and I am pleased to share with you what we have planned so far:

- March 29th 2025: Kodaly *Missa Brevis* and Haydn *Paukenmesse*, concert title 'In Time of War'
- May 10th 2025: Vivaldi *Gloria* and some of Handel *Coronation Anthems*
- June 21st 2025: Handel *Saul*
- November 15th 2025: Bach *Magnificat* plus other content tbc
- March 2026: proposed programme Stravinsky *Symphony of Psalms*, Britten *Rejoice in the Lamb*, Chichester *Psalms* Mozart *Wind Divertimento*
- March 2027: Bach B Minor Mass (with rehearsals across 2 terms starting in September 2026)

The music-sub-committee will be meeting before Christmas to finalise the details for the 2025-26 season and beyond, and we will endeavour to share those plans with you as early as possible.

In a climate of increasing costs such as venue hire, fees for musicians and library fees for the hire of music, the Choir will need to think carefully about how we allocate money and where we can do more to raise funds. I know that our Treasurer, Laura, will be sharing further details about our financial position in her report. Costs will certainly be something we will need to consider carefully as part of our planning for future programmes.

My thanks to my fellow committee members for their ongoing support over the past year, and in particular to Mary Boocock and Rosemary Corfield who are stepping down from the committee this year, although Rosemary is kindly going to continue to support us with providing refreshments during our mid-rehearsal breaks.

I would also like to thank Richard Roddis for his continued musical direction, leading us with patience, humour and passion. Thanks also to Tom Corfield, without whom many of us would be lost somewhere in the middle of the second stanza....!

Finally, thank you all for continuing to support the committee and choir. I am sure you, like me, are looking forward to performing again and our November concert is only 3 weeks away, so time to make use of the available learning aids if you haven't already and make sure we're all on top of the notes!

With very best wishes for Season 66!

*Charlotte Butters
Chairman
October 2024*



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Derby Bach Choir

251883

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

8/1/2023

To

7/31/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Events	10,972	-	-	10,972	13,254
Fundraising	4,195	-	-	4,195	16,155
Interest	838	-	-	838	321
Grant	-	-	-	-	5,948
Legacy	1,936	-	-	1,936	-
Subscriptions	11,294	-	-	11,294	-
Miscellaneous	3,034	-	-	3,034	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	32,269	-	-	32,269	35,678
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	32,269	-	-	32,269	35,678
A3 Payments					
Events	21,835	-	-	21,835	22,765
Admin	5,804	-	-	5,804	10,135
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	27,639	-	-	27,639	32,900
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	27,639	-	-	27,639	32,900
Net of receipts/(payments)	4,630	-	-	4,630	2,778
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	34,270	-	-	34,270	31,491
Cash funds this year end	38,900	-	-	38,900	34,269

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	HSBC	11,927	-	-
	Cambridge and Counties	26,973	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	38,900	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		Laura Bishop	23-May	

Derby Bach Choir

Independent Examiners Report 2024

1. Introduction

This report is written with the trustees of the Derby Bach Choir in mind, and is a brief overview of what I have done as an Independent Examiner, the formal report which will be submitted to the Charity Commission, and some observations I made as I went through the process. As an appendix I included a summary of the role of the Independent Examiner that I wrote in 2022.

2. The 2024 Independent Examination

This is a summary of the tasks I have carried out in reviewing the 2023-24 accounts. These are tests carried out on a sample basis – it is not a 100% verification.

- Confirmed that the accounts being examined are the version approved by the trustees
- Reviewed the accounting records compiled on spreadsheets
- Verified transactions in the accounting records to third party evidence (invoices, receipts etc.), and to receipts and payments in the bank account
- Checked the opening and closing bank balances in the accounting records to the bank statements
- Checked that the accounts represent the accounting records
- Checked additions
- Corresponded with Laura on all the above

3. The Formal Report

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of the Derby Bach Choir

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Derby Bach Choir (the Trust) for the year ended 31st 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; or
3. the accounts do 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.

Signed:

Name: John Millard

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any): ACA (ICAEW)

Address: 23 Penny Long Lane Derby DE22 1AX

4. Some Observations

It is Laura's first year in the role, and I hope I have been helpful and not overbearing in raising issues which are not strictly within the remit of the Independent Examiner! I have spotted a few gaps, and suggested some improvements.

In addition, the following are some observations that I have made during the course of my examination. They are not made as part of the examination, but are just suggestions for the Treasurer or trustees to consider.

4.1 As last year, in looking at ticket sales, I have confined myself to checking that the accounting records and the bank statements agree. Although some third-party evidence is available (e.g. SumUp and PayPal statements) to authenticate monies banked, it is not possible to prove or disprove whether any money has been received but not banked or recorded. Ultimately it is the responsibility of trustees to ensure, as far as possible, that every concert seat occupied has been paid for and the money banked. My suggestion is that the Trustees regularly monitor the processes which make this happen.

4.2 I recommend that the Trustees have a reserves policy. This is a requirement of the Charity Commission, though there is no guidance as to what it should be, because every charity has different needs and obligations. Often it is expressed as a percentage of operating costs, and 20% or 25% is quite common. The thinking here is that if income suddenly ceased, could the charity meet its financial obligations? At the end of the financial year the DBC reserves were £38,900, which can be contrasted with expenditure of £27,639. There are other considerations, of course, but I suggest that trustees ensure that they are comfortable that the assets for which they are responsible are being used to further the objectives of the charity.

4.3 When the dust has settled, Laura and I will review exchanges we have had over the last few weeks with the aim of tightening the process for next year. We have in mind to agree a list of data requirements (i.e. accounting records) and other documents (e.g. bank statements); layout of reports to trustees/members for the AGM, and an outline timetable.

John Millard

28th October 2024

Appendix:

The Role of the Independent Examiner

- **What is an Independent Examiner supposed to do?**

The Charity Commission document CC32 is 84 pages of directions and guidance for independent examiners of charity accounts. Trustees need to know of its existence, and some may wish to read it, but for those who have other calls on their time I have extracted some of the salient parts. It is important that trustees are aware of what the Independent Examiner is to do, and also what he/she is not to do.

An independent examination is a form of external scrutiny which provides a limited check on specific matters. It is sometimes referred to as giving “negative assurance”. The examiner is required to confirm whether there are any matters of material concern which has come to his/her attention. This contrasts to the role of an auditor who is supposed to provide an opinion on whether the accounts give a “true and fair view”. So the examination is therefore a limited form of scrutiny compared to an audit, providing less assurance in terms of depth of work which is carried out.

- **What is the content of an Independent Examination?**

What is required to be done is set out in the Directions made by the Charity Commission, and the content of the report is set out in the 2008 regulations. (There are 13 Directions and several examples of a formal examination report!)

The examination comprises:

- Review of accounting records
- Comparison of the accounts to the records
- Review of the accounts
- Consideration of any unusual items and matters of concern

In my view, the depth of these activities largely depends on factors such as the professional judgment of the examiner, the size and complexity of the charity, and the thoroughness and integrity of the accounting records. It can also depend on the tact and diplomacy of the examiner, who must remember that most treasurers are part-time amateurs who should not be subject to over-zealous interrogation!

- **Who does the Independent Examiner report to?**

Trustees are responsible for the keeping of accounting records and the production of accounts. The examiner’s role is to report to the accounts on these matters, and commenting in particular on:

- The accounting records
- Whether the accounts agree with the records
- And whether the form of accounts is correct

To put it another way, the examiner gives the trustees extra assurance that the treasurer is doing his/her job properly!

The report in Section 4 below follows the template suggested in CC32 4.1, and is the same as used by the previous examiner of DBC in the submission of the accounts to the Charity Commission.

- **When is an Independent Examination required?**

Charity law requires that any charity with a gross income of more than £25,000 must have an independent examination, and its accounts have to be filed with the Charity Commission within 10 months of its financial year end. (With income over £250,000 an audit is required.) A charity with income less than £25,000 may have an independent examination if it so wishes. For 2021-22, DBC comes under this threshold with income of £21,610; the projection for 2022-23 suggests the income may be just over the border!

- **Who can be an Independent Examiner?**

CC32 says that an Independent Examiner “must have the right skill”. This means that they must be independent, and have the necessary experience and skills. They must have an understanding of what accounts are, what they are intended to do, and must have some analytical skills.

I have previously supplied James with a potted version of my CV, but in summary, I have been a chartered accountant for some 42 years, I have worked in the charity sector for 25, and have had financial roles, and been treasurer and trustee, for Broadway church and Derby City Mission for many years.

John Millard

1st December 2022