

READING FESTIVAL CHORUS

England & Wales - Charity number 254201

Details

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 1967-11-07

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

Contact

Address 121 Church Road
Earley
Reading
RG6 1HG

Phone 01189660128

Email Treasurer@readingfestivalchorus.org.uk

Website www.readingfestivalchorus.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CHORUS SHALL BE TO FOSTER PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE AND APPRECIATION OF CHORAL MUSIC BY ANY MEANS THE TRUSTEES SEE FIT INCLUDING:(A) GIVING MEMBERS OF THE CHORUS THE OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY AND PRACTISE SUCH MUSIC.(B) THE PUBLIC PERFORMANCE OF SUCH MUSIC.

Activities: RFC prepares and performs 3 - 4 concerts each year for the community. We conduct open workshops on major choral works. In the past RFC has performed in conjunction with other choruses including an area children's choir and a German chorus from Dusseldorf.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services
- **What:** Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** NOT DEFINED, IN PRACTICE: READING AND DISTRICT.
- Oxfordshire
- Reading
- West Berkshire
- Wokingham

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-07-31	£33,430	£39,503	-	-
2024-07-31	£27,691	£23,350	-	-
2023-07-31	£23,619	£24,708	-	-
2022-07-31	£19,478	£20,292	-	-
2021-07-31	£9,722	£7,853	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Alison Janet Allen	Chair	2024-10-21
Dr Nicholas Thomas Morris Roberts		2021-10-18
Dr Thomas Edward Wall		2024-01-24
Helen Mary Shirley-Quirk		2025-09-29
Jane Bazley		2021-10-18
Margaret Cocks		2022-10-17
Rachel Mary Paton		2025-09-29
Sarah Elizabeth Hamilton		2020-10-19
Sue Mithen		2021-10-18

READING FESTIVAL CHORUS

England & Wales - Charity number 254201

Accounts



READING FESTIVAL CHORUS

Reading Festival Chorus

Report and Accounts

For the year ended 31 July 2025

Registered Charity No 254201

Reading Festival Chorus

Index to the Report and Accounts

For the year ended 31 July 2025

	Page
Report of the Committee of Management	2
Report of the Independent Examiner	8
Statement of Financial Activities	9
Balance Sheet	10
Notes to the Accounts	11

Reading Festival Chorus Report of the Members of the Committee of Management

Objectives and Activities

The aims and objectives of the Chorus are to foster public knowledge and appreciation of choral music by means of giving members of the Chorus the opportunity to study and practise such music, and the public performance of such music.

Reading Festival Chorus presents

Will Todd's
Mass in Blue
Bob Chilcott's
A Little Jazz Mass

Greg Hallam - Music Director
Tom O'Grady - Piano
Eric Guy - Bass
Ric Elsworth - Percussion
Lisa Swayne - Soprano

6:00 pm
Saturday 23rd November 2024
Wesley Church, Queen's Road,
Reading RG1 4BW

Tickets: £18, under-18s free
Available in advance from:
0118 947 8081
tickets@readingfestivalchorus.org.uk
or from TicketSource
Also available on the door

READING FESTIVAL CHORUS
Registered charity No. 254201
www.readingfestivalchorus.org.uk

The Chorus held three concerts this year, and also joined in the performance of the *Dream of Gerontius* presented by Johanneskantorei Düsseldorf in the Johanneskirche.

The first concert was in Wesley Church on 23rd November 2024 and featured Will Todd's *Mass in Blue* and Bob Chilcott's *A Little Jazz Mass*. The accompaniment was provided by a trio, and the soprano soloist was Lisa Swayne. The general opinion was that it was a highly successful concert, featuring a particularly talented soloist.

Our spring concert was also held in Wesley Church, on 8th February 2025, and was of Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*. This concert was held earlier in the term than usual, to enable us to start rehearsing *Gerontius*

in good time for the Düsseldorf performance. The work was performed with piano (Ben Giddens), harmonium (Nick Austin) and soloists Alexandra Stevenson, Sarah Anne Champion, Graham Neal and Timothy Dickinson. Although the size of the audience was disappointing, the performance achieved a high standard in all respects

On 25th May we joined with Johanneskantorei Düsseldorf

Sonntag, 25. Mai 2025
Johanneskirche
Edward Elgar
The Dream of Gerontius

and its youth choir (Jugendchor der Akademie für Chor und Musiktheater) for the first of our joint performances of Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*. Wolfgang Abendroth conducted the Düsseldorf Festival Orchestra and soloists Elvira Bill (mezzo), Jonathan Cook (tenor) and Dmitri Vargin (baritone). The tenor travelled from England to stand in at the last minute for a German tenor who was unwell. His excellent reception on the night was highly deserved. The Johanneskirche was virtually sold out: all agreed that it was a most moving performance of a work which is not often heard in Germany (though its second ever performance took place in Düsseldorf in 1901).

Reading Festival Chorus presents

Rossini's
Petite messe solennelle

Greg Hallam - Music Director
Alexandra Stevenson - Soprano
Sarah Anne Champion - Alto
Graham Neal - Tenor
Timothy Dickinson - Bass
Ben Giddens - Piano
Nick Austin - Harmonium

6:30 pm
Saturday 8th February 2025
Wesley Church, Queen's Road,
Reading RG1 4BW

Tickets: £18, under-18s free
Available in advance from:
0118 947 8081
tickets@readingfestivalchorus.org.uk
or from TicketSource
Also available on the door

READING FESTIVAL CHORUS
Registered charity No. 254201
www.readingfestivalchorus.org.uk

Our second performance of the work took place during the return visit of our German friends in the Great Hall of the University of Reading on 20th June. This performance was conducted by Greg Hallam. The orchestra was the British Sinfonietta, and the soloists were Martha McLorinan (mezzo), Peter Davoren (tenor) and Thomas Humphreys (bass). Chorus was again joined by the Johanneskantorei and its youth choir. The Great Hall was nearly full to capacity for a very fine performance which fittingly marked both the 80th anniversary of the founding of the Chorus, and the 80th anniversary of the beginning of the ongoing relationship between Reading and Düsseldorf. The concert was preceded by an introduction from Cllr Paul Gittings, Deputy Mayor of Reading, and Lindsey Beard, Deputy Lieutenant for Berkshire, was also present.

Our visit to Düsseldorf was celebrated by a party after the concert, and the visit of Johanneskantorei to Reading was celebrated by a party on 21st June at Purley Barn, with food provided by members.

We held our usual informal concert of carols and readings in Wesley Church Hall on 9th December. A collection was taken at the concert for Christian Community Action, a charity which gives practical support to people in crisis in Reading. The evening helped raise over £600 for its cause.

The Trustees of the charity (ie the Committee of Management) confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. Chorus continues generally to make no charge for concert attendance by those aged under 18, and offers reduced subscriptions to students, those on state benefits and those aged 65 and over.

Achievements and financial review

The financial statements have been prepared for the year ended 31 July 2025.

The Committee updated the current Chorus business plan to cover last year's financial position. This plan includes a budget for each financial period which is developed as the programme of concerts is finalised.

Overall position

The accounts show a deficit for the year of £6,073. Although it is never welcome to have to report a loss, it must be pointed out that the loss is less than had been projected, and considerably less than we had feared earlier in the year. Although each of our concerts made a loss (*Jazz Masses*: £442; *Rossini*: £2,371, and *Gerontius*: £9,605), the eventual loss on *Gerontius* was considerably reduced by donations received from The Reading Düsseldorf Association, Johanneskantorei, and some very generous donations from members and Friends of Chorus. The donation from Johanneskantorei helped to cover additional costs incurred by the inclusion of its Youth Choir. There were around 256 in the audience, so ticket sales were higher than in our initial estimates.

Although the *Gerontius* concert has considerably depleted our reserves, from £24,169 in July 2024, to £18,095 in July 2025, the reserves are still considerably above the figure of £11,500 which we estimate to be the minimum amount we should retain in reserves as a "safety net" (to enable us to continue to operate for a year even if we received no income from concerts). The Committee took the decision before our final concert to curtail our planned 2025/26 programme, with the support of the Musical Director, and not to perform with an orchestra in



Tickets: £25 (£22 before 13th June)
Under-18s/students: £10
Available in advance from:
0118 947 8081
tickets@readingfestivalchorus.org.uk
or from TicketSource (scan QR code)
Also available on the door
www.readingfestivalchorus.org.uk



Registered charity No. 254201

2025-26. The more buoyant state of our reserves at the end of this year should mean that that orchestral performances become a realistic possibility for the 2026-27 season.

Membership of the Chorus fell very slightly this year from 69 to 67. The fall in income from Friends is partially accounted for by two Friends becoming members. The work involved in organising both aspects of the Düsseldorf exchange this year has limited the opportunity to engage in fundraising, but Hire a Choir brought in £500 and the 100 Club £204. Bring and Buy sales were reinstated and raised a further £414. It should also be noted that a raffle at the Purley Barn party raised £347, which was included in the concert account for *Gerontius*. More ambitious fundraising is planned for 2025-26.

Membership and our rehearsal and administrative costs

As the Committee felt that the Chorus’s remuneration of our Musical Director and Accompanist had not kept pace with inflation, the decision was taken at the AGM last year to increase members’ subscriptions by a substantial 18%, as a “one-off” catch-up. This year membership subscriptions (£11,089: see note 5) have, as intended, very nearly covered rehearsal and administrative expenses (£11,239: see notes 11 and 13). The proposed increase in subs this year will therefore be only such as is required to ensure that the remuneration we pay continues to keep pace with inflation.

Chart showing our income for the year:

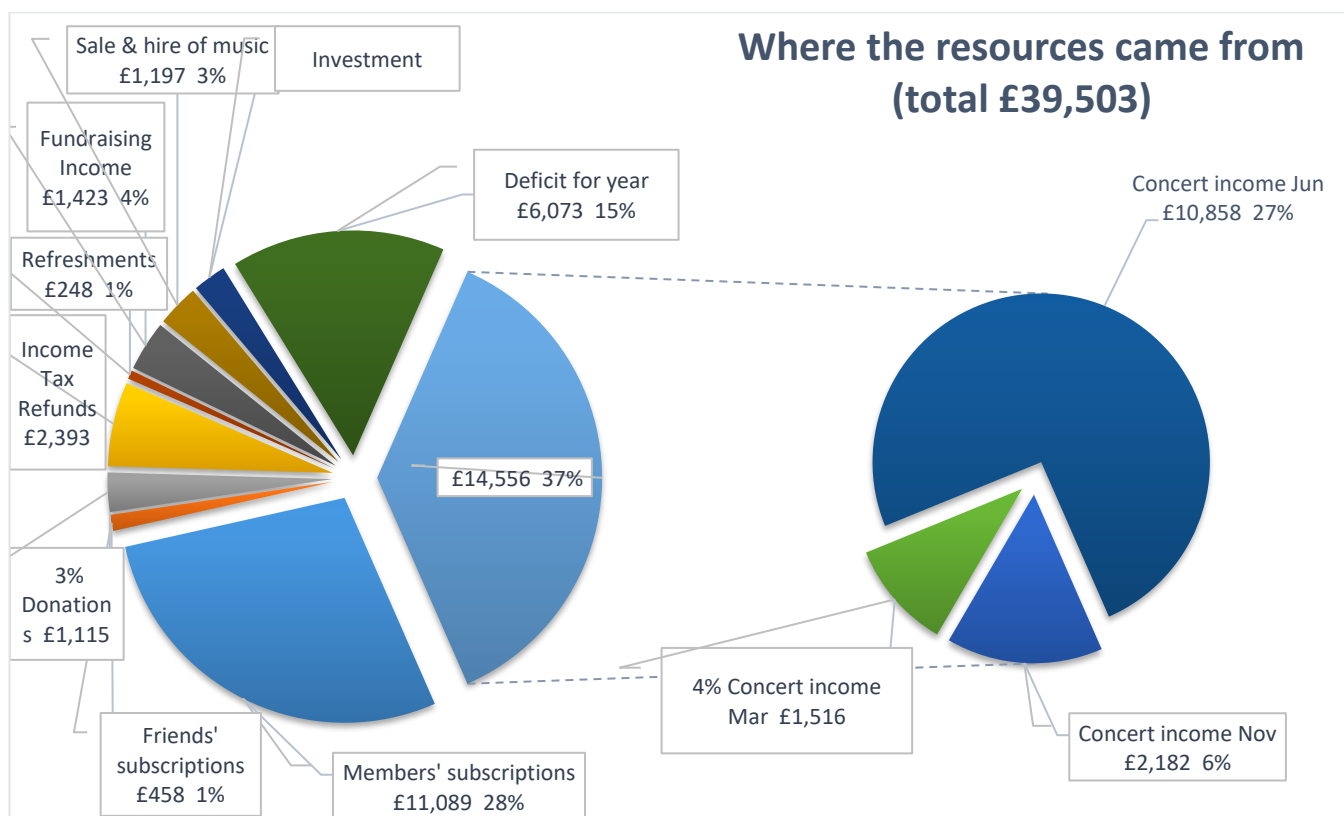
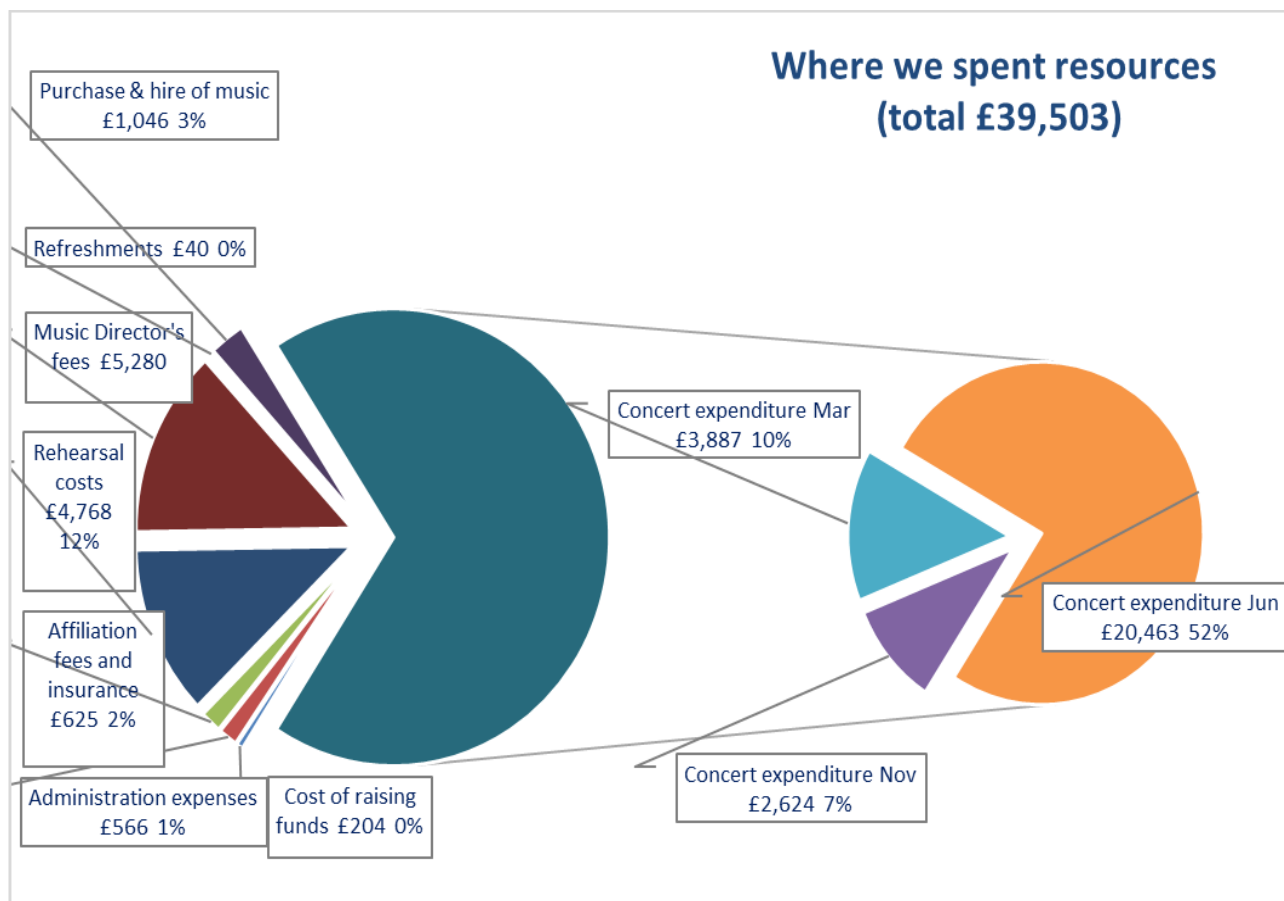


Chart showing our expenditure for the year:



Total reserves therefore decreased from £24,169 at 1 August 2024 to £18,095 at 31 July 2025.

The Committee of Management considers the Chorus has sufficient assets to fulfil its obligations. The Committee has set out a Reserves policy which is available to members through the Chorus website. The Chorus drew on accumulated reserves to cover costs this year, but such reserves are accumulated expressly to cover the cost of putting on expensive concerts. The Committee will continue to programme concerts which ensure an appropriate level of reserves is maintained.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and the second edition of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued in October 2019.

Structure, Governance and Management

Reading Festival Chorus is an unincorporated association governed by a written Constitution. This is made available through the Governance page of the Chorus website.

In accordance with this the Committee of Management is required to prepare financial statements for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Chorus and of the income and expenditure for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the members of the Committee of Management are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Chorus will continue in business.

The members of the Committee of Management are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the Chorus and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with charity law and the requirements of the Constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Chorus and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Members of the Committee of Management are the Trustees of the charity. Committee members are selected by the members of the Chorus at the Annual General Meeting, through election where there are more applicants than posts.

A set of Chorus Policies is published for members and others in the Governance section of the Chorus website.

Reference and administrative details

Reading Festival Chorus is registered at the Charity Commission with registration number 254201. The registered address is that of the Treasurer (currently 121 Church Road, Earley, Reading RG6 1HG).

The Chorus is pleased that the pianist John Lill CBE continues to be our Patron.

During this period (including the time between the end of the reporting period and the date these accounts were signed) the Trustees were:

	From	To
Katherine Walkem (chair)	Start of financial year	AGM 21 October 2024
Janet Allen (chair)	AGM 21 October 2024	Current
Jane Reed (vice-chair)	Start of financial year	Current
Margaret Cocks (secretary)	Start of financial year	Current
Nicholas Roberts (treasurer)	Start of financial year	Current
Thomas Wall (publicity)	Start of financial year	Current
Sally Hamilton (librarian)	Start of financial year	Current
Natalie McGuire (registrar)	Start of financial year	Current
Jane Bazley (concert manager - artists)	Start of financial year	Current
Susan Mithen (concert manager – front of house)	Start of financial year	Current

The Vice-Chair (Jane Reed) is also the Making Music representative.

John Kelly has served as Concert Manager – Staging during the year, but has not been a member of the Committee.

Examiner

The Committee of Management consider that neither an audit nor an examination of the accounts is required for this period under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act), but that according to our Constitution an independent examination is required. Mr William Ellison was re-appointed at the AGM as the independent examiner for the year ended 31 July 2025.

Signed on behalf of the members of the Committee of Management

(sgd) Nicholas T M Roberts

Nicholas Roberts – Treasurer

Approved by the Committee of Management on 1 September 2025

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES ON MY EXAMINATION OF THE ACCOUNTS OF READING FESTIVAL CHORUS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2025

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Reading Festival Chorus ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 July 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Charity 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 Charity'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 Charity 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: (sgd) W M Ellison

Date: 5 September 2025

Name: William Mark Ellison

Address: 73 Balmore Drive
Caversham
Reading
RG4 8NN

Reading Festival Chorus
For the Year Ended 31 July 2025

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	2025 Unrestricted £	2025 Designated £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £	Further details
INCOME FROM:					
Voluntary income					
Membership Subscriptions	11,089		11,089	9,554	5
Friends' Subscriptions	458		458	616	
Corporate memberships	0		0	0	
Donations	1,115		1,115	854	6
Gift Aid	2,393		2,393	2,223	7
Charitable activities					
Concert tickets and programmes	14,556		14,556	5,908	8
Refreshments at rehearsals	248		248	314	
Other activities					
Fundraising activities	1,423		1,423	5,387	9
Sale & Hire of Music	1,197		1,197	2,043	10
Investment income	951		951	792	13
TOTAL INCOME:	33,430	0	33,430	27,691	
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Costs of raising voluntary income					
Raising funds	(204)		(204)	(1,696)	9
Charitable activities					
Administration Expenses	(566)		(566)	(317)	11
Affiliation Fees and Insurance	(625)		(625)	(611)	
Concert payments	(26,974)		(26,974)	(9,398)	8
Rehearsals	(4,768)		(4,768)	(4,521)	12
Music Director fees	(5,280)		(5,280)	(4,785)	12
Refreshments at rehearsals	(40)		(40)	(56)	
Other					
Purchase & Hire of music	(1,046)		(1,046)	(1,966)	10
TOTAL EXPENDITURE:	(39,503)	0	(39,503)	(23,350)	
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	(6,073)	0	(6,073)	4,341	
Reconciliation of Funds					
Total funds brought forward	24,169	0	24,169	19,828	
Total funds carried forward	18,095	0	18,095	24,169	

**Reading Festival Chorus
BALANCE SHEET
as at 31 July 2025**

	2025	2024	Further details
	£	£	
CURRENT ASSETS:			
Debtors & Prepayments	209	782	
Investments			
COIF Deposit Account	15,089	18,138	13
Cash at bank and in hand			
Barclays Current Account	3,138	5,764	13
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS:	<u>18,436</u>	<u>24,684</u>	
LIABILITIES:			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(341)	(515)	
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES:	<u>(341)</u>	<u>(515)</u>	
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u><u>18,095</u></u>	<u><u>24,169</u></u>	
THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY:			
Unrestricted Funds	(18,095)	(24,169)	
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS	<u><u>(18,095)</u></u>	<u><u>(24,169)</u></u>	

Janet Allen - Chair

Nicholas Roberts - Treasurer

The Examiner's Report is on Page 8

Reading Festival Chorus

**Notes to the Accounts
For the year ended 31 July 2025**

1. Basis of Accounting

- a. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the second edition of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.
- b. The trust constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.
- c. There are no material uncertainties about the charity’s ability to continue and therefore the accounts have been produced on a going concern basis.

2. Recognition of Income

- a. Voluntary Income is received by way of donations and fund raising events. Cash donations are included in the accounts when they are received.
- b. Where incoming resources have related expenditure (as with fundraising) the incoming resources and related expenditure are reported gross in the Statement of Financial Activities, but shown side by side in the Notes to these Accounts.
- c. Subscription income due, including income tax recovered through Gift Aid, is accounted for in the period to which the subscriptions relate.
- d. Bank interest receivable is included in the period during which it is credited.

3. Expenditure

- a. All expenditure is included in the Statement of Financial Activities. The value of expense invoices received after the period-end is included in the relevant account.
- b. Any expenditure on stocks and items of a capital nature is written off in the period in which it is incurred.

4. Taxation

Reading Festival Chorus is not liable to either Corporation Tax or Income Tax on its activities by virtue of its status as a registered charity. The Chorus is not registered for VAT and the amounts shown are inclusive of VAT paid.

5	Membership subscriptions	2025	2024
	Number of members paying subscriptions	65.33 (67 indivs)	67.33 (69 indivs)
	<u>Voluntary income</u>		
	Membership fees received	11,089	9,554
	Friends subscriptions received	<u>458</u>	<u>616</u>
	Sub-total Voluntary income	11,547	10,170
	The tuition element of members' subs was formerly recorded but is no longer relevant for Gift Aid purposes		
6	Donations	2025	2024
		£	£
	General donations	195	108
	Transfers from members 65+ paying full rate subs	<u>920</u>	<u>746</u>
		<u>1,115</u>	<u>854</u>

Donations designated for the June 2025 concert are included in Concert Account.
General donations and transfers include receipts from a number of the Trustees.

Reading Festival Chorus

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 July 2025

7	Gift Aid	2025	2024
		£	£
	Income tax refunded	2,393	2,223

Gift Aid on donations designated for the June 2025 concert are included in Concert Account
Total Gift aid claimed in 2024-25 therefore = £3,051

8 Concert Income and Expenditure

	Concert 23-Nov-24	Concert 08-Feb- 25	Concert 20-Jun- 25	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
INCOME: Charitable activities					
Ticket Sales	1,972	1,372	5,540	8,884	5,529
Programme sales	0	0	225	225	0
Sponsorship/donations	0	0	4,088	4,088	50
Gift Aid on designated donations	0	0	658	658	0
Raffle	0	0	347	347	0
Interval donations	210	144	0	354	329
TOTAL INCOME:	2,182	1,516	10,858	14,556	5,908
EXPENDITURE: Charitable activities					
Conductors' Fees	698	698	825	2,221	1,951
Orchestra/Accompanist	1,050	700	12,080	13,830	4,351
Soloists	350	1,400	1,500	3,250	923
Music Hire	62	0	130	192	0
Venue Hire	250	250	1,595	2,095	1,480
Harmonium Hire	0	650	0	650	0
Programme costs	114	106	512	732	360
Publicity costs	70	70	73	213	200
Miscellaneous	0	0	3,668	3,668	0
Refreshment costs	30	13	80	123	133
TOTAL EXPENDITURE:	2,624	3,887	20,463	26,974	9,398
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(442)	(2,371)	(9,605)	(12,418)	(3,490)

“Miscellaneous” includes all other expenditure incurred in connection with the visit of the Chorus to Düsseldorf and the return visit of Johanneskantorei and its youth choir to Reading.

Reading Festival Chorus

Notes to the Accounts For the year ended 31 July 2025

9	Fundraising	2025	2025	2025	2024
		Income	Expenditure	Surplus	Surplus
		£	£	£	£
	Raffles & Quizzes	0	0	0	242
	Bring & Buy Sales	414	0	414	0
	Hire a Choir	500	0	500	650
	100 Club	408	(204)	204	174
	Jill Evans music sale	0	0	0	172
	Auction (incl Silchester Exhibition tour)	0	0	0	2,387
	Easyfundraising, AmazonSmile, etc	101	0	101	66
		£	£	£	£
	TOTAL	1,423	(204)	1,219	3,691

Donations at for example social events are included in Donations - see note 6

10	Sale and hire of music	2025	2024
	Income from sale and hire of music	1,197	2,043
	Expenditure on purchase and hire of music	(1,046)	(1,966)
		£	£
	Net surplus/(deficit)	151	77

Music purchased by RFC for use by members is charged immediately against income. Thus the expenditure on music includes additions to the library.

This category also includes the purchase and sale of concert folders, where a small stock of folders is kept by the Chorus.

11 Administration expenses

Expenses for 2024-25 include £75 for the purchase of wineglasses for use at concerts. The cost has been treated as expenditure for the year.

Trustees are entitled to claim reasonable expenses for travel to committee meetings. However no payments were made in the year. See also note 6

Trustee expenses paid	£0
Number of trustees paid expenses	0

A number of trustees were reimbursed for expenditure made on behalf of the Chorus (eg for music hire).

Details can be made available upon request.

12	Remuneration to Trustees	2025	2024
	No professional fees or other remuneration were paid to Trustees	£0	£0

Reading Festival Chorus

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 July 2025

13	Cost of rehearsals	2025	2024
		£	£
	Rehearsal hall hire costs	1,760	1,815
	Accompanist costs	3,008	2,706
	sub-total	<u>4,768</u>	<u>4,521</u>
	Music director's rehearsal fees	<u>5,280</u>	<u>4,785</u>
	Total rehearsal costs	10,048	9,306
	Costs to be met from members' subs include the above PLUS		
	Administration expenses	566	317
	Affiliation fees and insurance	<u>625</u>	<u>611</u>
	TOTAL costs to be met from members' subs (Total actually received was £11,089)	11,239	10,234

14 Bank accounts

Cash reserves of the Chorus are held in our account at COIF Charities Deposit Fund. This investment generated £951 interest (2024 £792).

15 Debtors, Prepayments and Creditors

Debtors/prepayments are purchase of music for 2025-26

Creditors are payments for music already made by members

READING FESTIVAL CHORUS

England & Wales - Charity number 254201

Accounts



READING FESTIVAL CHORUS

Reading Festival Chorus

Report and Accounts

For the year ended 31 July 2024

Registered Charity No 254201

Reading Festival Chorus

Index to the Report and Accounts

For the year ended 31 July 2024

	Page
Report of the Committee of Management	2
Report of the Independent Examiner	7
Statement of Financial Activities	8
Balance Sheet	9
Notes to the Accounts	10

Reading Festival Chorus

Report of the Members of the Committee of Management

Objectives and Activities

Britten:
St Nicolas

Vaughan Williams:
Fantasia on Christmas Carols
and more

Saturday 25th
November 2023

6.00pm

Wesley Methodist Church
Queens Road
RG1 4BW

Tickets: Adults: £18 (incl. programme)
Under-18s free
Available in advance from
0118 947 8081
tickets@readingfestivalchorus.org.uk
or from TicketSource
Also available on the door

Greg Hallam
– Music director
Gareth Treseder – Tenor
Boy choristers from
Pembroke College, Oxford
British Sinfonietta
Judith Creighton and
Nick Austin – Piano
Simon Dinsdale – Organ

READING FESTIVAL CHORUS
Registered charity No. 254201
www.readingfestivalchorus.org.uk

The aims and objectives of the Chorus are to foster public knowledge and appreciation of choral music by means of giving members of the Chorus the opportunity to study and practise such music, and the public performance of such music.

Chorus held its usual three concerts in the year. The first concert was in Wesley Church on 25th November, and featured the Britten cantata *St Nicolas* and Vaughan Williams *Fantasia on Christmas Carols*. The soloist in both works was tenor Gareth Treseder. *St Nicolas* also featured boy choristers from Pembroke College, Oxford who formed the small choir and provided the soloist.

Our spring concert was “Lenten Reflections”, given in Douai Abbey on 16th March. The

programme – much of it sung unaccompanied – featured works extending in time from Tallis motets to Sanders (*The Reproaches*), and also included Brahms *Warum ist das Licht gegeben?* and Rheinberger *Stabat Mater*. Simon Dinsdale accompanied the latter on the organ, and also played a chorale prelude by JS Bach and an organ sonata by Rheinberger. Several members of the audience commented that we had achieved a particularly high standard of performance in this concert.

Reading Festival Chorus presents
Lenten Reflections

Featuring music by
Purcell
Tallis
Brahms
and more

Greg Hallam
Music Director
Simon Dinsdale
Organ

Saturday 16th March 2024 7:30 pm
Douai Abbey
Upper Woolhampton, Nr Reading, RG7 5TQ

Reading Festival Chorus presents
A Sprig of Thyme

Music for a summer evening

Vaughan Williams
Rutter
Britten
Holst
and more

Greg Hallam
Music Director
Judith Creighton
Piano
Thomas Humphreys
Baritone

Saturday 13th July 2024 7:30 pm
BYO Picnic 6:00 - 7:00 pm
Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel
Pangbourne College, Nr Reading, RG8 6LA

Tickets: £18, under-18s free
Available in advance from:
0118 947 8081
tickets@readingfestivalchorus.org.uk
or from TicketSource
Also available on the door

READING FESTIVAL CHORUS
Registered charity No. 254201
www.readingfestivalchorus.org.uk

Our summer concert marked our first visit since 2007 to the

Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel at Pangbourne College. The concert, entitled “Sprig of Thyme” included the selection of folk-song arrangements by that name by Sir John Rutter, and also Britten’s *Choral Dances from Gloriana*, Vaughan Williams *Five Mystical Songs*, and Holst *I Love my Love*. Although the size of the audience was disappointing, choir members and others were able to enjoy a picnic before the concert in the pleasant grounds of the College.

We held our usual informal concert of carols and readings in Wesley Church Hall on 11th December. A collection was taken at the concert for Launchpad Reading, a charity which tackles homelessness.

The Trustees of the charity (ie the Committee of Management) confirm that they have had regard to the Charity

Commission’s guidance on public benefit. Chorus continues to make no charge for concert attendance by those aged under 18, and offers reduced subscriptions to students, those on state benefits and those aged 65 and over.

Achievements and financial review

The financial statements have been prepared for the year ended 31 July 2024.

The Committee updated the current Chorus business plan to cover last year's financial position. This plan includes a budget for each financial period which is developed as the programme of concerts is finalised.

Overall position

Overall our financial position improved over the year. Although Chorus was again unable to attract any Corporate Sponsors, the number of Friends remained fairly constant. Fundraising for the year increased substantially compared with 2022-23. Hire a Choir raised £650 (2022-23: nil). The Auction of Promises made a profit of £2,387 (including £240 from Prof Mike Fulford's guided tour of the Silchester Exhibition). A raffle that was drawn at the July concert raised £242, and a sale of music scores donated by Jill Evans raised £172. In addition our investment income rose to £792 (2022-23: £411) as a result of the increase in interest rates, and placing more of our reserves on deposit.

Income from other sources remained broadly the same as in previous years. Our income from our three concerts was only slightly higher than in 2023, but our deficit on the concert account was lower £3,490 (2022-23: deficit of £6,861). The lower deficit is largely because we did not perform any concert with a large orchestra, and made less use of professional soloists.

As a result of our fundraising efforts, and the lower deficit on concerts, we ended the year with a **surplus of £4,341**, compared with a **deficit of £1,089 in 2022-23**. Our total reserves therefore increased from £19,828 at 1 August 2023 to £24,169 at 31 July 2024. Although this may seem a large amount, it must be borne in mind that our likely expenditure on the joint concert with Johanneskantorei Düsseldorf in June 2025 of Elgar's *Dream of Gerontius* is budgeted to cost around £17,500, and overall the concert is likely to incur a deficit of around £13,500. Our other concerts in 2024-25 are also budgeted to make losses, albeit much smaller ones. The Chorus is fortunate in that its accumulated reserves mean that it remains viable in the longer term, and should go forward into 2025-26 with reserves, although probably only a little above our recommended minimum "safety net" of £10,000.

Membership and our rehearsal and administrative costs

The overall financial position does not, however, tell the full story. For many years members' subscriptions have been calculated using the rule of thumb that they should cover rehearsal costs, plus our general administrative expenses. (See Note 13 to the Accounts). Subscriptions were increased this year by 9%, to cover a shortfall the previous year, and to cover an increase this year (albeit below inflation) in payments to our Musical Director and Accompanist. With hindsight a larger increase would have been appropriate, as **subscriptions again failed to cover expenditure, to the extent of £680** (6.6%). (Compare Notes 5 and 13). This is largely because membership of the Chorus fell very slightly this year to 69 (from 74).

As we cannot assume that we will rebuild our membership figure this year, this will necessitate an increase in membership fees. Additionally the Committee feels that the opportunity should be taken to make good the below-inflation increases in recent years to the remuneration of our Musical Director and Accompanist. The proposal to increase members' subscriptions takes account of both of these objectives.

To summarise

Although we have – thanks to our fundraising efforts – made a surplus overall this year, the Committee proceeds on the assumption that members raise funds in order to subsidise concerts, and thus to enable us to perform larger works requiring professional orchestral musicians and soloists. **Fundraising is not intended to subsidise members' subscriptions.**

Chart showing our income for the year:

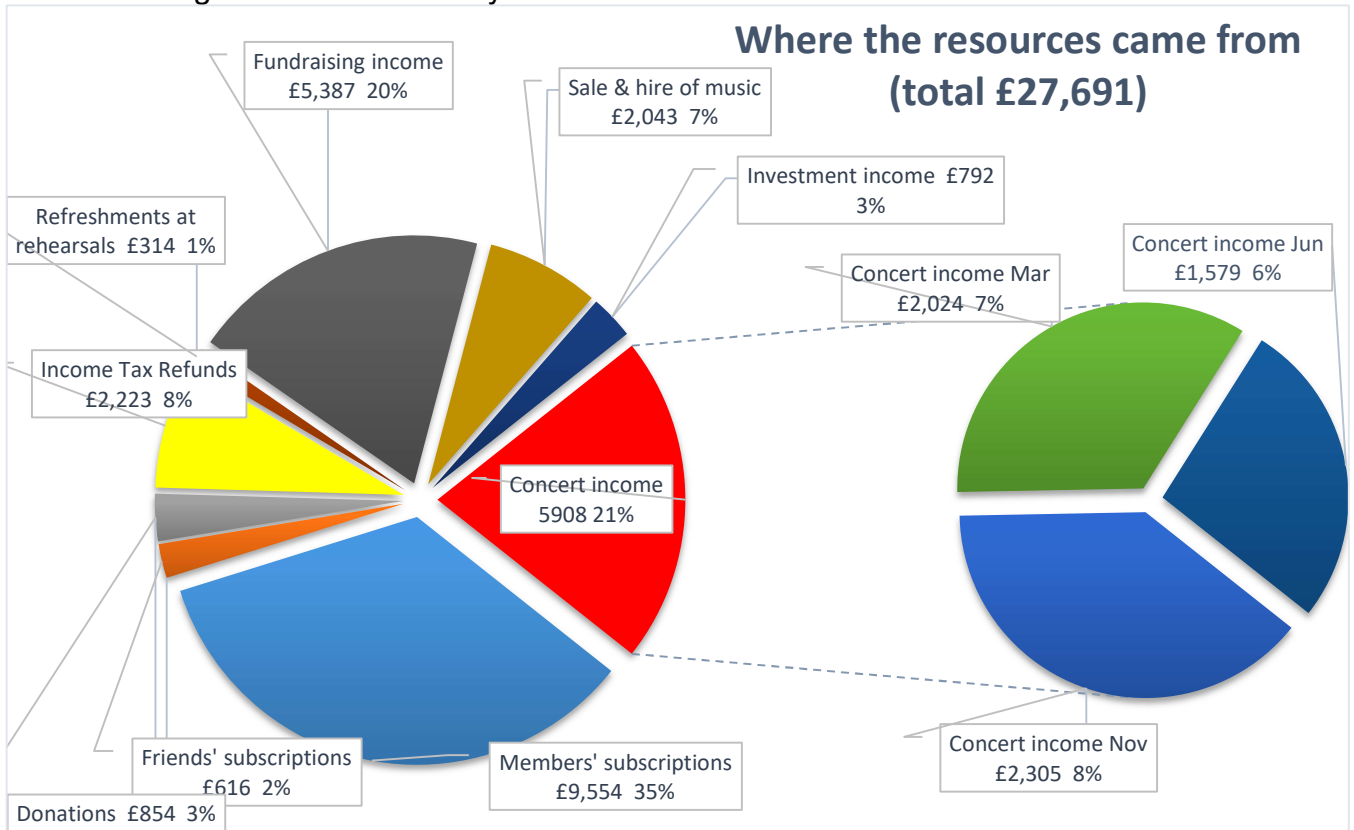
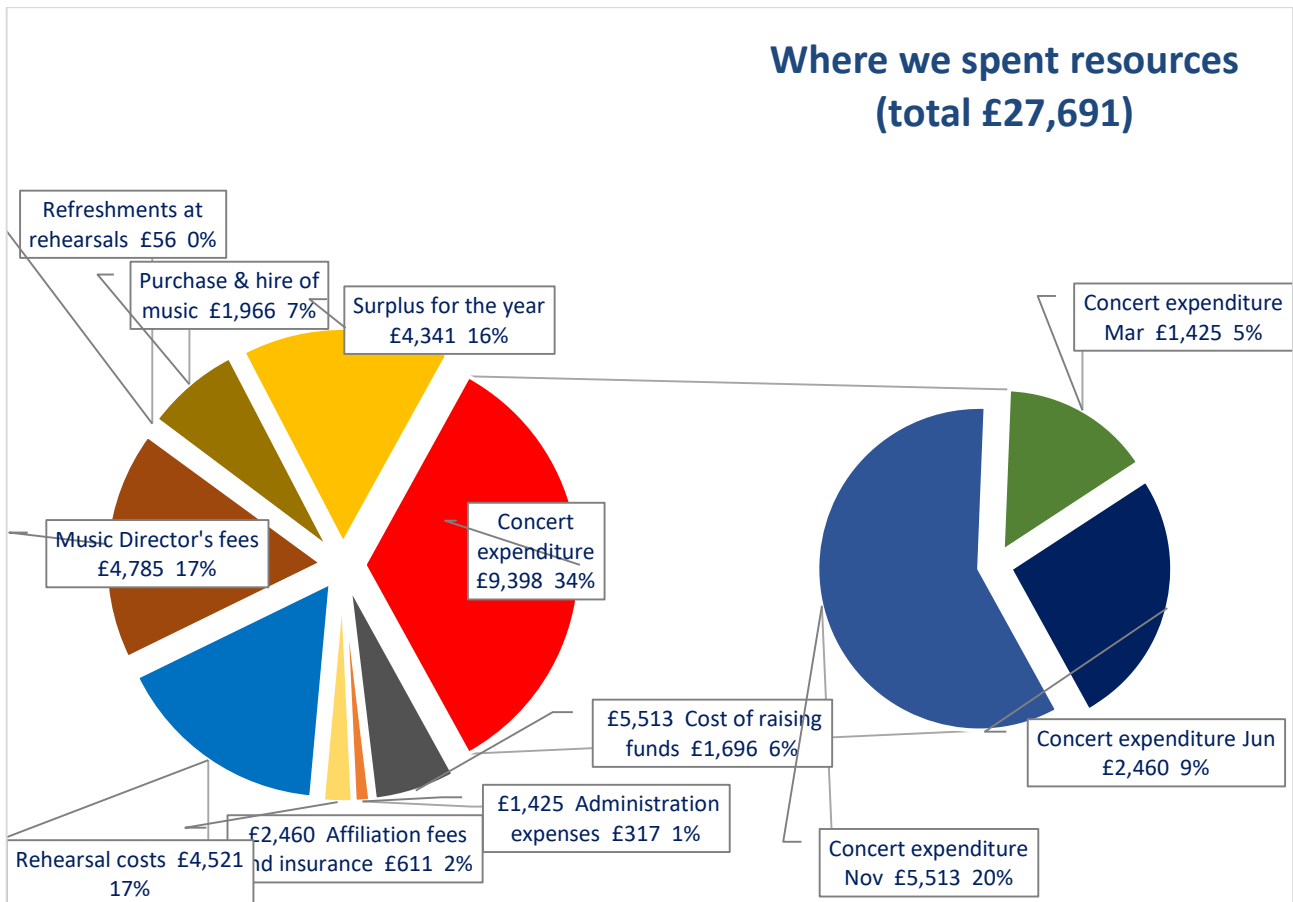


Chart showing our expenditure for the year:



Total reserves therefore increased from £19,828 at 1 August 2023 to £24,169 at 31 July 2024.

The Committee of Management considers the Chorus has sufficient assets to fulfil its obligations. The Committee has set out a Reserves policy which is available to members through the Chorus website. The Chorus did not need to use accumulated reserves to cover costs. The Committee will continue to programme concerts which ensure an appropriate level of reserves is maintained.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and the second edition of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued in October 2019.

Structure, Governance and Management

Reading Festival Chorus is an unincorporated association governed by a written Constitution. This is made available through the Governance page of the Chorus website.

In accordance with this the Committee of Management is required to prepare financial statements for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Chorus and of the income and expenditure for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the members of the Committee of Management are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Chorus will continue in business.

The members of the Committee of Management are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the Chorus and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with charity law and the requirements of the Constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Chorus and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Members of the Committee of Management are the Trustees of the charity. Committee members are selected by the members of the Chorus at the Annual General Meeting, through election where there are more applicants than posts.

A set of Chorus Policies is published for members and others in the Governance section of the Chorus website.

Reference and administrative details

Reading Festival Chorus is registered at the Charity Commission with registration number 254201. The registered address is that of the Treasurer (currently 121 Church Road, Earley, Reading RG6 1HG).

The Chorus is pleased that the pianist John Lill CBE continues to be our Patron.

During this period (including the time between the end of the reporting period and the date these accounts were signed) the Trustees were:

	From	To
Katherine Walkem (chair)	Start of financial year	Current
Jane Reed (vice-chair)	Start of financial year	Current
Margaret Cocks (secretary)	Start of financial year	Current
Nicholas Roberts (treasurer)	Start of financial year	Current
Thomas Wall (publicity)	Co-opted 24 January 2024	Current
Sally Hamilton (librarian)	Start of financial year	Current
Natalie McGuire (registrar)	Start of financial year	Current
Errol Carrington (concert manager - staging)	Start of financial year	AGM 16 October 2023
Jane Bazley (concert manager - artists)	Start of financial year	Current
Susan Mithen (concert manager – front of house)	Start of financial year	Current

The Vice-Chair (Jane Reed) is also the Making Music representative.

Examiner

The Committee of Management consider that neither an audit nor an examination of the accounts is required for this period under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act), but that according to our Constitution an independent examination is required. Mr William Ellison was re-appointed at the AGM as the independent examiner for the year ended 31 July 2024.

Signed on behalf of the members of the Committee of Management

(sgd) Nicholas T M Roberts

Nicholas Roberts – Treasurer

Approved by the Committee of Management on 6 September 2024

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES ON MY EXAMINATION OF THE ACCOUNTS OF READING FESTIVAL CHORUS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2024

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Reading Festival Chorus ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 July 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Charity 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 Charity'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 Charity 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: (sgd) W M Ellison

Date: 14 October 2024

Name: William Mark Ellison

Address: 73 Balmore Drive
Caversham
Reading
RG4 8NN

Reading Festival Chorus
For the Year Ended 31 July 2024

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	2024	2024	2024	2023	Further
	Unrestricted	Designated	Total	Total	details
	£	£	£	£	
INCOME FROM:					
Voluntary income					
Membership Subscriptions	9,554		9,554	9,536	5
Friends' Subscriptions	616		616	606	
Corporate memberships	0		0	0	
Donations	854		854	1,151	6
Gift Aid	2,223		2,223	2,560	7
Charitable activities					
Concert tickets and other income	5,908		5,908	5,779	8
Members tuition fees	0		0	0	5
Sundry income	0		0	0	
Other activities					
Fundraising activities	5,387		5,387	1,488	9
Sale & Hire of Music	2,043		2,043	1,996	10
Refreshments at rehearsals	314		314	92	
Investment income	792		792	411	14
TOTAL INCOME:	27,691	0	27,691	23,619	
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Costs of raising voluntary income					
Raising funds	(1,696)		(1,696)	(294)	9
Charitable activities					
Administration Expenses	(317)		(317)	(253)	11
Affiliation Fees and Insurance	(611)		(611)	(409)	
Concert payments	(9,398)		(9,398)	(12,640)	8
Rehearsals	(4,521)		(4,521)	(4,548)	
Music Director fees	(4,785)		(4,785)	(4,738)	12
Other					
Purchase & Hire of music	(1,966)		(1,966)	(1,826)	10
Refreshments at rehearsals	(56)		(56)	0	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE:	(23,350)	0	(23,350)	(24,708)	
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	4,341	0	4,341	(1,089)	
Reconciliation of Funds					
Total funds brought forward	19,828	0	19,828	20,917	
Total funds carried forward	24,169	0	24,169	19,828	

**Reading Festival Chorus
BALANCE SHEET
as at 31 July 2024**

	2024 £	2023 £	Further details
CURRENT ASSETS:			
Debtors & Prepayments	782	0	15
Investments COIF Deposit Account	18,138	14,347	14
Cash at bank and in hand Barclays Current Account	5,764	6,440	
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS:	<u>24,684</u>	<u>20,787</u>	
LIABILITIES:			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(515)	(959)	
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES:	<u>(515)</u>	<u>(959)</u>	
TOTAL NET ASSETS	<u><u>24,169</u></u>	<u><u>19,828</u></u>	
THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY:			
Unrestricted Funds	(24,169)	(19,828)	
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS	<u><u>(24,169)</u></u>	<u><u>(19,828)</u></u>	

Katherine Walkem - Chair

Nicholas Roberts - Treasurer

The Examiner's Report is on Page 6

Reading Festival Chorus

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 July 2024

1. Basis of Accounting

- a. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the second edition of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.
- b. The trust constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.
- c. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue and therefore the accounts have been produced on a going concern basis.

2. Recognition of Income

- a. Voluntary Income is received by way of donations and fund raising events. Cash donations are included in the accounts when they are received.
- b. Where incoming resources have related expenditure (as with fundraising) the incoming resources and related expenditure are reported gross in the Statement of Financial Activities, but shown side by side in the Notes to these Accounts.
- c. Subscription income due, including income tax recovered through Gift Aid, is accounted for in the period to which the subscriptions relate.
- d. Bank interest receivable is included in the period during which it is credited.

3. Expenditure

- a. All expenditure is included in the Statement of Financial Activities. The value of expense invoices received after the period-end is included in the relevant account.
- b. Any expenditure on stocks and items of a capital nature is written off in the period in which it is incurred.

4. Taxation

Reading Festival Chorus is not liable to either Corporation Tax or Income Tax on its activities by virtue of its status as a registered charity. The Chorus is not registered for VAT and the amounts shown are inclusive of VAT paid.

5	Membership subscriptions	2024	2023
	Number of members paying subscriptions (pro rata)	67.33 (69 individuals)	74
	<u>Voluntary income</u>		
	Membership fees received	9,554	9,536
	Friends' subscriptions received	616	606

The tuition element of members' subs was formerly recorded but is no longer relevant for Gift Aid purposes

6	Donations	2024	2023
	General donations	108	592
	Transfers from members 65+ paying full rate subs	746	601
		<u>£ 854</u>	<u>£ 1,193</u>

Donations to support a particular concert, and interval donations, are included in the appropriate concert account.

Donations to support a fundraising event are included with that event.

Donations includes receipts from a number of the Trustees.

7	Gift Aid	2024	2023
	Income tax refunded	£ 2,223	£ 2,560
	(The figure for 2023 included retrospective claims totalling £514)		

Reading Festival Chorus

Notes to the Accounts

For the year ended 31 July 2024

8 Concert Income and Expenditure

	Concert 25-Nov- 23 £	Concert 16-Mar- 24 £	Concert 13-Jul- 24 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
INCOME: Charitable activities					
Ticket Sales	2,111	2,024	1,394	5,529	4,966
Programme sales	0	0	0	0	187
Programme adverts	0	0	0	0	10
Sponsorship/Donations	50	0	0	50	0
Sale of Refreshments	0	0	0	0	504
Interval donations	144	0	185	329	112
					£
TOTAL INCOME:	2,305	2,024	1,579	5,908	5,779
EXPENDITURE: Charitable activities					
Conductors' Fees	725	613	613	1,951	1,552
Orchestra/Accompanist	3,751	300	300	4,351	5,819
Soloists	573	0	350	923	750
Music Hire	0	0	0	0	172
Venue Hire	250	300	930	1,480	1,399
Staging and Lighting	0	0	0	0	1,105
Piano Hire	0	0	0	0	588
Programme costs	135	135	90	360	265
Publicity costs	54	77	69	200	154
Miscellaneous	0	0	0	0	653
Refreshment costs	25	0	108	133	183
					£
TOTAL EXPENDITURE:	5,513	1,425	2,460	9,398	12,640
					£
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(3,208)	599	(881)	(3,490)	(6,861)

9	Fundraising	2024 Income £	2024 Expenditure £	2024 Surplus £	2023 Surplus £
	Raffles & Quizzes (Raffle at July 2024 concert)	242	0	242	497
	Bring & Buy Sales	0	0	0	144
	Hire a Choir	650	0	650	0
	100 Club	348	(174)	174	204
	Jill Evans music sale	172	0	172	0
	Social event	0	0	0	0
	Income from sponsored events	0	0	0	0
	Auction (incl Silchester Exhibition tour)	3,909	(1,522)	2,387	0
	Easyfundraising, AmazonSmile, etc	66	0	66	349
					£
TOTAL		£ 5,387	£ (1,696)	£ 3,691	1,194

Reading Festival Chorus

Notes to the Accounts For the year ended 31 July 2024

10	Sale and hire of music	2024	2023
	Income from sale and hire of music	2,043	1,996
	Expenditure on purchase and hire of music	<u>(1,966)</u>	<u>(1,826)</u>
	Net surplus/(deficit)	<u>£ 77</u>	<u>£ 170</u>

Music purchased by RFC for use by members is charged immediately against income. Thus the expenditure on music includes any additions to the library.

This category also includes the purchase and sale of concert folders, where a small stock of folders is kept by the Chorus.

11 Administration expenses

Trustees are entitled to claim reasonable expenses for travel to committee meetings. However no payments were made in the year. See also note 6

Trustee expenses paid	£0
Number of trustees paid expenses	0

A number of trustees were reimbursed for expenditure made on behalf of the Chorus (eg for music hire, printing, etc).

Details can be made available upon request.

12	Remuneration to trustees	2023	2023
	Professional fees - stand in for MD at rehearsals	nil	£ 197

(This needs to be recorded to be reported to the Charity Commission)

13	Cost of rehearsals	2024	2023
	Rehearsal hall hire costs	1,815	1,818
	Accompanist costs	<u>2,706</u>	<u>2,730</u>
	sub-total	4,521	4,548
	Music director's rehearsal fees	<u>4,785</u>	<u>4,738</u>
		£ 9,306	£ 9,286
	Costs to be met from members' subs include above PLUS		
	Administration expenses	£ 317	£ 253
	Affiliation fees and insurance	<u>£ 611</u>	<u>£ 409</u>
	TOTAL	<u>£ 10,234</u>	<u>£ 9,948</u>

14 Bank accounts

Cash reserves of the Chorus are held in our account at COIF Charities Deposit Fund. This investment generated £792 interest (2023: £411).

15 Debtors and Prepayments

Debtors and Prepayments includes £484 deposit paid on Great Hall of University for June 2025 concert