



**READING
FESTIVAL
CHORUS**

Reading Festival Chorus

Report and Accounts

For the year ended 31 July 2024

Registered Charity No 254201

Reading Festival Chorus

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For the year ended 31 July 2024

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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
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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 8LA

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

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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:

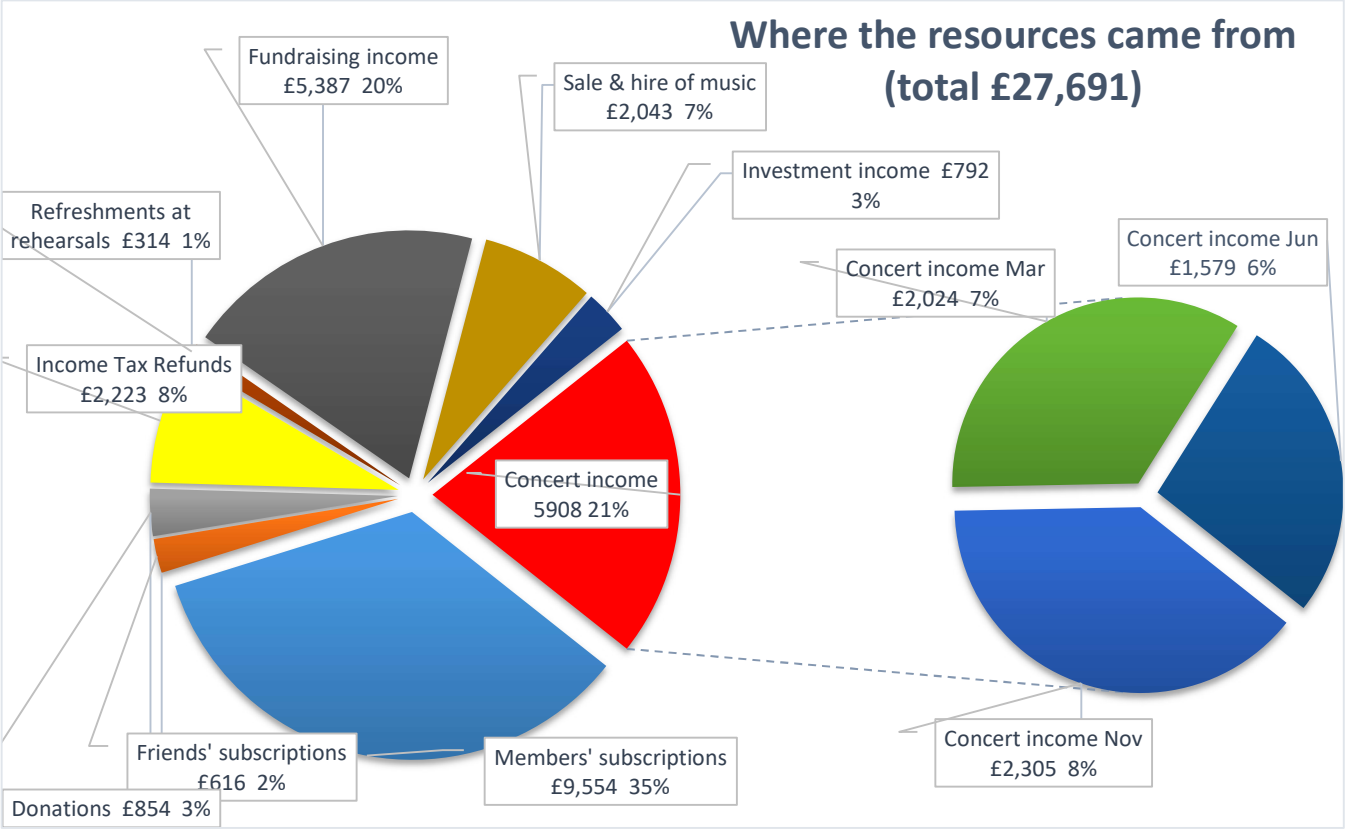
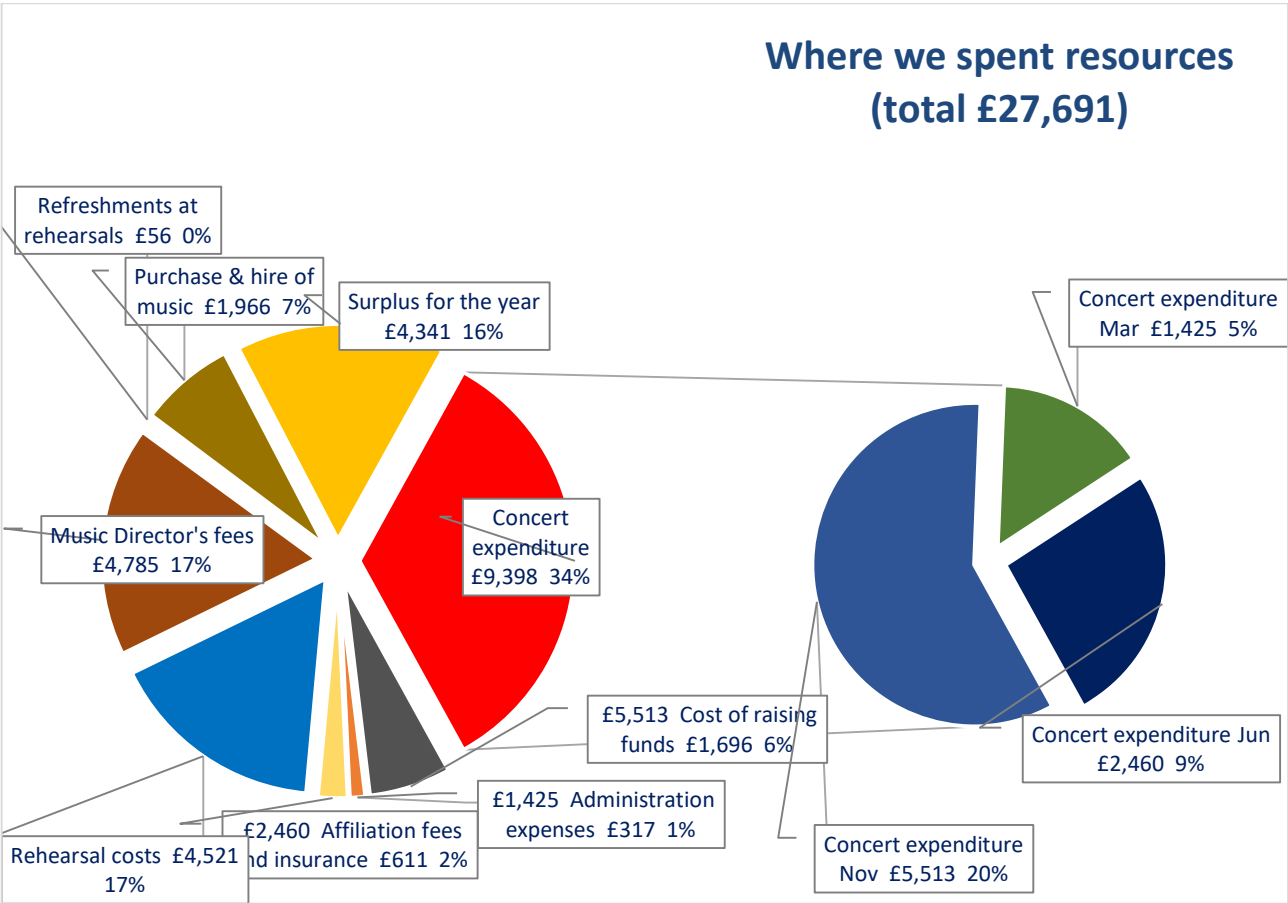


Chart showing our expenditure for the year:



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>24,169</u>	<u>19,828</u>	
THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY:			
Unrestricted Funds	(24,169)	(19,828)	
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS	<u>(24,169)</u>	<u>(19,828)</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

- 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.
- The trust constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.
- 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

- Voluntary Income is received by way of donations and fund raising events. Cash donations are included in the accounts when they are received.
- 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.
- Subscription income due, including income tax recovered through Gift Aid, is accounted for in the period to which the subscriptions relate.
- Bank interest receivable is included in the period during which it is credited.

3. Expenditure

- 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.
- 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	(1,966)	(1,826)
Net surplus/(deficit)	£ 77	£ 170

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
Professional fees - stand in for MD at rehearsals	£ 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	2,706	2,730
sub-total	4,521	4,548
Music director's rehearsal fees	4,785	4,738
	£ 9,306	£ 9,286
Costs to be met from members' subs include above PLUS		
Administration expenses	£ 317	£ 253
Affiliation fees and insurance	£ 611	£ 409
TOTAL	£ 10,234	£ 9,948

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