



## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE YEAR ENDING 31 JULY 2024**

### **THE SOCIETY**

Coventry Cathedral Chorus (formerly Saint Michael's Singers) was established in 1963 soon after the consecration of the new Cathedral Church of Saint Michael at Coventry. The society retains a close association with the Cathedral, which provides a base for rehearsals and a venue for some concerts. The choir also regularly takes part in concerts in Cirencester, in association with Orchestra Pro Anima, and has occasional opportunities to join with other choirs and orchestras to perform at venues further afield around the country.

The choir's current membership of about 65 mixed voices is drawn from a wide region centred on Coventry. Entrance to and continued membership of the choir is subject to regular audition.

From January 2022, Rachel Mahon has been the Chorus' Director of Music, following on from Paul Leddington-Wright's long tenure. Rachel is also the Director of Music at Coventry Cathedral.

The Chorus is run by a voluntary Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting and has no paid officers.

Although of amateur status, Coventry Cathedral Chorus strives to achieve the highest possible artistic standards, as declared in its constitution:

*The aims and objectives of the choir shall be the study and practice of choral music in order to foster public knowledge and appreciation of such music, both known and newly composed, by means of public performance of the highest possible standard*

Over the years the Chorus has come to be recognised as among the region's leading choral societies, both in terms of its diversity of music and in the quality of performance.

## OFFICERS

The officers of the society for the season 2023/2024 were as follows:

**Chair:** Kit Lawry

**Treasurer:** Eve Cooper

**Membership Secretary:** Olwyn Seal

**Other elected committee members:**

Martin Ablitt  
Hazel Allen  
Julie Barnes  
Sally Bradshaw

Philippa Rainbird  
Louise Ransberry  
Carole Solway

**Conductor:**

**Assistant Conductor:**

**Emeritus Conductor:**

Rachel Mahon

Luke Fitzgerald

Paul Leddington-Wright

**Chairman's Address:**

Kit Lawry  
19 Lower Ladyes Hills  
Kenilworth  
CV8 2GN  
Mobile: 07774 524352  
Email: [chairofccc@gmail.com](mailto:chairofccc@gmail.com)

**Treasurer's Address:**

Eve Cooper  
36 Beechwood Avenue  
Coventry  
CV5 6QG  
07760 153566  
email: [ccctreasurer1963@gmail.com](mailto:ccctreasurer1963@gmail.com)

**Charity Registration Number:** 257047



## THE SEASON'S ACTIVITIES

### *Coventry Cathedral Chorus' own promotions*

- In November 2023 the Chorus performed Rachmaninoff's *Vespers* sung in Old Church Slavonic. The Parliament Choir joined us, first in Coventry Cathedral and then in Southwark Cathedral, London. Feedback from audience quotes were very positive: "I never expected to hear that kind of music in this building". Along with that main piece, we sang shorter pieces by Gjeilo, Rheinberger and Barber.
- In December 2023 the choir presented a Christmastide Celebration in Coventry Cathedral. We were joined and accompanied by the Brass Band of Central England, Heart of England school choir and the Choristers of Coventry Cathedral, to raise funds for the Coventry & Warwickshire Children's Charity. A decision was taken to merge what had previously been two repeat concerts (afternoon and evening) into one concert. This proved successful. The programme comprised a mix of popular sacred and secular pieces for the festive season.
- Another change instituted in December 2023 was to sing Handel's *Messiah* once a year, and in Coventry only. (Travelling to Cirencester, though enjoyable, was expensive and sometimes difficult in winter weather.) We also discovered that we could get a reasonable audience performing *Messiah* on a weekday in Coventry, as the Cathedral's Saturday bookings in December needed to be available for other groups. This decision also cut down the choir's commitments from five concerts between mid-November and the end of December to a more manageable three. We performed by candlelight.
- On Good Friday 2024 the choir performed sacred works by Purcell, Bairstow, Sanders and Leighton for Holy Week and Good Friday. Very low advance ticket sales threatened cancellation but, in the end, there was a good, and very appreciative, audience.
- In May 2024, a new addition to our programme of Chorus-promoted concerts in Coventry Cathedral was a collaboration with the Coventry & Warwickshire Youth Orchestra to perform a Last Night of the Proms concert. We attempted, without success, to get grant funding for this but it went ahead anyway and was much enjoyed. So much so that C&WYO have already suggested another Last Night concert in May 2025. Joe Davis who conducts the C&WYO shared the conducting with Rachel for this concert.
- Our final "concert" in the 2023-2024 season celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of Coventry Cathedral Chorus (or St Michael's Singers, as we were initially named). This took the form of a Sung Evensong in June 2024 to which a very long list of past and present singers, conductors, patrons, Friends of Coventry Cathedral and our President Pam Rhodes were invited, as well as the Cathedral Choristers, to come and join us. It was a delight to welcome Pam Rhodes to Coventry again. Her presence enhanced the event.

## FINANCIAL OUTCOME OF CONCERT ACTIVITIES

### **Rachmaninoff's Vespers**

This was deliberately programmed to be an inexpensive concert; sung A cappella, together with the other shorter pieces of music, without orchestra to keep down costs. It was the only concert in the 2023-24 season to bring in a profit, of £763.

### **Christmastide Concert in aid of Coventry & Warwickshire Children's Charity**

The Chorus originally committed to paying the commercial rate for the Cathedral venue for this concert each year, so that the Cathedral didn't lose out. Changes in audience numbers and other factors (such as having the Brass Band of Central England playing with us – which is a big draw) meant that the concert made a deficit of £583.

The Chair and Vice Chair of CCC met with representatives of the C&WCC in January 2024 and agreed that C&WCC would find sponsorship to cover the cost of hiring the Cathedral venue at its commercial price. We hope that both C&WCC and CCC takings from this concert will be positive in future.

### **Handel's *Messiah* in Coventry Cathedral**

This concert attracted a reasonably sized audience who were very appreciative. We were working with a professional orchestra, though, so the outcome was a deficit of £2,143.

### **Good Friday Concert**

Audience numbers were quite low for this event – possibly because the works are less well known, although they attracted much appreciation. The outcome was a deficit of £311.

### **Last Night of the Proms**

This event was promoted jointly with the Coventry & Warwickshire Youth Orchestra, hoping to be a crowd-drawer and produce some profit. It did attract people who clearly enjoyed the music, joining in and waving a variety of flags, but resulted in a deficit of £326, split equally between CCC and C&WYO.

### **Jubilee Choral Evensong**

This event was aimed as a celebration of the Chorus and its 60 years of music-making. The music, company, and bringing together of a large group of people who care for Coventry Cathedral Chorus was wonderful. However, it made a deficit of £123.

## **FINANCE**

### *INCOME SOURCES*

#### **Members' Contributions**

Weekly rehearsal costs (see below) are covered by the members' annual subscriptions, which for this season were put up to £130 per person. Subscriptions amounted to £10,325 and Patrons' donations raised £2719, both including Gift Aid which was claimed where appropriate.

The 100 club operated again this year, raising £360 for the Chorus.

#### **Non-Concert Activities**

Royalties are earned from time-to-time from CD, radio or television recording sessions and also from concerts promoted by other agencies. Such fees totalled £224 in 2023-24.



## RESOURCE UTILISATION

### Concert Productions

The principal resource utilisation of the Chorus is its concerts. For 2023/24 expenditure on concerts was £24,490.

### Rehearsal Costs

Rehearsal costs consist of fees to the conductor and accompanist and costs related to the rehearsal venue. In 2023-24 these totalled £8285.

### Administrative Costs

Having no paid officers, but a very hard-working voluntary committee, the Chorus has very low administration costs - this year totalling £105, just 0.3% of expenditure.

## LOOKING FORWARD

### Concert Planning

Looking forward to the 2024-25 season, we plan a busy concert programme:

- Senbla.com, a London-based music promotion company, approached CCC to sing with them in a concert in Warwick Arts Centre featuring music from Game of Thrones, Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit. This represents a new venue and audience for CCC and a paid event on 1 November 2024.
- A Remembrance concert on 9 November 2024: Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*.
- A Christmastide Celebration concert in support of Coventry & Warwickshire Children's Charity on 7 December 2024 featuring the Brass Band of Central England and All Saints Primary School choir, in Coventry Cathedral.
- Two concerts in Compton Verney (another new venue and audience for CCC) on 13 December. Compton Verney is a Warwickshire stately home art gallery. These two concerts will also be paid.
- Handel's *Messiah* with candlelight in Coventry Cathedral on Monday 16 December.
- A performance of Charles Wood's *St Mark's Passion* and Finzi's *Welcome Sweet and Sacred Feast* in Coventry Cathedral on Good Friday, 18 April 2025.
- Last Night of the Proms with C&W Youth Orchestra on 10 May 2025 in All Saints Church, Leamington Spa.
- A concert to celebrate the 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Queen Elizabeth 1's visit to Kenilworth in 1575, in St John's Church, Kenilworth on Saturday 12 July 2025.

Further ahead we will endeavour to maintain the mix of the 2024-25 season: performing some concerts promoted by CCC, some in collaboration with other orchestras or choirs, some for payment, and singing in several different venues to reach different audiences.

## **Future Development**

- Working with our long-term friends, the Orchestra Pro Anima, and with the Brass Band of Central England, and re-igniting our partnership with the Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra, we shall look to expand our reputation and build audiences through promoting regular, popular events.
- Aiming to increase our presence on social media and actively work on inexpensive ways to increase our 'reach' of audiences. We have taken out membership of Culture Central which gives us free access to 2,000 people in Warwick, Leamington, Kenilworth, Birmingham and the West Midlands, through its fortnightly Newsletter where we can advertise our concerts for free.
- Researching how people coming to our concerts heard about them, and what draws them in.
- Continuing to seek and create opportunities to involve young people in our concerts, as well as the Choir Choristers, to attract audience (family members etc.) and to encourage children to continue participating in music-making in the future. To support this, we will work on building relationships with other organisations involved in music education in the area.
- Actively recruiting new members both for the benefit of the choir and because of the audience members they will bring with them. Most new members come through word of mouth from friends.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Coventry Cathedral Chorus will continue to use the resources at its disposal to promote concerts of choral music to the highest standards, working where possible with professional orchestras and soloists.

The choir is always keen to appeal to new audiences, as well as retaining existing customers, by presenting a wide variety of music including newly composed works. It also takes every opportunity to encourage the interest and involvement of young people in choral music.

In all of these ways the society seeks to fulfil the objectives of its constitution by bringing awareness and enjoyment of choral music to as wide a range of the public as possible.

**On behalf of the management committee:**



**Kit Lawry**  
Chair



**Eve Cooper**  
Treasurer



**Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Coventry Cathedral Chorus.**  
I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31st July 2024, which are set out on pages 8 to 11.

### **Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiners**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 (5) (b) of the 2011 Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of Independent Examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those recorded. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **Independent Examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
  - a. to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act, and
  - b. to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met, or

- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date:

13/11/2024

**David M Phillips, Chartered Management Accountant. Phillips and Becker Ltd,  
Accountancy House, 4 Priory Road, Kenilworth, Warwickshire CV8 1LL**

# COVENTRY CATHEDRAL CHORUS

## Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31 July 2024

	Notes	Total 2023/24	Total 2022/23 (restated)
		£	£
<b>Incoming resources</b>			
Concert Income		21,152	23,810
Donations		633	546
Fees earned		0	0
Net income from recordings/royalties	1	224	169
Membership subscriptions		10,325	8,792
Bank interest		210	94
Transport		460	250
Folders/Music		1,339	3,089
Patrons	6	2,719	2,989
100 Club		660	650
Fundraising		78	73
Other		40	0
		<u>37,840</u>	<u>40,462</u>
<b>Resources used</b>			
<b>Direct charitable expenditure</b>			
Concert costs		24,490	36,249
Rehearsal costs		8,285	7,225
<b>Other expenditure</b>			
Administration costs		105	240
Insurance		79	75
Making Music membership		392	365
PRS		379	78
Publicity		1,493	720
Transport		1,050	550
Folders/Music		1,579	2,678
100 Club		300	325
Special event - retirement of musical director		0	77
Subs reimbursement		165	0
Other - social events, refreshments etc		398	25
Donation to Coventry Cathedral		0	19,816
Donation to auditor's charity		225	200
		<u>38,940</u>	<u>68,623</u>
Net (outgoings)/ incoming resources		(1,100)	(28,161)
Revaluation of COIF investment fund	3	1,962	259
Fund Balances at 1 August 2023		<u>34,760</u>	<u>62,662</u>
<b>Fund Balance at 31 July 2024</b>		<u><b>35,622</b></u>	<u><b>34,760</b></u>



# COVENTRY CATHEDRAL CHORUS

## Balance Sheet as at 31 July 2024

	Notes	2023/24 £	2022/23 (restated) £
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors & Prepayments	2	2,079	2,270
Cash at bank and in hand		13,040	15,099
COIF Investment Fund	3	20,553	18,591
		<u>35,672</u>	<u>35,960</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4	<u>50</u>	<u>1,200</u>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		<u>35,622</u>	<u>34,760</u>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<u><u>35,622</u></u>	<u><u>34,760</u></u>
<b>Fund Balances</b>			
Unrestricted Funds	5	<u>35,622</u>	<u>34,760</u>
		<u><u>35,622</u></u>	<u><u>34,760</u></u>

Approved by the Committee Members on 25.11.2024 and signed on its behalf by:

  
**Kit Lawry**  
**CHAIR**

  
**Eve Cooper**  
**TREASURER**

## **Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 31 July 2024**

All activities are classed as continuing. Notes on pages 10 and 11 form an integral part of these accounts.

### **Accounting Policies**

#### **Basis of Accounting**

These accounts have been prepared under the historic cost convention and in accordance with applicable accounting standards and Statements and Recommended Practice on Accounting by Charities. In particular, the accounts are prepared using the accruals method with income and expenditure being recognised strictly in accordance with the dates of the concerts in which the choir is performing.

#### **Funds**

The Society's funds generally consist solely of unrestricted amounts. Unrestricted funds consist of both general and designated amounts which the Society may use at its discretion.

#### **Committee Costs**

The Society is a totally voluntary organisation, and no member of its Committee of Management is remunerated. £459 was reimbursed during the year to two Committee members in respect of administrative costs incurred by them on behalf of the Chorus.



## COVENTRY CATHEDRAL CHORUS

### Notes to the Financial Statement for the year ending 31 July 2024

	2023/24	2022/23
	£	£
<b>1. Net income from recordings / royalties</b>		
Profit	<u>224</u>	<u>169</u>
<b>2. Debtors</b>		
Trade & sundry debtors	<u>2,079</u>	<u>2,270</u>
<b>3. Investments</b>		
	20,553	18,591
<b>4. Creditors</b>		
Trade creditors	<u>50</u>	<u>1,200</u>

#### 5. Total Funds

The movements during the year were as follows:

	Balance 01/08/2023 (restated)	Incoming funds	Funds used	Balance 31/07/2024
General Funds	34,760	37,840	38,940	33,660
Revaluation of COIF investment fund		1,962		1,962
	<u>34,760</u>	<u>39,802</u>	<u>38,940</u>	<u>35,622</u>

#### 6. Patrons

The brought forward balance in the Patrons' Fund stood at £14,322.

Income from Patrons of £2,719 represents subscriptions and Gift Aid where applicable.

The balance in the Patrons' Fund at 31 July 2024 was £17,041.