

Trustees Annual Report (TAR) for Period 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2023

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name: Bristol Opera Company

Working Name: Bristol Opera

Registered Charity Number: 258553

Website: <http://www.bristolopera.co.uk>

Charity's Principal Office Address as at 15 July 2025:

36 Dirac Road
Ashley Down:
Bristol
BS7 9LP

Charity's Principal Office Address during TAR Period 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2023:

39 Canford Lane
Bristol
BS9 3DQ

Charity Trustees as at 15 July 2025:

Gary Richard Andrews	Vice-Chair – currently fulfilling the duties of Chair
Dr. Steven John Harris	Chair – <i>currently on leave of absence due to illness</i>
Lee James Hall	Treasurer – <i>appointed at AGM 19 October 2023</i>
Sue Tansey	Secretary
Katharine Clare Billington	Membership Secretary
Charlotte Monk	Secretary to the Friends of Bristol Opera
Abigail Elizabeth Rogers	Publicity / Social Media
Robert Aarons	Chorus Representative
Mary Helen Cummings	Social Secretary
Dr. Anna Maria Woods	Ex-Treasurer – <i>stepped down at AGM 19 October 2023</i>

Charity Trustees during the TAR Period 1 October 2022 to 30 September 2023

Dr. Steven John Harris	Acting Chair
Gary Richard Andrews	Acting Vice-Chair and Website manager
Dr. Anna Maria Woods	Treasurer
Kathryn Harris	Secretary
Katharine Clare Billington	Membership Secretary
Charlotte Monk	Secretary to the Friends of Bristol Opera
Robert Aarons	Chorus Representative
Veronica Lois Lander	Social Secretary

Structure, Governance and Management

Charity Structure: Unincorporated charitable association

Governance: Constitution as amended on the 14th September 1973, as amended 20 May 1993, as amended 3 September 1998, as amended 6 October 2022

Management

Charity Membership: Our members pay an annual subscription at the appropriate rate, to sing in rehearsals, and perform in opera productions and concerts.

Trustee Selection method: Trustees are appointed or reappointed every year, at the Annual General Meeting (AGM), which typically take place in October.

No person receiving any form of remuneration from the Charity may be a trustee.

A Musical Director and Producer are appointed each year at the AGM. The Musical Director receives a modest fee and is therefore not a trustee.

Regular committee meetings of trustees, Musical Director and Producer are held online via Zoom. Between meetings, daily communications happen via email and the Committee WhatsApp group.

Financial Management:

Our bank account has as least three signatories on the mandate, including The Chair, Treasurer and Membership Secretary. Every payment transaction must be signed by two people.

Receipts and payments accounts are prepared each year by the Treasurer and presented to our members at the AGM.

Objectives and Activities

Objectives: The object of the charity is to educate the public in the art of opera.

Activities: Founded in 1923, Bristol Opera is accessible opera, created by and for the people of Bristol. Every Spring we present a fully-staged opera, followed by a smaller-scale, opera-themed concert in Summer. Past shows are listed on our website <http://www.bristolopera.co.uk> In recent years, we have won three Rose Bowl awards (*Eugene Onegin* 2009, *Pearl Fishers* 2010, *The Vampire* 2012), the Wilfred Roe Trophy for Chorus Singing (*Eugene Onegin*) and three times, the National Operatic and Dramatic Society (NODA South West) Gerry Branton Award for Best Operatic Production (*Flying Dutchman* 2014, *Cavalleria Rusticana & Il Campanello di Notte* 2016 and *Carmen* 2017).

The charity trustees have complied with the duty in section 4 of the 2006 Act to have due regard to guidance on public benefit published by the Commission.

Achievements

Our fully-staged production this year was *La Traviata*, by Giuseppe Verdi. 15-18 February 2023, at the MacKinnon Theatre, 1532 Performing Arts Centre, Bristol Grammar School, Elton Rd., BS8 1SJ. Performing were 11 principal singers, 23 chorus, and 13 instrumentalists, conducted by Arne Kovac, our Musical Director since 2005. Arne has built up an orchestra pool of fabulous, local musicians, many of whom return every year. Our Producer / Stage Director was Charlotte Monk, a stalwart member since 1985, who has directed 11 operas since her 2009 debut with our double award-winning *Eugene Onegin*. Arne sourced a lush reduced orchestration by Francis Griffin (<https://www.reducedoperaorchestrations.info/la-traviata>) and we used a new English translation of the libretto by our multi-talented member, the late Graham Billing, who played Josef and sang tenor chorus too. The production was a great success – we did 4 nights instead of the usual 3, sold ~523 tickets totalling £9,010 sales and got very positive audience feedback. Our two *Viолlettas*, Jennifer Walker and Rebecca de Coverly Veale, gave outstanding vocal performances, and lead tenor John

Haque had great stage presence and emotional connection. John was so generous with his time, travelling from Sweden to rehearse and perform with us. Our chorus really brought the party to life, with exciting, clear-voiced singing. As always, we're very grateful to our enthusiastic team of set builders, costume makers, stage crew and front of house people.

To celebrate our Centenary, we held a blockbuster concert, 24 June 2023, under the wings of Concorde, at Aerospace Bristol, Hayes Way, Bristol BS34 5BZ. Audience members arriving early were able to board Concorde too! Usually, concerts are small-scale compared with the main production, but this just grew and grew, once our planning team - Gary Andrews, Rob Aarons, Kath Billington, Charlotte Monk and Susan Weaver (Life Member and ex-Chair 2013-2020) - got to work. In early 2022, we commissioned a new opera, ***Fish*** by local composer Joel Baldwin (<https://www.joelbaldwin.com/>), based on the life of Bristol-born cartoonist and illustrator Anne Harriet Fish, to premier at our concert and herald in the next phase in the life of Bristol Opera. We engaged bass William Stevens (<https://wno.org.uk/profile/william-stevens>), who most recently sang Dulcamare in our 2022 production of *L'Elixir d'amore*, as guest conductor and rehearsal repetiteur for *Fish*. Meanwhile, Arne devised and rehearsed a dazzling programme of opera choruses and arias, showcasing out hits over the years. We invited past members and soloists to join us, as well as our President, professional baritone Andrew Shore (<https://www.bristol.ac.uk/alumni/our-alumni/honorary-degrees/honorary-graduates/2014/shore.html>) who came and sang the role of Omar Kaayham in *Fish*. Altogether, 50 singers, a 35-strong orchestra, and a sellout audience of 312 people made it a magical and memorable night.

In terms of Income and Expenditure, the Centenary concert was highly atypical. Concert income of £12,843 was very high compared with the 2022 concert income of £1,523. This was due to:-

- Ticket sales £7,195 = ~312 seat @ £25/£20, compared with 2022 concert Ticket sales £1,188 = ~84 seat @ £15/£8.
- One-off Sponsorship income £4,861. This included a single donation of £2,000 from member Robert Aarons and his employer Hewlett-Packard via Benevity <https://hub.benevity.com/en-gb/>. Other contributors listed on the 2023 Accounts Breakdown, were members, former members and friends of Bristol Opera. In contrast, the 2022 concert sponsorship was zero.
- Programmes income £635, compared to £25 for 2022. Also, Susan Weaver bore the cost of programme design and printing herself, which was sponsorship-in-kind.

Similarly, concert total expenditure of £11,078 was high compared to £2,688 spent on the 2022 concert. This was mainly due to:-

- Commission of *Fish* £2,000. Zero for 2022.
- Lighting, Audio/Visual and staging hire £3,722. Zero for 2022.
- Venue hire £1,800, compared with £245 for 2022.
- Musical Director Fee £350. Fee waived for 2022.
- Advertising £275. Zero for 2022.
- Set and costumes for *Fish* £166. Zero for 2022.
- Photographer's fee £125. Zero for 2022.

Overall, our Centenary concert made a gain of £1,764.85 and the Year End Result was a gain of £1,283.54, so we had a successful year, both musically and financially.

Financial Review

Reserves Policy: There is no policy on reserves in place. Informally, we aim to maintain a bank balance greater than £15,000, to cover the cost of our main production, in the extremely unlikely case that we sold no tickets.

As Authorised by the Trustees of Bristol Opera,

Signed by: Anna Maria Woods, Trustee, and Treasurer during TAR Period 1/10/2022 to 30/09/2023

Dated: 15 July 2025

La Traviata 15-18 February 2023**Production Expenditure**

Theatre Hire	2408.66
Orchestra: 13 players x 6 calls	4985.17
Orchestra Parts Hire	638.00
Orchestra Score Postage	34.25
Music Director Honorarium	900.00
Principal Expenses - John Haque	900.00
Photographer Fee	125.00
Costumes	517.98
Set Build - Materials	183.07
Set Transport	100.00
Lighting Design, Hire & Operation	1034.28
Audition Room Hire 8 Aug 2022	28.00
Rehearsal Room Hire	1239.00
Rehearsal Accompanist Fees	910.00
Print Vocal Scores	303.88
Print Flyers & Banner	116.75
Print Programmes	316.09
Advertising - What's On	150.00

Subtotal 14,890.13**Production Income**

Ticket Sales: ~523 seats @ £20, £18, £14	9010.00
Programme Sales: 187 @ £2.50	468.10
Audition Fees	40.00
Vocal Score Sales	195.00

Subtotal 9,713.10**La Traviata LOSS -5,177.03****Company Operation****Expenditure**

Insurance	382.88
NODA Subscription	190.00
NODA & Rosebowl Reports - LaTrav.	130.70
Friends' Reception - La Traviata	98.50
Friends' Postage - Concert Programm	22.30
Presentations - La Traviata	275.30
Presentations - Centenary Concert	387.48
Logo Designs - Matthew Mills	180.00
Name Badges - La Traviata FoH	33.89
Website Hosting - Heart Internet	194.26
Zoom License	134.31
Sum Up Air Card Reader x 2	122.97
Sum Up -Transation Fees @ 1.69%	18.17
Bank Charge - non-UK bank transfer	25.00
Raffle Float - to Veronica Lander	25.00

Subtotal 2,220.76**Centenary Concert @ Aerospace Museum 24 June 2023****Concert Expenditure**

Commissioned Opera: FISH by Joel Baldwin	2000.00
Venue Hire - Concorde Hangar @ Museum	1800.00
Lighting, A/V & Staging - Stage Electrics	3722.40
Music Director Honorarium - Arne Kovac	350.00
Guest Conductor (FISH) - William Stevens	200.00
Orchestra: 29 /34 players, 5 calls maximum	935.75
Orchestra: desk lights & batteries	29.69
FISH Costumes - Donated by Teresa Davey	-
Omar Khayyam's Turban - Nicola Didcot	40.00
FISH Set	126.67
Photographer Fee	125.00

Commemorative Programme - Design & Printing

Sponsored by Susan Weaver

Rehearsal Room Hire	713.00
Rehearsal Accompanist Fees	320.00
Print Vocal Scores & FISH full score	292.76
Print Flyers	107.12
Advertising	275.00
Postage: orchestra and vocal scores	40.89

Subtotal 11,078.28**Concert Income**

Ticket Sales: ~312 seats @ £25, £20, £15	7195.00
Programme Sales: 127 @ £5	635.00
Vocal Score Sales	151.90
Sponsorship: FISH Commission [1]	2219.23
Sponsorship: Centenary Concert & Future [1]	2642.00

Subtotal 12,843.13**Centenary Concert GAIN 1,764.85****[1] See Page 2 for list of Sponsors****Company Operation****Income**

Members' Subscriptions	4800.00
Friends' Subscriptions	1570.00
Collection for Presentations - La Traviata	115.00
Refreshments	157.63
Raffles	273.85

Subtotal 6,916.48**Company Operation GAIN 4,695.72**

Thank You! - to our friends, members and former members who kindly sponsored the commission of Joel Baldwin's opera FISH, and supported our Centenary concert including the first performance of FISH:-

Gordon Brand in memory of Daphne Jane Burton Ken Mewes in memory of Christine
 The late Geoff Wickham in memory of Hazel Sandy Johnstone Sir John Kingman John Lye (legacy)
 Andrew Pincott Charlotte Monk Nigel Tasker Jeremy Watkins Monica Watkins
 Anthony Kennesson-Adams Gary Andrews The late Graham Billing Alison Bolster Neil Bennion
 Peter Braddock Glynis Campling Rebecca Chellappah Ethel-Jane Cormack Heather Davidson
 Teresa Davey Alexandra Denman Elfride Harris Beatrice Hayes Norma Head Niall Hoskin
 Cathy Mackerras Mary Miller Esmeralda Patatin Susan Weaver Anna Woods
 Anonymous Donors - with fund-matching from Hewlett-Packard

2023 Expenditure before 1 Oct 2022

La Traviata 15-18 February 2023	
Production Expenditure	
Addition Room Hire:	28.00
St. Andrew's Methodist Church 8 August 2022	
Print Vocal Scores - 6 Sept 2022	303.88
Subtotal	331.88
 Centenary Concert 24 June 2023	
Commissioned Opera: FISH by Joel Baldwin	
50% downpayment 29 April 2022	1000.00
TOTAL 2023 Spend before 1/10/22	1,331.88

2024 Income & Expenditure before 30 Sept 2023

Merry Wives of Windsor 15-17 February 2024	
Production Expenditure	
Print Vocal Scores	351.00
 Production Income	
Vocal Score Sales	240.00

CALCULATIONS LEADING TO:-

YEAR END RESULT & BANK BALANCE ON 30 SEPT 2023

Year End Balance on 30 Sept 2022	£19,552.98
Company Operation GAIN	£4,695.72
La Traviata LOSS	-£5,177.03
Centenary Concert GAIN	£1,764.85
Year End Balance at 30 Sept 2022	£20,836.52
 Merry Wives of Windsor - spend before 30/9/23	 -£351.00
Merry Wives of Windsor - income before 30/9/23	£240.00
Predicted Bank balance at 30 Sept 2023	£20,725.52
 Barclays Balance on 30 Sept 2023	 £20,725.52

Result for Year Ended 30 Sept 2023

Year End Balance at 30 Sept 2022	£19,552.98
Year End Balance 30 Sept 2023	£20,836.52
Overall Result for Year (GAIN)	£1,283.54

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE for year ending 30 Sept 2023**Productions: La Traviata****Centenary Concert****This Year**

Company Operations	Income	Expenditure
Members' Subscriptions	4,800.00	
Friends' Subscriptions	1,570.00	
Gift Aid	-	
Donations Received	-	
Refreshments	157.63	
Raffles	248.85	
Jim Head Commemoration		-
Insurance		382.88
NODA Subscription		190.00
Website Hosting		194.26
Zoom Licence		134.31
Presentations		547.78
Friends' Reception		98.50
Committee Expenses		81.19
2 SumUp Card Readers & Transaction Fees		141.14
Bristol Opera Logo Designs		180.00
NODA & Rose Bowl Awards - Reports		130.70
Subtotals	6,776.48	2,080.76

GAIN on company operation**4,695.72****Productions**

Production Expenses		25,305.42
Tickets Sales	16,205.00	
Refreshments	-	
Programmes	1,103.10	316.09
Audition Fees	40.00	
Sponsorship	4,861.23	
Subtotals	22,209.33	25,621.51

LOSS on productions**3,412.18****Total Income and Expenditure****28,985.81****27,702.27****Overall Result for Year (GAIN)****£1,283.54****Year Ended 30 Sept 2022****L'Elisir D'Amore A Masked Ball****Last Year**

Income	Expenditure
4,700.06	
930.00	
-	
31.90	
105.05	
214.00	
	50.00
	382.88
	117.00
	158.28
	172.68
	88.52
	71.18
	41.34
5,981.01	1,081.88

4,899.13**(GAIN) Last Year**

14,620.41

7,720.00

80.00

50.00

351.40

230.39

60.00

-

8,211.40

14,900.80

6,689.40**(LOSS) Last Year****14,192.41****15,982.68****£1,790.27****(LOSS) Last Year****BALANCE SHEET AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2023****Current Assets brought forward 1 October 2022**

Barclays	£18,221.10
Cash	£0.00
2023 EXPENDITURE before 1/10/22	£1,331.88
GAIN for year ended 30 September 2023	£1,283.54
2024 EXPENDITURE before 30/9/23	-£351.00
2024 INCOME before 30/9/23	£240.00
Total	£20,725.52

Current Assets carried forward 30 September 2023

Barclays	£20,725.52
Cash	£0.00
Total	£20,725.52

**Submitted by Anna Woods (Treasurer) to Bristol Opera at AGM on 19 October 2023****Re-Issued by Anna Woods 15 June 2025**

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Bristol Opera Company

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Bristol Opera Company, Registered Charity Number 258553, (the Charity) for the year ended 30 September 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the 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: 

Name: Valerie Ann MacLeod

Relevant professional qualifications: CTA ATT

Address: 26A Tresco Road, Nunhead, London SE15 3PX

Date: 