

## **Trustees' Annual Report for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2024**

**Charity name: Minehead and Exmoor Music Festival Society**

**Charity registration number: 260276**

### **Objectives and Activities**

The purpose of the Society is to promote the performance, appreciation and understanding of classical music by arranging concerts of orchestral music, recitals and other performances as part of an annual music festival held in the town of Minehead in West Somerset and in other locations on Exmoor.

The ethos of the society is that first-class live performances of classical music should be available to as many people as possible and not confined to those living in or close to cities. The society believes that the Minehead and Exmoor Music Festival demonstrates one way in which this can be achieved and is consistent with the Charity Commission's guidance on providing public benefit.

### **Achievements and Performance**

In 2024 the principal activities of the Society were the arrangement, promotion and management of the 61st Minehead and Exmoor Music Festival, which ran from 21st to 27th July and comprised three orchestral concerts, a chamber concert and a young musicians recital.

The previous year, 2023, was a landmark year for the Society, with a number of significant changes. The festival's Music Director, Richard Dickins, retired after 42 years in the role and the majority of the committee decided it was an appropriate time for them to stand down as well. So, for the 2024 festival a new committee was formed, comprising one member from the previous committee, new volunteers from the local community in Minehead and volunteers from the musicians of the orchestra. The 2024 festival was the first one organised by the new committee, which took over at the end of the 2023 festival.

The main achievement in 2024 was that the festival took place as usual and was widely judged as successful. There were concerns that the attendance at the festival might be reduced following the retirement of Richard Dickins. To counter that, in one of first acts the new committee chose up-and-coming young conductor Chris Stark as the replacement for Richard Dickins and engaged two outstanding soloists for the orchestral concerts. In the event, ticket sales for the orchestral concerts were higher than in the previous year (909 in 2024 compared with 823 in 2023).

Other achievements included the re-instatement of the Young Musicians Recital as part of the festival and the continuation of the Student Family Ticket Scheme. The latter is an innovative feature of the festival, funded by the Fairfield Charitable Trust. It was started in 2023 and

enables young people (under the age of 16) who are having instrumental music lessons to attend concerts accompanied by a parent. The scheme covers the cost of the tickets for both students and parents and is aimed at students who would benefit from attending but would be unlikely to do so because of the cost involved. Suitable young people are nominated by their music teacher. In 2024 the grant covered the cost of 26 young people attending the concerts.

Financially, the festival was less successful. The accounts for the 2024 festival show a deficit of £4,464, compared with a surplus of £3967 in 2023. The reasons for the deficit and the plans to address it are covered in the financial section of this report.

## **Volunteers**

Running the festival that is the central activity of the society is made possible by the voluntary contributions of very many people: the musicians in the orchestra, who give a week of their time, unpaid, to rehearse and perform an intensive programme of orchestral music concerts; the 'Festival Hosts' – local residents who provide the musicians with free bed and breakfast accommodation; and 'Festival Friends', supporters who make an annual donation to the festival. In a wider context – and not directly the responsibility of the society - there are other volunteers without whom the festival would not be possible: the Regal Theatre in Minehead, which hosts the orchestral concerts, is managed and run by volunteers.

## **Financial Review**

In 2024 the total income of the society was £25,143 and the total expenditure was £29,607, resulting in a deficit of £4,464. The deficit was covered by the reserve fund which, at the start of the year, stood at £8,100. The deficit was due to a combination of increased costs and reduced income.

### *Increased costs*

A number of factors contributed to increased costs in 2024. Some were an unavoidable result of the change of the committee while others were the result of decisions made by the new committee.

An example of the first kind concerns the catering for the orchestra. This was previously provided by a member of the committee at cost price, but the new committee had no option but to employ a professional catering company, increasing the cost from £2,231 in 2023 to £4,176 in 2024.

An example of the second kind is that a piano concerto was included in the programme of one of the concerts, which increased the cost of instrument hire from £975 in 2023 to £1,680 in 2024.

### *Reduced Income*

After ticket sales, the biggest single item of income for the society is from organisations supporting the arts and/or local events, in the form of grants. However, by its nature such income is uncertain and historically the society has had some years with large grant income interspersed with years of reduced income. In order to reduce the uncertainty in funding that

exists each year the society decided to try and increase the funding provided by local business organisations who make a regular, annual donation to support the festival. Currently there is only one company doing so. For the 2024 festival the society concentrated its efforts on recruiting such companies rather than applying for grants. This policy was followed during the year but was not successful. In total, twelve local companies were approached, but none was willing to enter into any kind of commitment (although one made a single, one-off donation).

In addition to sponsorships, the festival's income derives from two main sources: ticket sales, and individual donations. As is done each year, for 2024 both were reviewed as possible sources of increased revenue.

### *Ticket Sales*

Ticket prices need to remain comparable with those of other events at the Regal Theatre, which limits the scope for increased revenue from that source. In 2023 the ticket price for the orchestral concerts was raised from £18 to £20 and it was decided that a further increase in 2024 should not be implemented. In 2024 revenue was £17,310 from 909 tickets, while in 2023 it was £16,705 from 823 tickets.

### *Donations*

Donations are principally from Festival Friends, who are able to purchase priority tickets if they make a minimum donation of £20. The number of Festival Friends has remained more or less constant for many years and they comprise a loyal group of local residents who support the festival. It was decided that the scope for increasing the number of Festival Friends in the short term is limited and that increasing the minimum donation was likely to be counter-productive, so no changes were made for 2024.

## **Reserve Policy**

For the society a reserve fund in the Accounts serves two purposes:

First, it acts as a cushion against the fluctuations in the balance of the society's accounts that occur during the year. Most festival expenditure is incurred either before or just after the festival, while the major income (from ticket sales) does not reach the society until sometime after the festival. The reserve is necessary to cover the interval between the two.

The second reason is that, as outlined in the Financial Review section of this report, the yearly balance of the account can vary from year to year due to the uncertainty in the grant-based income on which the society relies. Historically, the festival making a deficit has not been a rare occurrence. In the last 12 years it has made a surplus in 5 years and a deficit in 7. As long as the reserve is sufficient to absorb the fluctuations in the final figure in the accounts this is not a problem.

At the end of 2024 the reserve is £3637. With annual deficits recently in the region of £3-4,000 this is clearly lower than is desirable. The aim of the society, therefore, is to increase the reserve to a level closer to the core cost of the festival. While this can be

achieved by a period of a number of years in which the festival makes a surplus with none in which it makes a deficit, this is an uncertain process.

### *Strategy for 2025*

Therefore, for the 2025 festival, the committee will:

- 1) continue to explore ways of increasing local business support;
- 2) resume applying for grants as the main source of additional income;
- 3) review the policies concerning the level of ticket prices, Friends' minimum donation, advertising costs, programme costs etc.

## **Structure, Governance and Management**

The Minehead and Exmoor Music Festival Society is an unincorporated association registered as a charity with the Charity Commission. The management of the Society is by the Committee, which has the power of co-option. The Society's constitution specifies that the Committee may appoint no fewer than two of its members as Trustees of the Society. In practice it has appointed three Trustees (the current trustees are listed below). The Committee as a whole is responsible for complying with the requirements of the Charity Commission. Each year the planning, organisation and management of the festival is carried out by the seven members of the committee, which meets at monthly intervals to monitor progress and make any decisions that are required.

The constitution allows the Committee to appoint a Musical Director, to whom they may delegate responsibility for devising the concert programmes. Richard Dickins, who held the post for forty-two years, retired at the end of the 2023 festival and one of the first and most important tasks of the committee in 2024 was the appointment of a new Music Director.

The fact that the Minehead and Exmoor Music Festival has been organised annually for very many years may give the impression that its continuation is assured and that the organisation and running of it occurs more or less automatically each year. This, of course, is not the case and each year there are new difficulties to be overcome and challenges to be met. The trustees are confident, however, that with the dedicated committee and excellent local support the festival will continue to flourish.

## **Reference and Administration details**

<b>Charity name:</b>	Minehead and Exmoor Music Festival Society
<b>Other names the charity uses:</b>	1. Minehead & Exmoor Music Festival (publicity) 2. Minehead Music Festival (bank account)
<b>Registered charity number:</b>	260276
<b>Charity's principal address:</b>	Langdales, Church Rd, Minehead, Somerset TA24 5SA

**Trustees:**

Tracey Thurlow (treasurer)

Paula Tysall

Michael Dewar



# Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period  
from

1/1/24

To

31/12/24

## Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Donations and Grants	6,453	-	-	6,453	-
Activities for generating funds	18,451	-	-	18,451	-
Lottery	211	-	-	211	-
Bank account interest	28	-	-	28	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b> (Gross income for AR)	25,143	-	-	25,143	-
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total receipts</b>	25,143	-	-	25,143	-
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Advertising	1,310	-	-	1,310	-
Admin costs	1,565	-	-	1,565	-
Printing and stationery	671	-	-	671	-
Ticket admin costs	1,211	-	-	1,211	-
Catering	4,256	-	-	4,256	-
Orchestral Musicians and soloists	6,440	-	-	6,440	-
Instrument and Music Hire	2,779	-	-	2,779	-
Travel and accommodation	7,322	-	-	7,322	-
Venue hire	4,053	-	-	4,053	-
<b>Sub total</b>	29,607	-	-	29,607	-
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total payments</b>	29,607	-	-	29,607	-
<b>Net of receipts/(payments) -</b>	4,464	-	-	4,464	-
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Cash funds this year end -</b>	4,464	-	-	4,464	-

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Treasurer's Account	622	-	-

	Deposit Account	3,015	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>3,637</b>	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	OK	OK
		<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Endowment funds</b>
	<b>Details</b>	<b>to nearest £</b>	<b>to nearest £</b>	<b>to nearest £</b>
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Details</b>	<b>Fund to which asset belongs</b>	<b>Cost (optional)</b>	<b>Current value (optional)</b>
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	<b>Details</b>	<b>Fund to which asset belongs</b>	<b>Cost (optional)</b>	<b>Current value (optional)</b>
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
	<b>Details</b>	<b>Fund to which liability relates</b>	<b>Amount due (optional)</b>	<b>When due (optional)</b>
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	T A Thurlow		Tracey Thurlow	27/09/2025



**Section A**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

Minehead and Exmoor Festival Society

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

December 2024

**Charity no  
(if any)**

260267

**Set out on pages**

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31/12/2024**.

**Responsibilities and  
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed 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 (other than that disclosed below \*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

*\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

**Signed:**

**Date:** 23/10/2025

**Name:** Ian David Lockhart Bogle



<b>Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):</b>	N/A
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<b>Address:</b>	1 Hanbury Mews,
	London, N1 7DW

## Section B

## Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

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**Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.**

The accounts were prepared carefully and I saw no anomalies. The receipt of Gift Aid money from HMRC doesn't necessarily come in the accounts of the year where they are claimed which confuses things somewhat but this is being sorted.

The year saw a depletion of the reserves. The previous year there was a desire to increase the reserves and the Annual Report outlines ways that this will be addressed in the coming year which is very important.