

**B R I G H T O N
O R P H E U S
C H O I R**

Brighton Orpheus Choir

Charity registration No. 260887

**Trustees Report and Financial Statements for year
ending 31st August 2024**

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31st August 2024.

Charity Name: Brighton Orpheus Choir

Charity registration number: 260887

Contact address: 91 Woodland Ave, Hove,
East Sussex, BN3 6BJ

Trustees:

Hilary Brown - Chair (from 18.10.22)

Sarah Saward – Treasurer (until 25.10.23); Val Gray - Treasurer (from 25.10.23)

Caroline Price – Secretary (until 25.10.23); Hilary Woodward – Secretary (from 25.10.23)

Vicki Lywood Last (from 19.10.22)

Emma Evans (until 24.05.24)

Terry White (until 6.7.24)

Murray Park (until 25.10.23)

Independent Examiner:

Steve Brentnall
1 Meadow View Cottages
Town Littleworth
LEWES
BN8 4TH

Choir web site: www.brightonorpheus.org

E-mail: info@brightonorpheus.org

Charity Structure, Governance and Management

Brighton Orpheus Choir ("the Choir") is run in accordance with its Constitution, adopted at the Choir's AGM on 10th October 2007 and lodged with the Charity Commission. The Constitution, which is amended from time to time, provides (inter alia):

- The members of the Choir's Managing Committee ("the Committee") are the Trustees of the charity and must be members of the Choir.
- The Committee comprises three officers (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer) who are appointed for one year at the AGM
- The Constitution provides for at least two but no more than six additional members of the Committee. These members are to be appointed at the AGM and hold office for one year.
- All members of the committee are eligible for re-election annually.
- The Committee has power to co-opt additional members provided that at any one time the total number of Committee members shall not exceed nine.
- Membership of the Choir is open to anyone aged 16 years or above and who is able to pass an audition.

Activities and Objectives

The objects of the Choir shall be:

1. to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by the performance of sacred and secular music and by any other means the Trustees see fit, and
2. to assist charitable institutions.

The choir achieves the first object through:

- Maintaining an active rehearsal programme that seeks to develop the musical ability and knowledge of all choir members.
- Public performance of musical works to both increase the musical ability of the members and the musical knowledge of the general public.

The choir achieves the second object through:

- Making retiring collections for other charities at the public concerts put on by the choir.
- Running fund raising events (such as carol singing) for other charities.

- Participating in fund raising events organised by other charities. The trustees have paid due regard to Charity Commission guidance on public benefit in deciding what activities the choir should undertake.

Achievements and Performance

The 2023/24 choir year began on 20th September at The Friends Meeting House in Ship Street. This has become our permanent rehearsal base and has proved a very successful venue due to the support we receive from the Meeting House staff, its location in the centre of Brighton and its proximity to transport links. We attracted many prospective new recruits to our Open Rehearsal – 17 of those became new choir members and the committee felt that the choir was entering a more positive phase with increased numbers and an interesting programme of music to sing in the future, under the leadership of Nicholas Houghton.

The choir rehearsed Verdi's Requiem for a joint concert with Sussex Chorus and Sussex Symphony Orchestra, organised by the Sussex Symphony Orchestra. The concert was held at All Saints Church in Hove on 11th November. Many choir members enjoyed performing in this large event.

Due to the earlier than usual concert date, the choir spent the remaining weeks practising for our carol singing fund raiser for Shelter, at Brighton Station on the 13th of December; conducted by our Musical Director Nicholas Houghton, this was a huge success with approximately 50 choir members attending. The public were generous with donations and appreciative of our singing. Carol singing is a beneficial way of making the public aware of the choir and its activities and we had leaflets available to give to interested members of the public. After the carol singing, we went to Pizza Express for a meal which was very enjoyable, and we will organise another meal again in December 2024.

For our Spring Concert we performed Dvorak's Mass in D and Faure's Requiem at All Saints Church in Hove, accompanied by the organist of All Saints, David Stevens. The concert was well attended, and we received very positive feedback. A retiring collection was made for Lunch Positive, which provides meals and opportunities to socialise for the HIV community in Brighton and Hove. We were pleased to welcome volunteers from Lunch Positive to the concert.

For our final concert of the choir year, we performed at St John's Church Knoyle Rd on 6th July - a concert on the theme of the sea and at an earlier time of 5pm. Refreshments were sold which included homemade cakes donated by choir members. The concert included performances from students from Varndean School Brighton. This is the second time that we have worked with the school and once again it was felt to be a success. These collaborations attract students' friends and family, who might not normally attend our concerts, and we also provide a valuable platform for the students to perform to a wider audience. A retiring collection was made for the RNLI who are celebrating their bicentenary this year. We were pleased to welcome members of the Brighton RNLI Crew who came to help collect donations.

Looking back on the achievements of Brighton Orpheus Choir during the 2023/24 year, we have had a successful year. Thank you for the work of Treasurer Val Gray and Secretary Hilary Woodward. We now have a carefully worked out budget and spending forecasts and the Constitution and other procedural matters have been scrutinised and brought up to date and continue to be monitored. The new website, on the Making Music Platform, is very helpful. We sell more of our concert tickets online; we have been able to update our image using professional photography, and we are able to organise our membership records and communicate with our members and the public more efficiently.

Brighton Orpheus Choir is privileged to have Nicola Grunberg as our professional accompanist, and under the leadership of our Musical Director Nicholas Houghton, the standard of our performances has improved, and our membership has increased.

Financial Review

Spending has been strictly controlled through forward planning to set budgets and monitor spending. In addition, membership has increased, bringing in a larger subscription income. Thus, we have largely been able to avoid spending more than income: Total receipts (excluding legacies) for 2023/24 was £24,498 and expenditure £24,842 leading to net payments of just £344.

We were excited to receive £11,517 from the estate of Laura Josephine Bristol, along with other donations totalling £256.

Balance at year end was £18,646.

During 2023/24 income collection methods were streamlined – subscriptions were paid only by bank transfer or cheque, saving around £150 in third party charges. Tickets were sold only on the web site and using card readers/cash on the door, to clarify income streams.

The concert accounts continue to present challenges, with staging and venue being considerable fixed costs. This year the Winter event was staged by Sussex Symphony Orchestra, avoiding costs and resulting in an unexpected contribution to our funds of £300 from the proceeds. We produced only two concerts ourselves: we managed to almost break even at the Spring concert and made only a small loss on the Summer concert, mainly due to the excellent efforts of all choir members in selling tickets. The donation of homemade cakes for sale at the Summer concert made a very positive impact on our audience and bank balance, we are very grateful to all those who baked, and those who organised and served cakes, and those who ran the bar. The sale of re-cycled greetings cards to choir members, has been re-established, which generates a small amount of further income. We continue to seek additional sources of income through grants and donations, so that the reliance on membership subscriptions is less.


Our Independent Examiner is Steve Brentnall to whom we are very grateful.

Reserves Policy

Our policy is to maintain sufficient reserves in the general fund to cover the expected deficit at any forthcoming public concerts for the current financial year, together with 12 months of salary and rehearsal venue costs, as contingency against unforeseen situations. Previously the reserve had been set at £10,000. The policy was reviewed and amended by the Trustees on 2nd October 2024, to £15,000, which we do currently have.

Prepared by Hilary Brown.

Approved by the Trustees at their meeting on: 23.10.2024

Signed:  Hilary Brown (Chair)

BRIGHTON ORPHEUS CHOIR

Receipts and Payments Account

For the year ending 31/8/2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Receipts		
<i>Income from Charitable Activities</i>		
Member subscriptions	15059	10248
Income tax recovered	1950	1107
Concert income	7427	7828
Friends	0	100
Legacies and donations	11773	0
Concert retiring collection	0	275
Other income	62	400
Total Receipts	36271	19958
Payments		
<i>Charitable activities</i>		
Concert costs	10054	20316
Conductor	5479	5404
Accompanist	2854	2517
Rehearsal rent	2566	3645
Publicity	1271	1709
Music purchase/Hire	884	1765
Other Expenditure/Admin	1195	808
Charitable donations	0	366
	24302	36529
Making Music Subscriptions and insurance/PRS	540	462
Total payments	24842	36991
NET RECEIPTS/PAYMENTS(-) FOR THE YEAR	11430	-17033

Cash Funds 1/9/2023	7216	24248
Cash Funds 31/8/2024	18646	7216

Statement of Assets and Liabilities as at 31 August

	Unrestricted	Restricted	2024	2023
Assets				
Unity Bank Current Account	18646	0	18646	7216

Signed by one or two Trustees on behalf of all members

1. Signed



Date 29/10/24

2. Signed

Date

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
BRIGHTON ORPHEUS CHOIR [Registered Charity No. 260887]**

I report on the accounts of Brighton Orpheus Choir for the year ended 31st August 2024 which are set out on page 7.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

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.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is eligible for independent examination, 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 statement

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 records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any 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 material matters have come to my attention which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act, or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I 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.



Signed by :-

Steve Brentnall

1 Meadow View Cottages
Town Littleworth
LEWES
BN8 4TH

Date *29th Oct 2024*