

KINGSTON CHORAL SOCIETY

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

1 August 2024-31 July 2025

Annual Report and Financial Statements

29 September 2025

Charity Number 261522

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Administrative Information

Trustees during the period

Kate Cockle
Jane Harnden
Jeanette Hull
Debbie Lye OBE
Sarah Moreton (from 24 October 2024)
Peter Wickenden (from 5 December 2024)

Executive Officers

Debbie Lye OBE (Chair)
Kate Cockle (Deputy Chair)
Jane Harnden (Treasurer)
Jeanette Hull (Secretary)
Sarah Moreton (Deputy Treasurer)
Peter Wickenden (Member representative)

Registered address

39 The Green
Morden
SM4 4HU

Charity registration number 261522

Independent Examiner	Claire Stephenson, 3 Popes Road, Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire WD5 0EY
Bankers	CAF Bank Ltd., 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

Kingston Choral Society is affiliated to Making Music and Arts Richmond

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives of the Charity

Kingston Choral Society is a Registered Charity in England and Wales, charity number 261522. Its charitable object is "the study and practice of choral music in order to educate the public in its arts and sciences, by the presentation of concerts and other activities".

Objectives during the period were:

- To further build the membership, especially in the lower voice parts
- To generate more income in response to continuing cost increases to enable KCS to continue to provide high quality choral music for audiences within the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames (RBK) and beyond
- To supplement fundraising activity and subscriptions with grant income from the Humphrey Richardson Taylor Charitable Trust and soloist subsidies from the Josephine Baker Trust
- To complete the review of Governance arrangements, started in 2023-24, culminating in the adoption of a revised Constitution.
- To carry out additional activities to fulfil the Society's public benefit objectives.

Membership and Funding

As a voluntary organisation managed by its members, Kingston Choral Society's main source of income is member subscriptions. The Society claims Gift Aid relief on these where eligible. Further income is generated via grant applications, sundry activities, including the sale and hire of music and concert dress accessories, and fundraising activities, described below. Annual Membership subscriptions remained at £180 or £25 per term for students.

During the period, KCS membership increased from 112 to 126, with a temporary higher figure of 138 during the spring term, when the society ran a successful special 'one term only' membership offer to attract lower voices for the Cadogan Hall 75th Anniversary Concert.

Fundraising, Grants and Donations

Internally, the Society raises funds through activities including raffles, bring and buy, plant and produce sales, a ticketed Come & Sing event, and a Friends Scheme. During the period these activities raised £3053.

The society's fundraising activities were supplemented by grants generated by a successful application to the Humphrey Richardson Taylor Charitable Trust and to the Josephine Baker Trust sponsorship scheme to match fund six young soloists for the November performance of *Israel in Egypt*.

The Society drew on the donation of £7,000, received in the 2023-2024 financial year, that was made specifically to enable us to meet the considerably higher costs of staging the March 2025 Brahms and Poulenc concert at Cadogan Hall in central London. In accordance with the donor's wishes, we intend to carry

forward a proportion of that gift to facilitate the re-establishment of the pattern of regular concerts there that applied before the pandemic.

Musical programme during the year 1 August 2024 to 31 July 2025

The annual concert programme is proposed by Andrew Griffiths, the Musical Director, and within a budget parameter proposed by Trustees in the early spring of each year. The Trustees then seek Committee approval for the programme. The Concert season runs from September to June. Members rehearsed and performed four concerts during the period. The November and March concerts in particular drew larger than expected audiences, and the Society was able to attract soloists and musicians of the highest calibre to perform for the local community.

KCS 2024-2025 Concert Season

16 November 2024 All Saints Church, Kingston *Israel in Egypt*

Handel: *Israel in Egypt*

Soloists: Georgie Malcolm & Harriet Cameron (Sopranos), Alexander Hutton (Countertenor), Dominic Lee (Tenor), Alaric Green & Jacob Harrison (Basses)

Purcell Orchestra

Conductor: Andrew Griffiths

14 December 2024 St Andrew's Church, Surbiton *Christmas Concert*

Bob Chilcott: *Mary Mother*

Carols for Choir & Audience

Organ: Gavin Roberts

Conductor: Andrew Griffiths

29 March 2025 Cadogan Hall *75th Anniversary Concert*

Poulenc: *Gloria*

Brahms: *A German Requiem*

Cadogan Hall, Sloane Square

Soloists: Sophie Bevan (Soprano), Roderick Williams (Baritone)

Thames Sinfonia

Conductor: Andrew Griffiths

28 June 2025 St Andrew's Church, Surbiton *Rhymes & Charms*

Kerry Andrew: *Rhymes & Charms for Flyaway Things*

John Rutter: *The Sprig of Thyme*

Madrigal Selection: Gibbons, *The Silver Swan*; Bennet, *All Creatures Now*;

Butler, *The Bee Madrigal*; Josquin, *El Grillo*; Vautour, *Sweet Suffolk Owl*; Anon, *Sumer is icumen in*.

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, *Deep River* (Piano)

Florence Price, *Clouds* (Piano)
 Piano: Libby Burgess
 Conductor: Andrew Griffiths

The almost 40 year partnership with the Thames Sinfonia and Purcell Orchestra ended this year. It has been of immense value to be able to source professional musicians through the Society's longstanding relationship with the orchestra fixer Elizabeth Andrews. Fortunately, the KCS Musical Director has identified a professional fixer who has agreed to work with KCS in the same way by securing professional musicians to play in the society's orchestral concerts in the future.

Other musical activities

On 3 April 2025 at St Andrew's Church, Surbiton, KCS Musical Director, Andrew Griffiths, supported by accompanist Gavin Roberts on piano and organ, ran a highly successful *Come & Sing* evening workshop, focusing on Faure's *Requiem* and his *Cantique de Jean Racine*. This fundraising event attracted 115 singers, including 31 non-members. The evening also featured a raffle and a refreshment interval including cakes baked by members, some of which were later sold. The event raised £1,118 for the society.

Alongside the scheduled concerts, the Kingston Choral Society volunteer outreach programme entertained and engaged with audiences from the wider community in fulfilment of our Public Benefit responsibility. The choir's annual carol-singing afternoon in the Bentall Shopping Centre on 30 November 2024 raised a record £600 for the Shooting Star Children's Hospice. In addition, KCS Outreach programme volunteers visited 5 residential homes and day care settings across the borough to entertain visitors and clients on 7 occasions during the period.

Social Activities

The pandemic of 2020-2021 demonstrated the value of the KCS community to its members. The singing is the primary purpose of the choir, but the sense of community, burgeoning friendships and interaction that go with it are an important aspect for our members. The Membership Secretary, Voice Reps and the Trustees are all conscious of this and build opportunities for socialising into choir activities. For example, all new members receive a welcome letter, there is a tea and talk break during every rehearsal, and members are reminded regularly of the opportunity to meet others at a nearby pub after rehearsals. Members also organise annual Choir & Friends walks, and advertise other opportunities to walk with choir colleagues during the year.

Website development

This project was completed and launched for members during the period. Members and external partners have praised the look and navigability of the refurbished website. There is also enhanced security and the benefit of an easily accessible private Members' area.

This project was led by the Society website manager and the Treasurer, supported by the expertise of an IT professional who donated his time and advice to KCS free of charge.

Documentation and file sharing

The current executive team inherited a Dropbox file storage system. This was incomplete, difficult for some members to access on their personal IT systems, posed problems of version control and was difficult to navigate. During the year the Secretary, on behalf of the Committee, explored different options. Informed by that work, Committee agreed to migrate KCS files from Dropbox and personal computers onto Google Drive, and to use Google Drive consistently for file storage and sharing from now on. Although this system is problematic for users who don't have a Gmail account, its functionality in terms of sharing files, and allowing selected users to save and edit documents is good. There is therefore a project afoot to migrate KCS documents into folders, including naming and dating all files and folders in a consistent and transparent way.

Governance

The Trustees form the executive team, and they advise the Committee of 12 (the 6 Trustees plus 6 additional volunteer members), which is the governing body of the Society.

Trustee appointments are proposed and elected by members at the AGM each September/October. Trustees serve for up to five years with their appointments re-approved annually at each AGM during their term of service. As early as possible before a Trustee post (see next paragraph) falls vacant, the position is advertised in the weekly KCS Newsletter. Potential applicants receive a job description, and a summary of Trustee roles and responsibilities, based on Charity Commission Guidance. If there is more than one application for a role, an appointment panel of Trustees and other Committee members select the successful candidate. All Committee appointments are endorsed by the AGM.

The October 2024 AGM agreed to appoint a fifth Trustee. There have traditionally been four Trustees who also carry out the executive roles involved in running the charity. These are: Chair, Deputy Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. The serious illness of the Treasurer throughout the period necessitated the appointment of a Trustee Deputy Treasurer. The Trustees arranged for the current Treasurer's predecessor, a professional accountant, to manage the choir's finances as Acting Treasurer, but she was not able to take on the wider responsibilities of Trusteeship and membership of the executive. The election of a Trustee Deputy Treasurer both enhances financial management and ensures that the executive team of Trustees remains informed about and accountable for financial decision-making. The December 2024 SGM (see below) then elected a sixth Trustee "without portfolio" to represent the Members' perspective, and to provide additional management capacity. For example, assisting the Secretary with the ongoing digital files migration from Dropbox to Google Drive, and working with members to review governance arrangements and role descriptions to ensure that there will be a strong candidate standing for election as Chair at the September AGM.

The Committee endorses and reviews all policies, manages risks, agrees the concert programme, signs off budgets and makes significant decisions, e.g. on musician appointments and remuneration, subscription rates and concert ticket pricing. During the period Committee reviewed and amended the Financial Reserves Policy, the Risk Management Policy and Risk Register, the Concert Policy, the Data Protection Policy, the Music Hire Policy, the Safeguarding Policy and the Choir Code of Conduct Policy, which sets out the Society's expectations of members' behaviours.

The Committee meets termly, at least three times a year, and outside these meetings may occasionally agree decisions via email. A quorum for both meetings and written decisions is 8.

Around a dozen other non-committee helpers contribute by taking responsibility for essential tasks, including website management, social media, internal communication, music purchase and librarianship, liaison with Making Music, ticket sales, member support, drafting programme notes, marketing materials, management of the KCS Friends scheme and outreach activities. All committee members and helpers carry out roles with tasks and responsibilities set out in job descriptions.

Additionally, during the period a Cadogan Hall Organising Committee (CHOC) special project team, worked together to ensure timely and successful delivery of the major investment we made in the March 2025 concert. The CHOC met again to review the experience and the outcomes, which have been recorded for future learning.

Amendment of the Constitution

Following on from the identification of a need to update the constitution during the 2023-24 season, the Committee drafted, amended and reviewed proposals to update it. In September 2024 they agreed to recommend the revised version to members, and Trustees called an SGM for 5 December 2024. 52 members (46% of the membership) attended. The meeting unanimously adopted the amended KCS constitution (last revised in 1993), agreeing that the new version better reflected current practice, notably in the domains of digital communication and recognition of essential policies and controls to underpin the operations of the charity, particularly electronic banking.

Risk Management

Trustees maintain, and the Committee regularly reviews, a risk register to enhance the Society's readiness to respond to potential risks and issues as they arise. The register encompasses four overarching risk areas: Governance, Finance, People and Reputation, and assesses likelihood and impact. Risk mitigation and contingency plans are included.

Financial Controls

Financial controls, which are reviewed regularly by the Trustees, include:

1. Preparation of budgets showing a two-year outlook, which are approved by the Trustees and Committee.

2. Reviews of performance against budget and other financial matters at each committee meeting.
3. Preparation of a forecast, generally at the half-year stage, for review by the Trustees and committee, and agreeing actions to address areas of concern as necessary.
4. All Trustees are advised of payments to be made from the Society's bank account, which also require authorisation by two Trustees.
5. Expenses are only reimbursed where they have been incurred in the course of carrying out agreed choir activities.
6. Capital expenditure and other one-off types of expense must first be agreed by Trustees and Committee.

Public Benefit

In planning activities, the Trustees give careful consideration to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit and confirm that they have complied with their duty in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011.

Kingston Choral Society specialises in providing access to high quality choral music to the local community and audiences from further afield. The Society engages with the community in several ways, including through:

- Four annual concerts, usually at venues within the borough, which are preceded by free open rehearsals earlier on the day of the concert;
- Active publicity and marketing campaigns, both online and via leaflets and flyers, which encourage local people to join the choir and to attend our concerts;
- Outreach activities in shopping centres, care settings and other locations;

During the year the charity additionally benefited the public by generating charitable funds from a Christmas Carol public concert held in the Bentall Centre which raised over £600 for Shooting Star Children's Hospices.

Financial Review

The 2024-25 accounts were approved by Members at the AGM on 25 September 2025.

Subscription revenue was £3,530 over budget – largely thanks to members that joining in the Spring term for the Cadogan Hall concert, but also through a growth in annual memberships. The major portion of the additional Gift Aid receipts of £1,818 was attributable to this increase.

Large concerts with a professional orchestra and soloists are part of our charitable purpose and are expected to be loss-making. This is offset slightly by smaller events with only piano and/or organ accompaniment which tend to yield a small profit. This year finances did better than budgeted overall. Strong publicity efforts helped to boost audiences, particularly at Cadogan Hall. Sales of drinks and programmes per head of audience are increasing, helped by the introduction of card readers that allow us to sell multiple items in one go.

The change in environment since the pandemic prompted the Trustees to conduct more detailed analysis of our own finances, including benchmarking

against other choirs. This helped to inform the 2023 subscription fee increase, and a ticket-pricing review last year led to increased concert revenue. The Committee has also focused on trimming costs, striving to get good value without affecting the quality of our activities. The improvement in the Society's financial position enables a more ambitious approach in the coming year.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Kingston Choral Society

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 July 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

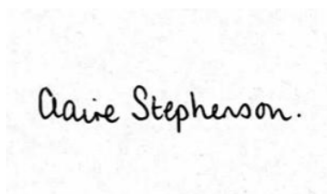
I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

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; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.



Claire Stephenson FCA

3 Popes Road
Abbots Langley
Hertfordshire
WD5 0EY

Date 29th August 2025

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Balance Sheet

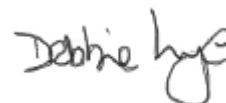
Balance Sheet			
Kingston Choral Society			
As at 31 July 2025			
	Account	31 Jul 2025	31 Jul 2024
Fixed Assets			
	Tangible Assets		
	Office Equipment	331.88	414.88
	Total Tangible Assets	331.88	414.88
Total Fixed Assets		331.88	414.88
Current Assets			
	Cash at bank and in hand		
	Current Account	1,031.45	697.79
	Deposit Account	32,470.91	27,501.06
	Total Cash at bank and in hand	33,502.36	28,198.85
	Accrued Income	4,330.00	22.00
	Petty Cash	225.00	225.00
	Prepayments	1,371.82	4,452.68
Total Current Assets		39,429.18	32,898.53
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year			
	Accruals	1121.61	321.61
	Deferred Income	3,500.00	11,927.00
Total Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		4621.61	12248.61
	Net Current Assets (Liabilities)	34,807.57	20,649.92
	Total Assets less Current Liabilities	35,139.45	21,064.80
	Net Assets	35,139.45	21,064.80
Capital and Reserves			
	Current Year Earnings	14,074.65	1,583.51
	Retained Earnings	21,064.80	19,481.29
Total Capital and Reserves		35,139.45	21,064.80

Approved by the trustees of Kingston Choral Society

Signed:



Clare Mannall, Acting Treasurer
30/8/25



Debbie Lye OBE, Chair
25/8/25

Principal Accounting Policy

The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have set a policy whereby the unrestricted free reserves held by the Society should be sufficient to cover between 3 and 6 months of operating costs. This ensures that undertakings, for example, in the form of contractual commitments to venues and freelance musicians, can be met with confidence. At 31 July 2025, free reserves amounted to £28,839 (2024: £9,515). Restricted reserves consisted of a £2,800 grant from the Humphrey Richardson Taylor Charitable Trust for the four concerts in the 2025-2026 season, and a private donation of £3,500 towards the cost of staging a future dated Cadogan Hall concert, and to provide a subsidy for future appearances there.

Statement as to Disclosure of Information to the Independent Examiner

The Trustees who were in office on the date of approval of the financial statements have confirmed, as far as they are aware, that there is no relevant information of which the Independent Examiner is unaware. Trustees have taken the steps that they ought to have taken as trustees in order to make themselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that it has been communicated to the Examiner.

The report and financial statements were approved by the committee via email in September 2025, and recommended to and adopted by Kingston Choral Society Members at the AGM on 25 September 2025.

Future Plans

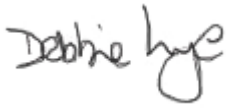
Kingston Choral Society has scheduled a varied programme for 2025-26. The season opens on 22 November, St Cecilia's Day, with an exuberant orchestral concert of musical celebration: Britten's *Rejoice in the Lamb*, Vaughan Williams's *Serenade to Music* and Haydn's *Paukenmesse*. The Christmas concert features The Holy Birth, a choral work by Elgar's contemporary, Herbert Sumsion, alongside traditional carols and well-known songs. On 21 March *Romantic Visions* celebrates great nineteenth century German oeuvres by Beethoven, Brahms, Mendelssohn and Schumann. The June season finale, *Make our Garden Grow* will focus on compositions celebrating the natural world, and depicting the fragile balance of the climate. The programme is set out in a Concert Calendar leaflet which Members disseminate widely across Kingston and neighbouring boroughs.

Over the next period the Society Trustees aim:

- To further build the choir's profile, audiences and membership
- To continue to generate more income sufficient to support high quality music-making
- To keep member subscriptions and ticket prices under review, as advised by the Treasurer
- To extend access to music to new local audiences through an increasingly active outreach programme

- To ensure a smooth transition when the current Chair steps down after five years in September.

Signed on their behalf:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Debbie Lye". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent 'D' and 'L'.

Debbie Lye OBE, Chair