

BEDFORDSHIRE ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED 31st
JULY 2024

SECTION A: REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

Charity name: BEDFORDSHIRE ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY (the ``Society``)

Registered Charity Number: 262813

Other name the Society is known by: Bedford Symphony Orchestra; Bedford Sinfonia

Contact address of the Society: Dominic Mills & Co, 11 Grove Place, Bedford, MK40 3JJ

Email: enquiries@bedfordsymphony.com

Website: www.bedfordsymphony.com

Trustees

The following individuals served as Trustees during the twelve months ended 31 July 2024

Chairperson: Louise Radok

Bedford Sinfonia Representative: Dominic Mills,

Honorary Treasurer: Clive Bachmanis

Elected Ordinary Members of the committee for the 12 month ended 31 July 2024 were:

Honorary Secretary: Nicola Phillips

Bedford Symphony Orchestra Representatives: Julia Robinson, Caroline Cartwright

Publicity Coordinator: Benjamin Phillips

Bedford Sinfonia Representatives: Benjamin Phillips

Ex-Officio Members:

Caroline Waters, Alex Collins

Bankers: CAF Bank Limited, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4TA

Solicitors: Dominic Mills & Co, 11 Grove Place, Bedford, MK40 3JJ

Independent Examiner: John Sheehan, FCA, 42 Mallard Hill
Bedford. MK41 7QR

Section B: STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Description of the Society's Trusts

The Trustees of the Society are the three officers and the five elected Ordinary Members of the Committee (each a Trustee and together the 'Trustees'). In accordance with the Constitution, each year the membership of the Society elects the Officers and Ordinary Members of the Committee by a ballot at the Annual General Meeting. The Constitution provides that the Trustees may fill any vacancies arising on the Committee. The Chairperson is eligible to serve in this capacity for a maximum consecutive period of five years after which period he/she may be re-elected as an Ordinary Member. The other Officers and elected Ordinary Members may stand for re-election without restrictions.

On appointment and at any subsequent re-appointment thereafter, every Trustee is required to provide written confirmation to the Society of their consent to act as a Trustee of the Society and to confirm that they are not disqualified by law from acting as Trustee. Each Trustee has been provided with a copy of the following publications issued by the Charity Commission:

The Essential Trustee: What you need to know (CC3- May 2018), Charities and Public Benefit. The Charity Commission's general Guidance on public benefit (PB1 Sep. 2013).

The Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits.

Management of the Society

The management of the Society and the control of its funds are vested in a committee consisting of:

The three Officers (Chairperson, Hon. Treasurer, Hon Secretary):

The five elected Ordinary Members (two representatives each from the Bedfordshire Symphony Orchestra and the Bedford Sinfonia as well as the Publicity Coordinator.

The Co-opted Members (Webmaster and Outreach Organiser); and the Ex-officio Members appointed by the Officers and elected Ordinary Members who advise the Trustees on the matters under discussion.

During the twelve months ended 31st July 2024, the orchestras welcomed 4 guest conductors, none served as an Ex-officio member.

The Committee had regular Zoom meetings.

Affiliations of the Society

The Society is a member of Making Music- The National Federation of Music Societies (Registered Charity Number 249219) which represents and supports amateur and semi-professional music groups of all genres throughout the United Kingdom.

Section C: OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Aims of the Society:

The Society exists primarily to promote musical education in Bedfordshire. In furtherance of this aim, the Society runs two orchestras, the Bedfordshire Symphony Orchestra and the Bedford Sinfonia.

Principal Activities:

The Society regularly organises and promotes around ten classical music concerts each year in and around Bedford featuring performance by its two orchestras who are often joined by established soloists of international repute as well as younger soloists embarking on their professional careers. Both orchestras regularly support other musical groups in and around Bedfordshire in their training and performances.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these aims:

In accordance with section 2(1)b within section 3(1) of the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, the Trustees have had regard to the guidance on public benefit issued by the Charity Commissioners when exercising any powers and duties to which the guidance would be relevant. The Trustees believe that the Society conforms to the public benefit requirements of the Charity Commission. The reasons for this are:

The Society has charitable objectives which demonstrate public benefit in promoting the education, art, practice and public performance of music. All individuals in the local community have the potential to benefit from the activities of the Society. There are no restrictions on the membership of the Society- anyone with an interest in music can become a non- playing member. Playing membership is restricted to those performing in the two orchestras who meet the age and playing standard requirements. The concerts promoted by the Society are open to all members of the public without restriction.

Discount on ticket prices is offered to senior citizens, the unemployed, students and school children. Short educational talks are often given at concerts. The Society gives assistance to other music groups in Bedfordshire in support of musical education initiatives.

Section D: ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCES

Following Michael Rose's retirement at the end of the 2022-23 season, we were most fortunate in securing the services of two familiar faces as interim conductors for this season, namely, Uwe Radok for BSO, and Ian Smith for BS, whilst we went through the process of selecting a permanent conductor for BSO. This was expected to take up the whole season, so the process of looking for a permanent conductor for Sinfonia was postponed for the time being.

The season began with a welcome return to St Paul's Church for the first Sinfonia concert, conducted by Ian Smith. The programme included Järnefelt's Praeludium and Berceuse, Maxwell Davis's An Orkney Wedding, with Sunrise, complete with bagpiper processing down the aisle in full regalia, Dag Wirén Serenade for Strings (used as the signature tune for TV's 'Monitor' in the 1950s and 60s, for those of us old enough to remember!), and Mendelssohn Symphony No. 3 (The Scottish).

November saw the first BSO concert, which began with the Overture Les Francs-Juges by Hector Berlioz. This was followed by a superb performance by local professional Daniel Curzon of the Glière Horn Concerto (incidentally, Daniel was a former pupil of the evening's conductor Uwe Radok). The programme concluded with Vaughan Williams' Symphony No. 2 (A London Symphony). The enthusiastic applause of the audience truly reflected the high quality of all the performers.

The following week, Sinfonia accompanied Bedford Choral Society in a programme comprising Brahms Tragic Overture, a selection of Brentano Lieder by Richard Strauss, expertly sung by local soprano, Rebecca Bottone, and Brahms German Requiem, for which Rebecca was joined by Bass Daniel Barrett. The choir was in fine voice, and it was a rousing performance.

The next concert of the season started with Vaughan Williams' "Wasps" Overture, followed by the Britten 'Nocturne', for tenor solo and seven obligato instruments, and strings. The original tenor, Peter Hoare, had had to withdraw, but we were most fortunate that James Gilchrist agreed to step in. His interpretation proved to be a delight, and after Michael, who had returned as guest conductor, skilfully conducted the Haydn Variations, the concert ended with a rousing rendition of Mozart's Symphony No. 35 (Haffner).

Due to scheduling difficulties, the date for the second BSO concert had to be changed, and the only date the Corn Exchange was available was Sunday 10th March (Mother's Day). This was to be Uwe's final concert as interim conductor, and he chose works that were particularly poignant for him – the little-known Schumann Overture, Scherzo, and Finale, Op. 52, Fauré's Pelléas et Mélisande Suite, Op. 80, and Mahler's Symphony No. 4 in G Major, with Lottie Greenhow as soprano soloist. The contrasting styles of the pieces worked especially well, the orchestra pulled out all the stops, and the performance was truly

memorable. We gave Uwe a vote of thanks and made a small presentation at the end of the final rehearsal.

The last concert before the Easter break involved the Choral Society and Sinfonia in an eclectic programme: Lauridsen's *Lux Aeterna*, Britten's *Simple Symphony*, and Goodall's *Eternal Light*, with soloists Elizabeth Bottone (Soprano) and Philip Tebb (Bass). This had been a difficult programme for the Choral Society at rehearsals, but they more than rose to the occasion when the time came.

Sinfonia returned to St Paul's Church on 4th May for a concert with a European flavour, encompassing Italy, Germany and the Czech Republic in the first half, with Rossini's overture *The Italian Girl in Algiers*, Wagner's beautiful *Siegfried Idyll*, and Dvorak's *Czech Suite Op. 39*. This was followed by Austria, with Schubert's 4th Symphony after the interval. It was a fitting finale to the last of the instrumental only concerts given by Sinfonia this season.

BSO gave its third concert on 18th May. This was the culmination of the year-long process to find a permanent conductor to replace Michael Rose. In the first half, Bjorn Bantock conducted Schubert's 8th Symphony (the 'unfinished'), followed by Brahms Academic Festival Overture. After the interval, Cathal Garvey conducting Brahms' Symphony No. 2. There were several interesting moments both during the afternoon rehearsal and in the concert itself, and once voting had been concluded, it was evident that the orchestral opinion was too divided for an appointment to be made. With such an important decision at stake, it was decided that the process should continue into the 2024-25 season.

Our Society's mission is to encourage music education throughout Bedfordshire. We were very pleased, therefore, for members of Bedford Sinfonia to be asked, once again, to provide the orchestral accompaniment for four young soloists, winners from the Bedfordshire Festival of Music, Speech and Drama and the Rotary Young Musician Competition. The event took place on Sunday 16th June in the Recital Hall at Bedford School. This year's soloists were very strong: pianists Aaron Lim and Yazdi Madon played, respectively, the first movement of Grieg's Piano Concerto and Rachmaninoff's 1st piano concerto, and violinists Elias Demetrius-Louisy and Farah Ashby played, correspondingly, Bach's Violin Concerto in A minor (3rd movement) and the 1st movement of Bruch's Violin Concerto in G minor. Ian Smith expertly conducted and advised and encouraged the young soloists. Many thanks go to all the volunteers from Sinfonia who gave up their time so generously.

Sinfonia's final exhilarating concert on 22nd June rounded off the whole season. The programme started with the orchestra playing Sibelius's *Finlandia*. This was followed by Francis Poulenc's *Gloria*, with soprano soloist Katherine Crompton. After the interval, Bedford Choral Society were joined by Bedford Youth Chorus for a rousing rendition of Carl Orff's quirky *Carmina Burana*, with soloists Katherine Crompton (soprano); Joseph Doody (tenor), and Edward Grint (Bass). A fitting end to a most enjoyable season.

Section E: FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial Activities and Results

Summary

2023-24 season saw a fall of £9300 in total receipts (£25,712) compared to the 2022-23 season (£34,999) which is mostly accounted for by having received less in grants and donations (£4000) and lower ticket sales (£4000).

The cost of the Society's activities in 2023-24 was £36,141 therefore the Society made a loss of £10,429 over the 23-24 season.

Grants amounted to £1,750 from the Gale Family Charitable Trust and £1186 from various other sources.

2024-25 season:

Between 2020 and 2024, the everyday activities of BOS continued after Covid in terms of putting on concerts and running rehearsals, but there was a lack of volunteers to assist, and it was impossible to take on the longer-term development and strategic tasks. Furthermore, due to illness and a reduced Committee, the Chair was in a position of completing almost all tasks single-handedly.

An almost complete change in the makeup of the Committee in November 2024 was another major change and a period of adaptation was required to understand how things had been working. Once again, the focus remained on putting on concerts. However, since January 2025, systems have been investigated, responsibilities are being defined more clearly and whilst there is still work to do, many aspects of the organisation have been evaluated and are being adapted ready for the new season in September 2025. Measures include: fully costed programme planning, more rigorous membership subscription collection, social media and ticket sales strategies, collaboration with local enterprises with similar missions, funding applications and sponsorship opportunities, venue hire review. In conclusion, the Committee is now much more confident that they have almost all the personnel and planning in place to move forward into the near future and is forecasting a small operating profit for the 25-26 season.

Statement of receipts and payments for the twelve months ended 31st July 2024*

*Fund allocations from AGM results 16/10/2024 adjusted to reconcile with TAR accounts from Accumulus Accountancy Ltd

Receipts	£	2023	Cost of Activities	£	2023
Subscriptions	4,675.00	4,950.00	Artists	21714.35	21,002.43
Grants & Donations	2,935.57	7,000.00	Programme printing/Advertising	2273.50	3,269.99
Tickets & Programme Sales	9,115.04	13,183.94	Music Hire	2256.29	3,267.78
Performance Fees	8,634.00	9,865.00	Hall Hire	9,048.46	7,813.70
Bank Interest	112.00	0.00	Memberships/Misc	668.15	2,231.45
Misc.	<u>240.39</u>	0	Bank/Admin	<u>180.25</u>	<u>167.50</u>
	25,712.00	34,998.94		36,141.0	37,752.85
Cash at Bank				24,181.32	
Petty Cash				<u>149.5</u>	
				24,330.82	

Investment Policy

The Trustees have a policy for investments that states the Society may only invest in collective investment schemes promoted and marketed by the Charities Aid Foundation. The policy allows for up to 80% of the Society's investments to be held in income funds. As of 31st July 2023 the Society held 61% of its investments in income funds.

The policy is stated to be reviewed by the Trustees at least every five years. The policy is now overdue for a review.

The Society did not hold investments as of 31st July 2024.

Reserves Policy

The Reserves Policy remains unchanged and is as follows:

Requirements for reserves: The Society commits to incur expenditure in the furtherance of its charitable objectives often significantly in advance of securing revenues/donations. The Trustees consider it prudent to hold reserves from which to meet shortfalls of receipts over payments should they occur.

Level of reserves: The Trustees consider it prudent to hold reserves that represent at least 75% of the expenditure of the previous year. Reserves more than 300% of the expenditure of the previous year could be considered excessive and therefore earmarked for expending on exceptional items in accordance with the charitable objectives.

Steps to be taken to maintain reserves within the agreed range: Year on Year the Trustees will endeavour to manage the affairs of the Society such that expenditure is at least matched by receipts. In any financial year where payments exceed receipts by an amount more than 20% of the aggregate amount of receipts for the year the Trustees will seek to reduce expenditure in future years to alleviate the deficit.

Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the reserves policy: The Hon. Treasurer will report at the AGM compliance (or otherwise), with the Society's reserve policy. The policy will be reviewed every five years and is due for review.

Investment Policy: It is the policy of the Trustees to only invest in collective investment schemes promoted and marketed by the Charities Aid Foundation. Any investment decisions are to be taken by at least two of the Trustees acting jointly. It is the policy of the Trustees to diversify investments equally amongst growth and income funds. The policy will be reviewed at least every five years and is due for review.

Reserves

The Society's bank reserves were £34,759 at the start of 23-24 season and were £24,330 at the end of 23-24.

The Society does not hold any investments.

Therefore, total reserves = £24,330 on 31st July 2024.

Expenditure for the 23-24 season = £36,141

The Society was therefore in breach of its Reserves Policy as it ended the financial year with less than 75% of the previous year's expenditure in reserves. Please see p6 Section E

Financial Review “2024-25 season” for details of changes which BOS Committee began in 24-25 in order to address the financial deficits which arose in 23-24 and 24-25 and rebuild reserves from 25-26.

SECTION F: SUMMARY STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE TWELVE MONTHS ENDED 31 JULY 2024

Full details are available in “Trustees Report and Unaudited Accounts” prepared by Accumulus Accountancy Ltd. Please contact Bedfordshire Orchestral Society chair@bedfordsymphony.com

	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income and endowments from:			
Donations and legacies	2,936	2,936	7,000
Charitable activities	22,664	22,664	27,999
Other	112	112	-
Total	25,712	25,712	34,999
Expenditure on:			
Charitable activities	24,656	24,656	26,501
Other	11,485	11,485	11,251
Total	36,141	36,141	37,752
Net gains on investments	-	-	-
Net expenditure	(10,429)	(10,429)	(2,753)
Transfers between funds	-	-	-
Net expenditure before other gains/(losses)	(10,429)	(10,429)	(2,753)
Other gains and losses			
Net movement in funds	(10,429)	(10,429)	(2,753)
Reconciliation of funds:			
Total funds brought forward	34,759	35,759	37,512
Total funds carried forward	24,330	24,330	34,512

SECTION G: INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Bedfordshire Orchestral Society ("the charity") for the year ended 31 July 2024, which are set out in the financial report prepared by Accumulus Accountancy limited, summarised in Section F, above.

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 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities 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 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 the 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 matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and

- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities 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.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Sheehan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Sheehan FCA
42 Mallard Hill
Bedford. MK41 7QR
8 May 2025

SECTION H: TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES AND DECLARATION

Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are required to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the transactions of the Society for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- Prepare financial statement on a going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Society will continue to operate
- Follow applicable accounting standards, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements

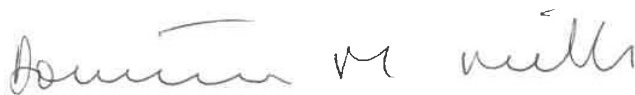
The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounts and records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the Society, and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011 (the "2011 Act"). They are also responsible for the safeguarding of the Society and take reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and any irregularities.

The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the 2011 Act and that an independent examination is required as carried out by John Sheehan in Section G.

Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements.

Date: 21-5-2025

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Dominic Mills". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dominic Mills

Bedfordshire Orchestral Society Committee Member

