

WIMBLEDON CHORAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL TRUSTEES REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
30th JUNE 2024

Reg. Charity No.: 263150



PRESIDENT
MUSIC DIRECTOR

Ian Partridge CBE
Neil Ferris BMus (Hons) ARCM MMus

ANNUAL REPORT

for the year ended 30 June 2024

Registered Charity Number 263150
www.wimbledon-choral.org.uk

Objects

The Objects of the Society are to promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of the art and science of choral music by the presentation of public concerts and other activities involving or relating to choral music.

Governance & Administration

Wimbledon Choral Society is a charity, registered with the Charity Commissioners (No. 263150) and operates under the same name within the rules of a revised Constitution adopted on 24 September 2001 and approved by the Charity Commissioners. The principal address of the charity is 13 Augustus Court, Augustus Road, SW19 6NA.

The charity is administered by a Committee as defined by the Constitution comprising of an Executive Group of Trustees, who are registered with the Charity Commission, plus other Society members making up the full Committee. All the Committee roles are occupied by Society members only and all members are eligible for any of the roles. No member of the Committee, Trustee or otherwise, is paid for his or her role. For the season ended 30 June 2024 the members in these roles were:

Society Members

Chair	+	Alex Youel
Vice-Chair	+	Ian Gleeson
General Secretary	+	Tracy Sherman
Treasurer	+	John Gale
Publicity Officer	+	Anna Lemmon
Concert Co-ordinator	+#	Paula Lambe
Sponsorship Officer	#	unfilled
Membership Secretary		Laura Stewart
Librarian		John Britton
Voice Representatives	*	Thérèse Kennedy-Laing, Sharon Smith
	*	Angela Wake, Sarah Harris
	*	Martyn Wake
	*	Jeremy Collis, Peter Hickson

Ex Officio Appointment

Music Director	Neil Ferris (retired 30-06-24)
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- + Trustees of the Society and Members of the Executive Group.
- # These posts are appointed or co-opted by the Committee as permitted by the Constitution and are, therefore, not elected at the Annual General Meeting.
- * Voice Representatives are elected for a two-year period, half of them retiring/standing for re-election each year.

Employees

The Society has no employees. During the 2023/2024 season, two professional musicians, the Music Director and Rehearsal Accompanist, were hired on a renewable contract or ad hoc basis.

Advisers

Bankers	Santander & NS&I
Independent Examiner	Annette Cowley, BA FCA

Public Benefit

Mindful of the guidance on public benefit by the Charity Commission in Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011, our aim is always to perform a varied repertoire in a range of venues and provide the widest possible access to our events in terms of ticket prices charged. We work hard to keep up the profile of the Society in our community, despite the limited number of venues suitable for large scale performances locally.

We collaborated once again with Merton Music Foundation to put on the 6th Merton Singfest in May, with a record number of local choirs taking part including many primary school and children's choirs. The annual event has become a popular fixture in the Borough music calendar.

The local charity collections at our Christmas concerts this year were in aid of Learn English Together & The Neurofibromatosis Association. Our audiences donated a total of £1,260.

The Society values diversity and membership is open to all; but as with many similar organisations, subject to applicants undergoing a voice test to ensure their vocal ability meets the standard required. The standard is agreed between the Society's Committee and the Music Director.

Reduced membership subscriptions are available for full-time students, those under the age of 26 and those who are registered as unemployed.

Events for the year ended 30 June 2024

Our programme last season featured a wide variety of musical opportunities to excite and challenge our choir members, soloists and musicians, to partner with other choirs and to attract substantial audiences to come and hear us perform. At the end of October 2023 many of us joined with the Bach Choir, Goldsmiths Choral Union and others - including school choirs - to deliver a powerful performance of Carl Orff's *Carmina Burana* to a completely packed Royal Albert Hall. We were glad to be invited to support the occasion as a 'choir for hire' - raising funds for our own choir as a happy consequence - and it was great fun to sing alongside colleagues in such a terrific setting.

Relishing our role as part of the life of our Wimbledon community, we again led the singing for the moving Remembrance Sunday service around the War Memorial in Wimbledon Village. In November our autumn concert of the *Verdi Requiem*, in a superb new arrangement by Richard Blackford for two pianos, was warmly received by another packed audience in Holy Trinity Church. This was the world premier as a concert performance of this arrangement. We delivered a knock-out performance with a full choir of upwards of 160 singers in equally full voice! We followed this up in December with our two Christmas concerts, one in the afternoon specially geared for families, with magical entertainment, and one in the evening, with readings. Our Music Director Neil Ferris led us - and the audience - in exemplary excitable fashion through the complexities of *'The Twelve Days of Christmas'*; great fun all round. Both concerts were very well supported and we helped raise funds for our two chosen local charities, as already described in Public Benefit.

In February we organised a 'Come and Sing' event for other choirs to join us in singing and learning about Cecilia McDowall's *Da Vinci Requiem*, using a new venue for us, the splendid auditorium of nearby Wimbledon High School for Girls. The event was well supported with over 100 participants and we were privileged to welcome and to hear from Cecilia herself on the day. The very next month we performed the lovely *Fauré's Requiem* and Richard Blackford's haunting *Mirror of Perfection*, both delivered to a nearly full house at the ever-popular Cadogan Hall.

Our season concluded with a specially designed programme, *Reflections and Inspirations*, which paired modern compositions - including from our very own Michael Higgins - with their inspirations from classical composers such as Brahms and Elgar. These were moving performances all round, tinged with special poignancy as this was to be our very last concert led by Neil Ferris as Music Director.

Which leads me to offer, on behalf of simply everyone in the choir, past and present, its Friends, its President Ian Partridge, its Committee members, its supporters and all those who have followed and been inspired by Neil over the last fifteen years of his dedicated service to Wimbledon Choral, a huge "thank you" for all that he has done for us in that time. We also wish him great happiness with the Leith Hill Music Festival, continued success with professional choir Sonoro, and family happiness in whatever the future may hold. It was our privilege and delight to host a grand farewell party for Neil and this emotional evening, superbly organised by members of the choir, was a fitting way to mark his huge contribution to the success and progress of the Choir which we all love. My special thanks go to the small team which managed the recruitment process for Neil's successor, Daniel Mahoney, so brilliantly. We warmly welcome Daniel and look forward to developing an equally exciting and productive partnership with him over the coming months and years.

Responsibilities of the Trustees in relation to the Financial Statements

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and enable it to ensure that financial statements comply with the applicable law. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Society Representatives

Gift Aid Officer: John Gale

Reserves Policy

The Trustees consider it prudent that the Society should maintain reserves sufficient to cover the costs for a whole season.

Financial Matters

With the exception of the professional musicians in the capacity of Music Director and Rehearsal Accompanist, the Society is dependent on the services of its membership and others as unpaid volunteers. Full details of the financial statement of accounts for this past financial year are filed with the Charity Commission with this Annual Report.

Our 2023-24 Concert Season turned out to be very successful. Increased ticket income particularly at the Cadogan Hall, together with lower concert costs, combined to reduce our usual deficit on concerts to an almost break-even position (after taking ticket and specific donations into account). An increase in membership resulted in higher receipts and fees from a public appearance were a welcome addition to our funds. General expenditure was similar to that in previous years, but we incurred no costs in relation to recording or purchase of CDs, so the total for payments was lower than last year.

The overall financial result for the year was an excess of receipts over payments for the year. Our cash funds increased from £65,757 to £85,908 and our total assets from £80,945 to £111,167.

Risk Management

The Trustees perform regular reviews of its operations and strategic objectives to ensure adherence to its principal charitable objects and financial controls. They are satisfied that there are sufficient systems and procedures in place to identify and address in a timely manner those risks that the Society may face from time to time. A constant potential risk throughout any season is that of having to cancel one or more concerts at short notice. Implementation of the Reserves Policy above together with subscription to Making Music's insurance scheme is agreed by the Trustees as being of an adequate nature to minimise this particular risk.

Financial Controls

The Trustees perform regular reviews of its financial controls to ensure compliance with the Charity Commission's guidance of internal financial controls for charities. Controls include:

- Annual budgets are prepared and approved by the Trustees and full Committee.
- Performance is measured against the budget at regular intervals.
- Financial management information is discussed by the Executive and full Committee at regular meetings.
- As required by law, the Annual Accounts are subject to Independent Examination.
- There are no trading activities other than the direct sales of tickets for events in furtherance of the Society's Objects
- The Society does not make grants to any third party.
- All payments from the Society's bank accounts require two signatures from an approved list of signatories. This includes cheques, BACS payments and transfers between accounts.
- Expenses are reimbursed only in those cases where both (1) an individual has incurred those expenses in the course of carrying out the Society's business and (2) prior agreement has been obtained from either the Society's appointed Treasurer or Chair or both.

Signed – Alex Youel
Chair for the year ended 30 June 2024
For and on behalf of the Trustees

11th September 2024

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Wimbledon Choral Society

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 30th June 2024 set out on pages 5 and 6.

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 Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under s145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under s145(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 which give 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.

Signed : Annette Cowley BA FCA
Cowley & Co, *Chartered Accountants*
210 Worple Road, London SW20 8RH

Dated: 11th September, 2024

WIMBLEDON CHORAL SOCIETY
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 30th JUNE 2024

Page 5

	2024 Unrestricted Funds £	2024 Restricted Funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Actual £
Receipts				
Members subscriptions	35,557		35,557	30,730
Friends subscriptions	1,740		1,740	1,660
Donations	3,927		3,927	2,742
Tax recovered (gift aid)	-		-	5,091
Easyfundraising and similar receipts	202		202	442
Music hire to other choirs	2,529		2,529	2,416
Sale of folders (net)	60		60	(98)
Choir performance fees	1,450		1,450	-
Fundraising activities (Quiz)	(135)		(135)	482
Sale of CDs	310		310	4,465
Refreshment income (net of expenses)	394		394	288
Interest received	499		499	97
Collections received		2,740	2,740	80
	<u>46,533</u>	<u>2,740</u>	<u>49,273</u>	<u>48,395</u>
Payments				
Rehearsal hall hire	6,172		6,172	5,499
Musicians fees	12,820		12,820	13,465
Recruitment costs	1,241		1,241	-
DaVinci Recording costs	-		-	3,440
Purchase of CDs	-		-	5,850
Marketing & publicity	495		495	152
Website costs	907		907	383
Insurance	151		151	158
Making Music and other subscriptions	392		392	365
Administration & sundries	50		50	269
Librarian's expenses	646		646	574
Payments in advance	692		692	-
Card charges	89		89	82
Collections paid		2,740	2,740	80
	<u>23,655</u>	<u>2,740</u>	<u>26,395</u>	<u>30,317</u>
Net ordinary receipts	<u>22,878</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>22,878</u>	<u>18,078</u>
Concert receipts				
Ticket sales	52,854		52,854	38,015
Programme sales	2,982		2,982	2,156
Music hire and purchase	6,431		6,431	7,734
Singfest income	1,491		1,491	1,042
	<u>63,758</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>63,758</u>	<u>48,947</u>
Concert payments				
Hire of venues	14,090		14,090	16,661
Staging	5,639		5,639	5,957
Agency commission	2,396		2,396	1,723
Musicians	28,165		28,165	29,207
Instrument tuning & hire	705		705	1,355
Music hire and purchase	8,335		8,335	7,772
Other concert costs	489		489	450
Program design & printing	2,715		2,715	2,344
Advertising expenditure	2,508		2,508	3,894
Royalties	1,048		1,048	606
Singfest costs	370		370	882
Singfest - WCS costs	25		25	25
	<u>66,485</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>66,485</u>	<u>70,876</u>
Net concert payments	<u>(2,727)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,727)</u>	<u>(21,929)</u>
Net receipts (payments) for year	<u>20,151</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20,151</u>	<u>(3,851)</u>
Cash funds at 1st July 2023 (2022)	<u>65,757</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>65,757</u>	<u>69,608</u>
Cash funds at 30th June 2024 (2023)	<u>£ 85,908</u>	<u>£ -</u>	<u>£ 85,908</u>	<u>£ 65,757</u>

WIMBLEDON CHORAL SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AT 30th JUNE 2024

Page 6

	Unrestricted Funds 2024 £	Restricted Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Cash Funds				
Bank current accounts	17,138	-	17,138	17,486
Bank deposit accounts	68,770	-	68,770	48,271
	<u>85,908</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>85,908</u>	<u>65,757</u>
Other Monetary Assets				
Gift Aid recoverable	7,017	-	7,017	-
Other amounts owed to the society	765	-	765	196
Investment Assets				
M&G Charifund Units	17,477	-	17,477	15,234
Liabilities				
Amounts owed by the society	-	-	-	(242)
Total Assets of the Society	<u>£ 111,167</u>	<u>£ -</u>	<u>£ 111,167</u>	<u>£ 80,945</u>

Approved by the Committee on 11th September 2024 and signed on its behalf by

A Youel - Chairman

J Gale - Treasurer