



Ashtead Choral Society

Trustees' Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 2024

Reference and Administration details

The name of the Charity is Ashtead Choral Society, whose Registered Charity Number is 265400.

The principal address of the charity is 98 Craddocks Avenue, Ashtead, KT21 1NL.

Names of the Trustees who manage the Charity

The Trustees are as follows:

Mr V Desmond (Chair) (from November 2023)
Mrs A Bailey (Secretary)
Mr A J Williams (Treasurer)
Mrs L Crook
Mrs S Early
Mrs I Kenward
Mrs K Lewis
Mrs L Morrell (from November 2023)
Mr A Moss (from November 2023)
Mrs C Price

The following also served as Trustees during the year:

Mrs C Greenwood (resigned August 2024)
Mr G Morris (resigned November 2023)
Mrs V Moss (resigned November 2023)
Mrs H Parkin (resigned April 2024)
Mrs A Ridge (resigned November 2023)

The Society's Making Music representative is Mrs M Stephen

Structure, Governance and Management

The Charity is an unincorporated association. A revised Constitution was adopted on 7 February 2022.

The Charity is managed and administered by a Committee constituted in accordance with Rule 5 of the Charity. Trustees are appointed in accordance with Rule 7 of the Charity. No section representative may serve as such for more than three consecutive years.

Objectives and Activities

The object of the Charity shall be:

to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by any means the trustees see fit, including through the presentation of public events.

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, and, in particular, the specific guidance to charities for the advancement of the arts.

The benefits of the society are enjoyed by both choral society members and members of the public who attend our concerts, and can be seen in the diverse selection of choral music that is performed by the society. In deciding the concert programme for each season, the conductor and the Trustees are mindful to ensure that the choir performs both familiar and less familiar choral music. The music that we perform has been written by a variety of composers from different musical periods from both the sacred and secular repertoire available to choral societies of our size. The advancement of the arts is thus achieved through the exposure of both choir and audience members to different styles and genres of music.

The Trustees are mindful of the need to ensure that sections of the public are not excluded from participating as a member of the choral society through the use of financial assistance to those who might otherwise not be able to afford to join the society. Membership of the society is free for people aged 25 and under and there is a 50% reduction in the subscription for those members aged 26-30. Subscriptions may also be paid in instalments or reduced temporarily in the case of unforeseen hardship.

In recent years we have undertaken concerts where we have engaged local young musicians either to accompany us or to sing the solo parts of certain musical items. In this way, our public benefit has been extended to a wider section of society, as many of those young people have benefited from the experience of performing with a large choral society and in front of larger audiences than might otherwise be possible for them.

Our key objectives this year have been to:

- continue to provide a variety of choral music repertoire in support of our object above
- continue to support professional soloists
- continue to support local community charities
- continue to develop the choir musically
- continue to provide joy and support well-being of singers

See the section below – Achievements and Performance - for how we met those objectives. Additionally, during the season the committee recognised the need to build on recent work to develop our website and social media to grow our singer numbers from approximately 100 to 120, to attract larger audiences to our concert events, to collaborate with other choral societies, and to help singers with individual vocal health. Plans to deliver on some of these opportunities were made for the following season.

Achievements and Performance

During this season we kept true to our mission of bringing live choral performance to the community with three concerts. Our November concert featured the original two piano version of Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*. Our second concert embraced European composers - Rameau, Rossini, Gorecki and Faure – and featured the British composer, Sir John Rutter's *Requiem*. Our third concert tackled Brahms' epic German *Requiem* with our regular collaborators, the Kent Sinfonia. As ever, we were pleased to support professional musicians, especially those developing their careers, including this season: Sopranos – Helen Pritchard, Lucy Cox, Eleanor Pennell-Briggs; Alto – Susan Legg; Tenor – Adam Tunnicliffe; and Basses – Philip Tebb and Daniel Tate.

In addition to our own concert programme, we were pleased to collaborate with the Old Bailey Choir for a further performance of the Rutter *Requiem*. We were delighted that this performance in central London coincided with news of Sir John Rutter's knighthood for services to music.

In addition to the musical highlights above, approximately 60 members of ACS undertook a tour of Umbria. This was a great opportunity to bring the UK's enviable choral tradition to Italy and provide three free concerts at the cathedrals of Citta della Pieve, Perugia and Pienza. The tour was also a good opportunity for singers to get to know each other, to experience Umbria and to develop our ability to deal musically with new places and the associated challenges.

Supporting our local community continues to be a core part of our activity. We were delighted that this year our popular annual *Carols for Choir and Audience* event had a very full house of local residents who raised almost £1500 for two charities: Joe's Buddy Line and Dyscover. Joe's Buddy Line was set up in memory of Joe Lyons and aims to promote and protect the mental health of young people from Primary School to University. Dyscover is a charity that supports people with aphasia, a communication difficulty usually as the result of a stroke.

None of these activities – musical, charitable or otherwise - would be possible without the support of our super professional music team: musical director, Dr Andrew Storey, and accompanist, Mr Stephen Ridge. Nor would they be possible without the volunteers who give their time to organise everything from charity events to venue booking, and from tours to paying invoices. We thank you all for your commitment and support.

Financial Review

Concerts this year reverted to the Society's more normal pattern of a major concert, with full orchestra and soloists, an "intermediate" concert with a smaller orchestra, and a "smaller" concert with just one or two musicians. Overall, the loss on concerts over the year was £11,273, significantly less than the previous year (£16,209), when the concert programme was maintained at a higher level to encourage members and audiences to return after the covid pandemic. Ticket sales, however, were disappointing.

The Trustees were delighted to receive a grant of £1,500 from the Humphrey Richardson Taylor Charitable Trust towards our concert costs for the year. The support of the Trust for music-making in the Surrey area is greatly appreciated.

Subscription rates were increased significantly from the previous year, returning to a similar level as pre-covid, having been kept deliberately lower in the last two or three years to encourage members to return.

No fundraising events were held during the year. However, income continued to be received from Easy Fundraising (£165) and from donations made by choir members at the tea interval (£387) and the sale of pencils (£15).

The tour to Italy was funded entirely by the payments made by tour participants, with no cost to the Society. (Note that the difference of £110 in the accounts between tour income and tour expenditure represented a prepayment from one choir member in the 2022/23 season).

Our Carols for Charity morning was again very successful and £1,486 was split between our two chosen charities – Dyscover and Joe's Buddy Line.

As noted in the accounts, there was a delay in receiving the Gift Aid payment from HMRC for subscriptions and donations during the season, which was eventually received after the end of the Society's financial year. Income for the year is therefore understated from its true position. Taking account of the amount that should have been received, total income (unrestricted funds) in the year would have been £35,051. Thus there would have been a reduction in unrestricted funds of £3,327 over the season. Costs continue to increase and so the Society needs to plan its finances carefully to avoid depleting our reserves too much. The Trustees are addressing this issue by looking carefully at concert planning, a drive to recruit new members and the possibility of one or two fundraising activities.

Charity's policy on reserves

The Trustees recognise that there are expenses associated with the putting on of concerts which may need to be covered even if those concerts cannot take place. There are also expenses associated with running the choir on a day-to-day basis that would have to be met even if the society were to wind up. Having considered these issues the Trustees have decided that an appropriate level of reserve to be held is £12,000 in unrestricted funds.

Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees:

	Vincent Desmond	Anthony Williams
Position	Chair	Hon Treasurer
Date	4 November 2024	4 November 2024

Ashtead Choral Society
Charity Commission Number - 265400
Receipts and payments accounts
For the period from 1 July 2023 to 30 June 2024

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
<i>Receipts</i>	£	£	£	£
Income from concerts (note 3)	6,952	-	6,952	10,070
Member subscriptions	19,225	-	19,225	14,970
Income tax recovered (note 4)	-	-	-	2,620
Friends/Patronage donations	-	885	885	1,065
Income tax recovered (note 4)	-	-	-	139
Other donations	48	-	48	-
Income tax recovered	-	-	-	-
Music hire and sales	1,365	-	1,365	1,226
Funds raised for other Charities	-	1,486	1,486	1,468
100 Club	453	-	453	505
Bank interest	1,515	-	1,515	988
Grants (note 5)	1,500	-	1,500	-
Fundraising income	567	-	567	1,628
Tour	-	45,628	45,628	13,270
Miscellaneous income	25	-	25	60
Total receipts	31,650	47,999	79,649	48,009
<i>Payments</i>				
Concert expenditure (note 3)	18,225	-	18,225	26,279
Honoraria	11,144	-	11,144	9,613
Hire of rehearsal rooms	5,507	-	5,507	4,509
Music hire and purchases	1,401	-	1,401	1,441
Publicity	797	-	797	973
Gifts and donations	-	1,486	1,486	1,468
Subscriptions, sundry fees, other dues, and bank charges	983	-	983	644
Fundraising expenses	-	-	-	595
Secretarial and admin. expenses	68	-	68	20
Tour	-	45,738	45,738	13,160
Miscellaneous expenses	253	-	253	1,499
Total payments	38,378	47,224	85,602	60,201
Net of receipts/(payments)	(6,728)	775	(5,953)	(12,192)
Cash funds last year end	20,966	16,185	37,151	49,343
Cash funds this year end	14,238	16,960	31,198	37,151

Ashtead Choral Society
Charity Commission Number – 265400
Statement of assets and liabilities as at 30 June 2024

		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
		£	£	£	£
Cash Funds	Barclays current account	5,221	-	5,221	7,690
	COIF Deposit account	9,017	16,960	25,977	29,461
Total bank accounts		<u>14,238</u>	<u>16,960</u>	<u>31,198</u>	<u>37,151</u>

Assets retained for the charity's own use

Piano	2,000	-	2,000	2,000
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Signed on behalf of all the trustees

Anthony Williams
Hon Treasurer

Date of approval 4 November 2024

Ashtead Choral Society
Notes to the Accounts
For the year ending 30 June 2024

1 Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis.

2 Endowment and restricted income funds

The charity has no endowment fund. It has one restricted income fund, the Judy Williams Memorial Patronage Fund, which was established to enable the choir to be able to afford to perform works which it would not otherwise be able to do. No monies were utilised from this fund during the year ended 30 June 2024.

As at 30 June 2023 the restricted income funds included £110 which was a prepayment of tour fees received from one member. No tour funds remain at 30 June 2024.

The Charity does not have any designated funds.

3 Financial results of concerts

	November 2023 £	March 2024 £	May 2024 £	Total 2024 £	2023 £
Concert income	2,571	2,156	2,225	6,952	10,070
Concert Expenditure					
Professional fees	3,500	1,200	6,980	11,680	18,532
Venue	819	802	836	2,457	3,044
Other costs	2,622	628	838	4,088	4,703
Total concert expenditure	6,941	2,630	8,654	18,225	26,279

4 Gift Aid

There was a delay in the receipt of Gift Aid from HMRC which meant that payment was not received until after the end of the Society's financial year. These payments will therefore appear in the accounts for 2024/25. The amount of Gift Aid in respect of subscriptions and patrons/friends donations in 2023/24 was as follows:

Subscriptions (unrestricted funds)	£3,401
Patrons/friends donations (restricted funds)	£144

5 Grants

A grant of £1,500 was received from the Humphrey Richardson Taylor Charitable Trust towards the 2023/24 season.

Independent examiner's report on the accounts



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the Trustees/ members of	Ashtead Choral Society		
On accounts for the year ended	30 June 2024	Charity no	265400
Set out on pages	5-7		
Responsibilities and basis of report	<p>I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 30 June 2024.</p> <p>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").</p> <p>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.</p>		
Independent examiner's statement	<p>I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that, in any material respect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or • the accounts do not accord with the accounting records <p>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.</p>		
Signed:	E A Storey	Date:	5 November 2024
Name:	Mrs Elisabeth Storey		
Relevant professional qualification:	FCA		
Address:	29 Barrett Road, Fetcham, Leatherhead, Surrey, KT22 9HL		