

2021-22 Henley Choral Society- chair's annual report

2021-22 represented another unsettled year for Henley Choral Society, with covid-19 still leaving its mark (necessitating that we dip into reserves) and a change in Musical Director. But, as you will hear, I think we are moving into steadier times, allowing us to grow, develop and look forward to our 50th anniversary and beyond.

Autumn 2021

The first term of the year was still marked by covid-19 and the associated restrictions. We did not appear to have any outbreaks as a consequence of rehearsing, so precautions taken by members and the choir as a whole, in the form of ventilation, mask wearing, spacing, vaccination and staying away when unwell, all seemed to work.

As reported in last year's Chair's report, term started with a 'Bring and Sing' workshop of Brahms' Requiem (the performance having been cancelled from the prior term). Members of local choirs joined us and they especially commented on the skills of our two piano accompanists, Anita d'Attelis and Dave Smith.

Our Christmas concert felt like we were getting back to some normality, although ticket sales were nearer 250, when we might expect 400. We were accompanied by Onyx Brass, giving a wonderful Christmassy feel. Overall, it was a lovely concert, with a mix of favourites like Handel's Zadok the Priest, many well-known carols, and less well-known works such as Daniel Pinkham's moving Christmas Cantata and Orlando Lassus's majestic Omnes De Saba Venient. We were pleased, once again, to sing with HYC.

Spring 2022

This term continued to be hampered by covid-19, notably with our chosen venue. University of Reading announced in January that their great hall had severely restricted numbers, making performing there impossible. Many alternatives were considered and investigated by Jane and Carol, in the end, a recommendation from Toni and subsequent multiple visits by Jane and others led to us choosing the Oratory School. Again, despite strong efforts, we had limited ticket sales and the challenge of last-minute changes in soloists leading to last minute searches for people who knew the work and were available and programme adjustments. But our performance of Mendelsohn's Elijah, with the Henley Symphonia, was a tremendous success. Here's what the Henley Standard said:

"As the audience chatted in the interval, one heard either astonished excitement from those who didn't know the work, or great praise from those who did...Despite the vicissitudes of covid, choir, soloists and orchestra were brought together splendidly by their conductor, Peter Asprey in this bravura production of Elijah: a fitting finale to his six years of work with Henley Choral Society."

In February, we had an excellent workshop run by voice coach, Liz Toye. It was high energy, enjoyable and educational.

During that same term we completed the search for a new MD, with a stand-out candidate emerging in both interview and auditions. It was wonderful to have input from the whole choir through the audition process. Our accompanists also gave top marks to our final choice. We are fortunate that he accepted, so for Summer 2022 we had a new MD, marking the start of the Harker era.

Summer 2022

Richard quickly settled in and had an excellent first term, showing us what a varied repertoire he was going to introduce us to, and how he wanted to stretch and encourage us. This included the sailors

who appeared more drunken than rambling. Because of diary clashes, we again had late adjustments to the date, the venue and alike. But the concert has probably made a small profit and was great fun. Here again is Henley Standard

“A special mention has to be given to David Smith, a brilliant musician and accompanist who played with authority and musical excellence — bravo. This was a thoroughly enjoyable concert with plenty of variety and musical colour. Both Henley Choral Society and Henley Youth Choir are going from strength to strength.”

Picking up from that, we must remind ourselves how lucky we are to have such talented and committed accompanists, Anita d’Attelis and Dave Smith. They are outstanding.

We had a very enjoyable and educational workshop in the summer term run by Richard, featuring hits from the musicals (favourites of our late Queen).

Sadly, Alex Haigh left HYC in June, after he was offered a prestigious position at the Royal Opera House. The summer concert was his last. But we are fortunate that Richard agreed to combine the two roles of HCS and HYC MD.

Looking ahead

We seem to be in a stable phase regarding covid-19. Our MD has planned a programme of music looking out to 2026, allowing us to plan well in advance. We have a joint HCS and HYC MD allowing for greater synergies and, we hope, growth of HYC. We are looking forward to our fiftieth anniversary with the world anniversary of our commission and other activities. Our finances are healthy, although we do need to get back into balance year on year. The membership has grown, although more tenors are always welcome.

Fees

As you know, the Committee decided to increase fees to £150 this year. Mark will speak about this in the Treasurers report shortly. At the risk of stealing his thunder I thought I would say a few words about the Committees rationale, as I know the cost of living is going up in all realms, so this increase would not have been welcome:

- This is the first increase in three years
- All our expenses are increasing.
- We do need to get back into in-year financial balance, we cannot keep drawing on our reserves, which we had to do during Covid-19
- We get tremendous value from our fees- rehearsals with two outstanding professionals, at least two free workshops a year, the opportunity to perform a wide variety of works with leading soloists, orchestras and other musicians
- We support the important work of Henley Youth Choir



Henley Choral Society	276728
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Receipts and payments accounts

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For the period from	1st September 2021	To	31st August 2022
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Ticket Sales	£14,760	-	-	14,760	£395
Programme Sales	£1,093	-	-	1,093	
Member Subs	£20,080	-	-	20,080	£15,880
Patron Subs	£2,200	-	-	2,200	£4,125
Gift aid tax relief	£5,270	-	-	5,270	£3,705
Bank interest	£31	-	-	31	£5
Donations	£10,150	-	-	10,150	£3,300
Hire of music to members		-	-	-	
Sales of music to members	£2,332	-	-	2,332	
Advertising revenue	£2,365	-	-	2,365	
Bar takings	£1,775	-	-	1,775	
Sundry	£3,234	-	-	3,234	£177
Petty Cash		-	-	-	
		-	-	-	
Sub total	£63,290	-	-	63,290	27,587
A2 Asset and investment sales, etc.	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	63,290	-	-	63,289.92	27,587
A3 Payments					
Conductors fee	14,630	-	-	14,630	9,907
Accompanist's fees	7,920	-	-	7,920	4,934
Orchestra Fees	10,982	-	-	10,982	3,425
Soloist's Fees	4,494	-	-	4,494	
Other fees	6,416	-	-	6,416	1,585
Hall hire	7,617	-	-	7,617	1,712
Equipment hire	3,648	-	-	3,648	531
Music Hire		-	-	-	
Music Purchase	4,441	-	-	4,441	51
Bar Expenses	1,189	-	-	1,189	
Publicity	3,716	-	-	3,716	1,515
Sundry	6,599	-	-	6,599	2,301
		-	-	-	
Sub total	71,652	-	-	71,652	25,961
A4 Asset and investment purchases, etc.	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	71,652	-	-	71,652	25,961

<i>Net of receipts/(payments)</i>	- 8,362	-	-	- 8,362	1,626
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	70,214	-	-		68,588
<i>Cash funds this year end</i>	61,852	-	-	Cross Add Error	70,214

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	CAF CURRENT	10,875	-	-
	CAF DEPOSIT	48,077	-	-
	HSBC	2,899	-	-
	Total cash funds	61,852	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	N/A	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	N/A		-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	N/A		-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
	N/A		-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	



Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Charity Name
Henley Choral Society

On accounts for the year
ended

31st August 2022

Charity no
(if any) 276728

Set out on pages

1

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 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 43 of the 1993 Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993 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 41 of the 1993 Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 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.

Signed:

Date:

28/09/2022

Name:

Joanne Grundonner

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

AAT

Address:

43 St Helens Way, Benson, OX10 6SP