



# TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

Year ended 31st August 2024

*Registered Charity No. 277544*

Trustees’ Annual Report for the year ended 31st Aug 2024

Reference and Administration details

Charity Name: North London Chorus

Registered Charity Number: 277544

Principal Address: 31 Meadow Place, London SW8 1XZ

Trustees & Elected Committee Members: Gary Bilkus (Chair), Alison Salisbury (Hon Secretary), Alan Chandler (Hon Treasurer), Viv Canter, Shaun Davies, Lucy Ellis, Tessa Padel, David Stone - all for the full year, Rhona Graham and Tim Lutton from 29/02/2024

Co-opted Committee Members: None

Musical Director: Murray Hipkin (also present at Committee)

Committee Members for part of choir year now resigned: Kate Hodgkin (to 29/02/2024)

Principal Bankers: CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Mailing, Kent, ME19 4JQ

Independent Examiner: Chaweevan Williams FCCA, Verdant Accountants Limited

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Constitution as amended 25<sup>th</sup> January 2018

Organisational Structure

The Chorus is managed by a committee as detailed above. All members of the Committee are elected by the Chorus at its Annual General Meeting and hold office until the following AGM. All Committee members offer their services on a voluntary basis. The Chorus employs no staff but contracts for the services of the Musical Director and Accompanist. The Chorus is not connected to other charities. New Trustees / Elected Committee Members are recruited within the ranks of the choir and are encouraged to stand for Committee at the AGM. According to the Constitution, a maximum of 6 out of 10 Committee Members can remain without standing for re-election the following year. This encourages rotation of membership and “new blood” within the ranks of the Committee. All elected Committee members are Trustees also.

Objectives and Activities

In accordance with the Constitution, the Chorus aims to promote, develop and maintain the public’s appreciation and education in the art and science of music. Focusing on choral music, it performs concerts, and holds workshops for its members. In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission’s guidance on public benefit, including the guidance on public benefit and fee charging. The Chorus relies on income subscriptions to cover its operating costs. In setting the level of subscriptions, the trustees give careful consideration to the accessibility of the Chorus for those on low incomes and in these circumstances reduced subscriptions are available.

North London Chorus is a Public Benefit Entity and as such is committed to enabling as many people as possible to benefit through choir membership, participation in workshops and concert attendance. To this end, a varied programme of music is undertaken to appeal to as wide an audience as possible. The Trustees have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission. More specific details of our activities, which benefit the public, can be found in our Musical Director’s and Chair’s reports.

These objectives remain the same for the coming year.

Financial Position

The Financial Statements and accompanying notes on pages 6-10 give a detailed account of the main drivers of the finances of the Chorus. In summary, we started the year with net assets of £8,495 and ended with £4,822 making a deficit of £3,674. The Committee managed the reserves in accordance with the policy described below, through careful cost control, realistic concert budgets and contributions from outside and within the choir. The net resources carried forward at 31 August 2024 represent a sufficient level of reserves. The Committee continues to monitor reserve levels carefully as we cross into the new financial year.

Reserves Policy

Reserves are needed to bridge the gap between the spending and receiving of resources, to cover other costs including unplanned emergency cancellation of concerts at short notice resulting in costs but no revenue and to fund new developments as agreed by the Trustees, from time to time. The Trustees' policy is thus to ensure normal expenditures are matched by a sufficient level of income and that an appropriate level of reserves is maintained to enable the Chorus to function, to allow for unforeseen contingencies and to fund new initiatives to develop its work in accordance with its aims and objectives in a manner that does not present undue risk to the choir's financial position. The Trustees will act to increase the level of reserves where significant expenditure or increased risks are foreseen.

**Chair’s Annual Report**

**Sept 2023 – Aug 2024**

I am pleased to be able to report another very successful year for the Chorus.

We sang fairly traditional fare centred around the Bach *Magnificat* in November, but both of our other concerts were much more unusual. Our Verdi *Requiem* in the summer played with reduced orchestral accompaniment proved that it can enthuse an audience even without the massed ranks and correspondingly large venue usually required. And our performance of *The Prison* by Ethel Smyth in the Spring showed that we are able to champion and do justice to less well-known works by unfairly neglected composers. Our particular thanks to the Foyle Foundation and the Vaughan Williams Foundation whose generous grants made it possible to put on this challenging work. And our thanks also to Chris Hopkins for his brilliant work in the summer term preparing us and conducting the Verdi in Murray’s absence.

I am very pleased to note that the uncertainty surrounding the future of the ENO and Murray’s contract has been largely resolved, and in a somewhat more positive way than originally seemed likely. Murray has a new permanent ( albeit seasonal ) contract with ENO and no longer has to consider leaving London.

Once again, we held a well-attended non-residential Weekend Workshop in February, and we now expect to continue the format in future years unless the costs in real-terms of a weekend away return to a more affordable level.

The various efforts spearheaded by the committee to improve our marketing and publicity have borne fruit, and although we still have significant gaps in the lower voices, we are now more or less full in the Soprano and Alto sections.

Our online presence in particular has significantly improved, due partly to some technical fixes to the way search engines index our website, but mainly to the more enthusiastic use of social media. My thanks to everyone who has made the effort to keep our name visible, whether physically or virtually.

It goes without saying that we can only function effectively as a choir through the amazing voluntary efforts of our members, whether or not they are on the committee. The hard work of all those involved in everything from weekly teas to concert management, membership liaison to programme production, technology, accounting and administration is much appreciated, not only by myself as Chair, but I’m sure by everyone in NLC. There are far too many to mention by name.

But as always, particular thanks to our professionals: Murray, Catherine and Yvette, and also, for the last time, to Mark who was our first vocal consultant, and played a vital part in supporting our level of musical attainment. We wish him well and hope to see him at future events.

Gary Bilkus - Chair,  
November 2024

## Musical Director's Review (2023-2024 Season)

Our 2023-2024 season opened with a concert of baroque masterpieces. The centrepiece was Bach's *Magnificat*, which we were performing for the third time since I became musical director. The choir was accompanied by the Meridian Sinfonia, playing on period instruments, and we were joined by soloists Ellie Neate, Sophie Goldrick (a last-minute replacement for an indisposed Bethan Langford), Graham Neal and Trevor Eliot Bowes. We also performed Bach's *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, an early version of the Gloria from the *Mass in B minor*. Rising star Ellie was showcased in Handel's virtuosic motet for soprano, choir and orchestra *Laudate pueri Domini*, and the programme was completed with a Bach aria for our bass soloist and a concerto grosso by Handel featuring soloists from the orchestra.

In March 2024, after a long period of planning and fundraising, we achieved the distinction of giving the first British performance for almost 20 years of Dame Ethel Smyth's *The Prison*. Thanks to generous support from the Vaughan Williams Foundation and the Foyle Foundation, as well as the regular support we receive from Nimrod Capital and Goodman Jones, we were able to realise this ambitious plan. Soloists were Rebecca Bottone and Alex Otterburn, the orchestra was the Meridian Sinfonia, and the programme was introduced by Lucy Stevens. The Smyth was framed by Beethoven *Meerstille und glückliche Fahrt* and Brahms *Nänie*. This performance was previewed and reviewed by music critic and blogger Robert Hugill.

Our summer concert was once again conducted by Chris Hopkins, to allow me to fulfil a second contract conducting at the International Gilbert and Sullivan Festival in Buxton. The programme was Verdi *Requiem*, performed in a relatively new chamber version for piano (featuring our accompanist Catherine Borner), timpani, bass drum, horn, double bass and marimba. Soloists Philippa Boyle, Sophie Goldrick, Ruairi Bowen and Frederick Long joined the choir for a sell-out performance of this new take on a well-known masterpiece, to great acclaim. The concert was preceded by a special "come-and-sing" event as part of a series of "playdays" with the Orchestra of the City, and four soloists Elinor Rolfe-Johnson, Sophie Goldrick, Ben Thapa and Armand Rabot. Chris conducted.

In addition to the concert programme, we also ran a weekend workshop in the spring term, with expert technical input from our two vocal consultants Yvette Bonner and Mark Oldfield. We took the opportunity to look at some non-concert repertoire, look ahead to the summer concert and hold extra sectionals on *The Prison*. We were also delighted to welcome actor Lucy Stevens in a highly entertaining and informative performance of her one-woman show about Ethel Smyth, *Grasping the Nettle*. Members also enjoyed trips to *Iolanthe* and *The Magic Flute* at English National Opera.

All in all, it was a hugely successful season artistically. Membership remained roughly static with vacancies mostly in the bass section, so we had to boost the section with volunteer or professional guest singers at all three concerts. My thanks to Gary Bilkus (chair) and the rest of the committee, and to Catherine Borner (accompanist) and our two vocal consultants Yvette Bonner and Mark Oldfield. We said goodbye to Mark at the end of the summer term and marked his departure with a presentation at his last rehearsal.

Murray Hipkin - Musical Director,  
November 2024

 north london chorus  
 Patrons Janis Kelly • Laurence Cummings  
 Musical Director Murray Hipkin

*Meridian Sinfonia*

# **JS Bach** Magnificat in D Gloria in excelsis Deo **Handel** Laudate pueri

Saturday 25 November 2023  
 7.30pm  
 St James Church  
 Muswell Hill N10 3DB

Ellie Neate *soprano*  
 Bethan Langford *mezzo-soprano*  
 Graham Neal *tenor*  
 Trevor Eliot Bowes *bass*  
 Murray Hipkin *conductor*

North London Chorus  
 Meridian Sinfonia  
*with period instruments*

Book online:  
[northlondonchorus.org/tickets](http://northlondonchorus.org/tickets)  
 £25 • £21 • £13  
 Concessions £2 reduction  
 Unreserved tickets available from  
 St James Church bookshop





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[northlondonchorus.org](http://northlondonchorus.org)  
 NLC is a registered charity (no 277544)  
 **GOODMAN JONES**  
 CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

 north london chorus  
 Patrons Janis Kelly • Laurence Cummings OBE  
 Musical Director Murray Hipkin

*Meridian Sinfonia*

# **Ethel Smyth** The Prison Brahms Nanie Beethoven Meeresstille und glückliche Fahrt

Saturday 16 March 2024  
 7.30pm  
 St James Church  
 Muswell Hill N10 3DB

Rebecca Bottone *soprano*  
 Alex Otterburn *baritone*  
 Murray Hipkin *conductor*

North London Chorus  
 Meridian Sinfonia

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 north london chorus  
 patrons Janis Kelly • Laurence Cummings OBE  
 musical director Murray Hipkin

*Meridian Sinfonia*

# **Verdi** Requiem

Arranged for small ensemble by  
 Michael Betzner-Brandt

Saturday 22 June 2024  
 7.30pm  
 St James Church  
 Muswell Hill N10 3DB

Philippa Boyle *soprano*  
 Sophie Goldrick *mezzo-soprano*  
 Ruairi Bowen *tenor*  
 Frederick Long *bass-baritone*  
 Chris Hopkins *conductor*  
 North London Chorus  
 Meridian Sinfonia



book: [northlondonchorus.org/tickets](http://northlondonchorus.org/tickets)  
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# Statement of Financial Activities - Summarised

North London Chorus

For the year ended 31 August 2024

	2024	2023
<b>Rehearsals and Administration</b>		
<b>Subscriptions related income</b>		
Subscriptions received	17,438	16,190
Income tax recovered on deeds of covenant	3,604	3,457
<b>Total Subscriptions related income</b>	<b>21,042</b>	<b>19,647</b>
Hall hire - rehearsals	(5,096)	(4,847)
Professional fees - rehearsals	(14,176)	(13,645)
Insurance and Making Music membership	(1,020)	(713)
Administration & Other	(975)	(1,391)
Depreciation expense	(100)	(100)
<b>Net incoming / (outgoing) resources</b>	<b>(325)</b>	<b>(1,049)</b>
<b>Concerts</b>		
Tickets, programmes and advertising	18,896	19,677
Concert-specific funding	7,500	4,986
Professional fees - concerts	(23,808)	(18,665)
Instrument & music hire	(1,350)	(803)
Concert venue costs	(2,850)	(2,580)
Flowers	(350)	(400)
Printing & publicity	(1,827)	(1,465)
Concert - other costs	(2,542)	(996)
<b>Net incoming / (outgoing) resources</b>	<b>(6,331)</b>	<b>(246)</b>
<b>Other</b>		
Other donations and net fundraising income	116	604
Other income incl. coffee & raffles	976	954
Annual sponsorship	1,500	1,500
Friends of NLC Revenue	390	420
<b>Net incoming / (outgoing) resources</b>	<b>2,982</b>	<b>3,478</b>
<b>Total surplus / (deficit)</b>	<b>(3,674)</b>	<b>2,183</b>

The Statement of Financial Activities details the expenditure incurred and revenues received by the Chorus during the year to 31 August 2024.

We made a deficit this year of £3,674 which can be broadly summarised as follows - we invested in our three concerts which made approximately the following deficits - Winter 2023 (£3,000), Spring 2024 (£3,000), Summer 2024 (£500) funded with net inflows (income less non-concert expenses) of around £2,850 and reserves from previous years.

The total expenditure incurred by the Chorus during the year was £54,094. Of that amount £21,367 was spent on rehearsals and administration and £32,727 on concerts. Income during the year was £50,421. Of this, £21,042 was from subscriptions related income, £26,396 from concerts and concert-specific funding and £2,982 from fundraising and sponsorship. £3,604 of Income tax recovered on deeds of covenant was included within the subscriptions related income; all relevant Gift Aid had been claimed from HMRC by the year end.

Professional fees for rehearsals include the cost of our Musical Director, Accompanist and Vocal Consultants.

Administration costs include £321 for the costs of accounting software, a fee of £300 for the Independent Examination of the accounts, as well as a range of other smaller expenses to support the running of the choir.

Depreciation of £100 represents the annual allocation of the cost of our assets (amplifier, transparent banner and lighting), spread over their estimated periods of use.

Of the £26,396 concert revenues for this year, £16,040 was generated from ticket sales, £1,235 from programme sales, £510 from programme advertising revenue, £1,112 from the bar and £7,500 from concert specific funding. This funding was raised specifically for the Spring 2024 concert, to support our performance of Dame Ethel Smyth's *The Prison*. We are grateful for the grants we received from the Foyle Foundation (£6,000) and the Vaughan Williams Foundation (£1,500).

The majority of the £23,808 professional fees for concerts relates to orchestra fees (£16,275). The type of costs in "concerts – other costs" have always included a small crew at the venues to help with the heavy lifting (humpers) and extra choral support (bumpers) as well as our licence to operate a bar. In addition this year, this category included the hire of folding acoustic screens, the fee for an assistant conductor who carried out sound balance work and an introduction to *The Prison* especially written and presented, all for the Spring 2024 concert and made possible by the funding we received.

Other donations of £116 relate to NLC's participation in the Easy Fundraising scheme. The Friends of NLC initiative brought in net revenue of £390. The tea break at choir rehearsals generated £976 over the choir year. The Chorus gratefully acknowledges receipt of £1,500 from its ongoing sponsors Goodman Jones and Nimrod Capital.

# Balance Sheet - Summarised

## North London Chorus

As at 31 August 2024

	31 AUG 2024	31 AUG 2023
<b>Fixed Assets</b>		
Equipment	80	180
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash at bank and in hand	6,160	13,019
Amounts recoverable by NLC	1,323	391
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>7,483</b>	<b>13,409</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Amounts payable by NLC	2,741	5,094
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>4,822</b>	<b>8,495</b>
<b>Total Reserves</b>		
Net resources brought forward	8,495	6,312
Current Year Earnings	(3,674)	2,183
<b>Total Reserves</b>	<b>4,822</b>	<b>8,495</b>

The Balance Sheet lists the Chorus's assets and liabilities as at the close of the financial year on 31 August 2024.

### Fixed Assets

The Chorus owns an amplifier, a transparent banner and lighting. These assets are included in the balance sheet at cost less accumulated depreciation.

### Current Assets

Amounts recoverable by NLC of £1,323 relate to small amounts owed to NLC at the year end - £1,248 owed by the members for scores purchased for the Winter 2024 concert, and £75 representing the deposit we hold with St James Church.

### Current Liabilities

Amounts payable by NLC of £2,691 mostly relates to subscriptions paid by members in advance of the new choir year (£2,363).

### Net Resources

The Committee aims to maintain a level of net resources in accordance with the policy described in the Trustees' report. The net resources carried forward at 31 August 2024 of £4,822 represent a sufficient level of reserves. The Committee continues to monitor reserve levels carefully as we cross into the new financial year.

Approved by the Committee on 3rd December 2024 and signed on its behalf by



Alan Chandler (FCCA)  
Treasurer

**Notes to the Accounts**

1. Basis of preparation

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with:

- the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and with
- the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and with
- the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

1.2 Going concern

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the North London Chorus’s ability to continue as a going concern. There are no material uncertainties affecting the current year’s accounts.

1.3 Change of accounting policy

The accounts present a true and fair view and the accounting policies adopted are those outlined in note 2. There have been no changes in approach compared to last year.

2. Accounting Policies

2.1 Income

a) Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

b) Tax reclaims on donations and gifts

Gift Aid receivable is included in income when there is a valid declaration from the donor. Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise.



**Notes to the Accounts (continued)**

2. Accounting Policies (continued)

2.2 Expenditure and Liabilities

a) Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

b) Deferred income

No material item of deferred income has been included in the accounts.

c) Creditors

North London Chorus has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts.

d) Provisions for liabilities

A liability is measured on recognition at its historical cost and then subsequently measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date.

2.3 Assets

a) Tangible fixed assets for use by charity

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £100. They are valued at cost. The depreciation rates and methods used are disclosed in note 5.

b) Debtors

Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

3. Analysis of Income

All income received was unrestricted apart from £7,500 which is shown on the face of the accounts as concert specific funding. This funding was raised specifically for the Spring 2024 concert, to support our performance of Dame Ethel Smyth's *The Prison*. We are grateful for the grants we received from the Foyle Foundation (£6,000) and the Vaughan Williams Foundation (£1,500).

4. Details of certain items of expenditure

Independent examiner's fees were £300.

## Notes to the Accounts (continued)

### 5. Fixed Assets

Details	Year purchased	Cost or valuation b/f	Additions	Total cost	Accumulated depreciation brought fwd	Net book value at start year	Depreciation in year (straight line basis)	Accumulated depreciation carried fwd	Net book value at year end
Amplifier	2020	£119.00	£0.00	£119.00	£89.25	£29.75	£29.75	£119.00	£0.00
Transparent banners	2020	£119.94	£0.00	£119.94	£89.97	£29.97	£29.97	£119.94	£0.00
Lighting	2023	£159.98	£0.00	£159.98	£40.00	£119.98	£40.00	£80.00	£79.98
<b>Total</b>		<b>£398.92</b>	<b>£0.00</b>	<b>£398.92</b>	<b>£219.22</b>	<b>£179.70</b>	<b>£99.72</b>	<b>£318.94</b>	<b>£79.98</b>

### 6. Debtors and prepayments

These comprise of amounts recoverable by NLC and prepayments and are disclosed separately on the face of the balance sheet.

### 7. Creditors and accruals

These comprise of amounts payable by NLC and are disclosed separately on the face of the balance sheet.

### 8. Cash at bank and in hand

This comprises of only cash at bank and in hand as North London Chorus holds no short term cash investments or short term deposits.

### 9. Transactions with trustees and related parties

#### a) Trustee remuneration and benefits

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from an employment with their charity or a related entity.

#### b) Trustees' expenses

No trustee expenses have been incurred.

#### c) Transaction(s) with related parties

There have been no related party transactions in the reporting period.

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

### Report to the trustees of North London Chorus Charity no. 277544.

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the year ended 31 August 2024 which are set out on pages 6-10.

### Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees 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 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.

### Independent examiner's statement

- (1) I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention which in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:
- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
  - the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.
  - the accounts did 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.
- (2) 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.



**Chaweevan Williams FCCA**  
Verdant Accountants  
Chartered Certified Accountants  
167 Clarence Avenue, New Malden, Surrey KT3 3TX

**Date:** 04<sup>th</sup> December 2024