

North London Festival Council

Trustees' Report for the year ending 31st December 2023

Structure, Governance and Management

The North London Festival Council (the “Festival Council”) is a registered Charity, Number 278363. It is constituted under a Trust Deed adopted on 18th October 2009 subject to later amendments. The Festival is administered by its Officers and Executive Committee, who are Trustees of the Charity, elected annually by its Members. The Executive Committee takes full responsibility for running the North London Festival of Music, Speech and Drama (the “Festival”) and brings its decisions and results to the Festival Council for approval once a year at the AGM. The following were in office as of 31st December 2023 as members of the Executive Committee:

Rosemary Cook (Acting Secretary)	Richard Mansfield (Treasurer)
Janice Twiselton (Administrator)	Graham Bennett
Daniel Collins	

As of 31st December 2023, following the resignation of Allan Clay due to ill-health, there were vacancies for the offices of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary, and for a Section Secretary for Woodwind & Brass, as well as other voluntary roles. Keziah Thomas is now Section Secretary for Harps, Zoe South has that role for Singing and Liz Partridge has that role for Strings, but none of these is a member of the Executive Committee. The remaining vacancies persist despite the networking efforts of existing Trustees and Festival well-wishers, and postings on volunteer websites.

Review of the 2023 Festival

This review incorporates the Festival Administrator’s report, which was previously a separate report.

The musical part of the 2023 Festival was held from Monday 13th March to Friday 31st March and from Saturday 15th April to Saturday 13th May, mostly in the Free Church in Hampstead Garden Suburb.

As a result of the Coronation of King Charles III, the date of the Speech & Drama Day was changed from 6th May to 29th October 2023.

The loss of that Saturday in May also necessitated changes to the dates of some music classes.

The Harp competitions, sponsored by UK Harp Association, enjoyed a very successful weekend at the Muswell Hill Methodist Church in Pages Lane.

In 2023, as in 2022, choirs recorded their entries for the three competitions and the adjudications were held online using Zoom. It is hoped to continue to hold these online competitions to avoid the difficulties, especially for school choirs, of transporting all their members to a Festival venue. However, in 2024 some live choir competitions are also planned, as some choirs find the process of recording themselves challenging and prefer to perform to an audience.

Most of the musical competitions were held at the Free Church in Hampstead Garden Suburb. The piano classes were very well supported. Entrants do not apply to enter the Emanuel Piano Trophy Competition; rather, they are nominated by another music festival, having won the top piano competition in the nominating festival. However, since so many festivals did not happen in 2021, due to Covid restrictions, we did not hold the competition in 2022. This resulted in our having more entries in 2023, as we allowed winners from both 2021 and 2022 to be nominated. The Piano Section Secretary's report follows separately below.

The Festival is very grateful to our sponsors whose support enables us to award prizes for various competitions.

The Festival is delighted to have recruited a team of experienced adjudicators, including Eva Doroszkowska, Eric Tebbett, Gemma Rosefield, Jo Cole, Joanna Forbes L'Estrange, Jon Thorne, Paul Barritt, Sarah Leonard, Tasmin Little and Timothy Barratt. All were excellent and their comments and observations were well received. The breakage of a string in the upper register of the Steinway piano towards the end of a performance in the Appelbe competition caused a problem which was successfully resolved by the Steinway technician, Branco, who was able to attend the venue later in the day. Steinways were very apologetic and covered the cost of replacement and an extra tuning. Many thanks are due to all our adjudicators. The Festival would also like to thank all its sponsors, whose support means that the Festival is in a strong financial position.

The Festival always needs new helpers, and we were very pleased to welcome two Hampstead Garden Suburb residents, Steven Rowe and Tony Brand, who gave much needed help at the Free Church. Both live in the Suburb and were able to publicise the Festival to residents. Steven was a constant presence in the

church for competitions and has become an expert at extracting donations from members of the audience. He also has many contacts in the Suburb, which meant that there was a large audience for the End-of-Festival concert.

Through Steven, the Festival has established a link with The Residents Association, resulting in sponsorship for the elite piano competition, previously the Appelbe Piano Prize, to be known from 2024 as the HGS Residents Association Piano Prize. Felix Appelbe, a former local resident, has now retired to a rural location and feels unable to continue his sponsorship; the Festival is very grateful for his long-standing input and wishes him a long and happy retirement.

The Free Church now has an extremely helpful administrator, Eddie Hayden, handling our bookings and we wish to acknowledge the Festival's thanks to him, and also to the caretaker, Gary, who has been in post for a long time and is also very accommodating, especially with regard to delivery and collection of the Steinway piano.

Sebastian Till has volunteered to oversee the main Festival website, thus providing much needed IT assistance. We are most grateful to him, and to Neil Palmer who maintains and upgrades the Play&Perform entry system on behalf of a large community, currently numbering over 40 competitive festivals spread widely across the UK.

Piano Secretary's Report

The piano section was very successful, attracting a significant number of participants. Competitors and parents were complimentary in their comments, reflecting a general opinion that it was so good to be able to take part in a live event following all the restrictions of Covid.

Classes of note, apart from the elite competitions, were the grades 1 – 5 classes sponsored by the ABRSM, who provided a “goody bag” for all participants. These classes attracted a large number of entries.

Sadly, Timothy Barratt had to withdraw from adjudicating the Emanuel Trophy Competition due to a bout of influenza, and Professor Frank Wibaut very kindly stepped into his shoes.. Professor Wibaut declared it was the best Emanuel Trophy Competition that he had heard, with all 19 competitors presenting programmes of a high calibre.

Speech & Drama Section Secretary's Report

Dan Collins organised a very successful Speech and Drama day at the King Alfred School in Golders Green. There were 149 entries and all the classes ran smoothly even though, due to the number of entrants, some classes had to be held in a drama studio across the road from the main venue and he had to recruit a second adjudicator. We were grateful to Rebecca Vines and Vivienne Redford who both provided wonderful adjudication. Dan thanked Sebastian and Richard for their help on the day.

Dan changed the timing of the Speech and Drama classes to the autumn. In previous years he felt that our Festival suffered from being so soon after the Watford Festival, which happens in March. He also explained that this year he set the closing date only two weeks before the day of the classes. In previous years, an earlier closing resulted in competitors not turning up or changing their minds about what they were going to perform. Dan was pleased that there were a bumper number of entries.

He mentioned two incidents from the Speech and Drama Day. The first was that, unfortunately, a girl fell off the back of the stage during her performance. Luckily, the girl was not injured, but we were pleased that Janice confirmed that we had Public liability insurance to cover such incidents. A mother complained that to Dan that her child had not won her class. Dan confirmed that the adjudicator's decision is final. He told the meeting that the poem chosen for the child was inappropriate for her age.

Financial Review

The Speech & Drama section represents a significant portion of the Festival's income and expenditure. The Festival committee were concerned that the financial figures for the 12 months to 30 June 2023 would not be comparable with the previous year, as they would not have included the Speech & Drama section. We therefore took the decision to move the year end from 30th June 2023 to 31 December 2023, meaning that the 2022 and 2023 figures will be comparable. This change of year end has been registered with the Charity Commission.

Income from entry fees increased by £2,994 to £16,063, a 23% year-on-year increase. This was largely a result of the number of entrants increasing from 777 to 886, a 14% increase. Despite significant increases in payments to prize winners

(up 37%) and adjudicators (up 46%), and premises hire costs also increasing sharply, there was a profit for the period of £2,874. This was £909 below the June 2022 figure of £3,783, but that year benefited from £1,407 of Gift Aid income versus none for the current period. We consider this to be a satisfactory outcome.

The Festival's cash resources rose from £20,571 as at 30th June 2022 to £23,446 as at 31 December 2023. We consider this to be a prudent level, as it is broadly in line with one year's expenditure.

The financial results were sent to John Best, a qualified accountant, for independent review. This has now been completed. Since no significant issues were identified, the results will be uploaded to the Festival's Charity Commission website.

Acknowledgements and Thanks

The Festival could not continue to exist and develop without the support of all its section secretaries, members, sponsors, prize donors, patrons, friends, and volunteers. On behalf of the Festival Council, we offer our most heartfelt thanks and deepest gratitude to all of you, for your support, your time, your ideas and above all, for your passion which enables the Festival to support and encourage all its individual entrants.

Signed on behalf of the North London Festival Council



Rosemary Cook, Hon. Secretary

North London Festival Council

Registered Address:

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Income and Expenditure Report

	18 months to 31 December 2023	12 months to 30 June 2022	Change
Income			
Entry fees	16,063	13,069	2,994
Door takings	1,960	1,249	711
Sponsorship - Prize Donations	5,995	4,040	1,955
Sponsorship - Adjudicator reimbursements	1,891	1,287	604
Donations (Patrons, ad hoc donations, Amazon Smile)	628	850	-222
Membership subscriptions	350	315	35
Gift Aid	0	1,407	-1,407
Bank Interest (CAF Gold & Scottish Widows)	<u>475</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>468</u>
Total Income (£)	<u>27,362</u>	<u>22,224</u>	<u>5,139</u>
Expenditure			
Hire of Premises	3,493	2,800	693
Piano Hire & Tuning	3,542	3,391	150
Adjudication	8,849	6,079	2,770
Paid to Prizewinners	6,480	4,715	1,765
Websites	674	635	39
Performance fees & expenses	150	140	10
PayPal charges	290	297	-7
Medals and Trophies	170	0	170
Subscriptions and PRS	280	244	36
Bank Charges	93	96	-3
Gen Admin & catering	<u>468</u>	<u>42</u>	<u>425</u>
Total Cost (£)	<u>24,488</u>	<u>18,440</u>	<u>6,048</u>
Profit/(Loss) to balance sheet (£)	2,874	3,783	-909

Balance Sheet

	31 December 2023	30 June 2022	Change
Assets:			
Gold Account (CAF Bank)	22,657	19,188	3,469
Current Account (CAF Bank)	<u>788</u>	<u>1,383</u>	<u>-595</u>
Total Assets (£)	<u>23,446</u>	<u>20,571</u>	<u>2,874</u>
Liabilities:			
Accumulated Fund	20,571	16,788	3,783
Income & Expenditure Account	<u>2,874</u>	<u>3,783</u>	<u>-909</u>
Total Financing (£)	<u>23,446</u>	<u>20,571</u>	<u>2,874</u>

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The North London Festival Council.

I report on the accounts of the charity for the 18-month period ended 31st December 2023.

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

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under section 145 of the 2011 Act)
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act)
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 you as 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 next statement.

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 2011 Act, and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 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.

John Best ACMA

72 Cranley Gardens
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22nd February 2024

Signed


