

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2024

1. Reference and administrative information

- 1.1. St Albans Chamber Choir is a registered charity, number 280876.
- 1.2. Its principal address is c/o The Treasurer, 4 Lancaster Road, St Albans AL1 4ET.
- 1.3. The Choir's affairs are managed and administered by a committee. At the beginning of the season, the Committee comprised:

Chair: Edith Gilmour (Trustee)

Treasurer: Andrew Fotheringham (Trustee)

Secretary: Susannah Renshaw (Trustee)

Other members: Carol Crook, Laurence Hawkins, Helen Kemish, Dorothee Nauth and Joanne Scott

- 1.4. At the AGM on 9 July 2024, Joanne Scott was re-elected to the Committee. There were no other changes to the membership of the Committee.
- 1.5. The Choir is affiliated with Making Music (The National Federation of Music Societies), a registered charity which provides advice and services to affiliated societies.

2. Structure, governance and management

- 2.1. St Albans Chamber Choir is an unincorporated association and is governed by its constitution, which was revised in 2001 and last amended in 2022.
- 2.2. The Committee members are elected or re-elected by and out of the Choir's members at the Annual General Meeting

3. Objectives and activities

- 3.1. St Albans Chamber Choir's objects are:
 - 3.1.1. To study and give performances of choral music of both familiar repertoire and rarely performed works, ranging from early to modern music, including works commissioned by the Choir.

- 3.1.2. To foster public knowledge and appreciation of such music by performing locally and further afield
- 3.2. The Choir meets these objects by giving performances of suitable choral works in venues appropriate to the music being performed.
- 3.3. The pieces are selected by the Committee, with guidance from the Choir's music director, to provide variety during the course of the season for both Choir members and audiences.
- 3.4. The music is practised at the Choir's regular weekly rehearsals in order to achieve the highest possible standards of performance.
- 3.5. A typical season contains works for *a cappella* choir, works for choir and soloists with organ or piano accompaniment, and works for choir and soloists with orchestral accompaniment.
- 3.6. The Choir has a long-standing link with the Wormser Kantorei of Worms, Germany and every two years gives a joint concert with the Wormser Kantorei, which alternates between St Albans and Worms.

4. Achievements and performance

- 4.1. Our 2023-24 season opened with a concert on 11 November 2023 in St Saviour's Church, St Albans on the theme of 'Freedom and Remembrance' to mark Remembrance Day. The programme comprised Francis Poulenc's wartime cantata 'La Figure Humaine' and Gabriel Fauré's ever-popular 'Requiem'. The Choir was accompanied by members of Ealing Symphony Orchestra in the Fauré and the concert was conducted by John Gibbons. It was the Choir's second performance of the Poulenc and the performance benefited greatly from greater familiarization with the complex chromatic harmonies of Poulenc's style. The concert attracted a reasonable audience and was well received.
- 4.2. Instead of a concert in the busy period before Christmas, the Choir opted to give a concert on Epiphany, 6 January 2024, with the title 'Star of Wonder'. This concert was also held in St Saviour's Church where, unfortunately, there were problems with the heating system. Some portable heaters were hired to take the chill off and mulled wine was served before the concert to warm the sizeable audience that had braved the weather to come and listen to us. The cold inside the church gave the occasion an authentic feel for Tallis' mass 'Puer natus est nobis', which formed the bedrock of the programme. The Choir was also delighted to perform, in her presence, 'Polaris' by 13 year-old Rebecca, who won the junior category of the BBC Radio Carol Competition that Christmas and lives in St Albans.

- 4.3. On 9 March 2024 the Choir returned to the Lady Chapel in St Albans Cathedral. The concert opened with Stanford's double choir setting of the Magnificat, followed by Frank Martin's 'Mass for Double Choir'. The second half opened with a setting of Emily Dickinson's poem 'I shall know why' by the Choir's Music Director, John Gibbons, and George Lloyd's setting of Psalm 130 'Out of the Depths'. It concluded with a moving performance of Vaughan Williams 'The Lark Ascending' in the choral arrangement by Paul Drayton, with the solo violin part played by Jenny Wigram, a member of the Choir. The audience for the concert was somewhat smaller than that for the Choir's concert in the Lady Chapel in 2022, but the performance received very positive feedback from those present, especially for Jenny Wigram's wonderful playing in 'The Lark Ascending'.
- 4.4. On 27 April 2024, the Choir was back in St Saviour's Church – this time for a performance of Bach's 'Mass in B minor' with four young soloists, Eleanor Bray (soprano), Nina Vinther (mezzo soprano), Dominic Bevan (tenor) and Ted Day (bass), and a period ensemble made up of some of the finest early music players in the UK. The concert was conducted by John Gibbons and the Choir gave a powerful and moving performance of a work that is recognised as a pinnacle of the choral repertoire. The large audience showed its appreciation afterwards with enthusiastic applause for all the performers.
- 4.5. Our next concert, on 8 June 2024 in the hall of Homewood Road URC, represented the Choir's first foray into holding a children's concert and had input from a number of Choir members, who devised and led different items involving singing and, in some cases, movement as well. Due to a clash with another event for children in St Albans that afternoon, only a relatively modest number of children participated in the concert, but those that came greatly enjoyed themselves.
- 4.6. The Choir's final concert of the season, entitled Fête Française, was held in the recently refurbished St Peter's Church in St Albans on 6 July 2024. The programme of French music by Ravel, Debussy, Saint-Saëns and Lili Boulanger, together with Gabriel Jackson's remarkable 'La Musique', was interspersed with piano duets performed by Fingers Crossed. The soprano solo in 'La Musique' was sung by Fleur Moore-Bridger, a former member of the Choir, and the concert was conducted by John Gibbons. The unfamiliar music may have accounted for the rather small audience, but the feedback from audience members afterwards was very appreciative.

5. Annual General Meeting

- 5.1. The Choir held its Annual General Meeting on 9 July 2024 at The Crown, 144-146 Hatfield Road, St Albans AL1 4 JA.

6. Financial Review

- 6.1. The Choir has three accounts with Metro Bank, St Albans – a current account, a deposit account and a fixed term deposit account.
- 6.2. The Choir's principal sources of regular income are members' subscriptions (including Gift Aid) and income from ticket and programme sales. Its main areas of expenditure include professional fees, venue hire, publicity, music hire and purchase.
- 6.3. In 2023-24, the Choir received grants from the Williams Church Music Trust and the Postcode Places Trust. The Choir is very grateful to both funds for their generous support of its activities.
- 6.4. The Choir's Independent Examiner is Mr David Stokes.

ST ALBANS CHAMBER CHOIR - SEASON 2023-2024
 ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2024

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT		2023-2024			2022-2023		
	Note	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Income							
General receipts	1	15473			10304		
Total General Income			15473			10304	
General Expenditure							
General payments	1	12053			9294		
Total General Expenditure			12053			9294	
Surplus/(deficit) of General Income over General Expenditure				3420			1010
Concert Income							
Direct concert income		9891			8287		
Other concert income		0			628		
Total Concert Income	2		9891			8915	
Concert Expenditure							
Direct concert expenditure	2	-16136			-8612		
Other concert expenditure	2	-345			-967		
Total Concert Expenditure			-16481			-9579	
Surplus/(deficit) of Concert Income over Concert expenditure				-6590			-664
Grants received for the Season							
The Williams Church Music Trust			3500			5000	
Postcode Places Trust			5000				
				8500			5000
Surplus/(deficit) for the Season				5329			5346

ST ALBANS CHAMBER CHOIR - SEASON 2023-2024

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	2023-2024		2022-2023	
Reserves Brought forward	£		£	
Surplus(Deficit) for Season	32684		27338	
	5329		5346	
Balance carried forward	38013		32684	
Comprising:				
DESIGNATED FUNDS	2023-2024		2022-2023	
Special Projects Fund	£		£	
Opening balance	10489		10489	
Transfers	0		0	
Balance, end of Season	10489		10489	
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS				
Opening bank aces	21745		16548	
Increase/decrease at bank during season	5942		5196	
Balance, end of Season	27687		21745	
Total cash at bank	38176		32234	
Prepayments & Income accrued at the year end	620		648	
Expenses accrued at the year end	-783		-198	
Closing reserves	38013		32684	

Andrew Fotheringham
Honorary Treasurer

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF ST ALBANS CHAMBER CHOIR

I have examined, without carrying out an audit, the accounts of St Albans Chamber Choir for the year ended 31 July 2024. The accounts have been drawn up using generally accepted accounting principles and agree with the underlying records as presented to me.

signed by:



David Stokes
Independent Examiner

Dated:

22/10/24

107 The Vinyard, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 7PX

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ST ALBANS CHAMBER CHOIR - SEASON 2023-2024
Income and Expenditure analysis

NOTE 1 - GENERAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

		2023-2024			2022-2023		
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income							
	Members' subscriptions	9636			8241		
	HM Revenue & Customs: Gift Aid	4123			1490		
	Friends	235			257		
	Donations	463			0		
	Sundry income	242			201		
	Bank accounts: interest received	774			115		
			15473			10304	
Total general income			15473			10304	
General Expenditure							
	Conductor's rehearsal fees	6350			4970		
	Rehearsal venue	3077			2240		
	Other rehearsal costs	153			0		
	Music hire	0			15		
	Music purchase	0			150		
	General administration	115			26		
	Making Music (NFMS): subscription and insurance	449			315		
	Conductor's fees for attending committee meetings	1301			1385		
	Refreshments	239			0		
	Website	370			173		
	Bank charges	0			21		
			12053			9294	
Total general expenditure			12053			9294	
Surplus/(deficit) of General Income over General Expenditure			3420			1010	

ST ALBANS CHAMBER CHOIR - SEASON 2023-2024
Income and Expenditure

NOTE 2 - CONCERT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

INCOME			EXPENDITURE		
	£	£		£	£
11 November 2023	<u>St Saviour's Church</u>		<u>Freedom and Remembrance</u>		
Tickets sold: 76	1356		Venue	540	
<i>less commission</i>	-66		Conductor	612	
Programme sales	77		Soloists	150	
Refreshments	193		Orchestra	46	
Advertising	167		Music hire	163	
			Ticket printing	15	
			Programme printing	99	
			Fliers & posters	37	
			Gifts	27	
			Refreshments	18	
			PRS fees	62	
		1727			1769
06 January 2024	<u>St Saviour's Church</u>		<u>Star of Wonder</u>		
Tickets sold: 83	1450		Venue	518	
<i>less commission</i>	-59		Conductor	612	
Programme sales	94		Music hire	177	
Refreshments	175		Ticket printing	15	
Advertising	167		Programme printing	90	
			Fliers & posters	45	
			Gifts	48	
			Refreshments	125	
			PRS fees	67	
		1827			1696
09 March 2024	<u>St Albans Cathedral</u>		<u>Wings of Hope</u>		
Tickets sold: 141	2766		Venue	1866	
<i>less commission</i>	-332		Conductor	612	
Programmes	163		Music hire	81	
Advertising	167		Programme printing	112	
			Fliers & posters	48	
			Gifts	29	
		2764			2748
27 April 2024	<u>St Saviour's Church</u>		<u>Mass in B minor</u>		
Tickets sold: 98	1955		Venue	455	
<i>less commission</i>	-100		Conductor	612	
Programmes	141		Soloists	969	
Refreshments	225		Orchestra	4910	
Advertising	75		Music hire	69	
			Ticket printing	16	
			Programme printing	82	
			Fliers & posters	48	
			Gifts	73	
			Refreshments	99	
		2296			7333
08 June 2024	<u>Homewood Road URC</u>		<u>Sing with us</u>		
Tickets sold: 36	123		Venue	95	
<i>less commission</i>	-5		Conductor	306	
Donation	2		Fliers & posters	25	
		120			420

06 July 2024

St Saviour's Church

Fete Francaise

Tickets sold: 54 902
less commission -36
Programmes 40
Refreshments 176
Advertising 75

Venue 805
Conductor 612
Soloists 450
Music hire 49
Ticket printing 16
Programme printing 102
Fliers & posters 48
Gifts 24
Refreshments 16
PRS fees 42

1157

2164

9891

16136

Income from informal concerts and other events

Expenditure on informal concerts and other events

St Mary's Church, Walkern

Conductor 306
Publicity 39

0

345

0

345

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			Gifts	73	
			Refreshments	99	
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