



TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 01 APRIL 2024 – 31 MARCH 2025

A. Legal and administrative information

1. Full name: Truro Choral Society (The Truro Singers)
2. Registered Charity number: 281902
3. Correspondent: Hon. Treasurer
4. Governing document: Constitution, revised 12 July 2022
5. Trustees: Officers and elected committee
6. Bank: Lloyds Bank
7. Activities: Choral music rehearsals and concerts (usually in Cornwall)
8. Investment powers: None specifically mentioned in the governing document, apart from "control of finance to be in hands of the committee"

B. Aims and organisation

1. Aim: To promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of choral music, by the presentation of public concerts.
2. The Charity is organised entirely by volunteers. The Director of Music and the accompanist are fee-paid per rehearsal at an agreed hourly rate.
3. The activities of the Charity are:
 - (i) Regular choir rehearsals
 - (ii) Presenting choral concerts
4. There are no major changes in the aims and organisation to report this year.

C. Review of progress and achievements

Membership remained steady at around 130, with a welcome (small) influx of tenors and basses.

As part of our charitable remit, we have developed an Artist in Residence programme aimed at supporting and encouraging young musicians at the start of their professional career. We are delighted that Katherine Gregory, soprano, agreed to accept the inaugural position as Artist in Residence to the Society. The Residency will extend for a period of 3 years during which Katherine will appear as soloist once each season (subject to there being a professionally suitable role) and when the Society will seek generally to support Katherine's concerts *etc.*

Scheduling clashes last year meant that this financial year spanned four events, rather than our usual three, since it includes the Spring 2024 concert. We benefitted this year from a particularly talented and enthusiastic cohort of Cathedral Choral Scholars who were keen to sing with us for concerts.

Since our autumn concert was planned for late November, we took the opportunity to slot in two additional concerts in the autumn term, which meant a busy period for the Committee but which were welcomed by the choir as some interesting variations from our usual cycle of events. The following Truro Choral Society concerts were performed:



13 April 2024 – Mendelssohn: *Elijah*

The Society had last sung this work, one of the great choral classics, many years ago as a joint concert with Three Spires Singers, and the work was new to over half of the choir. This meant some intensive rehearsals. A generous donation from an (anonymous) choir member persuaded us to invest in hiring a quartet of soloists from the Royal Academy of Music, London. The Academy's Professor of Performance personally selected the singers, all of whom were undertaking post-graduate studies. Overnight accommodation and travel costs, allied to the need for a larger orchestra, meant that this proved an expensive concert to stage, but choir, orchestra and audience alike were unanimous in their praise of the concert and delighted at the talent and energy brought by the RAM soloists. Not least was a magical moment when an unaccompanied semi-chorus of angels (three senior girl choristers from the Cathedral, prepared and conducted by James Anderson-Besant, Director of Music, Truro Cathedral) sang "Lift thine eyes" from the Cathedral's Tower – they were completely out of view, as this heavenly sound appeared from nowhere.

The RAM soloists were Conrad Chatteron (baritone, *Elijah*), Sophie Benfield (soprano), Sophie Patterson (alto), Constantine Akriditis (tenor), with Imogen Dowse (soprano, "The Youth"). Truro Symphony Orchestra (leader: Molly Leigh) accompanied the performance, conducted by Martin Palmer.

15 June 2024 – Rossini: *Petite Messe Solennelle*

Neither small nor solemn, this was a marvellous work to learn and perform, particularly the two long and tricky fugues. Again, our performance was enhanced by our soloists and we were delighted to welcome back several who have strong links with Cornwall, including Katherine Gregory (soprano), Helena Paish (mezzo-soprano), Paul Badley (tenor), David Caroe (bass), Paul Comeau (piano) and Michael Høeg (organ). Martin Palmer conducted the choir and Truro Symphony Orchestra (leader: Philip Montgomery-Smith).

11 September 2024 – Last Night of the Cornish Proms

A joint venture between the Society and Truro Cathedral, this near sold out concert was an evening of Cornish music and culture, with Cornish flags, Cornish tartan and colours to the fore especially during the audience participation items. Camborne Town Band provided the orchestral music and Truro Choral Society sang the medley of sea shanties. City of Truro Male Choir also featured and soprano Suzanne Manuell performed two sets of songs, while the whole evening was held together by compere Roger Bush. 16 year old violist Victoria Stolte played in the "young musician" slot, accompanied by Stella Pendrous (piano). Organist/pianist Jeremy Wan raced around from organ loft to orchestra stalls. Truro and Boscawen Rotary Club kindly provided the stewards for the evening, illustrating that it was very much a collaborative affair.

The event was dedicated to Benjamin Luxon who had died earlier this year. With the plans of three musical directors to dovetail, it was a hectic concert to organise, but brought an entirely new audience from our usual, and the Cathedral is keen for it to become an annual event.

23 November 2024 – Music for Advent

Bach: "Sleepers wake!", sung in German, was the principal work for this concert featuring music for the forthcoming Advent period. Bach's *Adagio* from the *Concerto for violin and oboe* was arranged



for two oboes (not uncommon at the time) played by Ellen Wilkinson and Jack Tostevin-Hall, both students at the Royal Academy of Music. The first half closed with Mendelssohn's "There shall be a star" extract from *Christus* which is becoming a firm choir favourite; Mendelssohn, in the view of Cornish composer Russell Pascoe, being a composer whose work really suits the Society.

The second half opened with Judith Weir's "My guardian angel", a short setting of a text by William Blake. This required the audience to drone "Alleluia" while the choir wove harmonies above. It was a remarkable success, not least aided by the orchestra's singing, so much so that we sang it twice! It was followed by Finzi's tricky "In terra pax" and the concert concluded on an uplifting note with Handel's version of similar text "For unto us a child is born" from *Messiah*. Martin Palmer conducted Truro Symphony Orchestra (leader: Philip Montgomery-Smith) with soloists Kate Banfield Rickard (soprano), Will Charnley (tenor) and Mark Meadows Williams (bass).

10 December 2024 – Carol concert

The early autumn concert left time to organise a concert of carols, held on a rehearsal night, at St John the Evangelist's Church, Lemon Street, Truro. This beautiful church had space for around 400. This was primarily an hour's concert for choir members and their families and friends, and around 60 people were welcomed with mulled wine and a mince pie for a lovely conclusion to a busy but productive autumn season for the choir. Then it was eyes down for the Verdi...

22 March 2025 – Verdi: *Requiem*

Our success with Royal Academy of Music soloists for *Elijah* last year led us to repeat the experiment and, by a happy coincidence, the RAM's choice of soprano soloist was none other than our Artist in Residence, Katherine Gregory. Zixin Tang (mezzo-soprano), Konstantinos Akridites (tenor) and Harrison Robb (bass) completed the quartet of soloists. Martin Palmer marshalled his considerable forces – 90 choir and 50 orchestra – including four off-stage trumpets playing from the Cathedral's gallery. After a slow build-up of ticket sales, the concert sold out. The concert was deemed a rousing success and a fitting farewell concert for our Musical Director, Martin Palmer.

D. Review of financial activities and affairs

Unfortunately, the "Music for Advent" concert coincided with some particularly dreadful weather surrounding "Storm Bert" which reduced considerably our typical "walk-in" audience and, compounded with a plethora of concerts in the Cathedral, meant that it produced a larger concert deficit than anticipated. Fortunately, the losses were offset somewhat by the success of the following Verdi *Requiem* although requiring large orchestral forces meant it was also an expensive concert to stage despite the full Cathedral.

The year's financial accounts were impacted also from the hangover of our 2023/24 season *Elijah* concert into this financial year, which thus reflects 4 concerts, two of which were particularly expensive to stage, and no *Messiah* (which usually attracts a large audience). As a result, financial reserves were reduced, although remain about the equivalent of 6 months operating costs.

There were a number of administrative changes to the Society. After the particularly hectic autumn, the Chair felt that she had achieved all she could in her 2½ years chairmanship and tendered her resignation to the committee in December 2024. The vice-Chair elected not to take over for the remaining 6 months and also resigned from the committee. An emergency committee meeting

Truro Choral Society

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elected a new acting Chair, and the appointment was subsequently put to the vote of the choir membership at an Extraordinary General Meeting in January 2025, where the acting Chair was unanimously elected into the substantive role.

In his 16th year with the Society, our Musical Director tendered his resignation with effect from the end of the choir season in June. The position was advertised in early March, with the expectation of appointing a new Musical Director for the 2025/26 season in late May 2025.

Report prepared by: Travis Mason (Secretary)

Signed by: Susanne Deneke (Chair)

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Susanne Deneke'.

Date: 05 November 2025

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Truro Choral Society Registered Charity No 281902

Balance Sheet

As at the 31st March, 2024

	£	£
Fixed Assets		
Current Assets		
Balance at Bank:		
Current	578.46	
Deposit	32,286.75	
	<u>32,865.21</u>	
Current Liabilities		
Creditors	0.00	
	<u>0.00</u>	
Net Current Assets		<u>32,865.21</u>
Represented by		
Capital Account		
Truro Choral Society (Charity No 281902)		
Opening Balance	15,283.96	
Profit (Loss) for year	17,581.25	
		<u>32,865.21</u>

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Profit and Loss Accounts

Year ended 31st March, 2024

2024

2023

Income		
Concert Income	15,171.46	10,951.08
Annual Membership Subscriptions	17,447.00	13,634.00
Annual Friend Subscriptions	995.00	845.00
Sponsorship	1,000.00	1,000.00
Music sales and hire to members	1,205.02	1,057.31
Fundraising (including donations)	6,176.55	2,557.32
Programme - sales & advertising	839.31	
Sundries	10.00	
Interest on Bank Account	240.16	34.78
	<u>43,084.50</u>	<u>30,079.49</u>
Expenditure		
Concert expense	14,844.73	30,391.36
Salaried Officer fees	5,680.00	5,065.00
Rehearsal venue hire	2,504.48	2,083.28
Social Event	300.00	1,100.00
Music Scores (Purchase, Hire and Printing)	790.54	1,641.20
Publicity	687.80	843.95
Making Music & website	646.00	604.74
Sundries	49.70	110.59
	<u>25,503.25</u>	<u>41,840.12</u>
Net Profit/(Loss) for Year	<u>17,581.25</u>	<u>-11,760.63</u>



Independent Financial Examiner's Report

To the trustees of

Truro Choral Society

Registered Charity No 281902

I report on the Financial Receipts and Payments Accounts set out on the attached Financial Statement for the above named organisation for the year ended 31st March 2024

Basis of Examiner's Statement

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 Charities Act 2011; and
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities 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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Harris'.

Chris Harris
31 Chainwalk Drive
Truro Cornwall TR1 3ST