

Charity Name	The Downland Chorale
Registered Charity Number	287877
Charity's address	40 Ridgemount Avenue, Coulsdon, Surrey,
Postcode	CR5 3AQ

Names of Trustees who manage the charity: (note: all are still serving as of 31st July 2025)

Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Date first appointed	Date last elected or appointed	Appointed by
Rosemary Viggiani	Chair	13.11.2023	28.10.2024	Elected by Members
Deborah Collymore	Treasurer	12.11.2018	28.10.2024	Elected by Members
Penelope Baker	Secretary	28.10.2024	28.10.2024	Elected by Members
Lynda Cole		05.12.2016	28.10.2024	Elected by Members
Joan Currion		29.01.2025	29.01.2025	Appointed by Trustees
Paul Eldridge		12.11.2018	28.10.2024	Elected by Members
Anne Odams		20.10.2005	28.10.2024	Elected by Members
Elizabeth Watts-Read		01.11.2021	28.10.2024	Elected by Members

There are no other Trustees.

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and for no remuneration or other benefits.

Structure, governance and management

Type of governing document	Constitution adopted 18 th March 2024
How the charity is constituted	Unincorporated association
Trustee selection methods	As set out in the Constitution

Additional governance issues

Support and advice	<p>The Downland Chorale is a member of Making Music, the industry body for small, voluntary music groups. Making Music provide, or broker, a wide range of support and advice including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Website and platform for management / admin – Insurance broker – Safeguarding advice / DBS services – Policy templates – Seminars and training on management matters – Networking
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Objectives and activities

Objects of the Charity.

To promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by the presentation of public concerts and recitals and by such other ways as the society, through its committee, shall determine from time to time.

Summary of main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects.

Our Mission is summarised as *"Providing extraordinary experiences for ordinary people"*. We do this by:

- Staging four concerts per year that are open to the public for a small fee;
- One full-day workshop open to the public for a small fee;
- Weekly rehearsals with coaching from our MD with piano accompaniment; open to Members for a fee; free of charge to potential new members on a trial basis with subsidised membership considered when requested;
- Choral scholarships for young people aspiring to a future in choral music;
- Submission of funding bids to increase uptake of activities and provide some subsidised fees where necessary;
- Fundraising to cover costs of choral scholarships and additional subsidised fees;
- Singing on request at community events and in care homes / sheltered housing at Christmas.

Additional details of objectives and activities: (optional information)

e.g. contribution made by volunteers

We could not function without our volunteers – not only our Trustees who sit on the Committee and manage our activities – but also the many volunteers at our concerts who run the raffle, arrange and serve refreshments etc. We thank them all very sincerely.

We also thank our professional musicians who, although paid for their services, often go above and beyond our expectations in delivering high quality coaching and amazing events. Again, thank you!

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year.

The 2024/25 year has been one in which the Downland Chorale has grown and developed, providing a sound base for the next few years.

Concerts and Events

Our amazing professional team comprising our Music Director, Thomas Chapman, supported by the greatly talented accompanist, Duncan White, has really stretched us with Dido and Aeneas, surprised us with the difficulty of the Rutter Gloria and given us a fun experience with the Beatles Workshop culminating with two fun concerts in partnership with the Euphonix Community Choir where the combined strength of more than 90 voices truly lived up to our mission "to provide extraordinary experiences for ordinary people." The audiences, first in Kingston and then in Coulsdon, really lifted our performance leaving indelible memories for us all.

In summary we have staged five concerts and one workshop:

November 2024:	Purcell: Dido and Aeneas
December 2024:	A Christmas Cracker in partnership with Keston Junior School Choir
February 2025:	Workshop: Come Sing the Beatles
March 2025:	Rutter: Gloria; Chilcott: Jubilate and Bruckner: Geistliche Chöre
July 2025 (Kingston & Coulsdon):	A celebration of Summer with the Euphonix Community Choir

Conductors Report

Our 2024 – 2025 season was dramatic, comedic, morose, reflective, festive, bombastic and joyful in equal measure. The range of repertoire and concert programming allowed us to explore 400 years' worth of music; this season, spanning from Henry Purcell through to Eva Cassidy, shows how diverse and eclectic the music we sing can be.

The choir provided drama and comedy in our November 2024 performance of Dido and Aeneas. It is the first time we have performed an Opera and members of the choir enjoyed the occasion with witch costumes, ably supported by be-cloaked professional soloists Rebecca Hardwick, Natasha Page, Billie Robson and Thomas Castle. It was comedic, dramatic and thoroughly enjoyable. In the first half the choir performed Purcell's *Funeral Sentences* and *The Bell Anthem*, all accompanied by professional string players. The *Funeral Sentences* are achingly beautiful although proved to be a significant challenge for the choir; despite this they were performed admirably well.

For our Christmas Concert we again collaborated with Keston Primary School Choir, led by Alma Burcombe. It was an energetic performance, full of joy and festive spirit. Highlights included Malcolm Sargent's *Two Christmas Spirituals*, Mathias' *A Babe was Born* and a rousing encore of *Jingle Bells*. There were readings performed by members and piano music from Duncan. The earlier start time of 6pm is a real bonus as well as it allows a more family feel and time for mulled wine and mince pies.

Our workshop this year was dedicated to songs by The Beatles. It was the first time I've chosen to do a mixture of learning styles throughout the day with some songs learned by ear and others learned with music, depending on length and complexity. There was even room for a few sing a long style Karaoke songs which was fun for everyone to just sing out without thinking about it. It meant for a more varied day and I feel was probably the most successful workshop I've done with the choir in terms of participant enjoyment.

Our Easter concert was a spectacular affair accompanied by professional brass band. We performed Rutter's *Gloria* alongside Chilcott's lesser known *Jubilate* and motets by Bruckner, including *Ecce Sacerdos*. The Rutter and much of the Bruckner posed various challenges, such as the large vocal range and rhythmic and harmonic complexity. The music and spirits of the choir was significantly enlivened by the volume of the brass instruments and the concert was terrific.

Much like the *Funeral Sentences* and *A Babe was Born* from previous concerts it is good to have some more challenging pieces which provide us with that wonderful sense of achievement. I urge the choir to remember this as over the years we have performed some tricky pieces and they always come good with hard work and dedication. The Rutter *Gloria* was thrilling and *Ecce Sacerdos*, in particular, was incredibly loud.

The summer was a personal highlight and was the first time I had brought together two of my choirs for joint performances. The choir collaborated with Euphonix, a community choir which I lead in Kingston. We performed the same programme on the Thursday at All Saints, Kingston and hosted Euphonix two days later at St John's, Old Coulsdon for the return leg. It was a wonderful opportunity for the choir to sing as part of a bigger chorus and gain an insight into the differences in styles of my choir leading. The choir performed Vaughan Williams' *Five English Folk Songs* on their own and collaborated with Euphonix on songs by Eva Cassidy, Johnathan Willcocks' *Sing Africa* and a medley from *West Side Story* which was a scintillating end to both concerts. It was some of the best feedback I've had from audience members after concerts and was a truly joyful occasion.

Thank You to Duncan who continues to be a fantastic talent as well as a wonderful colleague and friend. He has treated us to some very technically challenging solo items this year and never bats an eyelid when I ask him to play something that's not really meant for the piano; like organ parts or harpsichord realisations for example. Thank You for your great musicianship and hard work with the choir.

I'd like to thank Rosemary for her tireless efforts to keep The Downland Chorale invigorated and for dragging the choir into the 21st century. She truly goes above and beyond for us and it does not go unnoticed or unappreciated. The funding bids and work to introduce our choral scholarship scheme are very exciting and I hope herald a new age of diversifying the makeup of the choir. She is ably supported by the committee who are so crucial in keeping the choir running behind the scenes and we all owe a great debt of thanks to you all. Thanks also to those who volunteer to help out and also to those who get involved in fundraising. Sadly, we'd be nowhere without money and fundraising never ends so thanks to those who are coming up with new and clever ways to keep the choir's finances ticking over.

The next season is very much underway with our first choral scholars and a good handful of new members, especially in the sopranos. All new members are very welcome and we're delighted to have you on board. We've only had one bass join and stay since I joined the choir in 2017 and quite a few have left in that time. We very much treasure our basses but these statistics are bleak. I wonder if as a collective we can change that this year?

Best wishes for another great season.

Thomas Chapman

Membership and our wider charitable ambitions

As Thomas has alluded to above, we have sadly said goodbye to a number of long-standing Members during the year which has emphasised the need for us to diversify and attract younger voices to ensure our sustainability in the medium to long term.

We have also reached out for funding and, with support from The Humphrey Richardson Taylor Charitable Trust (HRTCT) and Croydon Voluntary Action (CVA) in partnership with Centrale & Whitgift and Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield, we have been really pleased to extend our marketing and welcome several new Members during the year. As a result we have seen a small net growth in Membership whilst also setting the ground for Choral Scholars to join us next year. To support this

we have strengthened our safeguarding practices ensuring that all necessary policies and DBS Checks are in place.

In support of our ambitions to grow and diversify we have developed our marketing materials and we have increasingly reached out through social media and also through other local organisations including many schools and colleges. These relationships led to our performing festive music in partnership with Coulsdon College students at the Toldene Court sheltered housing facility and also singing at the Coulsdon Yuletide celebrations to entertain families intrepid enough to venture out on a very stormy December afternoon!

Financial Review

Policy on Reserves

We aim to keep enough in reserve to cover costs for one term (four months). Details of our reserves are covered in the section below.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Not applicable

Finances: Annual statement of accounts for 2024/25

Our annual statement of accounts for 2024/25 is shown at the end of this report (pages 10 and 11). Thanks are given to Daniel Pyke for his independent examiners report shown on pages 8 and 9.

This is a year where we have seen an increase in costs slightly above inflation and a significant increase in income giving rise to a significant surplus for the 2024/25 year. The reasons for this are discussed below, the most significant factor being the one-off catch up in Gift-Aid claims which had not been made for the past three years due to a lack of capacity in the Committee. These historic claims amounted to £3,969. It is therefore expected that the turnover for the 2025/26 year will be somewhat lower than the 2024/25 year without causing concern.

Accounting for these historic gift aid claims, it can be seen that this year has been a good year financially with the underlying income of £27,194 still being a significant 21% (£4,777) increase on £2023/24.

A significant part of this increase has come from the successful funding bids awarded during the year totaling £3,351. A development which we hope can be continued and which we are confident to build into the budget for 2025/26.

The budget for 2024/25 was predicated on a number of assumptions which have been monitored throughout the year allowing us to learn from experience and adjust as appropriate for future years.

In reviewing the year-on-year changes it is useful to consider these assumptions and how they impacted on the finances.

One significant change was with regards to the Membership Subscriptions. In 2023/24 the core Membership Subscription was £69 per term but all Members were obliged to purchase three tickets for the main concert each term whilst accepting that not all these tickets would be used. This practice was seen to be unfair, unrealistically inflated the income from ticket sales and suppressed the membership fees thus also having an impact on the gift aid that could be claimed – as ticket sales are not eligible for gift aid.

In 2024/25 we addressed this issue by increasing the Membership Subscriptions to £90 with no enforced ticket sales. The impact that this has had on the accounts can clearly be seen with

subscriptions increasing from £9,596 to £12,305 – an increase of £2,709. Whilst some of this increase can be attributed to increased Members, the majority of this increase is due to the rebalancing of the fee / ticket structure. The counter effect to this can be seen in the Concert finances where the income has dropped from £11,702 to £8,482 – where the largest income from concerts is the ticket sales.

It is of interest to note that the General funding from HRTCT is driven by their recognition that Choral Societies like ours who sing the most challenging pieces with instrumental / orchestral accompaniment find it difficult, if not impossible, to make their concerts break-even. The change in our business model has brought this reality to the fore-front and allows us to better understand and better plan for the future with a more realistic understanding of the underlying financial assumptions.

We thank all our funders for their support and hope that they will continue to support us in the coming year.

Other optional information

Looking Ahead: 2025– 26 and beyond

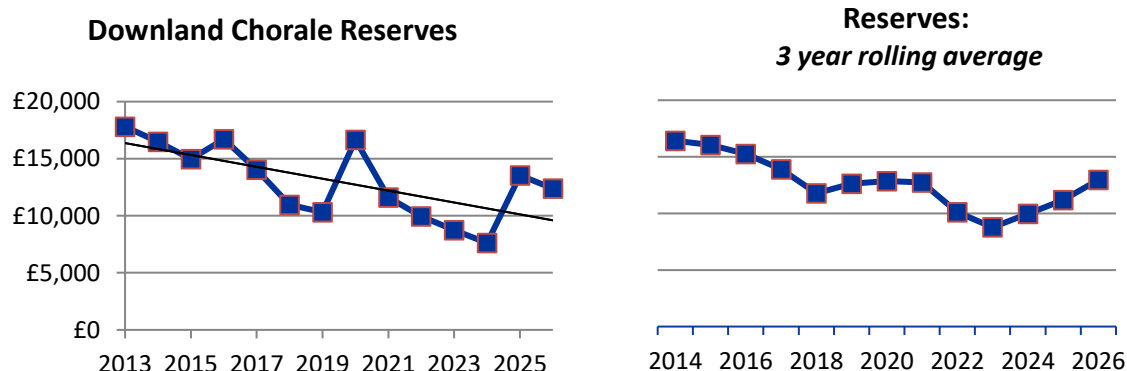
The Budget for 2025/26 has been developed and approved by the Trustees and is available on request. This is based on a continuation of the activities carried out during 2024-25 and we look forward to welcoming our new Choral Scholars.

The budget is based on some key assumptions drawn from recent experience. At the current time we are able to keep the Membership fees the same at £90 per term whilst accommodating increased prices and offering a raise to our professional team. However, this is dependent upon fundraising – both through our own efforts and also through funding bids to charitable trusts – continuing the success achieved in 2024-25. This will be reviewed termly and will be adjusted if necessary.

The impact that the accounts for 2024/25 and the budget for 2025/26 have on the reserves are shown below, both year-on-year and as a three year rolling average.

The trends in the reserves have been downwards over the past 10 years. The downward trend since the Covid years of 2020 / 2021 have been due in large part to the missing gift-aid claims. The stabilisation of the accounts through 2024/25 clearly show the recovery in the reserves to pre-Covid levels with an improving three-year trend continuing with the proposed budget for 2025/26.

A small drop in the planned reserves between 2025-26 is due to the funding raised for Choral Scholars through Go Fund Me in 2024-25 being used to fund our first Choral Scholar joining us in 2025-26. This still leaves our reserves in the target area of one-third of our annual turnover.



Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signature(s)



Full name(s)

Rosemary Vivien Viggiani

Position(s)

Chair

Date

29th October 2025

Independent Examiner's report on the accounts

Report to the Trustees /
Members of:

The Downland Chorale

On accounts for the year
ended:

31st July 2025

Charity no

287877

Set out on pages

7 and 8 of the Trustee's accounts

Responsibilities and basis of
the report:

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 July 2025.

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under s145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under s145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's
statement:

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date:

17/10/2025

Name:

Daniel Pyke

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body:

ACCA

Address:

95 Grosvenor Road

Epsom

KT18 6JF

Disclosure section

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern

Items that the
examiner wishes to
disclose:



Receipts and payments accounts

For the period
from

01/08/2024


To

31/07/2025

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Subscriptions	12,305	-	-	12,305	9,596
Gift Aid for last year (2023-24)	2,694	-	-	2,694	-
Gift Aid for prior years (2021-2023)	3,969	-	-	3,969	-
Sale of stock	157	-	-	157	220
HRTCT - Seasons Costs	1,500	-	-	1,500	-
Croydon Voluntary Action (CVT) Grant	1,000	-	-	1,000	-
GoFundMe (Choral Scholars)		609	-	609	-
Easi-fundraising	111	-	-	111	47
General Donations	131	-	-	131	423
Bank Interest	206	-	-	206	215
Event Income (Weddings / Funerals)	-	-	-	-	150
Miscellaneous rehearsal income	-	-	-	-	65
Autumn Concert	1,228	-	-	1,228	2,085
Christmas Cracker Concert	1,798	-	-	1,798	1,661
February Workshop	2,206	-	-	2,206	1,767
Spring Concert	1,392	-	-	1,392	3,351
Summer Concert	1,857	-	-	1,857	2,837
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	30,554	609	-	31,163	22,417
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	30,554	609	-	31,163	22,417
A3 Payments					
MD (Rehearsals)	4,792	-	-	4,792	4,977
Accompanist (Rehearsals)	3,568	-	-	3,568	3,610
Venue Hire & Heating (Rehearsals)	2,685	-	-	2,685	2,770
Music Hire (Choir)	234	-	-	234	237
Miscellaneous Rehearsal expenses	640	-	-	640	247
Making Music - subs, insurance, website	683	-	-	683	447
Other third party website	42	-	-	42	522
Publicity	422	-	-	422	251
Stock	-	-	-	-	103
Bank Charges	60	-	-	60	60
Point of Sale Charges (Stripe/SUMUp)	24	-	-	24	-
CVT - expenditure - other than subs	185	-	-	185	-
Concert Costs relating to last year	220	-	-	220	-
Autumn Concert	3,106	-	-	3,106	2,388
Christmas Cracker Concert	1,530	-	-	1,530	1,322
February Workshop	1,051	-	-	1,051	1,255
Spring Concert	4,071	-	-	4,071	3,762
Summer Concert	1,920	-	-	1,920	1,604
Sub total	25,233	-	-	25,233	23,555
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	25,233	-	-	25,233	23,555
Net of receipts/(payments)	5,321	609	-	5,930	1,138
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	7,616	-	-	7,616	8,754
Cash funds this year end	12,937	609	-	13,546	7,616

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	Cash float	80	-	-
	Deposit Account	10,680	609	-
	Current Account	2,177	-	-
	Total cash funds	12,937	609	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
			Rosemary Vivien Viggiani	29/10/2025