



*Registered Charity No. 291321*

**TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
*and*  
**FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**For the year ended 31 July 2025**

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## REFERENCE & ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

Status:	Newbury Choral Society is registered in the United Kingdom as a charity, number 291321								
Registered address:	15 Blenheim Road Newbury RG14 5LB								
Trustees:	<p>Trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting. The names of the trustees of Newbury Choral Society who have held office during the year under review and through to the date of this report are as follows:</p> <table><tr><td>Elizabeth Wallace</td><td>Chair</td></tr><tr><td>Tracy Smith</td><td>Secretary</td></tr><tr><td>Natalie Smith</td><td>Treasurer</td></tr><tr><td>Mike Barthorpe</td><td>Concert Manager</td></tr></table> <p>The following have also served as committee members during the year under review and through to the date of this report. Their role is to support the trustees in the running of the Society including the development and production of promotional materials, library services, refreshments at concerts and much more. In addition they provide critical input to all the key decisions made on behalf of members:</p> <p>Matthew Evans David Craig Ceinwen Lally Sinead Hall Sarah Palmer</p>	Elizabeth Wallace	Chair	Tracy Smith	Secretary	Natalie Smith	Treasurer	Mike Barthorpe	Concert Manager
Elizabeth Wallace	Chair								
Tracy Smith	Secretary								
Natalie Smith	Treasurer								
Mike Barthorpe	Concert Manager								
Independent examiner:	Sarah Palmer FCCA								
Bankers:	Barclays Bank plc 23-26 Parkway Newbury RG14 1AY								

The trustees of the charity present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2025 which have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011, Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice (FRS 102) (2019) and the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008.

### **Structure, governance and management**

The Society was founded in 1884. No trust deed exists. Elected office holders act as trustees. Committee members are elected from the membership at the Annual General Meeting. The conductor and rehearsal accompanist are engaged by contract on an annual basis.

### **Objectives and activities**

The Society is established to enable local amateur singers to perform choral music to audiences drawn from Newbury, Berkshire and surrounding areas.

The Society is committed to maintaining high standards in performance by working with dedicated professional musicians and by engaging professional soloists for concerts.

The Society encourages members of the local community to enjoy the pleasures of choral singing by making membership open without audition to anyone who can read music, sing in tune and who is committed to attending weekly rehearsals.

The Society aims to perform both well-known and less familiar works thus enriching the artistic life of Newbury. The Society currently performs three concerts per year.

The trustees consider that the Society's activities comply with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

### **Achievements and performance**

This has been another memorable year for the Society in which we again performed four very diverse concerts, maintained healthy membership numbers and consolidated our reserves despite some significant concert costs. We were also able to acquire our own piano for the first time (rather than using borrowed keyboards) with the support of grants and donations as well as initiating our first, very successful, Choral Scholars programme. The two excellent young singers, Laura Martin and Jess Norton Raybould contributed greatly to both rehearsals and

performances throughout the year and this is something we are planning to repeat in the future, hopefully also attracting some young Tenors and Basses to join us next time.

Our first concert of the season was a performance of Brahms Ein deutsches Requiem on Saturday 2nd November 2024 in St Nicolas Church Newbury at the earlier time of 6pm. This popular piece, performed without interval was accompanied by two pianos beautifully played by our accompanist Steve Bowey and Sue Garcia-Sierra and supported by two excellent young soloists Isabelle Haile (Soprano) and Alexander Bower-Brown (Baritone). Whilst we gave a credible performance it is fair to say that preparing this quite challenging work in just nine weeks was a stretch for the choir and we felt we could have done better with a bit more time. An audience of 190 was rather disappointing for such a well known piece, below the minimum 200 we had hoped for to justify the considerable costs of staging it.

Our Christmas concert on Saturday 15th December 2024 at 7.30pm in St Nicolas Church, Newbury was a traditional celebration with many much loved carols and plenty of audience participation. Our choral scholar, Laura Martin started the performance with a solo first verse of Once in Royal David's City, and both Laura and Jess Norton Raybould performed solos throughout the performance, showcasing their talent and excellent contribution to the choir. Steve Bowey was wonderful as ever providing the organ accompaniment. As last year we supported the West Berkshire Foodbank with a retiring collection from an audience of 225, slightly lower than the year before but still a good number which meant we were able to generate a profit, the only concert of the year to do this.

The high point of the season was a performance of Edward Elgar's The Dream of Gerontius on Saturday 12th April 2025 at 7.30pm in St Nicolas Church, Newbury. This is a work that many members had on their wish list but we had always thought out of the reach of the choir given the size of orchestra required. However with the discovery of a reduced orchestration version we decided to take on this iconic piece which proved to be rather more challenging than some had expected. That said, on the night it was a moving experience for many in the choir and the audience. Joe Tobin conducted an excellent orchestra of largely young professional musicians and soloists Emily Hopkinson (Mezzo-Soprano) as the Angel, Michael Bell (Tenor) as Gerontius and Daniel Vening (Bass) really bought the story to life. We only managed an audience of 202 which given the costs resulted in a loss and although this was expected, the loss was rather more significant than we had hoped.

Our final concert of the year on Saturday 28th June 2025 at 7.30pm again in St Nicolas Church, Newbury was something completely different. Entitled 'Journeys and Belonging' it bought together two modern pieces Bob Chilcott's The Voyage, and The Girl from Aleppo by Cecilia McDowall. The first, commissioned by Age UK Oxfordshire is a series of nine songs charting the journey through life and is about connectedness and needing other people. The narrative of Everyday Wonders: The Girl from Aleppo uses interesting musical effects, such as stamps, body slaps and

rhythmic speech to tell the story of Nujeen Mustafa, a Kurdish teenager with cerebral palsy. Fleeing her home with her sister, she escaped being engulfed by war and ended her journey in Europe. Accompanied by Steve Bowey on piano and the very talented Yuliia Chetverhova on violin this was a moving piece for all involved and proved a highlight for many in the choir and audience alike. West Berkshire Action for Refugees gave a short speech at the beginning of the second half of the concert and there was a retiring collection for them at the end. We also included solos from both of our choral scholars to mark the successful conclusion of their time with the choir and finished the evening with a short unaccompanied piece called The Road Home by Stephen Paulus. Sadly the audience was a very disappointing 92 which meant that even this lower cost concert lost a small amount of money.

Choir membership grew again to over 100, with 104 paying subscriptions during the year. This helped to offset significant losses across three of our four concerts and we ended the year with reserves of £14,251. The assets now include a new piano, supported by grants and donations which is shown as a fixed asset in our accounts. This has allowed us to take on another ambitious programme for the 2025/26 season although we will need to attract larger audiences if that is to continue into the future.

So overall another successful year in which the choir has continued to grow and develop under the excellent leadership of our Musical Director, Joe Tobin and with the tireless support of our Accompanist and now Deputy Musical Director Steve Bowey. The only disappointment has been lower than expected audiences which we are resolved to tackle in the coming season so that we can continue to perform great choral works, old and new, to a high standard with the support of professional musicians. Thanks as always to our committee for everything they do to ensure we keep the show on the road, from admin and finance (Tracy and Nat), to promoting our concerts (Mat and David), making the concerts actually happen (Mike), supporting new members (Ceinwen) and the many other jobs that they all, including Sinead and Sarah get involved with.

Finally thank you to all of our members for your ongoing support of the Society, for your enthusiasm and commitment to great performances and for creating an open, friendly and inclusive rehearsal environment which we should all be very proud of.

## Financial review

### Results for the year under review

Total income for the year exceeded expenditure by £2,248 (surplus). In total concerts made a loss of £9,669. The net assets of the Society now stand at £14,251 (2023/24 net assets £12,003).

### Funds

The Society has no restricted funds. The unrestricted funds are utilised to cover the costs needed to enable the charity to continue with its charitable objectives.

### Reserves policy

Unrestricted funds are needed to cover administration costs without which the charity could not function. The trustees monitor and review reserves levels regularly throughout the year and reserves continue to be maintained at a level to cover 9 months of normal operating costs.

## Plans for future periods

Plans for the future are covered under 'Achievements and Performances'.

## Statement of trustees' responsibilities for the financial statements

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales require the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity's incoming resources and application of resources during the year and of its state of affairs at the end of the year. In preparing those financial statements they are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- Prepare the statements on a 'going concern' basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees' responsibilities include keeping proper financial records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and ensuring that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. The trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the charity's assets and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and breaches of law and regulation.

We hereby approve the financial statements.

On behalf of the Trustees

E Wallace, Chair  
1st December 2025



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

**Responsibilities and basis of report:** As the charity's trustees, you 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 Society's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent Examiner's statement:** The charity's gross income did not exceed £250,000. 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:-

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

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.

**Signed:**

**Date:** 1st December 2025

**Name:** Sarah Palmer

**Professional**

**Qualification:** FCCA

**Address:** Butterfield House, St John's Road, Newbury RG14 7AD

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES****YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2025**

The Newbury Choral Society has no recognised gains or losses other than those included in the Statement of Financial Activities and therefore no separate statement of total recognised gains and losses has been presented. There is no difference between the net incoming resources for the year as shown in the Statement of Financial Activities and their historical cost equivalents.

Incoming resources	2025	2024
Members' subscriptions (2025: £190 pa, 2024: £180 pa)	18,090	17,286
Grants	4,120	-
Gift aid (note 2)	1,806	1,283
Hiring out of staging	550	450
Fundraising and donations	2,444	243
Commission	-	71
Other	160	407
	<hr/> 27,170	<hr/> 19,739
Resources expended		
Conductor's fees (excluding concert fees)	(6,460)	(6,450)
Accompanist's fees	(4,400)	(3,184)
Hire of rehearsal room	(1,847)	(1,783)
Subscription and insurance (Making Music)	(566)	(419)
Website charges	(64)	(120)
Depreciation of fixed assets	(483)	-
Other	(1,432)	(333)
	<hr/> (15,252)	<hr/> (12,288)
Concerts – net deficit (note 4)	(9,669)	(3,194)
Net surplus	<hr/> 2,248	<hr/> 4,257

**BALANCE SHEET****31 JULY 2025**

	2025	2024
Fixed assets ( <i>note 3</i> )	4,346	-
Current assets		
Debtors and prepayments ( <i>note 6</i> )	9,828	6,589
Cash at bank	1,497	10,978
	11,325	17,567
Liabilities		
Creditors and accruals falling due within one year ( <i>note 7</i> )	(1,420)	(5,564)
Net current assets	9,905	12,003
Total net assets	14,251	12,003
Funds b/f	12,003	7,746
Result for the year	2,248	4,257
Funds c/f	14,251	12,003

The financial statements on page 9-13 were approved by the trustees on 1st December 2025 and were signed on behalf of the Newbury Choral Society by:

Elizabeth Wallace  
Chair

Natalie Smith  
Treasurer

**1. Accounting policies****a. Accounting conventions**

The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable accounting standards and Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting by charities. An accruals basis has been used in accounting for the income and expenditure of the period.

**b. Grants**

Grants receivable are accounted for in the Statement of Financial Activities in the period in which the performance conditions associated with the grant are met. .

**c. Depreciation**

Fixed assets are depreciated on a straight line basis over their estimated useful life.

**2. Gift Aid**

The amount receivable by the Society under gift aid relief for subscriptions and donations was £5,713 (2024: £4,375) and is in respect of periods up to 31 July 2025.

### 3. Fixed assets

	Staging	Piano	Total
<b>Cost</b>			
At beginning of year	10,844	-	10,844
Additions	-	4,829	4,829
At end of year	10,844	4,829	15,673
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At beginning of year	(10,844)	-	(10,844)
Charge for the year	-	(483)	(483)
At end of year	(10,844)	(483)	(11,327)
Net book value			
At 31st July 2025	-	4,346	4,346
At 31st July 2024	-	-	-

Fixed assets are depreciated on a straight line basis over their estimated useful life. The useful life of the piano has been estimated at 10 years.

The cost of fixed assets acquired in the year was funded by grants of £4,120 and donations which have been recognised in income in the current year.

During the year 2011/2012 the Trustees elected to write off the residual net book value of the staging. The staging assets are retained for use by the Society.

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2025

### 4. Concerts

	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer	Total
Concert costs					
Music	(180)	(200)	(655)	(156)	(1,191)
Venue hire	(532)	(682)	(1,025)	(835)	(3,074)
Soloists	(617)	-	(1,273)	(610)	(2,500)
Orchestra	(2,620)	(440)	(6,787)	(300)	(10,147)
Conductor	(600)	(600)	(600)	(600)	(2,400)
Advertising and tickets	(105)	(263)	(119)	(79)	(566)
	(4,654)	(2,184)	(10,459)	(2,580)	(19,878)
Concert income					
Ticket sales	2,231	3,205	2,980	1,315	9,831
Refreshments	-	37	143	164	344
Programmes	-	97	146	153	396
	2,231	3,339	3,269	1,632	10,471
Net surplus/(deficit)	(2,423)	1,418	(7,191)	(949)	(9,669)

### 5. Cash at bank

	2025	2024
Current account – Barclays plc, Newbury	1,497	10,978

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS****YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2025****6. Current assets**

	2025	2024
Debtors and prepayments		
Gift aid	5,713	4,375
Prepayments and accrued income	4,115	2,214
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	9,828	6,589

**7. Current liabilities**

	2025	2024
Creditors and accruals falling due within one year		
Room hire	(480)	(40)
Concert costs	(88)	(351)
Deferred income	-	(5,173)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	(567)	(5,564)

**8. Choral scholarships**

Donations recognised in income in the current year include £400 in donations received to support the choral scholarships. The cost of the choral scholars in the current year of £1,250 is included in other expenses.