

# STRATFORD UPON AVON CHORAL SOCIETY

England & Wales · Charity number 502020

## Details

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**Status** Registered

**Legal form** Other

**Registered** 1972-11-21

**Register** [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

## Contact

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**Address** Oldwick House  
Binton Road  
Welford On Avon  
Stratford-Upon-Avon  
Warwickshire  
CV37 8PT

**Phone** 07732306614

**Email** [stratford.choral@gmail.com](mailto:stratford.choral@gmail.com)

**Website** [www.stratfordchoral.org.uk](http://www.stratfordchoral.org.uk)

## Activities

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**Objects:** THE OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY SHALL BE: 1. TO ADVANCE, IMPROVE, DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN PUBLIC EDUCATION IN, AND APPRECIATION OF, THE ART AND SCIENCE OF MUSIC IN ALL ITS ASPECTS BY ANY MEANS THE TRUSTEES SEE FIT, INCLUDING THROUGH THE PRESENTATION OF PUBLIC CONCERTS AND RECITALS. 2. TO FURTHER SUCH CHARITABLE PURPOSE OR PURPOSES AS THE TRUSTEES IN THEIR ABSOLUTE DISCRETION SHALL THINK FIT BUT IN PARTICULAR THROUGH THE MAKING OF GRANTS AND DONATIONS.

**Activities:** encouragement and performance of choral singing

## Classification

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- **How:** Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, The General Public/mankind

## Geography

- Warwickshire

## Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-04-30	£33,552	£36,294	-	-
2024-04-30	£32,593	£29,450	-	-
2023-04-30	£34,300	£28,173	-	-
2022-04-30	£21,348	£18,052	-	-
2021-04-30	£2,368	£842	-	-

## Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Elizabeth Jean Statham		2018-11-01
Glenda Winifred Kershaw		2018-06-18
Ian Andrew Duffin		2024-06-17
JACQUELINE GOUGH		2023-06-19
Janice Walker		2025-06-02
Jean Margaret Hutchison		2022-05-23
Maralyn Ann Arnull		2024-06-17
Michael Roland Barrie		2025-06-02
Neil John Harrison		2022-05-23
Philippa Vandome		2022-05-23
Timothy Peter Moore-Bridger		2022-05-23

**STRATFORD UPON AVON CHORAL SOCIETY**

England & Wales - Charity number 502020

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# Accounts

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# Stratford upon Avon Choral Society

Registered Charity No. 502020  
www.stratfordchoral.org.uk



## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025

### 1. Trustees

Tim Moore-Bridger – Chairman  
Glenda Kershaw – Treasurer  
Jackie Gough – Secretary  
Maralyn Arnull – Membership Secretary  
Jean Hutchison – Librarian  
Fiona Macvie  
Liz Statham  
Philippa Vandome  
Neil Harrison  
Chris McKinty  
Ian Duffin

### 2. Structure and Management

The Society is managed by a committee, which comprises five officers and six ordinary committee members. Each officer is elected annually, and ordinary committee members are elected for a period of two years. Officers can be re-elected on up to nine consecutive occasions. Ordinary committee members can be re-elected on up to four consecutive occasions. All officers and ordinary committee members are trustees of the charity who give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits (save those benefits of membership afforded to every member of the Society). In planning activities for the year, trustees have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit at committee meetings.

The trustees meet regularly and are responsible for all decisions made in relation to the Society's activities. Sub-committees have been set up for publicity and to assist with the selection of the music to be performed by the Society. The sub-committees, some of whose members are not trustees, report back with their recommendations to a full committee meeting of the trustees.

### 3. Objects

The objects of the Society as defined in the Society's constitution adopted on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 are:

To advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by any means the trustees see fit, including through the presentation of public concerts and recitals.

To further such charitable purpose or purposes as the trustees in their absolute discretion shall think fit but in particular through the making of grants and donations.

#### 4. Chairman's report

I am very pleased to be reporting on the 2024/25 season of the Stratford Choral Society, which has been outstandingly successful.

Our first concert in November was Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, a work that is relatively unknown to the general public. It is a mass that is neither short nor particularly solemn. We greatly enjoyed learning the choruses and found them relatively straightforward. The work was performed in its original version with a harmonium and piano accompaniment. Although we perhaps worried that this would not give us sufficient support we need not have been concerned. The pianist and harmonium player were excellent, as were the soloists. The result was a splendid concert, warmly appreciated by a large audience.

As in the previous two years we were invited to sing carols in early December at the Shakespeare Hospice. They are our neighbours at St Andrew's Church and allow us to use their car park for our Monday evening rehearsals. It is always beneficial to the Society to be seen and heard by members of the public who do not necessarily attend our concerts, and it is a way also of advertising what we are presently rehearsing. The afternoon was less cold than in previous years, and most enjoyable for the group who came to sing. Singing carols at the Hospice is now a regular part of our season and is to be welcomed.

Our December concert was Handel's *Messiah*. We are now performing *Messiah* every other year as it is such a popular work with audiences and singers alike. We were anticipating a good audience and in the event the church was absolutely packed! An audience of somewhere around two hundred and fifty was exciting for us all, and in my experience of the choir unprecedented. Our reviewer described it as "compelling and absorbing listening". Those of us who have sung *Messiah* on numerous occasions agreed that this performance was one of our very best.

In the New Year we embarked upon the task of learning Bach's *St John Passion*. It is fair to say that some of the music was demanding, and there was a great deal to sing. However, it was also inspiring, and especially so when we had our final rehearsal and were able to see exactly how our responses fitted into the text sung by the Evangelist. The concert itself was a triumph, and something of which the Society can be very proud. Our reviewer for this concert, by special invitation, was Christopher Morley, for many years the senior music critic of the Birmingham Post. We wanted to make sure that this special concert – enabled partly by a generous bequest from the estate of Colin Nichols, who with his wife Patricia sang with the Society for many years – was reviewed by someone of great experience. So, we were thrilled when, in his review, he stated that "the choral input of a very high standard was maintained throughout the evening with the many chorales particularly effective." He concluded his review by saying that "there were riches galore, enjoyed by the packed audience".

All three concerts have been greatly enjoyed by singers and audience alike. Crucial to the success of our concerts of course is the choice of soloists and orchestra. We have been incredibly fortunate this year to have outstanding soloists in all three concerts. It would be invidious to pick out any individuals but I'm sure no one would disagree that Nathan Vale as the Evangelist and Alexander Ashworth as Christus in the *St John Passion* were quite outstanding. Soloists are by their very nature quite expensive for a society like ours, but it is essential that we be prepared to pay what is necessary in order to secure the participation of such gifted performers. The choir is only as good as the soloists with whom

we sing. Similarly, we must be prepared to engage good orchestras. We had the Regency Sinfonia again for *Messiah* and they were extremely good as usual. We had excellent piano and harmonium accompaniment for the Rossini. For the *St John Passion* we engaged Instruments of Time and Truth, an ensemble playing period instruments. They were superb, described as a "wonderful orchestra" by our reviewer, and he should know! We must always be alert to what is best for whatever we are singing and know that the right accompaniment will enhance the performance.

We have now started to prepare for our summer concert in June. The programme will comprise selections from *European Sacred Music*, edited by John Rutter. Some fifty members of the choir are participating in the summer season, and as in previous years we will also have two students, a flautist and a trombonist, from King Edward VI School joining us. We are very much looking forward to what is always a joyous way to end the Society's year.

The Society relies very heavily on the work of the committee. I'm extremely grateful to all officers and committee members for their commitment and hard work. They all have specific roles but in addition support each other and do whatever is necessary in preparation for the concerts. In the autumn, for example, Val Rayner, who has been the Booking Secretary for many years even after relinquishing the role of Honorary Secretary, found it necessary to step down from this role also. This could have left us in a very difficult position, for the Booking Secretary is the link with orchestras, soloists and venues. I am extremely grateful to our Librarian Jean Hutchinson and to our Publicity Manager Liz Statnam for volunteering to take on and divide Val's responsibilities between them, and in addition to everything else they do. The efficiency and smooth running of the concerts is in no small part a testimony to their endeavours.

Two committee members are standing down at the AGM. Chris McKinty has been on the committee since 2023 and has been responsible for the Newsletter. I am sure everyone would agree that under her guidance it has become an interesting and informative addition to the choir. I am glad that she will continue to produce the Newsletter in future though not on the committee.

Fiona Macvie, Vice Chairman and Chair of the music subcommittee, is also standing down, after ten years as a committee member. Fiona is an outstanding supporter of the choir, always ready to assist in whatever way she can. Amongst much else it is she who opens and closes the church for our Monday rehearsals. I hope she may remain on the music subcommittee after she leaves the general committee at the AGM.

Last year we received the approval of members to move to an online ticket system, in the hope that this would prove to be easier and more effective than the way we had largely done it before, by personal contact with family, friends and neighbours. We have been delighted by the success of this system, if audience numbers are an indication. We have had three very large audiences, with more than two hundred each time, and something over two hundred and fifty for *Messiah*. One of the aims of the Choral Society is that it should promote the appreciation of music in the community at large as widely as possible. The fact that we have had such audiences would indicate that we are achieving that.

We were sad to learn of the death of Tony Reason, a long-time member of the tenor section of the choir, in January, and of Duncan Fairfax-Lucy, a past President of the Society, in March. Some members of the choir sang at his funeral.

The choir depends very much for rehearsals on the expertise of Rachel Bird. It amazes me that she can respond instantly to Oliver's requests and her support of the choir is absolutely invaluable. We are very fortunate to have her as our accompanist.

Oliver Neal Parker, our Musical Director, has the charisma and the skill to help the choir to achieve far more than perhaps we expect. He is a superb schoolmaster, knowing just how much to encourage, how to explain, and how to drive us on. The rehearsals are demanding but great fun. The concerts are exhilarating. No wonder that the choir is in such fine fettle as it looks forward to its 190<sup>th</sup> year in 2026.

#### 5. Treasurer's Report for the year ended 30th April 2025

24-25 has been another financially successful year for the Society. This may seem a strange statement, given that we achieved a deficit of £2,742. However, this was actually far less than the original forecast.

We had planned to use some of our reserves, and a legacy, to enable us to perform our Bach concert, expensive in terms of soloist numbers, but also because of using period instruments. The concert eventually made a loss of over £5,600, though it certainly felt worth it.

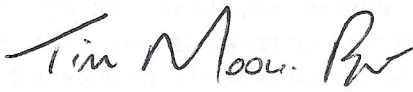
The main reason for the better than forecast result was the high level of ticket sales for our concerts, a total of 127 over budget. This has left us with reserves of £29,991, more than sufficient to cover the concert costs of the coming season.

Our costs, of course, continue to rise. Given the success of the last season a modest increase in subscription rates to £135 is proposed (patrons increasing to £99).

Many thanks to all who contributed to the success of the 24-25 season.

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

Signed on behalf of the Society's trustees:

Signature: 

Date: 23/6/25.

Full Name: Tim Moore-Bridger

Chairman

Charity Name <b>Stratford Choral Society</b>	No (if any) <b>502020</b>
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## Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 5/1/2024	To	Period end date 4/30/2025
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### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Donations	1,361	-	-	1,361	1,332
Member subscriptions	12,612	-	-	12,612	12,230
Patron subscriptions	1,140	-	-	1,140	1,045
Gift aid	2,645	-	-	2,645	2,928
Concert ticket sales	11,920	-	-	11,920	11,160
Programme sales and sponsors	2,867	-	-	2,867	2,661
Contribution to music hire and folders	399	-	-	399	900
Interest	536	-	-	536	237
Other fund raising	72	-	-	72	100
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>33,552</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>33,552</b>	<b>32,593</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>33,552</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>33,552</b>	<b>32,593</b>

### A3 Payments

Rehearsal room hire	2,325	-	-	2,325	2,463
Conductor and accompanist	8,680	-	-	8,680	8,220
Concert musicians	18,188	-	-	18,188	12,880
Concert venue hire	2,459	-	-	2,459	2,233
Other concert costs	902	-	-	902	881
Programmes and posters	2,009	-	-	2,009	1,615
Music and folders	417	-	-	417	350
NFMS subscription and insurance	566	-	-	566	543
Web site costs	140	-	-	140	78
Print, post and other expenses	608	-	-	608	187
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>36,294</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>36,294</b>	<b>29,450</b>

### A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)

	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

<b>Total payments</b>	<b>36,294</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>36,294</b>	<b>29,450</b>
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<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>- 2,742</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>- 2,742</b>	<b>3,143</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>32,733</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32,733</b>	<b>29,590</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>29,991</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>29,991</b>	<b>32,733</b>

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories

**B1 Cash funds**

Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
Bank	20,001		-
Building Society	9,850	-	-
Petty cash	140	-	-
<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>29,991</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
account(s)	OK	OK	OK
Signature	Print Name		Date of approval
<i>Tina Moore Bridger</i>	T Moore-Bridger		2/6/25

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees



**Section A**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

**Report to the trustees/  
members of**

Charity Name  
STRATFORD UPON AVON CHORAL SOCIETY

**On accounts for the year  
ended**

30th APRIL 2025

**Charity no  
(if any)**

502020

**Set out on pages**

1

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

**Responsibilities and  
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(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 (other than that disclosed below \*) 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.

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

**Signed:**

*Philip Bishop*

**Date:**

14th May 2025

**Name:**

PHILIP BISHOP

**Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):**

INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL ADVISER  
REGULATED BY F.C.A

**Address:**

DOWNTOWN

BIRMINGHAM RD

HENLEY IN ARDEN

B95 5QD

**STRATFORD UPON AVON CHORAL SOCIETY**

England & Wales - Charity number 502020

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# Accounts

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# Stratford upon Avon Choral Society

Registered Charity No. 502020  
www.stratfordchoral.org.uk



## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024

### 1. Trustees

Tim Moore-Bridger – Chairman  
Glenda Kershaw – Treasurer  
Jackie Gough – Secretary  
Carol Jackson – Membership Secretary  
Jean Hutchison – Librarian  
Fiona Macvie  
Liz Statham  
Sheelagh Douglas  
Philippa Vandome  
Neil Harrison  
Chris McKinty

### 2. Structure and Management

The Society is managed by a committee, which comprises five officers and six ordinary committee members. Each officer is elected annually, and ordinary committee members are elected for a period of two years. Officers can be re-elected on up to nine consecutive occasions. Ordinary committee members can be re-elected on up to four consecutive occasions. All officers and ordinary committee members are trustees of the charity who give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits (save those benefits of membership afforded to every member of the Society). In planning activities for the year, trustees have regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit at committee meetings.

The trustees meet regularly and are responsible for all decisions made in relation to the Society's activities. Sub-committees have been set up for publicity and to assist with the selection of the music to be performed by the Society. The sub-committees, some of whose members are not trustees, report back with their recommendations to a full committee meeting of the trustees.

### 3. Objects

The objects of the Society as defined in the Society's constitution adopted on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 are:

To advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by any means the trustees see fit, including through the presentation of public concerts and recitals.

To further such charitable purpose or purposes as the trustees in their absolute discretion shall think fit but in particular through the making of grants and donations.

### 4. Chairman's report

It gives me great pleasure to provide a report on the 2023-24 season, which has been extremely successful in many ways.

Our first concert in November was Handel's Oratorio *Samson*. This work has some similarities to *Messiah* but is more rarely performed by Choral Societies. It was enjoyable to learn the choruses, which were not in fact too difficult. The Oratorio is somewhat operatic in form, with six soloists and a chorus employed to set the scene or to comment on the action. The story of *Samson* is set in Gaza. The war there had just started a week before our performance, which was potentially problematic. However, Handel's wonderful music enabled singers and audience to transcend the horrors of the present time, and to reflect on the uplifting story of Samson.

*Prelude to Christmas* was our December concert. There is always something magical about a pre-Christmas concert, with traditional and less well-known carols, and an eclectic mix of readings. The reviewer in the Stratford Herald particularly enjoyed Rutter's *Candlelight Carol*, and the fact that the audience could join in with some of the traditional favourite carols as well. We were extremely pleased to have Tim Raistrick reading once more, and for the first time Juliet Grundy. Their choice of readings was delightful, and I particularly enjoyed the arrangement of *The Twelve Days of Christmas*, with the choir joining the readers in a wonderfully amusing version of the carol. I am pleased that Juliet subsequently joined the choir to sing in our March concert.

A week or so before *Prelude* we were invited again to sing carols at the Shakespeare Hospice, when they have the lighting of their Christmas tree. It was again cold, but our efforts were much appreciated. The Choral Society is very much an organisation based in the community, and we should take every opportunity we can to take our musical endeavours beyond just our three major concerts. The Hospice carol singing may well be an annual fixture, and I hope there may be others as well. I am very grateful to Jon for conducting us once again.

We knew that Mozart's *Requiem* would be a popular item both for us to sing and for our audience, and so it proved to be. Many of us had sung the Requiem before but it was Oliver's inspiring direction that enabled us to see things differently and produce what I think was a superb performance. An audience of something over 240 was the highest that I can ever remember for a concert in Holy Trinity and may well have been the highest ever. To see the church packed in the way it was made for a remarkable occasion.

As last year we have been rehearsing for a summer concert, scheduled for June 15<sup>th</sup> at St. Andrew's. We will be performing *Shakespeare in Song* – a selection of modern settings of songs taken from the plays, including seven arrangements by George Shearing entitled *Songs and Sonnets*. Once again two instrumentalists, students from King Edward VI School will be joining us. In addition, we will have the pleasure of hearing Oliver singing a few pieces. It has been great fun to learn, and I very much hope that members of the choir not singing will join us for what promises to be a delightful concert.

This year we have again been joined by the Regency Sinfonia and by the Holy Trinity organist. We have also had good soloists. It is imperative that we invite soloists to sing with us who suit the choir and the location, normally Holy Trinity, and the work that we are singing. Our booking secretary Val does a fine job, but it isn't easy always to find the right soloists to invite. Then, as happened twice this year, they sometimes fall ill at the last moment. I'm very grateful to Val and of course to Oliver for being able to find excellent replacements at very short notice, for both *Samson* and the *Requiem*.

Concerts have all been at Holy Trinity as is usually the case. This has not been without its problems. First of all, we had some misunderstanding with the church authorities about the rehearsal on the Saturday afternoon, in particular over the way in which the choir and the soloists were accommodated into the church while tourists were visiting Shakespeare's grave. This was a problem that we had not understood nor foreseen. We were able to discuss this at some length with the church authorities and resolve any misunderstandings, and what we now have is greater clarity about the Holy Trinity expectations of us, and more suitable arrangements for the choir and soloists during the Saturday rehearsal.

In the Spring there was also a real issue with the Holy Trinity organ. This was being repaired and scaffolding had been erected around the organ at the beginning of the year. We had been assured that it was highly likely that the scaffolding would be removed before our concert. We were therefore extremely worried when ten days before the concert we were told that it might not be removed in time. We were forced to consider alternatives and approached the Stratford Playhouse and King Edward VI School to see if they could rescue the situation for us. Both parties were extremely supportive. As it happened, we didn't need to go to either the school or the Playhouse as the scaffolding was taken down just in time, but it did mean that contact with them had been made. Perhaps in future it might not be a bad idea to consider a concert taking place other than at Holy Trinity.

The Choral Society is very fortunate to have so many loyal followers, and I am particularly grateful for the support of our Patrons, and our Sponsors, The Rigby Foundation and Holiday Inspirations Ltd.

Within the choir membership very many assist in different ways throughout the year, and I am very grateful to you all. But my special thanks go to the members of the committee who do such a tremendous job on behalf of the Society. We have had five full committee meetings, all on Zoom, and the music subcommittee has met three times. Committee meetings however do not in any sense represent the full work of members of the committee. There is so much to organise and arrange for a Society such as ours. There are the concerts themselves, and all they entail, rehearsals, programmes and publicity, the management of our finances – which you will see from the Treasurer's report are in a strong position – dissemination of information to members, organisation of auditions and re-auditions, ordering and distributing music before rehearsals start, and then collecting and returning the music to the respective libraries, production of a Newsletter every couple of months, social events, such as the splendid evening at the RSC to attend *Ben and Imo* at the Swan Theatre, a comprehensive website, which will prove invaluable in the future, as we develop new means of distributing tickets. This list is not exhaustive, but it demonstrates some of the ways in which members of the committee have maintained the work of the Choral Society, for which I am very grateful. I hope very much that other members of the choir will reflect on this and think if they would like to join the committee to continue this invaluable work.

Two committee members are standing down this year. Sheelagh has been on the committee for five years and has been in charge of tickets and relations with Patrons and Season Ticket holders. I'm very grateful to her for the way in which she has managed this essential, and often tricky task.

Then there is Carol, a member of the choir since 1988 and membership secretary for the last nine years. She is incredibly efficient, involved in all that we do. Anyone who saw her "Desert Island Discs", which we arranged during COVID, will remember her high-powered life in London before she migrated to Chipping Campden in the eighties, and will not be in the slightest surprised that she has proved to be an outstanding membership secretary. She has organised seating for concerts, registers at rehearsals, auditions and reauditions, communication with all members of the Society, management of the full database of members, and much more besides. She has been an invaluable colleague and supporter to me since I became Chairman two years ago. Singing is in her blood, and I am delighted that Carol is going to continue singing with the choir in the years ahead. Thank you very much, Carol, from all the membership of the Choral Society.

Then there are Rachel and Oliver. Rachel is the supreme professional, such a wonderful accompanist that she is almost not noticed at all. Anything that Oliver asks she does at once without a slip. How she does it is miraculous, but it greatly enhances our rehearsals and the ultimate performance. I am very pleased that she will be seen as a performer in her own right in the summer concert.

And Oliver is a quite outstanding Musical Director. He has that quiet authority which comes from being a fine schoolmaster, coupled with a superb singing voice. He makes us work hard each Monday, but he makes it such fun. There is always a feeling of enjoyment and satisfaction at the end of our rehearsals. His attention

to detail, concentrating on articulation and dynamics, has I'm sure made us a far better choir than we once were. We are incredibly fortunate to have Oliver as our Musical Director and thank him for all his efforts with us.

In conclusion it is worth saying that our aim is to provide singing and an appreciation of music for those who wish to perform, and enjoyment of music for our audience. I feel pretty sure that those two aims have been met this year.

Next year we have a most exciting programme, with Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle* in November, Handel's *Messiah* at Christmas, and just before Easter Bach's great *St. John Passion* with an orchestra of period instruments. There is very much to look forward to.

## 5. Treasurer's Report for the year ended 30th April 2024

Another successful year for the Society financially. We had forecast to break even, which was unusual in a Prelude year, when we would hope to add to our reserves, but we were aware that the costs of both the autumn and spring concerts would be high. The surplus of £3,143 is almost entirely due to audience numbers that we attracted to our concerts. The budget is based upon ticket sales (excluding patrons and season ticket holders) of 120, though we aspire to 150. We outperformed budget in all three concerts with ticket sales of 134, 158 and an amazing 226 in the main season.

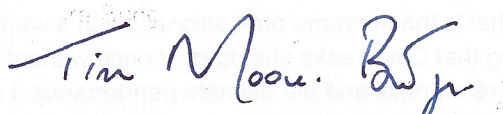
The summer concert appears in the accounts for the first time, the surplus being from the June 2023 concert. The associated costs in the accounts include the honoraria and rehearsal room hire (from May 2023), though the subscription income included relates to the 2024 concert, the subscriptions relating to the 2023 concert being in last year's accounts. The summer season ending with the June 2023 concert did make a modest profit, which we would hope to repeat in June 2024, although numbers singing are slightly down. Donations appear to be down, but this is due to the legacy of £2,500 included last year.

Costs continue to rise steadily with inflation. As mentioned above, honoraria and rehearsal room costs have increased due to the summer season. The main above inflation cost is in the NFMS subscription and insurance. This is due to moving into a higher banding, with the inclusion of our summer season income. Sale of some of our stock of Carols for Choirs Book 5 has helped to mitigate the extra cost.

We have ended the year with reserves of £32,733. This enables us to plan for more expensive concerts in the next few years. In particular, the orchestra costs for the Bach concert in March 2025 will be far higher than usual, and we are also performing *Messiah* this year, instead of repeating *Prelude*. We expect that this will begin to eat into these reserves.

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

Signed on behalf of the Society's trustees:

Signature: 

Full Name: Tim Moore-Bridger

Chairman

Date: 3/07/24

Charity Name Stratford Choral Society	No (if any) 502020
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CC16a

## Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 01/05/2023	To	Period end date 30/04/2024
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### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Donations	1,332	-	-	1,332	3,640
Member subscriptions	12,230	-	-	12,230	13,000
Patron subscriptions	1,045	-	-	1,045	1,240
Gift aid	2,928	-	-	2,928	2,531
Concert ticket sales	11,160	-	-	11,160	9,456
Programme sales and sponsors	2,661	-	-	2,661	2,682
Contribution to music hire and folders	900	-	-	900	1,440
Interest	237	-	-	237	119
Other fund raising	100	-	-	100	192
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total(Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>32,593</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32,593</b>	<b>34,300</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>32,593</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>32,593</b>	<b>34,300</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Rehearsal room hire	2,463	-	-	2,463	2,066
Conductor and accompanist	8,150	-	-	8,150	6,340
Concert musicians	12,880	-	-	12,880	13,344
Concert venue hire	2,233	-	-	2,233	1,909
Other concert costs	881	-	-	881	755
Programmes and posters	1,614	-	-	1,614	1,511
Music and folders	350	-	-	350	1,446
NFMS subscription and insurance	543	-	-	543	299
Web site costs	78	-	-	78	290
Print, post and other expenses	258	-	-	258	213
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>29,450</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>29,450</b>	<b>28,173</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

<b>Total payments</b>	29,450	-	-	29,450	28,173
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	3,143	-	-	3,143	6,127
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	29,590	-	-	29,590	23,463
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	32,733	-	-	32,733	29,590

**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 £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Bank	23,010		-
	Building Society	9,583	-	-
	Petty cash	140	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>32,733</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature <i>T.P. Moore Bridger</i>	Print Name T Moore-Bridger	Date of approval 17/6/24
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Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of

STRATFORD UPON AVON CHORAL SOCIETY

On accounts for the year ended

30/04/24

Charity no (if any)

502020

Set out on pages

1

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 30/04/2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(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 (~~other than that disclosed below~~\*) 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.

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

[Signature]

Date:

17th June 2024

Name:

PHILIP BUSHOP

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL ADVISER REGULATED BY F.C.A.

Address:

BOWNHAM  
BIRMINGHAM ROAD  
HENLEY-IN-ARDEN B9550D

**STRATFORD UPON AVON CHORAL SOCIETY**

England & Wales - Charity number 502020

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# Accounts

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## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

### 1. Trustees

Tim Moore-Bridger – Chairman  
Glenda Kershaw – Treasurer  
Valerie Rayner – Secretary  
Carol Jackson – Membership Secretary  
Jean Hutchison – Librarian  
Fiona Macvie  
Liz Statham  
Sheelagh Douglas  
Iwona Moore-Bridger  
Philippa Vandome  
Neil Harrison

### 2. Structure and Management

The Society is managed by a committee, which comprises five officers and six ordinary committee members. Each officer is elected annually, and ordinary committee members are elected for a period of two years. Officers can be re-elected on up to nine consecutive occasions. Ordinary committee members can be re-elected on up to four consecutive occasions. All officers and ordinary committee members are trustees of the charity.

### 3. Objects

The objects of the Society are:

To advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by any means the trustees see fit, including through the presentation of public concerts and recitals.

To further such charitable purpose or purposes as the trustees in their absolute discretion shall think fit but in particular through the making of grants and donations.

### 4. Secretary's report

The Society began its 2022-23 season on Monday the 5th of September 2022 during the second Elizabethan age but, following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11, it ended its 187th highly successful season in what is now the New Carolean Era. Apart from short periods during wartime and the Covid pandemic, the Society has performed throughout the reigns of 7 monarchs - Victoria, Edward V11, George V, Edward V111, George V1, Elizabeth 11 and our present King Charles 111. In just another 13 years the society will celebrate its two hundredth anniversary. What an epic achievement by a group of local amateur singers, two hundred sensational years of choral singing - think of that! Perhaps the committee had better start planning the celebrations!

September's rehearsals began with Haydn's "Theresienmesse", a light-hearted setting of the Latin mass and Mendelssohn's "Lobgesang - Hymn of Praise". Truth be told, we struggled a bit with the Mendelssohn largely

because it was sung in German so it was challenging to read the unfamiliar notes and words at one and the same time. But we worked hard to meet Oliver's high standards and in the event a choir of 65 singers produced a highly successful concert on the 19th of November as part of the Stratford Music Festival.

We were joined by the Regency Sinfonia and four fabulous soloists - soprano Hannah Davey, Mezzo Annie George, Tenor Peter Harris (who stood in at the last minute - though you wouldn't have known - when tenor Robin Bailey was taken ill with a chest infection). Hugo Herman-Wilson was baritone. Our invited reviewer reported that the choir "sang with joy and warmth" and that the musicians were "particularly commendable throughout for their subtlety in the Haydn and their power in the Mendelssohn in what was an "uplifting and upbeat concert".

We then had less than 4 weeks rehearsal before 63 singers performed Handel's masterpiece "Messiah" on the 17th of December. The choral society has sung this many times previously so being comfortable and familiar with the piece allowed us to make the most of Oliver's brilliant direction. We were accompanied once again by the superb musicians of the Regency Sinfonia. The concert was reviewed by Father Alex Austin. He described soloists soprano Fleur Moore-Bridger; alto Elisabeth Irvine; tenor Matthew Keighley; bass Eugene Dillon-Hooper as a "stunning quartet of soloists" and of the choir "Their magnificent and overwhelming Hallelujah chorus was attacked with spine-tingling zeal. The thunderous ovation which this fine five-star performance produced was thoroughly well-deserved."

In January work began on music for the Spring concert on 25th of March comprising Parry's 'Blest Pair of Sirens' and "I Was Glad", Elgar's "Spirit of the Lord" and "Give unto the Lord", Mendelssohn's cantata "Hear My Prayer", A Song of Wisdom" by Charles Stanford Villiers and Rutter's "Gloria". 78 singers were accompanied by soprano Heather Wardle, 8 excellent brass players and percussion of the Regency Sinfonia and the sympathetic playing of organist Douglas Keilitz. Reviewer Brian Midgley described Heather's voice as having "great purity, ideal for the famous "O for the Wings of a Dove", which was delightful". He congratulated Oliver and the choir on "A substantial and enjoyable evening".

It was a wonderful, if eventful, concert but the afternoon rehearsal and evening concert together required huge physical stamina for all the singers who took part and, as we were all distressingly aware, for two of our number, it was too much. Thankfully, we were later informed that both recovered well. How fortunate we were at the time to have several medics in our midst who were very quickly able to take control of the situation and enormous thanks are extended to them for their valuable assistance.

As I write this a summer concert - Songs for a Summer Evening - is planned to take place on the 17th of June at St Andrews Church. It is a new venture for the Society and is in response to the many singers who have said how much they missed singing between the last concert of the season in March and the start of the new season in September. If successful it may well become a firm fixture in the calendar. 59 singers are expected to take part singing a selection of pieces including Elgar's Sea Pictures, part songs and madrigals by Parry, Dowland and others. We are hugely grateful to Oliver and to Rachel for agreeing to take this on.

As a thank you for the use of the Shakespeare Hospice's car park on Monday evenings, the Society was pleased to support the hospice at the celebratory lighting of their Christmas tree in December. The enjoyable event took place outdoors on a very cold afternoon and 22 of our singers turned out. Carols were sung despite frozen faces and hands but mince pies and mulled wine helped to keep up the good humour.

Regrettably we say farewell to a few members who have decided to retire and hang up their music. Several retirees have been members for many years, one who joined in 1991 and another who joined in 1990. That is 45 years of singing with the Society between them. To all leavers and retirees, we send many thanks for your valuable contribution and support over the years. You will be missed but we shall hope to see you in the audience still enjoying concerts in the future.

Also, I send every good wish on behalf of the society to those members whose ill health has prevented them from singing recently. We wish you a speedy recovery.

The Society has been left a substantial bequest of £2500 by a former singer and is most grateful for this unexpected and much appreciated gift. The family has been advised that this legacy will be put towards a performance of Bach's St John Passion which the Society hopes to undertake in the not too distant future. It is a super piece but will be expensive to do so the legacy will be a valuable contribution towards that.

The Society started its season in September in good shape with 87 enthusiastic singers including 15 new singers this year. We are delighted to welcome new members and hope that they enjoy their singing with this long established and supportive community of like-minded people and that they find new, good friends within its midst, as I have been fortunate enough to find.

Turning to committee matters. Five committee meetings have been held under the chairmanship of Tim Moore-Bridger during the year since the last AGM when Tim took on the role. It has been an excellent first year Tim so many thanks for taking it on and well done! These days most of the meetings are by Zoom but both Iwona and Carol have kindly hosted some and I would like to thank each of them very much for their hospitality. Iwona has been an enthusiastic and successful manager of the society's social occasions in recent years for which we thank her. But she has not been fit enough to be with us this last year and is reluctantly stepping down from the committee. We wish you well Iwona and hope to see you back amongst us again soon.

I too am stepping down this year as Hon. Sec a job which I have been doing since 2017. During that time I have been closely involved in the running of the society having taken over from the previous secretary who had done the job so admirably for the previous 6 years. I knew that she would be a hard act to follow and was initially most reluctant to take it on but her charming persistence gave me pause for thought. For a number of years I had tremendously enjoyed singing with the choir, especially with my mates in the second sops and enjoyed the challenge of learning new pieces with the thrill of performing them in concert.

Also I was acutely aware that the success of the choral society, indeed its very existence, was not a matter of chance. It happens only as a result of the efforts of many people so I couldn't just sit back and enjoy myself as I felt it only right that I made a contribution. In doing that I've been fortunate enough, as has every one of us, to have had the benefit of the experience, commitment and hard work of those on the committee to whom we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude. So my grateful thanks to Tim and the previous Chairman before him and to all members of the committee. I will remain responsible for all the bookings to do with concerts, the venues, musicians and soloists and look forward to continuing my involvement in that aspect of the committee's work.

On behalf of the committee, I want to thank everyone who has volunteered their time and energy in support of the society, notably to all those who have helped to set up and break down the staging for concerts; for producing interesting and informative newsletters; for organising the flowers for concert soloists; to front of house at concerts; to those who help with stewarding at concerts, or running the bar afterwards and to everyone who has in some way volunteered their time.

The society also gratefully acknowledges the continuing and generous support of its Patrons and the sponsorship of the Rigby Foundation. A recent new sponsor is Holiday Inspirations Limited and the society wholeheartedly thanks them all.

This year has seen the establishment of a superb new website that presents the society in a highly professional manner to the wider public. This has involved many hours of work. I apologise if I have failed to mention all who have been involved in its production but nevertheless offer grateful thanks to everyone concerned.

How fortunate the society is to benefit from the generous efforts of so many individuals, none of whom are taken for granted. In particular, is our President, once again generously giving his time and energy in support of the Society, as he has done for very many years. We extend our warmest good wishes and thanks to him.

Two vitally important individuals central to the society's raison d'être are Rachel and Oliver. Rachel has accompanied the choir's rehearsals to the highest standard since 2008. Whilst we singers grapple with mastering

new music, trying to hit the right note at the right time, Rachel arrives, seats herself at the piano and without further ado impressively plays complex music with apparent effortlessness. Thank you so much Rachel for your unwavering support and long may it last!

Finally, our heartfelt gratitude and thanks go to Oliver who with skill and great good humour encourages us, introduces us to new repertoire, educates us and helps us to improve our singing skills. He has held our hands as we discovered each new piece and with his beautiful voice demonstrated how it should be sung. With flair and enthusiasm he leads us on a life-enriching journey of musical discovery. Thank you so much Oliver - how fortunate are we and the audiences who share in the fruits of your labours.

And so to our next 2023-24 concert season full of exciting musical experiences. We begin on Monday the 4th of September rehearsing Handel's dramatic Samson for a "celestial concert" on the 18th of November in Holy Trinity Church, followed by Prelude to Christmas on the 16th of December and on 23rd of March 2024 Mozart's Requiem, just some of the most beautiful choral music ever written.

## **5. Treasurer's Report for the year ended 30th April 2023**

This has been a very satisfactory year for the Society financially. We had forecast to break even, a very bullish aspiration in a year when we perform Messiah. Compared to the forecast we returned a surplus of £777, high ticket sales for Messiah being a major contributor. In addition, we received a legacy of £2,500, which has been ring-fenced to support a future concert.

The accounts surplus of £6,127 includes the above, plus £2,205 received in subscriptions for our summer season. Most of the costs will fall into the next financial year. The additional season has proved more popular than had been prudently estimated for financial planning.

Standard running costs continue to rise. Rehearsal room hire rise by 11% this year (a total of 16% over the last two years), so we do need to ensure that our subscription income supports our outgoings.

We start the 23-24 season with a healthy reserve of £29,590, which, in addition to covering costs for our summer concert, will allow us to plan for some larger scale concerts in subsequent seasons.

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

Signed on behalf of the Society's trustees:

Signature:

Full Name: Tim Moore-Bridger

Chairman

Date:

Charity Name  
Stratford Choral Society

## Receipts and pay

For the period from  
Period start date  
5/1/2022

### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>		
Donations	3,640	-
Member subscriptions	13,000	-
Patron subscriptions	1,240	-
Gift aid	2,531	-
Concert ticket sales	9,456	-
Programme sales and sponsors	2,682	-
Contribution to music hire and folders	1,440	-
Interest	119	-
Other fund raising	192	-
	-	-
<b>Sub total(Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>34,300</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>		
	-	-
	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>34,300</b>	<b>-</b>

### A3 Payments

Rehearsal room hire	2,066	-
Conductor and accompanist	6,340	-
Concert musicians	13,344	-
Concert venue hire	1,909	-
Other concert costs	755	-
Programmes and posters	1,511	-
Music and folders	1,446	-
NFMS subscription and insurance	299	-
Web site costs	290	-
Print, post and other expenses	213	-



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**B5 Liabilities**

**Details**


Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature


	No (if any) 502020
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**CC16a**

## ments accounts

To	Period end date 4/30/2023
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Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
-	3,640	4,643
-	13,000	8,656
-	1,240	1,590
-	2,531	2,741
-	9,456	7,056
-	2,682	1,737
-	1,440	626
-	119	11
-	192	200
-	-	-
-	34,300	27,260

-	-	
-	-	-
-	34,300	27,260

-	2,066	1,767
-	6,340	5,500
-	13,344	8,251
-	1,909	1,674
-	755	335
-	1,511	1,071
-	1,446	190
-	299	412
-	290	112
-	213	388



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-
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-
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**Fund to which liability relates**

**Amount due (optional)**

**When due (optional)**


-
-
-
-
-


Print Name

Date of approval

T Moore-Bridger




Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of

Charity Name STRATFORD UPON AVON CHORAL SOCIETY

On accounts for the year ended

30 APRIL 2023

Charity no (if any)

502020

Set out on pages

1-2 (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD/MM/YYYY.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, 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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(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 (other than that disclosed below \*) 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.

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

[Signature]

Date:

29th Jan 2024

Name:

PHILIP BISHOP

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

F.C.A. REGULATED

Address:

DOWNHAM BIRMINGHAM ROAD, HENLEY-IN-ARDEN B95 5QD

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

NONE