

BARRY MALE VOICE CHOIR

AGM 13/2023

Chairman's Report

Can I start by thanking you all for your attendance tonight. Hopefully, replacing one of our rehearsal nights with AGM has made attendance easier for us all.

I wanted to firstly refer back to our former's chair's report from last year which I had the opportunity of reading before preparing this report, and am struck by the positive nature of that report, the extolling of our music team, particularly Dot as MD, and the former chair's fellow members on the leadership team. As we now know, all was not what it seemed.

I am aware of the email sent to most of you on Thursday evening from our former chair, Martyn Todd, in which he referred to the 'Elephant in the Room', so considered it important that we address the unfortunate events leading up to his dismissal as Chair last September, and get this out of the way before moving on to more positive matters.

As a recap, the leadership resigned en masse on the 12 September due to what they considered unilateral actions by the chair, and whilst Martyn subsequently resigned, he withdrew that almost the next day. This was followed by a letter sent to the trustees by Dot's solicitor citing Martyn's alleged unacceptable communications to Dot, which led to his suspension as chair and from attending rehearsal and events. An EGM was then called to deal with the appointment of a new leadership team, and address whether Martyn should remain as Chair. The members agreed to his removal following the disclosures made as to his conduct at the EGM. His membership of the choir was then terminated on 24 November.

How then did we get to that point from the positive picture alluded to at last year's AGM?

The leadership team has had access to the content of emails and text messages sent between Martyn and Dot from March to September last year, and beyond. I have a 10 page summary of the content and Steve Jones as vice chair also reviewed the content with Gary Ball and Dave Williams before the decision was made to revoke Martyn's membership.

They reveal on Martyn's part unacceptable use of language, accusations made against other leadership members, showed he had a combative mindset towards them and of wanting to

manage members of the choir, as well as being disparaging towards many. I believe a number of you will be familiar with the sentiment as a result of emails received since these events unfolded. His attitude to Dot and others swung from one extreme to the other, without him recognising the inconsistencies in his expressed views. Dot had challenged him in relation to some of those remarks, indicating her concern for his attitude and for his wellbeing.

I don't want to dwell too much on this before this turns into an essay, but suffice to say the leadership team are confident of the decisions made and the reasoning behind them. If any member of the choir wishes to have sight of the correspondence then we are more than happy to arrange that, but do not wish to publish the content to ensure they do not go outside of the domain of the choir.

Many of us thought very highly of Martyn and had appreciated his leadership during testing times. What has transpired has been a shock and disappointment to us all. Martyn has shown little, if any, acceptance he has acted inappropriately, and the continued nature of his emails to the leadership team, to Father Dan who chaired the EGM and you as members shows his continuing mindset. It also worth bearing in mind that the interim leadership team has, since its appointment as a group of volunteers in October, sought to steer the ship through choppy waters, all the while facing a bombardment of cannon balls from Martyn's pen.

We are still afloat, but clearly we do not want this situation to continue. We now delete the emails we receive and we would encourage you to advise Martyn he should no longer contact you. There is in any event an issue as to his illegal use of data relating to members of the choir available to him as part of his former role which should have been returned or deleted, and if he continues to contact you after your request for this to stop, there are also issues of harassment that can be considered. There may be others among you more sympathetic towards him, and you may have before passed on information to Martyn from emails sent out or divulging what has been said at rehearsals. I cannot stop you from continuing to do that but would plead with you to consider your actions to avoid prolonging matters which would cause further harm to the choir.

I appreciate there has been some fall out, with the resignations of Ralph and Peter Humblestone which is regrettable.

As a choir, all 54 of us, we need to move on, and the new leadership team will require and be grateful for your assistance and backing as we strive to go on together, and concentrate on matters that will help the choir thrive and grow.

I now want to move on to more positive things.

In spite of everything, the choir has managed to achieve a considerable amount during the last year, and in addition celebrate its 120th anniversary, for which we have cause to feel immense pride.

We have contributed to 5 weddings, been able to heed the call to assist two schools, Rhose Primary and Llantwit Comp (who can forget the phones held aloft by teenagers no less!), attended the Ship Broker's Dinner at the Coal Exchange. In the last two cases, they've been so impressed they've asked us back. There was also the visit to Tenby, the joint concert at Narberth and then St David's Cathedral. In July we had the concert at the Memo with the Vale of Glamorgan Brass Band and had some of our rehearsals at the Eastern Shelter to help promote the choir.

We tried a new venue for our annual concert In June and were joined by South Notts MVC and whilst the attendance may have been less than we would have liked, the performance and atmosphere in the concert itself was a considerable success. The Christmas concert was even more successful, with almost a full venue back at St Helen's and with the choir's quality of performance impressing many.

The concerts and our anniversary meal all helped us celebrate the significant milestone of our 120th year.

There are names a plenty that deserve our thanks for all that we've achieved, in spite of the challenges.

To Dot in particular who has soldiered on, and helped us reach the heights in the midst of everything else going on in the background. Thank you Dot for sticking with us.

Thanks also to Emma and James for their usual professionalism and loyalty to the choir.

Thanks to the previous leadership team and all who stepped in in the interim to steer us this far.

Phil Murray – for organising the Celebration dinner and other social events

Richard King - his involvement with the organisation of the concerts and their promotion, not to mention his tireless work as secretary through the years

Nick Meyrick – his hard work as treasurer over a number of years

Phil Bacon – for taking up the Friends baton and the choir excursions, and to Neil Pugh who I understand has agreed to take these forward into the future.

Charles – for his usual enthusiasm as librarian, and his graciousness in letting go the valuable scores under his care 😊

Sandy – for staging and his organisation of the lottery

Russ Phillips – for dealing with the choir accessories

Father Dan – for chairing the EGM in difficult circumstances

Section reps

I apologise for anyone else that I've left out.

We can look forward to an exciting year ahead, particularly with the WNO Blaze of Glory coming up in March which we hope will raise the choir's profile by some way, and the competition and trip to Cheltenham.

Hopefully we can all move forward together for the good of the choir and each other.

Ymlaen a'r canu!

Steve Bowen

Interim Chair, BMVC



**BARRY MALE VOICE CHOIR
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022**

INCOME

EXPENDITURE

		Conductor's Fees & Honoraria	-£5,660.00
		Accompanist Fees Emma & James	-£5,805.00
		Hire of Trinity Church Hall	-£1,901.00
		Sub total hall and professional fees	-£13,366.00
Annual Subscriptions received.	£9,950.69	Subscription related expenses e.g. overpayments refunded	£0.00
120th / Christmas meal income	£1,223.00	120th / Christmas meal outgoings	-£1,642.19
Gift Aid rebates	£0.00	Guest MD fees	-£75.00
Uniform deposits received	£200.00	Uniforms deposits refunded	-£50.00
Grants received	£0.00	Music purchased	-£237.64
Pembrokeshire trip income	£9,986.00	Pembrokeshire trip expenditure	-£11,862.50
Income from commercial engagements (excluding weddings) and concerts	£5,420.36	Payments related to performances e.g. hire of hall, concert guest performers	-£3,505.78
Income from weddings	£2,720.00	Friends administration costs	£0.00
Friends income	£474.00	Misc expenditure e.g. replacement equipment, printing costs etc.	-£1,782.62
<u>Sundry income streams</u>		Donations to DEC for Ukraine - collection at St Davids	-£785.00
Fund raising e.g. barbecue	£339.81	Making Music, GVS, WAMVC, internet hosting etc. annual fees	-£652.00
Bonus Ball	£960.00	Legal costs (paid from reserve)	-£2,124.60
Misc income e.g. CD sales, sale of surplus beer etc.	£841.00	Recruitment related expenses	-£62.09
Donations to BMVC	£1,539.50	Website development costs	-£24.01
Cashback from e.g. Amazon, survey feedback etc.	£67.44		
Total income	£33,683.80	Total expenditure	-£34,504.71
1. Difference between income and expenditure	-£820.91		
2. Opening bank balance as at 1 Jan 2022	£11,726.62		
Sum of items 1 & 2 above	£10,905.71	Bank Account balance as at 1 January 2023	£10,905.71
Reserve account opening balance	£9,732.77		
Reserve account interest 2022	£20.02		
Reserve balance 1st Jan 2023	£7,628.19	Reserve account outgoings (legal costs)	-£2,124.60
Cash held by Treasurer	£20.00		
Total balance of funds available in current account	£10,925.71	Plus Reserve balance 1st Jan 2023 £7628.19	

Signed:

Julie Green

Date:

22/1/2023

Based on the information presented to me,
I, Julie Green, certify that these are a true set of accounts for the
financial year 1st Jan - 31st Dec 2022



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