



York *philharmonic* Male Voice Choir

Registered Charity No. 529713

Trustees' Annual Report

For the Year 01 September 2024 to 31 August 2025

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 1st SEPTEMBER 2023 to 31st AUGUST 2024

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LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

STATUS

The York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir (The Fletcher Memorial Choir) is an association governed by our Constitution, dated 15 July 2020, and Rules dated 12 June 2023.

The Choir was first registered with the Charity Commission as a charity in 1972, registration number 529713.

The Choir does not have a registered office. All official correspondence for the period was to be directed to the Choir Secretary, Mr JD Thomson, by email at yorkphilchoir@gmail.com or by post at 42 Rowntree Wharf, Navigation Road, York, YO1 9XA. Any current correspondence should be addressed to the address shown on the Choir's Charity Commission entry.

This Trustee Annual Report covers the 12 months 1st September 2024 to 31st August 2025. As the turnover of the choir is less than £250k the annual accounts will be presented on a receipts and payments basis. As turnover for the year is over £25k, a Trustees Annual Report (TAR) has been prepared and will be registered with the Charity Commission. In accordance with Charity Commission rules an electronic Annual Return will be made every year and reference can be made to the Financial Statement that is a separate document to this report.

GOVERNING OFFICERS

The Choir is governed by up to eight Trustees of the Choir who are elected annually by the membership at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). There were no changes in Trustees during the year between AGMs. Ex-officio officers are also appointed at the AGM.

	AGM Elected	
Role	22/07/24	22/09/25
President	Mrs J Waggott	Mrs J Waggott
Chair	Mr M Wash	Mr R Askew
Secretary	Mr D Thomson	Mr S Poole
Treasurer	Mr M Clarke	Mr M Clarke
Membership Representative 1	Mr A Houghton	Mr D Lampitt
Membership Representative 2	Mr S Poole	Mr M Nokes
Membership Representative 3	Mr R Askew	Vacant
Membership Representative 4	Mr D Lampitt	Vacant
Membership Representative 5	Vacant	Vacant

An Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) was held on 28th October 2024 as our Secretary, Derek Thomson, had to stand down due to ill health. Michael Nokes was duly elected as a Trustee and Secretary until the next AGM. In addition, Adrian Houghton stood down as a Trustee and Vice Chair also due to ill health. Rob Askew was duly elected as Vice Chair.

Whilst the choir year ended 31st August 2025, the AGM was held on 22nd September 2025 immediately after the weekend in which we celebrated our centenary.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER

Karen Wood ACMA, CGMA Outsource Accounting Services & Independent Examinations, Hiscox Building, Peasholme Green, York, YO1 7PR.

LEGAL ADVISERS

The Choir has not had the need to appoint a legal adviser.

INSURANCE ADVISERS

The Choir has not appointed an insurance adviser and is insured by a policy arranged through the National Association of Choirs by Marsh Commercial (Hull), Ground Floor, Unit 5, Hesslewood Office Park, Ferriby Road, Hull, HU13 0QF. The policy is underwritten by Ansvar Insurance.

PROPERTY AND CUSTODIAN TRUSTEES

The Choir owns no interests in land or property and holds no assets or funds as custodian trustees on behalf of others.

BANKERS

Unity Trust Bank plc, Nine Brindley Place, Birmingham B1 2HB (2 accounts; 1 current, 1 savings), and National Savings and Investments, Glasgow G58 1SB (1 investment account)

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

MEMBERSHIP

Voting membership of the Choir is open to anyone over the age of 18. At 31st August 2025 there were 61 voting members. There are also 8 honorary life members who have no voting rights.

There are regularly between 50 and 55 members at each rehearsal evening and there's never a shortage to assemble sufficient singers for our performances. We are nevertheless always on the

lookout for new members. Weekly sectional rehearsals were led by our AMD and around 20 regularly retire for a post rehearsal social drink and informal sing at The Snickleways pub.

Social activities this year included a centenary golf day, Chair's 'birthday bash', ten-pin bowling, and an informal music night where members get to practice solos and small group songs in front of family and Friends.

The Choir is also supported by The Phillies, an independent group that consists of member's wives and partners that as well as organising their own social events, also arrange and serve refreshments and organise raffles at our own concerts, fund raising events, and soirees.

After a short recruitment campaign, The Choir has 63 paid up Friends who benefit from a regular newsletter, prize draw, and a free ticket to one of our Christmas Traditions concerts.

ORGANISATION

In addition to the eight trustees, the Choir's Management Committee includes the Choir's Musical Director (MD), Berenice Lewis, *ex officio* who this year clocked up 25 years as our MD, together with a representative from each of the four sections of the Choir elected at the AGM each year. For 2024/25 these representatives were re-elected; Mr R Gott (2nd tenor) and Mr P Newman (baritone). Mr R Samwell (bass) and Mr O Innes (2nd tenor) were newly appointed representatives. These committee members assist the Trustees in governing the Choir but in this capacity do not have voting rights at committee meetings. The Management Committee met on 5 occasions during the year.

Various activities are entrusted to working groups set up by the Trustees in April 2009 under the Choir's Rules. Concerts Group (responsible for all aspects of performances not requiring overnight accommodation); Tour Group (responsible for those events requiring overnight accommodation); and the Publicity/Media Group (aimed at promoting the Choir's activities and bringing them to the attention of a wider audience). The Uniforms Group established to consider the purchase of a new uniform that were delivered from October 2023 was disbanded and Richard Pearson elected as Uniforms Officer to manage the ongoing need to dress new members. The Centenary Planning Group continued its work that included coordinating the production of commemorative centenary lapel badges, a centenary programme, and a full update to the book, "Sound Fellows – The Story of York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir – 100 Years of Song, 1925 to 2025" written by our very own Colin Hockridge. These groups meet as and when required and attend Management Committee meetings also as and when required.

The Musical Development Group (MDG) was disbanded during the year with sole responsibility for repertoire, rehearsals, music quality, and training of members reverting to the Musical Director.

Martin Sleeman continued his role as welfare officer and David Lampitt continued as the lead for the publicity/media Group. Two new Member Trustees were appointed at the AGM, Rob Askew and David Lampitt.

Richard Kay, our deputy musical director took a sabbatical from the choir leading to his eventual resignation to focus more on his MD role with Harrogate MVC.

RELATED ORGANISATIONS

The Choir is a member of the National Association of Choirs (NAC), a national body formed by choirs to give a collective voice, representation and to provide a wide support and advice function. The NAC is itself a charity, registration number 1014630.

INTERNAL CONTROLS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The Trustees are responsible for the Choir's internal controls and for monitoring their effectiveness. No material weaknesses have been identified.

The Trustees regularly review the risks to the charity and have established systems and procedures to mitigate any risks identified and implemented procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

During the current cost of living crisis, the greatest risk to the Choir during this reporting period remained the choir's financial security and members' health.

The Trustees have identified that financial sustainability remains a risk for the charity, especially following the replacement of our performance uniforms in late 2023 and the additional expenditure incurred as we celebrated our 100th anniversary. Further Sponsorship and Donations, to the tune of around £10k, were secured for our Centenary year, and other options are being considered for increasing revenue for day-to-day operations. Other key risks include damage to the Choir's reputation, failure to protect the health and welfare of its members, and failure to maintain a strong membership base. The latter is a continuing discussion at management meetings and is not unique to this choir. During 24/25 we continued with our social media presence with more regular posts about forthcoming concerts, the benefits of singing, and how to become involved with the choir. A refresh of our website resulted in a more modern look with additional information for visitors, including pages specifically focused on our centenary celebration events.

A key element in managing financial risk is to review the Choir's reserves annually. The Trustees conducted a review of their reserves policy in 2024/5 and agreed that the policy should remain unchanged. This was recorded at the AGM.

Risks to our musical team were considered, and it was agreed that succession planning should commence to secure long-term musical direction, providing stability and flexibility going into and beyond our Centenary year. Consequently, the trustees appointed a new deputy MD, Ms Emilie Bels, who took up her post in January 2025.

The choir has 3 nominated first aiders. First aid provision was reviewed in 24/25, resulting in refresher first-aid-at-work training for 3 first aiders, along with the purchase of 2 new first-aid kits, one of which is more suitable for taking to 'away' concerts. The Health & Safety Policy was reviewed during the 23/24 choir year.

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

The Trustees' Annual Report, together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31st August 2025, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard 102. The financial statement has been subjected to an independent examination by Outsource Accounting Services.

OBJECTIVES AND AIMS

Our objectives

The charitable objectives of York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir are ‘the study and practice of choral music to foster public knowledge and appreciation of such music by means of public performance’.

Our aims

The Choir seeks to achieve these objectives by giving public performances in various musical styles at a variety of venues (often in support of other charitable organisations) and by offering opportunities for male singers to develop and practise their skills in rehearsal and performance.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

How our activities deliver public benefit

The Choir rehearses weekly to enable the study of choral music and performs in public in different venues throughout the year in pursuance of our charitable aims. The Trustees consider that the Choir’s activities, summarised below, provide public benefit both to those who join the Choir to sing, those who support us, and to the wider community who attend our performances.

How we achieve our objectives

We normally achieve our objectives through encouraging prospective members to attend rehearsals and learn about and practice choral singing. Most prospective members become full members and are expected to improve their singing skills and, having reached an acceptable standard (assessed by means of a ‘voice assessment’), perform in Choir concerts. We also achieve our objectives by giving public performances in a variety of venues throughout our local area and, on occasion, more widely nationally and internationally.

Income from travellers for the 2024 Cork Tour and ring-fenced income for Centenary Sponsorship are the principal reason for turnover this year being over £25,000.

In October 2024 The Fletcher Memorial Trophy was presented to Roger and Linda Samwell for their long and dedicated service to the choir, Roger having held a number of posts during his many years as a member and Linda as a ‘Phillie’ and our Queen of raffles, St Crux jewellery sales , and bucket rattling.

At our centenary dinner on 20th September 2025, the Fletcher Memorial Trophy was renamed to the Fletcher Lewis Memorial Trophy in recognition of the 25 years of outstanding musical leadership by our MD Berenice Lewis who was also presented with the trophy for the 25/26 choir year.

New members

We initiated a recruitment drive during 2025 with new leaflets and posters to take advantage of appearing in front of some new audiences, including The York Proms and our own centenary concert at York’s Barbican Theatre. It is expected that the efforts will not bear fruit perhaps until the 25/26 choir year. However, we continue to see a trickle of prospective members come along to rehearsals, and in 24/25, 7 new members joined the choir. Unfortunately, 6 members left the choir.

Concerts

During the year we performed at venues in York, Selby Abbey, Wilberfoss, Newby Hall (which was also hosting Tractor Fest), Gunnerside, the Impossible Restaurant in St Helen's Square, York; Easingwold (with Jubilate Ladies Choir that included our President), and Whitby. A joint concert with The Golden Rail Band was performed to a full house at the Joseph Rowtree Theatre in September '24, which is becoming an annual event. We made no donations to our three chosen charities during 24/25 to our three chosen charities, Shine 21, Menfulness, and the North Yorkshire Music Therapy Centre. However, the intention is to split all profits made from our centenary concert in York's Barbican Theatre on 21st September 2025 between them.

Once again, we had a packed schedule of Christmas events, which generate most of our annual concert income, including our 4-night run of Christmas Traditions at Bar Convent, Holy Trinity, Goodramgate, and York Railway Station. A smaller group also returned to lead the singing at an annual Dignity memorial service at York City Church for those who have lost family and friends over the year. A song requested at the railway station sing prompted a £100 donation!

We once again took part in the York Community Choir Festival at the Joseph Rowntree Theatre in March. Our own annual summer concert in July, with the theme of The Phil through 100 years, which included favourites voted by members from the past 100 years, took place in The DeGrey Rooms as The Citadel was unavailable due to building work.

A new event for the choir was The York Proms held in the Museum Gardens. This open-air concert has been growing in size since its inception, and we were fortunate enough to perform in front of around 2000 people, leading up to the opening singing of the national anthem. This was delayed and we had to remain on stage whilst the crowd, and ourselves, enjoyed commentary by the York Town Crier as England's Ladies team took penalties to win the Women's Euro 2025 – a very memorable moment.

Competitions and Festivals

Each year the Choir participates in at least one choral festival or competition. Once again, the Choir competed in the Eskdale Festival of the Arts on a sunny April day in Whitby and were awarded a 1st, and 2nd, and a joint 2nd out of the three classes entered. As well as a competition, this is a great social occasion for the choir and its supporters where we can meet up with other like minded folk and enjoy a plate of Yorkshire's best fish and chips, and an ice cream.

Community performances

It is clear to see from the Concerts section above that most of our performances are in the community and often for the community. As well as facilitating the enjoyment and appreciation of choral music the Choir helps raise funds for a wide variety of charities and community-based organisations including churches where we sing by invitation. A number of these are free of fees or performed at reduced fees to enable the financial proceeds to benefit other organisations and charities. These community events also open the Choir to new audiences and occasionally will attract new members.

We also lead the singing at two of The Lord Mayor of York's Christmas Cheer events that are held for the over 60's in York's Assembly Rooms.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have agreed that the Choir's free reserves (excluding designated or restricted funds), should be set at a level that would fund one year's normal operating costs excluding depreciation and any extra-ordinary items. At the end of August 2025 that policy would indicate a required cash level of reserves of around £18k

Investment Policy

The Trustees hold the Choir's reserves between National Savings and Unity Trust Bank which is a member of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme and at a level that is no greater than that guaranteed by the scheme. The Trustees aim to take little or no risk to loss of capital value and any investments will only be made where they can be readily redeemed in cash. The choir currently holds around two years' reserves, similar to that at August 2024 and thus remains within the choir's reserves policy limits.

Financial Performance 2024/25

The choir is using 'receipts and payments' accounts. As stated in the Financial Statement, there were no funds materially in deficit at 31 August 2025. The Choir this year had a modest surplus of income over expenditure of £5813 (£24,514 deficit at 31 August 2024 due largely to the purchase of new uniforms during 23/24). This includes £5391 sponsorship and donations for our centenary celebrations. There is also a liability of £350 outstanding for financial audit. On 31 August 2025, total choir funds stand at £34,332, up from £28,519 in August 2024.

Economic challenges

The Choir generally continues to raise sufficient income to fund our annual operational expenditure and must continue with active recruitment to attract new members to sustain the Choir and perform sufficient income earning concerts.

In addition to Members, Friends, 200 Club (our licensed lottery), ad-hoc donations and concert fee income (including ticket sales, raffles, and refreshments), we held our annual St Crux fundraising day on 31 May 2025 raising £1400. Net profit from our Christmas Traditions was around £6.5k, and around £1.6k from our summer concert

PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Our centenary concert in York's Barbican Events Centre is being planned for 21st September 2025 which will bring together over 200 voices from 5 local choirs and brass ensemble with whom we have shared stages in the past. We'll be welcoming representatives from our Choir friends from Munster and Lochem, together with other special guests who have supported the choir over the years.

This event immediately follows our centenary dinner that is being held at York's Milner Hotel, for around 200 guests, including members of 2 choirs from Munster and Lochem with whom we have had a special post second world war relationship.

A refresh of our website took place early in 24/25 to give a more modern feel and improved information about what the choir can offer younger members. It will also be reconfigured to handle concert ticketing as the platform we currently use will be closing at the end of December 2024.

It is also likely that an overseas tour will be arranged to take place during 2027.

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TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities' Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP).
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- prepare the financial statements on a 'going concern' basis unless it is inappropriate to presume the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with The Charities Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

TRUSTEES' APPROVAL OF THE TAR AND ACCOUNTS

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees Annual Report and Accounts

Signature:



Name: Rob Askew (Chair)

Dated:

27-4-26.

York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir

Charity number 529713

Financial statements for the year ended

31st August 2025

outsorce

Charity accounts preparation & independent
examination service

York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir

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Independent examiner's report to the trustees

I report on the accounts of: **York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir**
for the year ended: **31st August 2025** which are set out on pages 2 to 4.

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 Charity'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

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

- 1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
- 2 the accounts do not accord with those records

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.



01/05/2026

Date:

Karen Wood ACMA

Outsource independent examination service
2 Galligap Lane
Osbalwick
York YO10 3NR

York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir
Charity number 529713

Receipts & Payments Accounts for the year ended:

31st August 2025

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	2025 Total funds	2024 Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Receipts				
Merchandise sales	1,264	-	1,264	2,021
Members subscriptions	8,962	-	8,962	7,617
Friends subscriptions	1,220	-	1,220	640
200 club subscriptions	1,274	-	1,274	1,161
Tour income	28	-	28	19,939
Other performances	-	-	-	2,916
Concert income	16,353	-	16,353	12,846
Fundraising & donations	2,503	-	2,503	5,186
Centenary events & donations	5,391	-	5,391	-
Centenary events & merchandise	3,303	-	3,303	-
Gift aid reclaimed	-	-	-	1,694
Bank interest	417	-	417	644
Total receipts	40,715	-	40,715	54,664
Payments				
Tour costs	-	-	-	24,461
Music & recording media	1,066	-	1,066	579
Marketing , advertising & website	3,385	-	3,385	889
Musical direction & expenses	6,926	-	6,926	6,119
Hire of hall for rehearsals & storage	5,539	-	5,539	5,456
Accompanist	2,442	-	2,442	1,140
200 club prizes	556	-	556	608
Accountancy fees	350	-	350	330
Friends prizes/gifts/entry fees	163	-	163	1,315
Bank charges	470	-	470	376
Office & administration costs	300	-	300	131
Centenary costs	-	4,251	4,251	
Insurance	222	-	222	207
Fundraising costs	173	-	173	408
Donations to other organisations	-	-	-	1,414
Concert & uniform expenses	8,962	-	8,962	34,080
Minor equip & other sundry costs	97	-	97	1,369
Total payments	30,651	4,251	34,902	78,882
Net of receipts/(payments)	10,064	(4,251)	5,813	(24,218)
Transfers between funds	1,949	(1,949)	-	-
Balance brought forward	22,319	6,200	28,519	52,737
Balance carried forward	34,332	-	34,332	28,519

York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir
Charity number 529713

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at:

31st August 2025

			2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Assets				
Cash at bank and in hand				
Current bank account	2,780	-	2,780	1,421
Savings bank account	14,587	-	14,587	10,170
Investment savings account	16,814	-	16,814	16,814
Cash in hand for floats	151	-	151	114
	34,332	-	34,332	28,519

			2025	2024
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£
Liabilities				
Independent review fee	350	-	350	350
	350	-	350	350

York Philharmonic Male Voice Choir
Charity number 529713

Notes to the accounts for the year ended:

31st August 2025

1. Basis of Accounts

The trustees have taken advantage of section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 and prepared the accounts on a receipts and payments basis.

2. Restricted income funds

Fund name	Purpose
Choir centenary events	To fund choir centenary events during the calendar year 2025

	Balance b/fwd £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Trf between funds	Balance c/fwd £
Choir centenary events	6,200	-	4,251	(1,949)	-
	<u>6,200</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,251</u>	<u>(1,949)</u>	<u>-</u>
Unrestricted funds	<u>22,319</u>	<u>40,715</u>	<u>30,651</u>	<u>1,949</u>	<u>34,332</u>

The funds set aside for the Centenary last year were spent on the Centenary costs this year. Funds collected for Centenary events this year were not restricted. Surplus funds were transferred to unrestricted funds to further fund the choir.

Approval of accounts for the year ended:

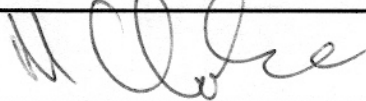
31st August 2025

The report and accounts were approved at a meeting of the trustees held on:

14-5-2026

Date

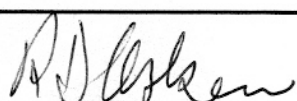
Signed for and on behalf of the trustees:



Signature

MIKE CLARKE

Name



Signature

ROB ASKEW

Name