READING FESTIVAL CHORUS

# Reading Festival Chorus

# Report and Accounts

# For the year ended 31 July 2026

**Registered Charity No 254201**

# Reading Festival Chorus

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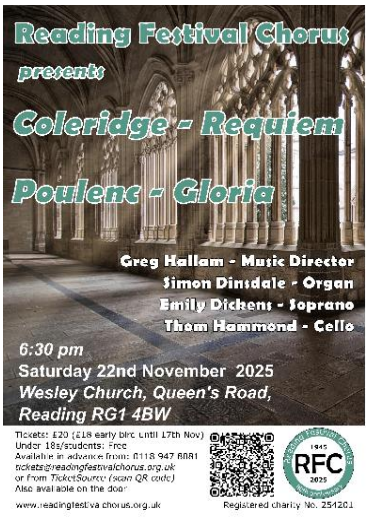
## For the year ended 31 July 2026


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**Reading Festival Chorus**
**Report of the Members of the Committee of Management**

## Objectives and Activities

The aims and objectives of the Chorus are to foster public knowledge and appreciation of choral music by means of giving members of the Chorus the opportunity to study and practise such music, and the public performance of such music.

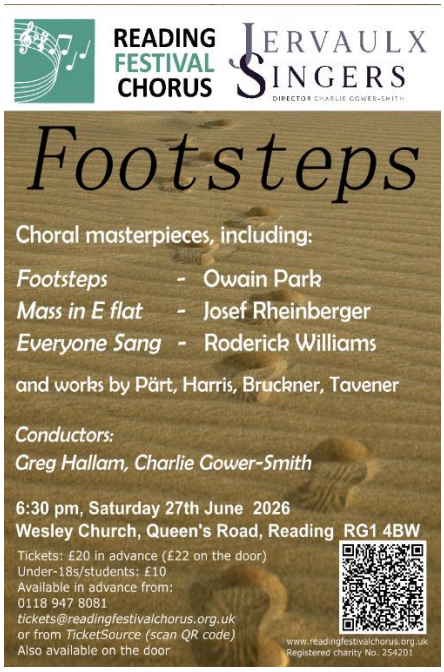



The Chorus held three concerts this year; all were held in Wesley Church. In addition the Chorus held its first "Come & Sing" event for many years at St Andrew's Church, Caversham.

The first concert was on 25th November 2025 and featured Poulenc's *Gloria* and Coleridge's *Requiem*. Emily Dickens was the soprano soloist in the *Gloria.* The solo cello which features in the *Requiem* was played by Thom Hammond, who also performed a solo, Stahel's *Song of Solitude.* The Chorus also performed Bruckner's *Os Justi* unaccompanied. Organ accompaniment for the Gloria and Requiem was provided by Simon Dinsdale.




Our spring concert was on 26th March 2026, and included Elgar's *Songs from the Bavarian Highlands*, Will Todd's *Songs of Peace*, Eric Whitacre's *Seal Lullaby*, and Parry's *My Soul there is a Country,* from *Songs of Farewell.* We were accompanied on the piano by our regular rehearsal accompanist, Judith Creighton. As no soloists were required, the concert achieved the rare distinction of turning a small profit!




Our summer concert adopted a novel format, in that we were joined by the Jervaulx Singers, a group of young singers based in Yorkshire, part of whose mission is to support amateur choirs. We were thus able to perform some pieces together, and some separately. Two of the main works in the programme were Owain Park's *Footsteps*, and Roderick Williams's *Everyone Sang:* both are works which were composed for a larger choir, and a chamber choir. Jervaulx joined the Chorus for the *Mass in E flat*, by Rheinberger. The Chorus sang William Harris's *Bring us, O Lord God* and Bruckner's *Christus Factus Est,* and Jervaulx sang Pärt's *Bogoroditse Devo* and Tavener's *Mother of God, here I stand.* Greg Hallam shared the conducting with Jervaulx's Charlie Gower-Smith. It was an interesting venture, allowing the Choir to perform pieces it might not have normally considered, and the combined groups certainly led to an enhanced performance which was a thoroughly enjoyable experience. However, our audience was lower than expected. Parts of the final rehearsal were video-recorded by a professional company, who then put together a brief recording which we are now featuring on our new website. We are grateful to David Backhouse for all his work in getting our new website up and running.

We held our usual informal concert of carols and readings in Wesley Church Hall on 8th December. A collection was taken at the event for Homestart, a local charity which provides support to families with young children who are struggling to cope with adverse circumstances. The collection amounted to £586.94, which was given in full to Homestart.

The Trustees of the charity (i.e. the Committee of Management) confirm that they have had regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. The Chorus continues generally to make no charge for concert attendance by those aged under 18, and offers reduced subscriptions to students, those on state benefits and to those aged 65 and over.

**Achievements and financial review**

The financial statements have been prepared for the year ended 31 July 2026.

The Committee updated the current Chorus business plan to cover last year's financial position. This plan includes a budget for each financial period which is developed as the programme of future concerts is finalised.

*Overall position*

The accounts show a surplus for the year of £6,349.

In view of the substantial loss inevitably sustained on the performance of *Gerontius* with Johanneskantorei Düsseldorf in June 2025, no concert was given with an orchestra in 2025-26. The somewhat pared-back programme nevertheless included a wide variety of choral pieces and styles. The November concert sustained a small loss of £454, the March concert made a small profit of £109, and the June concert a rather larger loss of £1,825. Ticket sales declined during the year and the Chorus is mindful to understand this.

The overall surplus for the year is due to some successful fundraising (see note 9). In addition to our usual sources of income, the Come and Sing Day on 16 May 2026 made a profit of £514, and the Auction of Promises on 29 June made a profit of £2,262. We are also grateful to our Musical Director, Greg Hallam, who gave a song recital at Wellington College on 21st September 2025 for the benefit of Reading Festival Chorus and Bracknell Choral Society. He was accompanied by Nick Austin, who is Bracknell Choral Society's accompanist; our thanks of course to him as well. Reading Festival Chorus's share of the proceeds came to £675 and we are very grateful to them both for their efforts on our behalf.

*Membership and our rehearsal and administrative costs*

Membership of the Chorus fell slightly this year from 67 to 64.

The Committee remains committed to ensuring that the remuneration of our Musical Director and Accompanist keep pace with general wage and salary inflation, which this year came to 4%. The Committee has in recent years worked on the principle that membership subscriptions should cover the cost of rehearsals, and administration and affiliation expenses (see notes 11 and 12). This year membership subscriptions (£11,391: see note 5) have failed to do so by the substantial amount of £1,336. This is due partly to the "one-off" cost of having a video of a rehearsal professionally produced for our newly-enhanced website, but the remainder of the shortfall is likely to be an annual under funding which we believe will need to be covered. Accordingly, an increase in members' subscriptions will be recommended by the Committee at the next AGM.

**Chart 1: Source of Income for the 25/26 Season:**

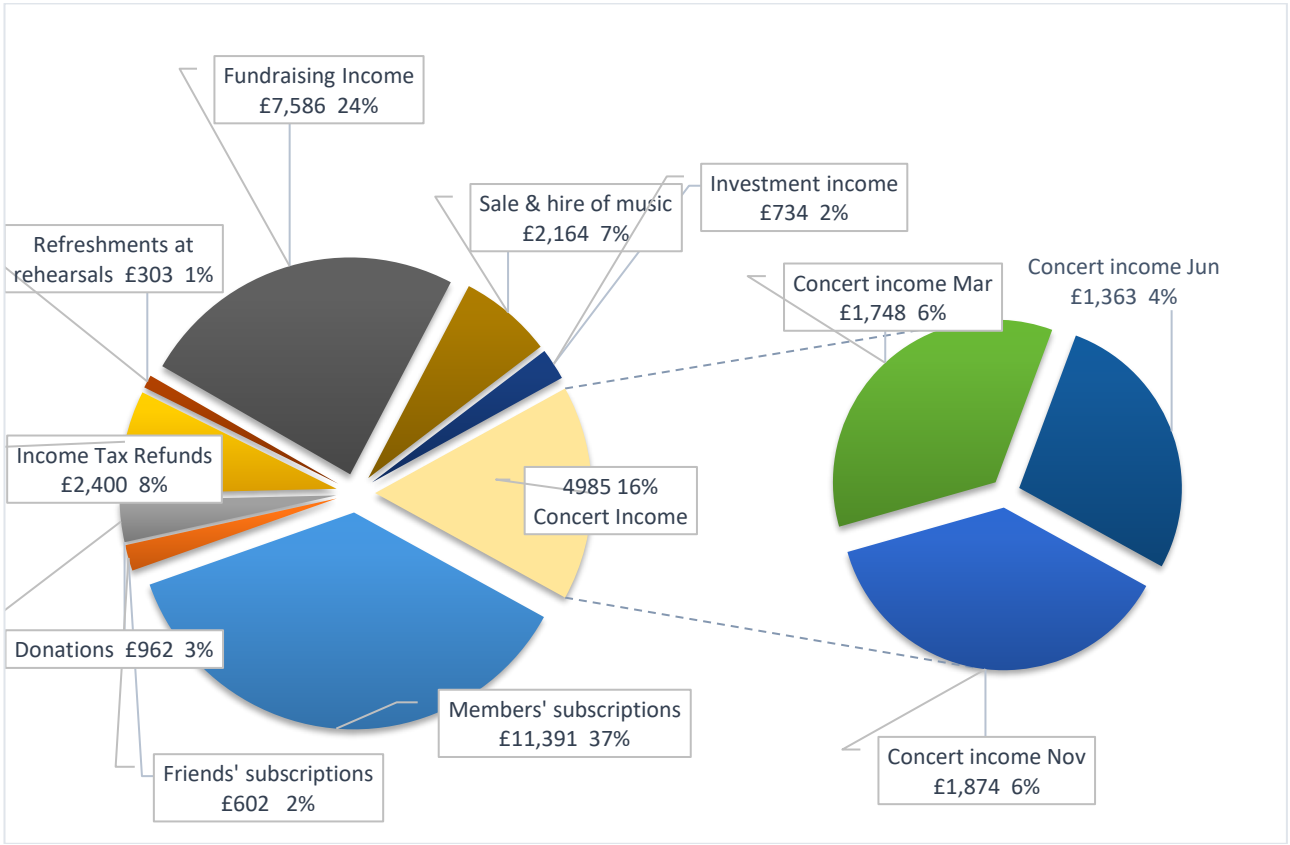
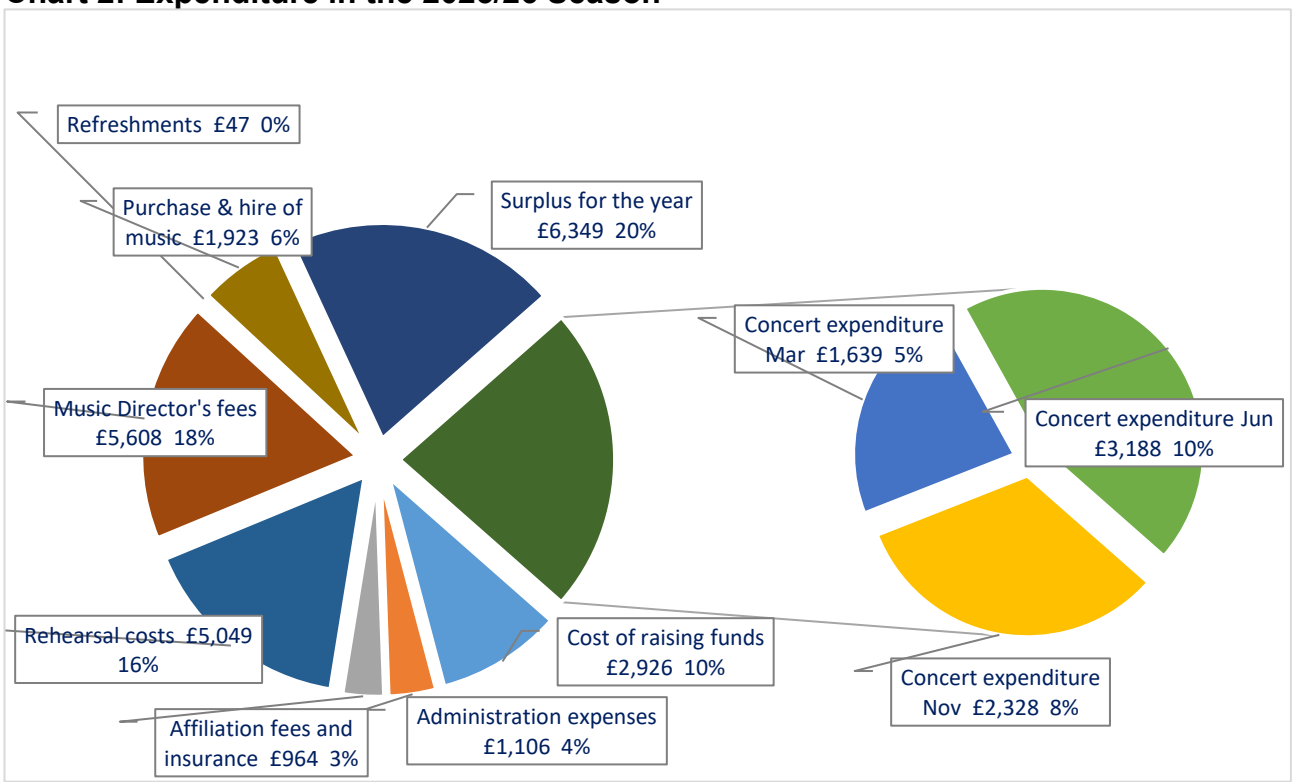



**Chart 2: Expenditure in the 2025/26 Season**




Total assets therefore increased from £18,095 at 1 August 2025 to £24,444 at 31 July 2026

*Reserves Policy*

Since at least 2016 Chorus has operated on the basis of retaining a financial reserve that would cover our estimated operating costs for the forthcoming twelve months. Most recently this has been set at £11,500. Although we had assumed that such a reserve would be

necessary to see us through such a contingency as the Covid-19 pandemic, and its attendant lock-downs, in 2020-21, in fact during the affected financial years (2019-20 and 2020-21) our reserves in fact rose. This was due to the fact that although we could not fund raise, we also did not incur the losses that naturally have arisen over the years of putting on concerts.

During the year ended 31st July 2026 the Committee did a thorough review of the life and cost of the Choir and has questioned whether we need to set our operating reserve so high on an annual basis. Whilst the Choir does build substantial reserves to cover the cost of larger performances, such as our joint performance of *Gerontius* with the Johanneskantorei, these funds are for performances. Further, the Charity Commission has recently issued new guidance on charities retaining reserves. Of particular relevance to us is the distinction that they make between *operating reserves* (i.e. a cushion to cover operating costs in the event of unforeseen circumstances), and a reserve which has been set aside to cover *anticipated future expenditure*.

A working group of the Committee considered this in further detail and decided that six months' operating costs would suffice as our *operating reserve.* Funds in excess of this amount are to be designated as the "Concert Reserve Fund", as that is, in practice, why we have retained the level of funds in recent years.

The Reserves on our Balance Sheet as at 31 July 2026 are therefore allocated between the Concert Reserve Fund of £18,000, and the balance of £6,444 as our general fund, which includes the operating reserve. It is hoped that this will bring greater transparency to our accounts, will assist us to budget for future larger-scale concerts, and will underline our need for ongoing fundraising.

*Note:It should be made clear that the Concert Reserve Fund is only, in Charity Commission terminology, a "designated" fund: as a matter of charity law, the Committee is free to deploy it as may be necessary, provided of course it is used for the charitable objects of the Chorus.*

The Committee of Management considers the Chorus has sufficient assets to fulfil its obligations.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and the second edition of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued in October 2019.

**Structure, Governance and Management**

Reading Festival Chorus is an unincorporated association governed by a written Constitution. This is made available through the Governance page of the Chorus website.

In accordance with this the Committee of Management is required to prepare financial statements for each financial period which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Chorus and of the income and expenditure for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the members of the Committee of Management are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Chorus will continue in business.

The members of the Committee of Management are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose, with reasonable accuracy at any time, the financial position of the

Chorus and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with charity law and the requirements of the Constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Chorus and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Members of the Committee of Management are the Trustees of the charity. Committee members are selected by the members of the Chorus at the Annual General Meeting, through election where there are more applicants than posts.

A set of Chorus Policies is published for members and others in the Governance section of the Chorus website.

**Reference and administrative details**

Reading Festival Chorus is registered at the Charity Commission with registration number 254201. The registered address is that of the Treasurer (currently 121 Church Road, Earley, Reading RG6 1HG).

The Chorus is pleased that the pianist John Lill CBE continues to be our Patron.

During this period (including the time between the end of the reporting period and the date these accounts were signed) the Trustees were:

| | **From** | **To** |
|---|---|---|
| Janet Allen (chair) | Start of financial year | Current |
| Jane Reed (vice-chair) | Start of financial year | AGM 29 September 2025 |
| Helen Shirley-Quirk (vice-chair) | AGM 29 September 2025 | Current |
| Margaret Cocks (secretary) | Start of financial year | Current |
| Nicholas Roberts (treasurer) | Start of financial year | Current |
| Thomas Wall (publicity) | Start of financial year | Current |
| Sally Hamilton (librarian) | Start of financial year | Current |
| Natalie McGuire (registrar) | Start of financial year | AGM 29 September 2025 |
| Rachel Paton (registrar) | AGM 29 September 2025 | Current |
| Jane Bazley (concert manager - artists) | Start of financial year | Current |
| Susan Mithen (concert manager – front of house) | Start of financial year | Current |

The Vice-Chair (Jane Reed, then Helen Shirley-Quirk) is also the Making Music representative.

John Kelly has served as Concert Manager – Staging during the year, but has not been a member of the Committee. In his absence due to an injury on 27 June, Jonathan Allen stood in.

**Examiner**

The Committee of Management consider that neither an audit nor an examination of the accounts is required for this period under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act), but that according to our Constitution an independent examination is required. Mr William Ellison was re-appointed at the AGM as the independent examiner for the year ended 31 July 2026.

Signed on behalf of the members of the Committee of Management

(sgd)

Nicholas Roberts – Treasurer
Approved by the Committee of Management on 29 September 2026

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES ON MY EXAMINATION OF THE ACCOUNTS OF READING FESTIVAL CHORUS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JULY 2026

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Reading Festival Chorus ("the Charity") for the year ended 31 July 2026.

### Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Charity 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 Charity 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.

Signed: Date: 28 September 2026

Name: William Mark Ellison

Address: 73 Balmore Drive
Caversham
Reading
RG4 8NN

**Reading Festival Chorus**
**For the Year Ended 31 July 2026**
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**

| | 2026 Unrestricted £ | 2026 Designated £ | 2026 Total £ | 2025 Total £ | Further details |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **INCOME FROM:** | | | | | |
| Voluntary income | | | | | |
| Membership Subscriptions | 11,391 | | 11,391 | 11,089 | 5 |
| Friends' Subscriptions | 602 | | 602 | 458 | |
| Corporate memberships | 0 | | 0 | 0 | |
| Donations | 962 | | 962 | 1,115 | 6 |
| Gift Aid | 2,400 | | 2,400 | 2,393 | 7 |
| Charitable activities | | | | | |
| Concert tickets and programmes | 4,985 | | 4,985 | 14,556 | 8 |
| Refreshments at rehearsals | 303 | | 303 | 248 | |
| Other activities | | | | | |
| Fundraising activities | 7,586 | | 7,586 | 1,423 | 9 |
| Sale & Hire of Music | 2,164 | | 2,164 | 1,197 | 10 |
| Investment income | 734 | | 734 | 951 | 14 |
| **TOTAL INCOME:** | **31,127** | **0** | **31,127** | **33,430** | |
| **EXPENDITURE ON:** | | | | | |
| Costs of raising voluntary income | | | | | |
| Raising funds | (2,926) | | (2,926) | (204) | 9 |
| Charitable activities | | | | | |
| Administration Expenses | (1,106) | | (1,106) | (566) | 11 |
| Affiliation Fees and Insurance | (964) | | (964) | (625) | |
| Concert payments | (7,155) | | (7,155) | (26,974) | 8 |
| Rehearsals | (5,049) | | (5,049) | (4,678) | 13 |
| Music Director fees | (5,608) | | (5,608) | (5,280) | 13 |
| Refreshments at rehearsals | (47) | | (47) | (40) | |
| Other | | | | | |
| Purchase & Hire of music | (1,923) | | (1,923) | (1,046) | 10 |
| **TOTAL EXPENDITURE:** | **(24,778)** | **0** | **(24,778)** | **(39,503)** | |
| **NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)** | **6,349** | **0** | **6,349** | **(6,703)** | |
| **Reconciliation of Funds** | | | | | |
| Total funds brought forward | 18,095 | 0 | 18,095 | 24,169 | |
| **Total funds carried forward** | **24,444** | **0** | **24,444** | **18,095** | |

**Reading Festival Chorus**
**BALANCE SHEET**
**as at 31 July 2026**

| | 2026 £ | 2025 £ | Further details |
|---|---|---|---|
| **CURRENT ASSETS:** | | | |
| Debtors & Prepayments | 583 | 209 | 15 |
| Investments | | | |
| COIF Deposit Account | 20,823 | 15,089 | 14 |
| Cash at bank and in hand | | | |
| Barclays Current Account | 3,696 | 3,138 | 14 |
| **TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS:** | 25,102 | 18,436 | |
| **LIABILITIES:** | | | |
| Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year | (658) | (341) | 15 |
| **TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES:** | (658) | (341) | |
| **TOTAL NET ASSETS** | 24,444 | 18,095 | |
| **THE FUNDS OF THE CHARITY:** | | | |
| Unrestricted Funds - general | (6,444) | (18,095) | |
| Unrestricted Funds – Designated | | | |
| Concert Reserve | (18,000) | | 16 |
| **TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS** | (24,444) | (18,095) | |

**Janet Allen - Chair** **Nicholas Roberts - Treasurer**

29 September 2026

The Examiner's Report is on Page 8

**Reading Festival Chorus**

**Notes to the Accounts**
**For the year ended 31 July 2026**

## 1. Basis of Accounting

a. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the second edition of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice issued in October 2019, the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.
b. The trust constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.
c. There are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue and therefore the accounts have been produced on a going concern basis.

## 2. Recognition of Income

a. Voluntary Income is received by way of donations and fund raising events. Cash donations are included in the accounts when they are received.
b. Where incoming resources have related expenditure (as with fundraising) the incoming resources and related expenditure are reported gross in the Statement of Financial Activities, but shown side by side in the Notes to these Accounts.
c. Subscription income due, including income tax recovered through Gift Aid, is accounted for in the period to which the subscriptions relate.
d. Bank interest receivable is included in the period during which it is credited.

## 3. Expenditure

a. All expenditure is included in the Statement of Financial Activities. The value of expense invoices received after the period-end is included in the relevant account.
b. Any expenditure on stocks and items of a capital nature is written off in the period in which it is incurred.

## 4. Taxation

Reading Festival Chorus is not liable to either Corporation Tax or Income Tax on its activities by virtue of its status as a registered charity. The Chorus is not registered for VAT and the amounts shown are inclusive of VAT paid.

| **5. Membership subscriptions** | **2026** | 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| Number of members paying subscriptions | 64 | 67 |
| Voluntary income | | |
| Membership fees received | 11,391 | 11,089 |
| Friends subscriptions received | 602 | 458 |
| Sub-total Voluntary income | £11,993 | £11,547 |

The tuition element of members' subs was formerly recorded but is no longer relevant for Gift Aid purposes
Where a member 65+ pays the full rate subscription, the concessionary rate is treated as their subscription: the balance as a donation.

| **6. Donations** | **2026** | 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| General donations | 257 | 195 |
| Transfers from members 65+ paying full rate subs | 705 | 920 |
| | £962 | £1,115 |

Donations designated for the June 2025 concert were included in Concert Account.

**Notes to the Accounts**
**For the year ended 31 July 2026**

| **7. Gift Aid** | **2026** | 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| Income tax refunded | £2,400 | £2,393 |

Gift Aid on donations designated for the June 2025 concert donations was included in Concert Account

**8. Concert Income and Expenditure**

| | **Concert 22-Nov-25** | **Concert 21-Mar-26** | **Concert 27-Jun-26** | **Total 2026** | Total 2025 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** | £ |
| **INCOME:** Charitable activities | | | | | |
| Ticket Sales | 1,682 | 1,598 | 1,234 | 4,514 | 8,884 |
| Programme sales | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 225 |
| Programme adverts | | | | | |
| Sponsorship/donations/ Gift Aid | 0 | 0 | 20 | 20 | 4,746 |
| Raffle | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 347 |
| Sale of Refreshments | | | | | |
| Interval donations | 192 | 150 | 109 | 451 | 354 |
| | | | | | £ |
| **TOTAL INCOME:** | 1,874 | 1,748 | 1,363 | 4,985 | 14,556 |
| **EXPENDITURE:** Charitable activities | | | | | |
| Conductors' Fees | 729 | 729 | 729 | 2,187 | 2,221 |
| Orchestra/ Accompanist | 350 | 350 | 1,500 | 2,200 | 13,830 |
| Soloists | 750 | | 400 | 1,150 | 3,250 |
| Music Hire | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 192 |
| Venue Hire | 250 | 300 | 250 | 800 | 2,095 |
| Harmonium Hire | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 650 |
| Programme costs | 146 | 161 | 167 | 474 | 732 |
| Publicity costs | 73 | 75 | 112 | 260 | 213 |
| Miscellaneous | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,668 |
| Refreshment costs | 30 | 24 | 30 | 84 | 123 |
| **TOTAL EXPENDITURE:** | 2,328 | 1,639 | 3,188 | 7,155 | 26,974 |
| **SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)** | (454) | 109 | (1,825) | (2,170) | (12,418) |

“Miscellaneous” in 2025 includes all other expenditure incurred in connection with the visit of the Chorus to Düsseldorf and the return visit of Johanneskantorei and its youth choir to Reading.

**Notes to the Accounts**
**For the year ended 31 July 2026**

| 9. Fundraising | 2026 Income | 2026 Expenditure | 2026 Surplus | 2025 Surplus |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Bring & Buy Sales | 369 | (22) | 347 | 414 |
| Hire a Choir | 500 | 0 | 500 | 500 |
| 100 Club | 456 | (228) | 228 | 204 |
| Come & Sing Day | 1,750 | (1,236) | 514 | 0 |
| Auction of Promises | 3,702 | (1,440) | 2,262 | 0 |
| Easyfundraising, AmazonSmile, etc | 134 | 0 | 134 | 101 |
| Greg Hallam song recital (RFC's share) | 675 | 0 | 675 | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | 7,586 | (2,926) | 4,660 | 1,219 |

Donations at for example social events are included in Donations - see note 6

| 10. Sale and hire of music | 2026 | 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| Income from sale and hire of music | 2,164 | 1,197 |
| Expenditure on purchase and hire of music | (1,923) | (1,046) |
| Net surplus/(deficit) | £241 | £151 |

Music purchased by RFC for use by members is charged immediately against income. Thus any expenditure on music includes additions to the library.
This category also includes the purchase and sale of concert folders, where a small stock of folders is kept by the Chorus.

**11. Administration expenses**

Expenses for 2025-26 include £495 for the production of a video of a concert rehearsal to be streamed on our new website. The cost has been treated as expenditure for the year.
Trustees are entitled to claim reasonable expenses for travel to committee meetings. However no payments were made in the year.

| | |
|---|---|
| Trustee expenses paid | £0 |
| Number of trustees paid expenses | 0 |

A number of trustees were reimbursed for expenditure made on behalf of the Chorus (eg for music hire, printing, refreshments).
Details can be made available upon request.

**12. Remuneration to Trustees**

| | 2026 | 2,025 |
|---|---|---|
| No professional fees or other remuneration were paid to trustees | £0 | £0 |

**Notes to the Accounts**
**For the year ended 31 July 2026**

| **13. Cost of rehearsals** | **2026** | 2025 |
|---|---|---|
| Rehearsal hall hire costs | 1,815 | 1,760 |
| Accompanist costs | 3,234 | 3,008 |
| sub-total | 5,049 | 4,768 |
| Music director's rehearsal fees | 5,608 | 5,280 |
| Total rehearsal costs | £10,657 | £10,048 |
| Costs to be met from members' subs include above PLUS | | |
| Administration expenses | 1,106 | 566 |
| Affiliation fees and insurance | 964 | 625 |
| TOTAL costs to be met from members' subs | £ 12,727 | £ 11,239 |

(Total subscriptions actually received £11,391 see Note 5 – a shortfall of £1,336).

**14. Bank accounts**
Cash reserves of the Chorus are held in our account at COIF Charities Deposit Fund. This investment generated £734 interest (2025: £951).

**15. Debtors, Prepayments and Creditors**
Debtors/prepayments are for music already purchased or hired for 2026-27
Creditors are (1) payments for music already made by members; and (2) miscellaneous creditors of RFC.

**16. Concert Reserve Fund**
In accordance with a decision of the Committee during the year, funds intended to be used to subsidise future concerts have been designated as a Concert Reserve Fund.