ST ALBANS CHORAL SOCIETY

Registered Charity No 287882

Report and Accounts for the year ended 15 July 2026

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OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY

The objects of the Society are:

- to promote the study of and public education in the art and science of choral music by the presentation of public concerts and recitals and by such other ways as the Society shall from time to time determine; and
- to support such charitable purpose or purposes, or such charitable institution or institutions as the Society shall from time to time determine.

REPORT FOR THE 2025/26 SEASON

The Committee

The Society is managed by a Committee in accordance with the Society's Rules. In season 2025/26, the members of the Committee were:

Alison Shipperlee: Chair
Sally Ripley: Vice-chair
Clare Curtis: General Secretary
Peter Aubusson: Treasurer
Pam Firth: Alto Representative
Clive Flatau: General Member
Sarah Gooden: Friends/Benefactors Secretary
Sam Hensman: Membership Secretary
Jonathan Humphries: Concert Manager
David Lee: Bass Representative
Helen Pitman: Soprano Representative
Julia Rouse: Ticket Secretary
Michelle Thompson: Marketing and Communications Manager
Gareth Truran: Tenor Representative

All Committee members were trustees of the Society. The Society's Music Director, Charlie Perry, also attended Committee meetings by invitation.

Season Overview

2025/26 was a highly successful first season under the leadership of our new Music Director, Charlie Perry. The choir's membership remained strong with 109 singers, including eleven new members who joined during the season. The members enjoyed rehearsing and performing a broad repertoire of music and our high-quality concerts attracted substantial audiences.

The details of our four concerts during 2025/26 are listed on page 3. The programme contained a wide range of music, including well-known classics from the choral repertoire and a varied selection of contemporary works. The autumn 2025 concert in St Peter's Church, St Albans drew a large audience to hear a programme of 20th and 21st century works, including Leonard Bernstein's Chichester Psalms and John Rutter's Requiem. The Christmas concert presented a mixture of traditional and contemporary seasonal music, including James MacMillan's O Radiant Dawn and Morten Lauridsen's O Magnum Mysterium. The April 2026 concert in St Albans Cathedral included a UK premiere of Nico Muhly's Preservation and featured W A Mozart's Great Mass in C minor. The season ended with a summer concert which incorporated Benjamin Britten's Rejoice in the Lamb and contemporary works by Eric Whitacre and Joseph Horovitz; the inclusion of Harry Baker's arrangement of Three Teasdale Songs, accompanied by the composer's jazz trio, was a new departure for the choir and was very well-received.

The Society continues to pursue its principles of being inclusive, welcoming and sociable, while striving for a high standard of concert performances. The musical achievements and development of the choir during the season were driven strongly by our professional musicians. Charlie Perry, who took up the position of Music Director at the beginning of the 2025/26 season, made a very successful start in the role; his choice of music to rehearse and perform has been well-received and his rehearsal style and techniques have assisted the choir's musical progress. Ed Kemp-Luck, the Society's accompanist, continued to provide valuable support during rehearsals and accomplished performances during concerts. The Committee thanks both Charlie and Ed for their dedicated service to the choir. The excellent professional soloist singers and instrumentalists who performed with us through the season enhanced the quality of our concerts and their contributions were greatly appreciated.

2025/26 Concert Programme

Four concerts were held during the season:

November 2025: *St Peter's Church, St Albans*
Chamber ensemble
Moses Hogan *Hear my Prayer*
John Rutter *For the Beauty of the Earth and The Lord Bless You and Keep You*
Leonard Bernstein *Somewhere from West Side Story*
Leonard Bernstein *Chichester Psalms*
John Rutter *Requiem*

December 2025: *St Peter's Church, St Albans*
Follow the Star – a selection of Christmas music, including: **James MacMillan** *O Radiant Dawn,* **James Whitburn** *The Magi's Dream,* **Anna Disley-Simpson** *Stopping by woods on a snowy evening,* **Cecilia McDowall** *A Heavenly Song,* **Morten Lauridsen** *O Magnum Mysterium*, traditional and contemporary carols; and seasonal readings by members of St Albans Choral Society.

April 2026: *The Cathedral and Abbey Church of St Albans*
The British Sinfonietta
George Friderich Handel *Zadok the Priest*
Nico Muhly *Preservation*
Igor Stravinsky *Pulcinella Suite (extracts)*
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart *Great Mass in C Minor*

June 2026: *St Peter's Church, St Albans*
The Harry Baker Trio
Benjamin Britten *Rejoice in the Lamb*
Eric Whitacre *Animal Crackers vols. 1 and 2*
Harry Baker *Three Teasdale Songs*
Michael Flanders and Joseph Horovitz *Captain Noah and his Floating Zoo*

Community Activities

The Society endeavours to make a positive contribution to the local community. £3,492 was raised during the season at concerts for our two chosen charitable causes: £1,792 for the Hospice of St Francis and £1,700 for Centre 33, a local drop-in centre for homeless and socially or materially disadvantaged people.

Financial Review

The Society's Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet are on pages 7 and 8. The financial result for season 2025/26 was a surplus of £8,531 (2024/25: a surplus of £1,380). The outcome for the season was considerably better than the budget due to stronger than expected revenue and significant reductions in some of our costs. Revenue was boosted by a combination of a healthy level of members' subscription income and the associated gift aid along with strong concert ticket revenue. Changes to the sourcing of publicity material and the printing of concert programmes contributed significantly to lowering our costs. The fulfilment of our programme for the 2025/26 season was materially assisted by a grant of £2,500 from The Williams Church Music Trust. The Society is very appreciative of the grants and support we have received from the Trust over many years.

The balance at the end of our financial year 2025/26 was £43,926 (2025: £35,395). Our financial strategy is to maintain a solid level of assets that will place us in a relatively resilient position to withstand occasional seasons when we might have adverse results due to unforeseen circumstances, bearing in mind that our annual concert cost commitments are approximately £30,000. A strong financial position will also enable the Society to perform more expensive programmes of music in some seasons. In light of the current healthy state of the Society's finances, the Committee will be considering ways in which some of our funds may be used to undertake development projects that will benefit the choir and the choral music community.

As reported previously, in early 2020 we planned to build up a designated Future Fund of reserves, to underpin the choir's continued development. A key objective of this fund was to help ensure that we can continue to perform high-quality concerts in St Albans Cathedral as part of each season's programme. The full launch of this initiative was postponed due to the pandemic. However, some donations to establish the fund were received; these are retained within the Society's overall assets. No further donations were received during 2024/25. The fund stands at £1,445 (including the associated gift aid which was reclaimed on donations to the fund).

FINANCIAL OUTLOOK FOR THE 2026/27 SEASON

Our activities and concert programme for the coming season have been planned with a view to taking advantage of the opportunity presented by our recent healthy results while still maintaining a solid financial position. We plan to perform the Brahms German Requiem in St Albans Cathedral in April 2027; this work requires a significantly larger orchestra than we have usually hired. Consequently, the overall cost of our concert programme in 2026/27 is expected to be higher than our concert costs in previous seasons. We therefore budget to have a deficit for the 2026/27 season after having had a substantial surplus in 2025/26.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The principal risk to the Society is promoting a programme of rehearsals and concerts which might produce a financial result that is substantially worse than expected. We endeavour to manage this risk through considered planning of our concert programme, detailed budgeting, closely controlling our costs and actively publicising our concerts and selling tickets.

The policy of the Committee for many years has been that we should retain a prudent level of reserves sufficient to meet the Society's contractual liabilities based on conservative assumptions about our commitments for rehearsal and concert costs for the next two seasons and possible situations in which we might receive severely reduced, or no, revenue or insurance payments. This policy and our supporting practices have stood us in good stead in recent years. We will continue to manage the financial risks and uncertainties through the same well-established process.

PUBLIC BENEFIT STATEMENT

The trustees have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

In pursuing the objects of the Society, the trustees believe that the choir conforms to the requirements of the Charity Commission to provide public benefit through:

- welcoming members of all adult ages and from a wide range of backgrounds and musical capabilities;
- enabling its members to participate in a creative, fulfilling, educational and sociable activity and providing opportunities for them to develop their singing technique, musical skills and knowledge of the choral repertoire;
- promoting public concerts which provide its audiences with enjoyable and stimulating cultural experiences through the high quality of the performances and the interesting range of music featured;
- commissioning and performing new choral works which extend the musical repertoire available for choirs;
- visiting two local senior living establishments to lead residents in community singing;
- providing opportunities occasionally for school children to participate in choral singing at its concerts, thus broadening the musical experience of the pupils; and
- performing at certain events to support or raise funds for other charitable causes.

OTHER INFORMATION

The Society is affiliated to Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies, which represents and supports amateur vocal, instrumental and promoting societies throughout the United Kingdom.

St Albans Choral Society is very grateful for the support of The Williams Church Music Trust.

Further information about St Albans Choral Society may be found at our website:
www.stalbanschoralsociety.org

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF ST ALBANS CHORAL SOCIETY (CHARITY NO. 287882)

I report on the accounts of the Society for the year ended 15 July 2026, which are set out on pages 7 and 8.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The Society's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Society's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act); and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Society and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respects, the requirements:
    - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act;
    - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent Examiner	**Date**
Ruth Falkus 6 Walnut Drive, Wendover Bucks HP22 6RT	20 August 2026

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 15 JULY 2026

		2025/26		2024/25
	£	£	£	£
Income				
Members' subscriptions	25,560		24,045	
Benefactors, Friends and other donations	1,268		1,045	
HMRC gift aid tax repayment	5,824		4,871	
Concert tickets and other concert revenue (see page 8)	21,631		20,007	
Grants from The Williams Church Music Trust	2,500		0	
Music and folders hire/purchase	4,385		1,969	
Singing lesson room hire – participants' payments	0		432	
Social events	2,307		6,709	
Sundries	606		426	
Bank interest – COIF and NatWest deposit accounts	1,307		1,375	
		65,388		**60,879**
Expenditure				
Accompanist's rehearsal fees	(5,670)		(4,810)	
Répétiteur's rehearsal fees	(480)		(405)	
Music Director's and Assistant Conductor's rehearsal fees *	(9,159)		(7,113)	
Concert expenditure (see page 8):				
Music Director's and Assistant Conductor's fees *	(3,325)		(3,325)	
Other concert costs	(24,727)		(28,676)	
Rehearsal venue hire	(3,176)		(3,463)	
Singing lesson room hire	(0)		(378)	
Music and folders hire/purchase	(5,242)		(2,143)	
Making Music subscription, insurance and PRS payment	(981)		(1,195)	
Members' voice checks	(976)		(0)	
Website	(124)		(124)	
Social events	(2,344)		(6,758)	
Music Director recruitment	(0)		(482)	
Sundries	(653)		(627)	
		(56,857)		**(59,499)**
Surplus for the year		**8,531**		**1,380**

Note: * The 2025/26 figures solely comprised the Music Director's fees whereas the 2024/25 figures also included fees paid to an Assistant Conductor.

BALANCE SHEET

As at:	15 July 2026		15 July 2025	
Assets	**£**	**£**	**£**	**£**
NatWest Bank current account	876		1,652	
NatWest Bank deposit account	1,609		2,500	
COIF Charities Deposit Fund	41,441		31,243	
Year-end balance		**43,926**		**35,395**
Represented by:				
Accumulated funds				
Opening balance	35,395		34,015	
Surplus for the year	8,531		1,380	
Year-end balance		**43,926**		**35,395**
of which:				
Future Fund (see page 4)	1,445		1,445	
Other funds	42,481		33,950	

CONCERT INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

	2025/26		2024/25	
	£	**£**	**£**	**£**
Autumn				
Income	4,082		9,816	
Expenditure	(3,974)		(18,218)	
Surplus/(Deficit)		**108**		**(8,402)**
Christmas				
Income	2,708		2,865	
Expenditure	(2,068)		(2,147)	
Surplus		**640**		**718**
Spring				
Income	11,293		4,144	
Expenditure	(17,904)		(3,737)	
(Deficit)/Surplus		**(6,611)**		**407**
Summer				
Income	3,548		3,182	
Expenditure	(4,106)		(7,899)	
(Deficit)		**(558)**		**(4,717)**
Total				
Income	21,631		20,007	
Expenditure	(28,052)		(32,001)	
(Deficit)		**(6,421)**		**(11,994)**