



**SOUTHWELL  
CHORAL  
SOCIETY**

**Southwell Choral Society**  
**Trustees' Annual Report & Accounts**  
**2024-25**

Charity Number: 500239

## CHAIR'S INTRODUCTION

What a spectacular 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season we have just enjoyed!

### People

A season of transition continued for the Society. Our MD, Marcus Farnsworth, rightly demands ever higher standards of choral singing from the Society as we move forward. His rehearsals give us the musical direction, vocal technique and musicianship necessary to ensure that we deliver the improvements as we explore both new and familiar repertoire. Along with his expertise, he also manages to make the rehearsals great fun and a highlight of the week for us all. Thanks, Marcus.

Tim Selman was our accompanist for the season as he continued in his position as organ scholar at the Minster. He really grew into his role, providing great support on the keyboards for the choir and also deputising for Marcus on occasions. It has been good to see him develop so well during the season and we wish him a very successful move to Lincoln to further his career. Thanks, Tim.

Remembering in our thoughts those we have lost during the season: Sheila Day – founding member of the Society, Karen Seymour (soprano), Ann Smith (alto) and David Harget (tenor) – Trustee and Booking Secretary.

### Concerts

**'Rossini - Petite Messe Solennelle'** on 23<sup>rd</sup> November with soloists, Alison Rose, Anharad Lyddon, Michael Bell and Gareth John, accompanied by Paul Provost (piano) and Tim Selman (harmonium) was a joyous start to our 60th Anniversary season. The concert had a good audience of over 220 who really enjoyed the evening.

There was a buzz of anticipation in the air on 10<sup>th</sup> May as we showcased the highlight of our celebratory season with the dynamic **'Carl Orff - Carmina Burana'**. We welcomed a star line up of soloists with Georgie Malcolm, Joseph Doody, Timothy Nelson, and enjoyed sharing the stage with the Southwell Minster Choristers. This was spectacularly accompanied by the Nottingham Symphony Orchestra, with ranks of percussion and brass filling the Minster with sound! The Minster was completely sold out with a really enthusiastic and appreciative audience including The Lord Lieutenant of Nottinghamshire and her husband among the dignitaries present.

**Summer Serenade** was our final concert on 12<sup>th</sup> July rounding off such a special season. This included a work by our President at its centre **'Chilcott - Songs My Heart Has Taught Me'** accompanied by Tim Selman on the organ and piano in his final performance with us. At this concert, Kitty Haworth, the young winner of both our bursaries performed three pieces and was presented with her awards by Rob McIntosh, one of the bursary sponsors.

Our continued thanks for the support given with Front of House for all our concerts by the Rotary Club of Southwell.

## Extra Events

A busy year for Carol Fitzgerald our Social Secretary! We started celebrations for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season back in October with our Bramley tree planting on the Burgage. A very successful event attended by many. I am pleased to say the tree had small apples on it this autumn!

The main celebrations were in May when following our 'Carmina Burana' concert the society shared a buffet and drinks reception in the Crossing with our 'Friends', sponsors and family. It was a great opportunity to share memories together and reflect on the journey travelled by the Society over the 60 years. Thanks for all your dedicated work this season, Carol.

**'Carols for Everyone'** December 7, 2024 saw Marcus leading this popular community charity event arranged by Southwell Lions. It was a very successful evening with the **Nicholas Thorpe Composition Award** winning entry **'Sam Meredith - Polaris'** providing the solo item for the society, it was very well received.

**'The John and Peggy Oldham Singing Day'** on March 29, 2025 featured our President, Bob Chilcott visiting the society for the first time as President. He led the day in the Minster, focussing on his works especially 'Songs My Heart Has Taught Me' in preparation for our summer concert. It was extremely helpful and enjoyed by all.

**The David McIntosh Bursary and the John and Peggy Oldham Award** were organised for the first time by Val Littleddyke and there was again a high standard of applications. Many thanks to Val for taking over this important part of our commitment to supporting young, local performers in a positive way. The outstanding winner of both bursaries was presented with her awards and performed at the **'Summer Serenade'** informal concert (details above).

## Membership of the Society

Thanks to Neil Parrott (Membership Secretary) for providing the information to inform this report.

The membership year started with a greater number of singers again. The data from September 2024 shows that there were 154 members on the database, comprising 60 Sopranos, 47 Altos, 18 Tenors, and 29 Bass.

Not all of our members were able to continue singing with us for a variety of reasons, such that by February 2025 there were 143 active singing members and by the end of the season this number was 144.

Throughout the year, as is usual, choir attendance at rehearsals has varied greatly, being from 50-80% of full members. Sadly, 3 active members have passed away over the last 12 months.

Rehearsals have continued to be held in the Minster to accommodate our increased membership. After trying various sites within the Minster, the Crossing proved to be the most successful, despite the draughts and some lighting issues!

## Going Forward

The committee continues, as part of the aims of the Society and its charitable status, to try and encourage young people to attend our concerts offering a free ticket to young people under 16 with an accompanying adult in any ticket section and I am pleased to report a good increase again in take up of this offer over the season. We also offer free membership of the Society to any student in full time education as we try to encourage young people to participate in this most beneficial and rewarding activity.

In our forthcoming season we again embrace changes! We are excited to welcome Peter Siepmann as our new Assistant MD/Accompanist and we are delighted that the new organ scholar, Nathan Monk, has accepted the new Associate Accompanist position and will act as the 'Dep' accompanist if Marcus or Peter are unavailable on rehearsal night.

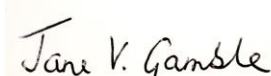
A personal thanks from me, as I have completed my three years as chair of the society, to all the committee trustees over that time. For their support and hard work throughout this very busy season and over the past three years of transition and expansion. Sharing out the work does make it easier for everyone and all of the trustees deserve our recognition and thanks for their dedication.

We are also very grateful to the many members of the Society who are not on the committee but undertake tasks vital to the success of our Society, thank you so much, too. A special thank you to Annette Durrand who has stepped down as the 'Friends' secretary earlier this year after many years of service. Thank you to Julia Dunn for taking on this role for the society.

Finally, Marcus is an MD who has and will continue to move us forward to ever higher standards of choral singing with our commitment and support. It can be challenging at times as we strive to achieve his ambitions, but oh, so worth the hard work when we do.

We look forward to making great music together at ever higher levels in our upcoming season 2025-26.

Thank you all for making Southwell Choral Society what it is today, here's to the future.



**Jane Gamble, Chair**

# Southwell Choral Society

## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

### Objectives and Activities

#### Purpose of the charity

The objects of the Society are to advance, improve, develop and maintain the Society members' and the public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music, in all its aspects, by any means that the trustees see fit, including through the presentation of public concerts and recitals.

#### Main activities

The Society successfully presented three concerts in The Minster this year: Rossini's Petite Messe Solenne, Orff's Carmina Burana and a Summer Serenade. Two concerts breaking even and one a manageable loss.

#### Public Benefit

The Trustees have paid due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit

#### Grant making policy

The Society awards the David McIntosh Award and the Peggy and John Oldham Bursary, £600 each, to promote the careers of young, local musicians. The Society also offers a Nicholas Thorpe Composition Award of £650 each year. These awards are decided by sub committees.

#### Contribution made by volunteers

All Officers and Trustees are volunteers and volunteer members assist with refreshments at singing days and setting up rehearsal facilities. The local Rotary Club volunteer their services front of house for concerts.

#### Summary of the main achievements

The significant increase in revenue from Members' subscriptions is testament to the quality of performances and rehearsals over the year.

The Society has also stretched itself in engaging higher quality soloists and musicians at higher costs, without threatening the viability of its finances. In particular, the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Carmina Burana was a sell-out.

## Financial Review

### Financial position at the end of the period

Receipts flat at £45,464 (2024: £45,888). Choir member subscriptions and ticket sales increased during the year by 8.4% and 18.6% respectively.

Payments up 12% to £49,788 (2024: £44,307) This mostly reflects increased payments to the Minster & vergers.

Deficit £4,325 (2024 Surplus: £1,581).

Closing Fund Balance £61,629 (2024: £65,953).

### Reserves Policy

The Society aims to maintain a reserve of at least £30,000 to cover a 10-month performance period in a typical year plus one large project.

Funds are held to:

- cover setbacks in funding or cash flow prior to a concert
- reduce the impact of risks beyond its control (concert planning involves significant expenditure in advance of securing funding for the event)
- build up funds for a future large project.

### Unrestricted reserves held at year end

£57,972 (2024: £61,646)

### Principal sources of funds

Main source of funds is from membership subscriptions, Friends' subscriptions and ticket sales, with additional funds from legacies, ad-hoc fundraising and sponsorship.

### Principal risks facing the charity

Each event staged carries a risk of performance costs not being covered by ticket sales.

We are dependent on the availability of Southwell Minster as our venue for both performances and rehearsals. The cost of this is due to increase very significantly from the 2026/27 season onwards.

### Investment policy

Funds in excess of the charities day-to-day requirements are held in an instant access interest-bearing NatWest deposit account.

## Structure, Governance and Management

## Trusts

The charity's funds comprise a general unrestricted fund and one restricted fund, the Nick Thorpe Composition Award fund. The latter provides annual grant awards for compositions. The annual winner is decided by a sub-committee of the Society.

The trustees may designate funds from the general fund for a particular purpose, however no designated funds were held during the year. The Society holds no funds as custodian trustee.

## Governance

Society is an unincorporated Community Choir managed by a committee of trustees and officers, elected in accordance with its governance document, the 2019 constitution.

The number of committee members shall be not less than 7 and not more than 12 members or Friends. The committee members are elected by and from the Society's members at the Annual General Meeting. Committee members serve for one year and are eligible for re-election for up to a maximum of five years' service. Officers may be re-elected to serve a maximum of three years in any one post, as part of their five years' service.

The committee may appoint any person who is willing to act as a member of the committee. They may also appoint committee members to act as officers. Any committee member or officer so appointed shall then stand for election by members at the next Annual General Meeting.

The committee may appoint one of the committee members (who may be an office holder) to act as vice-chair.

## Reference

**Period:** Year ended 31 August 2025

### Trustees during the year:

<b>Trustee name</b>	<b>Office</b>
Jane Gamble	Chair
Simon Smith	Treasurer
Val Littledyke	Booking Secretary
Geoff Littledyke	Deputy Chair
Helen Murray	Concert Secretary
Pam Brewerton	Minutes Secretary
Carol Fitzgerald	Social Secretary
Neil Parrott	Membership Secretary

Elspeth Fraser-Darling	
Zoe Brown	
Peter Rule	
David Wathen	

Charity Number: 500239

Principal address:

3 Manor Fields  
Halam  
Newark  
NG22 8DU

**Declaration**

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

**Signature** *Geoff Littledyke* **Date** *27/11/25*  
**Name** **Geoff Littledyke**  
**Position** **Chair (w.e.f. 29/09/2025)**

## Southwell Choral Society

### Receipts & Payments Account for year ended 31 Aug 2025

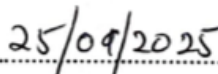
	2024-25			2023-24
	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Total	Total
<b><u>Receipts</u></b>	£	£	£	£
Subscriptions - Choir	-	20,070	20,070	18,510
Ticket & programme sales	-	15,688	15,688	13,232
Donations & sponsorship	-	3,211	3,211	4,118
Advertising income	-	-	-	1,800
Gift aid	-	3,649	3,649	3,315
Music sale/hire	-	411	411	539
Subscriptions - Friends	-	860	860	600
Miscellaneous income	-	323	323	3,100
Interest income	-	647	647	674
Rehearsal days & singing events	-	604	604	-
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>45,464</b>	<b>45,464</b>	<b>45,888</b>
<b><u>Payments</u></b>				
Musicians	-	5,671	5,671	13,485
Fees	-	10,440	10,440	9,400
Minster hire	-	11,600	11,600	8,975
Soloists	-	4,850	4,850	3,368
Vergers	-	2,737	2,737	2,221
Printing	-	2,249	2,249	1,688
Instrument hire	-	1,580	1,580	-
Music hire & purchase	-	526	526	822
Insurance & 'Making Music' sub.	-	700	700	675
Lighting	-	640	640	600
Thorpe Award	650	-	650	-
Bursary Award	-	1,722	1,722	558
Advertising	-	750	750	312
Performing rights fees	-	349	349	272
Practice room hire	-	83	83	169
Rehearsal days & singing events	-	1,336	1,336	150
Misc. expenses	-	3,906	3,906	1,613
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>49,138</b>	<b>49,788</b>	<b>44,307</b>
<b>FUND SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FOR YEAR</b>	<b>(650)</b>	<b>(3,675)</b>	<b>(4,325)</b>	<b>1,581</b>
Opening Fund Balances at 1st September 2024	4,307.04	61,646	65,953	64,371
<b>Closing Fund Balance at 31st August 2025</b>	<b>3,657.04</b>	<b>57,972</b>	<b>61,629</b>	<b>65,953</b>

# Southwell Choral Society

## Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 Aug 2025

	2024-25			2023-24
	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
<b>Assets:</b>				
NatWest Current a/c	-	8,893	8,893	13,662
NatWest Business Reserve a/c	3,657	48,920	52,577	51,830
Cash in hand	-	158	158	462
	<b>3,657</b>	<b>57,972</b>	<b>61,629</b>	<b>65,953</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>				
General Fund	-	57,972	57,972	61,646
The Nick Thorpe Composition Award Fund	3,657	-	3,657	4,307
	<b>3,657</b>	<b>57,972</b>	<b>61,629</b>	<b>65,953</b>

  
 Jane Gamble - Chair

  
 Date

### NOTE 1: ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1. The Society's accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis under section 113 of the Charities Act 2011.
2. Restricted funds are funds donated to the charity subject to restrictions as to their use. They comprise the balance of the Nick Thorpe Composition Award Fund.

# Southwell Choral Society

## Independent examiner's report on the accounts

### Section A

### Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

Southwell Choral Society

On accounts for the year  
ended

31 August 2025

Charity no  
(if any)

500239

Set out on pages

10-11

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31 / 08 / 2025**.

Responsibilities and basis  
of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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:

27/09/2025

**Name:** David Phillips

**Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):** Retired Fellow of the ICAEW.  
ICAEW Diploma in Charity Finance

**Address:** 3 Manor Fields  
Halam  
Newark NG22 8DU

**Section B**

**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material 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.**

Two payment transactions totalling £2,200 which were recorded as charged against restricted funds should have been charged against unrestricted funds. Subsequently corrected.