



**SHEFFIELD
ORATORIO CHORUS**

SHEFFIELD ORATORIO CHORUS

Registered Charity No. 500578

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

For the year ended 31 July 2024

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**Sheffield Oratorio Chorus
Annual Report and Accounts for Year ended 31 July 2024**

Legal Information

Trustees August 2023 - July 2024

Elected Trustees

Lydia Fielder Lord	Co-Chair to February 24
Philip Hirst	Chair from February 24
Janet Smith	Secretary to February 24
Helen Smith	Secretary from February 24
Helen Ledger	Treasurer
Lois McGrath	Concert Manager
Lydia Fielder Lord	Singing Representative from February 24
Alison Bond	Singing Representative from February 24
Hilary Fawcett	Singing Representative
Helen Smith	Singing Representative to February 24

Co-opted Members

Paul Clarke Making Music Representative from April 23

Director of Music Alan Eost MA ARCO ARCM
Voice Coach Dr Vivien Pike M Mus GRSM ARMCM LGSM FRSA
Accompanists Peter Heginbotham and Robert Webb

The Director of Music and Voice Coach attend and report to Committee meetings as non-voting members.

Registered Charity Number 500578

Principal Address

101 Whirlowdale Road
Millhouses
Sheffield
S7 2NF

Independent Examiner

Craig Williamson
White Rose Accounting for Charities
The Ghyll
Threapland
Aspatria
CA7 2EL

Bank

Natwest Bank plc

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Trustees' report

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2024. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities", issued in March 2005, in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charity.

Structure, governance and management

The charity is governed by its constitution adopted 16 September 1970 and amended 3 October 1979, 18 February 1987, 30 September 1992, 13 October 1993, 12 March 1997, 25 June 2003, 8 July 2009, 23 November 2016 and 7 July 2021.

The organisation's finances and policies are administered by the Trustees.

New Trustees are elected for three-year periods at the organisation's annual AGM or a Special General Meeting. The new members are given the information they need, including copies of the Constitution and policies and procedures. The Trustees from time to time may co-opt up to three further members, who attend committee meetings, but are not Trustees unless subsequently elected by the membership. The Trustees who served during the year are listed on page 2 of the report.

Objectives and activities

The main objects of the Chorus are to promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by the presentation of public concerts and recitals and by such other ways as the Society, through its committee, shall determine from time to time.

Review of activities

The Chorus has had a successful year both musically and socially. The membership has seen a modest increase over the year and in addition there have been several 'guest singers' joining us for individual concerts. Our 5-year strategic development plan has been reviewed during the year and has identified ways of encouraging new members to join the chorus.

Our 4 concerts during the year had reasonable audience attendance but our strategic development plan also seeks to increase numbers and reach out to potential new audiences. Our concerts during the year included a performance of Haydn & Mozart masses in Ecclesall Church, our Christmas Carol Concert which faced challenges due to ill health of many members, Rutter & Le Fleming works in Sheffield Cathedral and a performance of Brahms' 'Schicksalslied' and 'Requiem' in the Victoria Hall. The latter concert saw the Oratorio Chorus join forces with the Sheffield Bach Choir for the first time in over twenty years with the musical directors of each choir conducting. This was regarded as a very successful collaboration.

Our financial position for the year was better than originally budgeted due in large part to very generous sponsorship of our Brahms concert by a former long-standing member and supporter, Laurence Coates, who sadly did not live to see the concert. The concert was dedicated to the memory of Laurence and his wife Liz.

The Chorus also held its first ever Autumn Craft Fair which was a very successful fundraising venture in a local church hall.

The committee continues to look ahead to the future through the implementation of its 5-year strategic plan. It undertook an extensive consultation with the membership with the objective of enhancing the rehearsal experience and has implemented a number of new practices and policies arising from this and previous consultations.

Director of Music's Report 2023/24 Season

The 2023/4 season opened with a Classical Concert consisting of Mozart's "Vespers and "Coronation Mass" along with Haydn's "Little Organ Mass". A trio of young soloists were joined by Debra Morley (soprano) making a welcome return to our solo platform. The organ solo was in the hands of Peter Heginbotham who has, once again, become our accompanist, and South Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra provided the accompaniment. An enjoyable and successful concert resulted. This was followed by the usual Christmas concert, again in Ecclesall Church. Guests on this occasion were the Steel City Choristers, formed from the Cathedral Choir of old.

For the Spring concert, we returned to Sheffield Cathedral for a programme of approachable 20th Century music ie John Rutter's "Requiem" and the under-rated "Five Psalms" of Christopher Le Fleming. This featured a small ensemble of the SYSO with soprano soloist Ruby Hendry and Peter Heginbotham on the organ. We also had an enjoyable interlude provided by Natalie Fooks, BBC Chorister of the Year, and daughter of one of our members. Despite off-stage problems this was another successfully delivered concert. The highlight of the season came with the final concert, for which we joined forces with the Sheffield Bach Choir to perform Brahms' "Requiem" and "Schicksalslied"(Song of Destiny). We were delighted to welcome baritone Darren Jeffery and internationally acclaimed soprano Elizabeth Watts. The Victoria Hall was a new venue for SOC. A near-full house made this a successful venture both musically and financially

We start the new season with a "Concert for Peace" on Remembrance Saturday. This will feature the Karl Jenkins "Requiem" and Vaughan Williams' Cantata "Dona nobis pacem" (Grant us peace). A semichorus of the Froggatt Young Singers will join us. We also welcome back the outstanding young soprano Georgie Malcolm and making his debut with SOC the young rising baritone "Johannes Moore". The venue is to be Ecclesall Church. For the Christmas Concert we hope to welcome some young soloists. In April we will return to Sheffield Cathedral for a performance of the ever-popular oratorio "Elijah", last performed by SOC 20 years ago. The season will close with a concert and masterclass with young singers in June.

My thanks go to musicians Vivien Pike for her work with voice trials and coaching and to Peter Heginbotham for his work as accompanist and assistant conductor. Thanks also to Phil and the Committee for their support and hard work in moving the Society forward.

Alan Eost. Musical Director

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Financial Review

This season saw an increase in income to £40,182 compared with £39,120 in the previous year and reflects an increase in subscriptions, fundraising and the re-charge arrangement agreed with the Sheffield Bach Society for costs related to the final concert of the year.

Expenditure increased to £40,202 compared with the previous year's £37,729 additional expenses were incurred due to inflation increases in areas such as publicity and printing costs, as well as an increase in the number of soloists used and the additional costs for our joint concert with the Sheffield Bach Society.

This year's concert costs were greatly helped by our successful fundraising including a craft fair held in the autumn of 2023 raising £1,180 and sponsorship of the July concert by Laurence Coates a retired member of the choir in memory of both himself and his wife. We also benefited from other donations, and fundraising efforts totalling £2,045

Reserves policy

We began the year with total reserves of £36,594 and ended with £36,575 to underpin our future activities. The Chorus aims to maintain unrestricted reserves of a minimum of £15,000. This represents a suitable amount to provide the necessary security for booking orchestras, soloists and venues at least a year ahead. The need for reserves was illustrated in the past two years as the impact of a communicable disease is not covered by insurance. The unrestricted reserves at 31 July 2024 were £36,482. See Fund breakdown on page 9 for full details.

Public benefit statement

The trustees of Sheffield Oratorio Chorus take our responsibilities seriously. We are confident that the society's activities meet the public benefit guidance of the Charity Commission, in particular our main object as stated above. Our singing members benefit considerably in terms of improved musical education and mental wellbeing associated with singing with a choir. We offer opportunities to young singers to develop their skills by participating in our concerts as soloists and we welcome audiences to enjoy our music with us.

The Membership fee for the 2023-24 season was at the rate of £160 per year. On the principle that no one should be excluded on grounds of cost, there is always a 50% reduction for members on low incomes.

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Trustees' responsibilities for the financial statements

Charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period which show the state of affairs of the charity and of net income or expenditure of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- Prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.
- State whether applicable accounting standards of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable the trustees to prepare the financial statements. The trustees are responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities.

27 November 2024

This report was approved by the Trustees on [INSERT DATE] and is signed on their behalf by:



Phil Hirst
Chair

**Sheffield Oratorio Chorus
Annual Report and Accounts for Year ended 31 July 2024**

Independent Examiner's report to the trustees of Sheffield Oratorio Chorus

I report on the accounts for the year ended 31 July 2024 which are set out on pages 7 to 9

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) 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,
- to follow the procedures laid down in these general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act), and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity 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 respect, the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - 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.

Signed



Craig Williamson
White Rose Accounting for Charities
The Ghyll
Threapland
Aspatria
CA7 2EL

Date:

Sheffield Oratorio Chorus
Receipts and Payments Account for the year ended 31 July 2024

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	£	£	£	£
RECEIPTS				
Concert Income				
Ticket Sales - Concerts	8,547		8,547	8,610
Ticket Sales - Workshop	-		0	1,154
Programme Sales, Cushion hire, Refreshments	569		569	663
Music & Folder Hire & Sales	2,206		2,206	951
Sponsorship & Grants	3,589	500	4,089	3,460
Subs from Guest Singers	225		225	415
Total Concert Income	15,136	500	15,636	15,254
General Income				
Subscriptions from Members	12,926		12,926	12,400
Donations & Bequests	2,440		2,440	3,923
Fundraising	4,220		4,220	3,953
Gift Aid (HMRC Refund)	3,486		3,486	2,745
Bank Interest (COIF account)	1,474		1,474	845
Total General Income	24,546	-	24,546	23,866
Total Receipts	39,682	500	40,182	39,120
PAYMENTS				
Concert Expenditure				
Orchestras	6,769	1,500	8,269	9,764
Concert organists/pianists	1,380		1,380	1,050
Soloists	3,173		3,173	2,876
Concert Conductors	2,214		2,214	1,450
Other concert expenses & equipment	536		536	428
Venue Hire - concerts	3,718		3,718	3,357
Music Hire & Purchase	2,777		2,777	919
Publicity, programmes, tickets	1,869		1,869	1,234
Performing Rights fees	212		212	207
Total Concert Expenditure	22,648	1,500	24,148	21,285
General Expenditure				
Musical Director & Accompanists	9,829		9,829	10,064
Venue Hire - rehearsals	4,190		4,190	4,209
Education Costs			-	432
Publicity - Annual Brochure, website etc	504		504	457
Administration & minor equipment	402		402	314
Fundraising expenses	206		206	87
Accountancy	175		175	175
Gifts & Donations by SOC	167		167	162
Making Music (Annual sub and insurance premium)	581		581	544
Total General Expenditure	16,054	-	16,054	16,444
Total Payments	38,702	1,500	40,202	37,729
Surplus/Deficit (Net receipts/payments)	980	(1,000)	(20)	1,391
Fund balances brought forward 01/08/2022	35,594	1,000	36,594	35,203
Transfers between funds				
Fund balances carried forward	36,574	-	36,574	36,594

Sheffield Oratorio Chorus
Statement of Assets and Liabilities for the year ended 31 July 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Assets		
Balance at bank		
Current Account	7,051	7,470
Deposit Account (COIF)	29,000	29,000
Cash in hand	523	124
Total Assets	36,574	36,594
 Liabilities		
		-
		-
Accountancy & Independent Examinatic	175	175
	175	175
 Funds represented by		
General Fund	36,482	35,502
Restricted Funds:		
Chamber Choir	92	1,000
	36,574	36,594

27 November 2024

This report was approved by the Trustees on ~~[INSERT DATE]~~ and is signed on their behalf by:



Phil Hirst
Chairs



Helen Ledger
Treasurer

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Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 July 2024

Receipts and payments accounts

Because the level of income and expenditure is below £250,000 the group has opted for accounts prepared on a receipts and payments basis rather than an accruals basis. This is in line with the Charity Commissioners' guidelines for small charities and is seen as more appropriate for this organisation.

Funds

Unrestricted funds represent funds held for the general purposes of the charity at the trustees' discretion.

Designated funds are part of the unrestricted funds which trustees have earmarked for a particular project or use, without restricting or committing the funds legally. The designation may be cancelled by the trustees if they later decide that the charity should not proceed or continue with the use or project for which the funds were designated.

Restricted funds represent funds which can only be used for particular purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise where the donor specifies or where the funds raised are for a particular restricted purpose.

Restricted funds brought forward to this financial year represented:

Concert Costs (June 2024 Sponsorship)	£1,000
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At the year-end sums carried forward in restricted funds amounted to:

Nil