



## TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

### 1. Trustees

Tim Moore-Bridger – Chairman  
Glenda Kershaw – Treasurer  
Valerie Rayner – Secretary  
Carol Jackson – Membership Secretary  
Jean Hutchison – Librarian  
Fiona Macvie  
Liz Statham  
Sheelagh Douglas  
Iwona Moore-Bridger  
Philippa Vandome  
Neil Harrison

### 2. Structure and Management

The Society is managed by a committee, which comprises five officers and six ordinary committee members. Each officer is elected annually, and ordinary committee members are elected for a period of two years. Officers can be re-elected on up to nine consecutive occasions. Ordinary committee members can be re-elected on up to four consecutive occasions. All officers and ordinary committee members are trustees of the charity.

### 3. Objects

The objects of the Society are:

To advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by any means the trustees see fit, including through the presentation of public concerts and recitals.

To further such charitable purpose or purposes as the trustees in their absolute discretion shall think fit but in particular through the making of grants and donations.

### 4. Secretary's report

The Society began its 2022-23 season on Monday the 5th of September 2022 during the second Elizabethan age but, following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11, it ended its 187th highly successful season in what is now the New Carolean Era. Apart from short periods during wartime and the Covid pandemic, the Society has performed throughout the reigns of 7 monarchs - Victoria, Edward V11, George V, Edward V111, George V1, Elizabeth 11 and our present King Charles 111. In just another 13 years the society will celebrate its two hundredth anniversary. What an epic achievement by a group of local amateur singers, two hundred sensational years of choral singing - think of that! Perhaps the committee had better start planning the celebrations!

September's rehearsals began with Haydn's "Theresienmesse", a light-hearted setting of the Latin mass and Mendelssohn's "Lobgesang - Hymn of Praise". Truth be told, we struggled a bit with the Mendelssohn largely

because it was sung in German so it was challenging to read the unfamiliar notes and words at one and the same time. But we worked hard to meet Oliver's high standards and in the event a choir of 65 singers produced a highly successful concert on the 19th of November as part of the Stratford Music Festival.

We were joined by the Regency Sinfonia and four fabulous soloists - soprano Hannah Davey, Mezzo Annie George, Tenor Peter Harris (who stood in at the last minute - though you wouldn't have known - when tenor Robin Bailey was taken ill with a chest infection). Hugo Herman-Wilson was baritone. Our invited reviewer reported that the choir "sang with joy and warmth" and that the musicians were "particularly commendable throughout for their subtlety in the Haydn and their power in the Mendelssohn in what was an "uplifting and upbeat concert".

We then had less than 4 weeks rehearsal before 63 singers performed Handel's masterpiece "Messiah" on the 17th of December. The choral society has sung this many times previously so being comfortable and familiar with the piece allowed us to make the most of Oliver's brilliant direction. We were accompanied once again by the superb musicians of the Regency Sinfonia. The concert was reviewed by Father Alex Austin. He described soloists soprano Fleur Moore-Bridger; alto Elisabeth Irvine; tenor Matthew Keighley; bass Eugene Dillon-Hooper as a "stunning quartet of soloists" and of the choir "Their magnificent and overwhelming Hallelujah chorus was attacked with spine-tingling zeal. The thunderous ovation which this fine five-star performance produced was thoroughly well-deserved."

In January work began on music for the Spring concert on 25th of March comprising Parry's 'Blest Pair of Sirens' and "I Was Glad", Elgar's "Spirit of the Lord" and "Give unto the Lord", Mendelssohn's cantata "Hear My Prayer", A Song of Wisdom" by Charles Stanford Villiers and Rutter's "Gloria". 78 singers were accompanied by soprano Heather Wardle, 8 excellent brass players and percussion of the Regency Sinfonia and the sympathetic playing of organist Douglas Keilitz. Reviewer Brian Midgley described Heather's voice as having "great purity, ideal for the famous "O for the Wings of a Dove", which was delightful". He congratulated Oliver and the choir on "A substantial and enjoyable evening".

It was a wonderful, if eventful, concert but the afternoon rehearsal and evening concert together required huge physical stamina for all the singers who took part and, as we were all distressingly aware, for two of our number, it was too much. Thankfully, we were later informed that both recovered well. How fortunate we were at the time to have several medics in our midst who were very quickly able to take control of the situation and enormous thanks are extended to them for their valuable assistance.

As I write this a summer concert - Songs for a Summer Evening - is planned to take place on the 17th of June at St Andrews Church. It is a new venture for the Society and is in response to the many singers who have said how much they missed singing between the last concert of the season in March and the start of the new season in September. If successful it may well become a firm fixture in the calendar. 59 singers are expected to take part singing a selection of pieces including Elgar's Sea Pictures, part songs and madrigals by Parry, Dowland and others. We are hugely grateful to Oliver and to Rachel for agreeing to take this on.

As a thank you for the use of the Shakespeare Hospice's car park on Monday evenings, the Society was pleased to support the hospice at the celebratory lighting of their Christmas tree in December. The enjoyable event took place outdoors on a very cold afternoon and 22 of our singers turned out. Carols were sung despite frozen faces and hands but mince pies and mulled wine helped to keep up the good humour.

Regrettably we say farewell to a few members who have decided to retire and hang up their music. Several retirees have been members for many years, one who joined in 1991 and another who joined in 1990. That is 45 years of singing with the Society between them. To all leavers and retirees, we send many thanks for your valuable contribution and support over the years. You will be missed but we shall hope to see you in the audience still enjoying concerts in the future.

Also, I send every good wish on behalf of the society to those members whose ill health has prevented them from singing recently. We wish you a speedy recovery.

The Society has been left a substantial bequest of £2500 by a former singer and is most grateful for this unexpected and much appreciated gift. The family has been advised that this legacy will be put towards a performance of Bach's St John Passion which the Society hopes to undertake in the not too distant future. It is a super piece but will be expensive to do so the legacy will be a valuable contribution towards that.

The Society started its season in September in good shape with 87 enthusiastic singers including 15 new singers this year. We are delighted to welcome new members and hope that they enjoy their singing with this long established and supportive community of like-minded people and that they find new, good friends within its midst, as I have been fortunate enough to find.

Turning to committee matters. Five committee meetings have been held under the chairmanship of Tim Moore-Bridger during the year since the last AGM when Tim took on the role. It has been an excellent first year Tim so many thanks for taking it on and well done! These days most of the meetings are by Zoom but both Iwona and Carol have kindly hosted some and I would like to thank each of them very much for their hospitality. Iwona has been an enthusiastic and successful manager of the society's social occasions in recent years for which we thank her. But she has not been fit enough to be with us this last year and is reluctantly stepping down from the committee. We wish you well Iwona and hope to see you back amongst us again soon.

I too am stepping down this year as Hon. Sec a job which I have been doing since 2017. During that time I have been closely involved in the running of the society having taken over from the previous secretary who had done the job so admirably for the previous 6 years. I knew that she would be a hard act to follow and was initially most reluctant to take it on but her charming persistence gave me pause for thought. For a number of years I had tremendously enjoyed singing with the choir, especially with my mates in the second sops and enjoyed the challenge of learning new pieces with the thrill of performing them in concert.

Also I was acutely aware that the success of the choral society, indeed its very existence, was not a matter of chance. It happens only as a result of the efforts of many people so I couldn't just sit back and enjoy myself as I felt it only right that I made a contribution. In doing that I've been fortunate enough, as has every one of us, to have had the benefit of the experience, commitment and hard work of those on the committee to whom we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude. So my grateful thanks to Tim and the previous Chairman before him and to all members of the committee. I will remain responsible for all the bookings to do with concerts, the venues, musicians and soloists and look forward to continuing my involvement in that aspect of the committee's work.

On behalf of the committee, I want to thank everyone who has volunteered their time and energy in support of the society, notably to all those who have helped to set up and break down the staging for concerts; for producing interesting and informative newsletters; for organising the flowers for concert soloists; to front of house at concerts; to those who help with stewarding at concerts, or running the bar afterwards and to everyone who has in some way volunteered their time.

The society also gratefully acknowledges the continuing and generous support of its Patrons and the sponsorship of the Rigby Foundation. A recent new sponsor is Holiday Inspirations Limited and the society wholeheartedly thanks them all.

This year has seen the establishment of a superb new website that presents the society in a highly professional manner to the wider public. This has involved many hours of work. I apologise if I have failed to mention all who have been involved in its production but nevertheless offer grateful thanks to everyone concerned.

How fortunate the society is to benefit from the generous efforts of so many individuals, none of whom are taken for granted. In particular, is our President, once again generously giving his time and energy in support of the Society, as he has done for very many years. We extend our warmest good wishes and thanks to him.

Two vitally important individuals central to the society's raison d'être are Rachel and Oliver. Rachel has accompanied the choir's rehearsals to the highest standard since 2008. Whilst we singers grapple with mastering

new music, trying to hit the right note at the right time, Rachel arrives, seats herself at the piano and without further ado impressively plays complex music with apparent effortlessness. Thank you so much Rachel for your unwavering support and long may it last!

Finally, our heartfelt gratitude and thanks go to Oliver who with skill and great good humour encourages us, introduces us to new repertoire, educates us and helps us to improve our singing skills. He has held our hands as we discovered each new piece and with his beautiful voice demonstrated how it should be sung. With flair and enthusiasm he leads us on a life-enriching journey of musical discovery. Thank you so much Oliver - how fortunate are we and the audiences who share in the fruits of your labours.

And so to our next 2023-24 concert season full of exciting musical experiences. We begin on Monday the 4th of September rehearsing Handel's dramatic Samson for a "celestial concert" on the 18th of November in Holy Trinity Church, followed by Prelude to Christmas on the 16th of December and on 23rd of March 2024 Mozart's Requiem, just some of the most beautiful choral music ever written.

## **5. Treasurer's Report for the year ended 30th April 2023**

This has been a very satisfactory year for the Society financially. We had forecast to break even, a very bullish aspiration in a year when we perform Messiah. Compared to the forecast we returned a surplus of £777, high ticket sales for Messiah being a major contributor. In addition, we received a legacy of £2,500, which has been ring-fenced to support a future concert.

The accounts surplus of £6,127 includes the above, plus £2,205 received in subscriptions for our summer season. Most of the costs will fall into the next financial year. The additional season has proved more popular than had been prudently estimated for financial planning.

Standard running costs continue to rise. Rehearsal room hire rise by 11% this year (a total of 16% over the last two years), so we do need to ensure that our subscription income supports our outgoings.

We start the 23-24 season with a healthy reserve of £29,590, which, in addition to covering costs for our summer concert, will allow us to plan for some larger scale concerts in subsequent seasons.

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

Signed on behalf of the Society's trustees:

Signature:

Full Name: Tim Moore-Bridger

Chairman

Date:

Charity Name  
Stratford Choral Society

## Receipts and pay

For the period from  
Period start date  
5/1/2022

### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>		
Donations	3,640	-
Member subscriptions	13,000	-
Patron subscriptions	1,240	-
Gift aid	2,531	-
Concert ticket sales	9,456	-
Programme sales and sponsors	2,682	-
Contribution to music hire and folders	1,440	-
Interest	119	-
Other fund raising	192	-
	-	-
<b>Sub total(Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>34,300</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>		
	-	-
	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>34,300</b>	<b>-</b>

### A3 Payments

Rehearsal room hire	2,066	-
Conductor and accompanist	6,340	-
Concert musicians	13,344	-
Concert venue hire	1,909	-
Other concert costs	755	-
Programmes and posters	1,511	-
Music and folders	1,446	-
NFMS subscription and insurance	299	-
Web site costs	290	-
Print, post and other expenses	213	-



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**B5 Liabilities**

**Details**


Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature


	No (if any) 502020
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**CC16a**

## ments accounts

To	Period end date 4/30/2023
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Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
-	3,640	4,643
-	13,000	8,656
-	1,240	1,590
-	2,531	2,741
-	9,456	7,056
-	2,682	1,737
-	1,440	626
-	119	11
-	192	200
-	-	-
-	34,300	27,260

-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	34,300	27,260

-	2,066	1,767
-	6,340	5,500
-	13,344	8,251
-	1,909	1,674
-	755	335
-	1,511	1,071
-	1,446	190
-	299	412
-	290	112
-	213	388



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Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
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	-	
	-	
	-	
	-	
	-	

Print Name

Date of approval

T Moore-Bridger	



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of

Charity Name STRATFORD UPON AVON CHORAL SOCIETY

On accounts for the year ended

30 APRIL 2023

Charity no (if any)

502020

Set out on pages

1-2 (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD/MM/YYYY.

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 Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed 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 (other than that disclosed below \*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:

[Signature]

Date:

29th Jan 2024

Name:

PHILIP BISHOP

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

F.C.A. REGULATED

Address:

DOWNHAM BIRMINGHAM ROAD, HENLEY-IN-ARDEN B95 5QD

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight 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.

NONE