



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From **September 1st 2022** To **August 31st 2023**

Charity name: Congleton Choral Society

Charity registration number: 515851

Objectives and Activities

Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	THE OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY SHALL BE TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC IN THE ARTS AND SCIENCES, AND IN PARTICULAR THE ART AND SCIENCE OF MUSIC, IN THE PROMOTION OF CONCERTS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES.
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	<p>The Trustees have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.</p> <p>Membership of the choral society is open to any singer, subject to passing an audition by the Music Director. Rehearsals are then directed towards 4 public concerts per year. We believe that our activities benefit both singers and audience; for participants learning music, developing sight reading skill and vocal technique, and singing as a group.</p> <p>For our audience the enjoyment of hearing (and at Christmas participating in) a variety of musical styles, often involving professional soloists and instrumentalists. Tickets are competitively priced to attract a wide audience with both concession and children's tickets available. All full time students and under 26 year olds benefit from a reduced membership subscription rate. In addition, any member with financial difficulties can privately discuss a special reduced subscription arrangement with the Membership Secretary.</p> <p>We also hold choral workshops, which are open to all singers, and offer the chance to learn a variety of choral works with famous and local conductors concluding with an informal sing through.</p> <p>The Community choir was established for new non auditioned singers to experience both singing and music sight reading and taking part in performances. Many of these singers then move on to join the main choir.</p>
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	The trustees have complied with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Achievements and Performance

In September 2022 we started our second choir year with Music Director Tom Newall. Tom's choice of music with the agreement of the planning group, continue to be both challenging and inspiring.

Our season began, however with great sadness, at the loss of our wonderful accompanist, Andrew Green. It was a privilege to be invited by his wife Linda to sing at his service of thanksgiving following his funeral. Despite these sad times, we made a fantastic start musically to our season, and a wonderful singing day with Bob Chilcott on two new pieces which we will incorporate into our 2023/24 season.

November saw a collaboration with the Junior Choir from King's School, Macclesfield for our performance of Carmina Burana and we raised the roof of the town hall with two pianos and percussion. Audience numbers were slowly increasing since the pandemic but this was a sell out concert.

In December, we presented our first live Christmas Concert since covid and it was lovely to have a brass quintet along with Tom Pieczora on organ to bring the music to life, especially Cecilia McDowell's 'A Winter's Night' which we had live streamed the year before.

We had a booking from Foden's Brass Band to sing at various hotels on Christmas Eve, which raised a sizeable sum which went towards choir funds.

In January 2023 we started rehearsals for our most ambitious project yet featuring Handel's Dixit Dominus and Bach's Magnificat accompanied by the superb Baroque in the North.

During Andrew's illness we had been supported by various accompanists and during this time were able to appoint Rachel Fright to the role which she took up permanently later in the year.

We were once again invited to sing at the mayor's ceremonial service and it was a pleasure to play our role as community members of the town of Congleton.

Our summer concert entitled 'Music to make the Soul Sing' was in memory of Andrew Green. This was a programme I think we all enjoyed rehearsing and the choir gave an emotional but uplifting performance, in celebration of everything Andrew brought to his various musical communities.

Also in July, we received funding to deliver a day singing workshop at Mossley Primary School, where Tom and Rachel worked on a number of songs on the subject of the 'environment' with a performance for the rest of the school and their parents at the end of the day. Our commitment to securing the future of choral music is strong, and plans are in place to secure funding to continue this work.

We are so lucky to have Ian Pickford as our Assistant Music Director, who does a fantastic job of deputising for rehearsals, and of course conducting some pieces in performance.

The community choir has flourished in number and in vocal strength across the 2023/24 season. Each concert we have given has been well attended with a variety of music for all tastes, and many solo turns from our members making for a very enjoyable evening each time. We were delighted to sing for the mayor at his civic reception in May, but also at the coronation party in the park and this has seen the start of some future collaborations and bookings.

Although keeping to our plan for 2 orchestral concerts and 2 with piano accompaniment a year, we made an overall loss on concerts of nearly £8000. Audience numbers are still varying but concert expenses are increasing.

The committee worked hard this year to update our systems and made changes to support this.

We agreed to increase subscriptions from September 2024 to £180 per year. We hope this will give us more flexibility when choosing venues and accompaniments for concerts. As the year progressed we also increased our choir membership.

Fundraising is slowly being raised from pre pandemic levels. With the hard work and enthusiasm of some members who opened their gardens for a garden trail in May very sizeable funds were added.

Earlier in the year we had decided to move our website to the Making Music platform. Nick Sharman and Phil Edwards have continued to progress this change. Our new website is so much more informative and Phil has ably helped members to make the most of its resources.

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	The funds at 1 st September 2022 £27,334.88. at 31 st August 2023 £27,229.56. The pandemic has still affected expected audience numbers and the cost of living affected concert expenses. It was decided at the AGM to increase the membership fee from £156 to £180 from 1 st September 2024.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	As most of the society's energies are directed to the preparation and staging of four choral concerts each year and that we cannot rely solely on audience numbers to cover our costs, reserves should therefore reflect the amounts needed to provide these objectives. Based on costs over previous years the society believes that it is prudent to maintain reserves of €20,000, based on two orchestral and two keyboard concerts, which will be reviewed annually at the first meeting of the Executive Committee after the Annual General Meeting
Amount of reserves held	£20,000
Details of fund materially in deficit	None
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	

Additional information (optional)

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Members subscriptions Profit from Concerts and Singing Days. Fundraising such as raffles, carol singing, garden trail, socials.
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Following the decision of our bank (HSBC) to charge for the running of a current account plus other charges, the Society has moved accounts to the Co-operative bank which offers free banking and has a branch in Macclesfield.
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:	
Type of governing document	Constitution
How is the charity constituted?	Society

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Congleton Choral Society
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	515851
Charity's principal address	68 Fence Avenue Macclesfield SK10 1LT

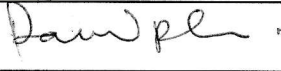
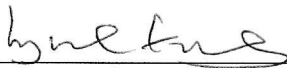
Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Lynne Evans	Chair		
2	Tony Bartley	Vice Chair		
3	Cathy Evans	Secretary		
4	Pam Upchurch	Treasurer		
5	Phil Edwards	Membership Secretary		
6	Margaret Gartside	Librarian		
7	Sandie Boynton	Publicity		
8	Patti Pinto	Wardrobe		
9	Kirsty Edwards	Concert Co-ordinator		
10	Suzan Moore	Soprano rep		
11	Shirley Jones	Alto rep		
12	Ian Pickford	Tenor/Bass rep		

Declarations



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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Pam Upchurch	Lynne Evans
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Treasurer	Chair



Date

22/1/2023

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Payments</u>	
<u>Opening balances at 1st September 2022</u>		<u>Running Costs</u>	
HSBC Current account	£689.99	Making Music sub/insurance	£508.00
HSBC Membership account	£4,904.56	Music Director	£6,005.00
Co-op Community Choir account	£2,154.00	Accompanist	£3,595.00
Virgin Charities account	£19,586.33	Hall hire	£1,480.00
		Website	£191.76
	£27,334.88		£11,779.76
<u>Concert Income</u>		<u>Concert Expenses</u>	
Summer Concert 2022	£16.00	Autumn Concert 2022	£6,343.69
Autumn Concert 2022	£3,025.55	Xmas Concert 2022	£2,727.12
Xmas Concert 2022	£2,057.70	Spring Concert 2023	£8,005.29
Spring Concert 2023	£2,539.88	Summer Concert 2023	£1,573.50
Summer Concert 2023	£3,355.51		
	£10,994.64		£18,649.60
<u>Bank Interest</u>		<u>Bank charges</u>	
Virgin Charities account	£75.02	HSBC current account	£22.80
HSBC membership account	£5.70	Co-op current account	£0.64
<u>Subscriptions</u>	£13,809.00	<u>Subscription refund</u>	£156.00
<u>Fundraising</u>	£2,767.30	<u>Fundraising expenses</u>	£52.50
<u>HMRC Gift Aid</u>	£3,108.46	<u>Deposits</u>	£454.70
<u>Music loan and sales</u>	£774.00	<u>Music hire and purchase</u>	£2,346.42
<u>Sale of Uniform</u>	£235.00	<u>Uniform</u>	£450.00
<u>Donations</u>	£1,552.51	<u>Sundries</u>	£1,051.48
<u>Community Choir</u>	£7,678.00	<u>Community Choir</u>	£6,566.55
<u>Chilcott Singing Day</u>	£2,321.26	<u>Chilcott Singing Day 2022</u>	£2,775.76
<u>Puccini Singing Day 2023</u>	£880.00		
		<u>Closing balances at 31st August 2023</u>	
		Co-op Current account	£701.49
		Co-op Membership account	£8,505.03
		Co-op Community Choir account	£3,361.69
		Virgin Charities account	£14,661.35
			£27,229.56
	£71,535.77	Total	£71,535.77
Income	£44,200.89	Expenditure	£44,306.21
		Loss for the Year	-£105.32
Signed by: -		Signed by: -	
			
Pam Upchurch (Honorary Treasurer)		John Tudor (Auditor)	

Auditor's report

I have examined the receipts, books and accounts of Congleton Choral Society for the year ending 31st August 2023. I hereby verify that in my opinion the financial statements, which have been prepared on an income and expenditure basis using historical cost convention, give a true and fair view of the financial affairs as at 31st August, 2023.

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