

BILLINGSHURST CHORAL SOCIETY

HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT to the AGM on Tuesday 9th September 2025

INTRODUCTION

We recorded a better-than-budgeted deficit of £(651) in the year (2024 - £715 surplus). We therefore ended the year with £5,829 (2024 - £6,480) in the bank comprising HSBC £829 and Shawbrook 60-day deposit account £5,000.

GENERAL ACCOUNT

Subscriptions income of £7,945 was down from last year's £8,510 but only £15 below budget. The total comprised 41 full-year members, paying £170 each (= £6,970), and 12 part-year and joining members paying in total £975.

We have 5 (2024 - 6) patrons paying at £60 and 5 (2024 - 2) at £100, making total income of £800 (2024 - £560). There are several honorary patrons too.

We were very fortunate in the year to receive several substantial donations, including donated Trustee expenses and donated Tour refunds. The recorded total is £3,901 (2024 - £937).

There was a related boost to our Gift Aid reclaim from HMRC, which amounted to £2,527 (2024 - £2,244). Furthermore it is estimated that there is already over £300 of Gift Aid to be reclaimed next year from the donations received most recently.

Thanks to our librarian and her team, we have made £192 (2024 - £218) by hiring out some of our scores to other choirs. Our stock of music scores is estimated to have cost approximately £4,000 over many years, and it is good when they can be used to earn some income for our Society.

We achieved fund-raising income of £1,757 (2024 - £2,335). There are some notable variations from budget and from prior year. The income included: £915 from 9 fund-raising events, including £140 from car boot sale (average £102) (2024 - average £119 from 8 evenings); £502 from the joint BCS/BDS Quiz Night (2024 - £506); £201 from rehearsal interval refreshments (2024 - £235); AGM & faith supper £nil (2024 - £202); garden party at Bell Cottage £nil (to be held in August) (2024 - £253) and Christmas party £134 (2024 - £120). Thank you everyone – organisers, participants and purchasers - for achieving these important sources of funds for our Society.

Sundry income comprised: Utility Warehouse £122 (2024 - £226); Horsham Lottery £165 (2024 - £180) and £30 from the sale of BCS clothing.

There were two prior year income items: £80 from a late-paying advertiser and £235 from the Village Tweet which had charged VAT over many years at 20% rather than, we discovered, at the correct 0%.

Rehearsal start and finish times at BCCC were trimmed and one rehearsal was held on a free trial basis elsewhere at St Mary's in Billingshurst, thereby saving £88 in hall hire charges.

One rehearsal was, at very short notice, not attended by Marcio or by a stand-in, thus saving his £130 fee and related expenses.

The Society's income in these accounts is £17,872 (general) and £8,635 (concert), totalling therefore £26,507. This brought the Society above Making Music's £21,000 income threshold, whereby our membership fee rose to £313 (2024 - £219). This exceeded the unadjusted budget by £88. We were above that threshold last year too, but the fee is not retrospectively increased.

We adjusted our Society's insurance cover, saving £50.

We disposed of our keyboard at the end of May, thus eliminating any further BCCC storage charges beyond the £250 (2024 - £275) incurred in the year.

During the year we bought a second Sumup device at a cost of £95. As at year-end, we carry forward 74 Ticket Tailor credits (= £27) for use with next season's on-line ticket purchases.

There were two prior year costs: £66 of past Trustee expenses, all of which were donated back to the Society, and £66 of PRS fees on our G&S arrangement scores. There was a £32 offset from the use of brought forward Ticket Tailor credits.

CONCERT ACCOUNT

Audience numbers were 96 at St Gabriel's (Advent) and at Horsham were 128 (spring) and 144 (summer). The plan is to grow these figures steadily beyond what we could realistically achieve in Billingshurst at either BCCC or St Gabriel's.

Whilst ticket sales exceeded budget by £420 at St Gabriel's, disappointingly the Horsham figures were in aggregate £(2,245) below budget (a budget that had been difficult to set given that it was a new location).

Our Advent concert at St Gabriel's entailed an unbudgeted extra £(300) of staging and lighting.

Our first concert at St Mary's was also a 'Come and Sing' which entailed paying a £(300) unbudgeted morning MD fee; this used up a large share of the £460 income gain.

Our spring concert entailed additional orchestra costs over what was budgeted. These were needed in order to provide the forces for Finlandia and the Peer Gynt Suite. But this was countered by a significant reduction in the orchestral costs in the summer such that in overall terms we saved £756 from budget.

There was a target of £1,000 grant income in the budget, but this was not achieved.

Thanks to excellent work by our marketing team - by tapping in to Horsham businesses and by securing advertisers on a three-concert package - we were able to achieve a £178 favourable variance on advertising revenue less printing costs. There is probably further potential here.

Macmillan benefited by £[redacted] from refreshment sales and donations, whereas we had budgeted £400 to bring this effort in-house.

MAIN VARIANCES FROM BUDGET (favourable / (adverse))

TOTAL budgeted deficit	"A"	£(1,222)
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General Account:

Donations / donated expenses	£ 2,600
Gift Aid	£ 450

Rehearsals (including free rehearsal at St Mary's)	£ 302
Second Sumup device purchased	£ (95)
Prior year VAT refund (Village Tweet adverts)	£ 235
All other General Account, net	£ (70)

TOTAL General Account variance from budget "B" £ 3,668

Concert Account:

Ticket income	£(1,825)
Come and Sing income (at one concert, not two)	£ (540)
Grant income not achieved	£(1,000)
Hall hire and staging (including £(300) at St Gabriel's)	£ (399)
Orchestral players and accompanists	£ 756
Refreshments not done in-house, but with Macmillan's again	£ (400)
Advertising income net of programme and all printing costs	£ 178
All other Concert Account, net (including £300 saving on soloists)	£ 133

TOTAL Concert Account variance from budget "C" £(3,097)

TOTAL Society variance from budget "D" = "B + C" £ 571

Year-End Result deficit "A + D" £ (651)

THE TOUR

The Tour to France was completely outside the scope of the Society's accounts. However it should be noted that nearly £20,000 flowed in and out of the Society's HSBC account on behalf of all the participating members from Billingshurst and Hastings. A tremendous amount of work was entailed in managing the arrangements and in balancing the books.

HONORARY TREASURER AND INDEPENDENT EXAMINER ROLES

This is my ninth and last AGM report as Honorary Treasurer. I have enjoyed everyone's support in performing the role during my term. Thank you.

I wish our Society's new appointee(s) every success in the role and I am confident our Society's finances will be in safe hands. I have agreed to continue to handle the Society's Gift Aid reclaims and I will make myself available to assist during the handover process.

On behalf of our Society I would like to thank Chris Edwards for his excellent work on checking the accounts. An independent examination of our accounts is a legal requirement.

I would also particularly like to thank David Eckford and Keith Paul, the two Chairmen I have had the privilege to serve with during my nine years on the Management Committee. Their energy, skill, enthusiasm and dedication are amazing.

A full set of Accounts together with the Trustees' Report will be submitted shortly after the AGM to the Charity Commission as part of the Annual Return. Those accounts will be available to the general public and therefore to potential new members.

Chris Kirk
Honorary Treasurer

4th August 2025