

Annual Report and Statement of Accounts

For the year ended August 31, 2024



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Annual Report for the Year Ended August 31, 2024

The trustees of Allegri are pleased to submit their report and accounts for the period September 1, 2023 to August 31, 2024.

Our Achievements and Performance

10th	32	222	1289	102,428	£869
year of promoting arts in the Derry & the North West region	concerts & performances	rehearsals/ workshops	participants	in person and online audience	surplus for the year

Allegri is a cross-community arts group established in 2013 within DCSDC, and one of the few remaining legacy projects from the City of Culture year. We have ladies, junior and youth choirs, a community orchestra and manage the annual Every Voice Festival. We also run community outreach activities.

We work to eliminate all barriers to arts participation, harnessing the creativity and self-expression of individuals. We offer access to the expertise and guidance of professional facilitators using arts to promote cross-cultural understanding, empathy and as a means to build positivity and healing.

Our family of choirs meet weekly and Orchestra NorthWest meet monthly to enjoy the benefits of music-making and prepare for regular concerts and performances. 2023/24 was another very successful year. Highlights are described overleaf.

Allegri Ladies had a jam-packed tenth year that kicked off with their Anniversary Concert in the Great Hall, University of Ulster (Magee). The choir then headed off on a fantastic 7 day USA Tour where they performed in the Irish Repertory Theatre in New York, joined friends for a concert at Washington & Lee University in Lexington, Virginia, and then travelled to Washington D.C. where they performed at the Residence of the Irish Ambassador. In March, the ladies performed as part of a Dawn Chorus to welcome the Spring Equinox. June was a busy month for the choir as they performed as part of the SIRENSCIRUS Event during the Ulysses YES Festival before performing at the Stand Up & Sing Concert during the Every Voice Festival. The ladies finished out the year with a performance in St. Columb's Cathedral during their Festival of Cloaks in July.



Allegri Ladies pictured following their Tenth Anniversary Concert in the Great Hall, University of Ulster (Magee)

Orchestra NorthWest began the 2023/2024 year with their Autumn Concert of September Symphonies in the Guildhall. The programme featured Dvorák's much-loved Symphony No.8., Peter Warlock's Capriol Suite for strings and Arturo Márquez's Danzón No. 2. They headed to the Strule Arts Centre, Omagh in May with 'Songs from Stage and Screen'. In July the Orchestra joined forces with the Allegri Youth & Junior Choirs to perform Benjamin Britton's Community Opera 'Noye's Fludde'.



Orchestra NorthWest performing 'Songs from Stage & Screen' at the Strule Arts Centre, Omagh

Our **Allegrì Junior & Youth Choirs** had the pleasure of joining the I Giovani Solisti (Connecticut) Chamber Orchestra from Connecticut when they visited the city in April before performing Noye's Fludde with the Orchestra in June. They then enjoyed two exciting weeks of Summer Schemes in August.



Participants pictured with Deputy Mayor Darren Guy following their Summer Scheme Showcase

All groups joined forces once again this year for two sold out **Christmas Concerts** on Sunday 10th December. We welcomed dancers from the Rainbow School of Dance who performed the ballet of 'The Nutcracker' with the Orchestra. The ladies and junior and youth choirs performed a host of Christmas Classics in the second half of each concert.



Orchestra NorthWest, Allegrì Ladies, Junior & Youth Choirs performing their Christmas Concert in the Guildhall

The annual **Every Voice Festival** took place 17th to 23rd June. This year the festival comprised ten events including community concerts, pop-up performances and a Gala Concert, as well as 41 workshops and rehearsals. For this we also created a brand-new pop-up choir 'The Shirt Factory Singers'. There were a total of 1074 participants from 35 choirs and an audience of 21,413 which includes in person and online views.



Come & Sing Workshop in the Guildhall, Every Voice Festival, June 2023



Every Voice Festival Community Concert, June 2023

Allegrì delivered a Rural Engagement Arts Programme funded by Arts Council Northern Ireland with our Musical Director Maurice Kelly working with a range of groups. There were weekly rehearsals with the Eglintones who enjoyed performing in a shared music concert in Ballymena with the Pick Me Up Choir as well as a performance in the Every Voice Festival community concert series. Maurice delivered six singing sessions with DEEDS (Dementia Engaged and Empowered in Derry & Strabane) which lead to a community performance in the Alley Theatre, Strabane and he also delivered a number of workshops with choirs from Limavady Grammar, St Patrick's College, Dungiven and St Patrick's & St Brigid's College, Claudy culminating in a mini-concert tour of all of the schools.

You can watch the REAP schools showcase performances entitled 'In Rural Harmony' [here](#).



Eglintones Choir, St Columb's Hall, Derry



DEEDS Choir Alley Theatre, Strabane



School pupils taking part in the In Rural Harmony project

Financial Review

Financial Performance

Financial performance in the year to August 31st 2024 has been broadly consistent with the trustee's forecasts and expectations; a surplus of income over expenditure of £869 was achieved for the year compared to £12,396 in the year to August 31st, 2023.

The year ended with a general fund balance of £21,760 (compared to £20,891 for the same date last year).

We were recipients of funding from Derry City and Strabane District Council (Community Support Fund, Community Festivals Fund), Arts Council of Northern Ireland (National Lottery Project Fund, Health & Safety and Rural Engagement Arts Programme), Clear Short-Term Funding supported by the Public Health Agency (Western) Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (Rural Micro Capital Grant Scheme).

Full income and expenditure listed on page 9.

Allegri

Statement of Receipts and Payments - Year Ended 31 August 2024

	Unrestricted Funds	2024 Restricted Funds	Total Funds	2023 Total Funds
<u>Receipts</u>	£	£	£	£
Voluntary Receipts				
Grants	-	48,898	48,898	35,773
Fundraising Activities	926	-	926	3,805
Donations	393	-	393	-
Sponsorship	100	-	100	300
Charitable Activities				
Membership Fees	9,445	-	9,445	11,733
Ticket Sales & Performance Fees	18,647	-	18,647	18,050
Total Receipts	29,510	48,898	78,408	69,661
Payments				
Cost of Charitable Activities	27,596	43,271	70,867	57,265
Asset and Investment Purchase				
Purchase of Equipment	150	6,522	6,672	-
Total Payments	27,746	49,793	77,538	57,265
Net receipts / (payments)	1,764	(895)	869	12,396
Reconciliation 31.08.24				
Cash at bank & in hand 31.08.23	13,041	7,850	20,891	8,495
Surplus / (deficit) this year end	1,764	(895)	869	12,396
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	14,805	6,955	21,760	20,891

These financial statements were approved by the board of trustees and authorised for issue on 2 November 2024, and signed on behalf of the board by:



Lisa Gibney
Treasurer



Nuala Sheerin
Chairperson

Allegri

Statement of Assets and Liabilities - Year Ended 31 August 2024

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Funds Reconciliation				
Cash at bank & in hand 31.08.23	13,041	7,850	20,891	8,495
Surplus / (deficit) this year end	1,764	-895	869	12,396
Surplus / (deficit) for the year	14,805	6,955	21,760	20,891
Bank & Cash Balances				
Bank Current Account	14,805	6,955	21,760	20,891
Cash in Hand	-	-	-	-
	14,805	6,955	21,760	20,891
Other Assets				
Furniture (at cost)	150	7,204	7,354	3,788
Digital Piano (at cost)		3,992	3,992	1,021
Laptop (cost)		1,249	1,249	1,249
AV Equipment (cost)		2,335	2,335	2,200
Grant income due		6,956	776	3,187
Performance fee due	1,295	-	-	-
	1,445	21,736	15,706	11,445
Liabilities				
Music Facilitation	504	1,160	1,664	-
Project Management	-	4,000	4,000	-
Room Hire	100	550	650	150
Performance Fees	300	1,000	1,300	250
Audio Visual	-	1,588	1,588	-
Transport Costs	-	240	240	-
	904	8,538	9,442	400

Notes to the Accounts

Reserves Policy

We have examined the charity's requirements for reserves in light of the main risks to the organisation. We have established a reserves policy whereby the unrestricted funds not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets held by the charity should be between 3 and 6 months of the expenditure. Budgeted expenditure for 2024/25 is £80,000 and therefore the target is £20,000 to £40,000. The reserves are needed to meet the working capital requirements of the charity and the Trustees are confident that at this level they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding. The present level of reserves available to the charity of £14,805 therefore falls short of this target level. Although the strategy is to continue to build reserves through planned operating surpluses, the Trustees are well aware that it is unlikely that the target range can be reached for at least 5 years. In the short term the Trustees have also considered the extent to which existing activities and expenditure could be curtailed should such circumstances arise.

Trustees' Expenses

No expenses were paid to any of the Trustees during the year except to reimburse them for purchases made on behalf of the organisation.

Trustees' Indemnity Insurance

No charitable funds have been used to purchase insurance to indemnify the Trustees against the consequences of any neglect or default on their part.

Accounting Policies

Section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 permits a charity to prepare a receipts and payments account and a statement of assets and liabilities where gross income in the financial year does not exceed £250,000, therefore receipts and payments accounts and a statement of assets and liabilities has been prepared and presented for the year ended August 31st 2024; this is consistent with previous years.

Income

All Income, including grants is recorded when received. All Expenditure is recorded when paid.

Basis of Valuations

Valuations have been provided for assets held for functional use; where possible the brand new purchase price/replacement cost is given. If this is not readily available a second-hand purchase price is given.

Independent Scrutiny

In the year ended August 31st 2024 gross income did not exceeded £250,000 and therefore, in accordance with the sections 144 & 145 of the Charities Act 2011 no audit or independent examination is required and no such scrutiny requirement is imposed by the organsiation's governing document.

Reference and Administrative Details

Charity Name

Allegrì

Charity Number

NIC107895

Principal Address

31-33 Bawnmore Place
Strathfoyle
Derry
BT47 6XP

Charity Trustees as of 31st August 2023

Nuala Sheerin (Chairperson)
Naiomh Ashford (Secretary)
Lisa Gibney (Treasurer)
Maggi Clifford
Michael McDermott
Rachel Tennis

Banking

AIB (NI) - previously known as First Trust Bank

Meadowbank House
143-145 Strand Rd
Derry
BT48 7TN

Insurance Broker and Underwriter

M Ladbroke Ltd
21B Napier Court
Gander Lane
Chesterfield
Derbyshire
S43 4PZ

Structure, Governance, and Management

Governing Document and Constitution

Allegri is an unincorporated association and is governed by a constitution which was last revised on 30th June 2022.

Allegri is run entirely by its members who pay an annual voluntary membership subscription. As of 31st August 2024, the Society had a membership of 173.

Trustee Selection and Management

The Society is managed by an Executive Committee which consists of all the appointed trustees. A number of the trustees also hold offices within Allegri. These officers are noted in the list of current trustees above. The Executive Committee typically meets on a bi-monthly basis. At each meeting the Treasurer presents the latest accounts which are reviewed against budgets and forecasts; spending is discussed and approved. Officers may authorise some spending, between meetings, within set limits but must ensure such spending is reported at the next meeting. The meetings also offer a forum to review recent activities within our programme and to plan forthcoming events. Correspondence and applications for membership received are considered; in addition, officers report on their areas of responsibility (typically, reports are made quarterly). Further ad hoc meetings are called if required, for example, to plan and manage special events or projects. The Annual Report and Statement of Accounts are approved by the trustees and then presented to the members at the Annual General Meeting.

Objectives and Activities

Allegri is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (charity no. 107895).

Public Benefits

The direct benefits which flow from the charitable purposes are:

1. To raise the standard of arts practice and performance - including shared learning and development opportunities in a safe and supportive environment; improved singing and musicianship skills, a high standard of music education from professional musicians, facilitators, teachers, conductors; the development of life skills in participants; an opportunity to develop social networks and connect with like-minded people; the improvement in physical and mental health and an opportunity to reduce stress and take time away from the pressures of everyday life; the development of transferable skills in participants; ambition, determination and positive life aspirations; opportunities to avail of accredited training and development; volunteering opportunities in arts administration, facilitation, event management
2. Creating opportunities for learning, performance and personal development in the arts for young people and adults - include the provision of the high quality arts learning and performance experiences; access to musical tuition, masterclasses and workshops from professional musicians; connections with groups, venues and institutions in the UK and Ireland and internationally; the opportunity to experience a wide range of musical styles and periods in our programming; the removal of obstacles - financial, social, cultural, religious or skills-based - for all beneficiaries; the opportunity to perform in high profile civic settings as well as venues which are not traditionally associated with performance
3. To advance community development through arts engagement projects - include the opportunity for individuals to build connections and networks outside their own communities; beneficiaries positively engaging with wider community development initiatives; improved self-image and community pride; new initiatives led by beneficiaries within communities; challenging of preconceptions, prejudices or stereotypes; music projects taking place outside traditional civic venues

These benefits will be demonstrated through:

Purpose 1: Increased quantity of learning & performance opportunities and increased quality in community arts output; diversity in performances; audience numbers and feedback; the esteem in which our work is held & feedback from audiences, press etc, familiarity with our brand and activities in a short time since our inception; beneficiaries who have not gone the traditional music route through childhood; audiences attending performances for the first time in their lives, now feel that it is something relevant to them that they can enjoy; delivery of projects on budget and within agreed timelines

Purpose 2: Surveys; liaison with our network of community workers; monitoring volunteering opportunities created and keeping connections to those who move beyond our activities; Evidence of increased arts provision; engagement on our social media channels;

Purpose 3: New initiatives in project areas; increased membership and interest in our activities
There is no harm arising from any of the purposes of our organisation. We have a number of robust procedures and policies in place (including Child Protection and Safeguarding, Equal Opportunities

and Conflict of Interest policies), to mitigate against any harm which might arise in the future. Beneficiaries are individual members of the ladies and children's choirs and the orchestra (aged 8 upwards), those who take part in our outreach workshops and projects, the general public as audiences who attend our public performances or view our work online.

Our members may benefit from exposure to a wider audience and a positive development of their skills and expertise through performance but this is incidental to the achievement of our purposes. Similarly, our volunteers and trustees may, in the course of their involvement with us, gain benefits including training and development opportunities leading to the acquisition of transferable skills which could be used in settings unconnected to our activities. Any such opportunities are necessary to ensure good governance and management and wholly incidental.

This report was approved and adopted by the Allegri Board of Trustees at a meeting on 14th November, 2024 and signed on their behalf.

Nuala Sheerin
Allegri Chairperson