



Creating a happier & healthier world through music and song



TRUSTEE'S REPORT

Committee Information

2022/23



NIC108238

- Chairperson
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Trustee
- Trustee
- Committee member
- Committee member

- Lisa Flanagan
- Linda O Hagan
- Sinead Drummond
- Joelle Stamp
- Ann Reid
- Keva Quinn
- Brenda Kellaghan

Artistic operations

- Kathy McCaughey
- Gareth Hughes
- Mark Hughes

Friends Of The Choir Studio

Creating a healthier and happier world through music & song

**Music
Charity
Community
Song**

OUR Charity aims

Our belief has been in the power of singing and music to improve health and wellbeing for ALL.

We aim to build a sense of community, family & belonging

We produce, promote & create opportunities to learn with a commitment to charitable purposes.

We support the physiological, social, psychological, behavioural and medical benefits of music and singing.

Lending support through music & performances to highlight important social causes.

The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland



CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE



I am delighted to introduce you to Friends Of The Choir Studio's annual report!
 The 2022/23 year has been a year of important landmarks - our first as a recognised charity and our first year of face to face singing since the pandemic.

Although in our infancy as a fully operational charity, we have had many successes and achievements this year that are highlighted within our report. We are extremely grateful to our music professionals and committee members who have worked tirelessly this year to enable us to learn, develop as a charity and most importantly to bring singing and music to the hearts of those who need it the most.

This year has reinforced the importance of music in making the world a happier and healthier place. We have seen the benefits our projects have brought to our members and local community. We welcome 2023/24 and look forward to more opportunities, welcoming new people into our choir family and continuing to spread joy through song and music,

Lisa Flanagan

Contact

The Choir Studio
 5G Greenbank Service Station
 Warrenpoint Rd
 Newry



Charity Aims

Music & Singing accessible to ALL

Our charity was established to ensure everyone, irrespective of age, gender, religion and beliefs find happiness and joy through the power of music & singing.

Our emphasis on inter-generational singing will be at the forefront of our objectives for the foreseeable - building community relationships and friendships, enhancing the lives of our members young and old, through a shared love of music and song.

Providing skill's & opportunities

Our Charity aims to produce, promote and create opportunities for our members.

We aim to provide singing workshops with industry professionals from all genres of music, and to provide performance opportunities both locally and nationally.

We hope to lend support through music & performances to highlight important social causes and to assist other charitable organisations through our music.

Creating a happier & healthier world through music and song

We support the physiological, social, psychological, behavioural and medical benefits of singing and the transformative power that singing can have for so many.

In 2022/23 Friends Of The Choir Studio,



Held over 50 in person events, performances & workshops

Partnered and supported 10 organisations from the charity, health and educational sector



Welcomed new members age 4-82 years from all walks of life!



Renovated our studio space

Our performances, workshops and music videos, have benefited over 750,000 attendees, both in person and online



Vision & Aims



2022-23 saw our charity successful in achieving many aspects of our vision and aims.

The awarding of charity status has enabled us to,

- Secure the lease of the studio
- Open a community bank account (this proved a lengthy process due to the covid backlog)
- Become affiliated with the CCG
- Secure grants with The Arts Council & Newry & Mourne Council
- Merge two rooms to increase studio space.

The refurbishment and increase of size within our studio space has allowed us to expand our number of members, ensuring we can bring singing and music to "all". The extra room has proven extremely beneficial post covid, allowing members, particularly our senior citizen choir, to distance out evenly and feel safe.



Vision & Aims



Music & Performance

2022/23 proved very successful in terms of performances, workshops, outreach charity work and competitions.

Emerging from the pandemic, morale from our members proved low - what better way to lift your heart than to SING, have a focus and task at hand.

We competed in our first ever choir competition in the City of Derry International Choir Festival and returned home as CHAMPIONS!

We presented our Big Band Night in Newry City Hall, featuring 100 performers aged 4-82 years.

Our Christmas programme saw us visit and perform for the most vulnerable people in our community. We had the privilege of singing in four local care homes, Daisy Hill Hospital, The Southern Area Hospice and an emotional performance singing at Belfast City Airport for a group of terminally ill children as they embarked on a trip to Lapland.

Our recorded song for Newry Hospice went "Viral" over 1 million views online! We raised a staggering £3,000 towards Hospice services.

We partnered with several other charities and groups including The Southern Area Hospice, The ARC, Road Traffic Safety Committee and Daisy Hill Hospital.



Financial Review

Friends Of The Choir Studio's total income for 2022/23 was £22,049. We were delighted to have secured funding from The Arts Council NI of £7,000 to facilitate our very successful community project over the Christmas period. A total of £2450 from Newry, Mourne & Down District Council was awarded for projects and payment for choirs performances at events.

Our core source of income was generated from our own fundraising initiatives and performances including our Big Band Night, in-house concerts, Christmas Light switch on, community movie night and The NI Business Awards, which totalled to £8,199. Our success at The City Of Derry International Choir Festival acquired £500 prize money with a further £200 donation from The Canal Court Hotel. Members subsidies/rent totalled £4100.

Please refer to our treasurer's and the independent examiners report to show income and expenditure in more detail. We have ensured compliance with the governance obligations of our funders and donors,



Timeline of events

April 2022	* Formal takeover of lease * Family Movie Night	Community
May 2022	* Extensive rehearsal schedule, vocal tuition, choreography and band practice * Big Band Night	All choirs, soloists, facilitators and band members 120 performers ranging age 4-82 years.
June 2022	* Performance Workshop * Examination centre * Musical Tea Party	Outside facilitator, children aged 7-19 years. Children's singing exams, outside examiner. Young At Heart senior citizen choir, community
July 2022	* Extensive vocal and band rehearsals * Performance at Fiddlers Green Festival * Singing Summer School	Uplifted Adult Gospel Choir & band. Uplifted Gospel Choir & band. Children aged 4 - 18 years.
August 2022	* Musical scoring preparation * Recording Studio * Performance At Praxis Healthcare Centre	Studio 32 & Elizabeth Freeburn, The Uplifted & Shining Light Choir The Uplifted & Shining Light Choir, musicians and soloists.



Timeline of events

September 2022	* Performance at Hospice Midnight Memory Walk * Introduction of singing for positive Mental health class	The Uplifted & Shining Light Choir, musicians and soloists. Community - adults
October 2022	* Release of Hospice Song * Performing at Newry Variety Market	All choirs, musicians, soloists and community.
November 2022	* The City of Derry International Choir Competition - three competitions and winners' performance.	The Uplifted & Shining Light Choir, musicians and soloists. Young At Heart Choir
December 2022	* Performance at four care homes, The Hospice, Daisy Hill Hospital, Belfast Airport - Children Lapland Trust. * Performance at The Quays and Buttercrane Centre	The Uplifted & Shining Light Choir, musicians and soloists. All Choirs, musicians and soloists, Community



January 2023	Performance at JigJazz show.	Uplifted & Shining Light Choir, band and community.
February 2023	Singing at Kayden McKeown anniversary Mass	All choirs and musicians
March 2023	Renovation of Studio	

Future Aims & Goals

Our first year as a charity has been both challenging and rewarding! Whilst we have had many successes, we acknowledge there is room for expansion and improvement in the coming year.

The refurbishment of our studio space will allow for more opportunities - projects and programmes, performance and educational workshops, music making and choral singing.

Enhancing our members lives through music and song and creating a happier and healthier community!

We will continue to develop and strengthen intergenerational music making, creating inspiring and musical opportunities for both young and old.

We hope to collaborate with industry professionals for a series of workshops, both educational and performance based.

Acknowledging the life changing ability our "Young At Heart Choir" has on its members, we hope to develop "The Musical Cafe"- a once monthly social gathering of the older generation to listen to great music provided by the members of our choirs!

Each afternoon a different musical theme, inviting the audience to sing along. We hope to include people living in rural areas as well as those local to the studio.

We are dedicated in the development of youth music making and singing! This year we hope to introduce musical instrument tuition.

We will seek new committee members that can help drive our organisation to its full potential.

We strive to develop and grow as a committee, ensuring we achieve our charitable purposes for the coming year.

"Being part of the choir has changed my life. It is wonderful sharing the joy of music with our choir family. I am grateful for all the opportunities choir has given me to perform and give back to the community"
 Melissa Mathers



"I am truly honoured to be part of the Uplifted Choir!"
 Valerie Campbell

Testimonials

"At 80 years of age I performed for the first time on stage in front of an audience! It was a truly wonderful experience. Choir has changed my life! I look forward to Monday's to sing, have a cup of tea and chat with our teacher Kathy and the many friends I've made, it really has lifted my heart being part of this wonderful organisation"

Eileen O Hanlon, The Young At Heart Choir



"Choir is brilliant, I love singing and dancing with my friends. We get lots of opportunities singing in shows and going to the recording studio"

Elyse, aged 9, The Little Voices Choir

"I could write a book on what choir has done for me. Mainly it has encouraged personal growth! Definitely reduces stress levels! It's something I do for me, me time.

Choir has given me so many opportunities that I never in a million years would have had. I have met some of my closest friends in choir. I'm tearful thinking how life has changed since joining choir, happy tears"

Maoliosa McAteer, The Uplifted Choir

"We want to thank our friend Kathy and members of her choir for supporting The Hospice over the past few years. We continue to be in awe of their talents and thoughtfulness. Each year they perform at our Midnight Walk, in our hospice garden for patients and staff and release their annual charity single to raise much needed funds. To date they have raised a £18,000 for Hospice services. We cannot thank them enough"

Allison, The Southern Area Hospice.

"Singing with the choir is like medicine for my heart and soul"
Linda, The Uplifted Choir



"Joining choir is the best thing I've ever done. It has truly enriched my life and I have formed some wonderful friendships along the way"
Donna Blevins, The Uplifted Choir

"Singing and choir is my life. It has afforded me so many wonderful opportunities. In 2021 under our vocal teacher Kathy's guidance, I reached the final of The Voice Kids. Since then I have gone from strength to strength and am delighted to be working on my debut album with my production team. Choir really has shaped me into the performer I am today and I am incredibly grateful for being part of something so magical".

Emily Jane Flanagan, The Shining Light Gospel Choir