

Trinity Singers AGM minutes

Meeting held at Churchill Primary School on Tuesday 27th February 2024, 21:00

Apologies from members

Margaret Avery, Susannah Read, Belinda May, Judith Taylor, Jane Stidard, Di Low

Members present

Rebecca Wimshurst, Sarah Gunn, Anne Seabright, Stacey Stockden, Joanna Mills, Clare Turner, Elizabeth Spiller, Jenny Bott, Suzie Leech, Sue Watson, Sal Varley, Georgina Yule, Roger Ellery, Simon Medd, Phil Willis, Jo Alvis, Roy Stickland, Nick Varley, Steve Hutchinson, Martin West, Bob Shapland, Katherine Hatch-Morelli, Anya Sitaram, Margaret Leimdorfer, Sarah Pearson, Valerie Pain, Andrew Tyrell

The minutes below summarise the comments from a quorate Annual General Meeting.

Adoption of 2023 AGM Minutes

Accepted by the members, no comments received from members.

Chairman report

Bob Shapland read out the following:

Trinity Singers enters its 25th year of making music in North Somerset! More of that later. 2023 was our first year as a Registered Charity* and you will recall that a new Constitution was approved at last year's AGM. This whole process had required a great deal of effort by the Committee in the months beforehand and was a big step for the choir to take but, I believe, a good one.

Membership had declined during the "Covid years" so I am particularly pleased to report that our numbers have begun to increase again. A big welcome to our new members and I do hope you are enjoying singing with us and that we can continue to increase towards our historic level of around 40. To that end, during the year we issued a number of Press Releases encouraging participation, and also asked members to be on the lookout for possible singers. This will continue.

Andrew will comment more on the musical aspects but, as a reminder, we put on a concert at All Saints, Wrington, in March, our first visit to Sandford Station for some time in June, and then a joint concert at All Saints, Weston, with Costanzi Consort in October. All of these events were different in style, and I believe that they provided the varied, and enjoyable, repertoire which is a theme of Trinity Singers.

Christmas was as busy as ever, with singing for Weston Hospicecare's "Light up a Life" service, our Carol Service in Burrington, followed by the Supper Concert, and then "Street Carolling" in Wrington. The latter has now become a regular event and is well supported by locals in Wrington.

Although we did a trial rehearsal at St Mary's it was decided to continue rehearsing at Churchill Primary School.

Looking ahead, we have two Sunday afternoon concerts to look forward to this year plus, of course, our 25th Anniversary celebration at All Saints Weston. Our current plan is to repeat the Sandford Station event (this time on a Sunday afternoon) and all the Christmas events as previously.

I want to thank all those who provide specific help with rehearsals and events but we are always happy to have more offers!

Thanks also to the Committee / Trustees for their work as a whole, and for the specific roles undertaken.

Please always feel free to express your views, or pass on suggestions, to me or any other member of the committee. We really appreciate all input.

On your behalf I express our thanks to Andrew. The amount of work he puts in to researching repertoire, planning rehearsals, providing rehearsal support, and then encouraging us to perform to a high standard (albeit not usually achieved until the day!) is enormous and unseen.

Finally, my thanks to all of you for making Trinity Singers such an enjoyable, and friendly, choir of which to be a member.

*It was also noted in Bob's presentation that if and when we add in gift aid to our income, it will likely give us approximately an additional £900 per year.

Musical Director Report

Andrew was pleased to report it has been another year of doing what our choir does really well: engaging with a huge amount of music from a wide variety of styles; working hard preparing the music both at home and in rehearsal; giving its MD sleepless nights; and then rising triumphantly to the occasion of public performance!

Last March Trinity Singers gave a performance at All Saints Wroughton of a programme of Baroque & Classical music – Handel's 'Zadok the Priest' and 'My heart is inditing', the Mozart 'Coronation Mass' and Henry Purcell's extraordinary 'Funeral Sentences'. A long-time follower came up to Andrew after the concert and said this was the best she'd ever heard TS sound.

In June we gave a short concert in the restaurant atrium at St Monica's, Sandford Station, which Andrew thought was quite a treat. He thought the audience were genuinely taken aback that we were as good as we were, and immediately invited us back.

Our October concert at All Saints, Weston - the programme of C17th & C20th English music given with Costanzi Consort - was, for Andrew, one of those stand-out events that come by from time to time, with our two choirs combining wonderfully, and the added luxury of the strings of Lochrian Ensemble together with Claire Alsop on organ.

At Christmas, we performed at the Burrington carol service, the supper concert and community carol-singing at Wroughton.

The choir has had lots of music to get to grips with and has responded with some very fine music-making — some majestic, really expressive and musical performances despite, at times, our numbers not being what we'd wish.

The last year or so has been a time of flux in terms of choir numbers: we've lost a fair handful of members – a result of family and other commitments, moving away from the area, or just needing to cut down on evening activities – and there have been times when it's been a worry. Fewer members means a smaller income from subs, so less available to spend on concerts; it also means we're unable to programme those major choral works that demand a large choir to be properly effective. The bottom line for Andrew is, and always has been, that TS give the best account it possibly can of any piece of music we programme: partly this is for our own enjoyment & benefit, partly for the audience's too, but equally - perhaps more so - that we are doing right by the composers whose work we are appropriating.

Giving the very best account of a work that we can comes down to members learning their vocal line fully and then singing with energy and commitment, which allows Andrew to shape what's going on into, hopefully, a convincing and expressive whole.

A while ago our numbers were a cause for concern. In recent months, we've been very pleased to welcome new recruits to our soprano, alto and tenor sections. In terms of bums on seats we are still

down a bit on basses, and still have room for more tenors too, but things certainly seem rosier than they did.

Coming up in March we have our Sunday afternoon concert in Yatton (on 'Birds, beasts and the natural world'), then our big 25th anniversary concert in May of Saint-Saens, Franck, Dvorak & Janacek, with strings, organ and harp. Then in July our return visit to Sandford Station before we break for the summer. Much to enjoy, he hopes.

He asked us all to keep doing what we do, and allow ourselves a decent dollop of pride in the fact that what we do, we do very well.

Treasurer Report

Sarah provided members with copies of the 2023 accounts and 2024/25 budget.

2023 Accounts

Headline: we made a profit of £600 in 2023 (without any Gift Aid). Year-end bank balance approx. £7000. Further explanation provided about our Making Music membership: it provides us with insurance, advice such as moving to charitable status, events.

Accounts proposed: Steve Hutchinson

Accounts seconded: Elizabeth Spiller

Accounts approved by all members

All members voted in favour of the 2023 accounts (no abstentions).

2024/2025 budget

In summary, the budget proposed is asking members for approval to lose some money in 2024 to pay for the 25th anniversary concert. We could be £1600 down on the 2024 budget if the concert loses the money budgeted/

Budget proposed: Katherine Hatch-Morelli

Budget seconded: Valerie Pain

All members voted in favour of the 2024/205 budget (no abstentions).

Election of Trustees

The constitution states 1/3 of trustees must stand down each year, but they can put themselves forward again for re-election.

Trustees standing down and putting themselves forward again were: Bob Shapland, Susannah Read, Elizabeth Spiller, Sally Varley

Trustees nominated above were proposed by Nick Varley

Trustees nominated above were seconded by Suzie Leech

All Trustees putting themselves forward for re-election were re-elected by all members present at the AGM (no abstentions).

Other Trustees who will remain in post are: Suzie Leech, Nick Varley, Sarah Pearson

Any Other Business

- I. Weston Hospice have asked us to sing at their Christmas Fair 25 November. Bob asked for a show of hands from those who think they could commit; not many members were able to commit. Furthermore Andrew Tyrell said he was not available due to another commitment, so we will not commit to singing at the event.
- II. Bob explored with the members present if setting up a members' WhatsApp social chat would be welcome. There was a mixed reaction. It was noted that it could be useful for planning lifts & sending last minute messages (broadcasts), but people are already part of a lot of WhatsApp groups.
- III. Georgina said she had 100% of music returned.
- IV. Other venues in which to perform concerts was raised by members. Leonard Cheshire and Tyntesfield were suggested. Leonard Cheshire has closed down. Jo Alvis said she may have an inroad to Tyntesfield through Johnny Alvis and will follow this up with him and let Bob know. Bob asked members to always suggest new venues we haven't considered and/or are not using if they think of any which might be suitable.
- V. Nick thanked Bob for all his work as Chair.

The meeting closed at 21:35