



**Patron: Samuel West**  
**Music Director: Darius Battiwalla**  
Registered Charity No. 518073  
Music Director : Darius Battiwalla  
Patron : Samuel West

## **ANNUAL REPORT OF SHEFFIELD PHILHARMONIC CHORUS 2012**

### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Following its highly successful 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday season and celebrations, 2011-12 was indeed an Olympian season for the Chorus. The year has yet again shown the Chorus pursuing excellence and innovation, which at times has pushed many of us well beyond our comfort zones. As a Chorus, we have:

- Led, and performed in, the Alight Festival - part of Music Nation, a Countdown event for the London 2012 Festival, the finale of the Cultural Olympiad, for the Yorkshire region on 3 March 2012. This gave us an unparalleled opportunity to raise the Chorus's profile locally, regionally and nationally, via networking with over one thousand other musicians and performers, and via publicity on local and national radio.
- Commissioned two brand new works for this, and participated in their world premières as part of Alight; that one of these commissions was composed for us by our own member, Yaron Hollander, was particularly pleasing and exciting.
- Successfully promoted, and with our friends from Halifax Choral Society, participated in, a concert of works by living composers: Karl Jenkins The Armed Man, and Philip Wilby's Bronte Mass. Philip Wilby's attendance was the icing on the cake, and we were delighted that he made time to be with us for this very special event; the collaboration of the Medina Mosque was yet another highlight of a most unusual and innovative performance.
- Launched the Friends of Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus, which we hope will provide greater financial stability and sustainability for the Chorus in the future.
- Continued to support local and national charities – St Luke's Hospice, Sheffield Royal Society for the Blind, and Heart Research UK.
- Provided music for five weddings.
- Held the national launch, by BBC's Disability Affairs Correspondent Peter White, of our Singclude project to improve access to seating areas for singers with significant mobility impairments. On the back of this, we are thrilled that Peter will be compèring our Christmas Concerts on 8 December, and we very much look forward to welcoming him back to Sheffield.
- Been "Local Leaders" in the Olympic Torch Relay, by offering community singing opportunities to the crowd as they lined the streets of Parson Cross. As Chairman of the Chorus I felt enormously honoured to carry the Olympic flame on this occasion, nominated by Kate Reece and sung on my way by enthusiastic Chorus colleagues!

The coming few months sees us spreading our wings to perform concerts outside Sheffield:



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22 September is a most prestigious occasion as we broadcast Sir Arthur Bliss's Beatitudes for the first time from the venue for which they were written - Coventry Cathedral, as part of its golden Jubilee celebrations.

Then on 13 October we have a long-cherished and awaited opportunity to join forces with Leicester Philharmonic Choir in a performance of Borodin's Polovtsian Dances and Prokofiev's Alexander Nevsky.

The remaining concerts in the season, as detailed in Janet Bower's report, include not only four City Hall performances but the first of what we hope will become a regular performance in the new annual season of concerts in the recently refurbished St Marie's Cathedral. A former member of the Chorus, Silviu Cobeanu, is responsible for populating this series and we hope our performance of Rachmaninov's Vespers will initiate a significant collaboration with yet another important Sheffield venue.

We also have the intriguing prospect of getting accustomed to a new rehearsal venue from September, after major and prolonged discussions during last season. We have found the Springs Academy excellent in almost every aspect apart from its location, which we believe may be having a detrimental effect on our ongoing efforts to maintain recruitment of new members. We are hoping that the newly refurbished King Edward VII School will provide equally good facilities but in a much better location for us. I would like to thank most sincerely Darius, Nigel, Maggie, all the Officers, Committee Members and Section Reps, along with many others who continue to help the Chorus in various ways. I salute your tireless efforts and hope you never feel taken for granted. I continue to view it as the most enormous privilege to lead the Chorus as your Chairman, and once again thank you all for your hard work and commitment to the Chorus, and your personal support, encouragement, suggestions and views which I have received during the last year. To conclude on the Olympic theme, I believe the Chorus is characterised by excellence, friendship and community, and I hope these will continue to be our hallmark as we move into the future.

Julie Smethurst  
Chorus Chairman



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## **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

### **2011-12 SEASON**

This extraordinary Season started with an exhilarating performance of 'Belshazzar's Feast' under the direction of our Music Director Darius Battiwalla. David Soar supported our narration of the dramatic story with a wonderful performance.

The City Hall's Carol Concert was again a two concert event and there were no fewer than seven other opportunities for Members to sing carols over the Christmas period. These included two sessions at Sheffield Rail Station, the annual visit to Tickhill Parish Church (now known as 'Tickhill Carols') and a new event for us - the Victorian Market at Kelham Island Industrial Museum.

In February we had the moving and affecting 'Requiem' by Gabriel Faure. There were superb performances by our soloists with a breathtaking rendition by Ella Taylor in the Pie Jesu.

The tour de force was 'Alight', an amazing event masterminded by Rachel Mallaband in response to the BBC's challenge to take part in the Cultural Olympiad. Rachel put together a commendable application, and won for SPC the privilege of leading Sheffield's participation in this unique celebration.

Yaron Hollander, 1<sup>st</sup> Bass, composed one of two works written especially for Alight. Music and dance was performed all over the City centre creating a spectacular occasion. It is a great credit to all those who participated that the event was a resounding success and Members gave unstinting support to the whole weekend. Our thanks go to Rachel and Yaron for their outstanding commitment.

The season was rounded off in April by staging our own concert in the City Hall and it was a pleasure to invite Halifax Choral Society to share the platform with us along with the wonderful Black Dyke Band and our own Darius Battiwalla. We last joined HCS and Black Dyke in Birmingham for a terrific DVD recording of The Armed Man and this was the work performed again.

In addition to 'The Armed Man' we performed the rather tricky and very new 'Bronte Mass' before its composer, Philip Wilby. We had some valuable help, prompted by Peter Quarrell, from the Medina Mosque in Sheffield who provided a young Muezzin to sing the Call to Prayer, which he did most effectively.

Ticket sales were very slow at first but after much anxiety the figures increased at the last minute and we sang to a very respectable number. While it was our own production we did have some very welcome help from Tom Stayte at SIV, and the staff there were most supportive.



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## SINGCLUDE

After purchasing the much appreciated stair climber last year we were able to hold the national launch of the 'Singclude' project in January and were delighted that Peter White, BBC's Disability Affairs Correspondent, was able to cut the tape on the stairclimber in front of about 50 invited guests in the grand surroundings of the City Hall's Memorial Hall which was kindly offered to us free of charge by Sheffield International Venues.

## OLYMPIC TORCH BEARER

We really are a privileged Choir because we have an Olympic Torch bearer at the helm. Kate Reece, 2<sup>nd</sup> Alto, and her husband Chris put our Chairman Julie Smethurst's name forward for selection and, of course, she was chosen. This has been a thrill not only to Julie herself but to many of us who cheered her on her way. In Julie's inimitable way she has shared the joy of her experience with so many including local children in Hillsborough Park after the Torch Relay on 25 June who were delighted to be able to hold the torch and be photographed with it. Furthermore, Julie has taken her torch into numerous local schools and given so much pleasure to the pupils.

## WEDDINGS

This summer we have been asked to sing at no fewer than five weddings - three of which were those of our own members. Congratulations to them all and many thanks to Rachel Copley for conducting the Singers on all these occasions - quite a commitment.

## 2012-13 SEASON

Of necessity this last season is overlapping with the next.

We have been asked by the BBC to sing 'The Beatitudes' by Sir Arthur Bliss, a work written for the dedication of the newly rebuilt Coventry Cathedral 50 years ago. In fact it has never been heard there because Britten's 'War Requiem' was performed on that occasion instead. The City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus was initially invited by the BBC to perform this for broadcast in the 50th Anniversary Year of the dedication of the new cathedral. They were otherwise engaged and so SPC was recommended because "they are reliable and good!"

The degree of difficulty presented by this work, as well as its scheduling for 22 September 2012 has meant having to start rehearsals for it quite early. Our men will be having their own moment of glory when they perform Schoenberg's "A Survivor from Warsaw". I heard a snippet of their rehearsal and that sounds a challenging piece, too!

The privilege of being invited to participate in this concert cannot be emphasized enough.



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Following our outing to Coventry, on 13 October 2012 we will be performing in the De Montfort Hall, Leicester to join Leicester Philharmonic Chorus in Prokofiev's 'Alexander Nevsky'. This dramatic work was brought to life for many of us by the late Sir Edward Downes who inspired us with his remarkable knowledge of the piece and of Russian history, and we look forward to performing it again.

For SPC the Sheffield International Concert Season 2012-13 will start with the annual Carol Concert in the City Hall on 8 December. As in the two previous seasons there will be two performances. This year we will have BBC Radio 4's Peter White compèreing and once more Black Dyke will accompany us with Darius Battiwalla and Nicholas Childs conducting.

The following week, on 15 December, we have a long awaited Messiah. It is now a number of years since this was performed in Sheffield City Hall and this time we will perform with Manchester Camerata and some excellent soloists all conducted by Darius Battiwalla.

In the New Year we go straight into rehearsals for Rachmaninov's 'Vespers'. We sang this a few years ago in Sheffield Cathedral and again in Lincoln Cathedral. This time Darius Battiwalla will conduct us in Sheffield's St. Marie's RC Cathedral on Friday 8 March 2013. In the same concert we hope also to perform Kodaly's Missa Brevis.

The Season will end on 2<sup>nd</sup> June when we will be in the City Hall to sing Vaughan Williams' 'Sea Symphony'. It is a powerful and evocative work and we will be joined by the Hallé, conducted by Cristian Mandeal.

#### EXTRA TO THE SEASON

On Tuesday 4 December we will be singing carols at Sheffield Rail Station in aid of Heart Research UK.

Tickhill Carols will be on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December at Tickhill Parish Church. This popular concert is open to all so do check your diary and join us. We hope to have Darius playing the organ and Sue Morton with some seasonal readings. The profits this year will go to 'Lost Chord'.

#### RECRUITMENT

Our perennial recruitment drive will be reinforced by another programme of Men's Sight Reading Workshops. These will commence on 16 October 2012 at 6.30pm and, as always, they are free of charge so do encourage any potential tenors or basses who may wish to consider joining us. Also please let Rachel Mallaband know if there are any specific organizations that we should be targeting to advertise the workshops, particularly if you have a named contact you can offer us.

Low numbers of tenors are now significantly influencing what repertoire we can perform to an appropriate standard, so it is crucial that we recruit more of them.



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## REHEARSAL VENUE

The great debate of the rehearsal venue has at last been resolved and from Tuesday 4 September 2012 at 7.00pm our regular venue will be the King Edward VII School on Glossop Road, Sheffield S10 2PW.

## VACANCY

Impending crisis – can you help? In the next couple of months Rachel Mallaband will stand down from her role as our Marketing and Publicity Officer, and as I write this we have no-one to cover her work, so from October the Chorus will simply not be able to promote itself or its concerts. If you feel you have any ability at all to write press releases, copy for flyers, keep the Chorus's biography up to date for concert programmes, etc, please would you very seriously consider offering your services immediately. The job could be shared, and is a team role working with Peter Miles on graphics, Kirsty Christer on website content, Janet and Julie on editorial content, Kate Reece on distribution and contacts, and others, so you will have plenty of support. Please contact Julie or Janet immediately if you think you can help – I cannot sufficiently emphasize how important it is to fill Rachel's shoes with the utmost urgency.

## FRIENDS OF SPC

Thank you to all who have "found a friend" so far – we have now a handful of Friends and a smaller but significant group of Friends For Life. May we encourage you to carry on seeking Supporters, Friends and Friends For Life, as the financial future of the Chorus depends on them. We still have more leaflets available or you can refer people to the Friends page on our website. We will shortly be needing someone to become the Chairman of the Friends, and then a management committee will need to be established. This does not have to consist of Chorus members, although it could do or could include some, so if you have ideas, or want to volunteer to help with the Friends' organization please let one of the Committee or your Section Rep know.

There is no doubt that it has been a very busy and, I know for some, an arduous season, both musically and logistically, but everyone has risen to the challenge. The forthcoming season shows no respite but I'm convinced that with the same degree of commitment and dedication we will show everyone that we are all rightly proud to be members of Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus.

Janet Bower  
Chorus Administrator



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## FINANCE OFFICER'S REPORT

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus - Financial report 2012

We start the new season with a healthy income from a very busy year. The main strands of income have come from donations, The Friends of SPC and fundraising.

When I budgeted for the 2011-12 season, I was very worried about the outcomes of the Alight events and our self-promoted concert as these were unknown quantities. The April concert in particular, was financially quite stressful as we were struggling to sell tickets until the last week before the actual event and we owe a big thank you to the generous donation we received from Julie Smethurst and her mother as this helped greatly with narrowing our losses.

Subscriptions always prove tricky to collect and account for. May I remind members that if you have any problems paying the full amount, you can just talk to me and we can decide on an appropriate level of subscription together. As in previous years I was STILL collecting subs in March. This really does make my job a bit harder than it needs to be, especially as I also have a REAL job, which is quite demanding and a family!

As the nature of our concert seasons is changing rapidly and we, as an organisation, are asked to take more and more financial risks, as members we need to accept more responsibility in raising funds for the SPC. We do not envisage receiving any big donations this year (and in fact we cannot predict when these will ever come), so we need to turn to other ways to increase our income without necessarily putting our subscription rate up.

The Friends of Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus should, in my opinion, be the avenue through which increase our funds. We have a few donors who have become Friends of SPC, but all of us should set ourselves as a target to raise at least our subscription rate again through encouraging friends and families to join "The Friends".

Paying members	Numbers
Full sub	157
Reduced	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>171</b>

Fundraising income	
Music & CDs	£555.10
Mugs	£440.00
Christmas cards	£720.00
Christmas	£113.50
Amazon	£331.54
75th Anniversary	£50.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2210.14</b>

Angela Argenzio  
 Finance Officer







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**Appendix 1 Alight Daylight Accounts**

	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>Income Categories</b>			
Budget income		1000	
Tickets sale	336		
Tickets and programmes sales	374		
<b>Total Income Categories</b>	<b>710</b>		<b>-290</b>
<b>Expense Categories</b>			
Budget expense		1500	
Hire of Victoria Hall	200		
Conductor fee	500		
Soloist fee Tenor	150		
Organist fee	300		
Horn players fee	200		
Printing	86		
<b>Total Expense Categories</b>	<b>1436</b>		<b>64</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>-726</b>	<b>-500</b>	<b>-226</b>



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**Appendix 2 Armed Man Accounts**

	Actual	Budget	Difference
<b>Income Categories</b>			
Tickets sale	14700	12852	1848
Advertising/ sponsorship	2490	2445	45
Sales of programmes	923.97	700	223.97
<b>Total Income Categories</b>	<b>18113.97</b>	<b>15997</b>	<b>2116.97</b>
<b>Expense Categories</b>			
Hire of Irwin Mitchell Hall	6000	6000	0
Stewarding cost*	1391.23	1440	48.77
Band Fee	4920	4920	0
Conductor fee	1100	1200	100
Soloist fee	750	750	0
Organist fee	250	200	-50
Harpist fee	200	200	0
Trisha Cooper	120	100	-20
N Castledine fee	250	250	0
Mosque Donation	250	250	0
Projection equipment & technical support	1116	1116	0
Rigging of tired seating	1184.40	1200	15.60
Stage manager (T Stayte)	144	150	6
Programmes	655	700	45
Catering	433.50	0	-433.50
Gifts	21.20	0	-21.20
Band music	56	0	-56
Contingency	0	970	970
<b>Total Expense Categories</b>	<b>18841.33</b>	<b>19446</b>	<b>604.67</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>-727.36</b>	<b>-3449</b>	<b>2721.64</b>



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## MEMBERSHIP OFFICER'S REPORT

The statistics reproduced below in this report are derived from the computerised Chorus Database.

### Composition of the Chorus

As at the date of compilation of this report (September 2012) there are 183 singing members of the Chorus (August 2011 – 195) and 66 Honorary Members (2011 – 67). Of the 183 singing members 10 (2011 – 10) are on an authorised Leave of Absence.

The Chorus numbers break down as follows:

	2011/12	2010/11	
1 <sup>st</sup> Sopranos	37	39	(0 on LoA)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sopranos	32	30	(1 on LoA)
1 <sup>st</sup> Altos	31	32	(2 on LoA)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Altos	22	27	(2 on LoA)
1 <sup>st</sup> Tenors	10	10	(2 on LoA)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tenors	11	13	(0 on LoA)
1 <sup>st</sup> Basses	24	25	(1 on LoA)
2 <sup>nd</sup> Basses	16	19	(2 on LoA)

### Resignations, Retirements and Deaths

During the year 2011/12 18 members retired or resigned or were written off the record due to unexplained absence for more than a year (2010/11 – 11) comprising:

	2011/12	2010/11
1 <sup>st</sup> Sopranos	2	1
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sopranos	2	2
1 <sup>st</sup> Altos	3	3
2 <sup>nd</sup> Altos	4	0
1 <sup>st</sup> Tenors	0	1
2 <sup>nd</sup> Tenors	3	0
1 <sup>st</sup> Basses	1	4
2 <sup>nd</sup> Basses	3	0



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## New Members

During the year 2011/12 11 new members (2010/11 – 25) were successfully auditioned and joined the Chorus comprising:

		2011/12	2010/11
1 <sup>st</sup>	Sopranos	1	5
2nd	Sopranos	5	2
1st	Altos	3	5
2nd	Altos	0	2
1st	Tenors	0	2
2nd	Tenors	0	3
1st	Basses	1	5
2nd	Basses	1	1

One 1st Tenor successfully auditioned but did not take up membership.

## Concert Attendance

A detailed breakdown of the concert attendance statistics is attached to this report as an Appendix.

Just a few points may be highlighted.

- 1 Chorus Members who have sought a formal Leave of Absence are excluded from the figures. Casual apologies are counted as absences.
- 2 I have the rehearsal records but no concert attendance record for the Wilby concert in Halifax on 1 April 2012.
- 3 The overall average Chorus attendance at Concerts for the whole season was 64.9% of those Members currently available.  
(2010/11– 75.8%)
- 4 The best attended concert was the Faure concert on 25/2/2012 at 71.6%  
(2010/11 Elgar - Dream of Gerontius on 4/11/2010 at 96.7%)
- 5 The worst attended concert was the Alight concert on 3/3/2012 at 46.1%  
(2010/11 Verdi Requiem concert in Leeds Town Hall on 21/5/2011 at 54.7%)
- 6 The best section attendance at a concert was the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bass on 7/10/ 2012 at 87.5%  
(2010/11 2<sup>nd</sup> Sopranos and 2<sup>nd</sup> Tenors jointly at the Elgar on 4/11/2012 at 100%).
- 7 The worst section attendance at a concert was 2<sup>nd</sup> Tenors on 3/3/2012 at 9.1% (only just saving the 1<sup>st</sup> Tenors' blushes!)  
(2010/11 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Tenors at the Verdi Requiem concert in Leeds on 21/5/2011 at 54.7%)



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## **Honorary Members**

There were no new Honorary Members approved by the Committee during the year. (2011/12 – 2).

I have been advised of the death of one Honorary Member who died some years ago and whose details have now been removed from the record..

## **Automated Registration**

The system appears to be working satisfactorily and does save me some time and effort as well as reducing the number of errors. I would remind members that it will always be there; a registration computer if the location is secure enough or manual sheets if it is not. If it's position is not immediately obvious it may have had to be moved for practical purposes – but it will be there somewhere. If you cannot see it immediately, please just ask.

I shall be printing new membership cards for 2012/13 for all Chorus members and these will be issued by the Finance Officer on receipt of the annual subscription paid at the appropriate rate. These cards now have extra information written into the bar codes which will enable the system to reject a registration where a subscription is outstanding beyond the period allowed for renewal by the Finance Officer.

## **Re-auditions**

Re-auditions continue on the usual three yearly cycle. The Soprano sections were re-auditioned over three sessions in July and I am very pleased to be able to report that every member of those sections who was re-auditioned was successful. There were just a few people who were not able to attend for various reasons and I shall arrange for them to be re-auditioned before the rehearsals in the first few weeks of next season.

The Alto sections will be due for their triennial re-audition session in the Summer of 2012 and I shall be very grateful if section members will sign up for their slots when advertised as soon as possible in order to keep the number of 'catch up' re-auditions to the very minimum.

I would remind all members that if they have not been heard after they have been called for re-audition then they may not sing in subsequent concerts without obtaining specific permission from the Music Director.

## **Voice Representatives**

The team of Voice Representatives are invaluable to me and I must not fail to record my annual public expression of sincere gratitude to each and all of them for the work they do. They are my 'eyes and ears' to the Chorus.



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## **Conclusion**

The Jenkins/Wilby concert on 28 April 2012 brought to a close one of perhaps the most difficult 6 month periods that I believe anyone who has ever had to fulfil the duties of Membership Officer for this Chorus has had to deal with. At one point, because of the schedule of parallel rehearsals, I was actually running six separate attendance records (seven if you also count the forthcoming Bliss concert for which I had already had to record occasional apologies and LoA requests). That one or two things went slightly awry is perhaps understandable and only to be expected but I think that, overall, the system, and I, bore up reasonably well under the pressure. There were a few points which became obvious could do with improving, especially where there are so many  $\frac{1}{2}$  &  $\frac{1}{2}$  rehearsals where a great deal of work was duplicated, and I have already given and will be giving much thought in the near future to how these areas might be improved.

May I also remind members that they undertake to sing in all concerts and should attend at least three quarters of rehearsals for each. Please make concert dates a priority and let me know well in advance if you are unable to take part. In the event of an illness or other emergency please telephone me before 11:00 am on the morning of the concert or inform another Chorus member so that I can adjust the seating plan.

My telephone numbers are 0114 230 4815 and 07711 846571 and my email addresses are either [john@johnspence.plus.com](mailto:john@johnspence.plus.com) or [membership@sheffieldphil.org](mailto:membership@sheffieldphil.org). All this information is prominently displayed on the website. For those of you who can communicate on the free BlackBerry Instant Messaging service my PIN is 25E81C1E.

Please also continue to inform me of changes of address and illness of members that come to your notice.

I should also remind members that, in the event that they do not complete the required three quarters of rehearsals, I do not have the power to waive the requirement under any circumstances. This should only be done by the Music Director on direct application by email to him.

**John M Spence**  
**October 2012**



## APPENDIX

	S1	S2	A1	A2	T1	T2	B1	B2	Concert Total
<b>7/10/2011</b>									
<b>Belshazzar's Feast – City Hall</b>									
Attended	25	25	20	11	6	8	17	14	126
Total available	35	30	27	23	10	13	23	16	177
%age	71.4	83.3	74.1	47.8	60.0	61.5	73.9	87.5	71.2
<b>10/12/2011</b>									
<b>Christmas Concerts – City Hall</b>									
Attended	30	17	18	15	4	7	16	11	118
Total available	36	31	27	24	8	11	24	14	175
%age	83.3	54.8	66.7	62.5	50.0	63.6	66.7	78.6	67..4
<b>25/2/2012</b>									
<b>Faure Requiem – City Hall</b>									
Attended	25	20	24	18	4	6	19	10	126
Total available	37	30	28	22	9	11	25	14	176
%age	67.6	66.7	85.7	81.8	44.4	54.5	72.0	71.4	71.6



	S1	S2	A1	A2	T1	T2	B1	B2	Concert Total
<b>3/3/2012</b>									
<b>Alight - City Hall</b>									
Attended	18	17	14	11	3	1	13	5	82
Total available	37	31	28	21	11	11	25	14	178
%age	48.6	54.8	50.0	52.4	27.3	9.1	42.0	35.7	46.1
<b>1/4/2012</b>									
<b>Wilby – Halifax Town Hall</b>									
Attended	Figures not available								
Total available	Figures not available								
%age	Figures not available								
<b>28/4/2012</b>									
<b>Jenkins / Wilby – City Hall</b>									
Attended	25	21	21	17	4	6	16	10	120
Total available	37	31	26	23	10	10	25	14	176
%age	67.6	67.7	80.8	73.9	40.0	60.0	64.0	71.4	68.2





## MARKETING AND PUBLICITY OFFICER'S REPORT

The role of Marketing & Publicity for the Chorus continues to draw together three strands of work undertaken by Committee members; namely, maintaining a suitable and high-level Chorus profile, promotion for specific events and concerts, and marketing the Chorus with the aim of attracting new members. This latter strand has long been recognised as being of vital importance to the longevity of SPC and an Education and Outreach Officer has now been appointed to lead this strand.

Since last years' report SPC have:

- Continued to build on the image of SPC being the première Sheffield choir by engaging with The Lord Mayor Cllr Sylvia Dunkley as a host for an *Alight: Daylight* concert in the Town Hall on 03.03.12, and by her attendance at the Armed Man/Bronte Mass concert in her official capacity.
- Continued to enjoy good working relations with Northends regarding our programme submissions and the printing of publicity materials.
- Continued to build upon our good working relations with the City Hall for SPC promotion including:
  - Devising a SPC specific tear-out page included in the Sheffield International Concert Season (SICS) 2012-2013 brochure (distributed to over 10,000 recipients) for the second year running,
  - Providing an 'In Conversation' event prior to the Armed Man/Brontë Mass concert with the composer Philip Wilby, and
  - Receiving pro-active promotion of SPC events as shown by SIV's interest in promoting the *Armed Man* concert and providing favourable terms for both the national *Singclude* launch and the *Alight: Twilight* show making it possible for these to be held in the Memorial Hall and Oval Hall respectively.
- Continued to build upon SPC's electronic presence via our website, Facebook and Twitter therefore improving the accessibility of the Chorus to new members and audiences (NB - Solely due to Kirsty's continued excellent, tireless work in this area).
- Achieved substantial media coverage and publicity for SPC including:
  - Oct '11 - Inclusion of SPC in an article in Profile magazine previewing the Sheffield International Concert Season 2011-12 (pgs 58-60).
  - Dec '11 - Christmas concert editorial in the December 2011 edition of Profile magazine (pg. 83).
  - 22.04.12 – BBC Radio Sheffield interview with Peter Quarrell promoting the Armed Man/Bronte Mass concert.
  - 23.08.12 Sheffield Telegraph (pg.26) – preview article for The Beatitudes
  - Various pre- and post-concert articles in the Sheffield Telegraph.
  - Various articles and coverage related to Chairman Julie Smethurst's role as an Olympic Torch bearer on 25 June.



- Additionally, SPC gained both local and national media coverage regarding the Alight festival, including:
  - 03.11.2011 Sheffield Telegraph (pg. 23)
  - 07.11.11 BBC Radio Sheffield Drivetime interview by Dean Pepall
  - 10.11.2011 Sheffield Telegraph (pg. 23)
  - 03.03.12 BBC Radio Sheffield Breakfast Programme interview
  - 03.03.12 BBC Radio 3. Five minute+ article including pre-recorded excerpts from the final dress rehearsal of Alight: Twilight in the City Hall and interviews with participants of various Alight: Daylight events
  - 03.03.12 BBC Radio 3, live interview by Suzie Klein following the Alight: Twilight show at the City Hall.

Additionally this year the Chorus:

- Formally launched the Friends of SPC.
- Held a national launch of our Singclude project, hosted by the BBC's Peter White.
- Commissioned 2 new works for the Alight festival; SPC member Yaron Hollander's Everyone Sang and Timothy Allen's Olympic Triptych – both of which received their world première's on 3rd March 2012
- Commissioned a musical show, Alight: Twilight which received its world première on 3rd March 2012.
- Bid for, won, organised all aspects of, and produced a music, dance and visual arts festival Alight. Further details of which are available at Annex A.
- Produced a unique SPC Christmas card for 2011 featuring the artwork of soprano Angela Wade.

### **2012-2013 marketing and publicity schedule**

In order to continue a co-ordinated approach to the 3 elements of Marketing & Publicity a schedule for the coming season has again been devised that aids the completion of various required tasks within the necessary timescales. This is attached as Annex B.

There are a number of items on the schedule that require additional support to come to fruition; for example, attendance at festivals, creation of a photo gallery and support of the Education and Outreach team in targeting potential new members. Additionally, support will be required to effectively market our self-promoted Rachmaninov *Vespers* concert in March 2013. It is hoped this new partnership with the Cathedral Church of St Marie may lead to future events, making a successful first venture even more important. Your help in offering time and/or expertise in support of any of these areas would be greatly appreciated by the committee.



## Thanks

I continue to be hugely grateful for the high quality and substantial volume of work undertaken by the team of people working with myself as M&P Officer.

Particular mention must this year again go to Peter Miles for his designs for our excellent flyers, leaflets and posters. His expertise and generosity in offering his time for the Chorus should never be underestimated. His work is a major factor towards the professional image we are currently able to portray.

I thank Kirsty Christer for her continued offer of expertise, ideas and swift actioning of all website tasks, along with new developing social network elements that are now so necessary to SPC's promotion.

I cannot possibly miss Julie Smethurst from my thanks. Her constant support, ideas generated for press releases, media articles and countless other elements of input to the M&P work have been deeply appreciated and gratefully received. For those who may not be aware, Julie works tirelessly behind the scenes on many aspects of 'non-Chairman' SPC work. For example; by sheer personal force of will she has attained a place on a BBC Radio Sheffield panel with presenter Paulette Edwards. The group of local participants will discuss topical events on air. The first panel is due to be on 29 September so Julie will be using the opportunity to promote the Beatitudes concert, the Nevsky in Leicester and the men's workshops due to start on 16 October. This kind of link with the local media is essential for us to maintain the high profile we currently enjoy, and her initiative is most welcomed.

This year I feel it necessary to make a specific "thank you" to all those who helped me with the ridiculously large challenge that producing the *Alight* festival entailed. I cannot possibly name everyone but special mention must go to Ann Garbett, Jo Briddock and again, Julie. They helped me to '...keep my head when all about me were losing theirs...'. Their sanity, wise words, sheer hard work and personal support in trying times were sincerely appreciated, and will never be forgotten.

## Your new challenge?

Having undertaken this role for nearly 3 years I will be stepping down at the AGM to concentrate on my 'day job' and my family. I would urge anyone interested in taking on the role to have a go; it is satisfying work that is of vital importance to the Chorus. Do feel free to contact me or any member of the committee if you feel you would like to discuss what the role entails.

As always, if you have any ideas, thoughts or opinions, please do feel free to speak to me at rehearsals and/or email me at [Publicity@Sheffieldphil.org](mailto:Publicity@Sheffieldphil.org). I am always happy to hear of new angles for media approaches, workplaces we could target for recruitment purposes or events you feel we should have a presence at. In all these instances personal contacts really do make a difference so please don't underestimate the importance your contact could be to the future of the Chorus.

Rachel Mallaband  
Marketing & Publicity Officer



## ANNEX A

### **Extract from the Summary of Project document provided to the Arts Council regarding the Alight programme of events**

*Alight* was a day long musical celebration presented as part of Music Nation, a countdown event for the London 2012 Festival, the finale of the Cultural Olympiad, focusing on Sheffield and the region. Music Nation (led by BBC and LOCOG) was a weekend of music throughout the UK held on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

Our initial aims were to:

- Lead a music and dance festival style activity inspired by London 2012 in partnership with other Sheffield / local cultural organisations to develop creative activity in collaboration; and
- Bring together a partnership of amateur and professional groups/individuals to create, develop and participate in the project.

Our key objective was:

- To present the musical festival (of both classical and more genres) in a way that appealed to a broad audience and helped them to value and enjoy the creative activity. We hoped that people might come as spectators but leave as potential participants with knowledge of how they could get involved creatively in their city.

### **Achievement of aims**

*Alight* was highly successful in achieving collaboration between Sheffield / local cultural organisations. 41 separate organisations took part in the *Alight* festival, most of which had never worked with each other previously.

- 3 unique works were created especially for *Alight*:
  - Yaron Hollander's 4-part vocal song with accompaniment to the Sassoon poem "Everyone Sang";
  - Timothy Allen's "Olympic Triptych". A major 12 minute musical work written for the combined forces and talents available in the *Alight: Twilight* show. It featured over 500 local, amateur musicians and singers; and
  - Mark Langley's *Alight: Twilight* show. Written to interweave all the creative forces available with a light hearted historical narrative of the history of the City of Sheffield delivered by professional actors.
- Musical and dance groups from across Sheffield, and across genres took part in standalone performances and/or as part of the spectacular *Alight: Twilight* show. These events catered for all ages (pre-schoolers upwards), and for a variety of musical tastes; pop, big band, choral (classical and contemporary) and world music.
- The *Alight: Twilight* show was especially conceived to juxtapose classical music alongside popular music to appeal to a broad and inclusive audience. Likewise for the dance groups included in the show. Additionally, music and dance groups were paired together from the groups showing interest in participating, creating wholly new partnerships.
- The creative activity of young people was featured throughout the festival both for their high quality performances but also via the partnership with Sheffield Hallam University which led to the creation of the *Alight* brand, and the involvement of students in Events Management and Graphic Art undergraduate courses.



- Extensive elements of the day's activity were available free of charge and in places where passing public would be encouraged to stop and enjoy the celebration. Particular successes were achieved in the Winter Gardens, the Sheffield Train station, Weston Park Museum, and additionally, an unscheduled walk and dance by the 20-foot giants into the Peace Garden area of the city. These locations had high footfall and therefore high visibility of the acts being presented. A number of musical groups encouraged audience participation, which was well received.

### **Lessons learnt**

- Disparate and diverse amateur groups can be brought together effectively so long as a clear, comprehensive and cohesive purpose is communicated to all parties at an early point in the project, and sustained through to project delivery.
- Hard work, commitment (of time and resources), passion and effective communication of the core aims and objectives are key to leading a disparate group. The formation of a festival 'feel' is possible so long as there is a strong theme or inspiration upon which all events can be linked.
- Grouping the day into time sections – *Alight: Daylight*, *Alight: Twilight* and *Alight: Into the Night* was effective for both marketing and organisational purposes.
- *Alight: Into the Night* failed to come to fruition. This element of the festival was delegated to the Events Management undergraduates as part of their course. The purpose of the *Alight: Into the Night* segment was to engage with 11 – 18 year old students from local schools. Planning was left very late and engagement became highly unlikely. The event was therefore changed to be for local people aged 18 – 25 years, at which point it was intended that new local bands would be engaged with. Again, late planning due to the changes in this element of the programme led to a very low take up and the Events Management lecturer decided to cancel the *Alight: Into the Night* segment of the festival. Although highly disappointing for the festival, this was an exceptionally useful learning experience for the Events Management students and hence should be seen positively for the projects input to the local development of young people. Earlier engagement, mapping of the interdependencies that affected the timelines of this segment, and the need for a deeper understanding of the difficulties of gaining access to secondary school age children were the key learning points that the students took from this element of the project.
- A long lead to time to a project of this size is required – a minimum of a full calendar year of available working time. Time and resources are always finite. Hence full project scoping is essential at the outset with the need for strict boundaries and a willingness to appreciate that there are times when a small group of volunteers simply cannot deliver at a higher or greater capacity than that that was achieved with *Alight*.

### **Key achievements**

- Extensive positive feedback from diverse participants, corporate colleagues, audience members and members of the general public.
- Creation of a cohesive, highly accessible festival event created for and by Sheffield / local people in celebration of the Cultural Olympiad.
- A legacy of 3 unique creations: all of which received their world premieres on 3 March 2012 as part of *Alight*.



- A legacy of strong new musical and cultural relationships leading to new events already being planned; the first of which to celebrate the arrival of the Olympic Torch into Sheffield on 25 June 2012.

Rachel Mallaband  
Marketing and Publicity Officer



## **OUTREACH AND EDUCATION OFFICER'S REPORT**

When I heard at last year's AGM that the post covering Outreach & Education was vacant I really felt that I had to put myself forward - the word 'education' appearing in one of my job titles and 'outreach' in another! I soon discovered that recruitment too was part of the role, making it a bigger job than initially anticipated, especially as this is so important for us if we are to continue to develop and be able to sing the repertoire we would like.

To define the task ahead, I started by producing a 'strategy' defining priorities and identifying what needs to be done and when in order to achieve these. This has now been approved by the Committee and will help to guide recruitment, outreach and education work over the next three years. In doing this, it became clear that the work was more than one person alone could cope with and so a Recruitment, Outreach & Education (ROE) group has been formed comprising myself, Sally Turnbull, Elizabeth Charlesworth, Sue Pennington and Thomas Mitchell and it is already clear that this will be of great value.

SPC's involvement in 'Alight' earlier this year was invaluable in building our links with Sheffield Music Service who have now been appointed leaders of Sheffield's new 'Music Education Hub'. These 'hubs' are required to involve the voluntary sector and I am therefore representing SPC on the hub's 'Singing Group' which will help to maintain our place in the City's wider musical life and particularly its music education.

Julie's involvement in the Olympic torch relay provided us with a unique opportunity to involve schools in the area and I worked with Sarah Hyde and Julie to achieve this. As a result, pupils from Mansel, St Thomas More and Meynell Primary Schools and Wooley Wood Special School sang along the route, after which Julie went into these to show them her torch and talk about both this and her love of singing.

The current main focus is on the organisation and promotion of this autumn's Men's Singing Workshops which will run for 6 weeks starting on 16<sup>th</sup> October. The success of these is critical to the future of the Chorus so I would urge you to do all you can to point potential new tenors and basses towards these. We really do need them!

One area on which we need to get a grip is identifying the links we have into other relevant organisations through our members. So, later this year, you will all be asked to complete a short questionnaire recording the links you have into schools, churches, other choirs & instrumental groups and other organisations on which we might be able to build.

If any of you would like to know more about plans for recruitment, outreach and education, please do have a word with me – I can be found among the 1<sup>st</sup> Basses. Recruitment is such a key issue that the Committee has agreed that it would be better to have a specific Recruitment Officer to work alongside me and the other members of the ROE group. If this sounds as if it might be your kind of thing, please do have a word with me or Julie.

Paul Maddox  
Outreach and Education Officer



## **LIBRARIAN'S REPORT**

It was an interesting year trying to find sufficient copies of some of the rather more unusual music on the program last season.

The main worry, which was a major and very real concern, was that we lost our main source of scores to hire. Fortunately the crisis involving the future of the Yorkshire Music Library has been resolved.

The campaign to save the collection, mainly orchestrated by Making Music and the National Federation of Music Societies, together with pleas from more than 2,000 choirs, bands, orchestras and drama groups, as well as many individuals finally had a satisfactory outcome.

The music collection is now housed in Huddersfield and run by Fresh Horizons, a Huddersfield based social enterprise. Not all systems are up and running yet. So far the terms and conditions have not changed. Thank you to all of you who supported the campaign.

Hiring music from other choirs is much more expensive.

For those members who at times grumble at the charges that we make for the hire of music, I can assure you that we only charge to cover the costs to us and no more. It is not used as a way of boosting the choir's finances.

**NOW FOR THE ANNUAL REMINDER** Sadly it appears that if scores are handed out without numbers being taken, due to time pressure or the sheer number of different items to be handed out, the return rate is lower and slower.

This obviously makes my job less pleasant and incurs significant costs for replacement scores.

Late returns, 2 weeks or more after the concert, will be charged at £5.00 per item, as before. Replacements will be charged at cost price, plus the cost of postage.

As always my thanks go to Howard Dore, Patricia Hall and all the other members who stepped into the breach during my absence.

Els Pearse  
Librarian





## **SOCIAL EVENTS OFFICER'S REPORT**

Following on from last year's 75<sup>th</sup> celebrations this year has been somewhat sparse in terms of social extravaganzas.

Once again we were joined by the band to enjoy mince pies and sherry in the interval of the Christmas concert. This year it was rather more cramped, we missed the space the Memorial Hall had offered the previous year.

The social in the City Bar after the Armed Man concert proved more popular than expected which also resulted in overcrowding and queues for the bar. There are lessons to be learnt by myself and the City Hall; however, I hope that such an event can be repeated.

The sun shone for Julie's few hundred yards of fame as an Olympic torch bearer and also the picnic which followed in Hillsborough Park. Julie very quickly became quite a celebrity with people queuing to have their photographs taken with her and to see and hold an Olympic torch for themselves. I'm not sure if Julie even had the chance to eat a crisp! It was a perfect way to end this atypical season which was partly influenced by our inclusion in the Cultural Olympiad.

I must just thank everyone who has helped me throughout the year, it really is appreciated as it makes my job so much easier.

Helen Kirk  
Social Events Officer



## FRIENDS OF SHEFFIELD PHILHARMONIC CHORUS REPORT

The launch of *Friends of Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus* has been well documented during the year and is mentioned already in this annual report. I would like to thank members of the steering committee who helped to establish the basics of the organisation and prepare it for launch in just a few months from my appointment.

The SPC committee's belief is that private fund raising and voluntary help from non-singing supporters will be essential to SPC in the future, if it is to expand its concert repertoire and gain a greater independence. My belief and recommendation to Committee at the time of launch was that active support by singing members – the 'Find a Friend' initiative - was essential to provide a significant critical mass of Friends & Supporters to set up the semi-independent resource which then, under its own momentum, could grow and assist SPC in the future.

Unfortunately, after quite a bright, but limited, start in the Autumn of 2011, the inevitable emphasis on demanding concerts and matters Olympian during the season has resulted in very little progress in recruitment being made over the past few months and I suspect that *The Friends* has slipped from the memory of most singing members – for example it receives no mention in the recently distributed 2012-2013 programme flyer.

I hope that a 're-launch' of the initiative can be organised this autumn and that the 2012-2013 season will prove to be the 'Year of the Friends' with a considerable increase in numbers in order to help the Chorus fulfil its objectives.

John Hyde  
Chairman, Friends Steering Committee