

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus – Who We Are and What We Do

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus (SPC or the Chorus) is a local music making charity which is also a member of Making Music, a national charity which supports music-making individuals and organisations, and Classical Sheffield, a local umbrella organisation for classical music-making in Sheffield.

Our Constitution sets out our charitable objects *'to advance the education of the general public in choral music by the regular performance of such music from the widest possible repertoire and such means as the Committee think fit'*.

Positive reviews and audience feedback confirm that we present high quality and innovative performances that are pleasurable cultural experiences for both audience and participants, even when we select difficult works that extend everyone's musical knowledge. Concerts are open to everyone, with fully accessible venues and concession prices for young people and those in receipt of benefits.

Chorus members greatly value the opportunity to engage in creative, enjoyable and fulfilling performances and recordings that help them to develop their vocal technique and musical repertoire. Singing membership is open to anyone who can sing to the required standard, and we do not exclude people on any other basis than their ability to sing. A number of registered blind people are valued members of the Chorus, and we have ensured that members with limited mobility are able to sing from the rather steep City Hall choir risers by buying and regularly using a stair-climber, which we share with the Montgomery Theatre. We offer special arrangements to those unable to pay the full subscription fee.

We are therefore confident that our activities meet the public benefit requirements set out in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006.

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus – How We Operate

SPC was an unincorporated charity (registration number 518073) until 17 October 2017 when it was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registration number 1175185. The assets of the unincorporated charity will be transferred to the CIO as soon as Gift Aid for payments have been processed, when the unincorporated charity will be wound up in accordance with the procedure required by the Charities Commission.

Our Constitution was agreed by the members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on 15 November 2016. It is based on the Charity Commission's 'Association' model and can only be amended at a meeting of all the members, which happened in October 2017 and again in November 2018.

Our Rules are not part of the formal Constitution, but form an Appendix to it. The Rules include arrangements for appointing the Music Director and Accompanist and for auditions and re-auditions, minimum attendance requirements, concert procedure, and the chorus dress code. The Rules were last updated in May 2018.

Our Trustees plan what we do, ensuring our activities benefit the public by meeting our charitable objects. Anyone can stand as a Trustee, as long as they are eligible under Charity Commission requirements. Trustees are normally elected by the members at the AGM, but may also be appointed by the existing Trustees.

The Trustees form a Chorus Committee, which meets approximately five times a year to plan and manage Chorus affairs. Trustees receive a Trustee Pack which includes guidance documents produced by the Charities Commission to help them understand and meet their responsibilities.

The Trustees appointed on 21 November 2017 were:

Chair: Paul Henstridge	Administrator: Anne Adams
Finance Officer: Graham Dawson	Membership Officer: John Spence
Librarian: Els Pearse	Minutes Secretary: Sue Pennington
New Members' Officer: Sally Turnbull	Marketing and Publicity Officer: Paul Bedwell
Social Events Officer: Helen Kirk	Education and Outreach Officer: Georgina Hulse
Transport Officer: Paul Duffield	Members' Representative: Rachel Mallaband
Members' Representative: Janet Hoyle	

Our Professionals The Trustees are responsible for appointing the Music Director, Accompanist and Voice Coach, whose expertise and commitment play a huge part in enabling the Chorus to meet its' charitable objectives. In addition, from time to time the general membership elects a President in recognition of her/his special contribution to the work of the Chorus. During 2017-18 these were:

President: Rachel Copley	Music Director: Darius Battiwalla
Accompanist: Rachel Fright	Voice Coach: Margaret MacDonald

Our helpers Other than Trustees, various other members helped the Chorus meet its' objectives:

Voice Reps: Katrina Hulse, Pat Hall, Rachel Rowlands, Kate Reece, Jim Monach, Richard Salt, Allan Lacey.

Graphic Designer: Paul Boardman	Website: Anne Adams, Matthew Morgan, Bill Best
Independent Examiner: Richard Pike	Making Music Representative: Richard Salt
Stairclimber: Bill Best, Howard Dore, Rachel Mallaband, John Morgan, Kate Reece.	

The Trustees are most grateful for the work of these generous and committed individuals.

Chairman's Report: What We Did in 2017-18

Another successful season under our belts. With a world premiere, concerts in Edinburgh, Middlesbrough, Manchester, Halifax and Sheffield plus a mini-tour to France and one planned to Germany next year, it seems we can really say that Europe seems to be our oyster.

The season opened on 15th October in the Victoria Hall, Halifax with Philip Wilby's "*The Holy Face*", written to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Halifax Choral Society. We performed the piece jointly with the Halifax Choral Society and a section from the Yorkshire Youth Choir, under the direction of John Pryce-Jones. After the concert Philip Wilby commented "*What a choir and what a concert!*". John Pryce-Jones was impressed with our professionalism and our ability to watch him. Halifax's administrator noted that "*Sunday's performance was absolutely stunning*". The Wilby was performed alongside Mendelssohn's beautiful *Psalm 114* and Bruckner's *Te Deum*.

Our annual Christmas Carol Concerts took place on 16th December, accompanied by the fantastic Black Dyke Band under the direction of Dr Nicholas Childs and our own Darius Battiwalla. Tom Redmond from Radio 3 acted as compere. His quizzes went down particularly well with adults and children alike, only slightly marred by the chorus losing against the audience on both occasions. As seems to be the case every year both concerts went down a storm with the audience. Tom Redmond commented on our performance of Darius' arrangement of "O Holy Night" "Goose bumps don't get much bigger than this!" Our thanks go to Helen Kirk for organising the reception for the Friends of the Chorus and the sherry and mince pies in the evening interval, to Janet Bower for the wonderful cake and to Anne Garbett for the stage decorations, which she brings every year. (It's worth noting that she made them all herself!)

Some of us, as ever, took part in various elective events over the Christmas season. First off were carols at the Millennium Gallery and thanks to Rachel Copley, our President, for taking on the directing. Then a small group sang carols at the Kelham Island annual Victorian Market; thanks to Donald Watts for accompanying on the accordion and to all participants for raising £100 for chorus funds - and all in Victorian costume! A larger group of us entertained commuters with carols at Sheffield Station in aid of Heart Research UK. Apparently they did very well on the collection. We finished with carols at Tickhill Parish Church. Thanks again to Rachel Copley for organising and directing. Our annual visit to Sheffield Cathedral for the St Luke's Carol Service was postponed to 21st January due to bad weather, when it passed off very successfully and, yet again, thanks to Rachel Copley for her direction. Thank you to all those members who were able to give of their time so generously to make all these events so successful and do so much to raise the profile of the Chorus around Sheffield. And to cap it all, our recording of *The Calypso Carol*, from the *Awake, Arise* CD which we recorded with the Black Dyke Band, was chosen for broadcast on Classic FM. Thanks to Rachel Mallaband for applying for this privileged slot along with only four other choirs in the country.

Our first outing in 2018 was the world premiere of Paul Mealor's "*Paradise*" on 27th January in Manchester with the Black Dyke Band as part of the Royal Northern College of Music Brass Band Festival. A very successful performance was followed with a recording of the same work for a CD on 5th February, again with the Black Dyke Band. On receiving a copy of the CD recently, Paul Mealor commented "*I am VERY impressed. It is a fantastic recording of the work. The second movement is exactly as I imagined it and the choir are simply outstanding in their sections. The ending really is incredibly dramatic*". It doesn't get much better than that!

On 3rd February we performed Mozart's *Requiem* with the delightfully energetic young Canadian conductor, Jean-Claude Picard. It was a wonderful evening of music making reflected by the comments that we had afterwards. Jean-Claude commented "*Thoroughly enjoyed performing Mozart's Requiem with this brilliant team*". Other comments from soloists and audience members were such as "*Fantastic choir*", "*Wonderful evening, fabulous performance*" "*They were amazing. What an inspirational evening*". Altogether, it demonstrates the effect that such an inspirational conductor can have on our performance.

On 20th April we had our After Hours concert in the City Hall Ballroom. The two works we performed were Brahms's *Zigeunerlieder* and Mendelssohn's beautiful *Sechs Spruche* under the direction of Darius and with Rachel Fright on the piano, the first time that she's performed with us. Another successful evening, although not to the full house we were hoping for.

Now we come to the Mahler 2 Tour of the UK. Thanks to the hard work of Anne Adams and the individuals from the Leeds Philharmonic Chorus the travel arrangements and concerts passed off with very few issues and everyone involved had a great time. In Edinburgh on 29th April we played to a packed and enthusiastic house. We performed alongside our friends in the Leeds

Philharmonic Chorus with the Bruckner Orchester Linz and under the inspired direction of Markus Poschner. It was a wonderful performance and an unforgettable experience for all of us, although a very long day! Some press comments are quoted below, the last two translated from German correspondents.

“The orchestra were helped by the combined forces of the Leeds and Sheffield Philharmonic Choruses, who did a great job, creating a big, soft and pleasingly accurate sound for their first entrance, building up to a blazing peroration in the final minutes.”

“Filling the organ gallery, the combined choruses of Leeds Philharmonic Chorus and Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus opened with a soft yet supported sound and displayed a majestic power for the final bars.”

“The Philharmonic choirs from Sheffield and Leeds with 140 singers were top notch in the final movement.”

In Middlesbrough on 1st May we gave the inaugural concert to another packed house in their refurbished Town Hall. Another hugely successful performance, followed by rave reviews although there are certainly issues here about the space available for the chorus and the difficulty we had in getting on and off the stage. The late change of date for the concert also caused some problems. However, notwithstanding these difficulties, it was another enjoyable and satisfying day.

The last performance with this wonderful orchestra and conductor was in Sheffield City Hall on 5th May. Another stonking performance to a very healthy-sized audience and even more rave reviews. A press review stated:

“It was [the Chorus] who brought the piece to its rousing conclusion and who, with chorus master Darius Battiwalla, received their well-deserved share of the prolonged applause.”

Many thanks to all those members who were able to give so generously of their time to make these concerts such a resounding success. They have done wonders in raising the profile and respect for our Chorus all over the country and beyond.

On 9th June we concluded our season with Rossini's wonderful *Petite Messe Solennelle* with Jonathan Scott, the internationally renowned organist and harmonium player, with our own Nigel Gyte playing the fiendish piano accompaniment. The concert in the City Hall Ballroom began with a fascinating demonstration of the 1880 Mustel harmonium, one of only a few surviving examples of this instrument in its original form. Our soloists included our very own Maggie MacDonald along with Charlotte la Thrope, an old friend of the chorus, tenor Richard Rowe and bass Charles Murray. Our performance was very well received and prompted some very complimentary comments. Richard Rowe emailed: *“the choir was on splendid form. I have never heard such a large choir so resolutely in tune throughout the a cappella sections. But also accurate in the long, complex Amens, with a lovely rich sound”*. Comments from members of the audience include *“Great concert. The Phil at their best.”*; *“very uplifting”*, *“splendid concert I enjoyed it immensely”*.

For a few lucky members the season was not quite over. In July a group of about forty-five took a trip to Perigeux in France, to give three concerts. The first, in Perigeux Cathedral, was to join with three local choirs to sing Theodore du Bois' *La Messe de la Deliverance*, written in 1918, to celebrate the centenary of the end of the first world war. We attracted a very good audience despite the clash with the World Cup final! In addition, we gave two concerts on our own in local churches with music that most of us knew already. They both included two works given by Darius on their organs. Both concerts went off very well to appreciative audiences. Our particular thanks should go to bass Matthew Morgan who organised the trip, which went very smoothly.

Now we've started the new season it's time to think ahead to our forthcoming After Hours concert in the City Hall Ballroom on 30th November and to Bach's B Minor Mass next year on 6th April. Both are going to need a lot of practice in and out of rehearsal times but, given our record over the last year, I have no doubt that all of us will rise to the challenges. In addition, we have the Classical Sheffield Weekend in March when we hope to contribute with a concert of music by female composers; something else to look forward to.

I'm sure that all of you will join me in thanking our committee members who so willingly give of their time to keep the Chorus running so smoothly and efficiently. However, I have to mention three people in particular. Anne Adams, our Administrative Officer, who works so hard for us and without whom everything would collapse in a confused heap, and Graham Dawson, our Financial Officer, who keeps such a close eye on all our finances – never an easy task! Last but certainly not least, John Spence, who steps down as Membership Officer after many years of hard work and amazing efficiency on behalf of the Chorus. We are all very grateful for his contribution and will miss him enormously.

Lastly, thanks to our professionals Darius, Rachel and Maggie, who continue do so much to help us to improve the quality of our singing and performances. Testimony to their continuing success is clearly shown by the standard of our concerts over the last season.

With my best wishes for the coming season,

Paul Henstridge Chair October 2018

Administrator's Report: Our Achievements in 2017-18 and plans for 2018-19

The Chorus objects are to '*advance the education of the general public in choral music by the regular performance of such music from the widest possible repertoire*', and the people who benefit are chorus members, concert-goers in Sheffield and the surrounding area, and the wider listening public via a broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and a new recording on CD.

The Chorus presented a range of sacred and secular works by composers from across the globe and from the 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. The programme took some risks, presenting two new works including a world premiere, as well as much-loved symphonic classics and a range of more intimate works designed to be sung in smaller spaces.

Audiences heard us sing unaccompanied and with national and international symphony orchestras, a world famous brass band, harmonium and piano. We sang in Latin, English, French, Latvian and German, to live audiences and on national radio, and took part in the recording of two new CDs. We reached a range of audiences in a variety of venues that included the Usher Hall in Edinburgh, Middlesbrough Town Hall, a ballroom, railway station and both indoor and outdoor museum spaces, and various churches in France as well as in and around Sheffield.

Taking the season as a whole, the Chorus met the aim of presenting choral music from a wide repertoire, and feedback suggests that members both relished the challenges and enjoyed the experience.

Similarly, audience feedback and official reviews indicate that members of the public who attended our concerts enjoyed them very much (see Chair's report for details). Sales of '*The Holy Face*' CD, together with broadcasts on Radio 3 and Classic FM, widened our reach beyond Sheffield.

Two years ago we set a goal to undertake a more detailed analysis of tickets sales, and the results are shown in the table overleaf. We are pleased to report that we met the target of 5000 ticket sales that we set last year, and that the general trend is upwards, though reaching healthy numbers of the local general public continues to present challenges.

Ticket sale figures for our two Christmas carol concerts in December 2017 were unavailable at the time of writing this report, though anecdotal evidence suggests the audience was no smaller than the previous year. However, a more conservative estimate of 2300 has been used in the table below.

SPC TICKET SALES OVER THE THREE YEARS 2015/16, 2016/17 AND 2017/18					
Season	Concert	Possible	Actual	%	
2015/16	Christmas x 2	4540	2620	58%	4346 tickets sold
	Haydn	2270	921	41%	
	V Williams	2270	805	35%	
	After Hours	Not available	Not available	Not available	
	2015/16 TOTALS	9080	4346	48%	
2016/17	Christmas x 2	4540	2439	54%	4574 tickets sold, 228 more than last year, an increase of 5%.
	Elgar / VW	2270	895	39%	
	Tippett	2270	892	39%	
	Classical Sheffield	Not available	Not available	Not available	
	Messiah	360	348	97%	
	2016/17 TOTALS	9440	4574	42%	
2017/18	Holy Face	Not available	Not available	Not available	Target 5000
	Christmas x 2	4540	Not available	Not available	
	Paradise	Not available	N/A almost full	N/A almost full	Figure for total tickets sold unavailable. <i>Conservative estimate for Christmas concert tickets sales yields a total of 5062 tickets sold over the year.</i>
	Mozart Requiem	2270	1259	55%	
	After Hours	Not available	Not available	Not available	
	Mahler 2 Ed Midd	N/A almost full	N/A almost full	N/A almost full	
	Mahler 2 Sheffield	2270	1273	56%	
	Rossini	400	230	58%	
	French mini tour	Not available	N/A healthy	N/A healthy	
	2017/18 TOTALS	9480	Conservative estimate 5062	Conservative estimate 53%	
					<i>This is an estimated increase of 11 %age points, reversing the trend and exceeding the target set.</i>

Though no figures are available, audience figures for the After Hours concert in the City Hall ballroom were disappointing, not helped by problems with the City Hall website which adversely affected publicity.

In contrast, attendance for the 'away' legs of the Mahler 2 mini tour concerts was excellent, with almost full houses in both Edinburgh and Middlesbrough. The 56% capacity audience for the same programme in the City Hall illustrates how difficult it is to galvanise equivalent levels of support in Sheffield, which struggles to attract a sufficiently large audience to fill this high capacity hall.

Nonetheless, and somewhat unsurprisingly, ticket sales for the Mozart and Mahler concerts, at around 56% of capacity, were much improved on the less popular Elgar/Vaughan Williams and Tippett concerts the year before which only reached 39% of capacity.

Rather disappointingly our self promoted Rossini concert attracted 230 people, a healthy 58% of the ballroom's relatively small capacity but at fewer than two tickets per chorus member, far short of the full house we ought to have been able to attract.

To summarise, we offered the public eight concerts during 2017-18, including one that was self-funded, compared to six the previous year, again including one that was self-funded, and five in 2015-16. Ticket sales are shown in the table on the previous page; the total is estimated as explained on the previous page. This conservative estimate indicates that we met our target of 5000, with an estimated increase of 11 percentage points. The estimated number of tickets sold in 2017-18 were 53% of the maximum number possible compared to 42% in 2016-17 and 48% of the maximum the previous year – an encouraging upward trend.

Our aim of launching a new website was achieved in December 2017, and feedback has been very positive. The new site is easy to navigate and provides information about forthcoming concerts with links to the relevant online booking facilities. Sixteen articles were featured in the News area, compared to 4 the previous year and 3 in 2015-6. The password-protected Members Area includes a wealth of useful information including links to rehearsal tapes and videos, concert arrangements and singing opportunities as well as weekly updates and official documents such as Chorus Rules, AGM papers and the minutes of trustee meetings. The site built up visitors very quickly from the launch date, with 7073 visits (clicks on a page) over the nine months to the end of August 2018, an average of 785 visits per month and 82 page views per day. These were from 4727 individual visitors (unique devices), an average of 525 individual visitors per month.

The Chorus was very lucky to acquire the services of a new Graphic Designer, Paul Boardman, who very quickly developed a new style of our posters and flyers as well as the entries in the City Hall concert programmes. The new style has been much admired, and we are extremely grateful to Paul for supplying such a high quality service free of charge.

Our plans for the 2018-19 season

Following last year's heavy programme, which included two mini tours and two recording sessions, we have planned four concerts in Sheffield rather than six, yet have ambitiously set the same target, ie 5000 ticket sales. We hope to attract more young people to our concerts via a reduced price voucher scheme to be distributed to schools early in the 2018-19 season.

The season commences with an After Hours concert in the City Hall ballroom on 30 November, rescheduled from 9 November, and featuring music influenced by Wagner, including works by Austrian composer Anton Bruckner and Max Reger from Germany, as well as an extremely challenging work by the Austrian-American Arnold Schoenberg.

In December the Chorus will give two performances of its annual Christmas Carol Concert in Sheffield City Hall with the Black Dyke Band, presented by BBC Radio 3's Petroc Trelawny. In addition to this concert, which forms part of the Sheffield International Concert Season, Chorus members will again sing carols in support of various charities and local events, including the Friends of Museums Sheffield, St Luke's Hospice, Heart Research UK and Tickhill Parish Church in aid of Alzheimer UK.

In February a small group of Chorus members will travel to Bochum in Germany, one of Sheffield's twin cities, to sing Messiah in English at the invitation of the Bochum Choir in their prestigious new concert hall, as part of the Bochumer Symphoniker Orchestra centenary celebrations.

In March the Chorus is pleased to contribute to the Classical Sheffield Festival Weekend 2019, when we plan to sing works by women composers in the City Hall ballroom.

The Sheffield International Concert Season continues in April with a work from the 18th century – Bach's monumental *Mass in B Minor*, widely acknowledged to be one of the greatest choral works every written. This wonderful work will be performed with the Royal Northern Sinfonia in Sheffield City Hall under the baton of Andrew Griffiths.

The season concludes in June with a return to the City Hall for a self funded event, the concert premiere presentation of Philip Wilby's oratorio for brass, organ and massed voices *The Holy Face*, which we recorded in 2017 following the world premiere of the orchestral version in Halifax. We will be joined by the Halifax Choral Society, who commissioned this innovative work, with the Yorkshire Youth Choir and the Black Dyke Band.

Moving to administrative matters, the Chorus does not have a mailing list because on-line publicity is handled on our behalf by Sheffield International Venues, so we were spared the need to send out notices about the May 2018 changes to the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). We will nonetheless be working through an action plan to ensure that member data is used and stored in accordance with the new regulations.

We are implementing a new marketing and publicity strategy to enhance the work done on our behalf by Sheffield International Venues, the social enterprise which runs the City Hall. We are producing exit flyers for distribution at the classical concert immediately before our own, and are planning to pay for full page adverts in each of the SICS programmes, rather than just those for concerts in which we take part. In partnership with the City Hall, we also plan to offer ticketing vouchers for schools and colleges, Sheffield Music Hub and Sheffield Academy, as our contribution to making classical music more accessible to young people and to encourage the musicians of the future.

Further to this commitment, our Education and Outreach Officer Georgina Hulse plans to offer workshops to a small number of schools, in addition to the 'note-bashing' and sight reading sessions already offered to both current and prospective chorus members. We are very grateful to Georgina for giving so generously of her time in this way

I would like to express my sincere and heartfelt thanks to all chorus members, our professionals and my fellow committee members, for their unstinting support, endless patience and generous, friendly enthusiasm. Special thanks go to John Spence, who as Membership Officer has worked above and beyond the call of duty on our behalf. His unstinting commitment will be much missed.

Anne Adams September 2018

Financial review - Finance Officer's Report

The accounts presented here reflect all the financial activities from 18th October 2017 to 17th October 2018 inclusive. Advice was received during the year from the Charity Commission was that we should not transfer to the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) until Gift Aid for the existing organisation was all reclaimed and that process is now underway and will be completed shortly. I apologise for the consequential delay in moving to the CIO but that will happen in the near future.

When reading the Statement of Financial Activities 2017-18, bear in mind that figures for the previous year funds relate to the extended financial year of 1st August 2016 to 17th October 2017.

Echoing the format introduced last year, the accounts are shown in two tables reflecting the style of account reporting more appropriate for a CIO. First, there is a Summary of Fund Movements 2017-18 which lists where all the funds are held and shows totals of all the movements during the financial period to 17th October 2018. There are 5 bank accounts held with HSBC and a COIF Charities Deposit Fund held with CCLA Investment Management Ltd. All interest earned in the COIF account is paid into the HSBC general bank account.

The second table is a statement of all the financial activities between 18th October 2017 and 17th October 2018. It shows a comparison of the income and expenditure categories between this financial accounting period and the previous one. This table now shows where funds are being held or used for restricted purposes.

For each self-promoted concert the Trustees pay particular attention in producing and maintaining a risk assessment document which, amongst other factors, covers financial aspects of risk. Appropriate actions are taken depending on circumstances including taking out sufficient insurance cover if necessary.

Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus has a reserves policy which is to hold sufficient funding to cover all activities in the current season and any firm commitments in the following season. The current level of funding meets this reserves policy. In rough terms at current rates of income and expenditure we need a reserve of around £20,000, which we clearly have. Over the last financial year, the figures show a net income of £1662.67. That figure includes a significant payment from Sheffield International Venues (SIV) for a City Hall concert in the previous financial year. With a very significant Gift Aid payment expected soon, the finances are currently in a satisfactory position. However, we cannot be complacent as ongoing negotiations with SIV indicate that the Chorus will have to pay a larger contribution towards the costs of future concerts.

The principal funding sources are membership subscriptions, friends, supporters and donations. I am immensely grateful to members for making arrangements to pay subscription fees promptly and for generous donations which have helped fund self-promoted concerts. Subscriptions totalled over £21,000 and it is important that we try to maintain our membership level both for the ability to perform demanding works and to bring in an appropriate level of funding. Members can choose a payment method which suits them best from the following: cheque, cash, standing order and internet bank transfer. There is a concessionary rate for students and those that cannot afford the full amount. This is in line with our policy of inclusion and I am happy to speak in confidence to anyone that might be concerned about paying the full amount.

Sincere thanks are expressed to friends and supporters of the Chorus who continue to provide much appreciated help financially and in a variety of practical ways. Thank you too to all those colleagues that have helped in a huge way throughout the year with various tasks that involve collecting and banking money from activities such as the purchase and hire of music, the organising and running of social events, the selling of concert tickets, programmes, advertising space, CDs, folders, scarves etc. Els has a particularly difficult task in searching for the best music hire/purchase deals and for ensuring that members pay for and return music in a timely fashion.

Principal regular items of expenditure during the financial year include paying for the services of the Music Director, Accompanist(s) and Voice Coach. Their fees are reviewed by Trustees annually. The fee structures for the Music Director and the Accompanist include a retention element. The expenditure for room hire includes the costs associated with rehearsals, auditions and self-promoted concert venues. Artistic costs for concerts are significant with soloists for self-promoted concerts being chosen to meet the necessary artistic requirement and agreed budget availability. City Hall concerts provide a level of financial income to off-set artistic costs dependent on a ticket sales formula but, as explained above, that is expected to drop for future concerts.

The cost of coach travel is significantly down because for a number of concerts and events away from Sheffield, the travel costs were borne by other organisations. This will not always be the case. Considerable planning was required for the French trip in July. Takings at the concerts were less than expected, particularly because of the unfortunate clash with the football world cup final! All accommodation, food and travel costs were covered by those that went and I am very grateful to Matthew and all those that helped in any way with the arrangements and practicalities. The agreement with the Montgomery Hall to share use of the stair-climber continues and has significantly reduced our costs.

In consideration of the planned events through to 31st July 2019 and commitments in the following season, maintaining the membership fees at the current level is estimated to retain financial resources within the reserves policy set.

Thanks are due again to Richard Pike for auditing in a thorough and professional manner. Thank you too to all the membership for the help, support and encouragement that I have received during the past year. It is much appreciated.

Graham S Dawson, Finance Officer, October 2018

Independent Examiner's report

Please note that the Independent Examiner's duty is to report to trustees; a copy of his report follows.

Independent Examiner's report to the trustees of Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus for the year ended 17 October 2018.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Richard Pike, Independent Examiner, October 2018

BALANCE SHEET: SUMMARY OF FUND MOVEMENTS 2017-18				18/10/2017 to 17/10/2018		
	Balances brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains & Losses	Balances carried forward
Fund Name	£	£	£	£	£	£
General Bank Account	1775.97	33033.35	35222.11	5400.00		4987.21
Concert Account	505.97	3195.35		-2400.00		1301.32
Savings Account	5264.39	1.82		-3000.00		2266.21
Friends of SPC	6743.50	650.00				7393.50
Friends of SPC Savings	5914.19	4.26				5918.45
COIF Deposit Account	46000.00					46000.00
Total Funds	66204.02	36884.78	35222.11	0.00	0.00	67866.69

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES 2017-18		18/10/2017 to 17/10/2018		
	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total funds (£)	Previous year funds (£)
Income from				
CD sales	1981.23		1981.23	1313.67
City Hall Concerts	2372.58		2372.58	3201.64
Classical Sheffield				750.00
Folders & Scarves	83.00		83.00	190.50
Friends & Supporters	713.50		713.50	740.00
Fund raising/donations	409.32		409.32	576.69
Gifts & Social	594.55		594.55	589.85
Investment Income	176.10		176.10	181.24
Performance fees	800.00		800.00	460.00
Sale and Hire of Music	1761.50		1761.50	2091.40
Self-promoted concerts	2955.50		2955.50	9783.35
Stair-climber refund	78.00		78.00	238.75
Subscriptions	21494.09		21494.09	24113.15
Tickhill	966.01		966.01	
TDF2018	4084.40		4084.40	
Totals	38469.78	0.00	38469.78	44230.24
Expenditure on				
Accompanist	4055.00		4055.00	4370.00
Artistic/concert costs - City Hall	498.05		498.05	6500.00
Artistic/concert costs - self-promoted	5390.40		5390.40	12572.74
Bank adj & refunds				60.00
CD purchase	600.00		600.00	
Chorus Master	8610.00		8610.00	10256.00
Chorus Master - concerts	2396.55		2396.55	
Classical Sheffield	100.00		100.00	1420.00
Coach Travel	900.00		900.00	4050.00
Gifts/Social	1244.20		1244.20	849.66
Insurance & PRS performing rights	693.92		693.92	594.00
Publicity	587.00		587.00	852.00
Purchase and hire of music	1028.42		1028.42	3111.01
Room Hire	3387.50		3387.50	5788.75
Secretarial, admin, travel	666.42		666.42	298.28
Stair climber	78.00		78.00	553.00
TDF2018	4917.96		4917.96	
Tickhill	414.69		414.69	
Voice coaching	1239.00		1239.00	1520.00
Totals	36807.11	0.00	36807.11	52795.44
Net income/(expenditure)	1662.67	0.00	1662.67	-8565.20

Membership Officer's Report

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

Composition of the Chorus

As at September 2018 there were 185 singing members of the Chorus, compared to 193 in 2017 and 189 the year before. Of the 185 singing members, 6 were on Authorised Leave of Absence, compared to 7 in 2017. The Chorus numbers break down as follows:

Table One Chorus Numbers	Sop 1	Sop 2	Alto 1	Alto 2	Ten 1	Ten 2	Bass 1	Bass 2	Total
2018	40	31	30	23	10	15	22	14	185
<i>2018 Leave of Absence</i>	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	6
2017	40	31	34	27	10	14	22	15	193
2016	42	31	30	22	12	14	23	15	189

Resignations, Retirements and Deaths

During 2017-18, 16 members died, retired or resigned or were written off the record due to unexplained absence for more than a year, compared to 11 in 2016-17 and 9 the previous year. They comprised:

Table Two Chorus Leavers	Sop 1	Sop 2	Alto 1	Alto 2	Ten 1	Ten 2	Bass 1	Bass 2	Total
2018	1	1	6	5	0	1	1	1	16
2017	3	1	0	0	3	0	2	2	11
2016	4	0	2	2	1	0	0	0	9

New Members

During the year 2017-18, 8 new members were successfully auditioned and joined the Chorus, compared to 16 in 2016-17 and 17 the previous year, comprising:

Table Three New Members	Sop 1	Sop 2	Alto 1	Alto 2	Ten 1	Ten 2	Bass 1	Bass 2	Total
2018	1	1	3	1	0	0	1	1	8
2017	1	1	4	5	1	1	2	1	16
2016	9	0	2	1	1	2	1	1	17

Concert Attendance

A detailed breakdown of the concert attendance statistics may be found in the Appendix. Chorus Members who have sought a formal Leave of Absence are excluded from the figures. Casual apologies are counted as absences.

Just a few points may be highlighted.

- 1 The overall average Chorus attendance at concerts for the whole season was 62% of those Members currently available, compared to 70% the previous year.

- 2 The best attended concert was the Mozart concert on 3/2/2018 at 78% of those Members currently available. This compares to 79% for the Messiah concert the previous year.
- 3 The worst attended concert (perhaps unsurprisingly in view of the promoters' error in advising the incorrect date) was the Mahler Concert in Middlesbrough on 1/5/2018, at 27% of those Members currently available. However, we were fortunate also to have members of the Leeds Philharmonic Chorus with us to give us satisfactory numbers. The worst attended concert the previous year was the Classical Sheffield concert on 18/3/2017, at 50%.
- 4 Perhaps the most significant statistic of all is that there were 1863 "opportunities" for Members to sing in a main concert or recording throughout the whole year (ie Members available to sing at each concert/recording totalled up for the year). This compares with 953 in 2016/17 - almost double those previously available. This clearly demonstrates just how busy the Chorus has been during this last year and illustrates the unique marketing opportunity which the Chorus has to attract new members in all sections.

Rehearsal and Concert Registration

The system is now working very satisfactorily and does save me significant time and effort as well as reducing the number of errors. I can mention, however, that just a few members still experience a little difficulty scanning their cards. This is usually caused by one of three factors:

1. Holding the card too close to the reader; it needs to be 6" to 8" away.
2. Waving the card about; it needs to be held still for a couple of seconds in order for the reader to focus on it – the red line indicates that the reader is trying to read the barcode.
3. Keeping a finger or thumb over one end of the bar code so as to obscure it; the reader needs to be able to 'see' both ends.

I would remind members that the registration system will always be there, whether at a rehearsal or at a concert; it will be the registration computer if the location is secure enough, or manual sheets if 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 'voice coloured' (see below) membership cards for 2018-19 for all Chorus members and these will be issued by the Finance Officer on receipt of the annual subscription paid at the appropriate rate.

Re-auditions

Re-auditions continue on the usual three yearly cycle. The Soprano sections were re-auditioned over three sessions in June and July along with four members of other sections. Those people who were not able to attend for various reasons will have to be re-auditioned before the rehearsals in the first few weeks of the current season if they wish to sing in forthcoming concerts.

The Alto sections will be due for their triennial re-audition session in the Summer of 2019 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. It is the Music Director's usual practice to ask a re-auditioning member to sing a very short extract from something being currently rehearsed. He quite deliberately does NOT tell me what that extract will be and it can vary from person to person.

Weekly Email Updates

It seems that there is some confusion about the authorship of the regular Weekly Email Updates. Please note that these are prepared by the Chorus Administrator and then distributed by me merely because I maintain the Chorus' database of email addresses. Any queries about content of the WEUs should be address to the Chorus Administrator – administrator@sheffieldphil.org.

Voice Representatives

The team of Voice Representatives is invaluable to me and I must not fail to record my annual public expression of my sincere gratitude to each and every one of them for the work they do. They are my 'eyes and ears' to the Chorus. All the Voice Representatives are very happy to help all members, especially new members, with any queries they may have about the Chorus or to direct any queries to me or to the appropriate Committee member. Names and photographs of the Voice Reps may be found in Appendix Two.

Minimum Attendance Requirements

In the past a significant number of members were regularly falling short of the Minimum Attendance Requirements (MARs) for a number of concerts and/or missing compulsory rehearsals. The consequence was that the Music Director was inundated with requests for approval to sing by people who were falling short of the MARs. As a result, he has now given me VERY LIMITED discretion to approve those members who just fall short. In consequence, all requests for approval to sing where the MAR has not been achieved or compulsory rehearsals have been missed should in the first instance be addressed to me either directly or via the Voice Representatives. I will then approve those satisfactory requests which fall within the scope of my discretion or pass on to the Music Director those which do not.

Please note that the singing lists (ie the numbers of those members in each section who have either completed the MAR or have otherwise obtained specific approval to sing in a concert) and the seating plans are closely related; ie the latter are prepared from the former. Therefore, if a member has fallen short of the MAR and has not obtained specific approval, there is no provision for her or him on the seating plan.

Concert Seating Arrangements and Voice Colouring

Almost every member of the Chorus has had their voice 'coloured'. The purpose of this is to group similar voices together which has the dual benefit of helping members by placing those with similar voices together on stage and, in consequence, considerably improving the overall sound of the Chorus. All new members will have their voice colour decided during their first audition. The colours are, progressively, White; Cream; Yellow and Orange. Whilst it has proved very difficult in practice to allocate precise on-stage seating places determined by voice colour it has been decided to continue with the old 'block' patterns on the seating plans with a note that members should, as far as practicably possible, arrange themselves within their 'blocks' so that they are adjacent to people either of their own voice colour or to someone of the next adjacent colour. A similar practice should be followed for seating during rehearsals though it is recognised that this may be more problematic.

A list of all Chorus members sorted by their voice colours is available on the Chorus notice board during rehearsal. It will be updated from time to time. If any Chorus member has not had their voice 'coloured' or does not know their voice colour they should contact the Membership Officer. In the absence of a specific voice colour, a Chorus member is treated as being 'white'.

It has become my practice in recent times to circulate to the whole Chorus by email a copy of the seating plan as approved by the Music Director. It is a great help to both the Staging Officer and to the Chorus as a whole if members check their email inboxes shortly before a concert to download the seating arrangement (which is usually in *.pdf format) so that they can familiarise themselves with the plan before arriving at the concert venue.

Conclusion

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

As you will all by now be aware, I shall not be standing for re-election as Membership Officer at the forthcoming AGM on 20 November next. I must therefore take this opportunity to record publicly my sincere and grateful thanks for the cheerful co-operation which I have received from all members of the Chorus over all the years during which I have held this office. Without your positive support it would have been impossible for me to fulfil the role.

The role of Membership Officer (in both its future facets, as determined by the Committee) is absolutely vital to the both the health and reputation of the Chorus. Without the organisational discipline which it imposes it would be impossible for the Music Director to produce a polished and professional musical ensemble which is worthy of the high level performances which we all enjoy so much. I wish my successor(s) in office every good fortune in job(s) which are both influential and especially satisfying.

My view of the bright future for the Chorus is that we can and will become a leading influence in choral music in the north of England and will continue to be on the short list for those who are promoting large scale choral concerts in the future. I firmly believe that we have the professional musical direction, the underlying strength of organisation and the overall vocal capacity to do so.

John M Spence, Membership Officer, September 2018

Librarian's Report

I am grateful to everyone who returned scores promptly and am as always very pleased with the help from Paul, Richard and especially Patricia Hall. I am also very grateful to Howard Dore who stores our own stock of music scores.

Leeds Central Library remains my first port of call for music hire, as they tend to have larger stocks than most other sources. However with the reduced periods of loan for the same hire cost and increased postal and administration charges, buying your own copy is at times a more logical option when a score is needed for a long period of time. Many hire copies of large scores are in hardback and are very heavy to hold. This is the case with Bach's B Minor Mass.

I will repeat the following from last year's report to remind old members and inform new members:

My brief is to cover the cost of scores and when searching for music I endeavour to get the best deal for all. Late returns incur extra costs. Therefore:

- There is a charge of £5.00 for the late return of music; late is defined as 2 weeks or more after the concert.
- A lost score will have to be replaced.
- If you have a problem please contact me as early as possible by email or telephone 0114 2683027 so that we can arrange a convenient handover.
- Alternatively post scores to: Els Pearse, 49 Westbourne Road, Sheffield, S10 2QT

Thanks to all members for their continued help and support.

Els Pearse, Librarian, September 2018

New Member Officer's Report

Between July 2017 and May 2018 I had 23 assorted new queries about SPC membership. Of these, some didn't show up and some tried us and didn't stay. However we successfully greeted 9 new members including 4 altos, 2 sopranos and 3 basses. This is a smaller number than the previous year of 18 recruits. I think the strange start of season with reviving the Wilby "Holy Face" which we knew well may have discouraged some people, although no one actually reported that.

Season	Start-of-season queries	Whole-year queries	% start-of-season queries	New Members	Conversion Rate
2015-16	N/A	35	N/A	19	54%
2016-17	16	39	41%	18	46%
2017-18	10	23	44%	9	39%

This year so far we have had 19 enquiries of which 11 have appeared and found us in our various venues. Please continue to make visitors welcome and thank you for "buddying" them at short notice if I ask you for help in the foyer. We are a friendly choir and as we all love singing in SPC it is easy to give a positive welcome to new people. PLEASE keep recruiting too!

Sally Turnbull, New Member Officer, September 2018

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: maintaining a suitable, high-level Chorus profile; promoting specific events and concerts throughout the year; and marketing the Chorus with the specific aim of attracting new members and supporters.

Our highlights have included:

- The premiere of Paul Mealor's *Paradise* with the Black Dyke Band as part of the Festival of Brass at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester which was broadcast on BBC Radio 3
- An After Hours Concert featuring Mendelssohn's Motets and Brahms's *Zigeunerlieder*
- Three memorable performances of Mahler's *Symphony No.2* with the Bruckner Orchestra Linz and members of the Leeds Philharmonic Chorus in Edinburgh, Middlesbrough and Sheffield
- Rossini's wonderful *Petite Messe Solonelle* with soloists and piano and harmonium accompaniment and
- A short French tour by members of the Chorus, which included two choral performances in local churches and a 100th Anniversary of the end of the World War 1 commemorative performance of *Le messe de deliverance* by Dubois in Perigueux Cathedral

I am most grateful for the work undertaken by fellow Chorus members and the support they have given me as Marketing and Publicity Officer.

We have continued to develop our social media presence through Facebook and Twitter. Our Twitter account @sheffphilchorus now has 1,357 followers, and our tweets over the 2017-18 period resulted in 103,942 impressions (number of times twitter users saw our tweets). The average engagement rate measures the proportion of tweets causing a reaction of some kind, eg a click to our website; the average engagement rate was 0.8% over the year, which is considered very high for this medium.

Steve Terry and Anne Adams have worked tirelessly in representing Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus in Sheffield's Classical Weekend festivals. We now have a co-ordinated approach to planning and scheduling our concert programme with partners to ensure the completion of tasks within the requisite timescales.

Special thanks also to Rachel Mallaband for continuing to support our promotional activities and Kath Eadon for her valuable assistance and patience in translating my notes to French for the tour programme.

Particular thanks also to our volunteer graphic designer Paul Boardman for his phenomenal support in developing the design of our print and graphic promotional material throughout the year. Paul's expertise and generosity in offering his time for the Chorus have been much appreciated and have helped present us in such a professional manner.

I would be delighted to hear if you have any ideas about how we might promote our work in the future. Please feel free to speak to me at rehearsals.

Paul Bedwell, Marketing & Publicity Officer November 2018

Social Events Officer's Report

This year, rather than ending with my thanks, I am going to begin with thanking all who helped me in any way; from selling raffle tickets, setting out and clearing away, letting me know news of members and generally being supportive, I really do value that help.

The social season began with what is becoming a tradition; our cheese and wine party following the AGM. Mince pies and sherry were, as in traditional fashion, served to the chorus and band in the interval of the evening Christmas concert. The Friends of the Chorus were also invited to partake in sherry and mince pies between the concerts.

Our Ballroom concert in June provided the perfect opportunity and venue for an end of season social in the form of a drink in the bar with snacks. This was well attended and it appeared that most people enjoyed it. In addition, the Friends of the Chorus had been invited for afternoon tea prior to the concert.

As always I am open to suggestions for future social events. Also, please let me know if you learn of a chorus member whose circumstances warrant a card.

Helen Kirk, Social Events Officer, October 2018

APPENDIX ONE CONCERT ATTENDANCE (overall figures overleaf)

	S1	S2	A1	A2	T1	T2	B1	B2	Totals
15/10/2017 Wilby, Halifax Town hall Hall									
Attended	21	18	15	6	7	3	11	8	89
Total available	41	31	33	27	10	16	23	16	197
%age	51.2%	58.1%	45.5%	22.2%	70.0%	18.8%	47.8%	50.0%	45.2%
16/12/2017 (Matinee) Christmas Concert, City Hall									
Attended	28	23	20	16	9	11	18	11	136
Total available	40	30	31	24	10	15	22	15	187
%age	70.0%	76.7%	64.5%	66.7%	90.0%	73.3%	81.8%	73.3%	72.7%
16/12/2017 (Evening) Christmas Concert, City Hall									
Attended	26	23	18	15	8	11	18	11	130
Total available	40	30	31	24	10	15	22	15	187
%age	65.0%	76.7%	58.1%	62.5%	80.0%	73.3%	81.8%	73.3%	69.5%
27 January 2018 Mealor Concert RNCM									
Attended	31	25	18	17	5	5	18	7	126
Total available	40	30	31	23	10	15	22	14	185
%age	77.5%	83.3%	58.1%	73.9%	50.0%	33.3%	81.8%	50.0%	68.1%
3/2/2018 Mozart Requiem City Hall									
Attended	31	28	24	20	8	6	18	9	144
Total available	40	30	31	23	10	15	22	14	185
%age	77.5%	93.3%	77.4%	87.0%	80.0%	40.0%	81.8%	64.3%	77.8%
5/2/2018 Mealor Recording									
Attended	30	23	20	17	6	5	18	10	129
Total available	40	30	31	23	10	15	22	14	185
%age	75.0%	76.7%	64.5%	73.9%	60.0%	33.3%	81.8%	71.4%	69.7%
20/4/2018 Rossini Ballroom									
Attended	29	26	25	14	6	6	15	9	130
Total available	40	29	31	23	10	16	22	14	185
%age	72.5%	89.7%	80.6%	60.9%	60.0%	37.5%	68.2%	64.3%	70.3%
29/4/2018 Mahler Usher Hall, Edinburgh									
Attended	22	19	16	9	5	5	12	10	98
Total available	40	30	30	22	10	16	22	14	184
%age	55.0%	63.3%	53.3%	40.9%	50.0%	31.3%	54.5%	71.4%	53.3%
1/5/2018 Mahler Town Hall, Middlesbrough									
Attended	9	13	5	7	3	3	4	6	50
Total available	40	30	30	22	10	16	22	14	184
%age	22.5%	43.3%	16.7%	31.8%	30.0%	18.8%	18.2%	42.9%	27.2%
6/5/2018 Mahler City Hall									
Attended	27	22	25	14	5	8	16	11	128
Total available	40	30	30	22	10	16	22	14	184
%age	67.5%	73.3%	83.3%	63.6%	50.0%	50.0%	72.7%	78.6%	69.6%

APPENDIX ONE CONCERT ATTENDANCE continued

	S1	S2	A1	A2	T1	T2	B1	B2	Totals
Overall 2017/18									
Attended	254	220	186	135	62	63	148	92	1160
Total available	401	300	309	233	100	155	221	144	1863
%age	63.3%	73.3%	60.2%	57.9%	62.0%	40.6%	67.0%	63.9%	62.3%

APPENDIX TWO VOICE REPRESENTATIVES

1st Sopranos



Katrina Hulse

2nd Sopranos



Pat Hall

1st Altos



Rachel Rowlands

2nd Altos



Kate Reece

All Tenors



Jim Monach

1st Basses



Richard Salt

2nd Basses



Allan Lacey