

Wednesday 10 September 2025 7pm, at St Andrew's Church, Psalter Lane, Sheffield.

Present: Anne Adams, Alan Anderson, Jo Briddock (chairing meeting), Paul Duffield, Marianne Grayson, Helen Kirk, Annie Park, Jane Parkin, Sally Turnbull, Kathy Towers.

Apologies: Patrick Callaghan, Georgina Hulse, Boo Spurgeon.

MINUTES

1 Apologies were reported and there was a reminder of the Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy.

2 Conflicts of interest arising from one or more agenda items – there were none.

3 3.1 Minutes of meeting held on 16 July 2025 were approved without further amendment.

3.2 Matters Arising

It was suggested that hire agreements for musical professionals could potentially be handed over to the new Contracts Officer and become part of that role. This would need to be agreed with the new incumbent as it's not currently in the role description

Reviewers: On Bachtrack there is a list of reviewers, four of whom are in the Sheffield area.

ACTION: Kirsty Christer to try and source contact details for reviewers on Bachtrack and approach as appropriate.

ACTION: Jo Briddock to ask Rachel Mallaband if she will take on the professionals contracts as well as soloists.

Event Planning Group meetings need to be convened.

ACTION: Jo Briddock to convene EPG meetings as soon as possible.

4 Governance

4.1.1 Finance Reports

There is a query as to the soloist fees for *The Creation* concert. Soloists were hired by the Halle and the SPC pays soloists without seeing the hire agreements.

Jane Parkin pointed out that the subscription fee increase (to £184) agreed by the Committee at the last meeting is awkward as it's not divisible by 3. It was agreed that the fee increase to be put forward at the next AGM will be amended to £183 for ease.

The Finance Reports were approved by the Committee.

4.1.2 There are a few small amendments to be made to the 2025 – 26 budget (cf estimated ticket sales for the St Marie's concert, higher allocation of £2100 for the male voice scholarships).

ACTION: Jane Parkin to make amendments and recirculate the budget to the Committee to be approved by email.

The 2025 – 28 budget was deferred until the next meeting.

4.2 Equality Diversity & Inclusion, including recruitment & retention

There was nothing to report.

4.3 SPC Strategic Plan

Excellent progress has been made over the last year towards realising the SPC's goals as detailed in the Strategic Plan. Anne A has updated the policy schedule details on the Strategic Plan document so that all is ready for her successor (the new Secretary) to refer to in the future.

As stated in the financial procedures there is a need for a Committee member to check all payments made by the Finance Officer to ensure they are in line with what was agreed.

ACTION: Jo B is to check that the nominated conductor and accompanist stand-ins are still willing to fulfil this role.

4.4 Policies and Constitution changes to be reviewed and approved.

The Committee approved the proposed amendment to item 13.1 of the Constitution and agreed that this is to be put forward at the forthcoming AGM, as indicated on the Agenda.

4.5 AGM

4.5.1 AGM Agenda and Trustee Annual Report.

The AGM Agenda was approved, including the Constitution amendment item (as above).

Minor corrections (mainly typos) were made to the Trustee Annual Report following comments from Committee members.

The Annual Report was also approved by the Committee. All contributors were thanked for their work.

4.5.2 Other AGM papers and emails.

These were also approved.

4.5.3 AGM event plan

The Committee was happy with plans for the evening. Helen Kirk is co-ordinating refreshments which will be laid out in the Church foyer. Chorus members can circulate in the church itself if they wish. There will be a presentation to retiring member Donald Watts.

ACTION: ANNE A to add to the Update that there will be a presentation to Donald after the rehearsal that precedes the AGM.

4.6 Friends

This item was deferred until the next meeting as Georgina was not present.

4.7 Chorus Roles

There is still no one who has said they are willing to undertake the new Secretary role. Jo Briddock said that it's essential to have a contingency plan if no one steps forward by the time Anne Adams stands down as Administrator (at the AGM).

The Committee discussed the fact that large numbers of emails are currently received by Anne via various email addresses, including administrator@, aneadams@, marketing@ etc. It was agreed that an automatic reply should be set up from the administrator address, the latter to include details of whom to contact about different categories of enquiry. Any secretary@ emails should automatically be forwarded to the Chair. For the time being emails to aneadams@ will not be forwarded elsewhere so that Anne can review and decide the best way for these to be handled when she is no longer in post.

ACTION: Marianne volunteered to review all Anne's email addresses and re-allocate as appropriate. She also volunteered to set up the automatic reply from the administrator address.

Anne A said that she is willing to offer support during the transition period (eg by providing templates of actions/responsibilities). She also said that she is willing to continue to attend Committee meetings in the short term and she was thanked for this offer.

4.8 Survey of Chorus

Marianne Grayson reported that there has been an excellent response to the Survey so far, with 90 responses received and plenty of positive feedback.

It is yet to be decided how the Survey results will be reported, but they will be reported in full to SPC members. Marianne will provide feedback at the next Committee meeting as the deadline for responding will have passed by then.

5 Operations

5.1 Brief review of recent events to determine learning points

There was nothing to report as the Chorus is just resuming rehearsals after the summer break.

5.2 Voice Exchange

The Voice Exchange is now in progress for the Arvo Part concert, as the rehearsal dates are now in place.

5.3 Marketing and Publicity

The Committee reviewed the marketing plan prepared by Kirsty Christer and was very pleased with how the campaign is planned. It was also noted that there has been good progress in social media interactions, for example.

The Plan will be taken forward by Kirsty with support from Jo B, Ros Hobson and relevant Committee members (eg Sally Turnbull if it relates to gaining new Chorus members).

The Committee thanked Kirsty for her work in preparing the marketing plan, which offers some exciting prospects for the season to come.

ACTION: Anne A to check the status of contracts with both Kirsty Christer and Georgina.

ACTION: Jo B to continue oversight of the marketing contract.

ACTION: Jo B to let Kirsty know that the marketing plan and budget have been agreed by the Committee and to ask Kirsty if she needs specific input from Committee members on particular initiatives.

5.4 Women's concert dress

It was agreed that women will wear 'smart black' for the St Marie's concert in November. This will continue to be the case unless an alternative is put forward that the Committee can consider.

ACTION: Anne A to put a note into a future Update to this effect and to revise the concert dress info on the website accordingly.

6 2025 – 26 Season and beyond

6.1 Repertoire Planning Group

The Committee reviewed plans as detailed in the report and checked these against SPC's strategic aims/targets. All agreed that the plans for this season, and those suggested for subsequent seasons, look very exciting indeed.

There was discussion of the difficulties posed for local music organisations such as the SPC by the huge increase in City Hall venue fees. There is a pressing need for a campaign to lobby the City Hall to take steps to support local music-making.

A useful tool would be an outline document that could be circulated to interested parties and stakeholders (including The MD, Andrea at the Halle, Ian Naylor at Sheffield CC) and used as a basis for taking the next step. This issue is to be discussed further at a future meeting of the EPG.

6.2 Event Planning Group

There is nothing to report. Anne A said that she is currently working through the event planners for forthcoming concerts.

Note that in future the new Event Planning Officer Rosalind Hobson will be responsible for convening EPG meetings.

Helen Kirk said that she would be willing to rejoin the EPG.

7 Committee Officer issues

7.1 Membership Officer

There was nothing new to report.

7.2 New Membership Officer

Sally T reported that 12 potential new members attended the first rehearsal of the new season and that there are 20 people possibly interested in joining the Chorus. She said that new-member auditions will hopefully be organised before the next (November) concert so that as many new joiners as possible will be able to sing.

The Committee agreed with the proposal to amend the audition forms to ask about previous choral experience.

7.3 Social Events Officer

Helen K said that she is currently working out costs for the Ceilidh next May so that ticket costs can be calculated.

Helen is also ordering sample name badges for the Committee to review and will send info by email.

7.4 Librarians

Alan Anderson reported that the room in Broomhill Library where SPC scores are stored is getting too small and that there was a proposal to increase the monthly rent from £20 to £30. This has been negotiated down by Jane Parkin to £25. There is probably a need to research an alternative room – to be revisited at a future meeting.

ACTION: Jo B to add the library store to the next Committee meeting Agenda.

He added that music hire arrangements are going well for the most part, with only a couple of instances of music not being returned.

The Committee agreed that it is very important that non-returners should be promptly invoiced for replacement copies if they fail to return music by the deadline.

7.5 Education and Outreach Officer

Nothing to report.

7.6 Other Officers

Nothing to report.

8 Any other business

ACTION: Anne A to add details of the forthcoming singing opportunities (eg the one with the Bach choir) to the next Update.

Jo B drew the Committee's attention to the fact that this meeting was the last to be attended by Anne in her Administrator role. The entire Committee agreed that Anne's work over many years cannot be over-estimated and that she has done a huge amount to transform the running and governance of the Chorus. She was thanked for her enormous contribution.

Date of Trustee meetings: 12 November 2025, 14 January 2026, 11 March 2026, 13 May 2026, 15 July 2026.

Date of AGM 2025: 07 October 2025

ACTION LIST

From 15 May 2024

- ~~MG to progress survey seeking member input re repertoire – New Yr 25-DONE~~ – see 4.8

From 9 July 2024

- Kirsty Christer to market the Friends Scheme once it is in place

From September 2024

- KC to take forward sourcing sound files for YouTube IN PROGRESS
- AA to continue to look for award opportunities IN PROGRESS
- AA to continue to take forward hire agreements IN PROGRESS

From 16 January 2025

- ~~MG to reactivate the Voice Exchange for The Creation concert. DONE~~

From 19 March 2025

- GH to discuss with the MD what might work best as a format for the publication of the Carol Book
- GH to explore potential concert reviewer candidates.
- GH to explore opportunities re the SPC Friends initiative and report back to the Committee in due course.

From May 14 2025

- Anne A to progress Award entries (eg Rachel's Christmas carol) as / when appropriate.
- Anne A to add to the Update a thank you to the two anonymous donors who are likely to be Chorus members. TO BE ADDED IN SEPTEMBER
- Anne A to order badges for all roles after HK has reported back.
- Anne A is to include clergy in emails re. arrangements for concerts at St. Marie's.
- ~~Alan A is to send AA details of the cost of copies for The Creation. DONE~~

From 16 July 2025

- ~~MG to approach the MD about circulating the Survey to Chorus members at the beginning of September. DONE~~

- ~~ST to speak to the MD about possibly holding new auditions in the evening after a rehearsal. DONE~~
- HK is to investigate name badges further and obtain samples for review. IN PROGRESS
- ~~JB to let JP know which fee increase option for professionals the Committee has decided to adopt. DONE~~
- ~~AA to write the agreed fee increase into all agreements with professionals, starting with the MD's agreement. DONE~~
- ~~MG to approach Patrick Callaghan about taking on the tenor Voice Rep role. DONE – Patrick is unable to take this on~~
- ~~JB is to approach Anita McKay about taking on the new Secretary role. She will emphasise that much of the work for the coming year has already been completed by AA.~~
- ~~AA to let Anita know that JB will be in touch.~~
- Depending on what happens with the Secretary role, JB to speak to Christine Pennington about rejoining the EPG.
- ~~JB to contact Boo and ask her to pause her rosette-making. DONE~~
- AA: Info about women's concert dress and the rosettes etc. to be added to an Update once Boo has been contacted.
- ~~MG to inform current recipients that the Bursary will continue next year at a higher fee (TBC). She will explain that there will be an audition and also ask the recipients to spread the word among their peers. DONE~~
- ~~AA to post the 2026 Bursaries on the website. DONE~~
- ~~AA to check about serving alcohol on the church premises. DONE – no problem, we just can't sell it.~~
- ~~AA to ask Trisha Cooper about undertaking concert reviews. DONE – no reply~~

From 10 September 2025

Kirsty Christer to try and source contact details for Bachtrack reviewers based in Sheffield and approach as appropriate.

Jo Briddock to convene EPG meetings as soon as possible.

Jane Parkin to make amendments and recirculate the budget to the Committee to be approved by email.

Jo Briddock to ask Rachel Mallaband if she will take on the professionals contracts as well as soloists.

Jo B is to check that the nominated conductor and accompanist stand-ins are still willing to fulfil their roles.

~~Anne A to add to the Update that there will be a presentation to Donald Watts after the rehearsal that precedes the AGM.~~

Marianne to review all Anne's email addresses and re-allocate as appropriate. Also to set up the automatic reply from the administrator address.

Anne A to check whether the status of contracts with both Kirsty Christer and Georgina.

Jo B to continue oversight of the marketing contract.

Jo B to let Kirsty know that the marketing plan and budget have been agreed by the Committee and to ask Kirsty if she needs specific input from Committee members on particular initiatives.

Anne A to put a note into a future Update about women wearing 'smart black' and to revise the concert dress info on the website accordingly.

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ACTION: Jo B to add the library store to the next Committee meeting Agenda.