

**Sheffield  
Philharmonic  
Chorus**

**TRUSTEE  
ANNUAL  
REPORT 2019**

## 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 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. 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 regularly using a stair-climber, which we obtained using Lottery funding and which we therefore 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 and have been a member of the Chorus for at least a year. 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 2018 were:

<b>Chair:</b> Paul Henstridge	<b>Administrator:</b> Anne Adams
<b>Finance Officer:</b> Graham Dawson	<b>Membership Officer:</b> VACANCY
<b>Librarian:</b> Els Pearse	<b>Minutes Secretary:</b> Sue Pennington
<b>New Members' Officer:</b> Sally Turnbull	<b>Marketing and Publicity Officer:</b> Paul Bedwell
<b>Social Events Officer:</b> Helen Kirk	<b>Education and Outreach Officer:</b> Georgina Hulse
<b>Transport Officer:</b> Paul Duffield	<b>Members' Representative:</b> Ben Stone

**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 2018-19 these were:

<b>President:</b> Rachel Copley	<b>Music Director:</b> Darius Battiwalla
<b>Accompanist:</b> Rachel Fright	<b>Voice Coach:</b> 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

Another wonderful musical year has passed for the Chorus with some great and accomplished performances to look back on.

First, some very good news. Petroc Trelawney, doyen of BBC Radio 3, has agreed to become our Joint Patron, alongside Sam West. Petroc has been very supportive of the Chorus for some years, advertising our concerts on Radio 3 and acting as compere at our Carol Concerts. We look forward to many years of association with him.

Our first gig of the new season was our After Hours concert on Friday 30 November. Titled 'Beyond Wagner', it followed on from the Wagner concert in the Irwin Mitchell Hall on the same evening. We sang the three Bruckner motets, the beautiful '*Nachtlied*' by Reger and the fiendishly difficult "*Friede auf Erde*" by Schoenberg.

What a challenging evening and a great success as you can judge from the comments from members of the audience: *"I thoroughly enjoyed last night's 'Beyond Wagner' concert. It was a real treat, both aurally and visually"* from Nigel Gyte. From Classical Sheffield: *"Very proud of our members of @SheffPhilChorus performing in their concert this evening - brilliant stuff!"* Trisha Cooper (BBC broadcaster who does the pre-concert talks): *"Absolutely brilliant!"* And from two members of the Chorus, with their totally unbiased judgements: *"The best next thing to singing with @SheffPhilChorus is listening to them. Beautiful performance in the Ballroom"* *"Congratulations to all who sang (& conducted!) last night So impressed with the sound, depth & range of expression"*.

On Saturday 15 December we had our two Christmas Concerts. We again performed with the Black Dyke Band under Professor Nicholas Childs. Petroc Trelawney was our compere and gave his usual accomplished and very popular performance. Thanks to Helen Kirk for organising the refreshments in the interval of the evening Concert and for the Friends' reception. Another good day for us and as a bonus we performed the beautiful *"Balulalow"* with its arranger, Paul Hindmarsh, in the audience. He commented: *'What a lovely performance of Balulalow! Thank you so much Darius. Please pass on my thanks to the choir.'*

Other messages from audience members: *'.....such a great Christmas Concert last night alongside @blackdyke band' 'what an excellent concert in Sheffield.....Spine tinglingly special #xmasHasStarted' 'First time in 20 years that I am not on stage with SheffPhilChorus for the Christmas concerts at SheffCityHall but hey, I got to hear it! You were amazing!!! Thank you blackdyke, PetrocTrelawny such a great way to start the festive season' 'Brilliant concert this afternoon at SheffCityHall..... with SheffPhilChorus and blackdyke' 'Excellent Concert!'*

As usual, the run-up to Christmas was a busy time for the Chorus with the many elective events. On Sunday 9 December a group of us sang at Sheffield Cathedral as part of the Service of Celebration for St Luke's Hospice in Sheffield. Thanks to Rachel Copley for organising and directing us. On the 14th a small group of our women members performed in the Town Hall under the direction of our own Georgina Hulse as part of the city's celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the Votes for Women's successful campaign. Thanks to Georgina for taking that on at short notice. In addition there was the Station Carols on the 19th and Tickhill Carol Concert on the 20th. Many thanks to Rachel Copley for organising and directing at Tickhill - and a special thanks to Janet Bower for hosting the post-Concert get-together at her home in Tickhill.

And to cap it all, we achieved a hat-trick (as it was reported in the Sheffield Telegraph) when Classic FM for the third year chose to play on air a track from our CD of Christmas Carols, *"Awake, Arise"*, which we recorded with the Black Dyke Band. This time it was the title track *"Awake, Arise"*. How's that for national recognition of the quality of our singing!

Early in February a group of 17 members visited Bochum, Sheffield's twin town in Germany, to take part in a joint concert of Handel's *Messiah* on the 7 February with the Philharmonischer Chor Bochum and the Bochumer Symphoniker under their musical director, John Lidfors. There was a sell-out audience and a standing ovation at the end so we must have done it all right. Also, we were extremely well looked after by their members and, in just a few days, saw and experienced so much of their city. It included a reception at their Town Hall, hosted by Mayor Erika Stahl, when we were presented with a rather magnificent picture of their Rathaus (Town Hall), which we plan to present formally to our Lord Mayor at our After Hours concert in October 2019.

As in previous years we gave a performance in the City Hall Ballroom as part of the Classical Sheffield Weekend on Sunday 10 March. This year the theme of this festival of music was Women in Music, Future Makers and Music Beyond Borders. Our very varied and hour-long programme featured four songs by Lili Boulanger, *Hymne au Soleil* and *Soir sur la Plaine* sung by the Chorus

with tenor Robin Morton, and *Reflets* and *Attente* by soprano Caroline Taylor, who also sang *Elegie* by Lili's sister Nadia Boulanger. We also sang *Abendfeier in Venedig* by Clara Schumann, *Schone Fremde* by Fanny Hensel and Rebecca Clarke's *Music, when soft voices die*. The concert was completed with Delius' *To be Sung on a Summer Night on the Water* and a second outing in the season for Schoenberg's *Friede auf Erde*. Many thanks to Rachel Fright for her wonderful accompaniment, and to Darius for directing and introducing the pieces to the audience. The music was very well received by audience and soloist alike.

From Caroline Taylor; '*had a fantastic time with the Chorus and really hope to work with you all again soon. Congratulations on a fantastic concert*', from the Sheffield Telegraph; '*Under conductor Darius Battiwalla they (the Chorus) gave sensitive and carefully-balanced accounts of a range of rarely heard pieces, including two by women - Fanny Mendelssohn and Clara Schumann - whose achievements are normally overshadowed by those of their male relatives, and it was Lili who was responsible for the most heart-warming contribution to a cold winter Sunday night, her lively Hymne au Soleil.*'

Then Saturday 6th April, the big one, Bach's B minor Mass, "The mightiest choral work ever written" (Hubert Parry - who should know what he's talking about). Under the inspired direction of Andrew Griffiths we gave a stunning performance of the work to a large and very appreciative audience. Among the many positive comments received two are below.

From the Sheffield Telegraph; '*It is not simply a setting of the Latin mass but a compendium of musical styles and moods - often lively and even jolly - designed to show off the talents of its various performers, who here all responded splendidly. The focus shifts from choir to soloists to orchestra to single instrumentalists, and all were in impressive form. The heavy lifting is done by the choir, and our own Philharmonic Chorus was meticulously prepared by Music Director Darius Battiwalla. They responded sharply and sensitively on the night to the admirably clear and precise guidance of conductor Andrew Griffiths*'. From Andrew himself; '*Thank you for an excellent project with SPC. I very much enjoyed working with the choir and thought that Saturday night was a great success. I hope very much that Ill have the chance to return in the future!*'

To complete our season we gave a second public outing to Philip Wilby's *The Holy Face* and to Paul Mealar's *Paradise* on Sunday 9 June and, again, we were privileged to perform alongside the Black Dyke Band and members of Halifax Choral Society and the Yorkshire Youth Choir. Another successful concert, although a disappointing audience.

Philip Wilby commented (by email): '*It was a splendid occasion, and very well received.... by composer and audience alike. The ending of The Holy Face was especially well sung, as many observed. Perhaps you might pass on my warmest thanks to the choristers, who were marvelous advocates for a long and complex piece. Soloists and band were predictably brilliant also..... who guessed that we would have applause after the (slow!) second movement? .....It just shows you what the North of England can pull out of the bag when it wants. Life affirming!* From Darius: '*I thought it was a great performance*' and from Trisha Cooper (BBC): '*What a wonderful concert! It was moving, uplifting and so varied. It must have been a joy to sing*'

Many thanks to Helen Kirk for organising and running the reception in the Ballroom after the concert. It was well attended by many from both Choruses involved and it gave the chance for some of our younger audience members to meet and chat to some of the Black Dyke Band, something organized by Anne Adams. In addition, it also gave us a chance to recognize and give presents to two of our three members who have achieved 50 years in the Chorus, Hilary Olsen and Donald Watts. Our third golden member, Chris Wren, couldn't be with us due to ill health but we hope to present him with his gift some time in the future.

Now we have next season to look forward to. With Rutter's *Gloria* recording with our old friends the Black Dyke Band, the After Hours Concert, our two Christmas Concerts (with the Black Dyke Band), Verdi's *Requiem* and Mahler's mighty 8th Symphony in Manchester, we have a full and challenging year ahead. I am certain that we'll all work hard to produce as successful a season as the one we've just had and I for one can't wait for it all to happen!

A special mention here for the performance we're giving on 18 April of Handel's *Messiah* in the Victoria Hall, with visiting choirs from France and Bochum. That's going to be a real treat and for the first time for all of us it'll be with a brass band. (Guess which one!)

I would like to complete this report with some thanks for those whose efforts make all this possible. To Anne Adams, our administrator, and to our three professionals, Darius, Rachel and Maggie, our heartfelt thanks for all that you do. The quality of our music and the meticulous organisation would not be possible without you.

In addition, many thanks to our Committee who give so much of their time and skills to the Chorus and a special thanks to our new Committee members, Marianne Grayson and James Oliver, who have taken over from John Spence. Thanks also to Nigel Wright for organising the Voice Exchange.

With my best wishes for the coming season.

**Paul Henstridge September, 2019**

### **Administrator's Report**

The Chair's report celebrates the wonderful music the Chorus sang last season, and sets out our musical plans for the coming year. It falls to me to meet our obligation to the Charity Commission to ensure that this annual report outlines the extent to which the Chorus fulfilled its stated objectives and public benefit requirements, and met the targets set last year.

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.

The Chorus again met our aim of presenting choral music from a wide repertoire, with sacred and secular works by composers from across the globe and from the 18th, 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. As in previous years the programme took some risks, presenting two new works, a new arrangement and little-known pieces by women composers, 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 a national symphony orchestras, a world famous brass band and piano. We sang in Latin, English, French and German, to live audiences in Germany and Sheffield, and on national radio. Venues ranged from a ballroom, a railway station, a museum, a brand new concert hall in Germany as well as our own City Hall and churches in and around Sheffield.

Audience feedback and official reviews continue to confirm that members of the public enjoyed our concerts (see Chair's report for details), and broadcasts on Radio 3 and Classic FM widened our reach beyond Sheffield.

Three years ago we set a goal to undertake a more detailed analysis of tickets sales, and the results are shown in the table below.

SPC TICKET SALES OVER THE FOUR YEARS 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18 AND 2018/19					
Season	Concert	Possible	Actual	%	
<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2015/16 TOTALS</b>	<b>9080</b>	<b>4346</b>	<b>48%</b>	4346 tickets sold
<b>2016/17</b>	Christmas x 2	4540	2439	54%	4574 tickets sold 228 more than 15/16 Increase of 5%.
	Elgar / VW	2270	895	39%	
	Tippett	2270	892	39%	
	Classical Sheffield	Not available	Not available	Not available	
	Messiah	360	348	97%	
	<b>2016/17 TOTALS</b>	<b>9440</b>	<b>4574</b>	<b>42%</b>	
<b>2017/18</b>	Holy Face	Not available	Not available	Not available	Target 5000  5062 tickets sold (estimate) 488 more than 16/17 Increase of 11%
	Christmas x 2	4540	Not available <i>Estimate 2300</i>	Not available <i>Estimate 51%</i>	
	Paradise	Not available	N/A almost full	N/A almost full	
	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	
	<b>2017/18 TOTALS</b>	<b>9480</b>	<b>5062</b> <i>(estimate)</i>	<b>53%</b> <i>(estimate)</i>	
<b>2018/19</b>	After Hours	Not available	Not available	Not available	Target 5000  3773 tickets sold (estimate) 1289 fewer than 17/18 Decrease of 34%
	Christmas x 2	4540	<i>Estimate 2300</i>	<i>Estimate 51%</i>	
	Classical Sheffield	Not available	Not available	Not available	
	Bach B min Mass	2270	1041	46%	
	Holy Face	1191	432	36%	
	<b>2018/19 TOTALS</b>	<b>8001</b>	<b>3773</b> <i>(estimate)</i>	<b>47%</b> <i>(estimate)</i>	

The target of 5,000 ticket sales that we set last year proved to be overly ambitious, with disappointing sales for concerts at the City Hall, despite a reduced price voucher offer for students and their families and teachers that was sent to all Sheffield secondary schools and to the Music

Academy and Music Hub. Though no figures are available, 'by eye' estimates for the After Hours and Classical Sheffield concerts in the ballroom indicate a probable capacity of around 50%.

In addition, ticket sales for the Holy Face concert were extremely disappointing, especially considering a free voucher offer for schools and the hire of a marketing professional, who did a magnificent job especially with digital marketing. However, ticket sales were hindered by problems with SIV ticketing, affecting both on-line and box office sales, such that most of the advance tickets were sold by members of the Chorus. The unfamiliarity of the programme to most music lovers may not have helped.

It is clear from the Finance Officer's Report that most concerts run at a loss, and that last year's loss was somewhat higher than is usual. However, as in previous years, subscription fees and the associated Gift Aid covered SPC's fixed costs (eg professional fees, venue hire, insurance, admin/IT) with sufficient surplus to subsidise the concerts.

Our improved website continued to attract positive feedback. A free check by Making Music in 2018 confirmed the following:

- Good use of social media posts for promotion and publicity for upcoming concerts, celebrating achievements, as well as sharing general music industry news and information
- Homepage clean and easy to navigate
- Very easy to find rehearsal and concert information, one and two clicks only, each under five seconds.
- New members' link right in view on landing page
- Social media connected to the website, including live Twitter feed

The report suggested the addition of more photographs, which we aim to do, but overall the Making Music volunteer was *'very impressed with what you're doing.'*

Twelve articles were featured in the News area, compared to 16 last year and 4 in 2016-17. 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. However, engagement with the website was slightly lower than in 2017-18, with 7848 visits (clicks on a page) compared to 7073 over the nine months since the new site was launched last year, an average of 654 visits per month (785 last year) or 65 page views per day (82 last year). These were from 4704 individual visitors (unique devices) compared to 4721 last year, an average of 437 individual visitors per month (525 last year). The pages visited most frequently are those in the Members Area, followed by those advertising concerts.

The Chorus continued to enjoy the services of our Graphic Designer, Paul Boardman, who supplies stylish posters and flyers as well as the entries in the City Hall concert programmes at very reasonable rates. Our Education and Outreach Officer Georgina Hulse offered two sets of 'note-bashing' and sight reading sessions for current and prospective chorus members. These were very well received and we are grateful to Georgina for giving so generously of her time in this way.

Following the retirement of John Spence, our Chair Paul Henstridge and Music Director Darius Battiwalla shared the duties of Membership Officer, the latter taking the opportunity to update and the singing database, which has thus been considerably enhanced. Towards the end of the season Marianne Grayson agreed to take on the Membership Officer role; we are grateful to all three for their services.



The Chairman's report sets out our musical plans for the 2019-20 season, during which we again aim to sell 5,000 tickets. We hope to attract more young people to our concerts by continuing to offer reduced price vouchers for young people and their teachers and families.

We have re-affirmed our commitment to supplement the marketing and publicity 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 will pay for adverts in each of the SICS programmes, rather than just those for concerts in which we take part. In 2019-20 we also plan to update our policies.

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.

**Anne Adams September 2019**

### **Financial review - Finance Officer's Report**

I apologise for the on-going delay in moving to the CIO which has been hampered by some health issues followed by delays having to deal with demands caused by our bankers HSBC. HSBC insisted on all charities completing a complex review of customer details as part of their effort to fight fraud and financial crime. With the overhanging threat of closing all our accounts, the work could not be avoided and required lengthy phone calls to determine the most appropriate answers to their questions. Fortunately, HSBC eventually replied that they had successfully completed our review and updated their records, so we still have our accounts. Following that it came to light that HSBC had changed their electronic statement download procedure cutting out the data format required for the financial package we have used for many years. This came out of the blue so there was no option but to search out another financial package that suits our way of working and to implement it from scratch. The package selected is provided by Paxton Charities Accounting and is specifically designed for UK charities. It can automatically produce gift aid claims when required. The system has been loaded with relevant details of all members, friends and supporters to enable this to happen. The on-line version of the system was selected in order to reduce administration for the Finance Officer and to easily enable access by other authorised officials if required. This move will facilitate the process of handing over to a new Finance Officer when the time comes. This system has other useful facilities, for instance it is very easy to track all member subscription payments Advice received 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. I apologise for the consequential delay in moving to the CIO but that will happen in the near future. Consequently the following tables relate to the CIO which will remain dormant until all relevant gift aid has been secured and the Charity Commission allows the transfer from charity 518073 to the CIO 1175185.

**Graham S Dawson, Finance Officer, October 2019**

<b>BALANCE SHEET: SUMMARY OF FUND MOVEMENTS 2018-19</b>							<b>Charity Number 1175185</b>
	<b>Balances brought forward</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Transfers</b>	<b>Gains &amp; Losses</b>	<b>Balances carried forward</b>	
<b>Fund Name</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	
General Bank Account	0.00					0.00	
Concert Account	0.00					0.00	
Savings Account	0.00					0.00	
Friends of SPC	0.00					0.00	
Friends of SPC Savings	0.00					0.00	
COIF Deposit Account	0.00					0.00	
<b>Balances Total</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES 2018-19**

**Charity Number 1175185**

	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total funds (£)	Previous year funds (£)
<b>INCOME FROM</b>				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>				
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Net Income - Expenditure</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>