

Leeds Festival Chorus

Annual Report
2020/21 Season

**Annual Report of the Trustees and
Financial Statements for the
Year ended 31 July 2021
For
LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS**

Registered Charity 517127

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS

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for the Year ended 31 July 2021**

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LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Trustees' Annual Report for the Year ended 31 July 2021

Structure, Governance and Management

The charity is an unincorporated body governed by its constitution and guidelines issued by the Charity Commission.

Trustees (Executive Committee)

Elected Officers:

Andrew Kitchingman (to 30.06.21)	Chairman
John Apps (from 06.07.21)	Chairman
Andrew Smith	Administrative Secretary
Jonathan Lacey	Treasurer
Peter Coltman	Concerts Organiser
Fiona Kirkby	Choir Coordinator

Other trustees in the year were as follows:

Emma Bates	Mary Crothers (from 21.10.20)
Mac Burnell	Mary Margorrian (resigned 21.10.20)
Harriet Carlyle (from 21.10.20)	Margaret Mara
Michael Croft	Margaret Whaley (resigned 21.10.20)

Appointment and recruitment of Trustees

The executive committee works with the Artistic Advisor (the conductor) to run Leeds Festival Chorus in accordance with the Constitution. The full committee are elected on an annual basis at the Annual General Meeting. All Chorus members are encouraged to consider standing.

Legal and Administrative Information

The charity is registered with the Charity Commission Number 517127.

The charity's address is:-

c/o Dr A Smith
28 Boroughbridge Road
Knaresborough
HG5 0NJ

The charity's bankers are:-

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill Avenue,
Kings Hill, West Malling
Kent
ME19 4JQ

The charity's independent examiner is:-

Martin Smith FCCA
Malcolm Jones & Co LLP
Accountants and Business Advisors
West Hill House
Allerton Hill
Chapel Allerton
Leeds LS7 3QB

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Trustees' Annual Report for the Year ended 31 July 2021 (cont)

Objects

The objects of the charity are to promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in and appreciation of the art and science of music in all its aspects by the presentation of public concerts and recitals and in such other ways as the charity through its Executive Committee shall determine from time to time.

Review of Activities and Achievements

The Coronavirus pandemic has made it difficult to achieve the objects stated above during the year, so the charity delivered its objects through regular online rehearsals and a variety of online concerts with a small online audience of Friends/Patrons together with an online recording of part of Purcell's "Come ye Sons of Art".

Reserves Policy

The charity's policy on reserves is to ensure that sufficient unrestricted net current assets (liquid reserves) are maintained to enable the charity to continue for at least the next twelve months in the event that there is an unpredicted and/or significant drop in income levels. The Trustees consider that the current level of liquid reserves (£40,519) is less than 12 months worth of unrestricted ordinary expenditure (£70,068 last year as this year's figures are not representative) and therefore does not meet the requirements of this policy. Accordingly the committee is undertaking steps to rectify this issue.

Risk management

The Trustees examine the major risks that the charity faces each financial year when considering their plans and annual budgets. The charity has controls in place to control these risks and mitigate any impact they may have on the charity's future.

Public Benefit

The Trustees confirm that they have complied with the duty in section 17(5) of the 2011 Charities Act to have due regard to guidance published by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit.

Financial Review

The reserves of the charity are both restricted and unrestricted in nature.

As noted in the Reserves policy above, the Trustees are of the opinion that the levels of reserves may not be adequate in exceptional circumstances to meet future expenditure and to fulfil the charity's ongoing aims and objectives. There is a surplus for the year of £9,212, compared to a surplus on ordinary activities last year of £4,826 and a deficit after exceptional items last year of £19,018, which has been taken to reserves. The total reserves at the year end amount to £65,702 (2020 - £56,490) of which £6,079 (2020 - £6,079) are restricted.

On behalf of the Trustees

.....
John Apps, Chairman

28 September 2021

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS

I report on the accounts of the Charity for the year ended 31 July 2021 which are set out on pages 4 to 10.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this period under section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- To follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- To state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanation from you as trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that, in any material respect, the requirements:
 - to keep proper accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Martin Smith FCCA
Malcolm Jones & Co LLP
Accountants & Business Advisors
West Hill House
Allerton Hill
Chapel Allerton
Leeds LS7 3QB

28 September 2021

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year ended 31 July 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 31.07.21 £	Total Funds 31.07.20 £
Incoming resources:					
Voluntary income	6	35,503	-	35,503	49,111
Activities for generating funds	8	-	-	-	25,071
Investment income	9	5	-	5	122
Incoming resources from charitable activities	10	277	-	277	1,340
Total incoming resources:		35,785	-	35,785	75,644
Resources expended:					
Costs of generating voluntary income	11	-	-	-	1,310
Fundraising & trading costs	12	15,188	-	15,188	60,994
Charitable activities	13	550	-	550	550
Governance costs	14	10,835	-	10,835	7,964
Total resources expended		26,573	-	26,573	70,818
Net incoming resources on ordinary activities for the year		9,212	-	9,212	4,826
Exceptional item	15	-	-	-	(23,844)
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year		9,212	-	9,212	(19,018)
Total charity funds brought forward		50,411	6,079	56,490	75,508
Total charity funds carried forward		59,623	6,079	65,702	56,490

The notes on pages 6 to 10 form part of these accounts.

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Balance Sheet as at 31 July 2021

	Notes	2021		2020	
		£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Tangible assets	2		19,104		21,067
Current Assets					
Other debtors	3	255		255	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>54,548</u>		<u>43,343</u>	
		54,803		43,598	
Current Liabilities					
Creditors & accrued expenses	4	<u>8,205</u>		<u>8,175</u>	
Net current assets			46,598		35,423
Net assets			<u>65,702</u>		<u>56,490</u>
Represented by:					
FUNDS					
Restricted income funds:					
Balance at 1 August 2020			6,079		4,329
Net incoming resources for the year			<u>-</u>		<u>1,750</u>
			6,079		6,079
Unrestricted income funds:					
Balance at 1 August 2020		50,411		71,179	
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year		<u>9,212</u>		<u>(20,768)</u>	
			59,623		50,411
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS	5		<u>65,702</u>		<u>56,490</u>

Approved by the Trustees

.....
John Apps, Chairman

For and on behalf of the Trustees

28 September 2021

The notes on pages 6 to 10 form part of these accounts.

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Notes to the Accounts
for the Year ended 31 July 2021

1. Accounting Policies

General

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), the Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis.

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue.

Incoming Resources

All income is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA), when it becomes receivable.

Resources Expended

All resources expended are recognised on an accruals basis, in the period in which they are incurred.

Grants Payable

Grants payable are included in the SOFA when agreed by the Trustees.

Funds Structure Policy

Funds comprise unrestricted income funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in the furtherance of the charity's objectives, and restricted funds which are dealt with and presented in accordance with the terms attaching to each separate restricted fund.

Tangible Assets

Tangible assets are capitalised at cost including any incidental expenses of Acquisition. A wear and tear allowance is provided at 10% on a reducing balance basis in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life and reflects the wish of the trustees to account for losses/damage etc. to its music library.

2. Tangible Assets

	Music Library £
At valuation	
At 1 August 2020	21,067
Additions in the year	159
Wear and tear provision (10%)	(2,122)
At 31 July 2021	19,104

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Notes to the Accounts
for the Year ended 31 July 2021 (cont)

3. Other debtors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Prepayments	255	255
Corporate sponsors	-	-
	<u>255</u>	<u>255</u>

4. Creditors

	2021	2020
	£	£
Accrued expenses	<u>8,205</u>	<u>8,175</u>

5. Funds

	2020	Movement	2021
	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds			
Music Library	21,067	(1,963)	19,104
General Fund	29,344	11,175	40,519
	<u>50,411</u>	<u>9,212</u>	<u>59,623</u>
Restricted Funds			
Chorus Master Scholarship Monies	1,471	-	1,471
Music to my Ears	4,608	-	4,608
	<u>6,079</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,079</u>
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS	<u>56,490</u>	<u>9,212</u>	<u>65,702</u>

6. Voluntary Income

	Note	31.07.21	31.07.20
		£	£
Members' subscriptions		19,086	21,135
Friends' subscriptions		1,492	1,528
Tax refund on covenanted subscriptions		4,927	4,898
Fundraising and social group		1,370	6,950
Grants, donations and sponsorship	7	5,826	14,600
Legacies		2,802	-
Other income		-	-
		<u>35,503</u>	<u>49,111</u>

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Notes to the Accounts
for the Year ended 31 July 2021 (cont)

7. Grants, donations, sponsorship and patrons

	31.07.21	31.07.20
	£	£
Miscellaneous donations	3,901	675
Donations for Dove Commission	-	2,000
J Apps	150	175
Olav Arnold Charitable Trust	1,000	1,000
M Beer	300	300
The Liz and Terry Bramall Foundation	-	2,500
Brewin Dolphin Ltd	-	2,000
M Clark	-	25
Dr M L Cooke	-	300
Genesis Labels	-	1,000
J Hill	-	175
Investec	-	2,000
Mr N H & Mrs T H Jones	-	300
A Kitchingman	-	200
J Lacey	-	50
R MacDonald	-	175
Mr W H Mordy	-	400
Spooner Charitable Trust	-	175
M Stanyard	-	175
D Strachan	175	175
B Tee	-	300
Rev M Winbolt-Lewis	300	300
S Wright	-	200
	<hr/> 5,826	<hr/> 14,600

8. Activities for generating funds

	31.07.21	31.07.20
	£	£
Concerts and recitals	-	25,071
Christmas CD income	-	-
	<hr/> -	<hr/> 25,071

9. Investment income

	31.07.21	31.07.20
	£	£
Bank interest received	<hr/> 5	<hr/> 122

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Notes to the Accounts
for the Year ended 31 July 2021 (cont)

10. Incoming resources from charitable activities	31.07.21	31.07.20
	£	£
Library income	<u>277</u>	<u>1,340</u>
11. Costs of generating voluntary income	31.07.21	31.07.20
	£	£
Publicity programmes, brochures and advertising	<u>-</u>	<u>1,310</u>
12. Fundraising & trading costs	31.07.21	31.07.20
	£	£
Hire of music	388	944
Online recording	1,000	2,500
Concert costs	-	33,057
Rehearsal costs	13,800	21,481
Auditions	-	3,012
	<u>15,188</u>	<u>60,994</u>
13. Charitable activities	31.07.21	31.07.20
	£	£
Donations	<u>550</u>	<u>550</u>

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Notes to the Accounts
for the Year ended 31 July 2021 (cont)

14. Governance costs

	31.07.21	31.07.20
	£	£
Subscriptions and insurance	613	470
Printing, postage, stationery and administrative expenses	413	838
Accountancy and Independent Examiner's fee	1,320	1,280
Friends' and patrons' expenses	144	394
Sundry expenses	35	35
Consultancy fees	4,750	-
Website costs and design	-	850
Zoom costs	528	-
Library expenses	439	561
Music storage	325	325
Music wear and tear allowance	2,122	2,341
Scholar costs re restricted funds	-	750
Bank charges	146	120
	<hr/> 10,835	<hr/> 7,964

15. Exceptional item

	31.07.21	31.07.20
	£	£
Dove Commission	<hr/> -	<hr/> 23,844

16. Trustees Remuneration

No Trustees or any persons connected with them have received remuneration (2020 – nil).

17. Trustees Expenses

Three Trustees (2020 – four) have been reimbursed out of pocket expenses totalling £1,371 (2020 - £1,517).

18. Staff Costs and Emoluments

There were no employees with emoluments in the year (2020 – nil).

19. Cost of Independent Examination

Preparation of accounts and associated costs were £1,320 (2020 - £1,280).

Treasurer's Report 2020-21

It has been an unusual year – with no concerts, and with many of our income streams totally drying up or certainly being much reduced.

I would like to draw your attention to the following.

1. You will see from the Statement of Financial Activities on *page 4*, that total income fell from £75,644 to £35,785. Voluntary income (*note 6 - which includes FRASC – see page 7*) dropped by £14k to £35.5k, with donations etc (which is included in this figure) falling by £8,774. *Note 8* - There was no income from generating funds (last year £25k) and library income was also down.
2. *Page 4* - Resources expended on ordinary activities fell from £70,818 to £26,573, with fundraising and trading costs dropping from £61k to £15k.
3. Governance costs (*page 10*) have increased in the year, due mainly to consultancy fees of £4,750, the costs of which were almost all covered by donations (+ Gift aid on those donations)
4. There was no exceptional item this year, so this means there is a **surplus for the year of £9,212 compared to an overall loss of £19,018 last year**. We had the legacy of £2802 and no venue rehearsal costs (which are factored into our subscriptions) which both helped to create this surplus (*section 6 page 7*).
5. *Note 2, page 5* - The balance sheet shows a drop in the value of the music library, due to the 10% wear & tear allowance being applied.
6. Debtors remain the same and there is an increase in cash at bank to £54,548. There is a marginal increase in creditors, which leaves the Chorus with net assets at the year-end of £65,702 (*page 7*). This is represented by restricted funds of £6,079 and unrestricted funds of £59,623.
7. A few years ago, we started to make a provision in the accounts for the re-auditions each year, rather than it being a hit every 3 years. This figure is in *section 4 page 7* (this also includes the Winchester pre-payment/deposits paid). It was decided not to add to that figure this year as we have missed 1 or possibly 2 years of re-auditions and adding to it would have increased this provision beyond it's intended purpose.

The Chorus subscriptions have been increased to £159. These are to cover the rehearsals costs. It is largely the reduction in membership that has led to the need for this increase, without which it is estimated that we would have a shortfall of around £3000 for our rehearsals.

The new singing year may well be a challenge, financially (and probably in other ways too!). We do not know the effect Covid will have on our concerts or rehearsals and who will support us this year. The last few years have seen a steady decline in our Corporate Sponsors (none paid last year) and only 3 Patrons paid.

The 2 York concerts have been budgeted to replace the LICS concerts (which normally cost us £4000 each) and we have budgets for the Roundhay concerts (we can use previous concerts there as a basis for these). I do not have any potential figures for the Winchester concert.

Jonathan Lacey (Treasurer)

Covid-19 Group

When the UK first went into lockdown in March 2020 we, like many other organisations, started off not quite knowing what to do. The Committee very quickly decided that we should carry on paying Simon and Rebecca, and that we should ask them to prepare some online resources that would keep members musically occupied.

Simon and Rebecca started off by putting audition material online, including some German tuition from Elizabeth Rusteberg. But the first real step forward occurred when Chris Short suggested that we might make a recording. *Bogoródtse Ďevo* was a great success, despite many Chorus members finding the experience of listening to their own voice rather disconcerting. It was broadcast on Radio 3, and also prompted the first online rehearsal.

By this time (May 2020), it was becoming evident that we would not be able to rehearse live for a considerable time and that, even when it was possible, we would need to be very careful. The Committee therefore decided to set up a small sub-committee to assess and recommend when and how we might resume live rehearsals. Joining me on this group were Fiona, Simon, John Apps to provide medical expertise, and Mary Magorrian to represent younger Members. We were later joined by Rebecca, who brought much valuable knowledge from other choirs, and Peter Coltman.

There was little the group could do at first, other than gather information. But in August, a clarification of Government advice indicated that live rehearsals would be possible, subject to various conditions. These included:

- Limiting numbers to 30 people;
- A survey of members to find out who was willing to attend;
- A risk assessment, which would have to be agreed with the venue
- Procedures and seating plans.

Unfortunately, by the time we had everything in place, Covid cases were shooting up again, the country went into lockdown, and we had to suspend our plans. During the long months of winter lockdown and the “roadmap”, we refined the plans in the expectation that we would be able to start live rehearsals after the relaxation of rules scheduled for 17th May. On 18th May, DCMS published guidelines that limited amateur choirs to six people, and we resigned ourselves to waiting until September.

Even now, with Government restrictions lifted in July, we have decided to resume rehearsals cautiously. The group will continue to monitor the situation and we hope that at some time we shall be able to relax our own restrictions. Meanwhile, many thanks to my colleagues on the group for all the hours that they have put into getting us back singing, and particularly to Simon and Rebecca, who have also been devising interesting and entertaining programmes for the online rehearsals. We are truly fortunate to have two such gifted and dedicated professionals.

Andrew Smith

Marketing Group Report

Our primary roles and objectives are:

- Communicating and engaging with Chorus members
- Publicising and promoting concerts
- Increasing the public profile of the Chorus
- Attracting new members
- Providing marketing assistance to other Chorus groups

What we did during the pandemic

During the lockdown was a quieter time in terms of concerts but marketing was still busy! Our aim was to maintain and promote the profile of the Chorus, as well as keeping members in the loop:

- Emailing out weekly rehearsal information and links to resources provided by Rebecca Taylor, as well as other emails
- Updating the website with news of our activities
- Posting regularly on Twitter and Facebook and interacting with other organisations on social media
- Producing material for a local magazine

What we are starting to do now

We are still doing much of what we did during the lockdown, and in addition:

- Focusing even more on keeping the website up to date with news items and banners for concerts, and content submitted by other Chorus groups. This is important so that visitors get a sense of the Chorus as an active and fun group to be a part of, and so that the information is accurate
- Sending emails to our external mailing list - currently with 180 subscribers
- Producing flyers and organising printing
- Liaising with marketing at other organisations
- Producing material for local media
- Producing the programme booklet for concerts and organising printing
- Other ad hoc tasks such as collating the reports booklet for the AGM

We also have a stand-alone **ticketing team** whose members are Pippa Lodge and Avril Brown. The role of this team is to organise the tickets for own-promotion concerts, for example producing ticket maps and organising the sale of tickets on the door at the concert.

We are very grateful as always to Francis Watson, who is not a Chorus member but an honorary patron, for supporting us in many roles for a number of years, including the website, emails and programme production.

The other members of the marketing team are Mary Magorrian, Emma Bates, Richard Wilcocks, Nicky Rowbottom and Mac Burnell

Changes to the team

This year as well as our new ticketing team members we were joined by Nicky Rowbottom as part of the Digital Communications working group. Her experience in digital media and marketing has been very helpful to the team. We have already had some great interactions in the social media sphere from her engaging posts.

In the **Digital Communications** working group we discussed how we would raise the digital profile of the Chorus. Short term action points included:

- Posting more frequently on social media and with a wider range of content (as opposed to just posting about our upcoming concerts)
- Emphasising our links with other organisations on social media to widen our reach
- Showcasing the social aspect of the choir in our communications
- Regularly posting news items on the website

We are working on these action points within the full Marketing team.

How can you help?

We are always appreciative of the support of members, whether in a formal or informal role. You can help us by

- Joining the Marketing group to take on a variety of roles such as producing the programme, writing news articles for the website, acting as a backup for emails to members, or supporting the ticketing team
- Sharing physical flyers or social media posts
- Sending us content such as photos of Chorus events, or news items for the website

If you'd like to know more about joining the Marketing group or about helping out on a more informal basis, please contact marketing@leedsfestivalchorus.co.uk, send a Facebook message to the Leeds Festival Chorus page, or speak to one of our members at rehearsals.

We are also still on the lookout for a Chair for the group. We're an enthusiastic group with a really important role to play in the Chorus so would benefit from some leadership to ensure we're on track!

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS – ANNUAL REPORT FROM LIBRARIAN, 2020-21

Scores for our rehearsals and concerts

AS we all know, no concerts could be held during the 2020-21 year because of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, in order to assist with online (Zoom) rehearsals and for preparation for concerts early in the 2021-22 season, scores of the following music were made available on several occasions during the year for collection from boxes placed at suitably located members' houses (in line with Covid-19 restrictions in force at the time):

J S Bach: Magnificat in D (Novello).

Dunkerley: Plural Absurdity.

Handel: Four Coronation Anthems (OUP).

Handel: Zadok the Priest (Novello).

Mahler (ed Simon Wright): Symphony No 2) (for 31 October concert).

Mendelssohn (ed Simon Wright): Drei Geistliche Lieder.

Rossini: Petite Messe Solonnelle (Ricordi).

Bundle of seven opera items (for 16 October concert).

Scores were also returned during the year using the same system. I am very grateful to Becky Clark, Lloyd Davies, John and Sue Dickinson, Jonathan and Becky Lacey, and Andrew Smith for having boxes during the year. And I am grateful to members generally for using the box system. Use of the box system has minimised postage costs for LFC.

Printing costs were incurred during the year for *Mendelssohn: Drei Geistliche Lieder* and for *Verdi: Gli arredi festivi* (one of the seven opera items). These copies are now available for hire to other choirs, therefore having the potential for recouping costs in the future. Hire costs were incurred during the year for *J S Bach: Magnificat in D*, *Handel: Four Coronation Anthems* and *Rossini: Petite Messe Solonnelle*. In the case of the *Bach* and *Rossini*, there was no expenditure in cash flow terms, with the hire cost being set against the credit which Leeds Music Library kindly granted to us in the early stages of the pandemic and on which I reported last year. Other scores used during the year were LFC's own copies.

Hiring out scores

I reported a year ago that, as a result of the pandemic, no scores had been hired out since March 2020. That position continued throughout the year ending July 2021. Sets of scores started to be hired out again in August 2021, as something approaching normal rehearsals by other choirs started to resume.

A number of score sets were with individual members of other choirs when lockdown suddenly came in March 2020. I have been engaged in a good deal of "chasing" of librarians of other choirs to gather these scores together and return them to me. I am pleased to say that, with the exception of two sets of scores, all such scores have now been returned, or payments made for replacements that were "pandemic-lost". I am taking steps to achieve full recovery of the remaining sets, in one case with increasing pressure.

Other matters

I reported last year that Lloyd Davies kindly agreed to deputise for me should I suddenly become stricken, and incapable, with anything nasty. Happily, being careful but no doubt with some luck, I have remained unstricken. Whether I am (in)capable is not entirely for me to judge ...

My work continues on the backlog of updating the master record of the scores that LFC owns and checking consistency with the corresponding records on the two websites from which nearly all of our hire-out enquiries originate.

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS

Choir Co-ordinator Report 2020 - 2021

This year's report will be much briefer than previously as so many of the things that I normally report on have not taken place. Whilst we have now resumed live rehearsals things are very far from being back to normal.

Choir Membership

Whilst we have been pleased to welcome several people to online rehearsals it has not been possible to hold any auditions so we have not been able to maintain choir numbers. Whilst starting the year with 141 members at the present time we have 125 members.

A much greater number of members have retired or left the choir this year than is normally the case. The pandemic has caused us all to reassess what we are doing and for some this has meant a move away from Leeds, increased family responsibilities and work pressures or a realisation that this is the time to retire. I hope that as things improve we may see some of our friends again. But for now those who are no longer in the choir at the start of this season are as follows:

Sopranos	Altos	Tenor	Bass
Hannah Chamberlain	Cathy Kitchingman	Tony Hartigan	Terence Gausson
Jordan Chapman	Susie White		Phil Higgins
Tara Evans			Tom Lusty
Ruth Fitton			
Rebecca Garrud			
Clare Gordon			
Janet Higgins			
Sue Higgins			
Hannah Waters			
Rebecca Yeadon			

We wish them all well and particularly hope that those who are retiring will maintain their association with the choir through the 'Friends of LFC'.

RECRUITMENT

As I indicated in my last report this is the year when the effect of the pandemic has really been felt. We have not been able to have open evenings but have welcomed quite a lot of people from far and wide to on-line rehearsals.

We do have 4 potential members sitting in on live rehearsals - 2 of whom joined us on-line and we shall be organising auditions for them in due course.

REHEARSALS AND ATTENDANCE

All last seasons' rehearsals were held on-line. Despite the best efforts of the Covid Group in trying to set up live rehearsals, visiting possible venues, preparing risk assessments and assessing the possibilities of streaming rehearsals, we have been unable to start 'live' until this season. We have, however, had 40 on-line rehearsals with varying attendance. The more severe the lockdown the more members have joined in on-line, ranging from 100 to 60 as the summer progressed and restrictions on activities were relaxed.

TRIENNIAL AUDITIONS

The important thing we have to do as we return to live singing is to bring our voices back to somewhere where they were pre-pandemic. There will therefore be no auditions until 2022. The actual time will be decided as we see how our singing progresses. Please note that these will also not be full auditions but voice assessments so that all members can receive feedback on anything they might need to work on to improve their singing voices.

VENUES

We remain grateful to St Chad's Church and the Parish Centre who have worked with us in trying to get venues ready for the live rehearsals that alas never materialised.

AND FINALLY

Although not everyone has been able to join in our on-line rehearsals the two people who are there, week in week out, are Simon and Rebecca. Their commitment to the choir in finding interesting pieces for us to sing and their unfailing good humour through our online rehearsals is hugely appreciated by us all. Many of our guests have commented on this and the fact that they have joined in so many rehearsals bears this out. Thank you so much to both of them.

EXTERNAL FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE – REPORT FOR THE AGM ON 6/10/21

The EFC is tasked with raising funds from corporate sponsors, charitable trusts, patrons and friends. In its current form it has raised, over recent years, almost £16,000 from charitable trusts to fund our Chorus Master and Composer Scholarships and provide subsidised tickets and also secured up to six corporate patrons paying us between £1,000 and £2,000pa each. Many of these successes came from personal contacts of Committee members.

Covid has changed all of that. We have not approached our corporate sponsors this year as we have had nothing to offer them. Nor have we made any applications to charitable trusts as they have had far more pressing calls on their funds. Our usual activities have therefore been on hold.

The Committee has therefore used the last 18 months to examine new avenues of funding, profile raising and recruitment with the help of Rebecca Wade, a post grad student from Leeds University whose input has been extremely helpful and stimulated some excellent ideas. Through her, Andrew K and David Strachan have made contacts within the University music department which may provide a useful source of recruits going forward. There have been outline discussions about choral scholarships for students, especially tenors, and this will need to be followed up.

We have also explored ideas such as Come and Sing and crowd funding and have put a great deal of time and thought into the latter. In large part the challenge is one of finding people with the time and energy who are willing to take on and develop these ideas into meaningful and sustained initiatives.

As we gradually return to normality we need to review our targets for external fundraising. The days of the major Leeds professional firms paying us an annual retainer have probably gone as marketing budgets have been cut and, if reinstated, may in future be directed elsewhere. Attracting sponsorship for individual concerts will depend on us providing events which are commercially attractive and sufficiently prestigious in terms of both venue and content to give sponsors opportunity to entertain their clients and contacts.

For the next couple of years we are constrained by the LTH closure for refurbishment. There are still Covid concerns for both audiences and choir members and it would be counterproductive to “relaunch” to potential sponsors until we are more confident in what we can offer them.

Sadly we have lost both our chairman (Andrew K) and our secretary (Barbara Brickles) both of whom made a fantastic contribution and will be difficult to replace. We are in need of fresh ideas and enthusiasm.

Would you be interested in joining the EFC??

Friends of Leeds Festival Chorus

Report 1st October 2020 to 30th September 2021

The last year has been as an unusual one for the Friends as it has for the chorus. There have been no live events for them to attend although a few of the Friends have joined us for on-line rehearsals. I wait to see how many Friends renew their subscription this year.

In October 2020 we had the following numbers of friends renewing:

Full Single -----	18
Country Single -----	10
Full Joint -----	24
Country Joint -----	10
Honorary -----	2
Total -----	64

During the year, we have gained two new Friends. One wished to join in rehearsals but couldn't audition to become a member. The other is a (complimentary) ex-member.

Total amount paid in subscriptions=£754.

There were also £423 worth of donations ranging from £2 to £138.

There were 87 Friends on the original list I inherited in March 2020 although I had not been able to verify that they were all 'active' until October 2020.

Several friends informed me they did not wish to continue being members of the Friends, mainly due to illness or incapacity in themselves or a relative.

There were no expressions of unwillingness to renew because we had little to offer this year.

Sadly, I was informed of the death of Brian Sleeman earlier this year. Brian had been a long time member and very supportive friend of the chorus. He was able to join in some of the Zoom rehearsals until his final illness. His son informed me that he found these rehearsals a great comfort. I have sent my condolences to his family on behalf of the Friends. Part of Parry's 'Invocation to Music', in a recording made by the chorus, was played at his funeral.

In July the Committee agreed to my proposal to simplify the Friends structure. There are now two levels of Friends:

Level One for those unable to attend concerts but wish to keep in touch with the Chorus;

Level Two for those attending concerts and are invited to the Chairman's Bar where they receive complimentary programmes and refreshments and the chance to meet former singing colleagues. They are also invited to attend social events and sit in on rehearsals.

Subscription rates had not changed for some years so these too have been simplified and increased.

Level One-£20 per household

Level Two-£35 single, £60 double

Although this is a considerable rise, it is still less than many other choruses charge and is set at a level which covers our costs.

I am looking forward to at last meeting our Friends face to face. Please encourage your friends and relatives to become Friends and attend our concerts.

Could I also remind you that on leaving the chorus, all members are offered complimentary participation in the Friends.

John Apps

Friends coordinator

25/9/2021

Report
from
The Concert Organising Team
2020-21

In the past year, we have been unable to mount any public concerts. However, we built on the idea of an on-line concert at Christmas to run a series of three further concerts marking St. Valentine's Day, Easter, and the arrival of Spring. These were

- Music for Valentine's
- Easter Journey
- Now is the Month of Maying

They comprised a range of pieces which we had previously rehearsed on-line and which we then sang to the accompaniment of professional recordings, along with a number of spoken contributions of prose and poetry contributed by various members of the chorus. The concerts were attended by a small on-line audience which expressed its warm appreciation. The participants themselves felt the concerts were immensely enjoyable providing a focus for on-line rehearsal work which might otherwise have become drudgery.

We would like to express our particular thanks to Rebecca Taylor whose technical organisation made this possible and to Simon Wright whose customary ebullience never flagged, even though he was conducting a chorus whom he could not hear!

Katie Turner
Rebecca Lacey
Lloyd Davies
Peter Coltman

25th September 2021

FUND RAISING AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE (FRASC) REPORT October 2021

The clue is in the title. FRASC's role is not only to organise events to ensure that the chorus is a sociable as well as a musical organisation, but also to complement the External Fundraising Committee by raising money through harnessing the chorus's many talents. Wherever possible, we try and satisfy both our remits by making fundraising a fun activity involving chorus members, and their families and friends.

With everything being online this year, it has obviously been almost impossible for FRASC to operate as it usually does. Nonetheless, we have been able to donate **£1,250** to the chorus as a result of some successful fundraising activities.

The first of these was a wonderful **LFC calendar** based on chorus members' photos and artwork. Co-ordinated by Mary Crothers in time for Christmas and with the assistance of a talented graphic designer friend, the calendars raised almost £1,300, of which 10% was donated to a very grateful St Gemma's. Thanks are also due to June Apps, who made a very generous donation towards the production costs, and to the FRASC team who organised online payments and deliveries.

In the absence of the traditional Christmas Bring and Buy sale, Fiona Kirkby organised an **online Christmas shop** to ensure that her regular Christmas pudding and mincemeat customers would not be disappointed (they weren't!) and raised over £200 in the process.

Last but not least, Chris Short's excellent **quizzes and second-hand book sales** raised £50.

With the various lockdowns and social distancing measures in place, it has not been possible to organise any social events and it is likely to be 2022 before we can start again.

Similarly, the St Chad's monthly **wine evenings** managed by Liz and John Whittaker and the **tuck shop** run by Emma Walker and Sian Moxon have both had to be temporarily mothballed. Remaining tuck shop stocks were donated to North Leeds food bank.

In any other year, we would also organise ad-hoc gatherings such as pre-concert potluck picnics. We love it when as many people as possible participate, so we hope that you will join in when normal service resumes! And if you have any ideas for social and/or fundraising events, or perhaps the next in our ever-popular **Walk and Tea** series, then please let us know.

During this strange, online year, we lost some of the team, including Gill Riley, Sian Moxon and Mary Crothers. They deserve a huge vote of thanks for all their input over the last few years, and we are very grateful for everything that they have done for FRASC.

We would love to have some new members who can bring fresh ideas! If you are interested, just talk to Harriet or any of the FRASC team: Fiona Kirkby (executive chef), Chris Short (treasurer), Liz Whitaker, Margaret Whaley, Catherine Dickinson, Fiona Miller and Caroline Bailey.

Harriet Carlyle

FRASC Chair