



TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

Year ended 31st August 2021

Registered Charity No. 277544

Trustees' Annual Report for the year ended 31st Aug 2021

Reference and Administration details

Charity Name: North London Chorus

Registered Charity Number: 277544

Principal Address: 31 Meadow Place, London SW8 1XZ

Trustees & Elected Committee Members: Judith Schott (Chair), Alison Salisbury (Hon Secretary), Alan Chandler (Hon Treasurer), Gary Bilkus, Shaun Davies, Sue Heaney, Kate Hodgkin, Yoav Landau Pope, Ainsley McArthur, Naomi Weber

Co-opted Committee Members: None

Musical Director: Murray Hipkin (also present at Committee)

Committee Members for part of choir year: All members of the Committee served for the entire year

Principal Bankers: CAF Bank Limited, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Mailing, Kent, ME19 4JQ

Independent Examiner: Chaweevan Williams FCCA, Verdant Accountants Limited

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Constitution as amended 25th January 2018.

Organisational Structure

The Chorus is managed by a committee as detailed above. All members of the Committee are elected by the Chorus at its Annual General Meeting and hold office until the following AGM. All Committee members offer their services on a voluntary basis. The Chorus employs no staff but contracts for the services of the Musical Director and Accompanist. The Chorus is not connected to other charities. New Trustees / Elected Committee Members are recruited within the ranks of the choir and are encouraged to stand for Committee at the AGM. According to the Constitution, a maximum of 6 out of 10 Committee Members can remain without standing for re-election the following year. This encourages rotation of membership and "new blood" within the ranks of the Committee. All elected Committee members are Trustees also.

Objectives and Activities

In accordance with the Constitution, the Chorus aims to promote, develop and maintain the public's appreciation and education in the art and science of music. Focusing on choral music, it performs concerts, and holds workshops for its members. In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance on public benefit and fee charging. The Chorus relies on income subscriptions to cover its operating costs. In setting the level of subscriptions, the trustees give careful consideration to the accessibility of the Chorus for those on low incomes and in these circumstances reduced subscriptions are available.

North London Chorus is a Public Benefit Entity and as such is committed to enabling as many people as possible to benefit through choir membership, participation in workshops and concert attendance. To this end, a varied programme of music is undertaken to appeal to as wide an audience as possible. The Trustees have complied with the duty in section 4 of the Charities Act 2006 to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission. More specific details of our activities, which benefit the public, can be found in our Musical Director's and Chair's reports.

These objectives remain the same for the coming year.

Financial Position

The Financial Statements and accompanying notes on pages 5-9 give a detailed account of the main drivers of the finances of the Chorus. In summary, we started the year with net assets of £8,119 and ended with £14,423 making a surplus of £6,304. The Committee managed the reserves in accordance with the policy described below, through careful cost control, realistic concert budgets and contributions from outside and within the choir. The net resources carried forward at 31 August 2021 represent a robust level of reserves thanks to continued payment of subscriptions from members of the Chorus. The Committee continues to monitor reserve levels carefully as we cross into the new financial year.

Reserves Policy

Reserves are needed to bridge the gap between the spending and receiving of resources, to cover other costs including unplanned emergency cancellation of concerts at short notice resulting in costs but no revenue and to fund new developments as agreed by the Trustees, from time to time. The Trustees' policy is thus to ensure normal expenditures are matched by a sufficient level of income and that an appropriate level of reserves is maintained to enable the Chorus to function, to allow for unforeseen contingencies and to fund new initiatives to develop its work in accordance with its aims and objectives in a manner that does not present undue risk to the choir's financial position. The Trustees will act to increase the level of reserves where significant expenditure or increased risks are foreseen.

Chair’s Annual Report

Sept 2020 – Aug 2021

The choir year started on Zoom as the Covid pandemic was still in full swing. We have been lucky enough to have Naomi Weber on the committee as she is uniquely qualified to keep abreast of the Covid research evidence and the government guidance. She has carried out our Covid risk assessments and advised on steps to mitigate risks as far as possible.

In October we were able to hold a few Covid-secure, indoor face-to-face rehearsals for a restricted number of members. These sessions were relayed via Zoom to members at home and we are grateful to Gary Bilkus and Shaun Davies for their technical support which enabled us to have these blended sessions.

Another complete lockdown was imposed in November, so all rehearsals reverted to Zoom. We ended the Autumn term with a Lockdown Cabaret, ably put together and compered by Nicola Bartlett and Fiona Brown.

The spring term rehearsals were held on Zoom and the term was rounded off by Zoom Kitchen Island Discs. Our castaways were Yvette Bonner, and her husband James Cleverton. Both are professional opera singers and Yvette is one of our vocal coaches. Our musical director Murray Hipkin was the interviewer and supplied the music chosen by our castaways.

As we were not organising and holding concerts, the committee used this year to review all our administration systems and to carry out detailed risk assessments. These included financial security measures and a review of the third-party platforms that underpin many of our online systems. Additional security measures are now in place and we have secured the choir’s systems and procedures for the future.

The committee also reviewed all the roles required to run the choir - there are a surprising number! Each role holder was asked to write detailed role and procedure documents. These were uploaded onto the committee shared drive so that they can be accessed by all committee members and shared with anyone having to take over a role at short notice.

Approval of the Covid vaccine and the roll-out of vaccination centres brought a much-needed glimmer of hope for a bit more freedom to come in 2021. However, the majority of our sessions continued on Zoom until June when we held several rehearsals in Martin School’s playground. Being in the open air and having Covid security measures in place encouraged some members who had not participated on Zoom to return to singing with the choir.

The choir year ended with a recital given for our members and Friends of NLC by our musical professionals, Murray Hipkin, our accompanist Catherine Borner our vocal coaches Yvette Bonner and Mark Oldfield and a visiting violinist, Gavin Davies. The event was held at St James Church which allowed plenty of space for the audience as well as the performers. A varied programme of music and song delighted us all. It was wonderful to hear live music again and was a lovely way to end a second challenging choir year. We held a retiring collection which raised £381.70 for Harington, a local charity that supports young adults with learning disabilities or other difficulties.

Our Musical Director has continued to manage Zoom and to plan and provide innovative and creative rehearsals throughout the choir year. He has played a pivotal part in keeping the choir together. Thank you, Murray!

Finally, I would like to thank my committee colleagues. Having a cohesive and constructive group with a variety of skills and aptitudes has enabled us to play our part in keeping the choir going.

Judith Schott, Chair - September 2021

Musical Director's Review (2020/21 Season)

As detailed in the Chair's report, we began the 2020-2021 season, with no immediate prospect of a live concert. Hopes were raised briefly in October when we were permitted to hold a few live rehearsals but dashed again when lockdown was reintroduced in November. The period following the 2nd lockdown was particularly frustrating because amateur singing was among the very last activity to be permitted and we were forced to rehearse outdoors.

Artistically I had to choose repertoire to stimulate the singing members of the choir, but not stretch them so far as to cause discouragement.

For the autumn we concentrated on our participation in the blended virtual performance of Handel's *Messiah* for the London Handel Festival. NLC, in collaboration with Finchley Choral Society, a local choir of similar size and demographic, performed three choruses, and everyone received training on how to film and record their own contributions at home. While some were daunted (and a few defeated) by the process, which was not entirely straightforward, the benefits of taking part in this extraordinary project (where the soloists and orchestra were live, and the choirs pre-recorded) were many, and the sense of achievement of being part of a creative process of music-making was very important to us. The concert is still available on YouTube as a lasting souvenir of this challenging period in the choir's life and is a source of great pride.

Following the success of this experimental performance, the LHF repeated *Messiah* at Easter 2021, and many members of NLC took part again, this time singing three different choruses as part of the "Stay-at-Home" choir. Alongside this we worked on new and repeated repertoire on Zoom including Schubert's *Mirjams Siegesgesang*, and a series of fugues from various choral masterworks. When online we also continued our series of music appreciation sessions, with members of the choir suggesting and introducing favourite choral music. We used our open-air rehearsals to review a lot of the repertoire we had only ever sung in Zoom sessions.

We had planned a summer concert. but restrictions on group singing indoors were still in place, so we used the venue to provide an entertainment for members by the choir's professionals. For many this was the first live performance they had attended in 18 months, and it was a poignant and moving evening.

Musical Director's Review (2020/21 Season)

My thanks to Judith Schott and the committee, as well as the choir accompanist, Catherine Borner, and vocal consultants Mark Oldfield and Yvette Bonner for their support during this immensely challenging period.

*Murray Hipkin - Musical Director,
November 2021*

Statement of Financial Activities - Summarised

North London Chorus

For the year ended 31 August 2021

	2021	2020
Rehearsals and Administration		
Subscriptions related income		
Subscriptions received	16,570	17,792
Income tax recovered on deeds of covenant	4,701	3,818
Total Subscriptions related income	21,271	21,610
Hall hire - rehearsals	(1,228)	(2,838)
Professional fees - rehearsals	(9,655)	(10,815)
Insurance and Making Music membership	(733)	(875)
Administration & Other	(959)	(834)
Distribution of Friends revenue	-	(455)
Depreciation expense	(88)	(28)
Net incoming / (outgoing) resources	8,608	5,765
Concerts		
Tickets, programmes and advertising	-	7,196
Concert-specific funding	-	2,432
Professional fees - concerts	(3,135)	(9,510)
Instrument & music hire	(150)	(1,275)
Concert venue costs	(200)	(1,230)
Flowers	-	(100)
Printing & publicity	-	(664)
Concert - other costs	(880)	(708)
Net incoming / (outgoing) resources	(4,365)	(3,859)
Other		
Other donations and net fundraising income	191	900
Other income incl. coffee & raffles	-	1,199
Annual sponsorship	1,250	1,250
Friends of NLC Revenue	620	601
Net incoming / (outgoing) resources	2,061	3,950
Total surplus / (deficit)	6,304	5,856

The Statement of Financial Activities details the expenditure incurred and revenues received by the Chorus during the year to 31 August 2021.

The total expenditure incurred by the Chorus during the year was £17,028. Of that amount £12,663 was spent on rehearsals and administration and £4,365 on concerts. Income during the year was £23,332. Of this, £21,271 was from subscriptions related income, £0 from concerts and concert-specific funding and £2,061 from fundraising and sponsorship. £4,701 of Income tax recovered on deeds of covenant was included within the subscriptions related income; this includes £3,750 of anticipated revenue from Gift Aid related to 2020/21 activities yet to be claimed from HMRC.

Professional fees for rehearsals include the cost of our Musical Director, Accompanist and Vocal Consultants. Our professional team has continued to work with us throughout the ongoing pandemic as we continued mostly with online rehearsals supplemented by some face-to-face rehearsals when government guidance allowed.

Administration costs include £259 for the costs of accounting software, a fee of £250 for the Independent Examination of the accounts, and £173 of website-related costs, as well as a range of other smaller expenses to support the running of the choir.

Depreciation of £88 represents the annual allocation of the cost of our assets (conductor's stand, amplifier and transparent banner), spread over their estimated periods of use.

The Chorus did not perform any revenue-generating concerts in the 2020/21 season.

Professional fees for concerts of £3,135 consist mostly of the MD's concert fees (£2,340), with much of the remainder going to soloists who created learning tracks for our participation in Messiah in lieu of our Winter and Spring Concerts, and the Summer Recital in St James Church which was organised for our Members to enjoy. This year, costs in "concerts – other costs" represent payments made to the London Handel Society relating to our participation in their Messiah performances.

Other donations of £191 relate general donations of £119 from various members to support the choir and a further £72 to add to the previous year's £362 raised through the sale of masks made by choir member Lucy Ellis. The Friends of NLC initiative brought in net revenue of £620.

The Chorus gratefully acknowledges receipt of £1,250 from its ongoing sponsors Goodman Jones and Nimrod Capital, particularly at a time when we had not been able to perform concerts in our usual setting. This enables us to bolster our reserves, ready for our return to the stage in the 2021/22 season.

Balance Sheet - Summarised

North London Chorus As at 31 August 2021

	31 AUG 2021	31 AUG 2020
Fixed Assets		
Equipment	179	28
Current Assets		
Cash at bank and in hand	13,825	8,968
Amounts recoverable by NLC	4,280	1,535
Total Current Assets	18,106	10,503
Current Liabilities		
Amounts payable by NLC	3,862	2,412
Net Assets	14,423	8,119
Total Reserves		
Net resources brought forward	8,119	2,263
Current Year Earnings	6,304	5,856
Total Reserves	14,423	8,119

The Balance Sheet lists the Chorus's assets and liabilities as at the close of the financial year on 31 August 2021.

Fixed Assets

The Chorus owns a Yamaha keyboard, some stage lighting, a conductor's stand, an amplifier and a transparent banner. These assets are included in the balance sheet at cost less accumulated depreciation.

Current Assets

Amounts recoverable by NLC is £4,280 of which £500 relates to sponsorship income outstanding and £3,750 for Gift Aid yet to be claimed along with a couple of smaller items.

Current Liabilities

Amounts payable by NLC of £3,862 include £2,033 raised for a specific future concert via Murray Hipkin's 60th birthday fund (including Gift Aid), £520 of accruals for expenses incurred, but not billed by the end of the financial year, and £1,309 of bills outstanding (but not overdue) at year end.

Net Resources

The Committee aims to maintain a level of net resources in accordance with the policy described in the Trustees' report. The net resources carried forward at 31 August 2021 of £14,423 represent a robust level of reserves thanks to continued payment of subscriptions from members of the Chorus. The Committee continues to monitor reserve levels carefully as we cross into the new financial year.

Approved by the Committee on 16 November 2021 and signed on its behalf by



Alan Chandler (FCCA)
Treasurer

Notes to the Accounts

1. Basis of preparation

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with:

- the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and with
- the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and with
- the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

1.2 Going concern

The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the North London Chorus’s ability to continue as a going concern. There are no material uncertainties affecting the current year’s accounts.

1.3 Change of accounting policy

The accounts present a true and fair view and the accounting policies adopted are those outlined in note 2. There have been no changes in approach compared to last year.

2. Accounting Policies

2.1 Income

a) Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

b) Tax reclaims on donations and gifts

Gift Aid receivable is included in income when there is a valid declaration from the donor. Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise.

Notes to the Accounts (continued)

2. Accounting Policies (continued)

2.2 Expenditure and Liabilities

a) Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

b) Deferred income

No material item of deferred income has been included in the accounts.

c) Creditors

North London Chorus has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts.

d) Provisions for liabilities

A liability is measured on recognition at its historical cost and then subsequently measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date.

2.3 Assets

a) Tangible fixed assets for use by charity

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year, and cost at least £100. They are valued at cost.
The depreciation rates and methods used are disclosed in note 5.

b) Debtors

Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

3. Analysis of Income

All income received was unrestricted.

4. Details of certain items of expenditure

Independent examiner's fees were £250.

Notes to the Accounts (continued)

5. Fixed Assets

Details	Year purchased	Cost or valuation b/f	Additions	Total cost	Accumulated depreciation brought fwd	Net book value at start year	Depreciation in year (straight line basis)	Accumulated depreciation carried fwd	Net book value at year end
Yamaha Keyboard	2012	£1,305		£1,305	£1,305	£0	£0	£1,305	£0
Stage lighting	2015	£182		£182	£182	£0	£0	£182	£0
Conductor's stand	2017	£112		£112	£84	£28	£28	£112	£0
Amplifier	2020		£119	£119	£0	£0	£30	£30	£89
Transparent banners	2020		£120	£120	£0	£0	£30	£30	£90
Total		£1,599	£239	£1,838	£1,571	£28	£88	£1,659	£179

6. Debtors and prepayments

These comprise of amounts recoverable by NLC and prepayments and are disclosed separately on the face of the balance sheet.

7. Creditors and accruals

These comprise of amounts payable by NLC and are disclosed separately on the face of the balance sheet.

8. Cash at bank and in hand

This comprises of only cash at bank and in hand as North London Chorus holds no short term cash investments or short term deposits.

9. Transactions with trustees and related parties

a) Trustee remuneration and benefits

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from an employment with their charity or a related entity.

b) Trustees' expenses

No trustee expenses have been incurred.

c) Transaction(s) with related parties

There have been no related party transactions in the reporting period.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Report to the trustees of North London Chorus Charity no. 277544.

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above Charity for the year ended 31 August 2021 which are set out on pages 5-9.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees 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 Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

- (1) I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention which in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:
- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
 - the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.
 - the accounts did 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.
- (2) 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.



Chaweevan Williams FCCA
Verdant Accountants
Chartered Certified Accountants
167 Clarence Avenue, New Malden, Surrey KT3 3TX

Date: 26th November 2021