

Leeds Festival Chorus

**Annual Report
2022/23 Season**

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS

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for the Year ended 31 July 2023**

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Registered Charity 517127		

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Trustees' Annual Report for the Year ended 31 July 2023

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:

John Apps	Chairman/Treasurer
Andrew Smith (resigned 19.10.22)	Administrative Secretary/Treasurer
Peter Coltman (resigned 19.10.22)	Concerts Organiser
Fiona Kirkby	Choir Coordinator

Other trustees in the year were as follows:

Emma Elgie	Elizabeth Palmer (appointed 19.10.22)
Chris Foren (appointed 19.10.22)	Anna Pitt (resigned 19.10.22)
Margaret Mara	Gillian Riley (resigned 19.10.22)
James Moxon	Judith Scott

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 a three yearly 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 J M Apps
Foxhill Cottage
Weetwood Lane
Leeds
LS16 5PJ

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:-

Andrew Wilkinson FCA
Malcolm Jones & Co Limited
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 2023 (cont)

Objects

The objects of the charity are to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by any means the trustees see fit, including through the presentation of public events.

Review of Activities and Achievements

The charity achieved its aims in the period under review by continuing to promote and deliver choral concerts. The closure of Leeds Town Hall for refurbishment continued to have a significant effect on concert income. It was noticeable that audience sizes were larger than last year as people were less reluctant to come to public events. We have performed 6 concerts with improved audience sizes.

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 (£42,681) is greater than 12 months worth of unrestricted ordinary expenditure (£40,887), but is less than the expected expenditure of £46,000 to £50,000 in 2023/24. Accordingly the Trustees will continue to monitor the situation.

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 on ordinary activities for the year of £12,854 (2022 - £10,119 deficit) which has been added to reserves. The total reserves at the year end amount to £68,437 (2022 - £55,583) of which £6,079 (2022 - £6,079) are restricted.

On behalf of the Trustees

.....
John Apps, Chairman

26 September 2023

**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 2023 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.

Andrew Wilkinson FCA
Malcolm Jones & Co Limited
Accountants & Business Advisors
West Hill House
Allerton Hill
Chapel Allerton
Leeds
LS7 3QB

26 September 2023

**LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year ended 31 July 2023**

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 31.07.23 £	Total Funds 31.07.22 £
Incoming resources:					
Voluntary income	6	41,692	-	41,692	34,693
Activities for generating funds	8	9,310	-	9,310	2,784
Investment income	9	537	-	537	31
Incoming resources from charitable activities	10	2,202	-	2,202	2,014
Total incoming resources:		53,741	-	53,741	39,522
Resources expended:					
Costs of generating voluntary income	11	266	-	266	316
Fundraising & trading costs	12	34,017	-	34,017	41,654
Charitable activities	13	1,100	-	1,100	1,100
Governance costs	14	5,504	-	5,504	6,571
Total resources expended		40,887	-	40,887	49,641
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources on ordinary activities for the year		12,854	-	12,854	(10,119)
Exceptional item	15	-	-	-	-
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year		12,854	-	12,854	(10,119)
Total charity funds brought forward		49,504	6,079	55,583	65,702
Total charity funds carried forward		62,358	6,079	68,437	55,583

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

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Balance Sheet as at 31 July 2023

	Notes	2023	2022
		£	£
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	2	19,677	19,731
Current Assets			
Other debtors	3	264	434
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>68,011</u>	<u>43,951</u>
		68,275	44,385
Current Liabilities			
Creditors & accrued expenses	4	<u>19,515</u>	<u>8,533</u>
Net current assets		48,760	35,852
Net assets		<u>68,437</u>	<u>55,583</u>
Represented by:			
FUNDS			
Restricted income funds:			
Balance at 1 August 2022		6,079	6,079
Net incoming resources for the year		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
		6,079	6,079
Unrestricted income funds:			
Balance at 1 August 2022		49,504	59,623
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year		<u>12,854</u>	<u>(10,119)</u>
		62,358	49,504
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS	5	<u>68,437</u>	<u>55,583</u>

Approved by the Trustees

.....
John Apps, Chairman

For and on behalf of the Trustees

26 September 2023

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 2023

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 2022	19,731
Additions in the year	2,132
Wear and tear provision (10%)	(2,186)
At 31 July 2023	<u>19,677</u>

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Notes to the Accounts
for the Year ended 31 July 2023 (cont)

3. Other debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Prepayments	264	434
Corporate sponsors	-	-
	<u>264</u>	<u>434</u>

4. Creditors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Accrued expenses	<u>19,515</u>	<u>8,533</u>

5. Funds

	2022	Movement	2023
	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds			
Music Library	19,731	(54)	19,677
General Fund	<u>29,773</u>	<u>12,908</u>	<u>42,681</u>
	<u>49,504</u>	<u>12,854</u>	<u>62,358</u>
Restricted Funds			
Chorus Master Scholarship Monies	1,471	-	1,471
Music to my Ears	<u>4,608</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,608</u>
	<u>6,079</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>6,079</u>
TOTAL CHARITY FUNDS	<u>55,583</u>	<u>12,854</u>	<u>68,437</u>

6. Voluntary Income

	Note	31.07.23	31.07.22
		£	£
Members' subscriptions		21,049	20,027
Friends' subscriptions		1,256	1,375
Tax refund on covenanted subscriptions		6,135	4,684
Fundraising and social group		5,676	1,750
Grants, donations and sponsorship	7	7,076	6,857
Legacies	7	500	-
		<u>41,692</u>	<u>34,693</u>

Grants, donations, sponsorship, patrons and legacies

	31.07.23	31.07.22
	£	£
Miscellaneous donations	488	3,904
Carol Sponsorship	1,290	-
Ticket Donations	664	-
J Apps	150	175
S Archbold	-	35
Olav Arnold Charitable Trust	1,000	1,000
M Beer	300	300
B Brickles	50	-
D Brickles in memory of B Brickles	500	-
J Hartigan in memory of T Hartigan	500	-
N Jones	300	300
M Kirkby	-	160
T Lusty	-	20
W Mordy	-	300
J Moxon	267	-
A Smith	130	12
M Stanyard	-	156
D Strachan	-	175
E Walker	60	-
Maurice Wilson in memory of Muriel Wilson	1,000	-
Rev M Winbolt-Lewis	300	300
S Winbolt-Lewis	50	-
S Wright	<u>27</u>	<u>20</u>
	7,076	6,857
Legacies		
Muriel Wilson	500	-
	<u>7,576</u>	<u>6,857</u>

Activities for generating funds

	31.07.23	31.07.22
	£	£
Concerts and recitals	<u>9,310</u>	<u>2,784</u>

Investment income

	31.07.23	31.07.22
	£	£
Bank interest received	<u>537</u>	<u>31</u>

Incoming resources from charitable activities

	31.07.23	31.07.22
	£	£
Library income	<u>2,202</u>	<u>2,014</u>

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Notes to the Accounts
for the Year ended 31 July 2023 (cont)

11. Costs of generating voluntary income

	31.07.23	31.07.22
	£	£
Publicity programmes, brochures and advertising	<u>266</u>	<u>316</u>

12. Fundraising & trading costs

	31.07.23	31.07.22
	£	£
Hire of music	1,039	1,053
Concert costs	10,346	17,767
Rehearsal costs	22,632	22,834
	<u>34,017</u>	<u>41,654</u>

13. Charitable activities

	31.07.23	31.07.22
	£	£
Donations	<u>1,100</u>	<u>1,100</u>

14. Governance costs

	31.07.23	31.07.22
	£	£
Subscriptions and insurance	629	618
Accountancy and Independent Examiner's fee	1,450	1,509
Friends' and patrons' expenses	43	401
Sundry expenses	300	184
Consultancy fees	-	-
Website costs and design	15	500
Zoom costs	144	144
Library expenses	673	503
Music storage	-	390
Music wear and tear allowance	2,186	2,193
Bank charges	64	129
	<u>5,504</u>	<u>6,571</u>

15. Trustees Remuneration

No Trustees or any persons connected with them have received remuneration (2022 – nil).

16. Trustees Expenses

One Trustee (2022 – four) has been reimbursed out of pocket expenses totalling £266 (2022 - £371).

LEEDS FESTIVAL CHORUS
Notes to the Accounts
for the Year ended 31 July 2023 (cont)

17. Staff Costs and Emoluments

There were no employees with emoluments in the year (2022 – nil).

18. Cost of Independent Examination

Preparation of accounts and associated costs were £1,450 (2022 - £1,509).

Treasurer's Report 2022-23

This was a busy year for the choir, with a significant improvement in the size of audiences, and in the choir's finances.

Once again we have been affected by the closure of Leeds Town Hall for refurbishment, as reopening has been delayed considerably. This has the effect of saving us money, as concerts there are more expensive than our other concerts. But it also has not allowed us to perform in large scale concerts in Leeds, and we haven't had the opportunity to perform to large audiences here.

We have continued to gain by the generosity of members and friends, particularly for the Christmas concert where sponsorship of the music raised £1270. But we have no sponsors now for our concerts, and only 5 patrons (down to 4 patrons in 2023/24, as one patron died during the year.)

I would like to draw your attention to the following

1. Page 4: Statement of Financial Activities.
 - You can see that total income rose substantially from £39.5k to £53.7k.
 - Voluntary income (note 6 - which includes FRASC – see page 7) rose from £34.7k to £41.7k, with donations etc (which is included in this figure) increasing by £719.
 - Note 8 - The income from generating funds (concerts etc) was £9,310, a big increase on £2,784 the previous year. However it is still low compared to the year ending 2021 when it was £25k.
 - Library income was £2202, compared to £2014 last year – thanks to Mike Croft for his work in handling this.
2. Resources expended on ordinary activities decreased from £49.6k to £40.9k, with fundraising and trading costs falling from £41.6k to £34k.
3. Governance costs have also fallen in the year, from £6571 to £5404.
4. Our funds show a surplus over the year of £12854, compared to a deficit of £10,119 the previous year. That is a considerable improvement and will help us when we are able to resume concerts in Leeds Town Hall.
5. Page 6: Tangible Assets. The balance sheet shows a small increase in the value of the music library. The main purchase was 100 new copies of Belshazzar's Feast, we also spent money on printing the 2 Catalan Songs that were given to us by Roderick Williams, and purchased copies of Sally Beamish's Good Wish.
6. Page 7: Debtors have fallen, it varies from year to year. Creditors have also increased significantly because we received £14,200 in deposits for the Spanish trip. Cash at bank rose from £54.8k to £68.4k, but this includes deposits for Spain, so would be £54.2K without them. This leaves the Chorus with net assets at the year end of £68.4k up from £55.6 the previous year.

It is worth noting here that if we subtract the Spanish deposits from the money in the bank then we have £54.2k, which is 1% less than at the end of last year. While it is good that this has not gone down significantly, recent levels of inflation mean that the effect is greater. The inflation rate for August was 6.3%, so that money will buy 6.3% less than it did a year previously.
7. Page 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 Spain deposits paid). We have not added to that figure this year as we have not yet restarted re-auditions.

Most of the proceeds from the Grand Raffle that was held in June and July are included in this year's accounts. The Fund Raising and Social Committee (FRASC) have a separate bank account, which received the money paid for raffle tickets. Nearly £3000 has been transferred to the main bank account by the end of our financial year. About £250 will be transferred when all the proceeds and costs have been assessed.

Finally, over recent years we have received from money left to us in the wills of members and former members. If you are making or changing your will, please think about adding Leeds Festival Chorus to the beneficiaries.

Richard Thomson (Treasurer)

The standard Chorus subscription has been increased to £185, effective from September 2023. This money is used to cover the rehearsals costs.

Marketing Group Report

Prepared by Elizabeth Palmer, September 2023

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

What we did last year

Communicating and engaging with Chorus members

- Established a weekly email to go out to Chorus members so that all updates come in the same email, rather than sporadically.
- Launched the members' area on the website as a space to store information for members.

Website

- Added events and news items to the website.
- Technical website maintenance.

Social media

- Posted about rehearsals and concerts.
- Interacted with other groups on social media e.g. liking, sharing, commenting.
- Paid Facebook advertising for concerts and open rehearsal.
- Started a Leeds Festival Chorus Instagram account (@leedsfestivalchorus).

Flyers and Programmes

- Content and design for our own concerts (Christmas and Summer Wishes).
- Annual LFC brochure.
- Delivered flyers across Leeds.

Other - Publicising and promoting concerts/Attracting new members

- Writing and sending out emails to our external mailing list.
- We advertised joining our mailing list when people booked tickets for the Summer Wishes concert and this resulted in 16 people joining the mailing list.
- Listing events on Leeds Inspired, which was pulled through to other local events listings.
- Promoting our events to members of other musical groups in Leeds.

We also manage the selling of tickets for our concerts at St Edmund's Church. This is led by **Andrew Smith**, who produces the ticket maps on TryBooking and organises the sale of tickets on the door of the concert.

Members of the marketing team are Andrew Smith, Christine Hamill, Emma Elgie, Elizabeth Palmer, Mac Burnell, Mary Magorrian, Richard Wilcocks and Sally Brown.

We are also supported by Irene Hall, who focuses on the technical side of the website and emails.

Goals for 2023-24

Our goals for the upcoming year include:

- Improving the consistency of our social media posts and use of the website.
- Chorus member recruitment - we are currently developing a recruitment presentation to encourage new members to join.
- Strengthen relationships with other musical groups in Leeds.
- Grow our external mailing list.
- Ensure that the team is future-proofed.
- Build our numbers of good-quality images of the Chorus.

How can you help?

We are always happy to receive help and support from members of the Chorus, even if you do not want to join the Marketing group. Some ways you can help us are:

- Sharing physical flyers or social media posts.
- Sending us content such as photos of Chorus events, or news items for the website.
- Letting us know if you spot a good opportunity for promotion.
- Sharing any photos of our concerts and rehearsals that you have.

If there is another opportunity you have spotted please do let us know. You can contact the Marketing group at marketing@leedsfestivalchorus.co.uk, or speak to one of the team at a rehearsal.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all the members of the Marketing group for their hard work this year.

Scores for our rehearsals and concerts

About 4,600 scores were issued for rehearsals and our performances during the year ended July 2023. Nearly 2,000 of these were for a single concert - our concert of largely British music at St Edmund’s Roundhay in May 2023.

A substantial proportion of the scores issued were already owned by LFC, and these included our first use of scores from the Ian McCrorie Collection, the purchase of which I reported a year ago. Hires were very conveniently made of several sets of scores from Leeds Music Library, with other hires during the year from Ampleforth College (at no charge through Simon’s good offices, so with grateful thanks), the Community and Youth Music Library in London, Congleton Choral Society, Glasgow Chamber Choir, and the Phoenix Singers of Shrewsbury. Purchases of new scores for our use during the year (and for our subsequent own use and for potential hire-outs) included *Sally Beamish: Good Wish*, several arrangements / editions by Simon (including *Sibelius: Finlandia* and *Wood: Full fathom five*) and prints from the online International Music Score Library Project (*Fauré: Pavane* and *Beethoven: Chor der Engel / Hallelujah Chorus* from *Christus am Ölberge*).

Of the 4,600 or so scores issued during the year, only three have not been returned at the time of writing this report. LFC has received full recompense for one of these, and discussions are proceeding regarding the other two.

Hiring out scores

28 sets of scores, involving a total of over 1,400 individual scores from our stock of 30,000 or more, were hired out to various choirs nation-wide in the year to July 2023. These included several hires from the Ian McCrorie Collection. On the rare occasions when full sets have not been returned, full recompense or replacement copies have been provided by the hirer. My favourite composers for this year in order of hire-out value are (1) Vaughan Williams, (2) Rutter (ed), (3) Delius.

Thanks

As ever, I am grateful to the many members who sign the sign-up sheets legibly, on the correct line, and return scores promptly. The latter is particularly important when I have to return hired scores within tight deadlines. Do please continue.

I referred in last year’s report to the move of the library store from one unit to another at Croydon House, Holbeck, but the move actually took place in the year to July 2023, so it is worth mentioning again with my grateful thanks to Lloyd Davies, Chris Foren and David Hall for helping with the hard labour involved – over 30,000 scores weigh a lot of kilograms, not to mention the shelving!

Last but by no means least, Lloyd Davies has been very ready at various times during the year to help with issuing scores at busy times and when I have been absent. Peter Bloodworth and John Dickinson have also helped with this. I am extremely grateful to them all for that invaluable assistance.

Looking ahead

I have been Librarian for five years now and I ran the hire-out operation for nearly three years before that for my predecessor. I am happy to continue, but I am equally happy to step down if another member wishes to take over. If anyone wants to talk that over with me, please do so. The getting-scores-in and the hiring-out parts of the job can be done almost 100% independently, and doing one of those jobs (as I did) would be an easy way in.

Mike Croft
Librarian

Slowly but surely rehearsals have returned to how they were pre-pandemic and it is good to see this. The choir is smaller than it was but there are signs that people are returning to singing once more. Do encourage musical friends to come along and give LFC a try.

CHOIR MEMBERSHIP

We started the new season with 111 members. Over the course of this year the following have left the choir.

Sopranos	Altos	Tenor	Bass
Ailie Kerrane		Andrew Pearson	Anthony Picton
Stephanie Peay		David Williams	Mark Savege
Sue Winbolt-Lewis			Jeff Trigg

All of the above have given sterling service to the choir and it has been much appreciated. In particular, Sue Winbolt-Lewis supported the choir through her many years as concerts organiser – a job requiring much tact, patience and hard work! Mark Savege has been a soloist for us on numerous occasions acquitting himself in an excellent manner. Both Stephanie and Andrew together with other more recent members of the choir have said how important the choir has been to them and how much they have enjoyed the music and friendship which has come with membership. We thank them for their contribution to our musical activities and wish them all the best. I hope that we shall see those still living locally, at future concerts.

RECRUITMENT

For the first time for two years we had an Open Evening. Held on September 28th - the attendance was rather sparse with 6 potential singers attending with 3 coming forward for audition. Over the remainder of the season we have had a further 10 people sitting in. However, it is not necessarily how many people come forward to audition but how many are successful that is important. Including those from the open evening we have auditioned 13 people of whom 11 were successful. It has been particularly good to see some singers who were previously members return to LFC. Successful singers names are below.

SOPRANO	ALTO	TENOR	BASS
Harriet Chauhan	Griet Beyaerts	Kurt Langfeld	Desmond Quinn
Sonja Langfeld	Phoebe Grange	Nick Salmon	
Emma Mitchell		David Williams	
Rachel Sykes			
Rebecca Yeadon			

TRIENNIAL AUDITIONS

These are due to take place in summer 2024.

CONCERTS

October 2022 York	62%	62/111
December 2022 Leeds	86%	99/115
February 2023 York	72%	82/114
May 2023 Leeds	73%	85/116
June 2023 Sheffield	79%	93/118

It is good to report that participation in concerts has improved from last year.

REHEARSALS and VENUES

St Chad's and St Columba's have, as previously, been our usual venues and we appreciate the use of these places. We have had 48 rehearsals this year in total and in the main they have been well attended. We do encourage members to come to rehearsals for concerts that they are not able to sing as it is good to learn the repertoire and keep voices in trim.

AND FINALLY

The choir is always a great support but I would particularly like to thank all those who have helped me at various concerts this year. Peter Coltman, Becky Lacey, Katie Turner and Siân Moxon have provided much appreciated help and assistance on numerous occasions – thank you all. Simon and Rebecca continue to make rehearsals both an educational and enjoyable experience and that always makes Wednesday evenings something to look forward to. As always our thanks go to them.

Fiona Kirkby - LFC Choir Co-ordinator

Friends of Leeds Festival Chorus

Report 1st October 2022 to 30th September 2023

As I predicted in last year's report, the number of Friends has fallen again. As at 1st October 2022, 36 had paid subs for the year. In addition we had 3 Complementary and 2 Honorary Friends. Several Friends made extra donations in addition to their subscriptions of either £20, £35 or £60.

We received £770 in subscriptions and £290 in donations making a total income of £1060 for the chorus.

Sadly, during the year four friends, who were also former members of the chorus, have died. The Chorus was well represented at their funerals and life celebrating events and were delighted to be able to sing on those occasions.

We are very grateful that their families made most generous donations and along with a legacy from one former Friend, we received a further £2,500.

The Friends continue to receive a quarterly newsletter from me, including details of upcoming concerts. Several attended our Christmas concert and the Coronation Celebration in May, but I suspect many were reluctant to travel to York and Sheffield.

Please encourage your relatives and friends to become 'Friends' of LFC. They can contact me on-

friends@leedsfestivalchorus.co.uk

John Apps

Friends' Coordinator.

Concert Organiser's Report 2022-23

Team changes – Peter Coltman had indicated last year that he intended to step down but has kindly continued in a very active 'caretaker' role while handing duties over gradually during the year. He will be stepping back fully from the role after the AGM and we must extend a huge vote of thanks for all that he has done in this role for the Chorus over the last few years. Thank you Peter!

Becky Lacey also indicated her intention to step down but, after the success of the concert in February 2023 has kindly agreed to support the Concert Organising team with the York Barbican concert in February 2024.

Siân Moxon took over as concert organiser for the St.Edmund's concerts for last year's Christmas concert and our 'Summer wishes' concert in May and has settled into her new role with great aplomb.

James Moxon has been acting as liaison between the Committee and the Concert Organising team since last year's AGM and will be standing for election as Concert Organiser at the AGM.

This has been a very busy year!

In October 2022 about 50 singers attended a very successful weekend at Giggleswick School organised by Margaret Mara. Simon introduced us to some of the repertoire we would be using in May and there was a very enjoyable vocal training workshop and question and answer session with internationally acclaimed soprano Lynne Dawson. There was also time for some exploration of the area including a guided walk and there was much good LFC social activity including a bar and Quiz night.

In November we were invited to sing the **Fauré Requiem** at St.Bartholomew's. Although the congregation, sadly was quite small on the day it was an enjoyable experience for those taking part to sing the Requiem in its intended liturgical setting.

In December we were at St.Edmund's for a **Christmas Concert** featuring Naomi Simon who had just been confirmed as the BBC Young Chorister of the Year. This was a great success with all the tickets sold and made a significant profit for chorus funds. Much credit must go to Siân Moxon, in her first concert as chief organiser, for pulling everything together so well.

In February 2023 we were back at the York Barbican with Simon conducting the York Guildhall Orchestra in an 'All Beethoven' concert. We sang the Angels Hallelujah Chorus (**Welten singen dank und ehre**) from Christ on the Mount of Olives and '**Meeresstille und Glückliche Fahrt**' sandwiched between the Egmont overture and the overture to Fidelio and then finished with the mighty **Beethoven's 9th Symphony**. Many thanks to Becky Lacey for all her work in pulling this together.

In May we sang a programme entitled 'Summer Wishes' with a mainly English programme including a new piece by Sally Beamish, '**Good Wish**' and a world première of our patron Roderick Williams' '**Two Catalan Songs**'. This also drew an excellent audience and resulted in only a very small loss.

In June a trip to Sheffield to sing the **Verdi Requiem** with the Sheffield Philharmonic Chorus and the Hallé Orchestra under the baton of Sofi Jeannin was well supported and feedback from the chorus and from Sheffield was very positive.

Most recently in September 50 or so chorus members were led by Rebecca Taylor in a 'Come and Sing' event at Leeds Minster and were joined by a similar number of non-LFC members from various parts of the country to learn and present the **Fauré Requiem** with two excellent young soloists. Well done, and many thanks to Rebecca for taking on that challenge so successfully and for Margaret Mara for seamlessly organising this event as part of Leeds Heritage Open Days scheme.

Leeds Town Hall

Looking ahead I think it is very important that the Chorus is fully aware of the uncertainty around the re-opening of Leeds Town Hall following the extensive refurbishments which are currently still ongoing. The latest updates we have had have been very vague but seem to suggest that it is unlikely the Town Hall will be ready for any concerts before the Autumn of 2025 at the very earliest.

From a concert planning and organising point of view this has made it extremely difficult to make any concrete plans for larger concerts in Leeds and I would ask the Chorus to be patient with us while negotiate the next couple of seasons. Rest assured that we are looking at providing an interesting and varied programme of events while we await an anticipated return to our more usual concert structure in due course.

As our External Opportunities Officer, Margaret Mara has been beaver away looking for new and exciting openings for us to show off our skills and the Programme Suggestion Group (PSG) has recently met again to move the planning forward using the repertoire suggestions gathered from the Chorus last year and further ideas from our professionals and the PSG members. We will keep you informed as and when plans become settled.

2023/24 season

We look forward to presenting the **Brahms Requiem** (with 2 pianists) and **Liebeslieder Waltzes** at St.Edmunds in October, **Verdi Requiem** with the Scottish Opera Orchestra in Glasgow under Paul Keohone in November and our own **Christmas Concert** at St.Edmund's on 16th December when we see a return of Naomi Simon, who sang so beautifully last year, as our soloist.

On Sunday 11th February at 3.30pm we will be hosted again by the York Guildhall Orchestra at the York Barbican to sing Parry's **Blest Pair of Sirens** and Mendelssohn's **Die Erste Walpurgisnacht** in a programme that also includes Elgar's Enigma Variations.

On 11th May we are back at St.Edmund's for Rossini's **Petite Messe Solennelle** with piano and accordion.

26th May – 1st June **Spanish Tour** to Salamanca

2024/25 season

Details are still to be confirmed but we are looking to start with a trip to a new venue for us at **Beverley Minster** in October 2024, then a return to St.Edmund's for another Christmas Concert on 14th December and a visit to **Fountains Abbey** to sing carols on 21st December

Peter Coltman
Becky Lacey
Siân Moxon
Lloyd Davies
James Moxon (committee liaison)

FUND RAISING AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE (FRASC) REPORT September 2023

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 external fundraising activities 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.

FRASC's focus this year has been on getting fund raising activities going again rather than on social events. This is in part due to FRASC being comparatively limited in number since committee members retired during the Covid years and partly because we perceive there to be limited interest from the choir in social events outside rehearsals. If this isn't the case and you have some great ideas for social events (or fundraisers) and would be happy to help us organise them, then please let us know!

In the last year, we have raised just over **£6,000**, of which around **£5,000** has been donated to the chorus to date.

Fund raising activities kicked off with the pre-Covid tradition of a post-rehearsal **Christmas Bring and Buy sale**. With post-sale purchases inside and outside the chorus, we raised an almost record-breaking £1,310! Thanks to everyone who baked, bottled and donated lovely Christmas gifts, with special thanks to Fiona Kirkby, who raised over £200 from her Christmas puddings alone. Shout outs also for John Dickinson, who continued to raise money for the chorus from his beautiful wood-turning and now-retired LFC tenor, Chris Short for his 2nd hand bookshop. There will be a repeat performance this year on 29th November, so please dust down your mixing bowls and get your baking and making hats on.....and if you have friends or family that would like a stall, let me know.

Our other big fundraiser of the year was the **Grand Summer Raffle**, which raised an amazing £3,240. Nearly everyone in the chorus (at least, it felt that way!) either donated a prize themselves or clubbed together to buy a group prize. It meant that we had a fantastic prize list that included a holiday cottage stay and dinner in a Michelin starred restaurant, vouchers for Betty's and Grantley Hall, Rudding Park, John Lewis, an RHS membership, and theatre and book tokens. Not to mention cases of wine and fizz, vintage whisky, home-smoked salmon, a delux chocolate cake, a Fitbit watch and some original art. Nobody could resist!! A huge thank you to everyone for helping to make such a success of the raffle but particularly to those who donated and/or co-ordinated such a great set of prizes.

Sandwiched in between, the **weekly raffle** managed by Margaret Whaley has raised over £840 this year, whilst Chris Short's **music sales** have also added to the coffers.

Wine evenings (pop-up bar) after rehearsals at St Chad's have restarted, though on a rather ad-hoc basis than previously. Thanks to those who have celebrated personal or chorus milestones by buying a round of drinks – it is very generous of you! It would be great if more people could help us with these, so if you think three or four of you could band together and run a wine evening, please let me or any of FRASC know. It's very easy and a great way to meet other chorus members.

FRASC and an excellent team of “clapping section” volunteers also run the interval bar at the St Edmund’s concerts, allowing us to raise between £200 and £400 each time.

If you would like to join us, helping to raise funds for the chorus and maybe get back to organising social events, then please have a chat with me or anyone in the brilliant FRASC team: Fiona Kirkby (executive chef), Margaret Whaley (long-suffering treasurer), Heather Newton, Siân Lomax and Julie Tomkins.

Harriet Carlyle

FRASC Chair