

## Annual Report and Accounts - 2021-22

### Background & History

Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society performs major choral and other works in Wells Cathedral several times a year – and sponsors a "Come and Sing" day in the spring of most years.

It can trace its existence back to at least 1863 as the “Wells Music Association” – and during the 20th century it joined forces with the Street, Shepton Mallet and Wedmore Musical Societies.

The chorus is drawn from a wide area in Somerset and is one of the leading choral societies in the South West of England.

The Society contributes significantly to the cultural life of Wells and the surrounding area, and we are proud of our efforts to reach out to all music lovers through a wide choice of music, some of which is rarely heard.

Our Come and Sing Day provides for those local and other singers from further afield to come and enjoy with us perhaps a new opportunity and experience in choral singing and is much appreciated.

### Objects of the Society

The Society is a registered charity – which, despite its name, is independent of Wells Cathedral. The Society’s objects, as defined in its Constitution, are:

- To educate the public in the art and science of music and, in particular, the art and science of choral music – by the presentation of choral concerts and other related activities.
- To assist and further such charitable institutions and purposes as the Committee shall from time to time determine.

### Public benefit

The Committee (whose members are the Trustees of the charity) have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on “public benefit” published by the Charity Commission when exercising their powers and duties.

### Management

The Committee of the Society makes arrangements for concerts and other related events and management of the Society's affairs and the control of finance.

Committee members are drawn from the membership of the Society and stand for election every year. Committee members who served at the end of the period are listed on Page 9.

The Committee is ably supported by specialist volunteers to whom we extend our appreciation – also listed on Page 9.

## Review of the year

### Chairman's report

#### *We're back!*

Bringing the choir together again after a two year break posed challenges for the Committee and choir members alike. We all had to adjust and be flexible as we steadily re-formed as Covid restrictions were relaxed. Keeping in touch through newsletters and receiving choir members' feedback throughout the break helped tremendously.

#### *Website*

In the background with the help of Iain MacCleod-Jones we have been able to launch a new website which hopefully most members are now familiar with.

#### *Messiah*

Our first concert to tell the community WCOS were back together was the daytime performance of Messiah in December. This was performed with local soloists and a quartet led by Maggie Faultless. We had the unexpected pleasure of singing to a full cathedral. There was tremendous enthusiastic feedback from members of the audience and their comments and suggestions were taken note of, such as reducing the size of the orchestra for future performances.

#### *Mozart & Haydn*

When we initially went into lockdown we were just a week away from performing the Mozart Requiem but with persistence and a few more rehearsals we were able to finally perform this in March of this year. Inevitably audience numbers were down as people remained anxious about attending events and this has had an impact on our finances.

#### *Come & Sing with John Rutter*

In May we had the pleasure of John Rutter leading a Come and Sing day in the cathedral with over 300 participants. John had kindly kept a space in his diary and promised to fulfil his commitment despite the 2 year postponement. A wonderful day of singing was had by all.

#### *Vaughan Williams anniversary*

Rather than hold a concert in November, with the agreement of the majority of choir members it was decided to give a summer concert as an experiment. It was a wonderful evening of music celebrating the 150th anniversary of Ralph Vaughan Williams. Again audience numbers were lower than expected despite every effort made by the publicity team. However we had to recognise that we were not alone in experiencing reduced audiences as this was found to be a similar experience by other choirs.

#### *Choir social*

We ended the season with our usual social event but this time we had the benefit of warmer weather and held the event in the Camery gardens. Our thanks go to Alex and Phil Lemanski for organising the event.

#### *Musical Director*

Sadly towards the end of the season we were to learn that Jeremy Cole was to be leaving his role as Director of Music this coming December. Jeremy's skill and commitment to getting

the choir to perform to a standard the choir could be proud of has been greatly appreciated. A big ‘thank you’ Jeremy for all you do in your work with the choir and the Committee.

### *Committee membership*

Throughout this year there have been numerous changes to Committee membership but my thanks goes to the hard work of all those past and present. I look forward to starting the next season with a full team. Their latest challenge has been the review of finances to determine what performances can be organised within the budget available.

### *New season*

We start the new season later than usual to prepare for the December performance of the Messiah when it is hoped audience numbers may pick up.

### *New patron*

One of our regular attenders to our concerts has been Dr Crossland. Due to his long term commitment and support to the choir it was decided to invite him to become one of our Patrons and we are delighted he has accepted.

## MEMBERSHIP

The numbers of choir members attending rehearsal and singing during the year were as follows:

2019	<i>Before Covid</i>	136
Autumn 2021	<i>Rehearsals resumed for Messiah</i>	125
Spring 2022	<i>Mozart/Haydn concert</i>	112
Summer 2022	<i>Vaughan Williams concert</i>	87

During the year 14 new members joined the Society.

Apart from musical considerations membership subscriptions are an important part of the the Society’s income, which it needs to meet the costs of providing attractive & ambitious concerts.

## CONCERTS & EVENTS

The number of tickets sold for each concert & event during the year was as follows:

<b>Concert</b>	<b>Music</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Capacity</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Profit/ (Loss) (b)</b>	<b>Note</b>
<b>Autumn 2021</b>	Messiah	800 (a)	840	95%	(£9,119)	(a)
<b>Come &amp; Sing 2022</b>	John Rutter	340	400	85%	£4,368	
<b>Spring 2022</b>	Mozart/Haydn	370	840	44%	(£11,574)	
<b>Summer 2022</b>	English Pastoral	261	840	31%	(£14,510)	(b)
<b>TOTAL 21-22</b>					<b>(£32,215)</b>	<b>(c)</b>

*Notes:*

- (a) The Messiah concert was given free of charge to the community with the aim of raising funds for the Cathedral post-Covid, therefore no tickets were sold.*
- (b) Some income & expenses for the Summer concert were received after 30<sup>th</sup> June – they are included here, but not in the Annual Accounts below*
- (c) Some expenses are not yet known, e.g. Performing Right fees*

From this it can be seen that ticket sales were well below the capacity of the Cathedral – and that the smallest loss was on the Autumn Concert.

## PUBLICITY

The main publicity media used during the year have been personal recommendations by members, posters in public places (e.g. shop windows, libraries, churches, notice boards etc) and free advertisements in local press.

In addition the Cathedral Box Office ensures our concerts are advertised alongside their other events on a variety of websites and the Dean helps ensure our concerts are promoted in the Cathedral Newsletter.

As reported above the Society rebranded its Web site during the year – and also has a Facebook page (with 250 followers) and mailing lists (with 170 subscribers).

## FUTURE PLANS

In making plans for the next season (2022-23) the Committee will endeavour to balance the ambition to present attractive concerts with the Society's limited financial resources, a change of conductor and the general economic situation in the country – whilst maintaining the high standards that the choir is known for.

For and on behalf of the Trustees

Marion Robinson, Chairman

## FINANCIAL REPORT

### Income & Expenditure

Income for the year to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 was £39,715 and Expenditure was £54,020, resulting in a deficit for the whole year of £14,305.

This deficit is deducted from the Reserves built up in previous years (amounting to £28,388 at the beginning of the year) – reducing the accumulated reserves to just £14,083.

*(Note that this calculation does not include receipts & payments since 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.)*

#### Income

The main sources of income were:

Ticket sales	£15,565
Membership subscriptions	£15,174
Friends subscriptions	£1,077
Gift Aid from HMRC (*)	£4,203

*(\*) in respect of subscriptions and donations from members and friends in 2020-21.*

Note that figures in the above table do not include income received after 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022, e.g. Summer Concert ticket sales & Gift Aid.

Income from tickets, members and friends have obviously increased substantially compared to the previous year – when there were no concerts.

These sources of income, together with Gift Aid, are essential to the continued activities of the Society and will allow it to continue into the future.

#### Expenditure

The main items of expenditure for concerts & events during the year were:

Orchestras	£25,565
Professional musician fees <i>(conductor, accompanist, soloists etc)</i>	£11,514
Rehearsal, venues, music hire etc	£13,332

Note that figures in the above table do not include expenses that had not been paid by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022, e.g. Performing Rights fees.

There was also “overhead” expenditure totalling £4,990 – which includes £1,641 for the Web site rebrand.

#### Reserves

At 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 the Society’s Reserves were the cash in its bank accounts totalling £14,083.

## Receipts & Payments

<b><u>RECEIPTS</u></b>		<b>2021-22</b>	<b>2020-21</b>
<b>Voluntary Income</b>		£	£
Donations	<i>Note 1</i>	140	120
<b>Investment Income</b>			
Bank Interest	<i>Note 2</i>	30	28
<b>Income from Charitable Activities</b>			
Concerts and Events		19,340	0
Members Subscriptions		15,173	1,531
Friends Subscriptions		1,077	800
Gift Aid Tax Refund	<i>Note 3</i>	4,203	3,629
Fundraising and Miscellaneous	<i>Note 4</i>	1,133	0
<i>Subtotal</i>		<i>40,926</i>	<i>5,960</i>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>		<b>41,096</b>	<b>£6108</b>
<b><u>PAYMENTS</u></b>			
<b>Expenditure on Charitable Activities</b>			
Concerts and Events		50,411	0
Making Music sub and insurance		532	523
Members Music Hire		0	100
Website Rebrand		1,641	0
Other		2,817	46
<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>		<b>55,401</b>	<b>669</b>
<b>NET RECEIPTS &amp; PAYMENTS FOR THE YEAR</b>		<b>(14,305)</b>	<b>5,439</b>

<u>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</u>	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2022	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
	£	£
Total Funds brought forward	28,388	22,949
Net Income/ (Net Expenditure for the year)	(14,305)	5,439
<b>Total Funds carried forward</b>	<b>£14,083</b>	<b>£28,388</b>

## Balance Sheet

	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2022	30 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
<u>ASSETS</u>	£	£
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Lloyds "Treasurers" account	474	2,744
Lloyds "Business Bank Instant" account	108	6,172
COIF "Charities Deposit Fund" account	13,501	19,472
	<b>£14,083</b>	<b>£28,388</b>
<b>Representing:</b>		
General, unrestricted reserve (*)	<b>£14,083</b>	<b>£28,388</b>

(\*) *All the Society's activities & income and are considered to be within a general, unrestricted fund.*

For and on behalf of the Trustees

Marion Robinson, Chairman

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS.

### Basis of Accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the Receipts and Payments – meaning that income and expenditure transactions are only included if they occurred were during period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

### Note 1 Donations

Donations from Members, Friends and others totalled £140.

### Note 2 Bank Interest

Interest was earned on the Society’s COIF “Charities Deposit Fund” and Lloyds “Business Bank Instant” accounts

### Note 3 Gift Aid tax refund

£4,203 Gift Aid was received in the year in respect of membership subscriptions and friends’ donations for the year to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021.

Gift Aid in respect of the current year had not been received by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

### Note 4 Fundraising and Miscellaneous

The majority of this income, £1,104, was for tickets sold for concerts which were cancelled in 2020 and not reclaimed.

## Reserves Policy

The Committee reviews the level of Reserves from time to time to ensure it has enough funds to ensure its future, whilst not accumulating unnecessarily large balances. The Committee takes the view that the minimum level of Reserves should:

- (a) provide a short-term cash flow buffer for the first concert in each season, e.g. to book an orchestra and soloists – before membership subscriptions and Gift Aid have been received.  
The Committee’s assessment of the minimum currently required for this is £15,000.
- (b) provide for a loss on concerts greater than forecast, for example catastrophic ticket sales after all expenses have been incurred, e.g. rehearsals, music hire etc.  
The Committee’s current assessment of this additional risk is £7,000.

Therefore the minimum level of reserves required to cover (a) and (b) is £22,000.

When it is possible to accumulate greater reserves this will provide funds for concerts demanding large resources.

## Current reserves

The Reserves on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 were £14,083 – which is below the policy target. The Committee will therefore plan the new season carefully to increase to the target amount as soon as possible.



## Legal and Administrative Information

<b>Name of Charity</b>	Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society
<b>Legal Status</b>	Unincorporated Trust
<b>Governing Document</b>	Constitution – revised October 2021
<b>Charity Registration Number</b>	800481
<b>Registered address</b>	3 Foster Close, WELLS, Somerset, BA5 3NB

### Trustees

Committee members, who are the Trustees of the charity, are collectively responsible for the management of the Society.

Committee members are elected annually from the membership of the Society – any vacancies occurring during the year being filled by co-option by the Committee, who may also reallocate roles between Committee members.

Members of the Committee (Trustees) and their roles at the end of the period were as follows:

<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Role</b>
Marion Robinson	Chairman
Chris Lambert-Shiels	Secretary
Dennis Johnson	Membership
Chris Jenkins	Subscriptions
Della Menday	Publicity & Programmes
Robin Walker	Concert Management
Sue Curragh	Friends, Voice Tuition

The Committee is also grateful for the assistance of other specialist volunteers as follows:

<b>Volunteer</b>	<b>Role</b>
Sue Hanson	Librarian
Nigel Lloyd	Financial Reporting, Gift Aid
Dot Hunter	Assistant Treasurer
Iain MacCleod	Webmaster

### Banks

Lloyds Bank plc, 24/26 High Street Wells BA5 2SJ
CCLA Fund Managers Ltd, 1 Angel Lane, LONDON, EC4R 3AB

## **Report of the Independent Examiner to the Trustees of Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society**

I report on the accounts of Wells Cathedral Oratorio Society for the year ended 30 June 2022

### **Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of accounts. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for 2021-22 under section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act") and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act
- follow procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act
- 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 explanations 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 below.

### **Independent Examiner's Statement**

In the course of my examination no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

1. to keep records in accordance with section 130 of the Act;

and

2. to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with accounting requirements of the Act,

have not been met; or to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Samuel Forsey  
Chartered Accountant (ICAEW)  
Kelson House  
Bakers Lane  
Chilcompton  
RADSTOCK  
BA3 4EW