

## MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF CHILTERN CHAMBER CHOIR 20/09/18

The meeting started at 21:20 after the main part of the usual Thursday rehearsal.

*Jan Montague read a list of apologies for absence:* Patricia Bandle, Lesley Culley, Mary McCarthy Harris, Lesley Pearce, Ruth Bardou, Faith Comminos, Chris Locke, Alison McMunn, Chris Watson, Evelyn Wotherspoon, Peter McMunn, Nevil Coulson, Geoff Harrison, Martin Pett, Peter Wright

1. Marie Brewer started her **introduction** with recognition of the enormous contribution Jean Green has made in her role as Choir Secretary for so many years, and thanked her for all her work.  
She then explained that until now Chiltern Chamber Choir has had no formal governance structure, and that this is now being changed in the following ways:
  - A constitution has been written and is available on the website.
  - An interim committee has been set up, consisting of Marie Brewer as Chair, Kate Goodwin Treasurer, Chris Sanders Librarian, Kate Perera Secretary and Jane Wild Publicity Officer. Adrian Davis is the Music Director. Decisions are to be taken by the committee.
  - In addition to the committee, there are a number of other “jobs”: Concert Manager (Jeremy Biddle), Attendance (Jan Montague), Programme Production (John Wignall), Annual Party Organisers (Jan Montague and Joan Veysey), After Concert Hospitality Manager (Patricia Bandle) and Official Photographer (Kathy Chantler). A list of committee members and job holders and their responsibilities is available on the website.
  - A new website has been designed and set up by David Brown, to whom many thanks. David will now be the website manager. The members’ section of the website will be the main source of information for choir members. ...
2. **Accounts:** these were presented and briefly commented on. There is a small cushion from past concerts, retained by a successful 2017 season in which the loss made by the Mageulone Messiah was recouped by the Messiah performed in St Peter’s on December 23. It is emphasised that this financial position is partly due to the fact that we do not pay our conductor or pay for rent of the Music School for rehearsals, and that this position may not continue indefinitely. Improvement is needed in ticket sales, an aspect in which the choir is not as diligent as it could be.

3. Adrian Davis read the **Music Director's Report**, starting with his thanks for the last 42 years. He recalled the past year's concerts, starting with the very successful performance of Handel's *Messiah* in Maguelone. He thanked Mary Harris for all the work she put into this. He then described the *Messiah* in St Peter's on December 23 as "wizard". *Lux Eterna* at Easter was a well sung concert, but the audience numbers were disappointing. The summer concert was "generally well sung" and the choir rose well to more challenging music. Perhaps more preparation and better attendance would improve performance of repertoire outside the choir's usual comfort zone, but Adrian felt that the choice of music and general presentation was more in keeping with our aims. Overall he finds the choir "more focussed" – long may this last.
4. **Election of the Committee** The co-opted members of the interim committee being willing to stand for election, and no further offers of help or nominations being received, Sidney Perera asked that the new committee members be approved *en masse*, and his proposal was accepted unanimously.
5. **Publicity** Jane Wilde spoke about publicity, and the need for a new image and proper corporate branding. This will be used on the new website, on Facebook and Twitter and on all posters and publicity material. Jane invited contributions from everyone for the social media feeds. She thanked Kathy Chantler for her work on posters, which David will now take over. She explained that a promotional bookmark is being worked on. Ticket sales will shortly be online through the Little Box Office. It is hoped this will make it more inviting for people to buy concert tickets in advance. At the Petertide Fair, where CCC had a stall, a good number of people signed up to a mailing list, and the general public will have heard Jane speak on Chiltern Voice radio. However, she emphasised that publicity is the icing on the cake, the choir must take responsibility for selling tickets, it is everyone's job.
6. **Touring** Following the failure of the proposed October German tour Marie had sent out a questionnaire about preferences for a tour. She was not unhappy to have received only nine replies – the conclusion was that there are no clear preferences either for date or for place. She had contacted a tour operator to enquire about an official tour arrangement. A trip to Rome with three concerts would cost £825pp, or the Rhineland £690. Chris Sanders had proposed enquiring about the Lintz area, but the operator was unable to give any suggestions on this.

7. Marie asked if the choir would be interested in using a tour operator. The replies indicated that such tours were expensive, therefore discouraged spouses from coming too, that self-organisation was preferable as it can be adapted to individual pockets and time availability. The suggestion was also made that it is not necessary to tour every year, and another that a tour “at home” (i.e. in the UK) was also an option. There is not thought to be any difference in the quality of performance if the tour is also regarded as a holiday, which seems to be most people’s preference.

Marie asked for suggestions and for volunteers to organise a trip, promising that support would be forthcoming to anyone who made the first move.

8. **AOB** Simon Stock (Herts Chorus) has offered a recording session which Marie has bid for on CCC’s behalf. The recording would be for publicity purposes. Andy Robertson reminded people that tickets are available online, and asked if an analysis can be made of where people heard of the concert when they attend. This is available through the Little Box Office scheme, which provides information on sales through different media.

There was a reminder of the spelling of the password to the choir section of the website.

Marie reminded everyone to read their emails, and that the website is the main source of information for choir members.

David Wilde asked if anyone had examined the possibility of acquiring charitable status. No work has been done on this yet.

The meeting finished at 10:00pm, with thanks from the Chair for everyone’s attendance and participation.