

Minutes of Committee Meeting on Tuesday 7 November 2023 by Zoom

Present: Philip Bellshaw (PB) (chair), Paul Spicer (PS), Graham Stroud (GS), Pauline Hygate (PH), Hilary Boszko (HB), Barbara Hathaway (BH), Corinna Gregory (CG), Ela Claridge (EC), Kate Crocker (KC), Heather Gay (HG), Eike Ritter (ER)

		Action
1.	Apologies for absence: Julia Sadler (JS)	
2.	Minutes of meeting held on 14 September 2023: agreed, subject to changes indicated below	GS
3.	Actions and matters arising from the minutes BH noted that the account under point 10b concerning the complaint received was not accurate, as the church had not volunteered information about the person responsible. The priest at SJSH is Fr. David Barry. PB said that a revised planning document would be needed soon, as it would be necessary to hold a planning meeting in the near future. PS will provide some possible dates.	GS CG, PS
4.	Decisions taken since the last meeting The organ recitals planned for October 2023 had had to be cancelled due to lack of interest. PS noted that the timing was probably a large factor, as people would be unlikely to want to drive to Rugeley in the dark evenings. PB suggested that the idea be revisited in a forthcoming planning meeting.	
5.	Finance update: PH presented the finance report (attached), circulated before the meeting. She noted that the addition of seven new singers was a welcome boost to the choir's finances (membership now stands at 67). PH reported that a one-year savings account had been opened with the Charity Bank and a deposit had been made. The transfer of a large sum out of the choir's Barclays account to the savings account had caused problems in persuading Barclays that this was not a fraudulent transaction. She noted that Barclays fraud department were insistent on having details of all Trustees (not just account signatories) and that she had written to Trustees to obtain these details. While she had managed to keep this issue on hold for the moment, this was not likely to last. PB noted that this is a strong argument to keep the number of Trustees to a minimum. PH informed the Committee that she had also applied for an easy-access interest-bearing account with the Charity Bank, to generate interest on account balances which also had to be available without delay. The Committee gave its full support to this action.	Trustees

	PH reported that the Performing Rights Society's fees had been reduced for amateur groups from January 2023 and that she hoped to be able to obtain a partial refund of the sums paid during the year.	PH
6.	Fundraising update: KC had presented a written update (attached). She asked about the possibility of a commission from Russell Hepplewhite and said that, if this was likely, the Feeney Trust criteria would need to be examined carefully for a submission next Spring.	KC
7.	Marketing update: HB had presented a written update (attached). She updated the Committee on the various campaigns running for the 18 November concert and noted that PS would be interviewed by BBC WM on 12 November. HG informed the Committee that, to date, 71 tickets had been sold. HB asked that the idea of giving choir members tickets to sell be discussed again. She noted that the visits to the website had increased by 60% and that publicity was already being distributed for the March 2024 St Matthew Passion, in particular the possibility of gifting tickets as Christmas presents.	
8.	Choir AGM, 22 November 2023: GS reported that the documents for the AGM had been sent to all members, life members and Patrons and that apologies and messages of support had been received from three Patrons. A small drafting change had been made to the Trustee Annual Report to the Charity Commission, to make it clear that there is no charge to the public for the Nine Lessons and Carols. PH pointed out that the financial documents circulated to the choir for the AGM were explanatory notes for her presentation of the Treasurer's Report, not the Treasurer's Report itself. PB and GS will have a short briefing meeting by Zoom with Gisela Stuart on Friday, 17 November.	GS PB, GS
9.	Come and Sing 2024 PB reported that Wylde Green URC had been booked for 27 April 2024 for the C&S.	
10.	Rest of 2023/24 schedule a. November 2023 concert PS asked about the time for the rehearsal; CG suggested 13.30. PS noted that two hours would probably be needed. CG will ask for volunteers to help set up St Paul's before the rehearsal and clear away after the concert. b. Nine lessons and carols PS reported that there had been a question from the priest at St Paul's about two items as these were Advent songs, but that he intended to stick to his list. He is still thinking about how to perform one song which needs finger clicks, stamping and hand claps. He thanked EC for her preparation and printing of his carol arrangements and descants. HB noted that the service does not appear on the St Paul's website. c. St Matthew Passion, March 2024 BH will send out a request after Christmas for accommodation for orchestra members (and soloists?). Music will be distributed before Christmas and rehearsals will start on 10 January 2024. On the concert day, PS requested a three hour rehearsal with the choir. PB suggested the need for a visit to Lichfield Cathedral to work out logistics and seating arrangements of the various groups with the cathedral staff. PS, PB and CG would be required.	CG PS BH

	<p>PS will suggest some dates. CG asked that it be after 15 December.</p> <p>d. Summer 2024 concerts</p> <p>PS reported that he had asked Tony Wass if he would record the two new Bednall and PS pieces. Tony had replied that he “would be honoured” to do so. Martyn Rawles will not be available to play organ for the concerts and suggested Callum Alger as his replacement. This suggestion was approved.</p>	PS
11.	<p>Social events</p> <p>a. Fish and chip supper</p> <p>It was agreed to change the date to 23 January 2024. GS will go ahead and book the upstairs restaurant at Dad’s Lane Fish and Chip shop.</p>	GS
12.	<p>Choir tour</p> <p>HB informed the Committee of recent progress on the next choir tour. This is provisionally planned for end-May 2025. She has spoken to two companies who could organise these. The first has a representative in Kraków and would take care of flights, as well as accommodation, concert venues, etc. They will have prices for 2025 early in 2024. The second company is based in Hungary and could arrange a tour, but wouldn’t handle flight bookings. They would only have prices available in September 2024, which is too late. PB thanked HB for her work to date and said that the choir would have to be updated on the possible tour soon, so that plans can be firmed up.</p>	GS
13.	<p>Correspondence received:</p> <p>None.</p>	
14.	<p>Any other business:</p> <p>GS informed the Committee that the Handbook will need updating after the AGM.</p>	GS, EC
15.	<p>Dates of next meetings:</p> <p>Thursday, 1 February 2024 at 17:30 by Zoom.</p> <p>Planning meeting to be arranged before the end of the year.</p>	<p>GS/EC</p> <p>PB/PS/</p> <p>CG/GS</p>