

WCCC Members Survey – Spring 2018

Introduction

The following pages contain an analysis of the results of the questionnaires completed by members of the WCCC in the spring of 2018.

The questionnaire was devised and distributed by the newly formed WCCC Development Group with the aim of gaining a current and clear understanding of members' views on a range of key areas

- The role of the choir.
- The choir's mix of activities: services, concerts and recordings.
- The extent to which membership is value for money.
- Members' attendance and commitment.
- Fund raising.
- The induction and care of members.
- Behaviour and professionalism.
- Social events.

The results of the numerical analysis of responses to questions are presented in a simple bar chart format.

Written responses to questions were collated, analysed and summarised with, where appropriate, a brief commentary on the findings.

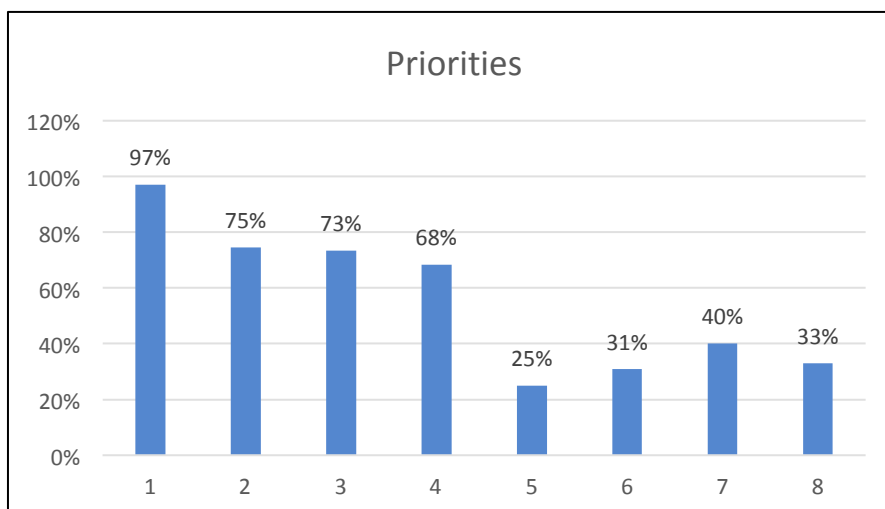
30 of the WCCC's 38 members (79%) completed the questionnaire. The majority provided answers to all the questions. A small number did not. The numerical analysis takes this into account.

Members were given the choice of either identifying themselves or remaining anonymous. 6 members (20%) chose the latter.

The results will be used to inform the Committee's management of the Choir and the Development Group's forward planning.

1. Please rank in order of importance what you consider to be the priorities of WCCC

All 30 respondents answered this question



- Bar 1** Sing services in the Cathedral
- Bar 2** Sing services elsewhere
- Bar 3** Perform concerts in the Cathedral
- Bar 4** Perform concerts elsewhere
- Bar 5** Sing a chamber repertoire without the need for public performances
- Bar 6** Make commercial recordings
- Bar 7** Undertake choir tours
- Bar 8** Sing for weddings and events

Commentary

Respondents principal interests are clearly items 1 to 4.

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- 2. Do you consider membership of WCCC value for money?**
Would you be willing to pay higher subscriptions to support ongoing costs?

Commentary

All respondents answered these questions

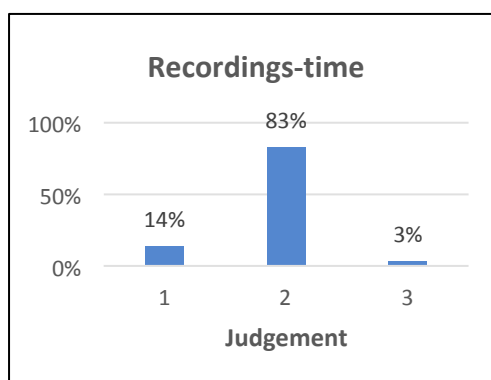
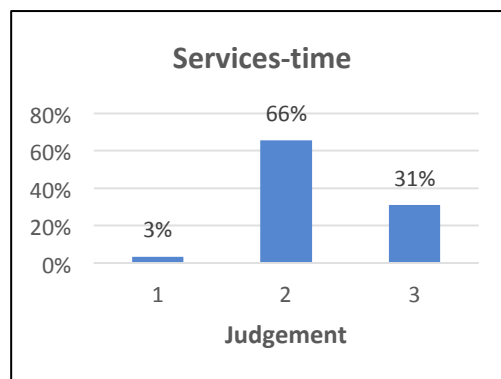
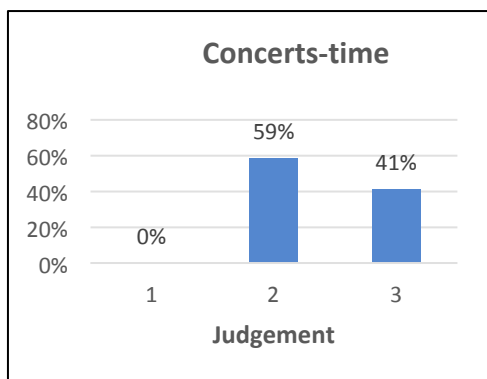
- 100% said that WCCC is value for money.
- 93% are willing to pay higher subscriptions.

There was a small number (4) of caveats along the lines of the negative impact on the overall cost of belonging the choir and “how much more” would a higher subscription be?

3. Do you think the current levels of activities in the following areas?

Concerts, Services and Recording are

1. Too much
2. Just right
3. Too little



Commentary

2 of the 30 respondents partially answered these questions. The percentages take this into account.

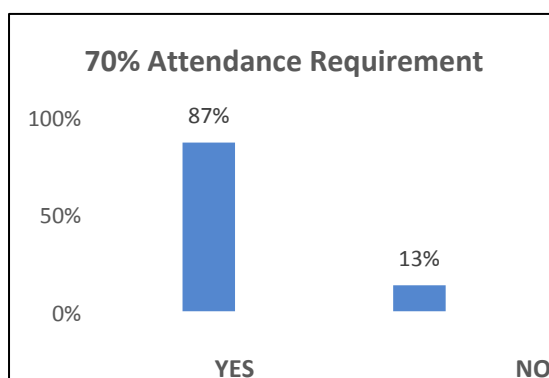
There is a clear consensus that the time allocated to all three activities is “just right” but there is a sizeable percentage of respondents who feel that more time should be allocated to both Concerts and Services.

4. Rehearsal attendance

At the last AGM we discussed rehearsal attendance with circa 70% considered to be an acceptable minimum in order to maintain this.

1. Do you agree with this?
2. In your view how should we manage those who consistently fall below 70% (please rank in order)
 - Do nothing.
 - MD/ Chair deals appropriately with individual situation.
 - Non-participation in the next event.
 - Asked to leave if less than 70% attendance continues.

Responses and Commentary

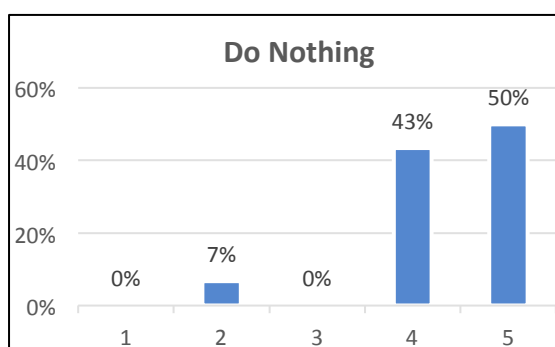


The response to the first question is an unequivocal 87% support for the 70% attendance requirement (see above). But the responses to the second question include several suggestions that this should be a guideline applied with a degree of sensitivity and flexibility, determined by individuals' circumstances and their reasons for not meeting expectations.

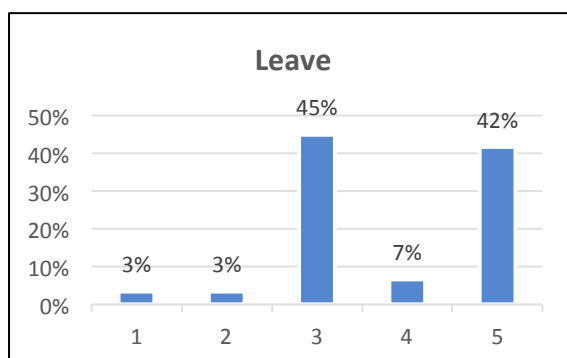
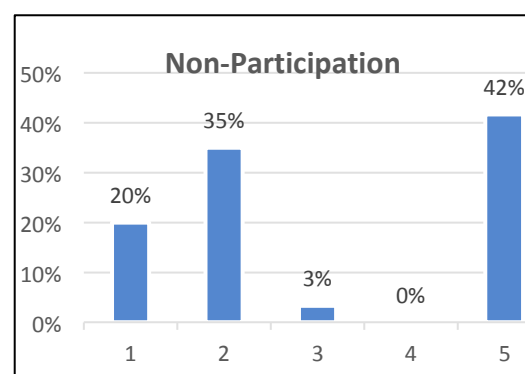
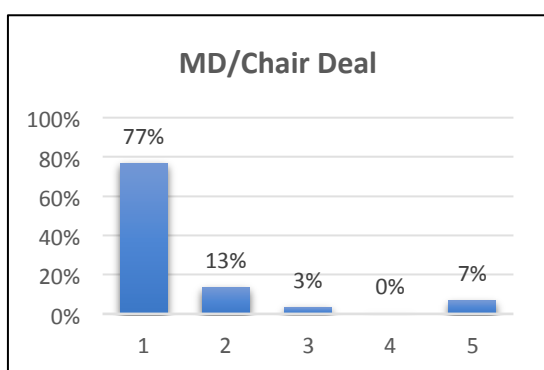
Only 15 of the 30 (50%) respondents completed the second question i.e. ranking the options from 1 to 4. The other 15 (50%) chose to rank fewer than the four options. The following charts reflects this.

e.g In the Do-Nothing Chart below

- Bar 1** % of respondents who made Do Nothing their 1st choice
- Bar 2** % of respondents who made Do Nothing their 2nd choice
- Bar 3** % of respondents who made Do Nothing their 3rd choice
- Bar 4** % of respondents who made Do Nothing their 4th choice
- Bar 5** % of respondents who did not offer an opinion



the following three charts follow the same rules.



The above charts indicate that members' preferred response to poor attendance is that the MD/Chair should deal with individual situations, with the preferred sanction being Non-Participation in the next event. Do Nothing is not an option and Leave is a last resort.

12 of the 30 Respondents (40%) included a written response in their answers. Between them they made the following points:

- Members should have a clear understanding of attendance requirements.
- The MD/Chair are the people to deal with attendance problems.
- Each case should be dealt with on an individual basis, taking into account personal circumstances.
- There must be consistency and fairness, thus avoiding perceptions of favouritism.
- WCCC is a voluntary choir which should accommodate other commitments which members have.
- There is one suggestion that less than 50% attendance in the 10 weeks leading up to a performance should automatically generate a ban.

5. We need to raise £2500 every year to support our work. Please tell us whether you are willing to contribute to WCCC's fund raising by giving time to support ancillary events.

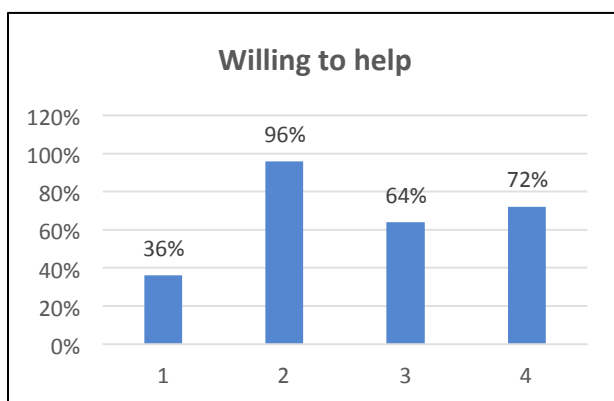
27 out of 30 respondents (90%) answered this question.

24 of the respondents (80%) said YES

3 of the respondents (10%) said NO

Would you be willing to?

1. Initiate, organise and deliver a fund raising event?
2. Give time to support others who organise a fund raising event?
3. Provide other resources to a fund raising event?
4. Give money in lieu of time to a fund raising event?



Commentary

The overall response is encouraging in that 36% are willing to organise an event with the promise of support from other members and the offer of money in-lieu of time.

6. What is your view of our current fund raising activity? (quiz nights, raffles)

28 out of 30 respondents (93%) answered this question

Responses and Commentary

19 out of 28 (68%) made positive comments about the relevance and effectiveness of the weekly raffle.

12 out of 28 (43%) made similar supportive comments about the quiz nights.

There were suggestions that the organisation and timing of the quiz night needs to be revisited in order that it is better promoted, thus attracting more participants. Earlier consultation with members on timing would avoid/minimise date clashes.

There was recognition that there is a limit to the amount of money that these kinds of events can raise.

There were suggestions that the choir should adjust its programming to match available funds and concerts and recordings shouldn't cost more than the choir can afford. This was countered by the idea that we should seek out wealthy sponsors and find a high-profile President.

7. What suggestions do you have for a fund raising event for WCCC?

Responses

20 out of 30 respondents (67%) answered this question

The following suggestions were made.

The number in brackets indicates the number of times the suggestion was made

- Talent Show (2)
- Barn Dance
- Quiz nights
- Car Boot sale

- Bring and buy
- Making jam
- Plant sale
- Cake sale- including post service sales to cathedral congregation (2)
- Coffee morning (2)
- Afternoon tea in members' gardens

- Annual bigger prize raffle
- Friends Scheme
- One off donations
- Purchase own music
- Non-event-based fund raising e.g sponsors, programme advertising
- 100 Club (3)
- Give each member £10 and ask them to increase it to £100 in a year by any means they chose

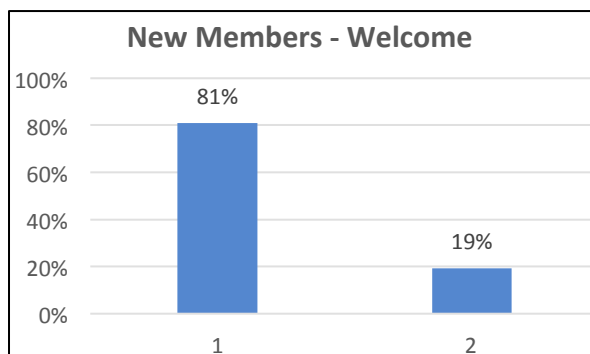
- Come and sing (3) e.g famous name (John Rutter, Bob Chilcott) in College Hall, open performance of a light opera (G&S)
- Put on Singing workshops, open to both members and visitors, with a professional teacher.
- Concert at Museum/Art gallery with reception
- Combined concert and wine tasting event e.g. French/German music and wines
- Illustrated talks associated with concerts
- Concert with picnic during the interval
- Weddings, funerals and paid events
- Carol singing e.g. Waterstones (2)

8. Standards and professionalism/best practice

Do you think WCCC is a helpful and welcoming environment for new members?

Responses and Commentary

27 out of 30 respondents (90%) answered this question



Bar 1 % of respondents who think that WCCC is helpful and welcoming

Bar 2 % of respondents who think that WCCC is not helpful and welcoming

Most respondents, a mixture of “new” and “old” members, feel that new members are welcomed into the WCCC.

Whilst the supporting written feedback, which 22 out of the 30 (73%) respondents provided, confirms the above, it does contain some mixed messages which suggest that there is room for improvement beyond the support provided by the Membership Secretary at the beginning of the joining process.

Observations by “old” members and reports from “new” members suggest that

- Notice of a new arrival and a formal introduction to members would be helpful for everyone.
- Whilst some new members feel that they have been made very welcome and settled in quickly others have sensed a degree animosity towards them from some well-established members.
- Working out who is who can be difficult for new members.
- Sometimes new members are left to fend for themselves, particularly at the break. A simple “buddy system” would alleviate this and help newcomers quickly to learn about things which established members take for granted.
- A member’s handbook would be a useful addition for all members- new and old. It would reinforce the important principles/ethos of the choir, as well as providing practical information about services/liturgy, WCCC committee, dress code, constitution, website etc.

Would you invite a singing friend or colleague to apply to join?

27 out of 30 (93%) respondents answered this question. 100% of them said “YES”.

There were a couple of caveats along the lines of

- Very much depends upon the person.
- If they were musical enough.

We receive feedback from those who see and hear us

Occasionally we receive negative comments about our professional conduct (for example; talking during services and rehearsals and lack of punctuality and appropriate behaviour when lining up in the cloisters.)

Please tell us how these matters can be resolved.

28 out of 30 respondents (93%) answered this question with the following responses and observations

- All feedback of this kind must be passed on to the committee for action where necessary. The MD/Chair should deal with the individual/s concerned.
- Regular reminders of codes of conduct in the cloisters and the Cathedral are needed and processing and going up for communion should be regularly rehearsed and supported by reminders from the MD/Chair. This would be useful for established members and vital for new members.
- Problems with last-minute lining-up in the cloisters would be avoided if pre-service practices ended a few minutes earlier, thus allowing time for members to prepare themselves for the service.
- Talking during services is totally unacceptable and lack of self-discipline appalling. It must be dealt with firmly by the MD/Chair.
- 2 members mentioned that the behaviour in services and rehearsals of some male members of the choir is inappropriate.
- Poor punctuality is a major problem as is irritating chat during rehearsals. Although late coming is sometimes unavoidable both are discourteous to and distracting for the MD and other members. They need to improve, and offenders dealt with firmly.
- Choir dress, particularly ladies', needs to be sorted.

9. We need to know a bit about you

Why do you sing in WCCC?

29 out of 30 respondents (97%) answered this question with the following responses

- A love of Church music combined with the joy and privilege of singing services and concerts in Worcester Cathedral.
- The joy and challenge of singing, to a high standard set by the MD, in a small choir.
- Fellowship: being part of the Cathedral and enjoying, with friendship and fun, the company of others who are serious about singing well.
- Enjoying the repertoire and the challenge of learning new music with like-minded people.

What do you most enjoy about WCCC?

28 out of 30 (93%) respondents answered this question with the following responses

- Singing services and concerts in the Cathedral.
- Making challenging, small-choir music with like-minded people in a friendly supportive atmosphere. There is a strong sense of camaraderie.
- The repertoire, the quality of our music making and the sense of achievement and satisfaction when we do something well.
- The MD: his conducting, musicality and insistence on high standards.

What could be better?

25 out of 30 respondents (83%) answered this question with the following responses

- Operational and organisational matters
 - Attendance and punctuality: rehearsals should start promptly and finish on time.
 - Vocal warm ups and more mixed- up singing and standing up during rehearsals.
 - More discipline during rehearsals: no mobile phones; there should be more respect for the MD and the chatter must stop, with committee members especially, setting a good example for the rest of the choir to follow.
 - Clear understanding of committee members' roles and responsibilities and an improvement in communication, including circulation of minutes, between the committee and the rest of the choir.
 - 12/18-month calendar of events.
 - Sort out dress code and performance behaviour.
 - To maintain the high musical standard of WCCC weaker singers should be identified and replaced by new, stronger/younger voices through, for example, biennial appraisals.
- Other matters
 - Strengthen links with the Cathedral.
 - More evensongs
 - Widen the repertoire to include complete works such as Faure's Requiem or a Bach Cantata. The current concert repertoire is the same as last year which makes selling tickets more difficult.

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- Repeat a concert in some different venues and to different audiences.

10.

Concerning Fund Raising is there anything else you would like to say?

18 out of 30 respondents (60%) answered this question

Responses

- Some feel that all choir members need to be involved in fund raising instead of leaving it to a few members.
- Others frankly admit that they are not fund raisers and that they joined the choir to sing, not to fund raise.
- We should cut our cloth according to our means and that ambitions are tempered by realistic proactive planning.
- With the creation of the Development Group there is an opportunity to deal strategically and sensibly with long term fund raising alongside “local” fund raising opportunities.
- There is a need reach out to the wider community, finding a more diverse audience and offering educational opportunities.
- By engaging with the wider community and promoting ourselves we will reach a wider audience. We need the wider community. It doesn’t need us.
- Other sources of funding need to be pursued e.g a replacement for the Newmarket partnership.
- There is too much pressure on members to raise funds.

Concerning our professionalism is there anything else you would like to say?

17 out of 30 respondents (57%) answered this question with the following observations and comments

Responses

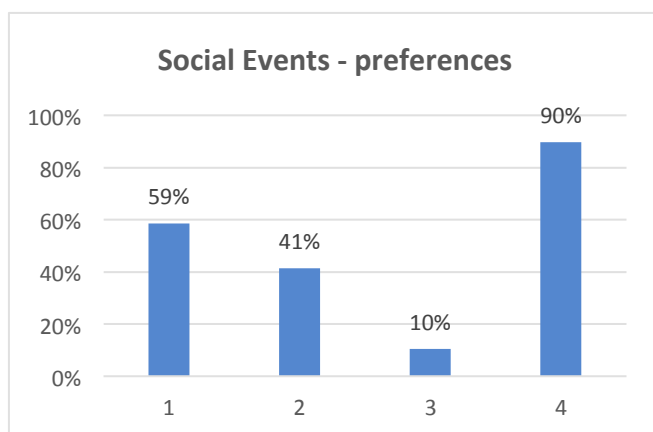
- Talking and Inappropriate behaviour during rehearsals, in the cloisters and during services/concerts is not acceptable and must stop.
- Rehearsals must start on time.
- There must be better forward planning, up to a year or more ahead, so that members are aware of key dates etc. and are more able and ready to commit to rehearsals and events.
- The choir’s uniform needs to be sorted out, particularly skirt lengths and styles but is a rethink needed and should red scarves be abolished?
- The choir is generally professional apart from the points made about behaviour, but it must be borne in mind that we are not a professional choir. Therefore, rules should be kept to a minimum and be guidance rather than law: helpful advice should be plentiful.

11. Social Events

Would you like there to be more social events?

Do you think that choir events should always be fund raisers?

29 out of 30 respondents (97%) answered these questions



Bar 1 % of members in favour of more social events

Bar 2 % of members against more social events

Bar 3 % of members who think all social events should be fund raising

Bar 4 % of respondents who think that not all social events should be fund raising

Whilst there is a majority in favour of the choir having more social events, there is a very clear rejection of the idea that all events should be fund raising.

What kind of social event do you enjoy?

25 out of 30 respondents (83%) answered this question and provided the following list of ideas

- Informal gatherings where members can get to know people that they may not normally speak to were good e.g: Garden parties and gatherings such as the 2016/17 summer social.
- Tours which provide a way of improving cohesion and heightening morale.
- Wine tasting.
- Quizzes-proven value.
- A barn dance with a bring and share supper.
- An annual dinner.
- Sunday lunch between morning Eucharist and Evensong on WCCC Sundays.
- Informal end-of-rehearsal and post-concert gatherings, like the recent birthday party.
- Busking in Cathedral Square.
- Outings to a concert or theatre, including supporting other choirs and encouraging them to come our concerts.
-