

**WCCC Committee Meeting 20th March 2024 held in the Old Palace
Minutes**

Present: Peter Brook (PB), Sarah Donaldson (SD), Liz Forman (LF), Jenny Kettleton (JK), Carole Oliver (CO), Kevern Oliver (KO), Helen Randall (HR), Lynne Reekes (LR) – present virtually via Zoom, Anne Renshaw (AR), Mark Wilson (MW), and Robin Walker (RW)

Item		Action
1	Welcome Apologies: John-Paul Hoskins and Stephen Shellard	
2	Minutes of 31/01/24 were unanimously agreed	
3	Financial report CO spoke to the report provided beforehand. Sam H has since approved our budget, but the uplift in Stephen's salary has to be approved by the cathedral's salaries committee so we await their confirmation. CO had included a fundraising target of £600 to produce a small excess. PB suggested this be reviewed after the concert - eg at the June committee meeting - when we should have a good idea whether it had made a profit or loss, and if new expenses had arisen for later in the year. In reviewing the accounts for the year end CO has noticed that Linda has raised nearly £500 for us with the raffle in the last financial year, but also that since the raffle was started 8 years ago she has raised over £4,600. CO is going to thank Linda publically at our rehearsal tomorrow.	
4	23/24 Events	
4.1	Fladbury Wedding No updates currently. Eileen has asked about a rehearsal time as various singers have asked her. LF will contact SS about this.	LF
4.2	25th Anniversary Social in the Undercroft As per her briefing note, CO has had now a response from the cathedral offering various dates. After some discussion it was agreed that the 19 th October would be the best date to go for, so she will move forward with booking this.	CO
4.3	Westminster Abbey Evensong The coach is booked and people are beginning to sign up.	
5	25th Anniversary Concert	
5.1	Finances We've received £780 in donations so far. Paper tickets are ready to go at an appropriate time if choir members feel they'd rather sell tickets in that format.	
5.2	Fundraising Plans continue for a cake sale at coffee after a Eucharist at the cathedral, but we are still awaiting an appropriate date from the cathedral – during Lent did not feel appropriate, and the Voluntary Choir are hoping to do something similar. Some	

5.3	<p>discussion was held regarding whether this was best held on a day when we are singing, or on a day when we are not singing, there are pros and cons to both. Regardless of when we are singing there have been plenty of volunteers to make sure the choir is well represented when we do hold the cake sale. It was also noted that we are not singing a Eucharist until after the concert.</p> <p>Publicity The publicity is ready to go, but AR and the publicity sub-group advise waiting until after Easter for this to be launched. At that point choir members will be given paper fliers/posters to display and distribute.</p>	AR and publicity sub-group
5.4	<p>Programme Andrew has provided us with an initial mock-up of the programme which was passed around. The various contributors have their briefs, and various advertisements will be included, some reciprocal with other choral groups, and some for sponsorship. The publicity sub-group has already discussed whether or not we should charge for the programme, it was agreed that we should, possibly for a 'minimum donation' of £2, but this can be confirmed at a later date.</p>	
5.5	<p>Venue RW updated us on planned building work at St Martin's which will unfortunately impact on our concert – some of the toilets will be out of use. There will be toilets available, but only one of these will be wheelchair friendly, and audience members requiring that one will have to go outside and around the building to access this.</p>	
6	24/25 Outline Planning	
6.1	<p>Himbleton Concert We have agreed that a date in June 2025 would be best for this, CO now in negotiation with SS regarding the exact date.</p>	CO/SS
6.2	<p>St Cecilia's Day Evensong and subsequent celebration It was agreed that we would move forward with a celebration after this as previously discussed. CO will look at booking the Chapter House for this. There was some discussion about the provision of refreshments for this. We could use the independent contractor who the cathedral and various other organisations tend to use now, or we could provide wine etc ourselves. It was felt unlikely that the cathedral would want to provide refreshments as they now generally use an outside company.</p>	CO
6.3	<p>9 Lessons and Carols – Evesham and at the Cathedral All Saint's Evesham would be delighted to have us for a 9 Lessons and Carols in December 2024. They've stated that later in the month would be easier for them as they have a lot of school carol services earlier in the month. We need confirmation of when we are singing 9 Lessons and Carols at the cathedral before this can be firmed up – this has been discussed with JPH/Sam H and they are aware that we remain keen to sing 9 Lessons and Carols at the cathedral as we have done for the last few years. LF will continue to liaise with them regarding dates.</p>	LF

6.4	<p>Tidings of Joy Concert</p> <p>LF confirmed that this was raised with JPH and Sam H at a meeting held with them, LF and SS regarding dates moving forward and how these are decided. Sam H has taken our points on board (he'd actually already read SD's briefing prior to our meeting) and is looking at a slightly different format for the concert this year, with the WFCS potentially being involved again as well as all the Cathedral choirs.</p>	
6.5	<p>Future Dates</p> <p>The proposed dates for Spring/Summer 2025 have now been sent to LF and run past SS. These were discussed and it was agreed we would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to Sunday 2nd February Evensong • Agree to Saturday 15th March Evensong • Agree to Monday 14th April Compline • Consider Saturday 21st June Evensong – but this is dependent on possible dates for the Himbleton Concert so LF will discuss further with SS. • Agree to at least some services over the weekend of 12/13th July (exact number to be confirmed as the Mason's service may go ahead in that weekend and 3 services on the Sunday is quite a tall order!) <p>The Elgar Festival weekend (31st May/1st June 2025) was also discussed, as we've been established as the choir for that weekend for the last few years now. AR explained that the featured composer for the 2025 weekend is Ian Venables. He has just written a set of canticles which are to be performed at the Three Choirs Festival this year (and broadcast on BBC R3), and she had wondered whether we could sing these for the final Evensong, possibly along with his responses. Obviously final music choices are up to SS.</p> <p>LF will take our above responses back to the cathedral, and also ask about the Elgar Festival weekend as above.</p> <p>AR also asked about the final weekend of the Three Choirs Festival as last time this was held in Worcester we were asked to sing the Sunday Eucharist at the last minute which for those involved in the Three Choirs Festival was hard work after a very busy week. This is not currently on our list of services for the year. LF will double-check this.</p>	<p>LF</p> <p>LF</p>
7	<p>Membership</p> <p>Numbers were discussed as per KO's briefing in the agenda.</p> <p>He raised the fact that the age of the tenors and basses is concerning SS. We could do with a drive to recruit more tenors and basses in general, ideally younger singers! It was also pointed out that we should be open to female tenors as well which would further increase our options.</p>	
8	<p>Rehearsal Spaces</p> <p>Having had one rehearsal back in the Song School we considered this again as a more permanent venue as requested by Eileen.</p> <p>Eileen has provided further data regarding venues, and has pointed out that we have only been able to use College Hall for 42% of our rehearsals in the last 12 months. Other venues then have to be arranged by rather clunky mechanisms.</p> <p>Having asked for feedback from the choir members, LF has received 4 e-mails, one</p>	

	<p>positive and three negative. SS is also not keen on using the song school as our permanent rehearsal venue.</p> <p>There was some discussion about possible external venues, but these would all need to be paid for. RW states that we would get reasonable rates at All Saints or at St Helen's. HR asked about other venues within the school complex, but it sounds like they don't have any large enough spaces any more.</p> <p>CO pointed out that going outside the Cathedral on a regular basis would mean that subs would have to go up considerably (likely by around £50), and it would also weaken the links with the rest of the Cathedral which we are trying to strengthen.</p> <p>After discussion it was agreed that we don't mind whether our main rehearsal venue is College Hall or the Cathedral, but we'd prefer the Song School to be the third option if nowhere else is available. CO said we would be able to manage a donation towards the cost of the verger needed to close up after us when/if we use the Cathedral rather than College Hall. LF will feed this back to Eileen.</p>	LF
9	<p>AOB</p>	
9.1	<p>Attire for Female Singers</p> <p>SD asked whether the guidelines for what female singers should wear could be reconsidered to include smart black trousers rather than insisting on a skirt which can be impractical, and also difficult to source. There was general agreement from the female members of the committee that this would be well-received!</p> <p>LF will e-mail the female choir members to get an overview of general opinion and feed back at the next meeting.</p>	LF
10	<p>Date of the Next Meeting: 01/05/24</p> <p>Venue TBC, but likely to be the Old Palace.</p>	