

**WCCC Virtual Committee Meeting 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023**  
**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), Anne Renshaw (AR), Stephen Shellard (SS), Mark Wilson (MW), and Robin Walker (RW)

Item		Action
1	<b>Welcome</b> <b>Apologies:</b> John-Paul Hoskins	
2	<b>Minutes</b> of 18/10/23 were unanimously agreed Matters arising are dealt with in the main agenda.	
3	<b>Financial report</b> CO spoke to the report she provided prior to the meeting, and we're on track based on our budget at present. CO and LR are beginning to think about the budget for the 2024-25 year, and are hoping for a small surplus of £150. This would be based on increasing the subs to £100 – they have been static at £90 for the last two years.  Note was made of the death of David Hawkins on the 9 <sup>th</sup> November, a generous benefactor to the choir to the tune of £1,500-2,000 over 10 years.	
4	<b>AGM Date</b> There was agreement that the AGM could be moved from 26/09/24 to 03/10/24 to allow for LR's planned holiday.	
5	<b>23/24 Events</b>	
5.1	<b>Sedgley Carol Service</b> All well in hand, final outstanding music will be given out at tomorrow's rehearsal. We are not able to use the car park we've used previously due to building work, but KO is liaising with the vicar regarding alternatives.	KO
5.2	<b>Fladbury Wedding</b> Eileen has this in hand, further details to be sent out after Christmas.	
5.3	<b>25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Social in the Undercroft</b> The choir had agreed that in principle a social event to celebrate our anniversary in June would be welcomed. KO noted however that there were three weeks in June when many members are not available for rehearsals (based on WhenAvailable responses), so that needs to be taken into consideration. The 28 <sup>th</sup> June was proposed as a possible date, and CO will enquire about availability on this date.	CO
6.4	<b>Westminster Abbey Evensong</b> No significant update this time, KO will be beginning further preparations after Christmas. Brief discussion was held about the possibility of subsidising coach travel – it was pointed out that not all members of the choir would want to take up this option for various reasons and may therefore resent their travel not being subsidised, so	KO

5.5	<p>this needs to be taken into consideration.</p> <p><b>Possible wedding 17/08/24 - Chaddesley Corbett</b> No response to two e-mails so unlikely to be taken forward.</p>	
6	<p><b>25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert</b> The thought processes behind the planning grid produced by KO in discussion with LF and PB was briefly explained. LF will oversee this to ensure all tasks are covered and to be the point of contact. Many of the roles are already well underway – finances, venue, music planning etc, the main job now is to formulate and take forward publicity. AR happy to (had assumed she would) take the lead here as befits her role on the committee, with SD, PB and CO to help.</p> <p>Discussion was held around publicity and what works in the current climate. Concerts need a title rather than just a musical work, so we need to think about this. Local radio is significantly diminished, and what local coverage there is won't just publicise a concert or an event, they need a story with a good angle. Social media was discussed, and the importance of members of the choir sharing our posts rather than making their own – this makes all the algorithms work to our advantage.</p> <p>A 'press pack' is needed which can then go on the website and members can download and use what they want/need easily, ensuring a consistent message.</p> <p>There was a query regarding Eventbrite, whether we can use the cathedral's account, and whether we still have our own. It was agreed that ideally we need to use the cathedral's to ensure the money goes to the right place, but this needs to be confirmed.</p> <p>RW raised a question about whether we wanted to capitalise on our anniversary year and consider merchandise as an option, eg mugs, clothing etc. He is happy to take the lead on this if so.</p> <p>RW also informed us that David and Shirley Scott who have been in charge of concert management at St Martin's for many years are stepping down, and he will be our St Martin's contact for the anniversary concert.</p> <p>The suggestion was made that Eileen should be asked to help KO with the H&amp;S aspects of the concert – KO will ask her.</p> <p>LF will fill in the grid and attach it to the minutes.</p>	<p>LF</p> <p>AR, SD, PB, CO</p> <p>CO</p> <p>RW</p> <p>KO</p> <p>LF</p>
7	<b>24/25 Outline Planning</b>	
7.1	<p><b>Himbleton Concert</b> The church is happy with a date in March-May 2025 for this.</p>	CO
7.2	<p><b>St Cecilia's Day Evensong</b> As per the e-mail discussion, everyone was reminded that the Chamber Choir raised funds to endow a day of music at the Cathedral, and St Cecilia's Day was chosen for this. The idea that we could sing the Evensong that day was raised (a Friday in 2024), and felt to be a good idea.</p>	

	<p>There was then more general discussion around the possibility of a celebratory Anniversary Evensong either on St Cecilia's Day itself, or that weekend if we couldn't sing on St Cecilia's Day for whatever reason, with invitations to a wider pool of people to promote music-making in general as per AR's e-mail copied below:</p> <p><i>We could send invitations to attend to our mailing list, plus to cathedral clergy and staff, Diocesan people, clergy/congregation from churches we've worked with e.g. St. Martin's London Road, Kempsey, Sedgley, Crowle, as well as to other city churches e.g. St. Martin in the Cornmarket, St. George's Barbourne, St. Stephen's Barbourne, etc.</i></p> <p><i>We could invite reps from local musical organisations e.g. WFCS, Elgar Festival, Elgar Chorale as a way of drawing together friends and colleagues in our common 'praise of music' on this Saint's day.</i></p> <p><i>An informal opportunity to meet and chat over a cup of tea afterwards would be good too .....</i></p> <p>The first step is to ask the Cathedral if we can sing on St Cecilia's Day itself, and it was felt wise to have a back-up plan so we can offer other options to the cathedral if necessary.</p>	<p>LF, PB, SS, ?AR</p>
8	<p><b>Fundraising</b></p> <p>Formal thanks were given to KO for his very generous donation of £500 plus gift aid towards the concert costs. The choir had been briefed on the proposal to raise a matching £500, in view of risks and possible additional costs.</p> <p>It was confirmed that HR's e-mail had now gone out to the members, and she's already had several offers to run coffee mornings/help at a cathedral sale, and will liaise with these individuals directly. She will also liaise with the cathedral regarding possible post-service sale dates. HR was thanked for taking the initiative.</p> <p>PB suggested that any further discussion of future fundraising ideas should be taken in conjunction with consideration of our general vision for the choir beyond 2024, and would be best discussed by the whole committee in the first instance, before putting to others.</p> <p>The FAQs compiled by HR were discussed. HR explained that these were inspired by multiple comments/questions put to her by members of the choir. This would suggest that they may be relevant, but the idea was not received well by some of the committee and it resulted in some unnecessarily pointed remarks being made. As a result of these remarks HR was happy for them to be put to one side for now, but it may be that we need to revisit them in the future.</p>	<p>HR</p>
9	<p><b>Operational matters</b></p>	
9.1	<p><b>Cathedral Relations</b></p> <p>PB spoke to his report previously circulated on the meeting held with JP, SH and cathedral 's Operations and Finance Directors.</p> <p>It was confirmed that LF and Sam H should be the first points of contact for us and</p>	

	<p>the cathedral respectively for any new contacts/needs. This is to ensure that our requests were carried due weight with cathedral staff. Obviously if a link and working relationship has already been established this can be used as normal. Closer ties are to be encouraged, particularly regarding social media – making sure the cathedral share our posts and vice versa.</p> <p>There appeared to be a general feeling at the meeting that joint events in the future would be welcomed.</p> <p><b>Rehearsal Spaces</b></p> <p>9.2 We agreed that the mood from the choir suggested that we would like to use the Old Palace as our regular rehearsal space if possible. Eileen had already raised this as a question with the cathedral staff, and met with an ambivalent response, mainly as they can use the Old Palace as a revenue-generating venue and may not want to relinquish this every week.</p> <p>The idea that we could use it as a general rule, but vacate it if a revenue-generating event had booked it was suggested.</p> <p>LF will update Eileen regarding these thoughts, and she will liaise with the cathedral team.</p> <p><b>Library</b></p> <p>9.3 All in hand</p> <p><b>Social media/Publicity</b></p> <p>9.4 Photos (with consent) of any fundraising events would be welcomed to go on social media.</p> <p>It was confirmed that our carol service on the 19<sup>th</sup> is the Blue Light service, but will have a lower profile this year for various logistical reasons. It is however open to all.</p> <p><b>Website</b></p> <p>9.5 Nil new</p> <p><b>Membership</b></p> <p>9.6 KO and SS spoke to the briefing paper circulated prior to the meeting. There was some discussion about capping numbers, and SS confirmed that what he was suggesting was, as a one-off due to special circumstances, we go over our numbers by 1 soprano for the Spring and Summer terms to compensate for Sheila Davies' low expected attendance due to her house move, and to have a new soprano 'bedded in' before Sheila leaves in the summer. The other two sopranos who have been having their try-out sessions would, pending a successful audition, be on a waiting list. In the end this was voted on, with a majority of 9 in favour of allowing an extra soprano for the next two terms.</p> <p>Angela Smith is leaving at the end of this term, KO will get a card.</p> <p>After Christmas we will need to think about recruiting a new alto, tenor, and bass.</p>	<p>LF</p> <p>KO</p>
9	<p><b>Date of next meeting</b></p> <p>10/01/2024</p>	