

**WCCC Committee Meeting 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024 held in person and via Zoom**  
**Minutes**

**Present:** Sarah Donaldson, Liz Forman, Carole Oliver, Anne Renshaw, Stephen Shellard (via Zoom), Lynne Reekes (via Zoom) for part of item 4.3 pertaining to the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Social

Item		Action
1	<p><b>Welcome</b>  <b>Apologies;</b> John-Paul Hoskins</p> <p>SD explained that she has had 1-to-1 discussions with all members of the committee to check in with them/their current thoughts. (Apart from JPH who she has written to asking if he would like a meeting.)</p>	
2	<p><b>Minutes</b>  The minutes of the last meeting (11/09/24) were confirmed as a correct record.  The minutes of the SGM were confirmed as a correct record.  These are to be sent to MW for publication on the website.  The minutes of the AGM were approved in their draft form, to go forward for approval at the next AGM.</p>	LF
3	<p><b>Financial report</b>  CO's report submitted before the meeting was noted. A further 6 subscriptions have been received since, leaving only 4-5 due.  The ongoing frustration with the lack of communication from the cathedral and difficulties in confirming Gift Aid continues (about £3,000 outstanding for this).</p>	
4	<p><b>24/25 Events</b></p> <p>4.1 <b>Tidings of Joy Concert</b>  This has been confirmed for the 14<sup>th</sup> December. We are invited to take part in the second half of this, the first half will be performed by the other Cathedral Choirs only. WFCS members have also been invited to take part in the second half. There is not time for us to dedicate any rehearsal time to this music, ?might we be able to join a WFCS rehearsal if they are taking part too (AR – as a member of WFCS – was not sure when this might happen).  It was agreed that we would get a show of hands at our next rehearsal of who might be able to take part in this.</p> <p>4.2 <b>Carol Service on 17/12/24</b>  CO asked if we need to provide readers for this? JPH is the point of liaison with Worcester News (his contact is Julie Bolton – Julie.Bolton@midlands.newsquest.co.uk).</p> <p>4.3 <b>19/12/24 – Evesham Carol Service/Social</b>  All Saints, Evesham have cancelled our planned Carol Service. As this date is in everyone's diary, could we use this date for something else? Various options were discussed including a possible social, carol singing at Norton Grange, normal rehearsal.  It was agreed that we would have a short rehearsal (perhaps an hour or so), followed by a Christmas social.</p>	<p>SD</p> <p>JPH</p>

	Eileen to be asked to check that we can have College Hall for the evening.	LF
	The request to sing carols at Norton Grange pub was discussed. Given the short notice, lack of details, and unfamiliarity with the venue we didn't feel we could do this either on the 23 <sup>rd</sup> , the 19 <sup>th</sup> or any other date this year, but we might be open to doing something there in the future. LF will contact the pub regarding this.	LF
4.4	<b>14/06/25 – Himbleton Concert</b> The origins of this concert were discussed. It was originally set up pre-covid as 'Vivaldi and Vino'. The current date has been in the diary for 18 months. Given everything else that we have coming up, SD wondered whether we could turn this into an evensong. It was unclear what length/repertoire etc was expected by the church. CO hasn't spoken to her contact there for several months, so agreed she will go back to them to see what their thoughts are. 'A Journey through Evensong' was suggested as a possible title/framework.	CO
4.5	<b>AGM</b> It was agreed that we would schedule this for June/July time for 2025. The AGM was pushed back to September/October a couple of years ago as we were waiting for accounts, but it would make more sense for it to be held at the end of academic year even if this means that the accounts need to be presented in draft form.	
4.6	<b>Strategic Planning</b> SD explained her thoughts behind having a 3 year plan for the choir, both in terms of events, and vision/ethos, looking at attracting new singers of an appropriate calibre, and also invitations to sing at various appropriate events.  AR spoke to SD's plan/brief, explaining that we should have one 'big' event per year, for example an orchestral concert, a concert with organ accompaniment (which could be duplicated as outreach), a tour, a recording etc. Perhaps these sorts of events need to be on a rota? There are also regular events such as 3 Choirs/the Elgar Festival built in. A more structured year plan would make it easier for new chairs/treasurers etc something to start from.  SD, AR and SS will form a subgroup to discuss this further and discuss a structure.  SS suggested an annual Come and Sing event as both a fundraiser and to increase awareness. It was pointed out that there are already quite a lot of Come and Sing events in existence in the County.	
4.7	<b>Possible Tour</b> We discussed the tour suggested by Benedict Coleman. In theory tours are good for bonding etc, but there were concerns raised about cost, timing, actual plan etc. We weren't sure whether we could really commit to a tour for October 2025. It might be easier/cheaper to go to a different UK cathedral as a first step.	SD/AR/SS
4.8	<b>3 Choirs Chamber Events</b> It has been suggested that we should arrange a joint event (service/concert) with	

	<p>the Chamber Choirs at Gloucester and Hereford mirroring the 3 Choirs Festival. SS has discussed this with his counterparts in Gloucester and Hereford with a view to starting this in Worcester in 2027.</p> <p>AR has also had a discussion with Jonathan Hope suggesting that we arrange this as an event distinct from the 3 Choirs Festival, start off with a Festive Evensong, but with the possibility of building on this in the future.</p> <p>KO to be invited to next meeting to update us re Westminster Abbey.</p>	
5	<p><b>Committee Structure</b> Various roles are already well-embedded, but there are a couple that need to be sorted out.</p> <p><b>Social Media</b> Laura Moss was going to take this on but has now said that she can't due to pressure at work. Clive had also volunteered to help, although may not be able to do this full time. SD had agreed that she will continue to run the social media for the next few weeks to take the pressure off Laura, and review things with her in a few weeks to see if she feels more able to take it on. If not she will go back to Clive.</p> <p><b>First Aider</b> It would be sensible for us to have a First Aider, particularly given the older demographic of the choir. SD is having a meeting with Sam Hudson shortly, and will ask if the cathedral have First Aid courses we can access. We need to ask the choir if there is someone who is already a First Aider who would be willing to hold that role for the choir, or if there is someone willing to be trained as one.</p> <p>Again the importance of communication with those holding supporting roles was emphasised. LF will continue to e-mail prior to committee meetings, but face-to-face check-ins are also important.</p>	<p>SD</p> <p>SD</p> <p>LF</p>
6	<p><b>Cathedral Liaison</b> Various meetings are lined up: CO/SD with Sam Poursain SD with Sam Hudson Aim is to move forward with improved relationships rather than looking backwards too much.</p> <p><b>6.1 Fobs for access to Song School</b> We feel that SS and the Librarian need general access to the Song School with the safeguarding/DBS requirements that that involves. AN Other – currently Carole – needs a fob for access for rehearsals/services etc, and they wouldn't necessarily need full safeguarding/DBS clearance as the choristers wouldn't be there at those times. There would be an argument for two people having access in this way so that we're not totally reliant on one person being present on all occasions. It was pointed out that Mark and Robin both have fobs through their roles as bellringers. SD will reply to Kimberley Bohan (Safeguarding officer for the cathedral) re this.</p>	<p>SD</p>

6.2	<p><b>Policies</b></p> <p>LF has contacted Sam Hudson re policies, he's replied saying that we can have the Safeguarding policy, but is asking for more detail re other policies.</p> <p>It was agreed that we could do with the complaints policy so that we know what would happen if someone complained to the Cathedral about us. Also Risk Assessments/Health and Safety Policies for the spaces we use, and the location of the nearest First Aid kit and defibrillator.</p> <p>LF will go back to Sam Hudson with more detail as above.</p>	LF
7	<p><b>Membership</b></p> <p>7.1 KO's update was discussed, along with the further update LF had received prior to the meeting – Chiffon has completed her 3 trial sessions and has an audition lined up, Vitor is keen to continue but missed a rehearsal due to family problems.</p> <p>It was pointed out that if SS is looking for 1 more to each voice part then that takes us to 40 which is big for a chamber choir. SS's plans were discussed. It was pointed out that it is rare that we get 100% attendance, and people do pull out at the last minute on occasion which can make planning difficult. When Available does help with this and with planning however.</p> <p>The 'ideal' complement was discussed, SS agreed that he wouldn't want to go beyond 40 at most, but likes having a cushion to help when attendance is poor.</p> <p>7.2 Re-auditioning was discussed, SS has been looking at this. General agreement that this should be done after Westminster Abbey.</p> <p>There needs to be a proper process, and sufficient time allowed for it, rather than just trying to squeeze it in around rehearsals. An appropriate space needs to be found too, where people won't be interrupted.</p> <p>SS keen to do it in sectional blocks, ie all S1's on one Saturday, S2's on another etc. Contingency needed for those who can't make a particular Saturday. SS is not able to do auditions before rehearsals as he doesn't finish teaching until 7pm.</p> <p>AR suggested that we should be on a rolling programme, auditioning everyone every 3 years or so similar to WFCs/3 Choirs Festival Chorus. Also suggested that it might be better to start the process earlier in the year.</p> <p>SS asked to produce a briefing note for the next committee meeting outlining his thoughts regarding target/ideal make-up of the choir in terms of numbers, and his thoughts on the re-auditioning process with some suggested dates.</p> <p>LF asked whether if people do drop below 70% attendance this is discussed (as per ToR of the choir). It is as a general rule, and often there good reasons for this. KO to be asked to provide a report regarding that for the next meeting (CO will mention it, but LF will e-mail formally).</p>	<p>SS</p> <p>CO/LF</p>
8	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>8.1 The Elgar Festival was discussed, LF to send round the e-mail forwarded by AR, with an emphasis on members joining the EFC where possible to maintain our relationship with the Festival.</p> <p>We should also mention it at a rehearsal in the next week or two.</p>	LF

8.2	Judith contacted LF in January to say that the Christmas tree and decorations may need refreshing as the tree is smaller than the current permitted size. We will ask the choir first if anyone has a tree we could use that's a decent size and in good condition, otherwise we agreed to buy a new one.	
9	<b>Date of next meeting: 1400 on 20/11/24 at LF's house</b>  Further dates were discussed: 29/01/25 05/03/25 (NB This is Ash Wednesday)	