

The Stondon Singers

CIO 1154435

Trustees' Report

1.1.18 – 31.12.18

Trustees' Report

The Trustees present the Trustees' Report and Financial Statements for the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018, this year seeing the 50th anniversary of the founding of the choir. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies and comply with the charity's constitution and applicable law.

Administration details

The principal address of the charity is currently Silver Birch, Greensted Green, Ongar CM5 9LF

The Trustees - Elected at AGM

Nick Alston	Chairman and Concert Manager
Marjolein Hillman	Secretary
Josephine Gordon	Treasurer
Annabel Malton	Librarian
Phil Holmes	Website and Ticket Sales
Faith Marchal	PR and Patrons' Secretary
Chris Bradbury	

The management committee

The Trustees and Christopher Tinker (Conductor)

Accounts Adviser

Richard Eason

Structure, governance and management

The Stondon Singers was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) on 1 November 2013 and is governed by a constitution adopted with amendments on 9 September 2014.

Trustees are elected at each Annual General Meeting to serve until the close of the next Annual General Meeting and are eligible for re-election.

Objectives

The objectives of The Stondon Singers are to promote, improve, develop and maintain public education in the appreciation of the art and science of choral music in all its aspects by the presentation of public choral concerts and by such other ways as the members, through the Trustees, shall determine from time to time.

Activities

The Stondon Singers is a mixed chamber choir, currently resident at the Priory Church of St Laurence, Blackmore. The choir enjoys considerable critical acclaim and performs several concerts a year. Although initially formed to sing the music of William Byrd, the choir of about 25 singers now performs a wide-ranging repertoire, whilst remaining committed to choral music of the Renaissance. The requirements for prospective new members are good sight reading skills, sufficient confidence to hold a line with only a small number of singers and the opportunity to work on the music at home. There is an informal audition for all new members, and voice reviews may be conducted from time to time for the whole choir. Weekly rehearsals take place in The Priory Church of St Laurence, Blackmore, Essex CM4 0RN, on Tuesday evenings 7.45-10.00 pm.

The success of The Stondon Singers is underpinned by a committed membership with a range of musical expertise, a professional Director of Music and the support of patrons and friends. The choir is accordingly able to undertake exciting and ambitious choral programmes.

Achievements and Performance

During this 50th Anniversary year, the Stondon Singers celebrated with four concerts. The conductor and committee aimed to devise interesting programmes blending familiar works with those which are less well known. Audience numbers continued to improve.

(i) Concerts

10 March 2018, 7.30 pm, 'Bach's St John Passion', Chelmsford Cathedral

A major concert in celebration of the choir's 50th anniversary with six soloists and accompanied by the John Jenkins Consort.

3 July 2018, 8.00 pm, 'William Byrd Anniversary Concert', Church of SS Peter & Paul

Stondon Massey.

An a cappella concert with music by William Byrd and his contemporaries.

13 November 2018, 8.00 pm, 'Celebrating English Music', Church of St Michael and All Angels

Galleywood.

This concert, accompanied by organist Laurence Lyndon-Jones, featured music by English composers including Vaughan Williams, Britten, Purcell, Stanford, Holst and Rutter.

18 December 2018, 8.00 pm, 'Christmas at Blackmore', The Priory Church of St Laurence Blackmore.

A varied programme with choral pieces and audience carols, with accompaniment by organist Michael Frith and harpist Gwenllian Llŷr.

(ii) Additional choral opportunities

16 February 2018, 12.30 pm, 'Lunchtime concert', Chelmsford Cathedral (by invitation).

21 April 2018, 5.00 pm, Choral Evensong, St Edmundsbury Cathedral, accompanied by John Cooper.

12 May 2018, 10.00 am, Choral Workshop, led by Ralph Allwood MBE, Church of St Michael and All Angels, Galleywood.

Public benefit

The Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance in deciding on the activities the choir undertakes. Activities for the public benefit can be demonstrated by:

- maintenance of a website
- the provision of detailed programme notes for each concert and / or an explanation of the works during the concert by the conductor
- discounted subscriptions for under 25s and tickets at reduced prices for children
- lending of music to other choirs
- participating in events organised by Brentwood Arts Council
- organising workshops for singers
- providing a choir for weddings as requested
- commissioning and performing the work of contemporary composers

Financial review

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the choir. Finances are discussed at all meetings. This enables the Trustees to ascertain the financial position of the choir and to ensure that the accounts comply with the Charities legislation. The Trustees are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The choir finances itself by membership contributions, payable on an annual basis and agreed at an annual general meeting, and concert proceeds from sales of tickets and programmes.

Other sources of income include:

- gift aid from donations and from members' contributions
- contributions from patrons
- one-off donations from individuals to sponsor a particular event or commission a work for the choir
- advertising revenue
- any surplus from workshops run by the choir
- revenue from hiring our music to other choirs
- revenue from weddings

The choir's direct income funds the full cost of running the choir and makes a contribution towards covering the net cost of concerts in the event of a loss.

Income for the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018 totalled £14,485.02

Expenditure amounted to £15,756.60

Loss for the year was £1,271.58

On 31 December 2018, The Stondon Singers had a cash balance of £20,510.79

held in the following accounts:

National Westminster Bank £12,570.22

COIF Account £588.63

Virgin Charity Account £7,351.94

A summary of the accounts is shown in Appendix 1.

Reserves policy

Reserves are held to help fund major concerts and to acquire and maintain assets.

Risk management

The Trustees have a responsibility to identify, assess and manage risks. They keep abreast of legislation which may affect charities through the Charities Commission website and through the 'Making Music' organisation to which the choir is affiliated. They ensure that the choir complies with copyright and performing rights law. The choir's insurance is arranged through 'Making Music'.

Policies

The choir has policies regarding Vetting, Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Data Protection. Policies are reviewed annually and current policies may be viewed on the choir's website www.stondonsingers.org.uk.

Future Plans

The following concerts and events are planned for 2019.

23 March 2019, 7.30 pm, 'Reflection and Hope', The Priory Church of St Laurence, Blackmore.

2 July 2019, 8.00 pm, 'William Byrd Anniversary Concert', Church of SS Peter & Paul,
Stondon Massey

12 November 2019, 8.00 pm, 'Autumn Concert', Church of St Michael and All Angels, Galleywood

17 December 2019, 8.00 pm, 'Christmas at Blackmore', The Priory Church of St Laurence,
Blackmore.

Approved by the Trustees