



ANNUAL REPORT

**To be presented at the Annual General Meeting
26 November 2020, 7.45pm**

Via Zoom

1. Legal and Administrative Information

<i>Registered charity number</i>	900317
<i>Principal address</i>	1 Acre End Close Eynsham Witney OX29 4AB
<i>Trustees and Officers</i>	Philip Booth (Chair) Kirsten Smith (Treasurer) Alison Jones (Secretary) Jean-Louis Metzger (Webmaster) Jackie Weaver (Membership Secretary) Nicky Boughton (Concert Co-ordinator) Vreni Booth (Social Secretary) Marie Bridge (Front of House/Publicity) Simon Wratten (Librarian)
<i>Music Director</i>	Duncan Saunderson
<i>Accompanist</i>	Julian Littlewood
<i>Governing document</i>	The Constitution of Summertown Choral Society 2016
<i>Bankers</i>	Nat West Bank, Oxford COIF Charities Deposit Fund 85 Queen Victoria Street, London EC4V 4ET
<i>Independent examiner</i>	Jacqueline Bowman 2B Sandfield Road Headington Oxford OX3 7RG

Objectives (from clause 2 of the Constitution)

The aims of the Society shall be to educate the public in the Art and Science of Music by the rehearsal of choral music, the presentation of public concerts and other charitable activities.

2. Treasurer's report

As in the previous year, the finances of Summertown Choral Society remain extremely healthy despite, or perhaps because of, the pandemic which has so changed the operation of the Choir. As always, we try to maintain a healthy reserve fund of at least £12,000 to allow for special contingencies. This year we anticipated spending a substantial amount on upgrading the website, but thanks to the networking abilities of our now Chair, and his contacts in the USA, we achieved an enormous improvement in the site at the very low cost of under £700. We are anticipating, in the event that we are ever able to return to the church for our weekly rehearsals, a capital outlay to purchase some extra heating, although any progress on this scheme has to meet with the approval of the Church.

We have kept our finances very healthy due to two factors. A record-breaking sell-out concert of Bach's B minor mass in February 2020 (how long ago that now seems) and no loss-making concert in June, due to Covid restrictions.

During the restrictions, from March until the end of the term, we continued to pay Julian and Duncan and also St Michael's. Despite this, we ended the financial year in a healthy position, with reserves of over £19,000. That has enabled us to offer much reduced subscriptions for the year 2020/2021, or at least for the winter term, in recognition of the drop in quality of the experience, but all credit to those who have worked so hard to achieve an ever improving quality in the Zoom sessions. We also provided free sheet music in the face of practical difficulties of hiring and distributing the music, gratefully helped in this by the positive response to the invitation to donate an offered subscription refund on last summer term's subscription.

And thanks are due also to our Independent Examiner, Jacqueline Bowman, for once again auditing our accounts this year.

Membership figures were almost the same in this year as in 2018-19, again perhaps attracted by the programme for the winter. The prices of tickets, programmes and the request for donations for refreshments appear to be pitched at a good level and do not need revisiting. Fingers crossed for our next concert.

Kirsten Smith
Treasurer
October 2020

SCS Accounts 2019-2020

	2018- 2019	2019- 20	2018- 2019	2019- 2020	2018- 2019	2019- 2020
	TERM 1	TERM 1	TERM 2	TERM 2	TOTALS	TOTALS
Receipts						
Subscriptions	13,120.00	12,890.00	2,955.00	3,170.00	16,075.00	16,060.00
Concert Tickets	3,762.14	4,287.69	1,894.56		5,656.70	4,287.69
Gift Aid				3,106.82		3,106.82
Concert Refreshments	289.90	369.00	219.00		508.90	369.00
Programme Sales	301.80	220.00			301.80	220.00
CD Sales and Music Hire						
Bank Interest	41.16	47.34	49.82	19.36	90.98	66.70
Advertising						
Misc.	10.00	50.00	5.00		15.00	50.00
Total Receipts	1,752.50	17,864.03	5,095.62	6,296.18	22,620.62	24,160.21
Payments						
<i>Rehearsal:</i>						
Professional Fees	3996.42	4208.25	3284.67	3223.64	7281.09	7,431.89
Hire of Hall	560.00	665.00	525.00	490.00	1085.00	1,155.00
Music Purchase/Hire/Printing	526.00	402.46	943.02	708.45	1469.02	1,110.91
Total Rehearsal:	5,082.42	5,275.71	4,752.69	4,422.09	9,835.11	9,697.80
<i>Concerts:</i>						
Soloists and Instrumentalists	6,033.95	7,577.05	2,610.00		8,643.95	7,577.05
Hall and Staging	923.16	943.66	548.16		1,471.32	943.66
Refreshments, Gifts for soloists	311.64	374.70	182.82		494.46	374.70
Commissioning Music	1,000.00		1,000.00		2,000.00	
Printing, publicity, programmes	884.66	928.36	715.31		1,599.97	928.36
Total Concert:	9,153.41	9,823.77	5,056.29		14,209.70	9,823.77
<i>Administration:</i>						
Stationary, postage, photocopying	108.33	20.00			108.33	20.00
Additional/replacement music			19.90		19.90	
Social	205.42	205.03	29.30	107.86	234.72	312.89
Independent Examination						
Subscription: Making Music	407.00	407.00			407.00	407.00
John Fletcher		220.00				220.00
Sundry, Web		612.76	100.00	200.00	100.00	812.76
Total Administration:	720.75	1464.79	149.20	307.86	869.95	1,772.65
Total Payments:	14,956.58	16,564.27	9,958.18	4,729.95	24,914.76	21,294.22
NET	2,568.42	1,299.76	-4,862.56	1,566.23	-2,294.14	2,865.99

Cash Funds brought forward	16,657.57
Surplus/Net	2,865.99
Cash funds brought forward	19,523.56

**Statement of Assets and Liabilities July 31st 2018-
30th July 2019**

31st 2019- 30th July 2020

Cash funds	<u>2018-2019</u>	<u>2019-2020</u>
Gift Aid (added late)	3,074.08	
CCLA Account	10,124.85	13,191.55
NatWest Account	3,491.64	6,177.01
Cash		155.00
Total Assets	16,657.57	19,523.56
Available Assets		<u>19,523.56</u>

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the **Summertown Choral Society**

I report on the accounts of the Summertown Choral Society for the year ended 31 July 20

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (The 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- *examine the accounts under section 43 of the 1993 Act;
- *to follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity;
- *to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

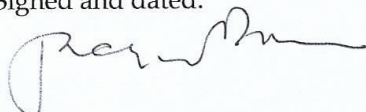
My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - * to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the 1993 Act; and
 - * to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Acthave not been met; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed and dated:



22.10.2020

28 Sandfield Rd
Hedington OX3 7RG

3. Report from the Chair

It can seem as if there is nothing to write about this year, because the choir's activities came to a brutal halt on March 12 when we had our last rehearsal (for the historical record: because of the coronavirus). And yet we performed Bach's B minor Mass to a full house on February 1. And we had already got well into our next term's rehearsals for the programme of French Romantic Choral Music planned for June 6 and were able to sing a pretty decent, and certainly rousing, full version of the Vierne *Messe Solennelle* at that last rehearsal on March 12. We then fell silent for some months, bar the occasional email alerting members to various online singing activities. The Summertown Singers' trip to Porto had to be cancelled (later rescheduled for 2021). Then, as the situation changed, we decided to fire up again at the start of the term and take on the challenge of online rehearsals, aided by Zoom, now a common feature in many people's lives.

The format of the online rehearsals has changed to try to provide something more akin to a real rehearsal where others singing can be heard. The choir acquired some audio equipment to help in this and we are very grateful to Sally Prime (soprano) for managing this, both in the 'tweaking' process and the weekly rehearsals.

Apart from trying to provide sound that members would enjoy listening to, we have tried to mould the format to accommodate for its being online, but also to accommodate the varied singing abilities of choir members. Duncan has also introduced some, note-wise, relatively simple shorter pieces alongside the Brahms *Requiem*: so far the Rheinberger *Abendlied* and two Bach pieces, *O Jesu Christ, mein's Lebens Licht* and the chorale from *Wachet Auf*. We have been grateful for members' feedback throughout this process.

Of course, we are keeping abreast of what the Government allows as regards gatherings of singers, as well as noting what other choirs are doing. Individual churches vary in what they allow and St Michael's is restricting singers to 12 and only in the North nave where we currently Zoom the rehearsal from. If this changes or the overall situation changes we will certainly reconsider our plans promptly. But for the time being we envisage a somewhat lengthy period of online singing.

On the positive side, the other important change this year is that we first updated and then completely revised our website. We have been helped in this by Paul Crim, an American living in Los Angeles, who masterminded the search for a new template and its setting up, at very modest cost to us. He has also been willing to be on hand for any future technical difficulties. Based on Wordpress, however, the new site can be managed without the need to know HTML code and so can be managed locally most of the time. It is hoped that members are now consulting it more than the old one. We have expanded it, particularly the Members menu, and kept it up-to-date, from week to week, so that members can rely on it as a source of information. This has made it possible to shorten the weekly email by providing links to the website. To this end we have moved our mailing list to Mailchimp, which allows for clearer formatting.

The other item of importance is heating at St Michael's. We unearthed two radiant heaters the church had stored away and this has made life more tolerable for (some) members. We made our own enquiries and liaised with the church about what more could be done. The very good news is that the church has now accepted the principle of radiant heaters on the pillars. This, in our view, is an excellent solution. They have costed it, but, because of the coronavirus and loss of income, cannot make it a priority right now. We have, however, reiterated our

willingness to make a contribution to the cost, as an important user of the church and as members of the local community, and we will continue to support the church's plans. We take the view that, whether you are warm-blooded or cold-blooded, Spartan or Lucullian (well, that's what Google offered me, though I realize I am mixing my Greeks and my Romans), you shouldn't have to sing in a cold church. There is no desire at this point to solve the problem by moving to another (warmer) church.

I would like to say how much I have enjoyed my first year of chair. It has been a pleasure to work with the committee: they are an enthusiastic group who, importantly, for me and us all, are very efficient. Some of them will have to retire from the committee at the end of next year – our constitution limits membership of the committee to five years – so do start thinking about whether you would like to take over a role. We realize that this is not everyone's cup of tea, but if you like organising with a group and have the time from other commitments, do get in touch. We will give out details nearer the time.

Our thanks, finally, go to Duncan, who not only took us to a memorable performance of the *B minor Mass*, but has been determined since to keep the choir alive and singing, with his enthusiasm for online rehearsals. And our thanks also to Julian, for his hard work at rehearsals and his continued commitment to the choir, as well as to the army of helpers who contributed to the smooth running of the concert in February.

Philip Booth
Chair
26 October 2020