

Whitehall Choir Committee
 MINUTES of the
 meeting held on 11 May 2015
 St Stephen's Rochester Row 6.30pm

Present: Jonathan Williams (Chair), Patrick Haighton (Treasurer), Joanna Tomlinson (Secretary), Ruth Eastman (Publicity), Richard Grafen (Webmaster), Martin Humphreys (Publicity), Penny Prior (Business Manager), Alastair Tolley (Tenor Rep)

Apologies: Paul Spicer, Kate Goulden, Mark Graver, Daniel Lambauer, Alison Williams

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
Minutes 16/3/15	<p>Rehearsal venue: rehearsals would move to St Peter's Eaton Square in September 2015. The cost would be higher. Need to work out how to let in latecomers. JW thanked JT/PH</p> <p>Auditions: had been completed. PS had given individual email feedback to each member. He was fairly comfortable with the results.</p>	
Finances (PH)	<p>2 items tabled.</p> <p>2015: We should finish the year with a modest surplus, depending on July ticket sales. PH greatly disappointed by ticket sales at the last SJSS concert. The main body of St John's seats 500 and we sold 274. How to improve this was a major issue. Sales did not appear to be price sensitive. Repayment to the Jubilee Fund would at best be nominal: he hoped to pay something to show willing and put in any surplus from the July concert. He suggested that choir members should give contact names in order to build a database. Other choirs insist on the sale of 2 tickets per singer in order to be allowed to sing in the concert: he was not in favour of this approach. MH suggested emailing directly those people who regularly fail to sell any tickets.</p> <p>2016: next year, with increased rehearsal costs and the possible loss of the printing concession from BIS there could be a £2,000 loss.</p> <p>Recruitment: PH said that 3/4 people were under 26 yrs old and paying lower subs: should there be a lower rate for under-30s also? MH thought it more effective to do things for the community of Whitehall eg get sponsorship to offer free tickets to the under-20s/over 65s. AT thought younger choir members might appreciate a more active social life within the choir.</p> <p>Welcome Pack: this could include notes on the importance of ticket sales and attendance at Come & Sings.</p> <p>Printing Costs: We would need 3 quotes for printing if we had to go elsewhere. On the whole the smaller programme had been well received. MH was in discussion with Gesa Brinkman about a possible sponsor for printing. Far fewer flyers could be produced.</p> <p>Subs: PH proposed to leave the cost of subscriptions unaltered or merely nominal to reflect inflation.</p> <p>Future concerts: SJSS had almost doubled in price over the last two years. The Banqueting House keep all the income from ticket sales and we bear the costs of professionals and music hire. We needed a Come & Sing event (or two) with a proper return.</p>	MH

	<p>AGM presentation: The Committee thought that graphics would help put forward the figures and grab attention. JW thought that the important facts to get across were the pressure points and the budget for next year. PH answered one or two questions on his figures.</p>	PH
<p>Review: 2 April 2015 Mozart & Schubert</p>	<p>Musically very good. Sales disappointing. JW reported that the standard of the performance had been compromised by the loss of 20 minutes while the choir organised itself. This must <u>not</u> happen again. Poor discipline. Apart from the vital loss of rehearsal time which affected both the choir and the soloists, every minute is very costly. Another error was that the men in the orchestra were not dressed in the same way as the men in the choir. This had been a communication error, also not to be repeated.</p>	
<p>9 July 2015: Vaughan Williams St Peter's Eaton Square</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It was agreed that RE would organise a photographer to take pictures of the choir in concert dress under the portico at 5.30pm. ● A banner could be put up outside the church ● There would be no interval. ● Drinks would not be included in the ticket but donations would be requested ● The copy deadline for the Pimlico and Belgravia Eye was 20 May. It was agreed to try an advert and editorial in this rather than use the national newspapers. ● MH suggested adding an offer of a free drink to those bringing the ad. with them to celebrate the choir's new rehearsal venue in the area ● Programme sellers needed. PH suggested creating a list of permanent volunteers (followers of the choir rather than singers) to help. JW would ask the choir ● The programme would cost £2 (which does not cover the real cost) - if the concession was lost we would need to simplify and reduce them ● 3 parking spaces for PS/MG and PH ● CDs for sale (JT check this ok) 	<p>RE</p> <p>PH/MH</p> <p>MH</p> <p>RE/MH</p> <p>JW</p> <p>PH/JT JT</p>
<p>17 November 2015: Athalia: SJSS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Needed to check whether have enough choral scores and which edition to be used ● Did we want to pay £350 for the SJSS mailing? The details were already in their programme. Is this money well spent? PH would ask Richard Heason what he thought. The contract had not yet been signed. ● JW/MH suggested promoting the concert through Handel House Museum. PS could perhaps give a lecture on Athalia? They also do Come & Sings for Handel choruses. ● There was ample scope for creative marketing of this relatively unknown but beautiful work ● SJSS also now requested a 200 word description of concerts for internet use. Paul would be asked to write this. ● It was important to have the soloists lined up asap. PS had been considering using a more experienced line-up but this would increase the cost considerably and would ticket sales be improved? PS had agreed with PH to spend money on preparing the soloists. ● JW would suggest that the soloists be rehearsed before the choir arrives 	<p>MG</p> <p>PH/JT</p> <p>JW/MH/ PS</p> <p>JT/PS</p> <p>PS</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JW would ask for a choir volunteer to make a video for Youtube 	JW
Choir Tour to Vienna May 2016	<p>The Viennese choir had proposed singing Frank Martin's Double Mass. Our March 2016 concert needed to reflect the tour.</p> <p>The 2nd deposit had been paid. There were 2/3 extra places in the hope that more people will sign up. PH to chase those who were making their own way there to ask them to pay for their share of the professional costs.</p>	PS PH
Choir Strategy: plan for plenary discussion with members	<p>JW tabled a draft piece for the Newsletter addressing Choir Development and progress thus far. PS wanted to address the choir himself. It was decided to use some of the rehearsal time on May 16th for this. MH volunteered to lead break out groups during the tea break over the next few weeks to discuss topics and give everyone a voice. All this to be drawn together at the AGM.</p>	PS MH
Forward Concert Planning	<p>Carol Concert 2015: St Peter's Eaton Square, Monday 14th December</p> <p>March 2016: Suggested programme from PS</p> <p>Summer 2016: Part-songs</p> <p>November 2016: The Creation</p> <p>Possible venues: St Alban the Martyr; St Paul's Knightsbridge; Holy Trinity Sloane Square; St Peter's Eaton Square; St James' Piccadilly for summer.</p>	JT
AOB	Ruth would design a new recruitment flyer	RE

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

Next Committee Meeting: Monday 29th June
Please note that this one week later than previously arranged