

Whitehall Choir Committee  
 MINUTES of the  
 meeting held on 14 September 2015  
 St Peter's Eaton Square

**Present:** Jonathan Williams (Chair), Paul Spicer (Music Director), Patrick Haighton (Treasurer), Joanna Tomlinson (Secretary), Julie Dyg (Alto Rep), Kate Goulden (Soprano Rep), Richard Grafen (Webmaster), Martin Humphreys (Publicity), Daniel Lambauer (Bass Rep), Penny Prior (Business Manager), Alastair Tolley (Tenor Rep)

**Apologies:** Mark Graver

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
Minutes: Matters Arising	<p>JW thanked PH/JT for the new venue and welcomed Julie Dyg as the new alto rep.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deb Dowdall had agreed to coordinate support for front of house from the choir and their friends/family to work with Jacky Haighton. It was necessary now to make this work in practice.</li> <li>• All BIS printing was now outsourced and needed a project code and budget. JW had thus far not had a response from BIS and would send a letter to try to get a project number for the choir.</li> <li>• The photographer in July took 1000s of photos. Many were not usable but there was some good material which JW would put on a DVD for Richard to use on the website and for future publicity.</li> <li>• Bob Porter continued to ask for repertoire that we don't have (eg Rachmaninoff Vespers), but it is encouraging that he is still asking!</li> <li>• In a few weeks RG would be ready with a new design for the website at which point input from choir members would be useful.</li> <li>• There had not been a print run of the new Recruitment Flyer. A need to decide how to use it. MH suggested a short print run to be placed in specific locations eg BIS/Morley College</li> </ul>	<p>JW/PH/JT</p> <p>JW</p> <p>JW</p> <p>RG/MH</p>
Choir Tour: Vienna: 28 April-2 May 2016	<p><b>The second concert:</b> the choir had been invited to sing a couple of anthems at the evening service (Mass) One anthem probably a capella at the front of the church and one from the organ gallery. The concert would follow.</p> <p><b>Rehearsals:</b> the Vienna choir's rehearsal space could be used</p> <p><b>Social programme:</b> needed to be finalised. Friday morning probably organised programme in Vienna; Saturday free day; Sunday the day in the Wachau Valley for 2nd concert. Evening meals would be arranged: easier to opt out of a plan rather than finding somewhere for 25 people to eat at the last minute.</p> <p><b>PS</b> to talk further with Thomas about the programming</p> <p><b>Time of Bus:</b> needed to be finalised soon</p> <p><b>PH to resolve</b> various cost issues</p> <p><b>Tour company:</b> now needed information. JW to start work on this. There were 3 spare spaces: new members might be interested amongst others. JW thanked DL for his work on the Tour.</p>	<p>JW/DL</p> <p>PS</p> <p>JW/DL</p> <p>PH</p> <p>JW</p>
Finances (PH) Report 2014/15	<p>PH tabled the Draft Annual Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was agreed to leave in the wording that the choir was grateful to BIS for their support as they had supported for half the year</li> <li>• Jubilee Fund: PH wanted to transfer £2,000 back into the Fund</li> </ul>	

<p>Budget: Concerts &amp; Events 2015/16</p>	<p>(£6,000 had been borrowed) - fairly low risk. It would not lead to cash problems which would arise, if at all, in Spring 2016. The April 2016 concert would be cheaper than Spring 2015 at St John's.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The year was £300 under break-even point.</li> </ul> <p>The Committee was happy for the Report to be submitted to the Independent Examiner.</p> <p>PH tabled a budget for 2015/16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>His audience figures were a target: Athalia 400; Holy Trinity 250; St James's 250 - within reach, but slightly higher than recent experience.</li> <li>A concert costs about £3,500 and an orchestra adds another £5-6,000.</li> <li>Concert revenues were defined by audience numbers and the ticket prices: £25 etc. at SJSS, £12 for the carols, £15 for HTSS and St James's, netting £17, £12, £14 respectively.</li> <li>A small surplus was estimated for the non-orchestral concerts.</li> <li>The estimated SJSS shortfall of £5-6,000 was subsidised from choir subscription income.</li> <li>Come &amp; Sings/Workshops/Tours should be self-supporting</li> </ul> <p><b>Printing Costs:</b> printing costs of £500 per concert were unsustainable. Could print half the amount of programmes/have simpler programmes/subsidise programmes. The change from A4 to A5 hadn't much affected price. PS thought it important to have an excellent programme for such concerts as Athalia, with the full text etc. but could scale back for smaller concerts (eg the length of biographies, particularly his!). DL suggested putting the programmes on the website. JW would look into the ratio of text to cost.</p> <p><b>Management accounts:</b> were in reasonably good surplus</p> <p><b>Ticket prices:</b> The committee felt that £15 was a reasonable price for an amateur choir in a church, and that higher prices could be counterproductive. In future PH suggested thinking about ticket prices at the same time as booking venues. JW pointed out the possibility of charging a lower price for the side aisles at St Peter's in future (eg £15/£12).</p> <p><b>It was agreed</b> to pay back £2,000 to the Jubilee Fund.</p> <p><b>It was agreed</b> to charge £15 for the Holy Trinity Concert in April and for the St James's concert in July</p>	<p>PH</p> <p>JW</p>
<p>Review of St Peter's Eaton Square: 9 July</p>	<p>A very successful concert. Good venue. Good organ. Good sightlines. Terrific soloist.</p>	
<p>17 November 2015: Athalia SJSS</p>	<p><b>Flyer:</b> JW reported that after some years, Ruth Eastman had stepped down from her role in publicity so in the short term there was no one to design flyers. JW started the ball rolling on flyer design for Athalia and design and wording was discussed. Once a picture had been chosen Laurie could do the artwork. It was too late to get into the October issue of the Pimlico &amp; Belgrave Eye. Proofs needed to be approved by St John's. JW would seek choir members who were interested in design to help in the future.</p> <p><b>Interview for YouTube:</b> MH happy to do a 4 minute video with Paul about Athalia with short musical extracts. Beth Organ had mentioned someone who could do the editing (Tony Piper edited the last one).</p> <p><b>MH</b> asked for a comp. for Hugh Canning, music critic on the Sunday Times.</p> <p><b>Orchestral scores:</b> Peter McCarthy's scores or modern Barenreiter scores? PS would contact Barenreiters and Peter and decide.</p> <p><b>Absences</b> from rehearsal: referral to PS at 3 missed rehearsals.</p>	<p>JW/MH</p> <p>MH</p> <p>JT</p> <p>PS</p>

Monday 14 December 2015: Christmas concert St Peter's	It would be nice to find someone with "a bit of a name" to do all the readings which tended to be ad hoc and often not very audible. PH had some contacts. Refreshments could not be served in church. It was agreed therefore that refreshments would not be offered, though JT would talk to the Verger about possibilities. It was agreed that, if St Peter's were content, £3 of an entry price of £15 would be donated to the Samaritans and £12 shared between the choir and St Peter's. This followed from a suggestion from Samaritans via Jacky Erwteman that the choir hold an event for them. Flyer design for concert needed.	PH/All  JT
21 April 2016: Holy Trinity Sloane Square	JD pointed out the 21 April would be the Queen's 90th birthday (actual not official). PS to finalise the programme with the Tour in mind. MG would need to know final programme asap.	PS
14 July 2016: St James's Piccadilly	PS had drawn up two draft programmes: one English Part Songs and one on a French theme. He preferred the French programme and this was agreed. A mezzo sop would be needed and could be a student. Refreshments/dress could perhaps follow a celebratory French theme. Ideas?	All
22 November 2016: Creation SJSS	PS had recently attended a very good performance of Creation but had found it dull, overly long and too complex to put together. He suggested a classic mass and a modern piece. Bob Porter had not been formally booked for the 22 November, only pencilled in. SJSS would need to know soon. JW also asked that before the next meeting our future schedule go on beyond November 2016.	PS  PS
Delivery of Choir Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-rehearsal notes were popular and would continue along with detailed rehearsal schedules.</li> <li>• The Tour precluded workshop/Come &amp; Sing before June</li> <li>• It was agreed to hold a closed choir workshop on Saturday 11 June 2016. A trainer would work with PS. First choice of venue St Mary-le-Bow: good venue, acoustic, lighting, location.</li> <li>• It was agreed to hold a Come &amp; Sing on Saturday 8 October 2016. PS suggested a standalone piece so that it would be something fresh for the choir. First choice of venue St Sepulchre's, Holborn.</li> </ul>	JT  JT
Any other business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The next meeting should have another choir event decided for early 2017.</li> <li>• It was agreed to turn down a request (through KG) to sing in the background at the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship's 50th anniversary on 29 October.</li> <li>• Alison Williams was still slowly recovering. JD would send around a card for her at the next rehearsal.</li> </ul>	JD

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

Next Committee Meeting: Monday 2nd November

2016 Committee Meetings: 18 January; 7 March; 9 May; 20 June; 19 September; 7 November