

Whitehall Choir Committee
 MINUTES of the
 meeting held on 16 March 2015
 6.30pm

Present: Jonathan Williams (Chair), Patrick Houghton (Treasurer), Joanna Tomlinson (Secretary), Ruth Eastman (Publicity), Mark Graver (Librarian), Richard Grafen (Webmaster), Kate Goulden (Soprano Rep), Martin Humphreys (Publicity), Daniel Lambauer (Bass Rep), Penny Prior (Business Manager), Alastair Tolley (Tenor Rep)

Apologies: Paul Spicer, Alison Williams

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
Finances (PH)	PH tabled a Statement of Financial Activities to 31/8/15. He stressed that choir subs covered the costs of regular rehearsals leaving £5,000 for subsidising concerts. The last SJSS concert was subsidised to tune of £3,500. The variable income came from audience numbers and ticket prices. The big difference this year was in putting on two orchestral concerts (£5,000 extra). Our ability to market our concerts and sell tickets was KEY. In the past the Ritz performances allowed for this. Both Workshops had been in deficit. In future they must be priced more carefully. A £3 charge for the use of a score would have balanced the books at the January workshop. We would break even this year. To repay the Jubilee Fund there would need to be a surplus.	
2 April 2015: Mozart & Schubert: St John's Smith Square	<p>With disappointing ticket sales to date there was a discussion on how to market the concert and future concerts more effectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It was going into "This is London" and the National Press (MH) ● PH questioned the effectiveness of the latter ● The Pimlico & Belgravia Eye covered precisely the area we perform and rehearse in and was delivered monthly to most addresses in the area (JT) ● RE would email Workshop attendees ● Richard Heason (SJSS) had told PH that the City of London Choir, who perform to packed houses there, have a very extensive data base. PH suggested that this could easily be done with the Whitehall Choir. ● RE noted that social media should be used much more effectively. ● MH would get details of Government departments intranet ● MH suggested encouraging the choir to "like" the Facebook page. All "likes" get automatic event notification. ● PH suggested sending out the Newsletter to interested people each term: RE was happy to help ● It was noted that good rehearsals sold more tickets 	<p>RE</p> <p>All</p> <p>MH</p> <p>RE</p>
9 July 2015: Vaughan Williams: St Peter's Eaton Square	All copies had been hired (MG)at £8 pp: Five Mystical Songs; Five English Folk Songs; Valiant-for-truth; Lord, Thou hast been our refuge and a ten minute piece from Ian. It was decided to have no interval and to serve drinks at the end of the concert. With a ticket price of £15 donations/charge for refreshments was necessary.	

	The Parish Hall could possibly be used as a fall back in the event of bad weather. Title?? something like "Mystical Summer's Evening"?	
17 November 2015: Handel Athalia: SJSS	Not yet sourced choir music (MG). Peter McCarthy has orchestral scores and 35 choral scores. It was decided to leave prices as for April 2 but market more energetically. A big effort was needed to promote Athalia.	MG
Choir Tour to Vienna May 2016 (DL)	The concert in central Vienna would now be at the Votivkirche not St Stephen's Cathedral which had proved far too expensive as a venue. The Votivkirche is often used by choirs, is lovely and with a good organ. The Austrian choir (40 strong) is anticipating an audience of 300. Their conductor had been in touch with Paul. The second concert would be outside the city, hopefully in the Krems Wachau Valley and in aid of a large charity. The first deposit had been paid and the next was due soon. DL would ask the tour company for final prices on those travelling independently.	
Rehearsal Venue	Choir reactions had been broadly positive following a trial rehearsal at the Parish Hall of St Peter's Eaton Square. It was warmer, more comfortable and a more pleasant social experience. The acoustic was of some concern - some found it deafening though others could hear both Paul and the rest of the choir better. Recruiting might become easier and PH felt it could change the whole social aspect of the choir. PS had said that he could make the acoustic work and that he was neutral on the matter. PH hoped that the church could be used for one or two rehearsals each term. He anticipated the cost at just over £3,000 ie double the St Stephen's cost. He hoped that this could be covered by increased ticket sales rather than by a £20 pp rise in subscriptions which was the other option. Two orchestral concerts a year would probably be out of the question. It as agreed, pending final negotiations with St Peter's, to move in September.	PH/JT
Choir Strategy	Some members of the Committee had met on 7 March to discuss a vision for the choir with the view to submitting a Strategy Paper to the AGM. JW asked committee members to come up with 5 things to develop over the next 5 years around singing, marketing, style for discussion at the May meeting. Ideas would then be thrown out to the whole choir mid way through the summer term.	All
AOB	Ken Holmes had given PH some historical documents for the choir which he would keep: the original Minutes Book and financial papers.	

The meeting closed at 8.50pm

FUTURE DATES:

Committee Meeting: Monday 22 June
Eaton Square concert: Thursday 9 July
AGM: Tuesday 14 July

Start Autumn term: 8 September
Athalia at SJSS: 17 November
Start Spring 2016 term: 5 January

