

Whitehall Choir Committee
 MINUTES of the
 meeting held on 29 June 2015
 St Stephen's Rochester Row 6.30pm

Present: Jonathan Williams (Chair), Paul Spicer (Music Director), Patrick Houghton (Treasurer), Joanna Tomlinson (Secretary), Ruth Eastman (Publicity), 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, Alison Williams

Agenda Item	Discussion	Action
Minutes: matters arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Pack: item for next term • Printing Costs: still trying to elicit reply from BIS 	JW
Finances (PH)	<p>4 papers tabled. PH raised 3 particular points for discussion at the AGM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • he proposed leaving subscriptions unchanged at £240 with a £10 discount for single payment • should the Jubilee Fund be repaid £2,000 now? The risk would be the need to return for more funds next year. PP thought it would be preferable to pay back less at this stage than have to go back for more funds. • should the Jubilee Fund be invested differently? The constitution stated that 80% should be invested in a bank account but currently the Fund was earning £21 p.a. The original intention had been to use the income from the development fund. If this were changed to 50% then £10,000 could go into a long-term bond and be relatively safe: ie about half the Fund. This would need a change to the constitution. It was agreed to put this to the AGM. <p>Other points: We were aiming at a small overall surplus. The subscription backlog was no longer a problem. The financial benefit of larger audiences was very clear: two orchestral concerts a year to small audiences were not affordable. Our problem with selling tickets at St John's Smith Square was common to others. PH would be meeting Richard Heason soon.</p>	PH
9 July 2015: Vaughan Williams St Peter's Eaton Square	<p>MH reported that the concert had not been advertised in the national press but was in This is London, the June and July editions of the Pimlico & Belgravia Eye (as well as an editorial), the Vaughan Williams Society website and concert-diary.com.</p> <p>Front of house organisation was discussed.</p> <p>RE had booked a photographer to take shots of the choir. He would arrive during the rehearsal and take informal shots and move on to more formal shots after the rehearsal. The choir would arrive in concert attire.</p>	
17 November 2015: Athalia SJSS	<p>It was agreed not to use the SJSS Mailing Shot (£300). SJSS now had the 200 word concert description and the list of soloists. It was advertised in concert-diary.com and would be in the Pimlico & Belgravia Eye, and This is London. Handel House would take flyers but it was too late to organise a Come & Sing with them. RE suggested that there could be a pre-concert talk at SJSS. PS would not do this but he suggested that someone from Handel House might. PH would ask Richard Heason about this. JW stressed the need for upbeat marketing for Athalia.</p>	<p>MH</p> <p>JW/PH</p> <p>RE/MH</p>

14 December: Christmas Concert: St Peter's E. Square	PS had sent a suggested programme to JW. A couple were sheet music items (which tended to be more spirited than the ones in our books). See attached programme*. JW would talk to MG. Same format as usual but it was important to get people who could read well, and we would be sure to have a microphone. PS suggested asking an actor to do all the readings. Ideas?	JW/MG * All
21 April 2016: English Choral Music: Holy Trinity Sloane Square/Tour	*See attached programme. The later date was necessary because the programme would also be performed in Vienna and was therefore not Passiontide music and no venues could be found during Holy Week. Tuesday 26 April rehearsal would be for the Tour participants only.	*
14 July 2016: St James's Piccadilly	Venue booked. *See attached programme. PS would also look at a programme of French music given the date.	PS *
22 November 2016: Creation SJSS	Could do a Come & Sing around this in the same term.	
Update of Tour: Vienna: 28 April to 2 May 2016 (Same programme as 21 April)	DL: hotel confirmed. Flights booked for 34. Votive Church (joint concert) confirmed: 200-300 audience expected. The Viennese choir would do all publicity. Second concert (just Whitehall Choir) in the lovely Wachau Valley. Very nice church, now confirmed. A charity event: half proceeds for a homeless charity and half for the church. This would be strongly marketed by the church and local charity. An audience of around 100 was anticipated. The coach would be available for two out of the four days. JW: names for the flights were required 10 weeks prior to departure. More difficult was how to deal with those making some/all arrangements independently. After discussion it was decided that it would be acceptable to opt out of the flights and the accommodation. PS: the joint choir piece would not be the Frank Martin Double Mass. It might be Balfour Gardiner's Evening Hymn. PS would contact Thomas to discuss. The programme would be sent out to the choir.	PS JW
Choir Strategy	Feedback from Focus Groups and AGM Presentation: Following up the SWOT analysis MH had held a series of Focus Groups to engage the choir more. In response to the SWOT analysis and to the question "How do we want to be different from other amateur choirs in London?", formulated with the help of Gill Carruthers, MH had identified particular issues concerning audience development/choir development/outside funding: see attached summary.* JW would draw the line on the Strategy process and write a short paper for the AGM.	* JW
AGM Preparation	Julie Dyg was prepared to stand as the Alto Rep; no-one had approached PP to stand as Business Manager. JW to ask Philip Pratley to collect nominations.	JW
Bob Porter repertoire	PS suggested that the a cappella programmes for April and July 2016 would be suitable to offer Bob Porter. If we used the Brandenburg Sinfonia he might ask us to do a Mozart Requiem.	JW/PS
Come & Sings/Workshop	These needed to be planned well in advance especially if the choir was expected to attend. They were a recruitment tool and a choir development	

	<p>tool and should, at worst, break even. PS suggested 4 different formats, all of which he liked, and suggested that one in the Autumn term and one in the Spring term would be enough:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Come & Sing with orchestra (perhaps every other year) • Come & Sing with piano • Open Workshop • Closed Workshop <p>PS said that Workshops did not need to be based on the forthcoming concert: see attached suggestions*. Some choir members found weekend events hard to commit to: workshops could be held on a weekday evening. Some dates would be planned.</p>	<p>*</p> <p>JW/PS</p>
Departure from St Stephen's	The refreshment team and MG would empty their things out of the cupboard. JT would get a card to thank the church for hosting the choir for 15 years.	
AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JW had received a couple of emails expressing concern at the standard of rehearsals. It was an issue that needed to be dealt with. His AGM paper would include this. • RG would canvass views from the choir about the content and design of the website. It was a while since there had been a new password. KG suggested xxxxxxx. • RE would design a new recruitment flyer. MH would encourage members to use their organisations' intranet. It would be nice to have more Whitehall members. 	<p>JW</p> <p>RG</p> <p>RE/MH</p>
Future Committee Dates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AGM St Stephen's: 14 July 2015 • Future Committees will be held in the Committee Room at St Peter's Eaton Square: 2015: 14 September; 2 November; 2016: 18 January; 7 March; 9 May; 20 June; 19 September; 7 November 	

The meeting closed at 8.35pm

*Please note 5 attachments