

# Reading Male Voice Choir

Minutes of a committee meeting held at Hawkedon School on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

**Present:**

Members: Ryland Lee (RL), Chairman; John Adams (JA) Deputy Chairman; Martin Butler (MB) Secretary; John Kay (JK), Treasurer; Section Leaders (SLs): Paul Lyden (PL), Arnie Howell (AH), Jeremy Jones (JJ).

Officers: Clive Waterman (CW), Musical Director; Chris Peck (CP) Health & Safety Officer; Steve Richardson (SR) Publicity; Nigel Shaw (NS),

Covering for 1<sup>st</sup> Tenors: Dave Allen (DA).

**Minutes:** Andy Sherwood.

**Apologies:** Andrew Evans, Mike Jearey, Dave Ewens

|  | Action |
|--|--------|
| <p><b>28/22 Minutes:</b> The minutes of the meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> June were agreed to be an accurate record of the event.</p>  |        |
| <p><b>29/22 Matters arising from the minutes:</b></p>  |        |
| <p>Repertoire to continue to be maintained to ensure interest and variability. Input from all choir members welcome.</p>   | CW/All |
| <p>Greyfriars concert no longer cancelled.</p>   |        |
| <p>Promotion of, and value for money of concerts for Charities: - Printing of programmes reduced to 50 per concert. It remains the responsibility of Charities to promote their concerts and to take the lead in selling tickets.</p>  |        |
| <p>Conductors podium now available for use at rehearsals.</p>  |        |
| <p>Trolley now being used for urn movements.</p>   |        |
| <p>H and S documents to be uploaded to website. Training required for web team.</p>  | AE     |
| <p>Choir photograph to be expedited and used for future material.</p>  | RL/MB  |
| <p><b>30/22 Chairman's report:</b></p>   |        |
| <p>Welcome to a new RMVC 'season' and a particular welcome to our new Trustees: Mike Jearey (SL Tenor1) and Arnie Howell (TL Tenor 2). I would also like to thank the retiring Trustees, Dave Allen (SL Tenor 1) and Dave Allen (SL Tenor 2) for all their hard work over the period of their trusteeship.</p> |        |

**50th Anniversary Year:**

It has certainly been an interesting and successful year. We celebrated significant milestones for two of our members - our MD Clive Waterman and chorister Fred Holloway for receiving their 50 years service badges - what a magnificent achievement. The celebration year culminated in an excellent 50th Anniversary concert in July and a celebration dinner in September.

A big thank you to all committee members who helped deliver, what has been an extremely busy year and a particular thank to Clive and Hayley who ensured our anniversary concert programme and performance was of a high standard and maintaining RMVCs reputation as a quality choir.

**2022 - 23 Concert Season**

We have a full diary of events for this concert season - a number are re-bookings from 'Covid cancelled' events - so it's good to see that the interest in RMVC has been maintained. Once again, a big thank you to Martin for all his hard work and organisation.

**Rehearsals**

It has been good to see the return of those choristers who had been on sabbaticals since the return to rehearsals post Covid restrictions - Mike Newman, Andrew Mickleburgh and Derek Fowler.

A number of new and 'revived' items are being added to this year's concert repertoire, so there will be a significant amount of learning to take on. To ensure that we make effective use of rehearsal time, the intention is that all choir notices will be kept for the interval so we can go straight into 'warm up' and rehearsal. Choristers will also be encouraged to make greater use of Noteworthy (some training can be given if necessary) and there will be further development of creating and using 'learning tracks'.

**31/22 Section leader's reports:****First Tenors**

Top tenors are back for the new term with 17 members, including 2 new men in Clive Willey and Bob Hill.

We have not yet seen a return by Andrew Searle and Keith Knee-Robinson that has been hinted, but I will try and reach out to both.

Covid continues to lurk, and we have had a couple of members off since the start of the term, fortunately no serious illness as far as I know. - Mike Jeary

There are some issues in regard to mobility/standing for some top tenors. Solutions need to be found for the choir as a whole with due regard to personal preferences.

In the first instance the people with issues need to be identified.

Venues will now need to be checked for compatibility with choir members needs.

**Second Tenors**

No report.

**Baritone**

The Baritones in general are in reasonable health although we have had some sickness mainly due to Covid and I am pleased to report that they have followed advice and stayed away if they

**All  
Trustees/  
NS/CP**

have a cough or cold. Bryan Verran has been off for a few weeks and is suffering with mobility problems and Derek Rygate has been feeling a bit low and has stayed away.  
 I'm pleased to announce that we have 2 new members Simon Walker and Howard Ballard, Simon has attended for 3 weeks he is a 66 year old retired engineer who has never sung before, I have put him with Allan Crisp for coaching. Howard, I have only seen once and know very little about him other than he is involved with other organisations, and he organises Barn Dances and has been involved with other choirs.  
 Everyone in the section seems happy to learn new songs and is looking forward to the new season. -Paul Lyden

**Bass**

Tony Batchelor attended his last rehearsal on 16<sup>th</sup> September before moving away from Reading. We wish Tony and his wife a happy life in their new home. We have been pleased to welcome back Derek Fowler and Mike Newman to rehearsals for the first time since the appearance of Covid-19. The section now has 18 active members. -Jeremy Jones

**32/22 Treasurers report:**

**CURRENT BALANCES**

Here is where we stand financially

| Balance at the end of:               | May 22        | 31 Aug 22     | May 23        |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Actual                               | Actual        |               | Projected     |
| Account:                             | £             | £             | £             |
| Assets                               | 18            | 18            | 18            |
| Debtors                              | -             | -             | -             |
| Metro Bank Current Account           | 27,070        | 28,027        | 12,545        |
| Metro Bank Reserve                   | 229           | 229           | 13,092        |
| Cash and cheques                     | 0             | 934           | -             |
| Creditors                            | -             | -             | -             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                         | <b>27,317</b> | <b>29,208</b> | <b>25,655</b> |
| <b>RESERVES (net current assets)</b> | <b>27,299</b> | <b>29,190</b> | <b>25,637</b> |

The balance as at the end of May 2022 is as in the Annual Report and Accounts. Reserves are as defined by the Charities Commission. They are represented in our accounts by the subtotal Net Current Assets. Since we write down our fixed assets to nominal values, in most years our total balances only slightly exceed our reserves.

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2022/23**

The current forecast for the financial year is that Expenditure will exceed Income by £1,662. This compares with budgeted deficit, approved by the AGM, of £1,395. Net Core Expenditure would be £1,817 and net non-core income would be £155. Our Reserves would reduce to £25,637 which is about £12,774 above our long-term target of £12,863 (£10,000 at 2017 prices).

**'Reserves' Working Group**

You may recall that the Committee recently discussed the position regarding our Reserves and what actions are necessary to regularise this position. I was tasked with establishing a working group to determine recommendations on what these actions could/should be.

There are no prescribed 'rules' regarding at what level our Reserves should be maintained.

However, having established a target level, we should determine if this level is, indeed, appropriate and, if so, what we need to do to regularise the situation whilst maintaining the long-term financial health of the choir.

I have asked our Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Secretary to work with me, initially, to consider whether our current target of £13,000 is appropriate; what, if any, funds should be 'ring fenced' for the YS Initiative and what actions could/should be taken to 2

reduce/regularise our Reserves.

I will provide regular updates on our progress to the Committee and present the output from our deliberations to the Committee for approval in due course.

Since my last report (June 2022):

- Our 50th Anniversary Concert took place on 2nd July resulting in a net expenditure of £2,854 – not reflected in the numbers above)

- Our 50th Anniversary Dinner took place on 3rd September resulting in a net income of £335 (excluding Raffle takings £363 which will be forwarded to the Disaster Emergency Committee charity but **including an 'anonymous' donation**, towards Simon and Hilary's fee, of £300) – not reflected in the table above

- 37 (out of 70) choristers have already paid their subs as of 18th September (including 9 x T1; 10 x T2; 7 x B1 and 11 x B2)

- I have transferred £12,863 from our Current Account to our Reserve

### **33/22 Musical directors report:**

Our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July was a very special occasion – as expected. I must admit I was very 'moved' by the whole experience. I just need to reiterate a heartfelt 'thank you' to everyone for contributing so much. I am sure that we all have great memories of a very special occasion! I have already outlined my thoughts to the Choir so I will not repeat myself here. That said, I must mention the wonderful contributions made by Simon Mayor & Hilary James, Ruth Adams and her extremely good Junior Choir, Lori Tingay, and also to Tony Clixby who recorded this occasion for us both on DVD and CD. The contributions of so many made the occasion truly memorable for us all.

Our AGM on the 8<sup>th</sup> July brought to an end a very mixed, challenging yet successful and rewarding choral year for all the reasons mentioned in my previous report.

The new season began with our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Dinner. Another really memorable occasion – a really good atmosphere, good food, many friends in attendance, and wonderful entertainment – an occasion to properly mark our 50 years of music making together.

We begin our new season with 22 songs that we know well so that we can construct concert programmes quickly. A number of these will be replaced by new and revised items as they are rehearsed and made ready. I aim to add at least one additional item to each concert we perform during the season. Some will replace the items we have performed for some time. This does not mean that I shall ditch them, merely put them on the 'back burner'!

There are a further 10 that we can revise, having been briefly looked at on Zoom, have been requested by choristers, or deemed a good idea by me! Also, I have identified 10 additional new items that we can get our teeth into to add further variety and challenge for us all! This makes a

grand total of around 40 + items that will allow us to be able to construct concert programmes containing our usual 16 pieces with relative ease and provide variety for our audiences. All will be introduced in a calm and measured manner – as appropriate!

The 'Young Singers' project is gaining momentum and there appears to be much interest in what we are attempting. My particular thanks to Ryland for his enthusiasm and drive in bringing this about. The next few months will see how successful the project will be, but with so many folk giving time and energy to it, I am sure that positive reports will follow!

Our first concert of the season beacons, this one being supported by talent from within our ranks. All Saints Downshire Square is a fine venue with a good acoustic, and I am looking forward to the choir giving Wana Baraka its first outing!

Christmas beacons, and we hope that this year we will be able to join with A440 and Occasions to perform our special Christmas Concert in Reading's Minster Church once again on 17<sup>th</sup>

December. Last year we got so close to this occasion only to have to cancel due to Covid.

The choir is in a good state. Choristers are keen and committed and I am looking forward to a positive and enjoyable season!

Standing up in rehearsal and advance notification of pieces to be covered are both working well.

Wana Baraka will replace African Trilogy in the repertoire.

### **34/22 Secretary's report:**

#### **Current Membership**

|               |                        |
|---------------|------------------------|
| Top Tenors    | 19                     |
| Second Tenors | 16                     |
| Baritones     | 15                     |
| Basses        | 18                     |
| Total         | 68 plus Clive & Hayley |

#### **Hawkedon School**

New entrance and exit procedure.

3 new card available to hand out – to decide who has these

We now have a total of 8 cards -These are issued to :-

- 1, Martin Butler
- 2, Ryland Lee
- 3, Geoff Crabb
- 4, John Adams
- 5, Jim Grufferty
- 6, Clive Waterman
- 7, Chris Peck
- 8, Paul Lyden ??????????????

2 dates have been given in November when the school will not be available. Looking into Christchurch Woodley as an alternative (11 & 25 Nov)

#### **Season 2024**

Possibility to visit The Netherlands in April/May 2024 to visit Arnhem - Arnhem Clarinet and Fortissimo Choirs.

Also, at same time Cornwall Male choirs again.

Or

Travel to other Male voice choirs in UK (Wales)

Investigate all possibilities further.

We have a certificate for singing at the Queens jubilee beacon ceremony, electronic copies will be distributed to choir members via members update.

**Term Dates for 2022 - 2023 season**

Start of Autumn Term Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022

End of Autumn Term Friday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2022

Start of Spring Term Friday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2023

End of Spring Term Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023

Start of Summer Term Friday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2023

End of Summer Term Friday 7<sup>th</sup> July 2023 (AGM)

**Events this season 2022 – 2023**

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2022 @7:30pm**

All Saints Church, Downshire Way, Reading for Church Funds  
Guests: RMVC Singers

**Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> November @ 2pm**

Oddfellows, Oxford Road, Reading. Informal event.

**Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022 @7.30pm**

Greyfriars Church, Reading for RMVC funds.  
Guests: Belle Canto Trio.

**Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2022 @3.00pm**

Main concourse, Reading Station for Royal Berks Charity and promotion of 17<sup>th</sup> December concert.

**Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2022 ??:?? am**

**JK  
(Wales)  
/MB  
  
MB**

|  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|
| <p>Reading University - Santa Run. Informal Event.</p> <p><b>Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2022 @5:00pm</b><br/> Three choirs Christmas Concert RMVC, A440 and Occasions singers.<br/> Christmas at Reading Minster. (Not for Sanctuary.)</p> <p><b>Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2023 @7:30pm</b><br/> Possibly St Bartholomew's Church (Reed College).<br/> Parkinsons Reading Branch - David Adby</p> <p><b>Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2023 @7:30pm</b><br/> St Mary's Church, Purley-On-Thames for Church funds.<br/> Guest: TBC.</p> <p><b>Saturday April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2023 @7:30pm</b><br/> All Saints Church, Downshire Way, Reading for Church Funds<br/> Guest: Aneesa Chaudry</p> <p><b>Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023 7:30pm</b><br/> Christchurch, Christchurch Road for Church funds<br/> Guest: TBC</p> <p><b>Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2023 @7:30pm</b><br/> Venue to be confirmed, Gala concert for young singers.</p> <p><b>Events next season 2023-2024</b></p> <p>October - St Edmond Campion, Maidenhead</p> <p>Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2023 @5:00pm Three choirs' concert - Reading Minster</p> <p>Possibly Taplow Court.</p> <p><b>35/22 Young Singers competition:</b></p> <p>Thanks to Chris Carr / Andrew Evans for work on website database.</p> <p>Mailshot gone out to Schools, Colleges, and Universities.</p> <p>Closing date for entries now 11<sup>th</sup> January.</p> <p><b>36/22 Health and Safety report:</b></p> <p>No injuries or incidents.</p> <p>Equipment check due in November.</p> <p>PAT testing in progress.</p> | <p>CP</p> <p>CP</p> <p>CP/RL</p> |
|--|----------------------------------|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>First aid training not yet started.</p>   | <p><b>Section Leaders</b></p>            |
| <p>Time for fire safety briefing needed for rehearsal on 28<sup>th</sup> October.</p>  |  |
| <p>Information in regard to mobility issues etc needs to be brought to the next Committee meeting.</p>   | <p><b>AE/<br/>Web team</b></p>           |
| <p><b>37/22 Social media and website</b></p>   |  |
| <p>Action needed on updating website especially meeting minutes, noteworthy, handbooks etc.</p>  | <p><b>All trustees</b></p>               |
| <p><b>38/22 Recruitment and retention.</b></p>   | <p><b>SR</b></p>                         |
| <p>A process needs to be put in place and followed, previous process has fallen by the wayside and is not working and not on the website.</p>  | <p><b>All trustees</b></p>               |
| <p>Previous documents to be forwarded to all trustees.</p>   | <p><b>Kevin</b></p>                      |
| <p>Chairman, Secretary, Musical Director and relevant Section leader should all be aware when someone is expected.</p>   | <p><b>Kevin</b></p>                      |
| <p>Kevin (Librarian) needs to know when people join.</p>   | <p><b>CW</b></p>                         |
| <p>Music packs need to be available for people that turn up unannounced.</p>   | <p><b>RL</b></p>                         |
| <p>Formalised procedure for placing in correct section needed, led by Musical director. Procedure to be carried out after individual indicates that they would like to join the choir.</p>             | <p><b>Section Leaders/JK<br/>/MB</b></p> |
| <p>We need to be upfront in the welcome letter that subscription need to be paid by members.</p>   |  |
| <p>Application form needs to be forwarded to Treasurer on receipt from potential member. This information then needs to be passed on to Paul Buckle for the membership list, and to the Secretary.</p> |  |
| <p>Subs to be at Half rate for first year if joining after December.</p>   |  |
| <p>We need to be aware that at the moment a general drive for new members is neither necessary nor desirable.</p>  |  |
| <p>We need to look at the possibility of non-singing membership. (ie attends rehearsals but not concerts, bearing in mind that de facto this already exists informally).</p>                           |  |



Samples of possible recruitment documents are given below.

### **Process for inducting potential new members**

#### **First night attendance**

- inform MD, Chairman and Secretary at the beginning of rehearsal
- Secretary to issue 'Welcome Letter' (see attached)
- Section Leader:
  - ask librarian for music pack, to be collected in at the end of rehearsal and re-issued at subsequent rehearsal
  - allocate a 'mentor' to provide music support during rehearsals
  - Get contact details and follow up after first visit

#### **After 3 - 4 rehearsals**

- Section Leader
  - Ascertain interest in becoming a choir member at the BEGINNING of rehearsal and inform the MD - who will conduct a 'voice test' DURING THE INTERVAL to confirm section placement
  - Inform the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Librarian (who will allocate a music number and issue a full music pack)
  - Issue copies of the following documentation
    - \*Acceptance Letter with 'gaps to complete (section and SL name) - see attached
    - \* Application & Gift aid Form - see attached. Hand completed copy to the Treasurer (who will pass a copy to the Secretary and Membership list coordinator)
    - \* Members Handbook - see attached
    - \*Uniform information - see attached

#### **Readiness to participate in concert**

- Section Leader to consult with MD to agree on readiness. Inform Wardrobe Master re: Allocation of uniform



## *Reading Male Voice Choir*

Welcome to our choir. To help you decide whether the Reading Male Voice Choir is for you we have put together some information to let you know what happens next. With this information and your experience at our rehearsals you can then decide whether or not you wish to become a choir member; your decision may be easier if you come to one of our concerts.

We don't have auditions, we are open to all, but we do set ourselves high standards and expect our members to do their part to meet those standards by practicing, learning the words and music and attending rehearsals and performances.

At your first rehearsal you will get a good idea of how the choir works, the humour and camaraderie, and the type of music we perform. We are happy for potential members to come to a few rehearsals before committing themselves to become choir members. We will try to put you in the right section, Bass, Baritone, Second Tenor or First Tenor; each section has a Section Leader who will make sure that you are not left uncertain about anything.

If you decide to join us our Musical Director will check your range to ensure that you are in the right section. Joining also means that your Subscription become due; our Treasurer will contact you about this, and our Librarian will provide you with the music for our current repertoire. When your Section Leader thinks you are ready to join us on stage, generally after a few months to give you time to learn the repertoire, he will discuss this with our Musical Director and if they agree you will be provided with a uniform and the date of your first performance decided.

We perform around 10 public performances a year – roughly one a month. The emphasis in our concert programmes is on variety and entertainment. On stage, we sing without music, so it is important that we all know it – both the words and our section's line. This is why our rehearsals are important. The choir has a long-standing rule that no member, irrespective of length of service, can sing in a concert if he has missed two rehearsals in the lead-up to a concert.

If you find that our choir is not for you that's fine, just return any music you have and we wish you well in your search for a choir - but keep singing. Thank you for giving us a try

Ryland Lee - Chairman

# Reading Male Voice Choir

(Registered Charity Number 294105)



## MEMBERSHIP FORM AND GIFT AID DECLARATION

|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> to withhold from other members |
|---|--|---|
| Title                                     |  |   |
| First name                                |  |   |
| Surname                                   |  |   |
| Home address                              |  |   |
| Postcode                                  |  |   |
| Home phone                                |  |   |
| Mobile phone                              |  |   |
| Email address                             |  |   |
| Partner's name                            |  |   |
| Emergency Contact Names and Phone Numbers |  |   |

### Data Protection Declaration (see Privacy and Data Protection Policy)

RMVC holds your contact details for the purposes of keeping you informed about choir business, for emergency contact and for gift aid recovery (if relevant). These details will be held for a maximum of 12 months after your last active paid membership period and then destroyed unless the member requests that we retain information on our database of members who have left the Choir.

In addition, member contact details are shared with other members of the choir by email to enable contact to be maintained between members. If there is data you wish to be withheld from other members please indicate this in the table above.



## Reading Male Voice Choir

Celebrating 50 Years of Making Music

Dear

I am delighted to confirm that at your recent voice test you achieved the standard required by the Musical Director and I welcome you to membership of Reading Male Voice Choir. The Musical Director considers your voice is best suited to the Section and your Section Leader is

The members area on the Choir's website, [www.mvc.net](http://www.mvc.net), includes a range of material relevant to members including details of future concerts. The password for the members area is "Qw1RE21\*". I would draw your attention in particular to the member's handbook which explains the Choir's structure, policies and practices.

**ATTENDANCE:** Regular attendance at rehearsals and practice are essential to ensure that each member is an effective chorister and we therefore maintain a register of attendance. Please let your Section Leader know if you know that you will be unable to attend a rehearsal.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Choir subscriptions are currently £130 per annum and is payable to the following bank account:

|                |                          |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| Account Name   | Reading Male Voice Choir |
| Sort Code      | 23-05-80                 |
| Account Number | 40348875                 |

If at any time, and for whatever reason, payment creates difficulty, please have a word with me or with the treasurer, in confidence, so that appropriate assistance can be considered. Our present treasurer is

**John Kay.**

Yours Sincerely

Ryland Lee  
Chairman

Ryland Lee Chairman  
Chairman@rmvc.net  
2 Allin Road  
Old Basing RG24 7DW

[www.rmvc.net](http://www.rmvc.net)  
Reading Male Voice Choir is a registered charity in England No. 2943946

Martin Butler Secretary  
martin.butler65@yahoo.co.uk

## RMVC- Choir Uniform

**General** The intention of RMVC uniform is to give a sense of belonging and for the choir to appear as a united entity. It indicates equality and common purpose.  
The standards below are designed to make it easy for choir members to understand what is expected of them.

RMVC uniforms should be cared for, and worn, according to the following:

**Jacket:** As issued by the choir, to be regularly cleaned and pressed. Lapel or other badges are not worn – the only exceptions are a Remembrance Poppy which can be worn in the left hand lapel at the appropriate time of year and the RMVC long service badge. Jacket pockets are to be kept empty, preferably at all times, but certainly during performances.  
Jackets should only be worn for performances or when the choir are making a public appearance. They should not be worn when travelling to and from engagements when jackets should be carried in a Suit Cover (provided).

**Trousers** As issued by the choir, to be regularly cleaned and pressed. They may be worn with or without a belt. If braces are worn they should be covered by the jacket at all times.

**Shirt** This must be a plain white long sleeved shirt. In particular:  
No stripes or patterns of any sort – including "woven in" stripes or patterns.  
Collars  
Plain and not buttoned-down. Collars to be of medium length – i.e. no wing-collars or collars which are excessively long or short.  
No tie clips:  
If cuff-links are worn, they should be small and discreet.  
No short sleeves  
Shirts must have long sleeves

**Tie** Choir tie as issued by the choir – To be clean and fresh at all times.

**Socks** Plain black socks.

**Shoes** Plain Black shoes. These should not have any contrasting colours e.g. laces or soles.

If you require further clarification, please speak to Robin John, Wardrobe Master, or your Section Leader.

# Reading Male Voice Choir Member Handbook

Charity No 294105



## **0.0 Introduction**

0.1 This handbook contains information which will let you know how the Choir works and how decisions are made as well as what is expected of you as a Member.

0.2 We pride ourselves on being a friendly, social organisation, but to function effectively we have to have some structure to what we do. Hopefully this handbook will help you to understand how we work and answer the questions you may have. If there are any issues you want clarifying feel free to ask any member of the Choir who will be only too pleased to help.

0.3 We have designed this Handbook to assist new Members to the Choir as well as reminding long-standing Members of the inner workings of the Choir as a Charity.

0.4 In addition to this Handbook there is a Formal Constitution, a Trustee Handbook, a Section Leader Handbook and an Officer Handbook. These documents are all on our website and copies are available to any Member of the Choir.

## **Contents:**

- 1.0 Rehearsals**
- 2.0 Concerts**
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Approved at AGM 8 July 2016 – Section 4 amended by Committee June 2017

Sections 2 and 4 amended by Committee March 2018

### **1.0 Rehearsals**

1.1 Rehearsals are held on Friday evenings between 19.30 and 22.00. Rehearsals are an important part of our activities and this is where our music is learned, practiced and improved. Rehearsals when a concert is approaching are vital and except in exceptional circumstances attendance at at least two of the three rehearsals preceding a concert is required for a Member to sing at that concert.

1.2 Members are expected to be diligent at these rehearsals and keep interruptions to a minimum. It is important that Members allow other Sections/Members to be coached without disturbance.

1.3 Rehearsals begin after the summer break on the first Friday in September and stop early in the following July for a summer recess. There are also short breaks at Christmas and Easter.

### **2.0 Concerts**

2.1 The Choir perform in concerts, primarily to raise money for charities. There is a programme of concerts throughout the season, approximately one each month.

2.2 Most concerts are held in the Reading area. However we travel to other locations when necessary, usually by coach for which a part-payment is made, the remainder being met by Choir funds. These trips may occasionally also necessitate overnight stay depending on the distance travelled, in which case Choir members will be expected to meet the cost of their accommodation.

2.3 In some years the Choir undertakes an overseas tour. Participation in these tours is not compulsory but those that attend get a great deal from them, both musically and socially. Choir members will be expected to meet the costs of their travel and accommodation on tours.

2.4 Payment is offered for reasonable expenses for those Members who are required to travel to concert venues to look at arrangements for the choir when the concert would require the choir to travel by coach or air.

2.4 Many partners accompany Choir Members when we travel which we welcome as this adds to the social and community feeling of the events.

2.5 The choir has a process for considering requests for us to sing at informal events, this can be found on our website.

### **3.0 Music and Uniform**

3.0.1 An integral part of the Choir is that Members rehearse with sheet music and perform in uniform. To ensure that this system is effective each Member is issued with music as appropriate and the essential uniform items; the costs of these are covered from the Choir budgets. These remain the property of the Choir and are returned when no longer needed, when a piece of music leaves the Choir repertoire, or when a Member leaves.

3.0.2 Members are responsible for keeping the property of the Choir safe and are liable for the full cost of replacement should loss or irreparable damage occur.

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### **3.1 Music**

3.1.1 The music selection is made by the Musical Director in conjunction with the Deputy Musical Director. The Musical Director consults in general terms with the Committee and Choir before the selections are made.

3.1.2 Members are dissuaded from taking music to concerts, particularly when touring.

- Music remains the property of the choir and is issued to Members while it is needed
- Music should be returned to the Librarian when it is recalled
- Members are responsible for its safe keeping
- Music is issued to Members as individuals (copies are marked with personal numbers), Members should not swap or give their copy to another Member
- The Librarian needs to be informed if Members need a copy of a piece or if they have misplaced anything
- In the event of loss the music will be replaced by the Librarian and Members are liable for the full replacement cost of the items. The replacement cost of a full set of music is approximately £40.00 (2015 Figure)

### **3.2 Uniform**

3.2.1 The intention of Choir uniform is to give a sense of belonging and for the Choir to appear as a united entity. It indicates equality and common purpose. The standards below are designed to make it easy for Choir members to understand what is expected of them.

- The Choir issues certain uniform items: Jacket, Trousers, Tie, Sweatshirt and Short-Sleeved Shirt. Other uniform items (see table below) are provided by the Member at their own expense
- Uniform items issued to Members remain the property of the Choir
- Uniform items must be returned to the Wardrobe Master when a Member leaves the Choir
- Members are responsible for keeping their uniform in good order
- In the event of loss the item of uniform will be replaced by the Wardrobe Master and Members are liable for the full replacement cost of the item. The replacement cost of a Choir jacket is approximately £250.00 (2015 figure)

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3.2.2 Choir uniforms should be cared for, and worn, according to the following:

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| Jacket              | As issued by the Choir, to be maintained by sponging and brushing and only dry-cleaned to remove stains or odour. Lapel or other badges are not worn – the only exceptions are a Remembrance Poppy which can be worn in the left hand lapel at the appropriate time of year; and the RMVC long service badge. Outside jacket pockets are to be kept empty, preferably at all times, but certainly during performances. If necessary small flat items (e.g. mobile phone - (switched off)) may be carried in the inside pocket.<br>Jackets should only be worn for performances or when the Choir are making a public appearance. They should not be worn when travelling to engagements when jackets should be carried in a Suit Cover (provided). If the jacket is worn on the way home from a concert it should be hung to allow creases to fall out. |
| Trousers            | As issued by the Choir, to be dry-cleaned every 2-3 years. They may be worn with or without a belt; if a belt is worn it should be black. If braces are worn they should be covered by the jacket at all times.   |
| Short-Sleeved Shirt | As issued by the choir, to be washed and ironed. This shirt should be worn when weather is hot and it has been announced that they are to be worn. When they are worn you must wear a black belt and no braces. Sometimes they are worn with ties, sometimes without as decided by the Musical Director.  |
| Shirt               | This is provided by each chorister. This must be a <u>plain white long sleeved</u> shirt. In particular: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● No stripes or patterns of any sort – including “woven in” stripes or patterns.</li> <li>● Collars must be plain and not buttoned-down. Collars to be of medium length – i.e. no wing-collars or collars which are excessively long or short.</li> <li>● No tie clips:</li> <li>● If cuff-links are worn, they should be small and discreet.</li> </ul>  |
| Tie                 | Choir tie as issued by the Choir – To be clean and fresh at all times.  |
| Socks               | Plain black socks.  |
| Shoes               | Plain black shoes. These should not have any contrasting colours e.g. laces or soles.   |

3.2.3 If you require further clarification, please speak to the Wardrobe Master, or your Section Leader.

#### **4.0 Policies**

4.1 The Choir takes its responsibilities for the health and safety of its Members and others who are affected by its activities very seriously. The Choir’s Health and Safety Policy, Good Practice Documents and Risk Assessments are constantly reviewed and can be viewed on our website and are available to Members and others on request. We also have policies on Safeguarding and Equality, these too are on our website and Members are expected to abide by these at all times. In addition we have policies for informal event singing requests and loaning RMVC equipment.

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## **5.0 Member Responsibilities**

5.1 Members are expected to treat each other with respect and tolerance.

5.2 As we sing all our repertoire by heart Members are expected to make every effort to learn the music and words.

5.3 Members must recognise that they represent the Choir, particularly when in uniform, and should behave in an exemplary way that would bring credit to the Choir.

5.4 Members are expected to abide by the rules governing the Choir.

5.5 Members are expected to pay their subscriptions and other payments due in a timely manner.

## **6.0 Section Leaders**

6.1 Each of the four voice types, First Tenor, Second Tenor, Baritone and Bass, is arranged in a section. Each section has a Section Leader who is a Trustee and they are elected at the Annual General Meeting.

6.2 It is expected that in the best interests of the Choir and for the personal development of as many individuals as possible, Section Leaders will hold that office for a maximum of four years.

6.3 Section Leaders have administrative roles for their section and are also responsible for advising their section Members on musical issues and Choir matters generally. They also have a pastoral care role for their section and highlight issues to the Committee members when they arise.

6.4 The full roles and responsibilities of the Section Leaders are set out in a separate handbook which is available on the website and to all Members on request.

## **7.0 Musical Director and Deputy Musical Director**

7.1 The Musical Director is the Choir's principal officer on all artistic and musical matters. The Deputy Musical Director assists the Musical Director on artistic and musical matters and deputises in their absence. The Musical Director or, in their absence, the Deputy Musical Director, is invited to Committee meetings where they may speak, but they cannot vote as they are not Committee members or Trustees of the Choir.

7.2 The Musical Director and Deputy Musical Director are appointed by the Annual General Meeting and are each paid an Honorarium which is set annually by the Annual General Meeting.

7.3 Concert travel expenses will be offered to the Musical Director and Deputy Musical Director when they use personal transport and the concert is one that requires the use of a coach for members. The payment to cover the cost of fuel for the distance the coach has driven.

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## **8.0 Officers**

8.1 To assist the Committee and the Choir generally we have a range of Officer posts with specific roles. These posts are filled annually by election by the Annual General Meeting. The list of Officers changes depending on the needs of the Choir.

8.2 Officers can attend Committee meetings, especially when an item is being discussed which concerns their responsibilities, although they cannot vote. Currently the Officer positions are:

- Stage Manager
- Staging Rota Coordinator
- Van Driver Coordinator
- Fund Raising Officer
- Health and Safety Officer
- Librarian
- Minutes Secretary
- Publicity Officers
- Social Secretary
- Wardrobe Master
- Webmaster
- Assistant Secretary

## **9.0 Supporters' Group**

9.1 The Choir has many friends and Members' partners who support our activities. On the first Friday of each month, during Choir rehearsals, the Supporters' Group meet together, often with a guest speaker. The Choir recognises the value of our Supporters and encourages their activities.

## **10.0 General Meetings**

10.1 These are meetings of the whole Membership of the Choir and are the primary decision making body of the Choir. There is an Annual General Meeting in July each year and the facility for Extraordinary General Meetings during the year should the need arise.

## **11.0 President**

11.1 The Choir has an Honorary President. Their role is to chair General Meetings of the whole Choir membership and to represent the Choir when such appearance would be appropriate in enhancing the status and image of the Choir.

11.2 The President is appointed by the Annual General Meeting.

## **912.0 Trustees/Committee**

12.1 The Choir is a Registered Charity and as such has a panel of Trustees who make up the decision-making Committee of the Choir. There are specific rules on the responsibilities of Trustees of charities and these can be seen in the Trustee's Handbook which can be found on our website.

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12.2 The Trustees are elected each year by the Annual General Meeting. They meet as the Committee of the Choir at least every three months. The minutes of these meetings are published on our website and are available to all Members on request.

12.3 The Trustees are:

- Chairman
- Deputy Chairman
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Four Section Leaders, one for each voice type, First Tenor, Second Tenor, Baritone and Bass

12.4 It is expected that in the best interests of the Choir and for the personal development of as many individuals as possible, the Chairman will hold that office for a maximum of three consecutive years.

### **13.0 Long Service Recognition**

13.1 The Choir recognises the loyalty and long service of Members and does this through presentations at the Annual General Meetings

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 10 Years | Engraved Glass Half Pint Tankard          |
| 20 Years | Bronze Pin                                |
| 30 Years | Silver Choir Lapel Badge                  |
| 40 Years | Gold Choir Lapel Badge                    |
| 50 Years | Gold Choir Lapel Badge and Zirconium Cube |

END

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**39 /22 Any other business:**

None

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|--|--|

**Date of Next Meetings:**      **24th November 2022**  
   **23<sup>rd</sup> February 2023**  
   **8th June 2023**