



## **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 AUGUST 2016**

### **1. Objectives and activities**

The objects of the Torbay Singers are to advance, improve, develop and maintain public education in, and appreciation of, the art and science of music in all its aspects by any means the trustees see fit, including through the presentation of public concerts and recitals.

In planning our activities, the trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance on public benefit and fee charging. We present concerts that are open to all and we aspire to a high standard of musical achievement, presenting professional artists alongside the choir formed from our members. We strive to ensure that ticket prices and other charges are affordable. We plan our annual budget and overall concert programme to keep ticket prices largely steady so that we can present a wide range of music to the public on equal terms. This cross-subsidy is significant: for our costlier concerts, the ticket price would need to be around double the usual level of £10 to £12 in order to recoup all costs.

In 2015-16 as in previous years, we offered a season ticket option which gave entry to our three programmed concerts for a total of just £25, a saving of over 20% on the price of individual tickets. For the fourth year in a row, there was a drop in take-up with only 17 subscribers for season tickets. The trustees will consider whether to continue with this concession.

We continued our policy of offering free admission to any young person under the age of 25 who is in full-time education. While we do not know whether this has influenced individuals to attend who would not otherwise have done so, we do know that the concession was claimed on at least 15 occasions. We will continue to offer this concession next season.

To limit barriers to membership of the choir, we have held membership subscriptions steady since 2010. In the face of increased running costs the trustees this year made a small increase (3.4%) in the subscription. We offer a termly payment option intended to assist members with limited cash flow. The subscription fee is waived for students in full-time education. A rough benchmark carried out at a funding seminar organised by Making Music suggested that our annual subscription is toward the lower end of the range for similar organisations.

Last year the trustees decided to designate funds from the charity's reserves to commission a new work to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Torbay Singers. The Trustees reached agreement in principle with the British composer Tarik O'Regan to write a short unaccompanied work for the choir. Unfortunately ill health and other commitments forced the composer to withdraw. The trustees approached three other British composers but were unable to reach agreement with any of them for various different reasons, largely around the timetable for delivery of the work. The trustees eventually concluded that the choir would benefit from exposure to a wider range of contemporary styles and composers in order to make a better-informed decision on whether and what to commission. Accordingly the trustees have released the funds designated for the commission and re-designated them to the Concert Production Costs Fund, with the intention of being able to mount larger-scale performances in and around the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season.

## **2. Achievements and performance 2015-16**

### **Chairman's Report**

Once again I feel that we have had a superb season. We began with our Angels and Shepherds concert, which was a very jolly Christmas performance, great fun for both the choir and the audience. The orchestra played beautifully and were really sensitive to the pieces and it was lovely for so many of the choir to have the opportunity of small solos.

For the Spring term we moved on to the Mozart 'double-bill'! This we performed in Totnes to a capacity audience and we literally sang our hearts out. This was a very demanding programme, but as usual Tina inspired and energised us to perform at our best and with the lovely orchestra and beautiful soloists it was a glorious concert.

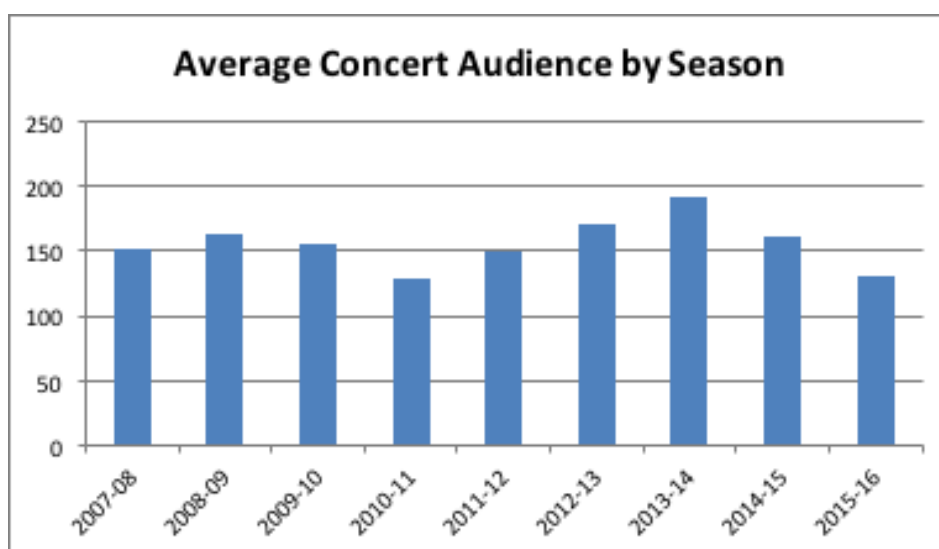
Our Summer concert saw us back in Torquay, but this time at St Luke's where our Faire is the Heaven concert was a celebration of British choral music, which was carefully selected by Tina and really worked well with the choir producing some beautiful blending and sensitive singing, which was very much appreciated by the audience. Sadly our audience numbers were disappointing at this concert which just emphasises how important it is for all of us individually to advertise our concerts and try to sell as many tickets in possible.

The end of the season was tinged with sadness as it saw us saying goodbye to Margaret Clark, who has been the choir's rehearsal accompanist over many years. On behalf of choir members past and present, the trustees would like to record our warmest thanks to Margaret for all the patient, warm-hearted and musical support she has provided over the years.

**Ticket sales for our concerts**, compared to the corresponding concert in the previous year, were:

	2015-16	2014-15
Autumn " <i>Angels and Shepherds</i> "	153	169
Spring (Mozart <i>Vespers &amp; Mass in C minor</i> )	155	172
Summer " <i>Faire is the Heaven</i> "	85	141
<b>Total</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>482</b>

The figures above assume that all season ticket holders attend all eligible concerts, so the actual numbers present at each concert are likely to have been lower.



The choice of repertoire and of concert venues strongly affects audience numbers, so year-to-year comparisons are of limited value. This season we performed in two venues where the choir had not performed before or in recent memory: St John's Totnes and St Luke's Torquay. While the concert at St John's was a sell-out, the seating capacity was limited by the size of the orchestra. Summer concerts are increasingly difficult to sell and the combination of mixed repertoire and unfamiliar venue produced a disappointingly small audience at St Luke's, which is an attractive venue both visually and acoustically.

### 3. Financial review

The charity ends the year less well-placed than planned in the original budget for the year, though still financially secure. The trustees had planned for an overall deficit for the year but in the event the deficit at £2,400 was around double that planned, for a number of reasons, including:

- Ticket sales for the spring and summer concerts were short of targets – indeed the summer concert yielded the lowest sales for any concert in recent years (60 direct sales);
- Seasonal income from programme advertising and season tickets is slowly declining;
- Membership numbers were slightly down and the cost of music hire has increased as we take on more diverse repertoire such as in the autumn and summer concerts. In this respect, the choir has probably been underspending for years compared to similar groups.

As in previous years, concert and non-concert expenses are shown separately in the accounts. “Non-concert” income and expenses are the “running costs” of the society (including rehearsals).

The society’s cash assets at the year’s end were £7,905. There is a small liability of £129 for outstanding Performing Rights fees due for payment in December 2016, shown “below the line”.

For the year ahead, due to a number of retirements and departures, the size of the choir is likely to be slightly smaller than in recent years. The Music Director considers that the maximum strength of the choir should be around 50. Accordingly, the budget assumes a drop in subscription income. Some costs will increase: our bank will introduce bank charges from October and the trustees will make a one-off provision for additional generic publicity materials ahead of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary season. These factors will require an increase in the annual membership subscription from £87 to £93. The trustees will as always review the subscription level for the following season.

The forthcoming concert season includes two programmes requiring soloists and/or instrumental forces: the autumn concert of works for choir with brass and the spring concert of Bach’s mass in B Minor with orchestra. As in recent years, there will be a small increase in ticket pricing for these concerts with higher production costs: from £10 to £12. Our recent experience suggests that this small increase does not “price out” audience members. Nevertheless, we expect the concert season to sustain a deficit of around £900 which will be offset against our Designated Fund for Concert Production Costs. This would leave the society with around £7,000 in cash assets at the end of the year.

#### **4. Reserves and Designated Funds**

As mentioned in section 1 above, the trustees were not able to reach agreement with a composer to commission a work to mark the choir’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The trustees have accordingly closed the designated Commissioning Fund of £4,250 and designated these funds to the Concert Production Cost Fund.

Given the level of cash assets held at the end of the year, the trustees have designated funds for the following purposes:

- Concert Production Cost Fund (£7,593), to allow the society to stage occasional concerts with larger instrumental forces or other higher costs, without the need to increase ticket prices beyond the reach of those with limited means. As well as the projected deficit on the 2016-17 concert programme, the Trustees are considering plans for a performance of Monteverdi's Vespers in 2017-18 that would be likely to call on this fund.

## **5. Reference and administrative details**

The Torbay Singers is an unincorporated association, registered with the Charity Commission as charity number 268917.

At the Annual General Meeting of the society held on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015, the members of the society resolved to adopt the new Model Constitution developed by Making Music in collaboration with the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission approved a "mass conversion" of Making Music member organisations to the new Model Constitution through a scheme dated 7<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

Under this Constitution and the Rules adopted by the trustees, the society is managed by a committee of three officers and four members with specific responsibilities. The committee members are elected by and out of the society's members at each Annual General Meeting with one third of the committee members retiring each year with the option of re-election for up to three terms of three years. Committee members are also the charity's trustees. The committee appoints the Music Director, who is a non-voting ex officio member of the committee. The committee makes its decisions on the management of the society by a majority of votes of those committee members present and voting, the chairman of the meeting having a casting vote where necessary.

At the time that this report was presented to the Annual General Meeting of the society, the committee members and trustees were:

Tina Guthrie	Music Director (ex officio, not a trustee)
Rachel Jermyn	Vice Chairman
Roger Matthews	Publicity Co-ordinator
Simon Milner	Treasurer
(Vacant)	Librarian
Andrew Richards	Secretary
Sue Roach	Chairman
Marea Sayer	Membership Secretary

The registered address of the society is:

1 The Mannings, Downeshead Lane, Crediton, Devon EX17 1HE.

This Annual Report and the accompanying Accounts were submitted to the Annual General Meeting of the society on 19 October 2016.

Approved on behalf of all the trustees by:

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**Sue Roach (Chairman)**

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**Date**

## Financial Statements for the year to 31 August 2016

In the period reported, the Society managed no restricted or endowment funds.

### Receipts and payments

	Non-concert £	Concerts £	Total Unrestricted Funds £	Last year £
<b>Receipts</b>				
Donations	-	-	-	66
Gift Aid	751	-	751	698
Grants	-	-	-	-
Sponsorship	-	-	-	-
Interest	3	-	3	2
Programmes/advertising	-	739	739	806
Refreshments/miscellaneous	48	284	333	274
Membership subscriptions	4,499	-	4,499	4,837
Ticket sales	-	4,272	4,272	5,740
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>5,302</b>	<b>5,296</b>	<b>10,598</b>	<b>12,424</b>
<b>Payments</b>				
General running costs	462	-	462	493
Music	635	-	635	531
Production and venue costs	-	1,169	1,169	1,431
Professional fees	3,520	6,020	9,540	7,827
Promotion costs	-	531	531	691
Rehearsal facilities	672	-	672	600
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>5,290</b>	<b>7,721</b>	<b>13,010</b>	<b>11,574</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>(2,425)</b>	<b>(2,413)</b>	<b>850</b>
<b>Cash funds last year end</b>			<b>10,318</b>	<b>9,468</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>			<b>7,905</b>	<b>10,318</b>

### Statement of assets and liabilities

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Last year
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Treasurer's Account	1,903	7,255
	Deposit Account	6,002	2,988
	Petty Cash	1	75
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>7,905</b>	<b>10,318</b>
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Gift Aid due	-	-
<b>B3 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Details		Estimated current value
	Lighting equipment		877
	Stock of sheet music		209
	Portable staging		1,746
<b>B4 Liabilities</b>	Details	Amount due	When due
	PRS fees for 2015-16	129	Dec-16

## Reserves and designated funds

In accordance with Reserves Policy adopted by the trustees, the society's funds at 31 August 2016 have been designated as follows:

Analysis of funds					
	At 1.09.2015	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	At 1.09.2016
<b>General Funds</b>					
Unrestricted income	300	10,598	- 13,010	2,425	312
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Commissioning Fund	4,250	-	-	(4,250)	-
Concert production cost fund	5,768	-	-	1,825	7,593
	10,318	10,598	(13,010)	-	7,905

## External scrutiny of the accounts

Where the gross annual income of a charity is less than £25,000 there is no legal requirement for external examination or audit of the accounts, except where this is required by the charity's governing document.

Item 17 of the Constitution of the Torbay Singers requires that: "The financial accounts shall be audited or examined to the extent required by legislation or, if there is no such requirement, scrutinized by a person who is independent of the Committee and then submitted to the members at the Annual General Meeting."

The trustees have asked that the scrutiny carried out by the "person independent of the Committee" should be sufficient in the opinion of that person to confirm the statements made below. The trustees are extremely grateful to Keith Wainwright for carrying out the scrutiny.

### Scrutiny of the accounts of the Torbay Singers for the year to 31 August 2016

Based on the information supplied to me:

- the accounts provide a factual summary of the money received and paid by the Torbay Singers during the year and;
- there is no matter to which attention should be drawn to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Keith Wainwright