



**Minutes of Committee meeting held on 17th September 2024 at 2:00 p.m.
At 56 Kellaway Avenue**

Present: Gwen Alwakeel, Gill Bowen, Margie Bushell, Guy Hawthorn (Chair), Bill Jerrome, Mary Neave, Barbara Rusbridge, Sarah Scott.

1. Apologies for absence: Marella Fison, Barbara Neville, Richard Pedlar.

2. Minutes of the last meeting held 2nd July 2024 - these were approved.

3. Matters arising - item 8 c) - Barbara Rusbridge reported that John Talbot has agreed to play the piano for the Christmas concert. He will also attend the final Monday rehearsal but not the pre-concert rehearsal on the day.

4. Officers' reports

a) Chairperson - nothing to report as Guy had only just started as interim chairperson.

b) Secretary - At the end of last term Geraldine Cutler left the choir as she had moved out of the area. At the start of this term Ken Thawley retired from the choir after 25 years. Both will be sorely missed. One soprano has returned to the choir.

As at the date of the committee meeting there were 8 sopranos, 11 altos, 5 tenors and 3 basses on the signed up membership list, although 2 altos are taking a term out. One new alto and two new basses have started coming but not yet formally joined the choir.

The Christmas concert is booked for Friday 13th December in the Baptist Church, and Toasting the Tree for Sunday 15th December. Next term's dates are yet to be agreed.

Gwen Alwakeel will be standing down as secretary at the AGM, which will be on Monday 30th September.

c) Treasurer - The accounts for the year 2023/2024 have yet to be audited, but there is a surplus of around £980 this year. The summer concert made a surplus of £82.45.

In the coming year there will be extra costs - around £400 extra for the hire of the Carey Hall (an increase from £24 per hour to £30 per hour), and the committee has already agreed that Barbara's fee be increased from £70 to £90 per session - an increase of around £660 in the year. The surplus should cover these extras, and there was also a surplus last year of £1500.

d) Social Secretary - a summer tea party was held in Richard Pedlar's garden in August, attended by around 20 choir members and declared to be a great success. The committee approved Margie's suggestion of a Christmas lunch again this year - she will try to arrange it for December 10th at Henbury Golf club.

e) Librarian - more volunteers are still needed to store music. Guy will ask again for people to help by taking a box of music, to be accessed by the librarian when needed.

Ken has been storing all the Christmas music: - as he is leaving the choir, Barbara Rusbridge offered to store the Christmas music in future. Storage may become more of a problem as more new music is purchased and if choir numbers fall and/or members move to smaller homes.

Ken is also holding the choir's archive material. Guy will ask Ken if he would like to continue as archivist, and if not, to look into alternative storage.

f) Voice Representatives - nothing specific to report.

g) Musical Director - the summer concert went very well. Going forward, as choir members get older and if numbers go down it may be good to think about putting on smaller events and/or joining with other choirs, rather than putting on a large concert, which entails a lot of work.

5. Review of subscription for the coming choir year - the treasurer reported that there has been a financial surplus for each of the past 2 years - greatly helped by not paying for a pianist in rehearsals. Barbara is still happy to continue this arrangement. Even with the increase in costs the choir should be able to cover expenses for the coming year, and the surplus could also maybe be used to pay for a soloist in a concert. The treasurer, Sarah Scott, proposed keeping the subscription at £7 per member per week. This was seconded by Margie Bushell and carried unanimously.

6. AGM preparation

- a) The agenda was agreed
- b) Committee positions - Sarah Scott volunteered to stand as secretary but will therefore have to stand down as treasurer. Tim Bushell has volunteered to stand as treasurer. At the AGM Margie will ask if anyone would like to take over as social secretary - if not, she is willing to continue.
- c) Oporto shield and book - after discussion it was agreed that it was no longer appropriate to award this annually. The committee wished to give the shield and book to Ken Thawley as a farewell gift and in recognition of his contribution to the choir over the years. Guy will invite Ken to the start of the AGM so the presentation can be made.

7. Recruitment of new members - use could be made of social media platforms and local Whatsapp groups to attract new members, and the free listings advert could be placed in a wider range of local magazines - e.g. Bishopston - as people may be willing to travel out of their immediate area to attend a choir.

8. Any other business

- a) The committee agreed to offer Honorary membership to Mary Horton, a founder member of the choir, and to Ken Thawley. These should be ratified at the AGM.
- b) Barbara will look into acquiring a light weight portable rostrum for use at concerts, as the present one is heavy and impractical to transport and set up.

9. Date of next meeting

Meeting of the concert planning team - Tuesday 12th November at 2pm at 56 Kellaway Avenue.
Next full committee meeting - to be arranged.