



# Minutes Wareham Choral Society AGM 2018

Monday  
1st Oct 2018  
9 pm at URC

## 1. Welcome to

Michael Alder, Pauline Alder, John Astley, Eve Baker, Maureen Bayliss, Nancy Baynes, Miriam Bell, Heather Cerullo, Gideon Daly, David Edgington, Diane Goff, Alan Green, Cathy Green, Margaret Harris, Jack Haworth, Jennifer Haworth, Yvonne Hunter, John Radford, Gaynor Kirby, David Kemp, Mark Lapper, Marion Leggott, Melvin Leggott, Bob Newnham, Jean Manning, Joan Naylor, Mary Norrish, Diana Peel, Judith Price, Elizabeth Read Wilson, Sarah Welton, Brian Wilkins

## 2. Apologies for Absence

Alison Allwright, Hazel Carter, Wendy Crees, Jane Freeman, Nancy Gibson, Mike Hampton, Hilary Jordan, Chris Kemp, Angela Salter

## 3. Minutes of last year's AGM

These were accepted as a true record.

## 4. Matters Arising

## 5. Proposed Amendments to Constitution

The committee had proposed amendments to two clauses of the constitution. These proposals, and the reason for the amendments, had been circulated to members with the requisite two weeks notice. The details of the changes are given in Attachment 1.

It was noted that more than two-thirds of the membership was present at the meeting, so that a vote on the proposals could be held. Each amendment was voted on by a show of hands, and both were carried nearly unanimously.

**Action: Secretary to modify the constitution accordingly.**

## 6. Chairman's Report

Judith Price reported as follows:

*Firstly, I would like to share with you important reflections on both our November and Christmas concerts of 2017.*

*The November concert programme included a selection of familiar and well-loved anthems by Joubert, Purcell, Parry, Lloyd and the first performance of a composition commissioned by Nigel for WCS. This was a setting of the British Legion Remembrance Day Exhortation 'They shall grow not old' by young composer Nils Greenhow.*

*We also engaged a quartet of singers from Westminster to support the choir since preparation time was just 8 weeks.*

*It was agreed in committee that the concert justified a ticket price of £12.50. Some members questioned this, but there was no dissent from the punters. The concert was well applauded, and we received one letter of congratulation.*

*However, we are aware that some choral societies reduce the price of tickets sold in advance by choir members and we agreed to raise this issue with you at this AGM.*

(see AOB for a summary of this discussion)

*Despite our Christmas concert falling once again in Advent, we attracted an enthusiastic audience – probably as it featured our local mezzo-soprano Grace Lovelass, who never fails to engage, the trumpet player Reuben Bennett from Swanage and a rather reluctant treble.*

*With the assistance of several ladies, the church was decorated, and candles put in place which unfortunately we failed to light. However, the atmosphere was festive and the concert ended with sincere thanks and a presentation to Nigel.*

*Some members were disappointed that the intention to fill a slot singing carols at Kingston Lacy did not come to fruition. Jackie March agreed to lead us but when we met to rehearse it was clear that without the support of a keyboard we were unlikely to do the choir justice or please an audience.*

*Similarly, we were asked by the URC this September to be included in a ‘show-casing’ event for users of the facilities here. In fact, we and other groups found it impracticable.*

*I would like to take this opportunity to thank Brian and the URC for the use of this hall each week. It is vastly better than the church – spacious, with an excellent acoustic, even better since the floor has been renovated*

*Nigel announced his intention to resign in late Autumn.*

*Realising that we were unlikely to engage a conductor in time to prepare us for the challenging task of performing Gerontius, I contacted David Fawcett and came to an agreement with him and John that together they would cover our choir rehearsals. I would like at this point to flag-up the tremendous debt that we owe John. It is our immense good fortune to have such an accomplished, talented and sought-after accompanist willing to take up the baton when requested and always with such good humour.*

*The process of appointing our new MD Hazel Ricketts is told in a later section of these minutes (see below).*

*Bob and I met with Hazel and Rosemary during the summer and agreed to hold a Come and Sing with favourite pieces that speak of remembrance but other contemporary compositions that seek to promote peace, for example The Wall by Chris Hutchings. We hope that this early introduction to new music will encourage you to come, enjoy and support the visitors. It is an opportunity to introduce Hazel as our new MD and hopefully attract new members.*

*Finally, a huge welcome back to John Astley!*

## **7. Treasurer’s Report**

Peter Davenport resigned as Treasurer for personal reasons. The Treasurer's report was not available at the meeting, but was produced later, by the new Treasurer, so is included below.

## Treasurer's Report for WCS Accounts 1 Sept 2017 – 31 Aug 2018

### Membership income:

Annual subscriptions received : 4560

### Membership expenditure :

MD	2675	
Accompanist	1380	
PRS Insurance		220
URC hall hire	420	
Music hire	24	
Printing of music	158	
DGS	720	
Commissioned work	100	
MD leaving present	200	

Total membership expenditure: 5897

**Total membership balance:** -1337

### Concerts income:

Ticket sales 2657

### Concerts expenditure:

Advertising/printing	397
Refreshments	152
Soloists	400
Church/venue hire	100
Incidentals	103

Total concerts expenditure: 1152

**Total concerts balance:** 1505

<b>Summary:</b>	Membership income:	+4560
	Membership expenditure:	-5897
	Concerts income:	+2657
	Concerts expenditure:	-1152

**TOTAL ANNUAL BALANCE:** +168

WCS Current Account Balance a/o 31 Aug 2018

1856.26

## 8. DGoS Report

Sarah Welton reported on Guild activities. The Gerontius concert had been a success, even in financial terms, the latter because of the huge efforts of the PAC in ancillary fund-raising.

But the Guild might need to reconsider its role in putting on such big concerts. The future of the Guild will be under discussion at its AGM on Oct 20<sup>th</sup>. Sarah referred the meeting to 3 documents circulated by the Guild chairman, and urged WCS members to attend.

The Guild currently has 3 vacancies on its committee – Treasurer, Secretary and Publicity Officer.

## 9. Appointment of New Music Director

The MD vacancy was advertised through Making Music, British Choirs on the Net. and the Gerontius website, and we were both surprised and encouraged to receive four applications.

Dimitrios Chrysostomou and Graham Coatman were at the opposite ends of the age range but exceptionally well qualified in both choral and instrumental music. Graham's experience was amazingly broad.

These were followed by Rosemary and Hazel's applications.

David Fawcett was interested but needed more time to consider other options - we did however include his name on the ballot sheet that you completed following the trial conducting sessions. In the event he decided not to apply.

The committee decided that all four candidates deserved a second interview and invited Mark Lapper to join the committee for the final decision.

Rosemary and Hazel had by this time asked to be considered as a package with Rosemary advising/mentoring Hazel and being prepared to stand-in on any occasion if Hazel was indisposed. Dimitrios had withdrawn his application due to changing circumstances.

The committee deliberated at length but agreed to appoint Hazel, bearing in mind your choice where she topped the poll (including David Fawcett) with 62% of the votes.

It should be noted that WCS is only paying Hazel and not Rosemary!

## 10. Election of Officers

Both Chairman and Secretary were prepared to stand for re-election, and no other nominations for these offices had been received, either prior to, or during, the AGM. So both were re-elected.

The Treasure's office was currently vacant. Elizabeth Read Wilson volunteered, with some trepidation, and was duly re-elected. Jennifer Haworth will instruct Elizabeth in what she needs to do.

**Action: JH and ERW to arrange to meet for tuition.**

## 11. Election of Committee Members

All other committee members were prepared to continue in office. No other nominations for these positions had been received, either prior to, or during, the AGM. So all were re-elected.

The committee is now:

Chairman	Judith Price
Secretary	Bob Newnham
Treasurer	Elizabeth Read Wilson
Librarian	Bob Newnham
Members Rep	David Edgington
Publicity	Eve Baker

## **12.A.O.B.**

The meeting discussed our ticket pricing policy.

Should we allow tickets sold via members to attract a small discount, a scheme used successfully by other choirs (for example, Broadstone)? This would give customers an incentive to buy in advance and give members a stronger selling pitch.

We decided that we would offer a discount for tickets sold by choir members only. So for example, a £12 ticket might be offered for £10 via choir members).

What should our policy be on selling tickets to younger customers?

We decided that accompanied children under the age of 12 should be free, and young adults (under the age of 18) should pay half-price.

It will be up to the committee to decide the precise details of this for each future concert.

Events at the Gerontius concert prompted a discussion about first aid arrangements at our concerts.

In the past Peter Davenport had fulfilled the role of first-aider informally, without ever having been called into action. Mark Lapper said that he was a qualified first-aider and was prepared to fulfill this role at concerts in future.

## **Attachment 1 – Proposed amendments to constitution.**

This document gives the required 2 week's notice of two proposed amendments to the WCS constitution which the committee will submit for ratification at the AGM on October 1st 2018.

The following paragraphs give the existing wording of the relevant clause in the constitution, explain the context, the reasons for wishing to amend it, and the proposed new wording.

### **Section 4 para 3**

**The Chairman shall hold office for one year and be eligible for re-election up to a maximum of three years, after which they must stand down for at least one year. Other officers shall hold office for one year and be eligible for re-election up to a maximum of five years, after which they must stand down for at least one year.**

This clause is presumably intended to prevent an officer either 'clinging on' to office unreasonably or being impelled to stay in office for want of a potential replacement. However, the difficulties WCS has in persuading members to stand for office (in common with many other amateur organisations of similar size) make this regulation difficult to enforce. The current Chairman and Secretary are both in breach of this regulation, and our previous treasurer held office for 17 years continuously.

So it is proposed that the clause is amended as follows:

**The Chairman shall hold office for one year and be eligible for re-election up to a maximum of three years, after which they must stand down for at least one year. Other officers shall hold office for one year and be eligible for re-election up to a maximum of five years, after which they must stand down for at least one year.**

**However if no replacement candidate is available, an officer may, at the discretion of the members at the AGM, continue to perform the office during the year in which they should stand down, and be eligible for re-election subsequently.**

### **Section 9**

**An Annual General Meeting shall be held no later than the end of September each year.**

The WCS year finishes at the end of August, and we start again in September after the summer recess. It is clearly desirable to hold the AGM soon after the end of the year, but holding it in September has not always proved practicable in the past; in fact the last time we succeeded in doing so was 2002!

So it is proposed that the clause is amended as follows:

**An Annual General Meeting shall be held as soon as practicable after the start of the autumn term, and no later than the end of December.**