

THE STONDON SINGERS

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 24th APRIL 2018 AT 7.45 PM AT THE PRIORY CHURCH OF ST. LAURENCE, BLACKMORE

Present: Michelle Arthur (chairman), Marjolein Hillman, Matthew Butt, Christopher Tinker, David Schacht, Faith Marchal, David Lloyd, Julia Dimon, David Evans, Michael Aves, Nick Alston, Chris Bradbury, Chris Overy, Audrey Cassidy, Karen Mortley, Lindsey Wyman, Josephine Gordon, Kate Hanson., Mark Ellis and Jack Dixon (late).

Apologies: Annabel Malton, Julie Lorkins, Angela Sparke, Phil Holmes, Mavis Holmes and Katharine Adams.

Minutes of the AGM 25th April 2017

Printed copies were circulated. The minutes were adopted as a true record.

Proposed: Audrey Cassidy, seconded: David Evans. All choir members were in favour.

Matters Arising

Michelle Arthur mentioned that the welcome pack for new members has now been put together, consisting of a welcoming letter and some basic information. Most of the required information can be found on the website.

Trustees' Report

The report was published on the website, but some choir members had had trouble accessing the correct page. There were no questions regarding the report.

Michelle Arthur added the following:

The William Byrd Anniversary Concert this July will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the first concert given by The Stondon Singers. It is worth reflecting on how, since that time, the choir has increased its reputation, broadened its repertoire and developed its engagement with the wider public.

We are now a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, which, among other advantages, brings us financial benefits in terms of Gift Aid. This status comes with responsibilities. As a registered charity, we are expected to do things for the public benefit. In our case this involves the promotion, improvement and development of choral music, through the performance of concerts and other activities connected with choral music. Here are a few examples of how we achieve this. We perform and commission works from contemporary composers. This year James Davey has been commissioned to compose a piece marking our fiftieth anniversary to be performed at the William Byrd concert. We have just sung Evensong at Bury St Edmunds, standing in for the Cathedral choir. We engage with the wider community through events like the Lunchtime Concert at Chelmsford Cathedral, which was very well attended, and our forthcoming workshop with Ralph Allwood. Your support for these additional events is essential and much appreciated.

Then there are the administrative and financial responsibilities. Through prudent management of finances, we were able to put on the St John Passion with orchestra and a fine group of soloists (including our very own Mark Ellis) at Chelmsford Cathedral. In addition, we are looking to include some instrumental soloists in our forthcoming season.

Thank you, Jose, for all your work on the finances.

In line with Charity Commission recommendations new policies were put in place last year. These have been reviewed and where necessary updated. This year new regulations on data protection require us to obtain the active consent of members, patrons and friends, in order to hold their personal data and make contact by email and telephone. Please kindly fill in the consent form and return it to Marjolein tonight.

The Trustees have, as always, been very busy on your behalf and very generous with their time and talents. I have already mentioned Jose. Nick does a tremendous amount of work before, during and after concerts frequently aided by his wife Pippa and willing choir members and their relatives. Annabel makes sure we can source the music we need for our planned programmes and where necessary makes editions for us. Faith has taken on the dual role of Publicity and Patron's secretary and is bringing us into the twenty first century making sure we use avenues of communication like Facebook and Twitter. Phil organises the printing and distribution of tickets as well as managing our website: both are important and time-consuming tasks. What can I say about Marjolein? Except that she does a fantastic job keeping everything up to date and in order. And of course, it is not just the committee who help with the smooth running of things. Matthew is our deputy conductor, Michael Aves has taken on the formatting of concert programmes as well as the printing. Chris Overy helps with the setting up before rehearsals and when 10 past nine comes we are all so grateful to Julia for the teas and coffees. There isn't one person here tonight who hasn't helped in some way.

David Schacht, a founder member and a long-standing committee member and trustee is standing down from the committee having fulfilled a number of roles, most recently being responsible for advertising and representing us on the Brentwood Arts Council. Thank you, David, for being the repository of the Stondon's history and for your help behind the scenes with concert management. You will be greatly missed and we look forward to you taking on the role of narrator when we perform Vaughan Williams' 'Oxford Elegy' at our autumn concert.

(David was presented with a bottle of whisky.)

I wish to thank Christopher for his calm, careful and methodical preparation of the choir which allows us to approach performances with confidence and means that no choir member is discouraged from asking 'Do you mind if we do that bit again?' at rehearsals. It has been a privilege to work with this committee and to sing with such a talented group of musicians. Thank you all for your hard work and commitment this year.

Treasurer's Report

Josephine Gordon gave her report and a copy was placed on record.

Music Director's Report

Christopher Tinker gave his report and a copy was placed on record.

Election of Trustees to Hold Office until the AGM in 2018

The list of officers standing was included on the Agenda for the AGM.

Josephine Gordon
 Marjolein Hillman
 Annabel Malton
 Phil Holmes
 Faith Marchal
 Nick Alston
 Chris Bradbury

Michael Aves proposed to elect the nominees en bloc, seconded by Mark Ellis. All choir members were in favour.

Any Other Business

On behalf of the committee Nick Alston thanked Michelle Arthur for all her hard work and her good leadership, remarking that things only work well when they are well led. All the policies and the new data protection rules were tiresome to organise and then there were personnel issues as well as Safe Guarding ones. This year has

already been fabulous and has been coordinated and led by Michelle with dedication, calmness and kindness.

Michelle was presented with a plant.

Michelle responded that she was very touched.

Christopher Tinker requested that it be put on record that for him as musical director it had been a particular pleasure to have worked alongside Michelle and that he will miss her very much.

The meeting was closed at 8.12 pm.