

Fakenham Choral Society Committee Minutes

Date & Location	Monday 15 th July. 2pm at Louise's home in Wood Norton
Present	Gill Ashby Colin Blackmore Sally Bone Tim Burton Rosemary Dear Mark Jones Diana Lyons Louise Myhill Sonia Radley Tracey Thompson

GLOSSARY			
Gill Ashby	GA	Mark Jones	MJ
Colin Blackmore	CB	Louise Myhill	LM
Roger Burbidge	RB	Sonia Radley	SR
Tim/Sue Burton	TB/SB	Tracey Thompson	TT
Rosemary/Brian Dear	RD/BD	Shirley Collyer	SC
Jonathan Dodd	JD	Fakenham Parish Church	FPC
Diana Lyons	DL	Salvation Army (Hall)	SA(H)
Jean Mayne	JM	Justin Harmer	JH
Christmas Tree Festival	CTF	Stephanie Walsh	SW
Mandy Etherington	ME	Sally Bone	SB

Minutes

Agenda Ref	Summary/Actions	Action Owner
1.	Apologies RB, JM SB was warmly welcomed to her first Committee meeting	
2.	Declarations of Interest There were none	
3.	Minutes of the meeting held on 6th June These were agreed and signed	
4.	Matters Arising not on the Agenda i. Amended minutes from 13 th May had been signed ii. Summer Newsletter – request for articles had been circulated for TB to collate. TB to chase up any not received iii. TB had explored the Ticket Source discount via Making Music. This reduced the commission by 0.5%	TB
5.	Correspondence • VE Day invitation from Fakenham Town Council. Angela Glynn had emailed CB to ask if the choir would consider taking part in the Town's VE Day events in May 2025. CB had replied that we would need further information but were open to being involved. No further updates since this. • Message from Roger Burbidge. TT read out an email received from RB, thanking the committee for all its hard work and, on top of that, arranging for the gift to mark his 50 years with the choir. He and Elaine were looking forward to deciding what the purchase with the donations.	
6.	Music & Marketing Group Update i. <u>Proposed change of Spring 2026 concert date</u> Committee agreed to moving the date to April 11 th (no break during Holy Week). The summer concert would remain the same (20 th June 2026). ii. <u>FPC Update</u> RD confirmed the concert dates until Christmas 2025 were in the diary. However building plans are still fluid, awaiting confirmation they can install a gas boiler and further building work. It was suggested that all concert dates in 2024/25 season are checked with other venues. Cley were in the process of getting rid of all their pews. RD to follow up iii. <u>Bringing June concert dates forward</u> This was to encourage more singers to commit to the summer term. Committee decided to keep dates as they are for 2025/2026 iv. <u>Updated suggestions for 2024/25 programme</u> Spring: Decision to hire an organ for Spring 2025 discarded (cost - Kodaly needed several soloists). This would be replaced by Elgar The Music Makers (1 soloist, orchestra of c35). We would start the learning process in September. Concert to include Elgar Sea Pictures (soloist only) and Parry Blest pair of Sirens (SATB 4 part version – Gresham's has enough copies to borrow). Summer: Will Todd Mass in Blue plus a contrasting piece TBC (possibly Baroque). Committee felt enough members had sung the Todd before to allow it to be learnt in time v. <u>Proposed new email account for marketing</u> TT suggested this would be helpful to keep this separate from personal emails. Committee agreed this could be done	RD TT
7.	Summer Concert Review – June 22nd 2024 Excellent feedback from audience and singers on the mix of music, although some had been a challenge to learn. Audience numbers were good considering it was post-Verdi. Soloists were all excellent and Rory and Julian should be used again in a more serious performance.	

8.	Summer Garden Party Review – June 25th 2024 A lovely evening enjoyed by members (and plus ones), Friends of and Sponsors. Thanks to SR for organising the event and those that helped on the day. Special thanks to Lady Leicester for use of her beautiful home.	
9.	Brief Review of 50th anniversary season and things learnt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It had been really hard work for a relatively small group of people. The end result had been excellent. • Forward planning (including the site visits) had been hugely valuable. Start planning well in advance! • Booking Community Centre for orchestra had been really successful and should be factored into future events • Working on spring music in the autumn had taken the pressure off the spring term • Had it not been for the amount of grants, sponsorship and donations, we would have made a loss of c£4,000 	
	MJ left the meeting at this point.	
10.	Treasurer's Report (see separate sheet for full details) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Update Balances: Main £1,649.52 Friends £3,528.85 No 3 £200 Deposit £19944.77 Total £24,823.14 This compares with reserves of £19,297.97 at the start of the financial year, so projects a surplus of £5,525.17 for the year ending 30th June 2024. These figures are not final as the full accounts are being completed ready for audit. GA emphasised in her report that the surplus had resulted from one-off receipts or items which can't be guaranteed. Without these the deficit would have reduced the reserves to £15,335.21. An exceptional year with an exceptional final outcome due to a great deal of hard work. Consideration of Reserves GA will need to submit an annual report to the Charity Commission. Our reserves had been increased last year in view of the increased costs of the 50th anniversary. GA's report summarised advice from the Commission on setting reserves. Costs have increased (soloists, staging storage, SAH hire etc.) which need to be factored in. We must provide a rationale to members if subs rise vs. the current level of reserves. Committee decided to see how the upcoming season went without so much fund raising. It was likely to result in the reserves returning to the c£15,000 mark. Proposed Subs for Members and Friends of Committee agreed not to raise Friends of FCS subscriptions. Offering leavers 50% off their first year as a Friend was a nice gesture we should maintain. We are aware of increasing costs coming up (stage storage, SAH hire, insurance) and there has been no rise in subs since 2019 (partly to recover from Covid and to encourage a larger membership for the 50th). Subs do not go towards concert costs and hardly cover our rehearsal expenditure. Committee agreed subs should rise to £138 (proposed RD, 2nd SR and all agreed). This is still less than £4 per evening and compares favourably with KLFC (£168) and SCCS (£130). The likelihood of an increase this year was flagged in the 2023 summer newsletter. New subs to be shared in the summer newsletter. MD and Accompanist remuneration GA had provided suggestions. Committee agreed that, as MJ was now finding soloists, his concert fee should be increased to £600. The weekly fees would increase to £138 for MJ and £88 to JH. Concert fees for the accompanist would vary according to the programme, but should be up to £400 (where they are the only musician). TT would email MJ and JH with the news. Audit Andrew Steward has agreed to carry out the audit once again Soloist fees Committee felt it would be helpful to provide MJ with a fee range when engaging soloists. As we had increased payments last season, Committee agreed that £400 - £450 would be appropriate. However, if the soloist requested more than the upper limit, MJ should refer it to the committee for clearance. TT would pass this on to MJ. Gill was thanked for the huge amount of work involved in the FCS accounts, in particular for the last year which has been extra challenging. 	TT TT TT
11.	Membership Matters and Recruitment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LM felt that the Verdi had drawn in new members, but there may be some changes come September. • We do need to recruit, especially tenors, and LM will contact those who were put on a waiting list last year. • It is sad that we still have members who have yet to sing in a concert. Why is this? • In any recruitment publicity, summer newsletter or website, we need to emphasise that we need to know people are coming along to try us out rather than them just turning up. 	LM
12.	AGM - 1st October 2024 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Committee willing to stand again All would continue, expect RB and TT. TM and DL had reached the end of their 3 year term so would need to be re-elected. SB would also need to be elected. At least one more committee member was needed. As no basses were on the committee it would be good to recruit one. This would be added to the newsletter. 	TT

	<p>ii. Recruitment of committee members to key roles It was increasingly important to have deputies for all the key roles. At the Verdi performance both RB and JM were unable to attend, putting additional pressure on RD. RD would be willing to stand for Chairman, but was keen to say it would be for a limited period only.</p> <p>iii. AGM Format This would start at 7.30pm, followed by a rehearsal</p>	
13.	<p>Secretary Recruitment Update The main concern with finding soloists had been resolved. MJ would find them and negotiate the fee, but the committee would deal with contracts. A final check on who is doing what would be needed. RD would be happy to do less frequent group emails (monthly was suggested).</p>	TT/SB
14.	<p>Christmas Concert – start time and ticket price</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A decision was required to allow SC to begin the marketing plan• With the concert being sponsored in full (or nearly full) Committee agreed the event should be free. Programmes would be sold (likely £1) and donations in buckets (also to consider card donations)• Start time agreed as 5.30pm.• TT to inform SC• Committee suggest Xmas Knights as a concert title (TB had other thoughts!) and wondered if we could include Sir Christèmas from the white carol book to continue the theme• On a serious note, we did need to ensure that stewards knew where stocks are mince pies were kept and have them ready on platters for the interval. Something to assign to ME.	TT
15.	<p>Sponsorship and Fundraising</p> <p>i. Sponsorship and Grants RD would like someone else to take on sponsors. It needs persistence. Choir members need to be encouraged to approach firms they use to ask about sponsorship. Committee agreed we should not apply for a Market Tolls grant in the next financial year</p> <p>ii. Make & Bake Sale 12th November. Committee needs to agree a selling plan (before rehearsal as well as in break). Date to be added to the summer news letter</p> <p>iii. Bridget Moss Open Garden Proof that one person can make a real difference. The event raised £570, however it was mostly Bridget’s friends who came along to support.</p>	TT
16.	<p>Website Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• TB confirmed he had received lots of excellent photos from Roger Townsin which he would use across the website and have as event galleries. Committee agreed that, if Roger was happy, he should be encouraged to continue photographing our events• Document uploads were continuing onto the Committee area of the site. TB did question whether everything TT had provided was relevant, but she confirmed that documents had already been thinned.• TB had plans, come the autumn, to change current website passwords.	
17.	<p>Librarian</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Norwich Library were buying 50 copies Jenkins ‘Joy to the World’ and would look elsewhere for the balance.• Editions of scores to be included in the summer newsletter. It would be helpful if members let SR know if they are buying their own scores• SR gave a note of caution that orchestral score hire can be expensive. It had cost £140 per carol last Christmas• SR intends to sell the FCS white carol books in the autumn. This will alleviate the lack of storage at the SAH	TT
18.	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Come & Sing 2025</u> RD had been in touch with MJ. A couple of dates had been proposed (1st and 8th March) which MJ could do. Confirmation of which date would need to wait until the schools returned in September. Two ideas for music – reprise the Verdi choruses or the same movement from several works (e.g. Glorias). Committee on balance liked the Verdi idea in the hope that more FCS members would take part and singers from other choirs who don’t get the opportunity to sing large works would come along.• <u>New music fund proposal</u> TT suggested an amount be set aside (perhaps from the Friends of?) for single sheet music. This was often not available to hire and buying would provide an opportunity to increase the diversity of music. Once purchased, choir members could buy their own and any balance could be hired out (and take less room to store). Committee agreed this was an excellent way to explore new music. TT would contact SW for her thoughts• <u>Flower presentation donations</u> DL asked TB if we could ensure the florist who donates presentation bouquets be given better recognition in the programmes. Perhaps we could include a logo• <u>A presentation for JH</u> Due to an oversight, JH was not presented with a gift at the summer concert. A bottle was found and given to him after the end of the performance, but DL had bought a bottle of prosecco to give to JH at the first rehearsal of term• <u>Attendance at start of term</u> LM asked if the newsletter / group email could ask members to let LM know if they couldn’t attend in the first few weeks of term	TT TT

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Christmas Tree Festival</u> GA confirmed we have a tree. More information and requests for help to come • <u>Donation of erasers</u> GA had bought a box of rubbers for choir members to use / purchase for a donation • <u>Steward awareness of concert dates</u> Committee suggested we should let stewards know about forthcoming concert dates now, to be followed up by JM nearer the time. TT offered to circulate the dates now in JM's absence 	TT
20.	<p>Date of Next Meeting Monday 19th August, 2pm at GA's home in Kettlestone. RD gave her apologies.</p> <p>LM was thanked for her hospitality. Meeting closed at 4.35pm</p>	

Signed as a true record (name)

Print name Date