

**London Welsh Male Voice Choir**  
**Minutes of Annual General Meeting**  
**16<sup>th</sup> May, 2013**

**Chairman:** Keith Warren.

**Secretary:** Nick Withers.

**Present:** In total 76 choristers, including, in addition to the Chairman and Secretary, the following Choir Trustees: Eirian Lewis (Vice Chairman), Harry Planche (Treasurer), Rowland Francis (Concert Secretary), Brian Johnson (Registrar), Geraint Lewis (T1 Rep), Phil John (T2 Rep), Phil Griffith (B1 Rep), Lyn Leyshon (B2 Rep).

Also present were Edward-Rhys Harry (MD) and Phyllis Pritchard (Hon. Member).

**Apologies:** Anthony Lea, Mike Benson, Phil Chalk, Paul Davies, Hugh Harkett, Peter Kirby, Martin Garnett, Bob Jones, Hywel Jones, Bob Mountney, Mel Simmons, Arthur Simpson, Brian Taylor, David Williams, Nigel Williams.

There were also apologies from Huw Edwards (Choir President) and Caroline Simmons (Hon. Member)

**Venue:** Main Hall, London Welsh Centre.

**1. Keith Warren called the meeting to order at 19:37.**

1. There were 107 choristers eligible to attend and vote at this meeting. 76 were present exceeding the minimum number of 54 to be quorate.

**2. A message from our President, Huw Edwards, to the 2013 AGM. (Full message on members web)**

The Chairman read out the message prepared by our President Huw Edwards. He acknowledged the hard work that choristers had put in to make this an exceptionally enjoyable and successful year. He referred to the very successful Wales Choir of the World Concert at the Royal Festival Hall, and the Festival of Male Voice Choirs at the Royal Albert Hall.

He paid tribute to Keith Warren, for his "exemplary service to the Choir over so many years in his role as Chairman", and Rowland Francis, "after three superb decades in the role of Concert Secretary".

**3. Election Preparation –**

1. Ballot papers were distributed to the choristers present by the Voice Reps.
2. Nominations had been received for all posts a week prior to this
3. There were two contested posts, that of Chairman, and Vice Chairman.
4. Identification of Candidates. KW asked each of the candidate's present to identify himself as his name was called.
5. The committee had not put any names forward for Vice Presidents, or Honorary members. No nominations were received from the floor.

6. Tellers. The following acted as Teller to count the votes Neil Dacey (T1), Alan Waldek (T2), Ferris Ash (B1) and Richard Snowden (B2). A short time was allowed for the ballot paper to be completed and the ballot papers were all collected before moving on to the next item on the Agenda.

#### 4. **To approve Minutes of the AGM of 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 2012**

(Including reconvened AGM of 27<sup>th</sup> September, 2012)

1. The Draft Minutes of the AGM of the 5<sup>th</sup> May 2011 had been available to choristers from the Secretary for the previous two weeks and were distributed to choristers with the Annual Accounts prior to the meeting.

2. Allan Waldek proposed that the Draft Minutes of the AGM be accepted and Pat Barnett seconded. On a show of hands, there was a substantial majority in favor, with 1 abstention and none against accepting the Minutes.

#### 5. **Matters Arising from the AGM Minutes**

1. There were no matters arising from the 2012 AGM minutes.

#### 6. **Collection of outstanding Ballot papers**

1. KW checked that all the ballot papers had been passed to the tellers at this stage.

#### 7. **Musical Director's Report (Full report is available on the members web).**

1. Edward stated that the first four year phase of a 12 year plan to develop the Choir had been effective. This year had seen some noticeable performances, but there was still need for improvement. He thanked the Choristers for their responsiveness and support to the changes put in place.
2. He thanked the Choir for the opportunity to conduct the 2012 RAHF, and was honoured that he had been appointed as musical director until 2014.
3. He thanked the outgoing committee members, Keith Warren for his support as Chairman, and Rowland Francis for his service as Concert Secretary.

#### 8. **Chairman's Report (Full report is available on the members web).**

1. The retiring Chairman, Keith Warren, said this was his seventh and final Statement to the AGM as Chairman having originally been elected to the post at the 2006 AGM and had been Vice Chairman for three years before this. He said it had been a privilege to serve as Chairman and believed that the Choir continued to be a vibrant and living organism: musically, financially and socially.
2. The Choir's finances were in a much better state than at the 2012 AGM, with the surplus from the successful 2012 Royal Albert Hall Festival being a significant factor in contributing to this. In this context he also paid tribute to the hard work of our Treasurer Harry Planche.
3. Regarding musical development the Choir's had continued on an upward path under the inspired leadership of the Musical Director and Principal Conductor, Edward-Rhys Harry and the brilliant accompaniment of Annabel Thwaite, supplemented when necessary by the gifted accompaniment of Anita D'Attellis. Annabel was also growing in confidence as the Choir's Deputy Conductor.

4. The previous year had seen an unbelievable and perhaps never to be repeated series of musical events that has considerably raised the Choir's profile both within the UK and throughout the world:
- In July 2012 the Choir organized the artistically successful Wales Choir of the World Concert at the Royal Festival Hall that involved Choirs from all five continents, with Bryn Terfel as principal soloist and saw the "world premiere" of a specially commissioned work by Karl Jenkins and Grahame Davies, *The Hero's Journey* that emphasized the Welsh contribution to the "Cultural Olympiad" and with the generous financial support of the Welsh government. He paid tribute to the work of our President Huw Edwards, and Vice Presidents David Goldstone and Roger Lewis in helping to bring about the re-location of the Concert from Alexandra Palace to the Festival Hall and to the very hard work of Paul Bunford in the administration of the Concert.
  - In August 2012 it was honoured by being asked to sing (alongside the Rugby Club Choir) the Olympic Hymn at the Closing Ceremony of the Games that reached an audience of over a billion.
  - In October 2012 the Choir successfully promoted the 23<sup>rd</sup> London Welsh Festival of Male Choirs at the Royal Albert Hall, conducted by our Musical Director, Edward-Rhys Harry, in which we were joined by eleven Choirs from England, Scotland and Wales and the "world champion" Cory Band with Annabel Thwaite on piano and Rob Nicholls on organ.
  - In March 2013 we sang on the pitch at the Millennium Stadium, Cardiff prior to the Wales v England game. This was an unforgettable experience and it is alleged (including by our President, Huw Edwards) that we helped inspire the Welsh team to the most comprehensive victory over England in living memory as well as winning the Six Nations Championship!
5. The Chairman paid tribute to the many Choristers who through their hard work had contributed to the success of the Choir over the past year and especially to Rowland Francis who was retiring as Concert Secretary after over 32 years in this role; he also thanked Eirian Lewis (retiring as Vice Chairman) and Geraint Lewis (retiring as 1<sup>st</sup> Tenor Rep) and Phil John (retiring as 2<sup>nd</sup> Tenor Rep.) In addition, there was a detailed section within his report on the activities of the Subcommittees that included giving thanks to all involved in their successful administration.
6. He expressed sadness at the recent death of longstanding chorister David Adami (Dai Mafia) and also at the fact that our dedicated Chorister, Phil Chalk was terminally ill with a brain tumour.
7. In the last section of his speech called "Challenges and Opportunities" the Chairman gave several "wake-up" calls to the Choir:
- While we continued to develop musically and had seen a welcome influx of young choristers into the Choir, we needed to increase the average attendance at both Rehearsals and Concerts and especially at rehearsals.
  - We need to be more careful about undertaking risky ventures in the future such as the Alexandra Palace debacle and to build up our cash reserves again.
  - In this context we need to find more Concerts next year than we have at present.
  - While succession issues within the Choir's Management are not as serious as they were a year ago, we need to encourage more young members to participate in the administration of the Choir. .
8. In conclusion, despite these "wake-up calls" , the Chairman remained optimistic about the future of the Choir. Many people over the years had contributed to its success and he believed this

would continue to be the case as belonging to such a great Choir remained a very enjoyable and fulfilling experience. He ended his Statement by repeating a phrase he had used at previous AGMs but still believed it was true!

“Let us remember why we are really here: to enjoy our shared love of music in a Welsh cultural context and continually improve on our ability to do this; to bring pleasure and joy to others through our musical performances and to raise funds for worthwhile charities. Long may it continue!”

## 9. 1 Questions/Comments on Chairman’s Report

1. Pat Barnett asked why the ‘Heroes Journey’ had been commissioned, and questioned the cost to the choir. In response it was stated that the then committee considered that the ‘Olympic Spectacular’ required a commission piece relevant to the Games. Karl Jenkins was an obvious choice to promote current Welsh musical culture at an international level.

It was also in line with the Choir’s charitable aim: ‘To promote Welsh music and culture by the commissioning of new music’. This has not been undertaken for the last 20 years.

There were divided opinions on the viability, and success of this venture. Whilst some choristers express their dislike of the piece, most agreed that it had been a great success with at the Wales Choir of the World and at the Royal Albert Hall Festival, and that it had ‘come alive’ when performed with the Cory Band.

## 10. To receive the Treasurer’s Report and Accounts for year ending 31.12.12

1. An audited financial statement was unavailable at this time, however a profit and loss balance sheet has been distributed to the attendant choristers.

2. Harry gave a verbal report to the meeting. The subsequent written submission of this is attached as an appendix to these minutes.

3. The accounts had not been audited because Harry had been extremely busy in the run up to the AGM, and insufficient time was available for the auditor’s report to be ready.

4. Harry explained why he had stood for re-election, but intended to stand down (retire) in favor of a new treasurer, once the accounts had been audited and accepted by the membership.

5. He said that he had been ably assisted in his tasks by a number dedicated people, and thanked each in turn.

6. He was pleased to report that there was a positive cash flow of £42.4k during the period mainly generated from the RAH 2012 Festival bringing the total funds in the Banks up to approximately £68.0k.

7. Questions/Comments on Treasurer’s Report. There were no questions from the floor, except to show appreciation for the work Harry had done.

## 11. Declaration of all Ballot results

### Trustees:

Chairman: Philip Griffith

Vice Chairman: Phil John

Secretary:	Nick Withers
Treasurer:	Harry Planche
Concert Secretary:	Andrew Downing.
Registrar:	Brian Johnson
Top Tenor Rep:	David Downing
Second Tenor Rep:	Tom Wilcox Jones
Baritone Rep:	Philip Griffith
Bass Rep:	Lyn Leyshon

**Other Elected Posts:**

Librarian:	Iorwerth Pritchard
Choir Marshall:	Andrew Downing
Wardrobe Master:	Barry Boulton

**Appointments:**

Accompanist:	Annabel Thwaite
Deputy Conductor	Annabel Thwaite

1. The full ballot results are given in Appendix A to these minutes.

12. 25 Years' Service Award.

Howard Lewis had completed 25 yrs service to the Choir. Keith presented Howard with the customary pewter tankard and congratulated him on his steadfast service to the choir.

13. Phil Griffith took over the Chair of the meeting from this juncture.

1. A vote of thanks was proposed from the floor (by several choristers) for the hard work Keith had put in on the Choir's behalf over the last seven years as Chairman. The Choir responded with a standing ovation.

14. Any other business. There was no AOB.

15. Phil addressed the meeting to inform the choristers that the meeting would be adjourned until the accounts have been audited. The meeting would then be reconvened in order to adopt the accounts and appoint auditors for the next year.

**The meeting was reconvened on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2013**

16. Total membership at this time was 105 and 65 members were present the meeting was therefore still quorate
17. Adoption of the Accounts for the year 2012.
1. The audited accounts had been made available for any members to request two weeks prior to this date. No additional questions on these accounts were raised. The accounts were adopted by all those present with one abstention.
  2. A vote of thanks for all the years Harry had had been such a diligent treasurer was expressed with a standing ovation.
18. Re-appointment of Auditors
1. Harry Planche asked that the current Auditors, Nunn Hayward, should be re-appointed. On a show of hands all were 'In favour' of the proposal.

These Minutes containing 10pages (including 6 pages of Minutes and 4 pages of Appendices) were agreed by a Trustees Meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2014

Signed..... Signed.....

(Phil Griffith)  
Chairman

(Nick Withers)  
Secretary

Dated: 25<sup>th</sup> May, 2013

AppendixA

## Annual General Meeting

**16<sup>th</sup> May, 2013.**

### **Tabulated Voting Results**

#### **Choir Trustees**

Post	Name	For	Against	Abstained	Result
Chairman	Philip Griffith	47		1	Elected
Chairman	Eirian Lewis	28			Un-Elected

Vice Chairman	Phil John	44			Elected
Vice Chairman	David Jones	32			Un-Elected
Secretary	Nick Withers	70	1	5	Elected
Treasurer	Harry Planche	71	0	5	Elected
Concert Secretary	Andrew Downing	72	0	4	Elected
Registrar	Brian Johnson	72	0	4	Elected
Top Tenor Rep	David Downing	18	0	0	Elected
Second Tenor Rep	Tom Wilcox-Jones	17	0	3	Elected
Baritone Rep	Philip Griffith	24	0	0	Elected
Bass Rep	Lyn Leyshon	10	1	3	Elected

### Other Elected Posts

Librarian	Iorwerth Pritchard	72	3	1	Elected
Choir Marshall	Andrew Downing	75	0	1	Elected
Wardrobe Master	Barry Boulton	75	0	1	Elected
Music Subcommittee	Keith Warren	70	3	3	Elected
Music Subcommittee	David Williams	70	2	4	Elected

### Trustee Nominated Positions

Accompanist	Annabel Thwaite	76	0	0	Elected
Deputy Conductor	Annabel Thwaite	65	8	3	Elected

Nick Withers 20<sup>th</sup> May 2013.

Appendix B

### 2013 AGM Treasurer's Verbal Report

A sad day indeed to hear Keith's final report which as usual has been a comprehensive review giving full and detailed details of the Choir's activities during 2012 and will include my comments explaining the financial impact of all of these events.

May I first of all say that it could also be my swansong Andrew Chamberlain has very kindly volunteered to take on my mantle, please Andrew be upstanding!!! Why then have I been put forward for nomination as the Treasurer at this AGM (you may well be asking yourselves) – I will explain, I have over the past few months been a very busy bee, the consequence of all this activity is that I have not been able to get the accounts completed in sufficient time to submit them to the auditors so that they can in turn issue the audit certificate in time for this meeting. In fairness to Andrew I felt that I should steer these accounts through the 2012 audit. When this is completed and we have the audit certificate I will table this to the reconvened AGM together with the audited accounts for your approval. On receiving your approval I will then hand them over to Andrew, This will be done by having a short EGM at the end of the reconvened AGM his nomination as Treasurer will be submitted to this meeting and put to the vote. I anticipate this as being at some time in July. This will mean that there will be sufficient time for me to hand over there in to him in an orderly fashion. I have put these proposals to the Trustees and have received their agreement so I hope that you the Choir at large will give your approval and do everything you can to support Andrew when he takes on the job.

I should like to thank all of those generous souls who help me in the boring but important tasks related to the finances of the Choir.

First of all I would like to thank Phil Griffith for the dedicated work he does in collecting subscriptions, hotel and bus money, this he does very efficiently but with tact and humor and as you are probably aware it is a tribute to his diligence and of course to your good selves that everyone in this room is entitled to vote at this meeting.

And then there is Brian Johnson who issues Concert Tickets and collects payment from Choir members for those tickets, it is again a very difficult and painstaking job which he carries out with such tact and efficiency.

An important part of the Choir Finances is the income generated from the sale of CDs. Our success in this is largely due to the efforts of Lynne Griffith assisted by Marilyn Jamar and Sue John - thank you ladies. Caroline Simmons who has retired from selling CD at Concerts has continued to help us by selling the new RAH12CD to the participating Choir (assisted by Me!) to whom I also extend my sincere thanks.

Once more Phyllis Pritchard did a grand job selling the new Xmas Cards and helping out in various other ways and always with an encouraging smile!!

As I mentioned above I must thank Colin Davies with the sales of tickets and allocating seats for the 2012 Festival this has been a major factor in rehabilitating the Choir's Finances.

I must also mention the cooperation that I got from the members of the various subcommittees in the Choir in particular Paul Bunford in Marketing and WCOTW and to David Williams on the Festival Committee, Eirian Lewis Tour Committee, Rowland Francis on Concerts and Joe, Steve and Andrew on the Social Events and indeed all the help and cooperation I had from all of my fellow main committee members

1. Thanks very much guys!

Anyway to get on to the report itself.

You will note that the Internal Accounts have been done in the same format as that used for the last few years so should be easy to follow and there are comprehensive notes on the important numbers so I don't propose to talk through them line-by-line, but rather give an overview of the elements of them which reflect the important financial events which have taken place during the year. I certainly will welcome any comments or questions you may have but please at the end of my report.

We had an active year with the Choir managing to stage two major Choral festivals, the WCOTW at the Royal Festival Hall and the Biennial Festival at the Royal Albert Hall (the former losing £5.7k and the latter earning £35.8k) together with 2 Away concerts and 6 "local" concerts. These together with rehearsal costs resulted in a loss of £5.9k on the concert account, we also had a small loss of £1.7k on the Trading Account, and £9.3k in General Costs, we charged the "Hero's Journey" of £24k to Cost but did receive two generous Bequests which together with some Donations (including Choir Friends) amounted to £10.9k. The result of this activity was a break even situation for the Choir with a small profit of £192 which marginally increased the Choir Funds to £66,535

The Choir Funds were made up of Stock of £5.2k which reduced by £0.4k (compared to 2011), debtors of £7.9k which dropped dramatically from £63.7k in 2011 due mainly to charging 2011 advance payments for the WCOTW, Karl Jenkins/Graham Davies Commission, RAH12 to cost, the residual debtors of £7.9k were mainly made up of an amount due from Sain plus Beckenham concert fees of £1.9k, Creditors at £14.5k again reduced appreciably compared to 2011 (£28.6k) mainly due to the repayment of the £10k loan from a Choir Friend, the current creditors were made up of Sain (£5.6k) the 2012 Audit fee of £3k plus Uniform Deposits £4k.

I am pleased to report that there was a positive cash flow of £42.4k during the period mainly generated from the RAH12 Festival bringing total funds in the Bank to £68.0k.

Looking at the individual accounts, there was a loss on the Trading Account of £1,694 on a sales value of £6,756 compared to a surplus of £832 on a sales value of £3,987 in 2011. This was mainly a result of selling the new RAH12 CDs to Choirs at a price just above cost and continuing our aggressive policy with regard to writing down slow moving stock down to ZERO.

As mentioned above the RAH12 Festival generated a profit of £35.8k and continues to be the major contributor to financial wellbeing of the Choir and in particular building our cash after the major outflows which arose from the Ally Pally cancellation and the Karl Jenkins Commission. A detailed operating statement for this event is attached with detailed notes in the accounts but in broader terms we made £35.8k on sales of £143.6k on this festival compared to £31.9k on sales of £120.4k on the 2010 Festival.

There was a deficit on the General Account of £8,863 compared to £9,704 in 2011. Subscription income was slightly up by £38 to £671 due to a slight increase in Choir Numbers (see detailed notes). We have now bitten the bullet and have increased the sub to a more economic level with effect from Jan 2013. Bank Interest Receipts were up (£13 compared to £59 in 2011) the slight improvement due to the higher level of bank balances compared to last year.

On the costs side of the equation the main feature related to the lower rental payments we made to the LWA (£1,500 compared to £2,477 in 2011) and there being no Young Welsh Singer of the Year competition which cost £1,150 in 2011. All other costs were kept under control.

There was no Choir Tour this year.

We made our normal annual donation of a £500 prize at the National Eisteddfod.

We incurred a loss on Concert activity of £5,884 on Concert Fees of £15,850 compared to a loss of £11,352 on Concert Fees of £25,213 in 2011. Full details of which are given on the attached schedules.

As mentioned in my reference to the Balance Sheet items we finally staged the WCOTW at the Royal Festival Hall, it was an outstanding artistic success and managed to keep the loss on it down to the modest amount of £5,741 in this financial year.

I again have attached a fully detailed operating statement, you will note that the RFH Festival benefited from being part of Brynfest which generated concert fees amounting to £21,678 (a record fee for the Choir!) and financial support from the Wales Government amounting to £23,100. Both of these sources of income arose from the guidance, support and connections of three of our Vice Presidents, David Goldstone, Roger Lewis and Lyn Feldon and the negotiating skills of Paul Bunford and the hard work of Keith Warren and your strully.

You will also note that the total result for the whole project over 2011 and 2012 was a loss of £50,517; the major thing to be learned from this is that we must have an oversight panel to vet future projects of this nature and to this end Laurie Adams has prepared a proposal to form such a panel to be called The Financial Risk and Oversight Committee (OSC) to take on this role and will initially comprise of Phil Olsen, Laurie Adams and two others. This proposal has been put before the current trustees and should be high on the agenda for the new Trustees appointed by this Annual General Meeting.

The Nosor Lawen was a great social success and broke even with a margin of £4.

We benefited from donations made by Choir Friends amounting to £450 compared to £1,035 in 2011.

Looking to 2013 see the financial objectives of the Treasurer (myself followed by Andrew) to be as follows:

1. Being part of the RAH Festival team responsible for Banking receipts, making payments and controlling and monitoring all of the other financial arrangements related to the 2014 Festival;
2. Being part of the Tour Committee Monitoring receipts, making payments and controlling and overseeing all of the other financial arrangements for any prospective Tours.
3. Being part of the Team organizing any further self-promoted concerts.
4. Being part of the Team overseeing the introduction of the new Financial Oversight Committee (OSC)
5. Continue to review of Gift Aid arrangements and donations and in relation to the RAH Festival and Sponsorship;
6. Ensuring that we invoice our concerts promptly so that we receive our income promptly
7. Liaising with Gethin Williams on the new "Choir Friends" arrangements.
8. Keeping a bead on Costs!!

I have now done this job for nearly 8 years so it I will welcome Andrew taking the Financial Reins in July and wish him and the choir good fortune in a choppy financial sea!!

May I conclude by thanking you all for being such good scouts and being so helpful and cooperative - paying for the tours, tickets, hotels, coaches, subs and all the other ghastly financial things that I get involved in as your bad tempered Treasurer.

I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

HP 16<sup>th</sup> May 2012