

**WANTAGE CHORAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Minutes of Meeting held at 8.45 pm on Tuesday 27 September 2011
at the Church Junior School, Newbury Street, Wantage**

1 Apologies had been received from Christine Birch, Kerry Collins, Dave Eggleton, Liz Piggott, Liz Trew, and Jo Willis.

2 Minutes. The minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2010 were accepted and signed as a true and accurate record.

3 Officers' Report. The report had been circulated to members via e:mail and hard copies were made available prior to the meeting. The report was adopted unanimously.

4 Treasurer's Report. The 2010/11 Accounts had also been circulated to members before the AGM. Dave Morris reported that the amount of Gift Aid received (~ £1200) covered the last two years. It would also be advisable to have two full terms worth of cash-in-hand for eventualities. He was retiring at this AGM, and Denise thanked him for all his hard work over his two periods as Treasurer.

5 Election of President. Jamie Lonsdale had been very supportive over the past year and was happy to continue as President. He was duly re-elected (proposed by Denise Davies, seconded by Pam Allen).

6 Election of Officers. The following officers were elected for the following year:

Chairman - Denise Davies, proposed by Roger Wiltshire and seconded by John Barlow.

Treasurer - John Deaton, proposed by Roger Wiltshire and seconded by Dorothy Throp.

Secretary - Lucinda Risius, proposed by Anne Chambers and seconded by Pauline Herbert.

Peter Mayall would take over as Librarian and join the Committee.

7 Elections to the Committee. Sue Hirst, Emma Matthews and Anne Chambers would be joining the Committee (proposed by Denise Davies and seconded by Olive Price). The current Members (Pamela Allen, John Deaton, Catriona Galbraith, Pauline Herbert, Shirley Lawrence and Barbara Palmer) were willing to stand again, and were elected en bloc (proposed by David Saunderson and seconded by Peter Mayall).

8(a) Motion from the Management Committee: "That the Annual Subscription for membership of Wantage Choral Society be raised to £100". This was agreed unanimously. If necessary, alternative terms of payment were available from the Membership Secretary (Pamela Allen).

8(b) Motion from the Management Committee: "That the Minutes be approved soon after the AGM instead of waiting a year". This suggestion was also agreed unanimously.

9 Report from the Fundraising Sub-Committee. As the recent questionnaire had showed a lack of support for using social events to raise funds, the Sub-Committee would in future concentrate on organizing smaller events such as coffee mornings and post-concert events. Organisers of the 100 Club need not be Committee Members.

10 Progress on the “Friends of Wantage Choral Society” Scheme. Catriona Galbraith reported that no-one had taken this up, and the way forward would be discussed at the next Committee meeting (see AOB below).

11 Appointment of “Making Music” (formerly National Federation of Music Societies) Representative. Olive Price was re-appointed as our MM Representative (proposed by Dave Morris, seconded by John Garvey).

12 Informal Address by Director of Music:

Richard Smith thanked the Committee, Fund-raising Sub-Committee, and all who helped keep things moving smoothly, especially those who helped in the background at concerts. He thanked David Noble for stepping into the breach as secretary, and particularly appreciated the support Dave Morris had provided during his many years as Treasurer. The choir had achieved much over the last year; *St Nicolas* was superb, *The Armed Man* was wonderfully sung and much appreciated by the audience, and the Dorchester Abbey concert was a great success.

Richard emphasised the need for a long-term financial plan, which is an essential tool for planning confidently and evaluating successes. He also asked for a more structured approach to publicity, including the development of a mailing list and clear ways of monitoring the success of publicity experiments. Currently the choir has neither.

Richard felt the most exciting developments of the year were the renewed commitment to outreach through the “Learn to Sing” sessions, the open rehearsals, the *Come and Sing* concert, the Committee's willingness to enhance the choir through developing new venues, the re-starting of sectional rehearsals and our new approach to systematic recruitment. True passion for choral music is expressed by taking a creative and active role in engaging people – as audiences and singers – with choral music.

The most exciting element of membership of a choral society is in the practical business of passing on one's love for choral music to the wider community through contributing to the choir's projects. Richard expressed sadness about the seeming unwillingness of many members to get involved with the practicalities of running the choir, and noted the embarrassing silence when the choir was called upon to continue its work by forming a committee. He thanked the choir for their fine music-making over the year, but reiterated that responsible membership of a choir has to involve considerably more than just singing.

13 Any Other Business. The following topics were raised:

- **Future Gift Aid Arrangements.** HMRC were making it more difficult for charities to recoup money from subscriptions, and the way forward would be discussed at the next Committee meeting. In any event, it was important to collect subscriptions quickly and try and claim some money back from the Government;
- **Donations from Patrons.** The launch of the “Friends of WCS” scheme a year ago had resulted in a failure to request these donations which, in previous years had benefited WCS by ~ £1200. This would be discussed at the next Committee meeting and the situation remedied as soon as possible.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

Shirley Lawrence (Acting Secretary)
5 October 2011