

**Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 21 June 2016
at Holy Trinity School, Bury**

Officers: Graham Bolton, Chairman; Tina Dixon, Vice Chairman/Website; Jean Seymour, Secretary/Programmes; Maureen Price, Treasurer.

Committee: Rosemary Artley, Flowers and Gifts; Chris Babbs, Trustee; June Bowker, Programme Advertising; Dorothy France, Minutes Secretary/Membership; Naomi Jahoda, Social Events Co-ordinator/Long Service Certificates/Flowers and Gifts; Gordon Jones, Outreach/Publicity; Tony Patten, Concert Seating (Assistant); Rachel Riley, Concert tickets; Geoffrey Stokes, Sarah Taylor, Facebook, Website.

Ex officio: Juan Ortuño, Director of Music.

Welcome: The Chairman welcomed everyone to the new season, especially new committee member Rachel Riley, and offered thanks for his own election. Apologies had been received from Chris Babbs and Dorothy France.

Minutes from the meeting on 12 April 2016 had been circulated and were taken as read. However, Graham offered an amendment to the final sentence of the Future Programme minute, to read: 'The programme for the following season 2017/18 would be discussed at a future Committee meeting.' Agreed: Archive copy amended.

Treasurer's Report: As Graham and Maureen hadn't had an opportunity to liaise, he repeated the financial situation offered at the AGM. There had been a loss of almost £2,000 on the last concert, and annual ticket/door sales were 24% down in comparison with the previous season. In answer to a query from Maureen re membership numbers, he revealed that there had been a maximum of 65 members last season, but regular attendance had averaged about 50, being particularly poor in the soprano section. Membership figures for comparison were:

	S	A	T	B
2010/11	31	20	6	11
2015/16	27	15	7	14

Future Programme:

Haydn's *Creation*, Tuesday 8 Nov. at Bury Parish Church. Potential soloists were Sally Johnson (S), John Elliott (T) and Matthew Kellett (B). Juan's suggested accompaniment would be a string quartet/quintet and a wind quintet, but no organ. Graham expressed a wish that Sarah could set up a database with details of our regular guest performers, to which she agreed.

Christmas Festivities, Tuesday 13 Dec. at Bury URC. Rosemary requested that this should include less unfamiliar music than in recent years, so that we could spend some time on music for the next spring concert. However, it was generally felt that we shouldn't repeat too much from previous Christmas concerts.

Spring concert, Saturday 11 March 2017*, Stand Parish Church, Whitefield*. This would include Jenkins' *The Armed Man*, duration 67 minutes, together with Beethoven's *Fantasy*, and Saint Saëns' *Rondo Capriccioso* from the ensemble.

Summer concert, Saturday 13 May 2017 at St Margaret's Church, Prestwich*. A programme switch from the planned opera/operetta evening was proposed by Graham and agreed; this is due in part to uncertainty about the venue (The Met), wanting to keep on board as many Members as possible, and to honour a long standing request for a concert of Victorian pieces selected from a list of church music, suggested by Keith Ball and Tony Patten, plus secular music. Sarah was aware of numerous newspaper reports of our early days, some of which could be incorporated into the presentation. Suggested possible venues were: Bury URC (preferred option); St Margaret's, Prestwich (a good move to perform in the south of the borough); or St John's, Walmersley. A sub-committee of Keith (Graham to speak to him) Tony, Naomi and Sarah would work on this programme and report back. A suggestion to include the Victorian anthems and canticles as part of the concert programme with *The Armed Man* was not agreed; Juan pointed out that we will have an ensemble which he would wish to use in other pieces while the anthems and canticles will be with organ only

Committee Jobs:

Existing positions were largely confirmed, with the exception of concert seating, from which Tony was withdrawing, but would assist Mike Cawley, who had volunteered to take on this task. We record our thanks to Tony for services past. Keith Ball had done an excellent job in acquiring programme advertising from local businesses. He was prepared to maintain contact with them, but the 'leg-work', invoicing, collecting fees etc. would need to be done by someone else. June volunteered to take this on, and Rachel would take over June's work with concert tickets. Rosemary and Naomi would share responsibility for Flowers/Gifts for guest performers and Geoff would be responsible for overseeing the setting out and stacking of rehearsal chairs.

Chairman's Agenda:

Membership is a major concern. We were not keen to repeat our 'leafleting' in, for example, Tesco. Discussion ranged around canvassing church choirs and repeating invitations to schools and colleges, and whether the latter should be offered free of charge or a nominal fee to cover expenses such as music hire; it was generally felt that the offer to students should be at no charge. Other suggested targets were Community Choirs, but we must take care that this isn't seen as 'poaching'. Fees for such organisations tend to be higher than ours, so cost should be less of an issue. Graham, Gordon, June and Rosemary would form a group to take this further. **Marketing**: the website is very important in this. Graham wished to join Sarah and Tina initially, to redesign our current site. Was there a way to avoid our copy in the Bury Times always being displayed on the Clubs and Societies page?

Presentation: We need someone to tackle our public image and physical appearance in concert, and notably the need for some overall unifying dress item for the ladies of the choir. Naomi, Rosemary and Rachel volunteered to undertake this task, which would include standing/applauding etc. in concerts, and front of house issues in general.

Togetherness: Social aspects were improving but there was room for more, e.g. workshops; performances away from Bury; sharing concerts with other choirs and/or orchestras. All these could help towards maintaining long-term membership. Tina agreed to arrange a further quiz night and one other social over the season.

Matters arising from AGM: 'Promises' included setting a workshop date at our next Committee meeting in September. Prior to the start of the season Graham intended to produce a leaflet to promote sales of season tickets. Maureen suggested that this could take the form of a bookmark, which members could distribute to friends and family and would keep us in the recipient's focus. Graham commented that most season ticket sales were engendered by members.

Graham sought input from Juan with regard to future programme content. Juan felt that we should sing mainly in English, with which the Committee was in broad agreement, with the possible exception of some items in, e.g., a 'Christmas Around the World' context. Gorton Philharmonic Orchestra's new Committee planned to perform *Carmina Burana* in October 2017 at the RNCM and would need a choir to join them, should we be interested. Tina asked whether this could become our autumn concert for the 2017/18 season, but perhaps October was too early for that. Sarah reinforced the suggestion that we needed to overcome our parochial attitude, and Rosemary felt that we could at least explore the possibility.

Date of Next Meeting: Graham pointed out that November 2018 marked the end of the Great War. A sub-committee would be needed, and that would be set up at our next meeting, which was agreed to take place on Friday 23 September at Graham's house, to commence at 7pm.

*** Note: Subsequent to the Committee meeting the date of the March concert was moved to Saturday 11th, when the Armed Man will be performed, at Stand Parish Church; the May concert will consist of Victorian Anthems and Songs and be performed at St Margaret's, Prestwich.**