

APPENDIX 2

AGM MUSICAL DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Good evening. As usual I'll start with a review of the Summer and Christmas concerts.

The Summer concerts went well with good audiences and with the programme made up of suggestions from choir members. Apart from our regular concert venues, we were able to give one concert in the refurbished church hall at Havering Road Methodist. We were made most welcome and the refreshments were a highlight of the evening.

As you are aware we are spoilt for rehearsal time for Summer concerts but not for the Christmas concerts. So after the summer break we restarted early in September with just twelve rehearsals before our first concert. Unfortunately John was very poorly during this time and we then realised just how much work John does on behalf of the choir each week. Of course all the committee pitched in to help out with the forthcoming concerts and we were delighted when Barbara's son in law, Warren, offered to help with our advertising leaflets and programmes. During this time we were concerned that John did not know what was causing his illness, and was still very poorly. We have given thought to how we can perhaps lighten the work John does and to help in this way, I have recorded vocal lines for the choir of music for the Summer concert. This is not a new idea. Quite a few choirs work in this way. I hope it will prove helpful to choir members..

We had excellent audience numbers at the Christmas concerts with four audience carols included and also some additional songs that the audience could join in. We welcomed the brass ensemble from the Salvation Army and at the first concert we were delighted to have a representative from the Samaritans who told us a little of the work they do daily and they received our Brian Goldspink Christmas Award for 2023.

As you would expect, the Christmas concerts were longer in length due to audience participation. However, I feel our audiences enjoy the opportunity to sing a carol and it would be missed if we cut this addition to our concerts at Christmas just to keep the concert at a shorter length.

A number of members were unable to make the final concert at Havering Road Methodist Church. 30% of the membership in fact. I needed to jiggle the seating a bit and as luck would have it, the acoustics in the Church hall were very good. They have a curved ceiling and this seems to help the sound. So luckily we got away with making quite a full sound although we were some members missing.

I would like to mention here that the choir department at all concerts was second to none. You looked very professional at both Summer and Christmas concerts so thank you for that. I always feel if you look good, you will feel good and sound good.

We then had our Christmas break and resumed in January with the Choir dinner. We were lucky to be able to have the Romford Golf Club again as a venue and it proved to be an excellent evening, with good food, and cabaret from Harv, Beryl and Barbara and excellent additions to the table decorations from Carol..

We've made a good start to the Summer programme, again mainly chosen from suggestions by the choir, but still have a long way to go. I know you must be aware that since Covid quite a few choirs have fallen by the wayside. This is due to members finding other interests and also sometimes due to financial problems. We have been delighted to welcome a number of new members since last September and we hope they will enjoy singing with us. I always feel we are a genuine Community choir. We perform within our community and take an interest in things happening. New members are made most welcome, members who are unwell are remembered and we take an interest in those of our choir who have other difficulties they might be dealing with. Such are the choir numbers at the moment that we might need to consider starting a waiting list. I can only remember this happening once some years before. It's a healthy problem to have.

I'm sure you are aware of the ongoing work done each week by members of the committee. It shows in the smooth running of the choir. And I would like to thank them all, especially for the extra work needed just before last Christmas.

Please remember to add the concert dates for this year to your diary. We are committed to three concerts in the Summer and three at Christmas. Attendance at rehearsals tends to be good and that means we can make progress on our songs each week. Remember to bring pencils to

rehearsal. If you mark up your copies, then I don't have to keep repeating myself.

We always perform to a high standard which of course our supporters expect. Let's aim even higher this year.