

NDC COMMITTEE MEETING

WEDNESDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2024

**Present: Carmel Dines (Chair), Barbara Austin, Carol Chester, Clare Goldspink,
Enid Weaver, Wendy White**

Apologies: John Pugh

1. Financial Position

The NDC account currently shows a healthy balance of c. £3,500. All major outgoings for the current period have been paid with no further major outlay expected until September.

Carol wished it to be noted that the Golf Club did not charge for non attendees of the event held there in January, even for those cancelling on the same day.

2. Committee Handbook

Clare provided a draft of her section which will be updated after the summer concerts as some technical aspects of concert set up may change in the meantime. She also needs to add instructions for equipment PAC testing which needs to be done in November each year.

Wendy has provided her section to Barbara. NDC Facebook admin details need to be added.

John's section (understandably) is still outstanding.

3. Performance Coaching

Clare has had a positive response from her contact (Kieran Brown) who would be happy to run a coaching session for the choir. We need to provide him with an outline of the content and potential dates to fit in with his performance commitments. Clare advised that a Sunday would probably be best and the cost would depend on the time involved and travel costs. The costs to be paid out of choir funds.

Clare to suggest to Kieran the preferred date of Sunday 12 May with Sunday 26 May as a back up.

4. Summer and Christmas Concert Dates and Venues 2024

These are as follows:

Saturday 29 June (afternoon) *	Havering Road
Friday 5 July	Harold Wood
Sunday 7 July	All Saints, Ardleigh Green

Saturday 30 November	St. Chad's
Friday, 5 December	Harold Wood
Sunday 7 December	All Saints, Ardleigh Green

- Concert time 4-6 pm

5. Piano Practice Parts (Recordings)

The Committee wished to thank Enid for her extra work in providing these extra and very useful practice tools. Enid confirmed that all relevant recordings for this summer's repertoire had now been prepared and distributed.

6. Brass Ensemble at Christmas Concert (All Saints)

Comments had been received from audience members that the brass ensemble were 'hidden' behind the choir when playing their selection and all that could be seen were the choir's 'blank faces'. It was suggested that the brass play their selection as the choir lead off for the interval and that the audience follow on for refreshments once they have finished. This would hopefully also alleviate queuing time for audience members when getting their drinks.

7. AGM Agenda

The draft Agenda presented by Carmel was agreed.

A number of questions/suggestions from members had been received. These were discussed and are summarised below:

Length of Concerts (too long). It was agreed that the timing of the concerts is well controlled and times should not be curtailed. Christmas concerts sometimes run a

little longer with the inclusion of audience participation carols but these are a popular part of the programme and should not be excluded.

There had been a suggestion that the audience should be asked to applaud only after each group of 3 songs but this was vetoed unanimously by the committee as it is very off putting to sing and hear no response.

Advance Notice of What Will Be Covered in Rehearsal. Enid agreed that she could issue advice by Thursday each week of pieces that choir should do 'homework' on for the following Tuesday. This will enable us to get up to speed more efficiently on some of the more complicated arrangements.

Learning the ending of songs first. This confused us all but the member who suggested this is welcome to elaborate and discuss it further.

Suggestions to encourage more tenors/bases to join the choir. We have been fortunate to have several new members join in these sections this term and choir membership is now up to capacity.

Singing solos or in small groups. This was unanimously vetoed by the committee as previously there had been 'dissension in the ranks'!

Adding Clare's name to concert programmes. Clare is grateful for the thought but would prefer for her name not to be included.

Afternoon Performances. These will be arranged when possible. It is not always agreeable with the different churches and it may vary between Summer and Christmas dates.

Clarification that although we perform in churches it is not church/religious music. It was agreed that a strapline or other device would be included in our advertising material to make this clear.

Playing background music as the audience enter and take their seats. This was agreed to be a good idea in principle although performing rights may be an issue in the various churches. John (and Helen) to please check and clarify the situation.

Earlier start for rehearsals (7.30). It was felt that this would not be fair to those members who work, some of whom struggle to get to choir for the current 7.45 start time. We always start and finish promptly so the established times will continue.

8. Any Other Business

Carmel had been asked to review the NDC Constitution Document with a view to any necessary amendments. She suggested that Point 5 under the Membership section of the document be amended to read as follows:

'All members are encouraged to attend as many weekly meetings as possible and to participate in performances, the dates of which are published well in advance. The final decision as to participation will be at the discretion of the Musical Director.'

This was unanimously agreed by the Committee.

Carol reported that the USB sticks with professional recordings of repertoire are not popular or are unusable by some members of choir who would prefer CDs which John is no longer able to produce. As this applies to only a few members Nick Butler and Jackie Whiteman have kindly volunteered to produce CDs as necessary. Barbara will provide them with blank CDs to burn as required.

Carol further commented that information could be distributed which may enable members to purchase MP3 Players or adaptors which would make using the memory sticks easier and more convenient.

Carol reported that mystery still surrounds the donation of the radio microphones which were left anonymously in Wendy's porch at Christmas time. Carol (and Harvey) have checked this equipment over and, although it is of extremely high quality, it would appear somewhat too complicated for our needs. We would like to know where the equipment came from so we could return it and/or send it to a better home. If anyone has any information on this please speak to one of the committee.

As an alternative Carol has sourced a simpler wireless, rechargeable radio microphone which can be purchased for c. £80. It was agreed to purchase two sets for use at concerts by the MC and MD.

Enid commented that there are some pieces in the summer repertoire where men and ladies sing extended sections separately. She would like to hold separate rehearsal segments to cover these. It was agreed that these would take place on:

Tuesday 12 March – ladies leave at 9.30. Men only 9.30-10

Tuesday 19 March – men leave at 9.30. Ladies only 9.30-10

Barbara said that she had received comments from members about audience arriving too early for concerts and being at the back of the church during sound checks. It was agreed that sound checks could possibly be shortened somewhat but that it was unreasonable to expect people to wait outside if they were early arrivals.

Barbara distributed an updated list of members and contact details. It was noted that this will be further updated in the near future to include recent influx of new members.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 08.45 pm.