



LINCOLN CHORAL SOCIETY

Founded 1896

Registered charity no 505023

President: The Precentor of Lincoln

LINCOLN CHORAL SOCIETY *SUMMER NEWSLETTER* *2024*

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Musical Director: Mark Wilde

Conductor Emeritus: Neville Turner

<https://lincolnchoralsociety.org>

Dates for your diaries at-a-glance

Monday 2 September 2024 – Autumn term begins. Rehearsal in the Isaac Newton Lecture Theatre

Saturday 23 November 2024 – Concert in the Lincoln Cathedral – Handel Messiah

Monday 25 November 2024 – AGM

Monday 23, 30 December 2024 – Christmas break.

Monday 6 January 2025 – Spring term begins.

Monday 21 April 2025 – Easter break.

Monday 28 April 2025 – Summer term begins.

Saturday 10 May 2025 – Concert in Lincoln Cathedral – Cecilia McDowall's The Girl from Aleppo, Bob Chilcott's Five Days that Changed the World and Will Todd's Mass in Blue.

The AGM will be on **Monday 25 November 2024**. Please volunteer and make sure you have the Committee you want by being part of it! Nominations are welcome for any of the committee positions. The Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer are the Trustees of the charity. If you don't feel able to offer that level of commitment, there are many ways in which you can assist in the running of the Society. Please speak to the Chairman or Secretary to find out more! **Please note** we are looking for a Secretary, Soprano and Bass Representative. Below are the Role Descriptions for the Secretary and Section Representatives.

Role Description for Secretary

- Take minutes at meetings, type up, send to chair for checking
- Prepare agenda, send to chair for checking
- Send minutes and agenda to all committee members
- Deal with general correspondence (letters and emails received), send ad hoc letters and emails as needed
- Send mass e-mailings to members, either messages from Society or forwarding emails which may be of interest
- Maintain a list of members' emails for this purpose
- Ensure all members have received, acknowledged and signed acceptance of data privacy policy
- Prepare and send summer newsletter, write secretary's contribution to this
- Deputise for chair at break in rehearsals (announcements, raffle) in chair's absence
- Keep Society documents
- Maintain contracts with Musical Director, Accompanist, Choral Scholars and Apprentices
- Liaise with external bodies eg Making Music, other societies
- Ensure Society's insurance is kept up-to-date
- To be a full member of the committee, attend meetings and act as a Trustee of the Society

Role Description for Section Representative

- Welcome new members, ensuring they have places to sit, music and information and understand choir procedures eg signing in, returning music
- Share information from the committee with singers on a regular basis
- Listen to concerns and ideas from members and relay to committee
- Assist at rehearsals and on concert days
- Take on additional committee tasks when appropriate
- Respond to alert from chorus secretary (usually email) that a new section member will be present at rehearsal.
- Be a full member of the Committee, attend meetings.

From Liz Murray – Chairman

The Isaac Newton Lecture Theatre at the University of Lincoln looks like being our long-term rehearsal venue after the Stephen Langton Building was abruptly removed as an option. Our attempts to have reliable access remain unsuccessful but we will keep trying. Ceridwen and Tom have certainly earned their scholarships and it's been wonderful to hear their voices develop.

Please read this bit... As always, my thanks go to all Committee members and choir officers – without the hard work of all concerned we simply wouldn't have a choir. If anyone would like to join in with the “behind-the-scenes” work of making the concerts happen and generally running the Society, please do consider standing for the Committee. There are eight members of the Committee, three of whom (Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer) are the Trustees of the Society, and a number of other officers. This year several important roles will be vacated: Jo is stepping down as Secretary, Gail is stepping down as Soprano section representative and we currently have a vacancy for a Bass section representative. So at the very least we need to recruit to those roles. The Secretary is crucial to the running of the Society, and the section representatives are your voice on the committee. As I have said before, there is no such thing as the Choir Fairy. Concerts don't just happen, people make them happen and if there are no people there will be no concerts. If you want the Society to continue to exist so that you can sing with it, please come forward. Committee meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month (except August) at 7.30pm via Zoom (so no need to leave the comfort of your own home!).

The committee has reluctantly decided it must increase the subscription for the 2024-25 season. Our costs for concerts have risen considerably and both the numbers attending and the amount received in sponsorship have fallen. **Please pay your subscription before term starts if at all possible.** Most people are able to pay by bank transfer; it reduces the queues at the start of term and makes life easier for the subscriptions secretary (who is a volunteer, like the rest of the committee) if people pay in advance. We hope that at least some members will feel able to support the Society by paying more than the minimum, as some do every year. We are very grateful to those who are able to do this; we recognise that it isn't possible for everyone. The committee recognises that £160 is a challenge for some members, particularly as a single payment. If this would cause difficulty, please speak privately to Janet McNeill (subscriptions secretary) or me. We don't want anyone not to sing because of the cost and would be happy to discuss a suitable arrangement.

Our concert in November was superb and Stanford's *Via Victrix* deserves to be better known. Some members have expressed concern that a lesser-known work may have adversely affected audience numbers; the reality is that there may have been a minimal reduction in audience numbers, but even a very well-known work no longer fills the Cathedral as it once would have done.

In December, we supported the Lincolnshire NHS Carol Service in the Cathedral, which was a lovely occasion; this was preceded by our carol concert at St Faith's. Saul was a splendid performance in April and the smaller orchestra of Musica Donum Dei was appreciated both in terms of cost and in audibility of the choir.

The Come & Sing was enjoyed by all who were able to attend and, as last year, we gained some new members as a result. Many thanks to Mark and Ed for leading us and it was fantastic to have so many people attending. The Fauré concert was also greatly enjoyed and St Peter & St Paul is on our list of future possible venues.

Realistically we cannot afford to continue to have two Cathedral concerts a year as we used to. It's an iconic building to sing in but very expensive. Next season we will have two concerts in the Cathedral but neither will carry the costs we have been used to. Messiah in November will cost us nothing (this has been negotiated with the Cathedral) and the contemporary concert in May 2025 will not involve a large orchestra.

Finally, thank you to all who completed the members' survey. [Click here for a summary of the findings.](#)

Stay safe, everyone.

From Jo Johnston – Secretary

I have been Secretary of the Lincoln Choral Society since November 2018 and have really enjoyed it. I am sad to be giving up, but I have taken on a new role at our local theatre which means I can no longer attend the committee meetings, which is a vital part of the role. I will still manage the website. If you are interested in being the Secretary, but feel it is too big role to do on your own, we can always discuss the possibility of sharing it with someone else. Please come and talk to either Liz or myself.

We have an up to date website (<https://lincolnchoralsociety.org>) which contains all the information about the choir that you should need including details of proposed concerts. It also includes a Member's area which contains details of rehearsals. I will email all members as soon as we know any updates relating to rehearsals or concerts. It also has details of all the Society's Officers and the policies for bullying harassment, complaints, edi, risk management, safeguarding, social media, trustees' conflicts of interest, volunteer and data protection. These policies have been updated to include the ones now required by the Charities Commission. Please take the time to read the policies as they have all been updated. If you don't have access to the Member's area please let me know.

From time to time members feel the need to migrate to a different voice section of the choir. It would be a courtesy to discuss this with the Musical Director before doing so.

If you cannot attend rehearsals please don't contact me, contact either the chorus secretary email: chorussec.lincolnchoralsociety@gmail.com or your section representative, Soprano: sreplinchoralsociety@gmail.com, Alto: altorep.lincolnchoralsociety@gmail.com, Tenor: tenorrep.lincolnchoralsociety@gmail.com, Bass: bassrep.lincolnchoralsociety@gmail.com.

From Liz Murray on behalf of Bron Williams – Chorus Secretary

Membership of the choir has increased steadily throughout the year, during which we have welcomed

new singers from counties and countries far and wide. We are a vibrant and diverse bunch of people who find common ground in the music that we love and share. Thanks to our Partnership and association with the University of Lincoln, we are very fortunate in being able to enjoy the presence of our Choral Scholars and Apprentices amongst our ranks, their confidence and enthusiasm helps us all to learn.

Attendance over the year has been very good and the wide variety of our singing programme has had something for everyone. Please remember to ✓✓ the register each week, it really helps with the administration of the choir and is also essential to check everyone is accounted for in case of fire. If you know ahead of time that you are going to be away, for whatever reason, please feel free to mark it on the registers in advance. (Apologies in person via friends are, of course, always welcome!). If it's short notice or retrospective apologies, please notify me on the CHORUS SECRETARY address: chorussec.lincolnchoralsociety@gmail.com this means that the Secretary of the Society is not inundated with apologies meant for the Chorus Secretary!

Following the second highly successful Come and Sing day we have again had new members come forward. As always, those singing tenor and bass voice parts are greatly outnumbered by those applying for soprano and alto voices: please spread the word around your friends and contacts! In the first instance, prospective new members should be encouraged to contact me to express interest in joining the choir by way of the chorussec email shown above. Rehearsals are 7:30pm - 9:15pm on Monday evenings in The Isaac Newton Lecture Theatre, University of Lincoln, Brayford Campus. The facilities are wonderful and we are very fortunate in having such a state of the art home.

Uniform for major concerts in the year ahead will be the same as usual: black tie dinner suits with white shirts and black bow ties for men: women may wear long black skirts or trousers with black long sleeved tops/jackets. For our smaller, often less formal performances such as Christmas and summer, dress code instructions will be given at the time.

I hope everyone has a good summer break and I look forward to seeing you on 2 September 2024 for our first rehearsal.

From Mark Wilde – Musical Director

It has been a fulfilling year at LCS in this 2023/24 season. We have given four concerts of a high standard and worked with some fine musicians and singers along the way. Stanford's Mass 'Via Victrix' was a huge musical success and marked the composer's centenary (a little early) suitably well. Our Christmas concert played to a packed St Faith's Church who were very welcoming. In the New Year brought we tackled Handel's great dramatic oratorio, Saul which was a real highlight of the year! We closed our season with a highly atmospheric concert of Fauré (another centenary) in Ss Peter & Paul Church; including his beautiful Requiem which we also spent a lovely day singing for our Come and Sing event. I hope we shall be returning to both St Faith's and Ss Peter & Paul again soon.

Next season sees us performing Messiah in the Cathedral for the first time in many years, collaborating with the Cathedral Choir and conducted by Aric Prentice. This will be a special performance and a little different too as we shall be doing the orchestration created by Mozart which included flutes, clarinets, and french horns. In May 2025 we shall give a very different concert in the cathedral of music by living composers: Cecilia McDowall, Will Todd, and Bob Chilcott. This will be a memorable concert of wonderful new music, dealing with engaging themes and styles; and we shall be collaborating with young musicians, and children's choirs from local schools.

Our scholars and apprentices have been a lovely team this year and really help our sound and sang superbly as soloists in our concerts too. It's been a joy to work with them.

The committee this year has changed quite significantly and I just want to take the opportunity to thank them all for their hard work and energy! And of course, I couldn't do it without our very own Ed Wellman by my side; thank you, Ed!

Onwards and upwards!

From Julia Woodthorpe – Librarian

Over the last year, whilst the vast majority of users have returned their scores promptly there have been some difficulties in reclaiming hired scores from members.

No score hire is free to the choir.

We pay an annual fee to the library which covers basics, but if out of county scores are needed, extra cost is incurred. Last term eventually all but one of the scores were accounted for, but two were missing beyond the extended deadline, so replacement scores had to be purchased.

The recording system and tracing of hire copies continues to evolve in line with changing needs. This year we have an added problem: our splendid Spring programme scores are proving hard to hire through the normal channels, especially for the extended time required- over 6 months.

This will mean extra expense, particularly as we may have to resort to commercial hire sources which are far more expensive, one of our potential hire costs from a commercial source would be 50p per score per month plus postage so this would be c. £240.00 - £270.00 plus postage c. £15 for this weight of parcel. Thanks to a link with a director, we have been offered a discount on this.

We already know two of the scores are not available through the public library system, and I am actively seeking inter-choir hiring to cover these. Few ordinary choirs are as large as ourselves, so numbers can be a problem. I am current seeking 60 copies per scores to hire based on the numbers requested and estimated extras needed for students and new members.

If you decide to buy your own copy, don't forget to let me know!

For the moment I cannot give you the cost of loaning scores in the coming session. I will let you know as soon as possible.

I'm still looking forward to an exciting year ahead! Best wishes to all,

P.S. Could you help the librarian keep her records, and assist at the beginning and end of term at rehearsals? It will mean meeting outside of these times too by arrangement. This needs someone who is numerate, and who will be given the information needed to understand the system. Please let me know if you are interested so that we can have a chat about it.

librarianlincolnchoralsociety@gmail.com

From Ingrid Alsop – Social Secretary

I have recently been appointed as LCS Social Secretary so would like to introduce myself to those who do not know me.

I became a member of the Choral Society when we reopened following Covid.

I sing with the soprano part of the choir and really enjoy being involved amongst such an exciting group of people who all share our love of music.

I would like to see the social side of our choir develop further and following the results of the recent survey by members, the great majority of you would wish this to happen! Following a discussion in the most recent committee meeting it was felt that it would be good to 'get the ball rolling' so I am delighted to provide you all with a date for your diary:

Monday, 14th October, 2024!

We propose having a shortened rehearsal to enable us all to spend time together, to get to know new members as well as current members. We seldom have more than a few minutes to talk to each other during our busy rehearsals!

We hope that you will all be happy to enjoy this opportunity to meet each other and there will refreshments provided!

Raffle

Thank you to all who have contributed prizes for the weekly raffle. This is a simple way to raise much needed funds to support our choir and a special thank you to Angela for organising it.

I am keen to explore additional ways of creating extra income, I know that in the past, the selling of cakes was successful and could be reinstated if people are in favour of this. I would appreciate all ideas that you may wish to contribute to support fund raising initiatives.

Please feel free to send your ideas to me via the LCS committee.

Enjoy the summer as it has finally arrived (at least, this week!) See you all in the autumn!

From Charlotte Smirthwaite Walker – Friends' Secretary

In the face of dwindling audiences, it is gratifying that Friend's membership has remained steady this year. We lost some but gained others and I continue to promote the scheme whenever I can slip it into conversation! Please oblige me by doing the same whenever you can. The new leaflets were successfully deployed at the last concert and we did receive some subscriptions as a result.

I would like to thank those members of the choir who have signed up for the Friends' scheme on behalf of partners or family - your support is noted and very much appreciated. I ask all choir members, if you have spouses or family that regularly attend concerts, please consider signing them up for a membership, the minimum contribution is only £25pa and they will have access to the VIP area during intervals and as such will receive free drinks and snacks in addition to the option to buy discounted tickets to our major concerts. It's a lovely way to show your appreciation for their repeated support for both you and the choir.

From Sue Marris – Treasurer – Subscriptions and Gift Aid information

It is good to report that the choir finances have begun to stabilise since my last report. The upcoming program has been planned with cost in mind but also respecting the views expressed in the members' survey.

We have a new Auditor in place and aim to have the 23/24 year accounts finalised and available well ahead of the AGM in November.

Annual Membership

The simplest way of settling your annual subscription is to pay it by bank transfer, so here are the details you need:

Bank: Lloyds

Sort Code: 30-92-93 Account No. 75115068

Reference: Your name followed by "subs" if there is space.

Gift Aid

Once again can I remind members to complete a Gift Aid form as we are able to claim Gift Aid on membership subscriptions. If you have already done this and nothing has changed there is no need for a new one. [Click here to download a Gift Aid Form.](#)

From Janet McNeill – Subscriptions Secretary

The membership form for 2024-2025 is available on the Lincoln Choral Society website, Members' Section. Click here to download either [a PDF version](#) or [a Word version](#). It would be greatly appreciated if you could pay your subscription during August by bank transfer or cheque, as it's always a busy time at the beginning of term, and I'm away for a week in September. If you can't download and complete a form, there will be some printed copies available from myself, or Bron (chorus secretary) at rehearsals in September. Finally, my address and contact details are on the form if you would like to post your membership form with a cheque.

Please write all information clearly – especially phone contact details and email addresses – so that you can be contacted easily when necessary.

The fees for full membership will be £160 this year. Anyone who successfully auditions and joins the choir from January 2025 onwards will pay a short subscription of £80.

Please ensure you complete all 7 sections of the form, and remember to mark your bank transfer with your name, followed by the word 'subs', as this makes my job a lot easier. By completing the membership form you are agreeing under GDPR regulations for those office holders of the society who need your contact details, to inform you about rehearsal and concert details, and to retain the information for the year of membership. Hence a new form will be required to be completed each year.

I'm looking forward to seeing you all again in September, for another inspiring and enjoyable musical year with Mark and Ed!

From Angela Clifton – Social Media Coordinator

Love them or loathe them, social media sites are very effective tools for the choir to communicate with members of the public and, we hope, to grow a community of followers, supporters and audience (both online and in the auditorium!)

The choir currently has accounts on Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter). In addition to the three public pages, we have a private, members' only page on Facebook.

As well as advertising upcoming concerts (and perhaps receiving audience feedback after a performance), public posts on the various platforms can help create and maintain interest in and engagement with the choir. Alongside the more formal notices and reports, we endeavour to show the "human" face of the choir.

For choir members ourselves, posts, particularly with photographs, can serve as a record of our time with one another at rehearsals, concerts and social events.

Statistics on the accounts demonstrate the usefulness of photographs, video and audio: there is always more interest and engagement in posts with pictures, video and sound. For this reason, we are always grateful for your permission to take photographs and use them on the various platforms. Our membership form includes a statement of consent for the society to take, hold and use images of members for legitimate marketing and promotional opportunities, but we are always sensitive to people's wishes – just speak up.

Do "like," comment on and share the public posts: we can all enjoy being ambassadors for the choir.

Finally, a big personal "Thank you!" from me to you all for being such sporting and photogenic subjects!