

BROMSGROVE CONCERTS

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees have pleasure in submitting their report and the financial statements for the year ended 30 April 2016.

Principal Activity

The principal activity is the promotion of the art and science of music by the presentation of concerts and other activities.

Trustees

The trustees who served during the period were as follows:

J Upward	Chairman
B Hall-Mancey	Secretary
J Sampson	Treasurer
A Cook	
C Cooke	
J Croft	
D London	
J Richards	
R Sugden	
G Vale	

At the Annual General Meeting on 29th June 2015 Bernard Hall-Mancey and John Sampson were re-elected as Secretary and Treasurer. Janet Upward indicated she did not wish to stand again as Chairman, but at a committee meeting August 15th 2015 as no-one else was willing to take up the post she agreed to stay on for a further year as nominal Chairman to chair meetings.

Constitution

We took up the offer of Making Music (the National Federation of Music societies) made to all its members to adopt a new constitution. Their model was drawn up with the Charity Commission to ensure compliance with their requirements so that the administrative impact on the committee was minimal. The model constitution was adopted by members at a Special Meeting held on 4th December 2015 and we received confirmation from Making Music (9th March) that the constitution had been accepted by the Charity Commission. It covers all the requirements of charity law and sets out in detail all that is required of members and trustees as well as the

freedoms that trustees need in order to run the charity while staying within the law. It puts Bromsgrove Concerts on a sound footing in terms of charity structure, regulation and governance. A subcommittee has also drawn up Rules and Regulations to structure the running of Bromsgrove Concerts. This was approved by the committee on 6 June and will be available to view at the 2016 AGM.

Review of the Year

Concerts

Before our main season opened in September we were pleased to offer, as our contribution to the Bromsgrove festival a recital for the 2014 winner of the Bromsgrove international Young Musicians Competition, Daniel Ciobanu. His enthusiasm, virtuosity and musical commitment were well demonstrated in his programme “Waltzes and Fireworks”.

The fifty-third season got off to a great start with the Carducci Quartet, old friends of Bromsgrove Concerts who brought three Shostakovich quartets. This concert was part of their year’s programme of playing all his quartets at various national and international venues this year to mark the fortieth anniversary of his death, and for which they subsequently received a Royal Philharmonic Society award.

Our next visitors were the Leonore Piano Trio on October 16th who brought a varied programme demonstrating another of our aims to mix classical pieces with modern and contemporary works making for exciting listening, with an early energetic trio of Beethoven, living composer David Matthews’s distinctive voice and the passionate lyricism of Mendelssohn.

Katie Stillman (violin) and Simon Lane (piano) concert on November 6th included Mozart, Glazunov and Colin Matthews (brother of David) finishing with Elgar’s glorious violin sonata

The Carnival Band provided a complete contrast at their concert in December with their mix of medieval and folk music on an intriguing mix of instruments which some audience members thought did not need amplification.

The second half of the season saw a performance by the Tippett Quartet January 15th of Robert Simpson’s Quarter No 14. In recent seasons we have programmed two other quartets by him and have been glad to champion his music with live performances which are too rare - the Tippett Quartet had to get the original manuscript score in order to play the work for us.

In February we welcomed Craig Ogden the guitarist again. His combination of an easy platform matter and great musicianship rightly draws a big crowd. His programme included Tippett’s the Blue Guitar, as well as a Lute Suite by Bach and an intriguing set of pieces Grimm Tales by David Knotts.

The season drew to a close with two very well received concerts. On March 4th Richard Jenkinson gave a brilliant recital with Benjamin Frith including two works by Worcester composer Ian Venables. This received a five star review from Christopher Morley in the Birmingham Post. He similarly lauded the performance of Ian Venables String Quartet at the last concert in our series by the Benyounes Quartet on 18th March.

Audiences

More members and subscribers bought Rover tickets (which allow purchasers to use their tickets flexibly) than during the previous season (14 Rover8 and 16 Rover4). Out of a total of 47 standard subscriptions, 15 were bought by committee members for themselves and family members, Of those with standard subscriptions for 8 concerts, not everyone attended every concert whereas almost all Rovers were fully used – 163 out of 176. 33 tickets were issued at reduced prices for students, and for disabled patrons and their carers. This number needs to be added to the ‘paid for’ plus ‘complementary’ tickets to achieve the final non-members total.

The sales of full-price tickets are tracked using data from the Artrix box office.

Concert	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	total
Members bought extra tickets		3	1				1	2	7
Number of paid-for tickets	33	32	8	61	19	78	34	17	282
Complimentary tickets	4	8	6	4	4	4	6	9	45
Total non-members	40	40	15	73	27	94	42	29	360
Rovers	19	22	19	18	24	27	17	17	163
Committee members	14	14	15	15	15	11	15	11	110
Members	25	26	20	14	29	17	30	27	188
Head count	98	102	69	120	95	148	104	84	820

Marketing and publicity

Information about our patrons

30 people on our mailing list bought 66 full priced tickets.
 people completely new to the list bought 149 tickets.

63 tickets were bought by people on the night of concerts and no computer record of their contact details was made.

We have the details of people who have bought multiple tickets for single concerts and others who have attended more than one concert.

The postcodes of all our customers has been used to calculate the journey times that people make on concert nights and this shows that while most people live within a short distance of Artrix, we still have audience members who come from further afield.

Publicity efforts in 2015/6

In June 2015, 6500 leaflet/order forms were printed. 72 were posted to members and the 245 names on the mailing list. Most of the balance was issued to a distribution agency to fill publicity stands in Worcestershire and neighbouring towns.

Bromsgrove Concerts was advertised in Chamber Music Plus (the publicity brochure issued on behalf of all West Midlands Music Societies) and in What's On.

Press releases were sent to local press for each concert.

Our web pages were kept up to date by a committee member and email was used to send reminders about forthcoming concerts and to circulate the newsletter.

Our concerts were advertised in the Artrix brochure and on their website, which hosts pages where tickets are ordered electronically.

Measuring the effectiveness of our publicity

There is little doubt that our message is getting seen and being acted upon as 50% of the patrons who attend a single concert and whose details were recorded by the Box office were previously unknown to us. This is consistent with the experience of the last three years. For the 2016/17 season, we will have a mailing list of 259 names, all of whom will have attended at least one Bromsgrove Concert in the last four years.

This will be segmented into:

1. people who made multiple purchases
2. names that appears on the sales list each year
3. patrons who live locally
4. the rest.

The remaining question for which we have no answer at this stage is "having come once. Why do people not come regularly?"

Development plan

At the instigation of the Elmley Foundation, we agreed to prepare a three year development plan to ensure that Bromsgrove Concerts would be sustainable, given the continuing squeeze on funding for the arts. To carry out this work, we formed a sub-committee. We identified the near static number of members as a weakness. We also recognised that the work needed to run the charity was increasing. Recruitment of new members and new committee members was seen as a priority.

The plan is now in draft form and the first steps have been made towards recruiting new members. For the 2016/17 season we will be offering existing members incentives to bring in new members. We have opened a dialogue with the

Birmingham Conservatoire with the aim of involving a young audience. A web-based survey of members was undertaken in March. The results of this, together with all the other data we have collected, will be supplied to a consultant who will direct our efforts during 2016/17.

Finance

The 2014-15 season ended with a deficit of some £800 so we started the year cautiously, although with healthy reserves. Nevertheless, we have ended with a surplus of some £1500. This turn around was due to donations from members (including one generous anonymous contribution to cover the artist's fee for one particular concert) and a special fund raising recital initiated and given by Peter Ward, a long standing audience member, while the concert CD stall continues to make a significant contribution to our income stream. The Elmley Foundation continue with their generous support and we also secured grants from RVW Trust, Grimmitt Trust and the Hinrichsen Foundation; we are enormously indebted to these organisations and thank them for this support.

We were also able to make economies on leaflet production and programme book-printing costs. Ticket income was larger than budgeted, two concerts drawing larger than expected audiences. In addition the increased Artrix fees were not as bad as feared.

We also wish to acknowledge the contribution our committee members make through their voluntary work for Bromsgrove Concerts, and for the out-of-pocket expenses they do not claim for. As a token of this the donations figures include a figure of £208 as income, and this is also entered as £208 expenditure, representing much more that is in fact contributed in this way.

Our reserves remain stable, and give us the confidence necessary to book artists and other arrangements for the full season long before any income arises.

Committee

We welcome David London to the committee who has already become active on the fund raising and development committee. The new constitution allows us to have up to fourteen members and we intend to actively recruit for these vacancies, as we are conscious that there is more work that needs to be done than current committee members can manage. In addition we will maintain our search for a new Chairman and hope to use internet recruitment sites to aid our search. Meanwhile Committee members have agreed to share out some of the work of Chairman between them.

Links and outreach

We have a positive working relationship with all the staff at Artrix who provide our box office function, front of house and technical support on concert evenings. We were pleased to welcome their new Director Hannah Phillips and had a constructive

meeting with her on taking up her post and hope to explore further ways we can collaborate with Artrix.

We attend meetings of the West Midlands Music Societies which provide a valuable interchange of ideas and sharing of problems and successes. We are also members of Bromsgrove Arts Alive, contributing a column about our activities to their twice-yearly magazine.

We exchange publicity information with the Orchestra of St John.

We continue to develop our relationship with Bromsgrove International Young Musicians Competition, offering a recital concert to their prize-winner as part of Bromsgrove Festival

We continue our membership of the Cavatina Chamber Music Trust. This enables us to offer free tickets to all young people, although take up of this scheme has been low this year.

Reserves Policy

The policy of the Trustees is to maintain reserves so far as possible at a level that approximately equates to next year's expenditure. The Trustees deem this to be necessary in view of uncertainty over the level of financial support from outside bodies. This means we need to be able to underwrite committed expenditure for booked artists for the following season before we start to get ticket income or know our grant income.

Risk Management

The Trustees actively review the major risks that the Charity faces on a regular basis and believe that maintaining reserves at current levels, combined with an annual review of the controls over key financial systems, will provide sufficient resources in the event of adverse conditions. The Trustees have also examined other operational and business risks faced by the Charity and confirm that they have established systems to mitigate the significant risks. No serious incidents have occurred.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The Trustees are required under the Charities Act 1993 to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the Charity's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year (unless the Charity is entitled to prepare accounts on the alternative receipts and payments basis). In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the trustees should follow best practice and:

- (a) select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- (b) make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- (c) state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departures and explained in the financial statements;
- (d) prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy the financial position of the Charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with applicable law and regulations. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention of fraud and other irregularities.

Approval

This report was approved by the Trustees on 22nd June 2016 and signed on their behalf.

Janet Upward
Chairman

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