



SLEAFORD CHORAL SOCIETY MINUTES OF AGM HELD ON WED 24 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 7pm IN SLEAFORD METHODIST CHURCH.

Present: K Jarvis, S Quarmby (notetaker), D Jacobs, A Harrison, A Algar.

No. of Choral Members Present: S 16, A 13, T 8, B 6 **Total 44**

<u>Agenda Heading</u>	<u>Notes</u>	<u>Action</u>
1 Apologies for absence	Pauline Coulson, Jan Purcell, Anthea Ashmore, Anne Manning, Jo Johnson, Di Scott-Cross, Mel Martin, Suzan Pratt, Doreen Bamford, Lorna Mulhearn, Susan James, Jenny Seddon, Gill Stokes.	
2 Minutes of Last AGM (2024)	Approved as a true record. Signed by K Jarvis, Chair. Proposed: L Paterson Seconded: J Perry Vote: Unanimously agreed	
3 Matters Arising	None	
4 Musical Director's Report	<u>Musical Director Report 2024/25 Season</u> Good evening everyone. Thank you very much for asking me to speak at your AGM because, of course, I am not a member of the society; I am an employee of the society and have no vote, so thank you. First of all, I would like to thank all of the Choral Council, the Officers in particular and also the Music Group, for your support over the year, of which there has been very much. We started last year with a splendid Christmas concert, which was made very special by the participation of the William Alvey School Choir, mainly through the kind offices of Sue Quarmby. It is always fun performing with the children and we were able to find a couple of pieces which we could perform alongside them, which was wonderful, and of course we get the parents turning up, which didn't do any harm whatsoever to the ticket sales! I was very honoured that the choir wanted to perform my Requiem for the Easter concert. It is not an easy work, but the choir worked incredibly hard and put their absolute all into learning the parts and also into the performance which was, I felt, a truly memorable one, enjoyed by a splendid audience as well. It was great to perform with the Sleaford Concert Band and I very much hope we will be doing that again; indeed, that is planned! I never imagined that my Requiem would ever be paired with my theme music for '64 Zoo Lane' in the same concert, but it seemed to work! We were blessed with wonderful soloists in Kate Woolveridge and Mark Wilde, I thought they were both absolutely 'spot on', and were also both incredibly easy to work with, which was wonderful for me and very helpful all round. The audience seemed very appreciative of the whole concert; I really cannot stress sufficiently how much I appreciated what the choir did, and how everyone 'gave their all'. It was a very emotional performance and very wonderful for me in particular; I felt truly honoured, so thank you all. I was also gratified to learn that the concert, far from being a financial liability, actually made a profit! This was largely down to Doreen securing a grant of £2000, for which we should all be grateful to her, and which I thank her for. In retrospect, that concert actually marked my 11th year as conductor of this choir, following seven years as the choir's accompanist, so it was actually would you believe my 18th year! Truly, I have given you the finest years of my life! We all, myself included, completely forgot my 10 year anniversary the previous year, so it was extra special for me to have performed all those pieces of mine in the 11th year concert; really marvellous! The Summer concert was constructed along the lines of the previous year's Summer concert and I think that established format is a tremendous success, with more of a variety line-up with solos, choir items and piano duets; I feel that we should stick with this format for future Summer concerts, broadly speaking, because it seems to work so well. In particular, I appreciated Lynne Loose's contributions: I especially enjoyed the piano duet which she performed with Liz Hill. A super arrangement and a lovely performance; Lynne will be greatly missed, as will Roger, who has been a very valuable member of the Basses. I will also particularly miss Alwyn Kirk, because he has been around ever since I became associated with this choir, and it was he who approached me as Conductor. He has been a great support to me personally over the years and will be greatly missed by me, because I have not yet found anyone to take his place as the butt of my jokes, though I'm working on it!	

	I want to end by thanking all choir members for their hard work and dedication over the year, which does not go unnoticed by me, so thank you all very much. Rowland Lee, Musical Director /Conductor.	
5 Membership Officer's Report	<u>Membership Services Officer's Report - 2024/25 Season</u> At the start of the 2024/2025 season we had 47 members, and during the course of the year 16 people joined the choir. Inevitably, there were some resignations (8 in total), including Alwyn Kirk who retired at the end of the season after many years of not only singing but helping the choir in different roles in the Council. He will also be remembered for the many years he directed the Consort, a smaller group from the choir who volunteered to sing a program of songs after the end of the season in a concert at a local church, so enabling that church to help raise funds for their church. While sopranos and altos come forward to join the choir, the tenors and basses remain the voices where it seems very difficult to get new members - so please encourage anyone who could join and help swell their numbers. As ever, the Section Representatives, Judith, Kathy, Peter and Derek, provide invaluable help to both their voice sections and to me. A heartfelt 'thank you' to all of them. Anne Algar Membership Services Officer	
6 Treasurer's Report and Checked accounts for 2024/25	<u>SLEAFORD CHORAL SOCIETY FINANCIAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2025</u> The accounts for the year ended 31 August 2025 show a surplus of receipts over payments of £1407, At the year-end, our cash balances had increased to £7019. Although donations (which were exceptional last year) are down, we improved the concert finances, in particular with the tickets sold for Rowland's Requiem which attracted a larger than usual audience. We were also able to obtain a generous grant from NKDC of £2000, which completely covered the extra costs of the soloists and concert band. The finances are in good shape as we go into the new year, so am pleased to report that the Council has decided that there will be no increase in the annual subscription for this year, which will remain at £95. A Harrison, Treasurer	
6a Approval of Treasurer's Statement & Accounts	Thank you to AH for his excellent work as Treasurer this year. Proposed: John Henwood Seconded: Owen Davies Vote: Unanimously agreed	
6b Membership Subscriptions for Season 25/26	<u>Council decision on fees for Season 25/26</u> Fees will remain at the current level of £95. Membership fees are now due and can be paid by cash, cheque or bank transfer. Members can pay 'half and half' – half (£47.50) now, and the other half at the beginning of January.	
7 Chair's Report	<u>Chair's Report – 2024/25 Season</u> It is always tricky knowing how to start a report like this because you want to catch people's attention from the off! However, when I was thinking of some kind of smart beginning, it seemed quite straightforward, as the thing I wanted to do most was thank everyone. So here goes. Thanks to all of you for your dedication and commitment to the choir. Thank you to the Council for all your hard work behind the scenes and for keeping everything ticking over like a well-oiled machine. Thank you also to Rowland, our unique and legendary MD, whose musical knowledge and sense of humour keeps us going, even in the more pressurised of times. I must also thank our now exited Deputy Conductor, Lynne, for the support she gave to Rowland and for her overall contribution to the choir. What a season 2024/25 was! The Christmas Concert was a joyous occasion, with the stars, of course, being the children from The William Alvey School Choir. It was a relaxed programme of music for us to master, except the challenge that learning the words for Neville's, Als I Lay on Yoolis Night presented! It was really just as well that the music for the Christmas Concert hadn't been too hard for us to learn, because little did we know what was about to come!	

	The highlight of the season, and undoubtedly of many seasons for Sleaford Choral, was our performance of the Rowland Lee Requiem. After a false start planning a joint performance with Lincoln Choral Society, we were absolutely determined that we could do it ourselves and we certainly pulled it off! There were so many feelings along the way in preparing for this concert..... 'oh my goodness, what have we done?' and 'there's no way we're going to be ready in time'. But, the main driver was wanting to do the beautiful music justice and not letting Rowland down. I don't think I'm alone in saying that it is a long time since I felt such elation and satisfaction at the end of a performance. It really was very emotional and a joy to be part of. We are so fortunate to have performed it, accompanied by the brilliant Sleaford Concert Band, excellent soloists and a very talented pianist/organist. Our Summer Rhapsody Concert was great fun and a celebration of the talent we have within the ranks of the choir. This seems to be turning into a lovely summer tradition! The 24/25 season certainly cemented in my mind, the value of sectional rehearsals when preparing for a large work. If we hadn't been able to do this in the run up to the Requiem concert, I know we would have felt even less confident in our ability to perform it! We will do everything we can to make sure these continue. 24/25 again showed us the value of collaborative working. eg. The William Alvey School Choir at Christmas and Sleaford Concert Band in the Requiem Concert. Not only is it enjoyable for the choir, but it exposes us to a different audience, which in turn helps us financially. As we have heard from Alan, our financial situation is currently looking more positive than it has done for several years, which gives us more flexibility to bring musicians and soloists in to support us at concerts. It is pleasing to hear that as a choir our membership base remained strong throughout the season, with some people coming solely to perform the Requiem. The few members that we did lose through the season was balanced out, numbers-wise, by new members joining the choir. What became even more apparent through the season was the need for more tenors and basses and we will be doing all we can to rectify this situation. It needs saying again, the fact we are here at all, and still strong, when so many other choirs have disappeared since Covid, is heartening. We enjoyed a couple of social events during the season thanks to Anthea's organisation and Derek's quizzical skills! The quiz is always great fun and not competitive at all! The annual summer dinner was also very enjoyable. Thank you both. As you know, regretfully, we made the decision to end the light buffet tradition at our concerts for very valid reasons. Anthea always did such a good job organising this and the food produced by all of you was always well received. Thankfully, the loss of the buffet did not affect numbers attending the summer concert. I talked about community in last year's AGM report and how we are placed firmly in the centre of Sleaford's community. During the season, we attended two community events - the NKDC carol service and the Martin Church Carol evening. I am pleased that these were both well supported by members of the choir and think it's important we continue to show who we are and what we can do at every opportunity. Last season really was a very successful one for Sleaford Choral, in all kinds of ways, thanks to all of you, so let's keep pushing onwards and, hopefully, upwards, a little! Thank you. <i>Karen Jarvis</i> <i>Chair</i>	
8 Election of Officers & Council	There are no vacancies on the Choral Council. No nominations have been received. All members of the Council agreed to continue for the next year. Election of Committee 'en bloc' Proposed: Owen Davies Seconded: Elaine Healey Vote: Unanimously agreed	
9 Appointment of Musical Director	Rowland Lee has agreed to remain in this position. Many thanks to Rowland	
10 Appointment of Deputy Conductor	Lynne Loose has resigned from the Deputy Conductor role. Many thanks to Lynne for her excellent work in this role and her support to Rowland and the whole choir.	

11 Music Programme for 2024-25 Season	DJ thanked members of the MSG for their work this year. Thanks particularly to MJ White and L Paterson, also to new member, S Quarmby. Christmas Concert Sat 13th December 2025 Rosemary Field will be organist and H Jacobs timpanist. 2 - 4 trumpeters also required. Programme includes Bach Christmas Oratorio as well as usual range of traditional carols and seasonal music. Martin Parish Church Fri 19th Dec 2025 Spring Concert – Saturday March 28th 2026 Britten’s St Nicholas and Steiner’s Crucifixion. Ed is booked to play. DB has emailed Mark Wilde inviting him to be soloist, no reply as yet. Bass soloist is also required. 3 child voices too. Organ, piano duet, percussionist and violin all required. Choral Council agree that there are funds available for this expenditure. Summer Concert – Saturday June 27th 2026 Programme to be finalised. Guests will be Sleaford Concert Band. Ed Wellman booked as accompanist. Attempting to book a larger venue – possibly St George’s School Hall. ‘Songs from the Shows’ is to be the theme. Christmas Concert Sat 19th December 2026 – Church booked. Guests will be Bretherton Bell Choir – DJ has made contact with Judith Kirk. RL interjected at this point to say he would like to expand community singing (as with Martin Church) in the possible form of a ‘Consort’ as before to perform Summer Outreach concerts to bring in a different audience.	DJ
12. AOB	• Sincere thanks to Judith Perry for once again providing the tree for the Christmas Tree Festival from the Choral Society. It is a great pleasure to be represented at this event. • Anne Strong asked if the Choir could perform at Heckington Windmill on 6th December 2026? It’s very much hoped that this will be possible. • Denise asked if there was any feedback on the Member questionnaires – KJ responded that yes, there was, but it required further compilation and will be shared with the choir soon. Formal AGM terminated at 7.30pm.	