

Exeter Cathedral Old Choristers Association AGM - Monday 18th April 2022 at 17:00

1. Welcome from the Chairman who thanked everyone coming to the AGM.
2. A minutes silence was held for those who have died. (*John Attfield, Christian Larder, Lucian Nethsingha, Eric Dare, Andrew Mosley, Donald Rutter, Edward Brice Bennett, John Thomas.*)

2b. (precentor's report) The precentor thanked the Chairman for Deaconing at this morning's eucharist. JM thanked the ECOCA on behalf of the Dean and Chapter for the strong support that the ECOCA give to the choristers of the cathedral. Our support was gratefully received, especially during the pandemic, by families who suffered as a result of the impacts felt nationwide.

3. The last few years have had their challenges due to the effects of the pandemic, disrupting what is the normal passage of learning for a chorister in their time in the choir. The choristers are in very good health as a unit and there have been very promising auditions for September with a proposed number of 41 which is a positive position in comparison to some other institutions across the country. Since our last AGM, Timothy Parsons has moved on to Bury St Edmonds to be the Director of Music however we have appointed James Anderson-Bessant as Assistant Director of Music starting in September 2021. We also had Laurence John with us this year as an Organ Scholar and he will be taking up the position of Assistant Director of Music at St David's Cathedral from September 2022. A new organ scholar, Alex Finderson-Brown will start in September 2022 who will then move on to King's College Cambridge as organ scholar from September 2023. The back row are in good health as we have a full compliment of choral scholars from September 2022 who will move into new accommodation at 9a The Cathedral Close. Michael Graham is leaving his post as a tenor lay vicar at the end of this academic year and he will be replaced by Jack Oades who is currently the Sub-Organist of Dublin Cathedral. Tamsin Bullock has been appointed as the new chorister tutor who was introduced to the members of the agm. TN thanked Sue Gunn-Johnson and her team for their hard work as the choir chaperone.

The Cathedral Choir has a concert with Fretwork in the Two Moors festival in October. The choir will perform the Stravinsky's Symphony of Psalms with the Devon Philharmonic over Eastertide next year.

4. The Head welcomed the members of the AGM and thanked them for coming today. Things are going well at the school and the numbers of pupils at the school is increasing with 281 pupils on the roll in Trinity Term this year. Scholarship results are currently at 84% for leavers. In 2019, ISI came for an inspection and the school was given *Excellent in All Areas*, the highest possible rating. In 2021, the Cathedral School was one of the 8 finalists in the ISI School of the Year for prep schools. During lockdown, *Choristers at Home* was created for those taking part in remote learning. JM thanked TN and his team for his tremendous work and support during the period of lockdown. The school has pushed the Creativity and Performance part of the curriculum with focusses on Art, Music, including Choirs and other instrumental ensembles. A new Director of Music, Russel Collins, will be starting at the start of the Trinity Term. Julia Featherstone will continue to work with him in the music department. £5700 was raised for the charity, Balloons, at the school's charity concert. Spanish has been introduced part of the curriculum offered in modern foreign languages. The school have county and national representatives for various sports. The cathedral choirs Messiah performance at Christmas included all 4 soloists being chorister parents. JF thanked Tamsin for her hard work as chorister tutor. The Headmaster thanked the ECOCA for their support and generosity.

5. Chairman's report attached.

6. GP handed out the accounts for 2019, 2020, 2021 all signed by the independent examiner. Attached to the minutes. Accepted *Proposed by Gordon Pike, Seconded Matthew Smith.*

7. 2022 rate was £15, *Gordon Proposed this was raised to £20, Seconded by Charlotte Longhurst. Cressida proposed that we amend the forms to encourage those not coming to still send their membership fee.*

8. *Attached.* The association has gratefully received some substantial legacies from former choristers. Dominic will look to contact the members of the association with regard to covenanted donations which have declined over the last few years. The incoming funds have reduced slightly due to the impacts of the pandemic however, we are still spending less than our income. We currently don't have an independent examiner but Dominic will be resolving this issue over the coming months. The chairman thanked Dominic for his invaluable work.

9, Carole Dobson, is very happy to continue as independent examiner, *Proposed by Hannah Deasy, Seconded by Cressida Peers.*

11. Charles continues as Chair, *proposed Jonny Titchin, S - Charlotte Longhurst*
Jonny continues as Secretary, *proposed Dominic Asater, Seconded by Charles Rendell*
Gordon continues as Treasurer, *proposed Cressida Peers, seconded by Dominic Asater*

JT proposed that Alex Stevens joined the committee, seconded by Hannah Deasy.
Alex Gaze proposed the rest of the committee is elected enmass, seconded by Harry Parham-Connelly.

10. The chairman read out the proposed amendment to the constitution to include the following wording as an amendment. Seconded by Nick Pedlar.
The Association will pay due regard to the Safeguarding Policy of Exeter Cathedral and to any advice and guidelines as may be issued from time to time. This policy is available on the Cathedral website at www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk/about-us/safeguarding/

The chair has agreed to be the *Safeguarding champion* for the association as part of the whole cathedral safeguarding provision.

12. Approval of the minutes to be accepted - *Proposed by Matthew Smith, Seconded by Richard Mitchell.*

Gordon Pike read out the apologies for the 2022 reunion.

Nigel Mitchell wanted to express thanks, on behalf of the Cathedral School governors, to the entire association for the support given to choristers and Gordon Pike for his service to the association and the school. The Chairman thanked the governors for their kind words.