

CHESTER MUSIC SOCIETY
CELEBRITY CONCERTS COMMITTEE

Minutes of the AGM held at St Mary's Creative Space, Chester on 18 September 2019

PRESENT: David Woods, Chair, Berkeley Ranby, Secretary, John Ierston, Treasurer; Mick Clarke, Ray & Mary Pulsford, Audrey Woolridge, Tom Miller, Richard Alliss, Jon Penn.

1. Apologies for absence: Chris & John Williams, Jenny & Colin Waker, Mary Ranby, David Parks-Smith, Sandy Boyne, Brian & Margaret Walmsley, Claire Hallet-Rorke, Penny Clarke.

2. Minutes of 2018 AGM

These were accepted as correct; proposed by Mick Clarke and seconded by Richard Alliss.

3. Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report

We again promoted six concerts last season in St Mary's Centre.

Membership was 97 (cf 102 last year). We as usual lost a few for a variety of reasons but happily gained more than we lost. Friends were up to 46 from 41 last year.

We had a very good year for attendance. Our average attendances rose from 139 to 149. Total seats sold for the season were 891 against 839 the previous season.

Jess Gillam in October, Claire Hammond in March and the Panama Jazz band at Christmas, all sold out with near capacity audiences for the other 3 concerts.

Attendance at individual concerts was as follows.

	Artist	Attendance
October18	Jess Gillam	163
Nov 18	Guy Johnston	141
Dec 18	Panama Jazz Band	153
Jan 19	Pixels Piano trio	142
Feb 19	Claire Hammond	150
Mar 19	Wihan and Sacconi Octet	142
TOTAL	Average 149 (139 last season)	891 Cf 839

We continue to use Ticketsource for all on line sales as well as our telephone booking service. It is highly efficient with prompt payment to us. We continue to use the VIC for a small number of face to face sales.

We are very grateful for numerous additional donations and the support of Friends of Celebrity Concerts In particular our anonymous benefactor again made a big difference to the money available for artists last season. This enables us to secure performers whom we could not afford without raising our seat prices considerably.

We continue to improve our use of Social Media and use our Facebook page to circulate information about our concerts. We like our more eye catching and vibrant posters and will continue to use them. Continued thanks to Colin Waker for managing both of these for us. We also use Mail chimp as way of circulating information about our events. Thanks to Berkeley for doing this.

We had another splendid buffet at the December concert, and again it was kindly co-ordinated by Margaret Walmsley, with help from Tessa Parkin, Lorna Wislade, Penny Clarke and Jenny Waker. The Society funded one school's workshop this year, managed by our section. This was at Dorin Park School in Upton and was conducted by the flute and harp duo Hefin. Some of you will recall hearing

Bethan and Charlotte play at a Showcase concert and Bethan plays harp regularly with Chester Philharmonic Orchestra. We did try to organise another but sadly we were unable to engage schools. This is a disappointment: we offer a free workshop to schools and very often they don't even respond to our offer. However we will press on and look to do two this season

There are a large number of people who have made these concerts possible and our thanks are due to them: Berkeley Ranby our secretary, Mick Clarke who books our artists, Colin Waker who produces our posters and programmes and manages our social media, Thanks to Jon Penn and Penny Clarke for cashing up and CD sales as well as numerous other jobs. Elizabeth and Hamp Oates looked after the box office on concert nights and Lila Hallett, Claire Hallett-Rorke, Mary Ranby and Tom Miller worked on the sales tables with Sandy Boyne and Brian Walmsley on welcoming. We thank John Ierston for his management of the finances, Chris Williams for looking after the interval wine (supported by John Williams, Alan and Vera Jackson). Yvonne Coleby-Davies has fed and looked after our artists on arrival and at the interval; Phillipa and Richard Allis for serving the tea and coffee in the interval. We are very grateful to the Wigleys, Elizabeth Morgan and Chris Williams for providing accommodation for artists. Mention must also be made of additional help from Vera Jackson and John Williams on First Aid. Off-committee support is always welcome and again thanks to our resident cake-maker Yvonne Coleby-Davies, resident vintner Sandy Young and the many contributors to raffle prizes.

Thanks, due to you all.

5. Financial Report

The Treasurer John Ierston spoke to his report which was circulated at the meeting. He stressed that it was provisional until the Society's accounts are finalised. He was extremely pleased to report that we had made the first surplus that he recalls – a total of £133.

This resulted from increased ticket income plus cost savings. Thanks to John for these accounts, which were accepted by the meeting, proposed by Jon Penn and seconded by Mick Clarke.

6. Election of Officers and Committee

According to the constitution, one third of the committee of nine retires at each AGM. David Woods, Berkeley Ranby and John Ierston retire by rotation. David Woods and Berkeley Ranby are eligible for re-election and were re-elected.

John Ierston has decided to retire after a marathon 30 years on the committee, 28 of these as Financial Controller. David Woods said how much his work and professional financial advice had been really appreciated. John had led the negotiations over the piano purchase with the receiver and negotiated a very good deal, hence we have a great asset of the Steinway piano. This is good for the City and the Society. The Society's registered address is with John's firm and he confirmed he is happy for this to continue. David presented John with a modest vinous token of our appreciation.

Jon Penn was elected as Treasurer, proposed by Berkeley Ranby and seconded by Mick Clarke.

7. Any Other Relevant Business – None.

8. Date and Venue of the 2020 AGM – 8.00p.m. Wednesday 16 September 2020, venue to be confirmed.