

NEW MUSIC MAKERS COMMITTEE MEETING - Minutes 25th August 2025

Present:

Eric Gerrey (Chairman), Eunice Deuchar, Sharon Thomas (ST), Sarah Turl (STu), Jerry Gamble, Elaine Walter, Jacqui Clift, Gen Marsh.

1. Apologies:

Margaret Ballard (joined via phone call for votes on Treasurer's proposals)

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting:

Agreed by all as correct.

3. Matters Arising

Hayling Island event – This will not be going ahead. **Action complete.**

John Lewis – Sunday 7th December afternoon not now available. They have suggested November 12th or 26th, but it was felt this was too early for Christmas songs. EG will ask them if we could do 30th November. **Action EG ongoing.**

Haskins – 1.00 pm Sunday 14th and 21st December – confirmed. **Action complete.**

Application forms are not in printable format on i-pads. NH to redesign the form and EG will print some out. JC will investigate this. **Action JC**

Website – Emmy to take photos of members not currently on website this week at rehearsal and remove those who have left. MD details updated. **Action EM ongoing.**

Names of people now dealing with bookings at Hedge End Hall passed to Eric and Secretary. **Action complete.**

Summer Concert Date for June 2026 agreed with Keziah and booked at The Rose Theatre. **Action complete.**

Summer Spectacular booked for July 11th 2026. **Action complete.**

Boxes at the Unit were labelled for the crockery by ST so that the correct items were put in the correct box after use. **Action complete.**

4. Correspondence

None

5. Finance

Total assets currently £11638. Since June committee meeting, music purchased £913. Surplus on summer concert £812. Summer Spectacular net surplus (pre PRS charges) £1171. Easy Giving £52.

Proposal by ST for deposit account to be opened – see Attachment A for full details.

Seconded by EG. In brief, it was agreed that we open a deposit account with £5k online.

Proposal by ST for subs to be reduced – see Attachment A. It was agreed that subs would stay as they are so we have several years ahead without change.

Proposal for increase of pianist fee by ST –Seconded STu. All agreed.

6. Publicity

Haskins had requested some material on the choir to use for their newsletter ahead of Christmas. STu provided a photo of our banner.

Christmas poster to advertise Christmas concerts will be the green background with Santa as most people are familiar with it. Prices to stay at £10 adults, £6 children. Under 5 free. Last year's order for fliers was £25 for 250, so will go with that and ask Mo to arrange when the poster template is ready. Ladies to wear black tops with blue sparkle – theme for decorations is pink, silver and turquoise.

7. Website and Facebook

It was suggested that future event dates for the choir be put on the main front page of the website as well as the past dates. Also the dates be put on the members page in pdf format so that members can print it off if required. EG to contact Emmy.

It was noted that the presentation of items on the website looked different on a phone to a computer screen. EG to ask EM if she can correct this. **Action EG/EM**

It was requested that a system be put in place for ensuring dates are circulated to members, but it was agreed that once the Secretary has sent them out by email, members could look at the website to find them. Important that website is kept up to date.

Reminder that choir WhatsApp group should only be used for general chat, not important items as not everyone is part of the group.

8. Local Vocals

The Dementia Group have supplied a list of dates they would like to have LV perform at for next year. ED has agreed a selection. ED now has a phone to use to play the music.

There are 2 potential new care homes in the offing which ED is looking in to, although one at Lee is considered to be too far to visit.

Christmas music to include 3 new songs – Deck the Halls, Wonderful Christmastime and Joy to the World. JG to put onto the website. **Action JG**

9. Forthcoming events

Social event Beetle drive and quiz 11th October to be organised at Underhill Centre. Price £5 per ticket, members to bring their own drinks and nibbles. Email to be sent out and list to be provided at choir for names.

Bishops Waltham event agreed for 27th November – ladies to wear ponchos and scarves. GM asked if choir would be interested in performing at Bishops Waltham Carnival on June 13th, outside on the recreation ground. In principle this was agreed – more info to be obtained. **Action GM.**

Xmas concert soloists – agreed that we would have 4 soloists, one for each half of both concerts. Members to be notified so they can prepare their solos.

10. Choir welfare

None

11. AOB

Wedding of Jason Brown

CA has obtained 3 songs Jason would like us to sing – A Clare Benediction, The Lord is My Shepherd and unison All Things Bright and Beautiful. Chris has been asked to play for the hymns. Chris needs 2 or 3 half-hour slots after choir practice for the group of 12 to rehearse, to be finalised. He is not available to go to the wedding rehearsal but ST happy

to go to see where the choir would be sited. Email to go out to choir to let them know the wedding is happening, followed by a form to be put out at rehearsals for completion by those wishing to go. We need 4 sopranos, 4 altos, 2 tenors and 2 basses. ST and ED would like to attend. JG will put the music onto the website. **Action ST/JG**

Draw proceeds

Proposal by ST to allocate net draw proceeds at our concerts to a named charity for the whole year. Whoever provides the name of the charity that will be selected by the committee must provide collection tins, and ideally information for the audience about the said charity. Seconded GM. All agreed.

Summer Spectacular wash-up

Agreed scones, jam and cream worked well. Cakes to be made smaller, and from traybakes rather than round cakes.

Cold drinks to be available for the choir.

The audience needs to be advised at the interval what is happening regarding serving the tea and cakes, and that more draw tickets will be available to purchase.

When draw made, the prizes must be collected at the end of the concert. There was some confusion when prizes were given out by a helper as the numbers were called, resulting in the wrong prizes being allocated.

Suggestion made that the draw needs at least one attractive prize, as some people were put off by the relatively ordinary selection.

Reminder to choir members who are helping not to take it upon themselves to change the layout of the draw table and its position, please.

It was agreed at the AGM that we would do the next Spectacular with 15 tables, but as a comment was made that the choir was “squashed”, and there was not a lot of room for members to hold their music, it was considered that perhaps it would be better to remain with 12 tables.

It was suggested by EG after the concert that we obtain some padded envelopes to store the tiered cake stands in. ST offered to take an envelope to the lock-up to see if they would work, which they will. Still need to go in a box. Agreed that the attachments would be kept in a small box but within one of the boxes of plates. Also, ST and Martyn have measured up the shelves with the intention of seeing whether different storage boxes for the china could be purchased that are stronger, as a couple of the ones we have are splitting. Some of the boxes are also quite heavy to manhandle. There are 200 mugs at the unit – proposal to get rid of them but keep the trays they are in, as the saucers will probably fit in them. Once mugs are removed, ST and Martyn will revisit the unit to see what the next best options would be. Agreed that as Lin Kellaway had provided the mugs, she be consulted as to what she would like to happen to them. **Action ST**

Folders

STu suggested we try and source some better quality folders, as some are beginning to look a bit shabby, and are quite bulky. To be discussed further.

Retired music

JG has put the Retired Music on eBay. A post has been put on the Choirs On Facebook Group to advertise this.

put some of this onto Facebook and will monitor any interest. **Action JG.**

Meeting closed at 10.07 pm

Next meeting Tuesday Sept 30th 7.30 pm

Attachment A

1. **PROPOSAL – to open an online savings account with £5k for a fixed period of one year with Hampshire Trust Bank..**
2. **PROPOSAL - To reduce members subscriptions to £20 from October 2025, or April 2026.**

PROPOSAL 1.

NMM has £11573 in current bank account. (As at 26th August 2025)

Annual forecast is currently showing a surplus of over £2k for the year ending March 2026. Lloyds who we currently bank with, need a deposit of £10k minimum to open a savings account.

The majority of banks need you to already have a current account open.

Building Societies – in the main need minimum £10k or more to open.

Hampshire Trust Bank – Easy access savings account online will link to our current account with Lloyds. All payments must go in and out of that account.

Variable interest as dictated by the bank, can rise and fall throughout the time the account is open, payable annually. Currently 4.14%, although with interest rates being what they are this could well be less by the time we open an account, should we choose to.

Minimum £5k **must always stay in the account**. Can add funds to it at any time and can withdraw in a day. No minimum period for having the account open is stipulated.

Alternatively, can have a fixed term for 1 year 4.44%, 2 years 4.11%, 3 years 4.07% but funds cannot be withdrawn until the end of the period.

My forecast for year to **March 2027**, with the subs staying on £22 for 47 members, shows that with the expected Gift Aid payment based on £22, we will be easily covering the fixed expenses of MD, Hall hire, pianist, Unit hire and subscriptions to societies. Estimate £2.5k surplus. This would be more with a full complement of members if we manage to maintain our numbers.

OPTIONS

The safest route is to invest in the easy access savings account, maintaining £5k throughout, but interest rates could drop.

However, there is room to consider a fixed term account which will give better interest as the interest percentage will not change. At the end of the period the whole amount can be reinvested or withdrawn.

My considered opinion and therefore proposal is that we could go at least for the 1- year fixed option, to get the 4.44% at the end of the year, giving us a guaranteed £220. There is no way of knowing how the interest rates are going to fluctuate, but this way there is a guaranteed income. If we invest £5k, we still have £5k surplus to run the choir with, which is well within our traffic light system and sits comfortable in the “green” category.

The hall hire for rehearsals will not be going up this year. Currently £17 per hour.

Unit fees have just gone up, so not expecting another rise until perhaps June next year. MD fee – currently £100, which is still a good fee. Making Music provide £78 as being the average. Not considering raising this at the present time.

PROPOSAL 2.

Reason for surplus of income against fixed costs - when the proposal was put forward in 2024 to put the subs up to £22 from September 2024, we knew we would be in pocket and did not want to have to increase subs again in 2025/2026. We could have just increased them to £21, but based on the figures I had, we may well have still had to increase them again anyway for 2025/26. However, I could not have foreseen the reduction in storage costs following negotiation, and the subs income was estimated on the number of members we had at the time as it would not have been prudent to assume we would be at full capacity, which we now are.

MD fees were less than expected (I estimate a fee for every week there is expected to be a rehearsal, but occasionally this does not work out.

My forecast for the year to 31st March 2026 for fixed costs is now £3962 surplus (based on 50 members), with the overall estimate a surplus of £644, but this is likely to be more as the Christmas concerts will probably bring in more than the £500 allowed for, and for year to 31st March 2027, it is £2472. The latter is reducing the number of members to 47 as we cannot be sure we will continue with a full complement.

I have also prepared some figures showing how we would stand if we reduced the subs to £20 from October 2025, and also what the year to March 2027 would look like at £20. The surplus to March 2026 would drop to £3015, and for 2027 to £1502.

We have the opportunity to let the members benefit from our change in circumstances. I am always cautious with my figures and will continue to be, so if anything the surpluses would possibly be more than I have quoted. Reducing to £20 a month would still be sufficient to produce a surplus to ride out a few more years to come.

Changing the subs will not affect our ability to put £5k in a deposit account for one year.

Sharon Thomas
Treasurer