

CHELTENHAM MUSIC SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY 9th AUGUST 2023 AT 7pm

The Annual General Meeting of Cheltenham Music Society will be held at on Wednesday 9th August 2023 at 7pm via Zoom. The Zoom link is contained in the covering email.

AGM AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Record of the virtual 2022 AGM (attached)
3. Chairman's report (attached)
4. Treasurer's report (see note) and adoption of the Annual Accounts
5. General discussion and plans for future seasons
6. Election of Officers:
David Pepper, Lynne Elouard and Mike O'Connell are willing to stand again as Chairman, Treasurer and Membership Secretary respectively.
The post of Programme Secretary will remain vacant and we will continue to contract with Tamsyn Hamilton to fill the role.
7. Appointment of an Independent Examiner

Comments or apologies for absence should be sent to me as below.

Note: because of the delay in receiving financial details from the Cheltenham Trust the Accounts and Treasurer's report are not yet ready: they will be made available before the meeting.

David Pepper
Chairman
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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2022-23

I am pleased to say that we have had another musically successful season. Our three string quartet concerts gave us a satisfying mix of familiar and unfamiliar music. The Elias played in November and the Consone in April; the Jubilee Quartet were scheduled to perform for us in February but were forced to pull out at short notice and we were fortunate to be able to book the Elmore Quartet in their place. The other concerts included some instrumental combinations that we rarely have: a string trio (the Eblana), a wind ensemble (the young Magnard), and a piano-four-hands recital (Charles Owen and Katya Apekisheva). Together with the opening cello/piano duo of Guy Johnston and Tom Poster these all gave us concerts that were well appreciated by our audiences.

It was a great pleasure that for several concerts the audience included a group of Ukrainian refugees. It was thanks to Lindsay Tyndall that we made contact with another local music teacher who was organising events and musical activities for the Ukrainians, and I was delighted that we were able to participate by providing complementary tickets and that so many (up to 24) wanted to join us – and, as I know from feedback afterwards, that they found the concerts both enjoyable and helpful. I will offer to repeat this next season.

Financially the picture is less rosy, and we are still on the path towards closure. Our membership fell once again, albeit not by as much as in recent seasons; we had 122 members, which to give some perspective compares with around 350 at our peak. Sales of tickets to non-members fell sharply, to about half of the (admittedly rather high) total the previous year. In strict operating terms (that is, ignoring changes in investment values) we had a deficit of about £7000 on the season. An unexpected bequest from the estate of the late Richard Smith for which we are very grateful has helped to compensate for that loss, but it remains clear that we do not have long-term viability. The situation is now exacerbated by the recent news that because Cheltenham Borough Council have severely reduced their grant to the Cheltenham Trust, the charge for hiring the Pump Room will increase from £600 last season to £925 next season and then to £1100 (plus inflation) thereafter, costing us at least another £3500 per season – another nail in the Society's coffin.

Last year I explained in my report that in order to combine fiscal prudence with the need to plan well ahead if we want to go out with a bang rather than a whimper, we had decided to make 2025-26 our final season. I can confirm that this remains our intention and that we are now actively planning our final two seasons.

Our committee has become significantly depleted over recent years, and that has increased the load on its current members. I would like to thank them all for their hard work in running the Society for the benefit of us all. Particular thanks are due to Penny Steer for all she has done to support Tamsyn Hamilton who has taken over the role of professional Programme Secretary. Tamsyn has taken on both setting up the programme and liaising with artists and agents and also supporting the Trust's event manager at the concerts. Tamsyn has been a pleasure to work with, and I want to thank her too for her unfailing support. In addition to the Committee, thanks are also due to Jo Miller who has continued to provide our artists with refreshments, and to Louise Cawte for her help with preparing programme notes.

As you all know our 2023-24 programme was announced in April and both membership and individual tickets have been on sale since then. It promises to be another enjoyable season, and I look forward to seeing many of you in October.

David Pepper

Minutes of Cheltenham Music Society AGM held on 18 July 2022

The meeting was held online via Zoom due to health issues and extreme heat.

Attendance

Sir David Pepper (Chairman), John Beard, Andrew Ellis, Lynne Elouard, Mike O'Connell, Penny Steer, John Wright, and five members of the Society.

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Lindsay Tyndall.

Record of previous virtual AGM

The record of the report to members for 2020-21 was taken as read.

Chairman's report

The Chairman presented his report, which had been distributed to members attached to the AGM agenda.

The season had been musically very successful, despite various Covid-related challenges. Fewer season tickets had been sold this season. The 6.5% pa falling trend had been maintained. This was to some extent counterbalanced by a rise in single ticket sales.

He thanked Andrew Ellis for his extraordinary 19 years as Treasurer. He also thanked the rest of the committee, and especially Penny Steer who had stepped forward in so many ways when Penny McCracken had fallen ill.

Treasurer's Report and adoption of the Annual Accounts

The Treasurer presented his report, which had been distributed to members attached to the AGM agenda.

Approval of the accounts was agreed *nem con*.

Questions and discussion

It was noted that Cheltenham Festivals (CF) is charitable trust, as is CMS; Ali Mawle is CF's co-CEO and is open to ideas about collaboration and willing to have a conversation with CMS. David confirmed that he very willing to have such a conversation.

A question was asked about holding concerts on a Sunday afternoon. Alas there are practical difficulties, including noise from the new café and the new parking arrangements at the Pump Room.

Election of Trustees

The election of Trustees John Beard, Lynne Elouard, Mike O'Connell, David Pepper, Penny Steer, Lindsay Tyndall and John Wright was agreed *nem con*.

Election of Officers

The election of the Officers – Chair (David Pepper), Treasurer (Lynne Elouard) and Membership Secretary (Mike O’Connell) – was agreed *nem con*. There was no election of a Programme Secretary because in the absence of any expressions of interest from members CMS has contracted with Tamsyn Hamilton to fill the role.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

Liz Giles had indicated her willingness to be appointed and this was agreed *nem con*.

John Beard
19 July 2022