

CHELTENHAM MUSIC SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Thursday 3rd September 2026 AT 7pm

The Annual General Meeting of Cheltenham Music Society will be held on Thursday 3rd September at 7pm via Zoom. The Zoom link is contained in the covering email.

AGM AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Record of the virtual 2025 AGM (attached)
3. Chairman's report (attached)
4. Adoption of the Annual Accounts (attached) subject to independent examination
5. General discussion and plans for future seasons
6. Election of Trustees.

There is no need for an election this year as all Trustees are within their three-year periods of office. Penny Steer is standing down this year. There are vacancies for Trustees: any nominations should reach me by 1 September.

7. 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.

8. Appointment of an Independent Examiner

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

David Pepper
Chairman
07545 940114
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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2025-26

Our 2025-26 season, originally planned as a grand swansong, did prove to be the musical feast we hoped for. A return visit by our old friends the Takács Quartet got us off to the best possible start. The second of our string quartet concerts turned out to be one of the last to be given by the Castalian Quartet, who were already in the process of disbanding; an enforced change of programme meant that we heard Beethoven's op.131 quartet, always a welcome experience. Between those two was a concert by VOCES8; this proved a sell-out, though their selection of music was not entirely to everyone's taste. Unusually we had a second vocal concert, with Roderick Williams and Christopher Glynn performing their new *English Song Winterreise* – a wonderful evening. Three members of the Kaleidoscope Chamber Collective gave us a trio of horn trios, which included some splendid playing but proved to attract a disappointingly small audience. A very fine recital by Clare Hammond included, in one of her typically imaginative programmes, one of the pieces from her co-creation prison workshops with Michael Betteridge. The grand finale featured the Marmen and Kleio Quartets and culminated in a memorable and electrifying performance of the Mendelssohn Octet, which produced a more joyous audience response than any I can remember.

The season was again complicated by the loss of the Pittville Pump Room, this time because it was closed for four months so that its floor could be strengthened. We consequently had to relocate the last four concerts of the season, and we were again fortunate that the Ladies' College were able to accommodate us, twice in the Parabola Arts Centre and twice in the Princess Hall. We are very grateful for the cooperation and help of their staff. We can hope that this will be the last time such a problem hits us.

As always, sincere thanks are due to the Officers and members of the Committee for their hard work in running the Society for the benefit of us all. I would like to express particular and warm thanks to Penny Steer, who is standing down as a Trustee; she averted disaster by standing in as temporary Programme Secretary when Penny McCracken fell ill several years ago, and has been a constant source of knowledge, information and wise advice. We shall miss her. I am also very grateful also to Tamsyn Hamilton for her unfailing help in the role of professional Programme Secretary. In particular I thank her for the unexpected hard work of finding new accommodation for four concerts and making sure that the transfers did not damage the programmes. Once again thanks are due to Jo Miller who has continued to provide our artists with much-appreciated refreshments.

Financial Report

The attached set of accounts detail the Society's finances for the season. The artists' fees were much greater than usual because of the swansong plans. In consequence, as we knew would be the case, the season ran at a substantial deficit. However at £11600 it was rather less than we had expected, thanks to another rise in membership and single ticket sales that were greatly in excess of any we have had before. The latter was partly but by no means entirely because of the VOCES8 sell-out; but it has to be noted that the exceptional sales for that concert did not come close to compensating for the size of the artists' fee. The cost of hiring the Pump Room has reached a new peak; the Cheltenham Trust is now under new management, and we wait to see what the effect on the hire charges will be, and I should record that they have offered us a very attractive deal for marketing services next season for which we are grateful. Our other costs were in line with recent years. At the end of the season our reserves stood at £79242.

The increase in membership was a welcome surprise. After a pattern of steady decline for many years, it has increased from 130 to 171 in two years. How much of that growth is the temporary result of the special programmes we put on in the expectation of imminent closure remains to be seen.

The future

Despite the extension to the Society's lifetime, we know that we cannot continue on the current model for more than another three or four years before our reserves run out; our membership and audience sizes are simply not enough to fund the venue and programme quality we are used to. We included in the pack for 26-27 subscriptions an appeal for increased donations to buy us more time; early indications are that this has had some success, but it is too soon to have an informed view of its impact on our longevity. The Committee will be considering our options in the autumn as we start to plan the 27-28 season.

David Pepper

Minutes of Cheltenham Music Society AGM held on 12 September 2025 via Zoom

Attendance

Sir David Pepper (Chairman), John Beard, Dominic Hamilton, Mike O'Connell, Lindsay Tyndall, John Wright, and three members of the Society.

Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Lynne Elouard, John Finney, Penny Steer, and one member of the Society.

Record of previous virtual AGM

The minutes of the previous AGM on 27 July 2024 were agreed *nem con*.

Chairman's report

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

The season had again proved to be very successful, with a lot of good music, and we had been able to use the Pump Room for the whole season. Our membership numbers had increased again, continuing the recent reversal of a long-term downward trend. Financially, as expected we had an operating deficit for the season, but we still have substantial reserves.

Looking ahead, the next season will be a bumper one. We had planned it on the assumption that it would be our final season, but fortunately our reserves have benefitted from the closure of the Runge Trust, and we expect to be able to continue for at least two more years and maybe longer.

Adoption of the Annual Accounts

Adoption of the accounts, subject to their approval by the independent examiner, was agreed *nem con*.

Questions and discussion

Amplifying the Chairman's report, the Membership Secretary reported that we already have 168 members for the next season; the total for last season had been 147.

Election of Trustees

The current Trustees were all willing to stand for re-election. John Finney and Dominic Hamilton, who had been co-opted to the Committee during the year, were willing to become Trustees. All were elected for a three-year term *nem con*.

Election of Officers

The Officers – Chair (David Pepper), Treasurer (Lynne Elouard) and Membership Secretary (Mike O'Connell) – were willing to stand again, and their appointment was agreed *nem con*.

The post of Programme Secretary remains vacant and CMS will continue to contract with Tamsyn Hamilton to fill the role.

Appointment of Independent Examiner

Paul Broekman had indicated his willingness to be reappointed and this was agreed *nem con*.

Any other business

None.

John Beard
13 September 2025

Cheltenham Music Society

Statement of Financial Activities for the period 1 May 2025 to 30 April 2026

	note	2025-2026	2024-2025
Income			
Subscription tickets		20740	15765
Single Tickets		13449	9755
Donations	a	4875	1640
Runge Trust	b		51917
Interest		2151	1226
		41215	80303
Expenditure			
Artists' Fees and Expenses		34625	28611
Venue Hire		7920	7700
Commission	c	1886	1463
Piano hire & tuning		594	1356
Programmes		458	260
PRS levies		1696	1446
Publicity		452	464
Administration	d	4646	4210
		52277	45510
Net incoming		-11062	34793
Increase/decrease in value of investments		-755	-664
Balance, brought forward		91060	56931
Balance, carried forward		79242	91060

Balance sheet as at 30 April 2025

Assets			
Current account	e	37987	50808
COIF Deposit account		51696	49362
COIF Income units		10068	11006
Debtors	f	1143	552
		100894	111727
Less: creditors & prepayments	g	-21651	-20668
Accumulated Fund		79242	91060

Notes to Accounts

- a Including Gift Aid £1353
- b 2024-2025 only
- c Commission paid to Cheltenham Trust (CT) plus credit card charges
- d Administration includes PayPal charges
and payments to contractor for Programme Secretary duties
- e Balance end 30 April 2026
- f Net credit from CT for concert 7
- g CT and admin Invoices arriving late plus advance payments of 25/26 subs