

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Semitones.

6th January 2019, All Saints Church, Gosforth.

Present: Ewa (Chair), Michael, Carol, Diana, Annette, Peter, Rachel, Cecilia (minutes), Tony Jen, Sylvia, Jennifer, Katharine, John (new member).

Apologies: Chris, Neil and Jodie.

1. Summary of the past year:

Diana presented a very positive and comprehensive annual report outlining Semitones' main activities in 2018. This was distributed and discussed. Diana will forward it to Michael to put on the website.

2. Finances:

Annette reported that in the middle of 2018 we had barely sufficient funds to cover the conductor's fee for the year and outlined her successful fundraising activities:

Waitrose Community Matters (Newcastle + Jesmond)	£516.00
Skipton Building Society	£500.00
National Lottery	£840.00
Bags of Help (Tesco)	£1,000.00
Orchestral Busking in Gosforth & Newcastle	£441.94

As a result we still have £3,101.19 in the bank. Gratitude was expressed to Annette for this amazing effort and achievement.

We discussed asking care homes for an increased voluntary contribution for our concerts this is to a) more accurately reflect the market rate for such activities; and b) cover more (but not all) of our costs. It was reported that we had increased the rate that we pay the conductor from £30 to £35 last year. It was agreed that we would request £50 per concert from January 2019.

3. Suggestions for Sheet Music and Workshops:

Members expressed differing views about the past success of workshops. It was agreed that we would keep an eye out for relevant workshops and ensure that they reflect the wider requirements of the orchestra members.

4. Change to Arrangements Around Sheet Music:

It was agreed that after eight years of Jennifer carrying the blue suitcase full of all the sheet music, that in future each member would be responsible for carrying their own sheet music for their instrument/part. Alternatives were discussed, especially concerning the keyboard music. It was agreed that in addition to the pianist carrying

their music, a folder would accompany the actual keyboard and Peter will carry an additional folder for rehearsals. Jennifer agreed to still be the main contact for sheet music and to supply music to any current members who require replacement music, or to new members joining the orchestra. Thanks were expressed to Jennifer for looking after the music so well, for so long.

5. Conductor for 2019:

It was agreed that we would like David to continue as our Conductor until at least February half term 2020. We are very grateful to David for his outstanding engagement with our care home audiences; and his commitment to Semitones.

It was agreed that Annette would discuss our requirements for the coming year with David.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Chair - Ewa is prepared to continue as Chair, unless anyone else is interested. Katharine expressed an interest in knowing more about what the role involves and Ewa has agreed to make this information available.

Treasurer - Annette agreed to continue as Treasurer.

Concert Organiser - Jen is prepared to continue organising the concerts but requested that she would like someone else to support her in this role. Carol agreed to assist.

Posters Distributor - Carol will continue sending the posters to the care homes.

E-mail Distributor - Katharine agreed to continue sending the emails re concerts and rehearsals.

Music Organiser - Jennifer agreed to still be the main contact for sheet music and to supply music to any current members who require replacement music, or to new members joining the orchestra.

Keyboard - Tony has agreed to continue to look after the keyboard and rattles, but has asked for assistance to cover his holidays. Katharine and Cecilia have agreed to help out on a short term basis (1-2 weeks at a time).

Key Holder - Peter and Ewa will continue looking after the keys.

Webmaster - Michael is happy to continue as webmaster.

Social Media and Graphic Designer – Philip has agreed to continue to produce posters and publicity materials and manage the Facebook page.

Additional Activities - Cecilia will continue to organise additional concerts including Gibside Chapel; Seaton Delaval Hall and Gosforth Shopping Centre.

7. Update of Email List

An email list was circulated and updated. Katharine will ensure that those not currently attending, but wishing to stay in touch would be added to the list.

8. AOB

Cecilia suggested that we improve our professional image by:

- a) purchasing a pop up publicity banner, at a cost of approximately £30, so that when we are playing in public it is easier for audiences to see who we are and what we are about. It was agreed that Cecilia and Carol would liaise with Philip on the design of the banner and that approval of the artwork would be sought from the group before the purchase.
- b) Purchasing a brightly coloured accessory, ie scarf, tie, sash etc to enhance the dress code and create a more uniform appearance. It was agreed that Annette would look further into this.

Jen reminded members to be professional during concerts and not talk or make any noise when the conductor is introducing the pieces.

Ewa raised the possibility of playing in hospices, which needs to be during the working week. It was agreed that these would be small group activities and would be arranged by the members who would be available to take part.

Rachel mentioned that sheet music is available on loan from Newcastle Central Library for those wishing to source music for a solo or duet.

Jen mentioned the concert programme and it was agreed that the care home concerts would finish for the summer at the end of June. Ewa agreed to ask the church if we could use the rehearsal room on 08/09/19 & 15/09/19, as opposed to the first two weeks of the month.

We are extremely grateful to All Saints for letting us use their room for rehearsals and as a way of expressing our gratitude we are keen to offer musical support whenever requested. Diana will bring a thank you card to our next rehearsal for us all to sign.

CO, 06/01/19