

United Kingdom Sacred Harp Convention

15–16 September 2018

Brighton and Hove, Sussex

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Officers: Catherine Roberts (Chair), Steve Brett (Vice-chair), Rose Hales (Secretary), Ted Brown (Treasurer)

Catherine Roberts opened the meeting leading 49t.

Approx. 40 singers in attendance.

19.1 Approval of the 2017 accounts

Ted Brown shared the 2017 accounts. The accounts are £51.34 down, which is not a problem. Reusable cutlery and plates had been purchased for future conventions, which will bring the costs down in the future. Accounts were approved.

19.2 2019 UK Sacred Harp Convention – update

Steve Brett confirmed that the venue has been booked (Trinity Centre, 2016 venue). The scaffolding is due down this year. Steve welcomed any questions about the 2019 convention.

19.3 2020 UK Sacred Harp Convention – submission of bids

Helen Brown confirmed that the East Midlands singers have secured a provisional booking in Stannington/Sheffield. However, they are also continuing to look for an alternative venue in the meanwhile. It was confirmed that the East Midlands singers can take on the Convention in 2020 and will make a final decision on the venue later in the year.

19.4 2021 UK Sacred Harp Convention – submission of bids

Emily Verrier raised the possibility of York singers hosting the 2021 Convention, she said they have some venues in mind. They have found a venue that can hold around 150 people, however there was concern from attendees that this would be too small. Helen Brown suggested this may be a gamble, as attendance is likely to go up in future years (considering the attendance in 2018). There is also the consideration that if York hosted in 2021, this would potentially mean that the Convention would be in the Yorkshire area two years in a row. Durham was suggested, but local singers declined. Discussion is to be continued.

Action: Emily will explore if there is a venue in York that can cater for more than 150 people.

19.5 Singing calendar / website

There was continued discussion on the new format of the Sacred Harp Calendar and the UK Sacred Harp website. Edwin and Sheila Macadam announced that after 20 years of running the UK Sacred Harp website and calendar, they have decided to step down from this. As of 31 December 2019, the calendar will no longer be published by them. The group expressed their wholehearted thanks to Edwin and Sheila for their hard work for the last 20 years.

As of 1 January 2020, there will need to be a new format for the calendar and website. There was discussion as to whether to trial Seth Dickens' Google Calendar idea, alongside the

current calendar for as long as possible. Seth said that the concept is more of a work in progress and that the Google Sheet isn't ready for the public eye quite yet. Seth proposed an idea that those who have skills in this area (website design etc.) form a Website Committee and put in time to check it and work on it.

It was said that WordPress is an ideal system for the community's needs, as it is nice and easy to work with. Steve Brett, Seth Dickens, Ed Johnson-Williams and Eimear O'Donovan volunteered to be part of the website team. It was mentioned that Robin may be able to help as well. It was pointed out that the website will need to be funded, an estimated figure of around £5-10 a month for WordPress.

Action: The website team will go away and make a proposal and set up a budget.

It was agreed we should use the same web address if possible. The minutes book 2019 (published January 2020) must have correct web address included. A request was put in for clear instructions for using the new system. The website team reassured that it would be made as user friendly as possible.

The link for the current work in progress calendar was requested. Seth agreed he would share it as soon as possible.

The question was raised as to whether there was an official full UK Sacred Harp mailing list. It was pointed out that there is no means of letting everyone know about websites and business meeting decisions. It was discussed whether Facebook is the best option, alternatively, groups could send it out via their own local mailing lists. They could also be posted on the current website. It was agreed that it would be easiest to post on the current website.

It was discussed whether there should be two separate websites – one for the convention and one as a resource for the UK sacred harp community. The possibility of putting both on the same website was discussed. It was agreed that the business meeting minutes should be put on the UK Sacred Harp Convention website.

Action: Seth Dickens to create a space for past business meeting minutes on the UKSHC website.

19.6 Approval of the mid-year minutes

The business meeting minutes were approved.

19.7 Safeguarding

The meeting attendees again raised and discussed how the community must help to protect vulnerable people. It was discussed that local singing groups need to take responsibility for how they sort out their accommodation for hosting all days or conventions, this cannot be handled on a national level. Ed Johnson-Williams asked how we would respond to abuse within the community. It was suggested that we have a code of conduct, and potentially a separate conduct committee. There would need to be at least two people that a singer could go to. It was raised that it should be the responsibility of the upcoming chair. Helen Brown suggested that there should be someone at each specific event. Joe Jones suggested the chaplain as the contact, not the chair. Which all agreed.

Action: Fred Langridge offered to send the 'working committee' a code of conduct that we could base our own on.

It was agreed that the contacts should be the chaplains, incoming and current.

19.8 Appointment of locations committee

Hannah Land, Ian West, Judy Whiting and Karen Turner were re-appointed to the locations committee.

19.9 Appointment of convention treasurer

Ted Brown was re-appointed as convention treasurer.

19.10 Reconstitution of standing committee

Vicky's time on the standing committee has ended and thanks were given to her and the Sheffield singers for their work in hosting last year's convention. Steve Brett of Bristol was welcomed to the committee as next year's convention chair. The newly constituted standing committee: Catherine Roberts (2018 Chair), Steve Brett (2019 Chair), and Ted Brown (UK Sacred Harp Convention treasurer).

There being no further business, Steve Brett closed the meeting leading 36b.