

Ways of supporting Chantry Quire

Many of us feel that there is a need to finance the activities of the choir in a more structured way, so that we have a more proactive approach to funding our concerts and supporting our chosen charities. The benefits of the suggested schemes below are not just financial; it is important to have a large group who have a sense of friendship with the choir community. We know that there is a lot of goodwill around; for last year's Passiontide video concert, more than enough was raised to cover the costs very quickly. It was a good example of - to quote Mike - "what can be done when people's hearts are engaged". Below are some ideas for achieving this.

1. Major corporate sponsors

We have learned from past experience that local, personal contact is crucial in finding sponsors. Our Chairman, Philip Jones, has succeeded in securing a 3-year sponsorship from Fargro, a local garden supply company. We need you all to come up with your own suggestions for additional corporate sponsors, with a personal contact name. We can then provide you with an outline 'script' on which to base your personal approach (face to face or on the phone, for preference), including an explanation of why we need their help:

- 1) It enables us to support young musicians (both singers and players). With the general reduction in funding for the arts, both in performance and education, it is vital that choirs like ourselves are in a position to support young musicians, and to have a financial reserve to ensure that this can happen. If we are known to support young singers, we will continue to attract them, as word soon gets round.
- 2) We will be able to put on the occasional more expensive concert (e.g. with first-rate solo singers and/or instrumentalists), which will in turn attract larger audiences. If we can attract large audiences, then the charities we support will benefit more.

We can also provide a link to the Passiontide pieces on our YouTube channel, to give them an idea of what we are capable of.

In return for a multi-year commitment of significant sums (£500 or more per year), our corporate sponsors would receive:

- Acknowledgement (and logo) on our website, social media sites, posters and concert programmes
- Two free tickets plus two free programmes for each concert
- One concert, during the sponsorship period, to be an appropriately themed fundraiser for their chosen charity
- Invitation for 2 people to our Summer Party

In addition to advertising, and publicity for our sponsors, we will need to foster an ongoing relationship with them by showing them how their money has been used to develop the choir and keeping them apprised of current and future developments.

2. Friends of Chantry Quire

We also need to develop a scheme for individuals who would like to have a 'special relationship' with the choir. We already have a mailing list of more than 100 supporters, as well as followers on our various social media accounts. Last year, Mike sent a note to the mailing list, setting out the detail of the Passiontide concert, which was an object-lesson in how to keep people on board and interested.

What CQ would get from it:

- A modest annual subscription (£10-50) per Friend
- A cohort of people who have a special relationship with Chantry Quire
 - Likely purchasers of tickets
 - Willing to spread the word about concerts etc
 - Possibly, willing to volunteer for non-singing help (e.g. publicity distribution, front of house at concerts, etc)

Suggested benefits for being a Friend of Chantry (to be discussed and agreed)

- Regular contact via a dedicated newsletter
- Advance booking for concerts
- Invitation to our Summer Party
- Complimentary ticket(s) to every concert
- Free programme(s) per concert
- ? List of named friends in each programme
- Invitation to our Summer Party
- The opportunity to sponsor an individual concert, proceeds to go to a charity of their choice and (4) free tickets

To launch the initiative, we would propose doing a concert for a charity such as St Wilfred's Hospice, which has effective fundraising teams, a wide audience and effective publicity streams, so that hopefully we would have a large audience. At that concert, an effective speaker from the choir will give a brief talk explaining why we want their support, and inviting people who are interested in becoming Sponsors or Friends to give us their e mails on their way out.

We also propose having a supporter liaison member of the committee to manage the whole process and keep in regular touch with all our supporters.

Other factors which need to be considered in increasing income

1. *The programme and programme budgets*

The programme of events should be agreed at least a year ahead. Once this has been agreed, it will then be possible to estimate the finance required to deliver the programme, thus giving time for the necessary fund-raising to take place. Each series of concerts should have a budget with all the anticipated expenditure for the year. That will clarify the fund-raising required to bridge the gap between income (choir membership fees and anticipated concert takings) and expenditure.

2. *Fund-raising subcommittee/individual*

We need someone clearly identified to be responsible for fund-raising. This, however, must not stifle all those personal contacts that are so productive in raising money and getting friends to concerts.

3. *Social media*

The importance of using social media cannot be underestimated. We now have a publicity and marketing subcommittee, whose responsibilities developing our social media presence, and it will be vital that they and the fundraisers work closely together.