

Why are the Pink Singers recruiting an external Board of Trustees?

The Pink Singers has changed a lot over the 36 years that we've been in existence. The choir has gone from strength to strength over the past few years musically, politically and socially.

Currently we are run by a Management Committee comprising 15 choir members who are voted for by choir members. With many of the team turning over each year it's difficult for us to effectively manage day to day activities as well as oversee our governance and plan for the long term.

Over the last year one of our choir members carried out in-depth interviews with 25 current and previous members involved in the running of the choir.

The key issues identified were:

- Annual turnover of most Management Committee roles resulting in knowledge loss and tension and affecting our ability to forward plan.
- A lack of understanding of the purpose and responsibilities of roles and committees amongst choir members. Having the same Trustees on the Management Committee made overseeing decisions and finances difficult.
- The large size of the Management Committee inhibited decision making.
- Choir members didn't understand the requirements of roles and the skills of member applicants. In some instances, there was a mismatch of roles and skill sets.
- Some roles for instance the Chair of the Management Committee was too big.
- There was a lack of clarity around "must do" versus "nice to have" activities.
- Manual systems and processes added unnecessarily to the workload.

This resulted in a number of recommendations:

1. Changing our constitution from an Unincorporated Association to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
 - a. The new constitution will enable us to split out the day to day and long term management into two teams.
 - b. The Board of Trustees would appoint the management team from existing choir members.
 - c. Trustees liability is limited which we hope this will enable us to recruit Trustees from outside the choir.
 - d. A draft constitution is currently with the charities commission for approval.
2. Moving to a team based structure for day to day roles
 - a. We have a passionate group of members, most of whom want to do their bit to help the smooth running of the choir
 - b. We propose to reduce the number on the day to day management team from the current 15 to around 5 or 6.
 - c. Each manager will be supported by a team of people from across the choir, helping to spread the load.
 - d. Trustees would appoint these managers from applicants in the choir and would be able to remove members if it is not working.

- e. The number and nature of the roles on the Organising Committee would be determined by Trustees based on the long and short term needs of the choir.
3. Create a list of “must have” and “nice to have” tasks
 - a. A list has been produced which helps us to prioritise activities and focus the resources we have on what is most important to choir members.
 - b. The list is also used for handover when roles change.
 4. Introducing choir management software
 - a. We recently started using Choir Genius from Groupanizer.
 - b. This enables us to store documents and rehearsal tracks and notes in one place.
 - c. Choir members all have a profile page with contact details and “skills” which helps when we need tasks doing

We followed this review up with a rigorous process of engagement with the choir to gauge member buy in and are happy to say that over 95% of the choir voted to move forward with the proposal to change to a new constitution, to split out our management and recruit an external Board of Trustees.

We have also recently carried out an in-depth choir survey that has gathered member feedback on things such as the importance of each of our objects; corporate and charity gigs; rehearsal and concert venues; foreign & UK trips; singing & choreography workshops; social events, communications; management team; the new structure, constitution and choir management software.

We are really excited about the prospect of having an external group of Trustees to help improve our governance, guide our strategy and enable the Pink Singers to continue to thrive for years to come.