



Annual Report of the Trustee Executive Committee of Rising Voices Wessex – May 2018

The Executive Committee of Rising Voices Wessex Community Choirs presents its fifth annual report, covering the period from September 2017 to April 2018 and the accounting year ending March 2018.

Background, Aims and Objectives

Rising Voices Wessex choirs aim to support individuals recovering after cancer treatment and people whose lives have been affected by cancer, such as those bereaved through cancer or as carers. The choirs offer participation in singing as a means to aid recovery of health and wellbeing for those thus affected by cancer. The choirs seek to encourage recovery of confidence and social interaction as well as promoting the concept of living well with and after cancer

Music has the power to communicate with individuals at times of difficulty. There are established associations between music and health, both physical, psychological, social and spiritual. Involvement with music making is recognized as having benefits for specific conditions such as cancer, neurological disorders and some forms of dementia. Participation in music making has been shown to improve wellbeing.

Rising Voices Wessex was launched on the 8th January 2013 at the Lighthouse Arts Centre, Poole with local media coverage and a brief feature shown on BBC South Today.

The **Rising Voices Wessex** choir project directly stems from key principles defined through the National Cancer Survivorship Initiative (NCSI). Fundamentally the intention is that by having such a supportive activity available in the community, singing 'for fun' will reduce medical dependency by enhancing individuals' improved confidence, health and wellbeing - strengthening their ability to cope with issues they deal with following cancer. Reducing medical dependency in the aftermath of cancer will be of increasing importance in helping health services manage increased future demand. Increased life expectancy means an increase in the prevalence of cancer.

Continued improvements in cancer survival as a result of treatment add to service demands and underpin the need for change and better community-based support for people affected by cancer – reducing the burden on acute hospital care towards more holistic, community-based approaches where individuals can access supportive techniques, such as singing, to help in optimising their health and wellbeing.

Following its launch **Rising Voices Wessex project** was able to demonstrate in Poole local demand for such a choir, establish core choir membership and a regular session for meeting and rehearsing. A formal evaluation undertaken by a music Psychologist was commissioned at the start of the **Rising Voices Wessex** project; this confirmed the beneficial nature of singing in the choir.

In June 2015 a second choir was inaugurated, based in Bournemouth.

Rising Voices Wessex became a registered charity in January 2016

Public performances by the choir have become a regular feature and are important for at least three key reasons –

- promoting the message of the benefits of singing,
- raising funds that enable the choirs to be sustainable,
- encouraging ongoing member recruitment.

The sense of achievement experienced and confidence gained by those who take part in public performances represents an additional benefit to them. Since the choir was started it has presented numerous performances at a range of events - from a visit to Cherbourg, Poole's twin town, to feature at a French cancer awareness event early in 2013 through to being a supporting choir for Russell Watson at the Lighthouse in Poole during his UK 'Up close and Personal' tour in June 2015. The experience of performing has proved very positive in virtually all settings.

The Poole **Rising Voices Wessex** choir rehearsals continue to take place every Tuesday evening at 6.15 to 8.30 pm at St Johns Church, Ashley Road, Parkstone. Most weeks over 40 singers attend. **Rising Voices Wessex** continues to appreciate the support of St John's Church allowing it to use this excellent venue and facilities - and for the warm welcome given to the choir.

The Bournemouth **Rising Voices Wessex** choir meets and rehearses New Church, Tuckton, Bournemouth every Monday evening at 6.45 to 9.00 pm. After a slow start numbers have increased; attendances now are around 30 - 35. **Rising Voices Wessex** is extremely thankful to those associated with the New Church, Tuckton who have welcomed the choir to their church.

Providing simple refreshments and time for social interaction are key parts of the **Rising Voices Wessex** strategy and is something to which all members contribute. Social interaction over tea, coffee or a soft drink creates a supportive social environment that links with the support provided through the choirs. Members that attend the choir rehearsals are asked to make a donation of £4.00 towards the running costs of the choirs, i.e. the Choir Director, venue costs, song sheets and music and refreshments.

It is important for **Rising Voices Wessex** to always present a professional image of the choir and its work in performances. In this context **Rising Voices Wessex** has purchased suitable clothing that creates an identity when the choir is singing in public.

Members pay a small donation for ***Rising voices Wessex*** labelled Polo shirts and fleeces - generally used in daytime/daylight performances. For evening choir performances members are asked to wear black clothing with blue scarves or blue waterfall cardigans for the ladies. Each new member is given a set of lyrics covering the choirs' repertoire and folders for lyrics are available to purchase.

Management of Rising Voices Wessex

As ***Rising Voices Wessex*** has developed a clear management structure has evolved to address the practicalities of week by week running of the choir and the strategy of the overall project as a registered charity, this latter is covered by a board of Trustees.

Trustees of ***Rising Voices Wessex*** comprise a group of individuals with a range of personal and professional experience relevant to the overall project. The Board (executive committee) specifically comprises a combination of individuals who are not singers with the choir(s) and members who are. Trustee roles are voluntary, they receive no payment. In appropriate circumstances legitimate expenses may be claimed.

The Chairman, officers and other Trustees are appointed (and may be re-appointed) at the Annual General Meeting. The skill mix of Trustees is subject to regular review by the Trustees to ensure an optimum balance of expertise. There is currently one unfilled Trustee vacancy

Expertise on the current board of Trustees encompasses music, charity fundraising, finance and NHS clinical experience - Trustees meet or telephone conference at least four times a year to review the charity's operations and to determine policy.

Steering group - Operational

The steering group meets monthly and takes responsibility for the week by week operational management of the choir. It reports to the board of Trustees. The steering group includes the Choir Director, some Trustees and members of both choirs. Membership of this group is also voluntary.

Minutes are taken from each steering group meeting and are available on the website www.risingvoices.org.uk or on request. Mrs. Noeline Young currently chairs the steering group.

The steering group has a membership secretary and has established the use of a membership form so that all those attending have their details recorded on a database. The information is compliant with data protection legislation requirements and steps are in place to ensure processes are compliant with the updated 2018 enhanced Data Protection legislation.

The steering group has also undertaken workshops and commissioned surveys to enable all members of the choir to give feedback on Rising Voices Wessex based on their experience.

Having basic information on those attending as well as on past members ensures members and friends can be contacted about activities and events, make contact in case of an emergency and seek simple feedback information as to how the choirs are performing in meeting people's needs. There is an opt out facility on the email system for those who no longer wish to receive emails from **Rising Voices Wessex**.

Executive Committee members (Trustees) are:

- Dr Alastair Smith (Chairman), Retired NHS Consultant, former Clinical Lead NCSI
- Mrs Noëline Young (Vice chair) – Retired NCSI Project Manager/Clinical Nurse Specialist
- Mr Rob Taylor (Treasurer) - Finance Director, Trenitalia c2c
- Mrs Jean Querol – Retired therapy radiographer and practice manager
- Dr Susi Caesar - GP in Dorset

Mrs Joy Atkinson, singer, teacher of music and singing tendered her resignation as a Trustee in 2017 and

Mr Ian Catley, Retired Chief Executive of local charity About Face resigned as a Trustee from January 2018.

Rising Voices Wessex is grateful for the support and input from these individuals during their time as Trustees.

Mr Roger Preston – BSO Cellist - to be proposed at the AGM in May

Rising Voices Wessex review 2017-18

Choir membership: From its outset, **Rising Voices Wessex** has proved popular with people whose lives have been affected by cancer. During the year numbers attending rehearsals continue to increase with aggregate weekly numbers now totalling 70 – 90 members (covering both venues) and just under 150 members on its database.

Rising Voices Wessex continues to encourage recruitment of new members.

Rising Voices Wessex has a website and social media presence established through both Facebook, Twitter and You Tube. Word of mouth, however, still remains a very good method of attracting new members.

Rising Voices Wessex is a member of Arts and Health South West, The National Council for Voluntary Organisations and Living Well Active.

Since September 2017 Rising Voices Wessex has continued with its busy and active schedule that promotes the benefits of singing to regain health and wellbeing. **Rising Voices Wessex** now has a broad repertoire of songs that can provide up to an hour's music in performance.

	Date	Event
2017		
1	November 19 th	Tree Lights, St Johns Church, Poole.
2	November 30 th	Womens Fellowship, Broadstone, Poole.
3	December 2 nd	Southbourne Green, Bournemouth.
4	December 3 rd	Christmas in Poole – Poole Quay.
5	December 7 th	St Peters Church, Bournemouth with Wessex Cancer Trust.
6	December 12 th	Panto at the Lighthouse, Poole - press night.
7	December 16 th	Southbourne Green, Bournemouth.
8	December 16 th	Christmas Concert, New Church, Tuckton, Bournemouth.
2018		
9	January 13 th	Fifth Birthday Afternoon tea at the Cumberland Hotel, Bournemouth.
10	February 3 rd	AFC Bournemouth.
11	February 12 th	Afterglow support group, Function room, The Greenhouse Hotel, Bournemouth.
12	March 10 th	Dancing with Choirs, Lighthouse, Poole
13	March 15 th	National Palliative Care Conference at the Bournemouth International Centre.
14	March 16 th	Social evening - Quiz Night at the Blue Boar, Poole.

Fundraising and grant applications:

Following initial funding in 2012 by the Dorset Cancer Network **Rising Voices Wessex** has sought and received ongoing financial support from a number of sources, these include in the past:

Macmillan Cancer Support
The People's Lottery Fund
Going for Bust.

During the past year:
Greggs Foundation
Bournemouth Football Club – 'The Cherries'.

The grant from the Greggs Foundation has enabled **Rising Voices Wessex** to plan a further Big Sing event on June 24th 2018, to be held at the Bournemouth School for Girls. We are delighted that Gavin Carr, Chorus Director of the Bournemouth Symphony Chorus will be taking the day supported by Chris Dowie, Accompanist and Assistant Chorus Master of the Bournemouth Symphony Chorus

The £1000 grant from Bournemouth Football Club was awarded to cover the cost of IT equipment – laptop, projector and printer.

In January 2018 **Rising Voices Wessex** was accepted for the Arts and Health South West (AHSW) Challenge – subject to the choirs raising £2000.00, AHSW will match the outcome of this fund raising effort with £2000.00

With a stated aim of self-sufficiency members are asked to offer a donation weekly towards day to day running of the choir and basic catering.

When invited to perform the choirs' policy is to request that event organisers donate £50.00 - £75.00 - as a contribution toward costs, especially for the Choir Director. Also, where possible and appropriate 'bucket collection' is undertaken after the performance.

Rising Voices Wessex has started the process of setting up a 'Friends of Rising Voices', people who are willing to help to support the choir but who do not necessarily want to sing in it. Further work on this scheme needs to be done in the coming year. **Rising Voices Wessex** has agreed the principle of seeking patrons who can help support both the running costs of the choirs and help raise the profile of the choirs.

Promotion and marketing

Rising Voices Wessex also has video clips on its website and on YouTube. There have been occasional appearances on local radio and television and articles in the

Bournemouth Echo and Southbourne Eye and similar publications.

In September 2017 a ***Rising Voices Wessex*** presented a poster at the International Arts and Health three day Conference in Bristol. This attracted a lot of attention, interest and positive feedback.

Evaluation

Questionnaire surveys in the last two years continue to indicate that members derive significant benefit from ***Rising Voices Wessex***. It is also clear from the questionnaires that the personality and approach of the Musical Director are very important to the success of the choirs. ***Rising Voices Wessex*** has also contributed to questionnaire research run by Tenovus Cancer Care into the benefits of music and singing for people affected by cancer.

Looking Forward

The Trustees of ***Rising Voices Wessex*** remain committed to sustaining, developing and expanding the charity in accordance with the overall ambition of the project – to improve health and wellbeing of people affected by cancer in the community through singing in a choir.

In the coming year ***Rising Voices Wessex*** will be looking to develop further fundraising initiatives generally as well as taking up the AHSW challenge. It will seek to raise its community profile and cooperate with other like-minded choirs elsewhere in the country to demonstrate the benefits of singing as well as facilitating the spread of such community based choirs.

Rising Voices Wessex will increase the musical support provided to its Choir Director in the coming year. The intention is to engage a deputy capable of leading rehearsals and conducting performances to work with Ali Sharpe and be cover for leave and sickness. The support and services provided on a voluntary basis by choir member David Marshall as a deputy have been and continue to be invaluable but are not sustainable in the longer term, with the increasing workload directing both choirs and sustaining a steady level of public appearance. The Trustees place on record their thanks to David for his commitment which has been invaluable in sustaining the choirs' activities.

Thanks and Acknowledgments

Thanks are due to all those who continue to support the choirs – many have done so since its foundation; the additional commitment of members 'old and new' is so important to the ongoing existence of both choirs. Help with fundraising, with the day to day running of the choirs, support at venues, administration for the steering group and events, making cakes are examples of the terrific support given by members.

The Trustees thank Ali Sharpe for her committed and enthusiastic choir direction – so important to make people want to join the choir, come and sing and enjoy singing. Thanks are due to those who support her with setting up equipment, staging etc. As recorded above the Trustees also thanks David Marshall for his musical support and ability to deputise for Ali and work with the men's voices in rehearsals. We would

also thank Macmillan Beauty Therapists at Boots and A'Courts hairdressers who have provided support for choir members at some of its 'major' public appearances.

Statement of Executive Committee's responsibilities

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

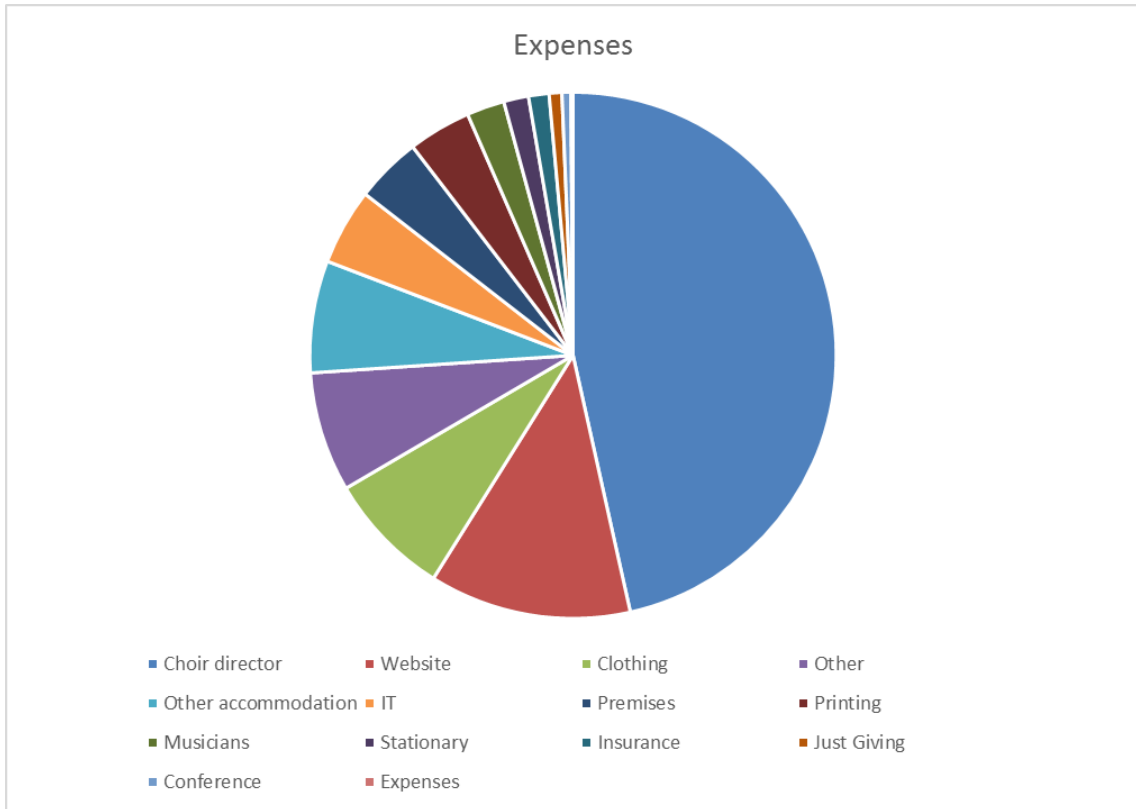
The law applicable to charities in England & Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the incoming resources and application of resources for that period.

Financial Review

Costs outstripped revenues in 2017-18

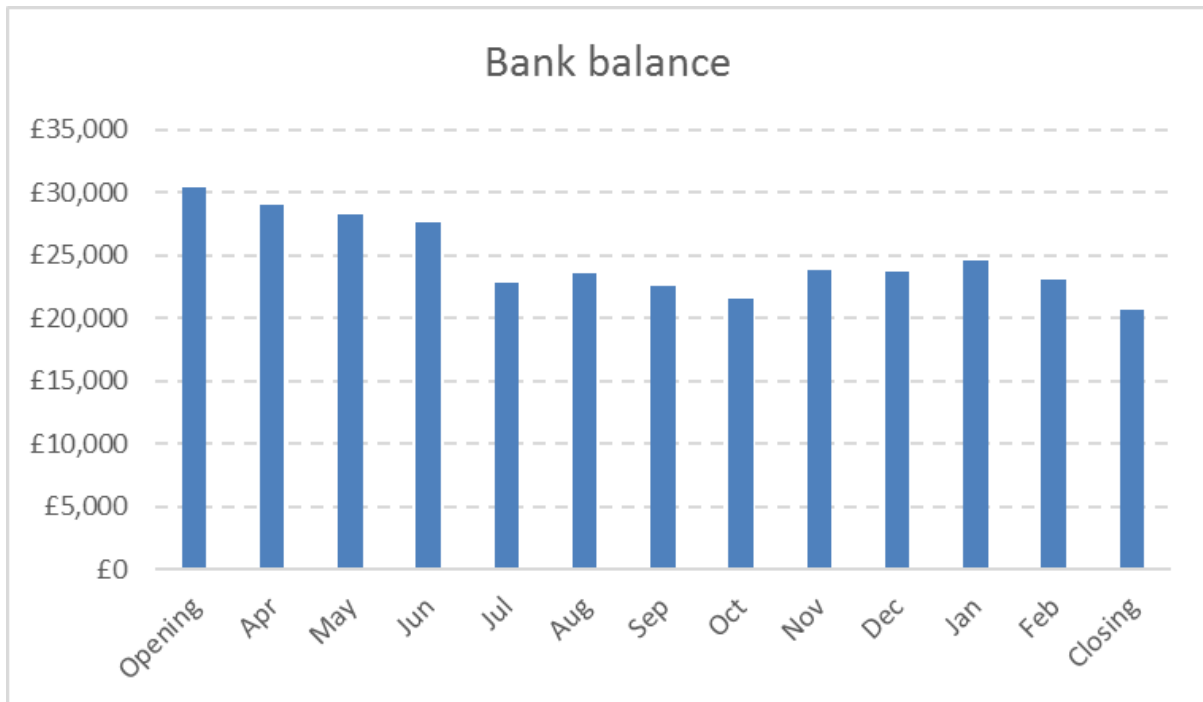
- Revenues totalled £17,788 in the year and costs were £27,547
- The bank balance decreased from £30,405 to £20,646 so remains healthy.



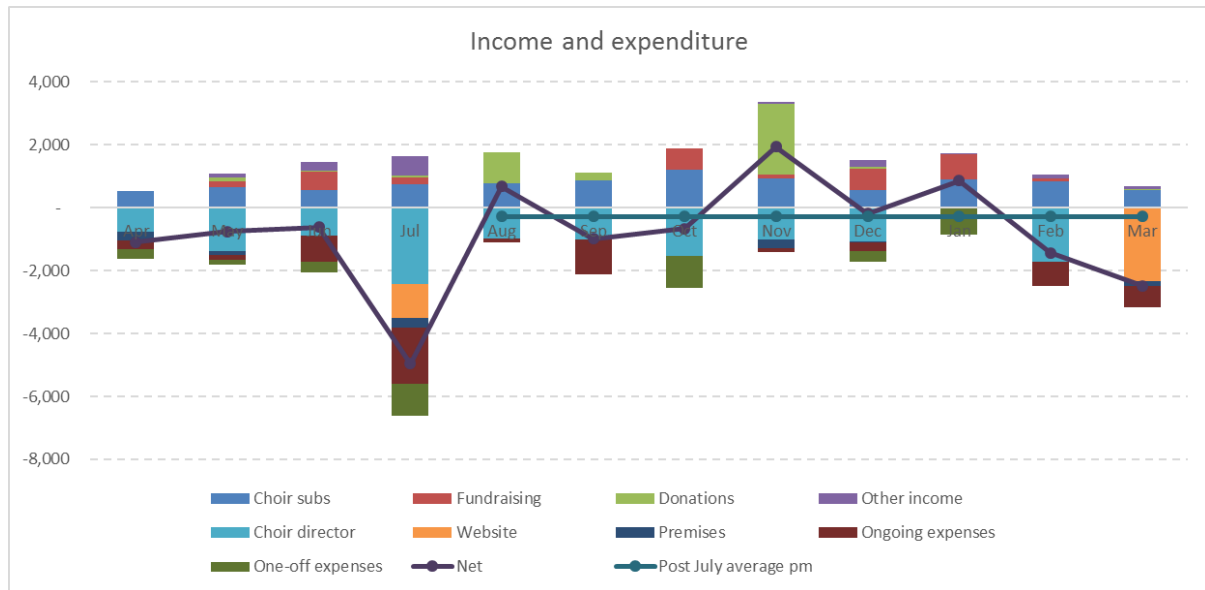


There is sufficient cash to continue operations for two more years

The average monthly loss in 2017 – 18 was £810, Post July the average cash run rate was £286



Monthly spend peaked in July at the end of the Lottery funding.



Data

Income

Category	Description	Sum
Subs	Bournemouth choir	£ 4,003
	Poole choir	£ 5,128
Donations		£ 3,797
Fundraising	Bucket collections	£ 1,179
	Fundraising	£ 2,163
Other income	Big sing	£ 511
	Raffle	£ 215
	WI talk	£ 50
	Workshop	£ 116
	Charities Trust	£ 100
	ASP	£ 70
	Clothing/stationery	£ 500
Difference to bank	-£ 43	
Grand Total		£ 17,788

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Subs	233	228	238	327	270	416	576	397	281	392	378	268
Donations	308	435	324	416	491	450	640	541	280	507	451	284
Fundraising	-	124	48	50	1,000	250	-	2,250	50	-	-	25
Other income	-	42	-	220	14	-	682	-	177	-	43	-
	-	125	570	-	-	-	-	109	497	792	70	-
	-	-	-	511	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	215	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	116	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	70
	-	-	54	71	-	-	-	55	239	20	22	39
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	43
£	541	1,070	1,449	1,644	1,774	1,117	1,898	3,353	1,523	1,711	1,064	643

Expenses

	TOTAL
Choir director	£ 12,810
Website	£ 3,415
Clothing	£ 2,112
Other	£ 2,030
Other accommodation	£ 1,896
IT	£ 1,291
Premises	£ 1,120
Printing	£ 1,066
Musicians	£ 638
Stationery	£ 422
Insurance	£ 346
Just Giving	£ 216
Conference	£ 150
Expenses	£ 35
TOTAL	£ 27,547

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Choir director	775	1,385	890	2,430	970	1,025	1,525	1,025	1,075	-	1,710	-
Website	-	-	-	1,070	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,345
Clothing	-	-	833	-	-	764	-	-	-	-	-	515
Other	-	-	-	952	53	138	-	111	-	-	776	-
Other accommodation	-	-	250	750	-	-	-	-	100	796	-	-
IT	298	-	-	-	-	-	888	-	90	15	-	-
Premises	260	130	-	305	-	-	-	260	35	-	-	130
Printing	281	32	-	431	-	168	-	-	-	-	-	154
Musicians	-	-	100	250	-	-	135	-	153	-	-	-
Stationery	-	108	-	-	53	-	-	-	260	-	-	-
Insurance	-	-	-	346	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Just Giving	18	18	-	36	18	18	18	18	-	36	18	18
Conference	-	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Expenses	-	-	-	35	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
£	1,631	1,823	2,073	6,605	1,094	2,113	2,566	1,414	1,713	847	2,504	3,162

Net cash flow -£ 1,091 -£ 753 -£ 624 -£ 4,961 £ 680 -£ 996 -£ 668 £ 1,939 -£ 189 £ 864 -£ 1,440 -£ 2,520

On behalf of the Executive Committee

Chairman Dr Alastair Smith

Date 08.05.2018