



Chairperson's Report for 2014-2015 (for item 5 of 2015 AGM Agenda)

Dear Westbourne Orchestral Society members

I apologise but this year, due to many other commitments, I do not have the time to provide the same level of very detailed Chairperson's report that I have done in previous years. As mentioned last year, I need to cut back and will be stepping down from the Committee entirely at the 2016 AGM.

However, I refer you to the WOS Annual Report for 2014-2015 which we produce for Charity Commission purposes. I would like to add the following personal comments to that.

I am very pleased that our concerts over the last year appear to have been very well received by our audiences, as well as having been much enjoyed by members. Audiences seem to be growing again, too.

I am particularly pleased that we have been joined by several new members over the past year, including several younger ones.

Three areas in which I personally would ideally like to try and help improve over the next year before I step down as Chairperson are as follows:

Doubling of woodwind (and possibly brass) sections

This would be a break with tradition for WOS, but I believe this would have three advantages:

- It would remedy the situation over recent years in which we have quite often had gaps in rehearsals in woodwind and brass sections
- We would be fulfilling one of our charitable aims, which is to enable members of the community to enjoy making music together – we very often have to turn down requests from woodwind players to join us, because officially our woodwind sections are “full”
- It would increase our membership and probably our audience.

Professional orchestras do not double woodwind sections, but we are an amateur orchestra, and several other orchestras (e.g. the Wessex Youth Orchestra that I am also involved with, and the National Youth Orchestra) do double some sections, and very successfully. The details would need to be worked out but I do know that it can be made to work, and I think it would improve the quality of our rehearsals and performances.

Filling the current hole in percussion

For several years now we have had no percussion (apart from timpani when Tricia [Davis] is in the UK) until the day of our concerts. To fill this obvious gap, I think a good use of the legacy would be to pay a local professional teacher to come and play percussion on a regular basis (perhaps not every week, but at least one week in two), on the understanding that they would encourage their pupils to



come and play too, and for those pupils to ultimately join, after which it would be understood that the presence of the teacher would no longer be required.

As ever, the Committee would welcome alternative suggestions from members for the use of the legacy in order to meet our charitable aims and comply with our reserves policy (for which please see our Annual Report).

Matinee or Sunday concert for residents of local care homes

I think we would be providing a valuable service (and at the same time probably increasing our regular audience) if we tried to do at least one concert a year which was designed particularly for residents of local care homes (mainly for the elderly, but also for others who may not normally be able to attend our concerts, e.g. people with Down's Syndrome and other special needs).

The concert should probably be free for residents of the homes and their carers (and possibly free for anyone attending, since otherwise it would be complicated to know who to charge admission to), and at a time that would suit the residents (e.g. a Saturday afternoon, or possibly on a Sunday afternoon or early evening).

The repertoire would need to be easy for us to play (so as not to take too much rehearsal time away from our main concerts) and should ideally be popular classics and music from the shows. We would make a loss from such concerts, but I think it would be a very valid use of the legacy and ultimately would increase our audience and bring us a lot of goodwill within the community.

Concluding remarks

Thank you **all** for another very enjoyable year of music making, whether your involvement is from playing or the many things behind the scenes (including setting up and tidying up before and after rehearsals, providing the teas and other refreshments, running the ticket box office, producing posters and programmes, arranging publicity) that help to make the music happen! In particular a big job is to order, catalogue (and collect again after we've finished with the music!) the parts, and a massive thank you to our Librarian, Stella Galton for all that she does for WOS.

I look forward to another rewarding musical year ahead with you all.

Kind regards

Patrick Lee

Chairperson

18 June 2015