

Whitstable Music Society Chairman's Report to Members

July 2021

When writing this report I notice that the last Chairman's Report was dated June 2018, which just shows the long reach the Covid Pandemic has had on the Society's regular activities. Despite Covid, or because of it, a lot has been going on in the background since then. Our last concert was in February 2020 and the first Covid Lockdown started on 23rd March so we were obliged to cancel our concerts in March and April 2020.

We had arranged a series of concerts from September 2020 to April 2021, but we realised during the Summer of 2020 that we wouldn't be able to go ahead because of Covid. We then planned to start again in January 2021 but that also proved to be impossible. We therefore decided to "leapfrog" a whole year, skipping our 2020/21 season completely and starting again in September 2021 with the same musicians. Fortunately we had sufficient funds to pay the musicians half their concert fee a year in advance with the other half on completion of their recitals, thus easing some of the financial worries that Covid has entailed for musicians everywhere.

So we are now looking forward to a new season starting in September 2021 through to April 2022 with some semblance of normality. I hope you will see from our new brochure that we have arranged an excellent programme of concerts and we very much hope that you will feel able to renew your season tickets for the coming concert season.

As there have been no concerts for the last 19 months there has been little activity to report in our accounts. We have decided therefore to dispense with a formal AGM in 2021, and instead to circulate this Chairman's Report and a Financial Statement, which will also be posted on our website. I am pleased to say that the society is in a healthy state financially with good reserves. Audited accounts will be presented at the next formal AGM in June 2022 by which time we hope to be well clear of the Covid Pandemic.

Our sponsors play a key part in maintaining our finances and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking them for their ongoing support. Also our experience over many years has shown that personal recommendation is the most effective way of promoting the society's concerts, so we hope that our current members and regular concert goers will help to increase our audience numbers by recommending our concerts to their friends.

On behalf of all our members I would like to thank the committee for their hard work throughout the last two years. Their enthusiasm and dedication has kept the Society going throughout all the difficulties that Covid has presented. We are enormously grateful too for the many donors who help us in various ways. A list of sponsors and donors is published in our new season's brochure and on our website.

I look forward very much to welcoming you to our first concert on Saturday 26th Sept 2021.

John Walker

Chairman

