

CAMPAIGN CHOIRS ANNUAL MEETING 1 JULY 2018 BRIGHTON

Chair: Jenny Patient (Sheffield Socialist Choir)
Scribe: Nest Howells (Côr Gobaith)

Present:

Jenny Patient	(Sheffield Socialist choir)
Barry Johnson	(Open Voices)
Alan Macdonald	(Manchester Community Choir)
Gro-Mette Guldbrandsen	(Côr Gobaith)
Rosemary Snelgar	(Raised Voices)
Cynthia Cockburn	"
Ziba Nadimi	"
Nest Howells	(Côr Gobaith)
David Fogg	(Bolton Clarion)
Adey Rees	(Red Leicester)
Mark Whyatt	(Commoners' Choir)
Sheila Pickford	(Manchester Community Choir)
Lotte Reimer	(Côr Gobaith)
Lily Gleenan	(Protest in Harmony)
Andy Dykes	(Sheffield Socialist choir)
Sue Harris	(Côr Gobaith)
Kathy Pitt	(Calder Valley Voices)

Apologies:

Leslie Barson	(Red and Green)
Elsbeth	(Liverpool Socialist Singers)
Anni Tracy	(Lancaster Rabble Rousers)
Frances Bernstein	Leeds
Nottingham Clarion Choir	
Strawberry Thieves	

1 Welcome: Lotte Reimer

2 2017 minutes: Action points/Matters arising

- 2.i Developing lists of songs by categories for the website - action still required;
** Lily to take back to Protest in Harmony*
- 2.ii Social Media (FB/Twitter)
Some activity on Facebook - useful for sharing events, promoting other information. There is confusion between the Facebook page which was initially set up and the Facebook group, which is the one to encourage everybody to follow (currently only 71 members). Both are public.
** all choirs and choir members need to be encouraged to join the group by their CC rep..*
- 2.iii Logo - is on the website and the Facebook group page
** urge all involved choirs to use on their choir websites/identity with a link to the CC website*
- 2.iv information about history of street choirs was disseminated and used effectively by SCF2018. Thanks and congratulations to Hullabaloo for their effort in this regard!
- 2.v The website calendar of events is under used.
** As much information as possible should be forwarded to Alan*

- ** Alan to send email to encourage and remind choirs to contribute
- *** minutes to go on website
- 2.vi Reminders to choirs about annual £20 (or appropriate) contribution (per choir) to the group had limited effect.
* for discussion
- 2.vii Banners - no take up yet (still stuck with Lotte's old sheet banner, need feather type banner)
- 2.viii Guidelines for Organising Major Events - Cynthia was congratulated and thanked for producing a very useful document (used, London, Birmingham, Manchester).
- 2.ix Information regarding above points to be sent out by email.
Feedback reports - see AOBs

FINANCE

(David Fogg feedback)

£242.01p in the account.

45 choirs are signed up to CC, 126 individuals on the email list (from a total of 60 choirs). The 45 campaign choirs vary in size, activity, attendance at SCF etc and how well established and experienced they are. Contact and contributions have been variable possibly due to time gaps between meetings and reminders of subs.

Originally choirs were asked for contributions towards the fund, with a suggested sum of £20 per choir where possible. Some choirs contributed significantly more. It is recognised that the amounts will vary according to choir means.

The fund will cover various costs, such as:

banners, subsidising events, and supporting choirs or individuals who incur costs from producing and printing material for big choir events etc. (often repeatedly in the same location, e.g. Raised Voices in London).

There is a need for a democratic structure, in the amount contributed, reminders of how and when to submit contributions, and clarity in use made of the funds.

Action - Admin/Communication Group, A/CG (see Agenda item 1)

**Email SCF meeting minutes to CC, and follow up again in September with information about:*

planned/potential use of funds

direct request for annual payments

clear structure for submitting annual payments

**Appeal for volunteers to take this on and follow up responses or lack thereof.*

**Encourage individual choir reps to communicate back and chivvy up their choirs.*

AGENDA ITEMS

1 Lotte: Institutional structure

-needs to be democratic, but currently depends on two or three people. Roles and responsibilities need to be defined and shared out more widely.

Suggestion:

1.1 establish an admin/communication group consisting of 4-6 people from different choirs, and representing different regions. The group would could maintain contact via email or skype. It is intended

that involvement in the group would be on a rotational basis. Roles to include:

organising annual meeting, keeping track of minutes, listing actions, maintaining emailing list, choir lists

some tasks that need specialist knowledge - e.g. finance, website, social media

Currently: finance - David Fogg; email list - Lotte, Jenny; website - Alan; Facebook - Chris Green (frequently abroad)

Action: **Alan to contact Chris Green re sharing Facebook responsibilities*

**Seek proactive volunteers, representing the range of choirs and regions, to form a small admin/communication group (A/CG) with separate emailing list to 'oil the wheels'. Agreed group for the next year: David - Bolton (finance); Ziba and Rosemary - London; Lily - Edinburgh; Alan - Manchester (website, possibly Facebook); Lotte - Aberystwyth (email list/member list); Jenny - Sheffield (email list)*

2 Gathering

Linking to SCF not ideal due to low/varying numbers of CC attending, busy weekend which has its own agenda.

A low cost weekend gathering of choirs and interested individuals was considered a good idea and costs, venue, format and purpose discussed.

2.1 Costs and venue

e.g. Aberystwyth area, with access to YHA self-catering accommodation.

The National Forest has affordable YHA in Derbyshire, which would be more accessible to some choirs.

The venue could be hosted by a different choir each year with accommodation offered by members,

Due to commitments and other campaigns, as well as travel considerations, it may be more practicable and cost effective to link to a planned event which the CC are likely to be at. This was generally favoured as the route to pursue. Faslane/Glasgow in September 2018 was mentioned, as was Peterloo bicentenary, Manchester 2019

2.2 Content and format

(Lotte) Format: self-organising programme, more anarchist, similar to the Strawberry Thieves' weekend and the French revolutionary choirs' week, with an overall structure to feed into, tasks to volunteer for.

Content to include: general meeting, peer organised workshops, event planning, sharing protest songs, etc.

3 Upcoming events , summer 2018- summer 2019

3.1 Peterloo anniversary 18.8.19

Appropriate to combine / tag onto Manchester SCF in July. No info on whether SCF is to acknowledge the anniversary.

** A/CG to suggest to organisers to make the most of the connection to the anniversary*

3.2 Faslane 22.9.18

Rally, marching 1 mile to North gate. Not a blockade, calling for singers on the Saturday.

Referencing Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, raising awareness, Sunday 23.9.18 big sing in Glasgow city centre, see mailing list, song sheet available, contact Protest in Harmony.

**potential for including a CC meeting at the Quaker meeting house.*

3.3 Anti Trump 13.7.18

Rally: 2pm Portland Place to Trafalgar Square 5pm.

Raised Voices have produced a song sheet, Singing at Oxford Circus 2.30pm approx. More singing leaders required. RV will organise placards, loudhailers, large words etc. - Link with Cynthia.

Cynthia thanked for organising this.

3.4 Menwith Hill 04.7.18

4-8pm meeting with food, contact David.

4 Final comments

4.1 Members urged to generate discussion with choirs, disseminate information and COMMUNICATE. It was recognised that choirs are organised differently, not all choirs have meetings as part of their structure, making it more difficult for members to find time to report back / initiate discussion. Support may be needed for choir reps to find that space.

4.2 Best plan for CC meetings: Piggy-back meetings to upcoming actions. Meanwhile, research possible venues for Gathering.

4.3 General comments:

Sheila - very pleased to see that political choirs still in existence.

Mark - pleased to discover big network of campaigning choirs, offered support from Commoners Choir.