



Early Voices Wales
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED
31st August 2025



Registered Charity: 1208080

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

Year ending 31st August 2025

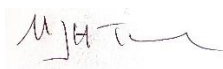
The trustees present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st August 2025. This reporting period began 1st May 2024, the date of Registration with the Commission.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered charity name:	Early Voices Wales / Lleisiau Cynnar Cymru
Charity number:	1208080
Principal office:	Early Voices Wales 42 Church Meadow Boverton Llantwit Major CF61 2AT
Trustees:	Michael Trickey (Chair) Fiona Senior (Treasurer) Jennifer Doolan (Secretary) (resigned as Trustee 03/11/2025) Edwin Counsell Emrah Tokalac (appointed 24/09/2025) Siân Tesni (appointed 01/12/2025)
Bankers:	The Co-operative Bank plc – Business Direct P.O. Box 250 Skelmersdale WN8 6WT United Kingdom

Supporting Policies: <https://www.earlyvoiceswales.co.uk/policy-pdfs>

This report and financial statement was approved by the Trustees and signed by the Chair on their behalf, by agreement:



30/4/26

Any queries arising from this report should be directed to The Secretary, via
hello@earlyvoiceswales.co.uk

Structure, Purpose and Activities

Early Voices Wales (EVW) is registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) (Registered Charity No. 1208080). The objects as stated in its governing document, and for which the charity was established, are “to promote the awareness, understanding and enjoyment of music composed before 1750 for the public benefit of people in Wales and elsewhere, in particular but not exclusively through providing opportunities to participate in choral singing, undertaking educational events and cultural exchanges, arranging public performances and broadcasts”.

The CIO was registered on 01/05/24, following the success of an independent community project set up in 2023 by Anna Cristoni-Apel. The CIO was registered to enable this work for the public benefit within the CIO structure. The Fountain Singers, established and run by Anna Cristoni-Apel since 2015, was also brought into the CIO. EVW therefore has two main strands: the Fountain Singers, and a separate annual programme to advance EVW’s wider charitable objects, centred around the annual festival and outreach work.

The CIO bank account was set up on 16 October 2024 and the accounts run from this date; the existing community group funds made up the starting balance. In the interim period 01/05/24-16/10/2024 the Trustees oversaw ongoing activities being brought under the CIO (including the 2024 Early Voices Festival, 11-12/05/24), while focusing on initial administration, structures, and planning for the 2025 Festival. The CIO first applied for grant income in October 2024.

Over the reporting period, the management of the CIO remained the same since its registration, with Anna Cristoni-Apel as Artistic Director and Michael Trickey as Chair of the Board of Trustees. At the time this report was produced, Jennifer Doolan had stepped down while Emrah Tokalac and Siân Tesni had joined the Board.

The Trustees are aware of their responsibilities in ensuring that the festival delivers identifiable benefits to the public in accord with established objectives and permitted activities. They are satisfied that the objects of the Charity and the activities of the Charity are within the definitions of Charitable Purposes as set down in the Act and refer to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission’s general guidance on public benefit when reviewing their aims and objectives.

Reporting Year 2024-2025 Achievements and Performance

The Fountain Singers

The Fountain Singers actively promoted EVW’s charitable objects in bringing diverse early music to new singers and listeners. The choir had a successful year, growing in membership, audience numbers and reputation. Good retention and joining rates are testament to the choir’s welcoming, accessible ethos and the members’ enjoyment in participating. Membership increased from 11 on 01/10/2024 to 15 on 01/10/2025, a rise of 36%.

The Fountain Singers continue to showcase varied early music repertoire. Their summer 2024 concert, of the Llibre Vermell de Monserrat, formed part of the Festival’s events. In December 2024 they performed a programme of Marian devotional music from the medieval and Renaissance periods, in both Cardiff and Llantwit Major. In November 2025, they performed at an illustrated talk on Palestrina organised in partnership with the Italian Cultural Centre and also recorded 2 pieces for a BBC Radio Wales broadcast. In May 2025, they joined with the Ewenny Chamber Choir for the central performance of EVW’s 2025 festival: “Palestrina 500!”. This was the Fountain Singers’ highest-grossing concert to date and the best-attended event of the festival. EVW’s two complementary strands benefitted through collaboration.

The 2025 Festival and other activity

Successes

The 2025 festival, held on 1st and 9-11th May, was a success in a number of key ways. The range and scope of programming was a progression from the first festival in 2024, attracting more performers from outside Wales, including specialist vocal ensemble Iuchair, and the musical drama production The Telling. The festival also created opportunities for more local performers, both professional and amateur, including the Ewenny Chamber Choir, Contraband, Scott Baker & Sarah Dunbar, and Sazava. The main programme was accompanied by successful outreach events (detailed below) which significantly widened the festival's community reach.

The 2025 festival exceeded its growth goals for ticket sales, engagement, and financial performance. In autumn 2024, the CIO successfully applied to the ACW and Ty Cerdd, a significant milestone. EVW was also fortunate in attracting continued "seed-funding" support from SepSols Ltd for the 2025 and 2026 Festivals. First secured prior to the CIO to support 2024 festival planning, this commitment recognised both the success of the 2024 festival and the assurance of the CIO structure. EVW also launched a "Friends of Early Voices" scheme in 2025, creating a community of interested supporters who offer a small annual financial donation.

Challenges

Some unforeseen challenges were met with in 2024/25. Performer illness caused two artists to be unavailable at short notice but suitable adjustments were made. Live music from a nearby pub affected the audibility and experience of Saturday 10th May events. Mitigation strategies are underway within the community and altered venue and schedules for 2026 should avoid disruption. The festival also grew quickly between May 2024 and May 2025: While a mark of success, this also brings challenges for practical management, especially around operational and administrative functions, and budgetary risk. EVW is exploring ways of finding additional operational support, including an increased pool of volunteers.

Legacy

Trustees are committed to managing EVW's growth sustainably through its early years and beyond, to further its charitable objects. Establishing the annual festival further will boost the public benefit it creates, including enhanced community engagement, progressively fuller programming, increased audience/performer reach, and superior performance quality. The Trustees recognise the importance of supporting diversity and inclusion as the festival expands, and maintaining the balance between local community focus and wider cultural reach. A key priority is early career support and youth engagement: In 2025/26 EVW will pilot an annual "residency", offering young performer(s) a special position within the festival's programme.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

Accessibility and inclusivity is integral to EVW in fulfilling its core charitable purpose to promote participation and enjoyment of early music for everyone.

Festival 2025 outreach activity and audience reach

Accessibility and inclusivity underpins the EVW festival programme, promoting the charity's aims to reach groups which experience barriers (real or perceived) from enjoying early music. The Trustees are grateful to the performers and volunteers who helped EVW promote its values through outreach activity. We also thank EVW's outreach funders Ty Cerdd and Arts Council Wales.

Outreach activity under the 2025 programme completed in March 2026, reflecting the completion span allowed by Ty Cerdd and other funders. This has been highly successful and shows increasing momentum in reach and scope. In particular, the Trustees note:

- Three professional groups engaged in funded outreach during the festival: Iuchair, The Telling, and Scott Baker & Sarah Dunbar.
- Two free events were also held, reaching ~80:
 - An open sharing session with the Oasis One World Choir, workshoped with The Telling, was especially designed to foster participation from within refugee communities in South Wales. Promotion was targeted to the refugee community and other low-access groups.
 - Dr Lucy Donkin gave an educational talk to support the festival's musical performances.
- 48 complimentary tickets were provided for the festival's ticketed events to increase access, especially to refugee participants.
- Community outreach reached ~60: a children's group, a dementia group, and a wellbeing group.
- A further five outreach sessions are scheduled within the schools outreach period.

The CIO's 2024/2025 activity, including outreach, reached audience of 490 to date, with a projected total of ~600 by the completion of schools outreach. When compared to ticket sales of 348, outreach numbers demonstrate the festival's success in harnessing ticketed programming as a generator of wider access, almost doubling reach. EVW hopes to increase outreach in the coming year, both in number and relative to ticket sales.

Ticket prices for concerts were £12 (under-16s free), rising to £15 (under-16s £5). Two of the weekend's events were free of charge and were well-attended. High ticket sales confirm that this represents fair pricing and good value for money. Audience feedback was also collected, confirming affordability and community value alongside high artistic quality.

The Festival venue was chosen with accessibility and inclusivity in mind. St Illtyd's Church, Llantwit Major is an accessible venue at the heart of the local community, used for wide-ranging secular events. The location has good public transport links, including by train from major urban centres, as well as serving a town population of >13,000.

Fountain Singers choir membership

The Trustees are active in upholding the accessibility and inclusivity of the Fountain Singers for members and potential members.

The Fountain Singers is designed to widen access, adopting measures which remain unusual in the field of early music groups. The non-audition choir welcomes all singers regardless of experience or training. The choir produces high-quality music while supporting its members to practise and enjoy early music at their own pace and level. Positive audience reception shows that these accessible values are consistent with high-quality performances.

To promote affordability, Fountain Singers member subscriptions are considered carefully. These are currently set at a suggested amount of £15/month. In special circumstances, subscriptions can be confidentially waived or reduced. Rehearsal and performance venues are chosen with consideration of accessibility, convenience, and journey affordability. The choir provides printed music for members as required.

Fountain Singers audience participation

Performance venues are chosen to maximise accessibility and reach and to serve both the urban and rural communities of Cardiff and the Vale. These are recurrently St. Iltyd's Church, Llantwit Major and St. John's Canton, both of which are accessible by public transport and within reach of sizeable local communities by foot.

Ticket prices are deliberately kept affordable. In 2024/25, these were set at £12 (under-16s free), demonstrating excellent value for money when compared to similar events. Ticket sales for the Fountain Singers remained excellent during the period, with sellout concerts in both May 2024 and May 2025 concert, demonstrating the choir's continued reach and accessibility.

Financial Review

The Trustees continue to uphold strict ringfencing between the finances of the Fountain Singers and the charity's other activity. Accounts are managed separately and amounts carried forward are separated into restricted funds (Fountain Singers) and unrestricted reserves (festival and other projects). This reflects the charity's policy to protect the Fountain Singers from additional financial risk. These two areas of financial management are presented in turn.

The Fountain Singers

The Fountain Singers financial performance was strong in 2024/25. Both turnover and funds carried forward have increased following:

- increased subscriptions from £12 monthly to £15;
- increased number of members;
- growing audience numbers for concerts.

Subscriptions form the main income stream, amounting to £3,189 in 2024/25. Ticket sales generated 27% of funds in 2024/25.

Reserves - restricted funds

The funds carried forward at 31 August 2025 include £2,338.33 which are treated as restricted funds arising from the finances of the Fountain Singers. Trustees have agreed that the level and use of additional restricted funds is to be managed in consultation with the members of the Fountain Singers.

Early Voices Wales Festival and other activity

The other funds carried forward at 31 August 2025 were £3,173.78. These derived from the finances of the EVW festival and are treated by Trustees as reserves. In 2025 the festival continued to benefit primarily from generous public funding, from ACW (£4,650) and Ty Cerdd Create (£1,400), Ty Cerdd Engage (£712.50), and Llantwit Major Town Council (£100). These awards, as well as continued private sponsorship from SepSols Ltd (£1,500), enabled EVW to implement its full planned programme for the May 2025 festival. Other significant income included ticket and other sales, refreshments, subscriptions from the EVW Friends. The budget scale of the 2025 festival represented a considerable increase from the pre-CIO budget for the 2024 festival, a trajectory which the Trustees hope can be maintained sustainably into 2026 and beyond.

The 2025 festival was a financial success, with ticketed audience exceeding the target by some margin. The strategy of maintaining affordable pricing enabled broad access while growing audience numbers and revenue. The uptake of EVW's new "Friends" membership has been promising, bringing in £475 during the period. While this is a fairly modest income stream at present, it is hoped that this membership will grow considerably through future years.

The Trustees are aware of future challenges for festival funding. Venue costs and travel expenses in particular have risen significantly and will affect the 2026 festival and other events. As the festival grows, core operational costs are likely to increase, many of which are ineligible for some funding. The Trustees also note that the last annual SepSols Ltd donation will be received in 2025/26. The Board is working on strategy to mitigate the foreseeable impacts of these changes to enable growth and resilience.

Unrestricted reserves

As a young charity, EVW is actively building reserves as part of its strategy of sustainable growth. Trustee policy is to build up and maintain minimum unrestricted reserves of £5,000 or 15% of the working festival budget (planned expenditure) in each year, whichever is the greater. However, as £5,000 is a very large percentage of each annual budget to date, the pace of reserve-building must be balanced against EVW's productivity and purpose in its early years.

Volunteers

The Trustees gratefully acknowledge the essential work of the many volunteers who assist with marketing and administration, provide accommodation and hospitality for musicians, organise, make and sell refreshments, and assist with front-of-house management. Some local musicians also donated their time for outreach activities, or on an expenses-only basis.

Risk Management

The Trustees have sought to identify the major risks to which the charity is exposed; these are reviewed regularly and systems have been established to mitigate them. The Trustees are regularly updated on operational activity, at Board Meetings and by regular circulation and extra decision-making.

A Public Liability Insurance policy is provided annually by PolicyBee.

Financial risk management

Financial risk management and risk mitigation are addressed on a continual basis and the festival, Fountain Singers, and other activities are planned with careful regard to income expectations and financial sustainability. Strict financial ringfencing of the Fountain Singers income and expenditure ensures that the choir is protected from risks which may attach to the festival's more dynamic planning and activity. Contingency plans and financial safeguards are under constant review.

DBS and safeguarding

Early Voices Wales complies fully with the law and guidance on safeguarding, including for DBS certificates. Our policies and procedures are reviewed annually as a minimum and can be viewed here: <https://www.earlyvoiceswales.co.uk/policy-pdfs>



EARLY VOICES WALES LLEISIAU CYNNAR CYMRU

Registered Charity Number 1208080

Statement of financial activities for year 01 May 2024 to 31 August 2025

Early Voices Wales | Lleisiau Cynnar Cymru delivers its work through two main strands: the **Early Voices Wales Festival** and the **Fountain Singers**, its resident chamber choir.

The financial activities of the Fountain Singers are **ring-fenced** and managed **separately** from those of the Festival. Income and expenditure for each are accounted for independently to ensure transparency and clarity in financial reporting.

EARLY VOICES WALES FESTIVAL

RECEIPTS	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
Grants/funding			
Arts Council Wales		£4650.00	£4650.00
Ty Cerdd Create		£1400	£1400
Ty Cerdd Engage		£712.50	£712.50
Llantwit Major Town Council	£100		£100
Sponsorship			
Sepsols Ltd.	£1500		£1500
Ticket sales & programmes	£6105.92		£6105.92
Performance Fees	£55		£55
Donations			
Refreshments	£431		£431
Friends of EVW Membership	£475		£475
Miscellaneous	£15.70		£15.70
TOTAL RECEIPTS	£8,682.62	£6,762.50	£15,445.12

PAYMENTS	Unrestricted/restricted funds	Total Funds
Artistic Director fees	£3700	£3700

Artists' Fees & Expenses	£6536.01	£6536.01
Venue Hire, Refreshments & Performer Gifts	£1401.30	£1401.30
Marketing & Publicity	£1544	£1544
Core costs	£593.22	£593.22
TOTAL PAYMENTS	£13,774.53	£13,774.53
Starting balance*	£1503.19	
TOTAL RESERVES this year end		£3173.78

FOUNTAIN SINGERS

RECEIPTS	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
Member Subscriptions		£3189	£3189
Ticket sales		£1477.32	£1477.32
Performance fees		£360.71	£360.71
Donations		£380	£380
Miscellaneous		£17.82	£17.82
TOTAL RECEIPTS		£5424.85	£5424.85

PAYMENTS

ALLOCATED	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
Artist Director Fees		£2060	£2060
Venue hire		£981.25	£981.25
Marketing & publicity		£72	£72
Travel Expenses		£300	£300

Lindisfarne Accommodation & Refreshment Expenses		£380	£380
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Miscellaneous		£28.60	£28.60
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TOTAL PAYMENTS		£3821.85	£3821.85
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Starting Balance*		£735.33	£725.33
TOTAL RESTRICTED funds this year end		£2338.33	£2338.33

TOTAL ASSETS (EVW Festival and Fountain Singers) – Bank and other cash balances	£5512.11 (£2338.33 of which is restricted)
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OVERVIEW – RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

EARLY VOICES WALES FESTIVAL

TOTAL INCOME	£15,445.12
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TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£13,774.53
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Balance carried forward (RESERVES)	£1670.59 (to add to starting balance*)
TOTAL RESERVES	£3173.78

FOUNTAIN SINGERS

TOTAL INCOME	£5424.85
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TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£3821.85
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Balance carried forward (RESTRICTED FUNDS)	£1603.00 (to add to starting balance*)
TOTAL RESTRICTED FUNDS	£2338.33

EARLY VOICES WALES LLEISIAU CYNNAR CYMRU

TOTAL INCOME	£20,869.97
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TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£17,596.38
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TOTAL ASSETS – Bank and other cash balances	£5512.11 (£2338.33 of which is restricted)
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* The opening balances for both the Fountain Singers and the Early Voices Wales Festival represent funds generated through activities undertaken prior to the organisation's registration as a charity. These funds arose from the Fountain Singers' activities and the Early Voices Wales Festival 2024, both of which took place before charitable status was obtained.