DUNBARTONSHIRE
CONCERT
BAND

Dunbartonshire Concert Band

Minutes of AGM

Saturday 28th October, 2023, 1215-1245pm

Kessington Hall, 58 Milngavie Road, Bearsden, Glasgow, G61 2DP

1. Attendance and apologies

45 band members were present at the meeting which meant it was quorate as more than one third of the current membership were present.

Apologies were received from: Moyra Hawthorn, Laura Hunter, Jacqui McMahon, Alison Beattie, George Gourlay, Andrew McCafferty, Andrew Kwan, Adam Wilson, Alan Hunter, Julian Fosh, Grant Macintosh and Angela Caldwell.

2. Approval of Previous AGM minutes

The minutes were approved by Fiona Ross and John Carswell.

3. Receive Financial Accounts

The accounts were published and sent to the band via email prior to the AGM.

The accounts were proposed by Alan Cooper and seconded by Harriet Fishley.

4. Chairpersons Report – Ruth Sinclair

It's been another busy year, so we'll start with a quick recap. If I miss anything or anyone out, apologies, it isn't deliberate!

Following last year's AGM, we started the preparations for the festive season.
At the start of November, Chief Elf Michele and her assistants put up the Kessington Christmas Tree ahead of the band recording 3 Christmas pieces to release on Facebook and YouTube in the run up to Christmas. Thank you to Alison Beattie for all her hard work in producing and editing the 2022 Christmas recordings.

Christmas 2022 saw DCB return to Gartnaval Royal and Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum – and I'm sure everyone will agree that it was fantastic to be back at both venues. You'll be pleased to know that Kelvingrove is booked for this Christmas and we are hoping to return to Gartnaval Royal before the end of the year.

Christmas 2022 also saw us hold our first concert in Kessington, which was a great success despite the freezing cold and icy weather - weather which unfortunately meant the Brass Group had to cancel their planned performance at Morrisons Anniesland the next day. Fingers crossed for this year.

DCB turned 50 in 2023 and we've been marking the event throughout the year, with memories from longstanding members, old programmes and newspaper cuttings and photos plus a couple of special events. Thank you to Kerry for redesigning the DCB logo for the year to mark the anniversary.

It is a good problem to have but now the band is so large, it is difficult to find venues that we can fit into as a full entity. Outdoor concerts are therefore perfect for us but we're at the mercy of the weather!

Having engaged in a lot of communication with WestFest and sorted out contingency plans should it rain for our performance at The Big Sunday At The Bandstand at the start of June, it ended up we were more likely to get sunstroke! The weather was glorious and once again a really appreciative audience.

Unfortunately, the sun didn't shine for our second outdoor concert at Mugdock – torrential rain meant we had to cancel. These things happen with a Scottish summer! In-between we slow roasted at our Summer Concert at Kessington, conducted by Michelle. Once again it was a very successful evening, with particular highlights the starring moments in pieces by Glyn from the bassoons (aka The Teddy Bears) and Scott. Special thanks to The Bunting Team – Michele and Louise, assisted by Alison – who handmade the amazing DCB bunting. I should explain that the bunting came about because, after the Christmas Concert, like at any concert, you can get audience feedback. We got feedback that there was too much of the colour brown in the hall due to the wood panelling!!

Our Social Event at the end of June marked the band turning 50 and showcased performances by small ensembles as well as 2 pieces by the full band. Thank you to those groups and individuals who took part to have a moment in the spotlight. The feedback has been so positive that we might repeat it on a smaller scale – or put small ensembles in future concerts. Thank you to Café Melo for a delicious buffet and to Shona at The Magical Cake Company for the amazing cake too. At the Social Event, we were also able to thank Glyn for his time as Honorary President and we surprised Alan and David with their appointment as Lifetime Members – which will be made official later today.

My plans for a quiet, band-free summer were dashed in a nice way at the start of July when Alan emailed to say did I remember that application to Radio 4 that he, Andrew, Moyra and Anne had submitted? They'd only been selected from over 1000 entries and would be guest editing an edition of the Today programme! What an incredible advertisement for DCB, community music and the overall benefits of music it turned out to be. Andrew, Anne, Moyra and Alan – you sounded like broadcast professionals – and didn't we sound fabulous playing to the nation? We've had wonderful feedback on the back of the programme – greatly increased traffic to the website, specific messages praising 12th Street Rag and an invitation to play a concert at an arts venue just outside Tain – yes, we are planning to accept the invitation! Bravo Guest Edit Team –community music is most definitely good for the soul!

And before we knew it, it was August and the new season had started, with a first post-covid return to Kirkintilloch Canal Festival, outdoors in the sun. The remainder of 2023 will see an open rehearsal in November for any former members to come and join in with some music making to celebrate the 50th anniversary, before we enter the festive period – yes, Christmas music time!!!

Going forward into 2024 we hope to play a concert in Arrochar, finally taking up The Three Villages Hall invitation to return from 2013 (?); if the refurbishment works to the atrium at the QEUH completes, we hope to return there too and we have a couple of other potential new venues under consideration. As always, if you have any new venue suggestions, especially one that can easily fit the full band and where we can collect donations, please let the committee know.

And now the Thank Yous. A huge thank you to Robert and Michelle for all their hard work and the time they put into the band. There is a lot of unseen work goes on behind the scenes week in, week out – choosing music that is playable but challenging and also audience friendly, putting together concert programmes to fit the player mix and drafting weekly rehearsal schedules based on player availability.

The second huge thank you goes to the committee for all their support and the enormous amount of work they've put in over the past year – Alison, Susan, Fiona, Heather, Anne, Anna and John. There have been various extra tasks needing done as part of the 50th anniversary (with more to come) and the committee has absorbed this extra work. I'd like to particularly thank Susan for her work in coordinating the production of the 50th anniversary souvenir programme and Alison (and her mum and sister!) for organising the clothing orders!

As always, Glyn was on standby throughout the past season, ready to take a rehearsal if needed, and still arranging music for us – we have been so fortunate to have received so much music from him over the years. Sadly, he made the decision to step down from his role as Honorary President in June, which we marked at the Social Event. Thank you for everything Glyn.

Thank you also to David, Alan, and Robert for all the work that goes in to Kessington, which means the hall has become an in-demand community venue for music and the arts. Music and theatre groups, choirs, dance groups, art clubs, music teachers, toddler groups – a diverse range of users have selected the hall as their home. Alan will give a short update on Kessington later on in the meeting but thank you to the Kessington Team for making our home a success.

At this point I'd like to give a special thank you to Susan's partner Neil Macmillan, who has helped out both DCB and DCB Kessington on several occasions in the past year, again often unnoticed in the background. Not only did he take the official 50th anniversary band photos, he takes photos at concerts, he's fixed the collapsing library table, been heavily involved in trying to diagnose and fix the cause of the water ingress downstairs, helped clean up several lots of flooding, raised the piano off the floor to prevent damage, carried out the temporary repair that diverted the serious water ingress at the start of October, had the drone up to look at the roof – the list goes on! Thank you, Neil.

Thank you finally to Neil Harper as Making Music Rep, Cameron for organising and running the 100 Club, to all members who provide home baking for the concerts, to family and friends who help out at concerts selling tickets on the door, organising the raffle, serving interval refreshments, selling programmes and being door security; and to the small group of members who always volunteer to help the committee setting up for concerts, moving chairs etc – particularly Colin, Jonathan, Fiona M, Moyra and David Brown. We need more people to help with tasks outside of committee tasks, hence my recent email looking for IT geniuses (thank you to Orlaith and Margaret for coming forward) and someone to take on the 100 Club. We need everyone to chip in and help, not just the same people all the time.

Harriet wouldn't forgive me if I didn't mention how we can raise some extra funds via easyfundraising. So if you aren't signed up to it or you are signed up and are considering changing the organisation or charity you support, please consider DCB – and encourage family and friends to use it too.

In summary, the band is in good health. We now have almost 70 members, however we do need to keep recruiting and particularly need trombones and trumpets so please continue spreading the word – I know some of you do and are very good at it! DCB is rightfully recognised as a band that plays to a high standard but to maintain that standard requires commitment. As it says on the website, membership means undertaking personal practice and a commitment to attend Saturday morning rehearsals and play concerts. Attendance has been somewhat sporadic in some sections since we resumed in-person rehearsals so please make every effort to come. There's no better way to spend a Saturday morning – and there's even cake!

5. Musical Director Report – Robert Baxter

Robert was unable to attend the AGM and a report was not provided.

6. Treasurers Report – Fiona Ross

Fiona gave the following presentation:

The band is still in a very healthy financial position despite making a loss this year. The loss was deliberate and was essentially due to costs involved in the 50th anniversary celebrations, like the special programme and the catering for the social event. These appear under stationery and miscellaneous and explain why that has gone up so much. In fact, the loss is not quite as bad as it looks as the costs of the first order for the clothing with the band logo fell last season but your repayments less a small subsidy will appear in this year's accounts.

Going forward we intend to continue running at a loss as we don't need our reserves to be anything like as high as they have become. As I explained last year, my main focus for budgeting is normally to set our subs so that they

cover our routine rehearsal expenses ie, the MD fee and hire of the hall when taken with the other guaranteed income (tea money and gift aid). However, for this season the committee have already agreed to increase the MD

fee, but I don't want to ask for any increase in the subs. This means that those income streams will definitely not cover rehearsal costs, so we are likely to make a significant loss on this season.

One of the main reasons for the healthy bank balance is that our ticketed concerts have been very profitable since we introduced the home baking! This does not mean that you can relax about selling tickets as we don't want to make too big an overall loss and we need to keep the pattern of profitable concerts. We still haven't managed to get back to as many other types of concert as before the pandemic but at the moment these don't go anywhere near covering their costs. We do want to build these up again and we are looking at ways to get round the fact that people carry much less cash these days but it is likely that such concerts will mostly cost us so it is particularly important that the ticketed concerts are profitable.

7. Subscriptions

Fiona explained that subscriptions will remain the same as last year:

Full member: £110; Retired: £65; Unwaged: £50

Fiona emphasised that subscriptions can be paid in any frequency (monthly, quarterly etc.), and asked band members to speak to her in confidence if they are struggling to pay the required subscription amount. Details are on the band website.

8. Election of Committee Members

None of the committee are standing down this year, and the current committee were re-elected.

9. Election of Honorary Independent Financial Advisor

Fiona announced that our current independent financial advisor, Robert Thomson has stated his intention to stand down either at the end of 2024 session and definitely by the end of 2025, after serving this role for many years. Fiona recorded our thanks to him for all his work on behalf of the band.

His re-election was proposed by Cameron McCulloch and seconded by Monika Mihm Carmichael.

10. Election of Honorary Life Members – Alan Cooper and David Broad

As part of the band's 50th Anniversary, the committee sought the band's agreement to appoint two new honorary life members – Alan Cooper and David Broad. The overwhelmingly positive response to this confirmed that it was a popular choice. Both Alan and David are trustees for DCB -Kessington, and over the last 5 years have worked tirelessly on the Kessington Hall project, culminating in DCB moving in 2 years ago and continuing with the daily management of the Hall and all that entails. Our appreciation for their work is recorded formally here.

At the 50th Anniversary social event in June, Alan and David were both surprised with this news, and at the AGM, they were presented with a certificate to mark their Honorary Membership status.

There was no shortage of band members willing to propose and second the election of Alan or David.

Alan Cooper: proposed by Ruth Hart, seconded by Neil Harper

David Broad: proposed by Monika Mihm Carmichael, seconded by Jan Wallace

11. Consider Resolutions of which due notice has been given.

No resolutions were raised.

12. Elect or Re-Elect Band Trustees

All the current trustees are happy to continue in the role.

The current trustees are: Jill Bolling, Alan Cooper, Moyra Hawthorn, Jonathan Smithers and Colin Suckling.

13. Kessington Hall Update – Alan Cooper

Alan gave the following presentation:

DCB-Kessington – report for DCB AGM – 28 October 2023

Now 2 years into the project, we continue to fulfil our remit to act as a community music and arts facility.

In addition to DCB and DWE, regular (weekly) users include…

· 2 choirs/singing groups

· Theatre/dance (Stellar)

· 3-4 ballet groups

· Ballroom dancers

· Piano lessons

· Private music/dance practice

· Children's art classes

· Yoga

Plus, occasional (monthly) use for…

· Impromptu music (clarinet choir, Summer Winds, private practice, etc.)

· Music therapy sessions

· Holiday "Art Camp" for children

· Church group

· Etc…

The hall is increasingly in demand as a venue, and almost to capacity in terms of lets – especially due to recent closures of other local venues.

So, although our fees are relatively modest (we don't employ staff), we have a steady income stream, and finances are healthy. We aim to maintain a balance of at least £10k in the bank account, for contingencies, and we've usually managed that until recently – current balance ca. £8.5k – but that's on top of recent one-off capital expenditure of over £25k, including:

· Library & tank room ceilings (£17,000+)

· Boiler room vent (£780)

· Staging (£8,500)

· Ballet barre for Studio 1 (£310)

· Broken window repair (£360)

· Fire safety (£750+)

· Etc…

Challenges:

· Flooding – we think that we (and Scottish Water) are now on top of the problem (blockage of mains drains?) – but many thanks to all the volunteers who helped in the most recent occurrence, and especially to Susan's partner, Neil Macmillan, for some amazing work on tracing & fixing drains, etc.

· Climate change – "future proofing" – boiler replacement (eventually?). We have an Energy Efficiency Assessment completed for the hall.

· Routine, day-to-day maintenance & admin: there's always something needing fixing/sorting, and we need a few more (local) volunteers to share the load.

Alan Cooper – for DCB Kessington Trustees 28 October 2023

Alan opened the floor to any questions following his report.

13.1 Monika Mihm: Asked a question to Alan Cooper regarding the funding of building repairs to Kessington Hall where DCB-Kessington doesn't own the hall. She asked should the council be assisting with this? Alan Cooper explained that as we lease the hall on a 'peppercorn rent', we are responsible for maintaining the fabric of the building over the 25year lease period. He reminded those present that we do have a 'break out' clause that we can hand the hall back after 5 years. We are able to apply for grants for specific projects and have done so already.

13.2 Michele Muir: commented to Alan Cooper that there is a sense of community ownership between the different groups using Kessington Hall which is a great credit to DCB -Kessington. In response, David Broad commented that that reflects positively back on DCB too.

14. AOCB

14.1 Jane Ireland asked if a date had been set for our Christmas concert at Kelvingrove. Ruth Sinclair confirmed this has been emailed to band members and is Sunday 10th December, 12-2pm.

14.2 Jonathan Smithers proposed formal recognition to Ruth Sinclair for her leadership of DCB over the last year. Those present agreed with this.

14.3 In his absence, Andrew McCafferty had requested that the band paid tribute to a former member, French Horn player, Dougie Craig, who recently passed away. Dougie was a member from the very early days of DCB and made a huge contribution to the band over his time in it. He is remembered as a tremendous player and a constant source of encouragement for many members. We also record our condolences to Karen Clayton, Dougie's granddaughter and flute/piccolo player in the band.

14.4 Monika Mihm Carmichael raised the notion of a band trip 'up North' and asked if members would be interested in this. Ruth Sinclair stated we have been invited to Tain and are working towards a band tour in the area in 2024.

There was no further business and Ruth thanked everyone present for attending and closed the meeting.