

Music in English Cathedrals 2001–2011

Background and process

This paper was written in response to a request from the AEC Executive for a review of the 2001 report *Music in English Cathedrals* which would include an overview of musical developments since then. A representative group met under the Chairmanship of the Very Revd Michael Tavinor (Dean of Hereford). The other members were Katherine Dienes-Williams (Director of Music, Guildford Cathedral), John Paton (Precentor, Christ Church, Oxford) and Timothy Hone (Head of Liturgy and Music, Salisbury Cathedral) who acted as Secretary and author of the report. They took as a starting point for discussion the summary recommendations of the 2001 report; the structure and enumeration of this paper corresponds to the 2001 recommendations in order to facilitate easy cross-reference. The final form of the report has benefitted greatly from two wide-ranging discussions at CLAM meetings and further specific contributions from members of the Group.

The recommendations in the 2001 report were grouped under four main headings, which then identified four principal categories for further action:

- A. affirmation of Cathedral music, and engagement in medium and long-term review and planning;
- B. collective action by the English Cathedrals working together;
- C. establishment of good working practices and relationships;
- D. effective management and operation of Cathedral music.

In summary, the 2001 report concluded that the continuing health and development of Cathedral music were dependent on

- a life of corporate prayer and spiritual growth sustained within a supportive Christian community;
- high liturgical and musical standards;
- continuing challenge, creativity and stimulation;
- clear structures and guidelines, processes of decision-making;
- and boundaries of responsibility;
- good inter-professional relations;
- inter-departmental understanding and collaboration;
- open and effective communication;
- good working practices;

- staff development and skills training;
- realistic remuneration, resources, facilities and working budget;
- realistic timetables and demands;
- balance between Cathedral demands and other work (adults);
- or education (students and children);
- effective and ongoing publicity and public relations;
- effective recruitment.

Scope of the review and initial observations

The purpose of the 2011 review is to ask

- what has moved on in the ten years since the report *Music in English Cathedrals* was produced in 2001?
- what are the new challenges?

We suspected that, while some things had improved, in other areas there may be more cause for concern and need for further work. In particular, we felt that expectations and work-load were probably continuing to increase. This is partly as a result of the increase in the number of Cathedrals providing opportunities for girl choristers. While this is a welcome initiative, it results in Cathedrals and their directors of music having responsibility for a greater number of choirs and children. It is also the result of increasing demands of legislation, the necessity of greater documentation and accountability, the need to be more proactive in terms of maintaining wide public awareness of the choir to aid recruitment, and the increasing diversity of activities with which Cathedrals become involved.

This review will provide some sort of snapshot of Cathedral music in 2011.

We felt that now, as in 2001, things are very fragile, despite the many successes which we, quite rightly, celebrate and share. One of the success stories of the past ten years is that there has been much more 'joined up' PR about the benefits of singing and of the contribution the Cathedral choir system makes to this. Despite this, we were aware that issues can arise in Cathedrals which could threaten the continuation of the present pattern of choral worship:

- members of Chapter may have little previous experience of choral worship and may not appreciate its value;
- the traditional style of choral worship may seem to be at odds with mission and outreach;
- administrators, lay members of Chapter and others, may ask whether the choral worship is 'value for money' or suggest that it should be self-funding.

We felt that we needed to represent:

- the diversity of practice, not least in terms funding, of the additional choirs that many Cathedrals now operate;
- the importance of visiting choirs, which usually contribute a significant proportion of the Cathedrals' choral worship.

Detailed response to the recommendations of the 2001 report

The recommendations of the 2001 report are included in italics for ease of reference.

A. Commitment to Cathedral music and its future

1. *To affirm the special and unique contribution of English Cathedral music to the life of the Church; to emphasize its current vitality and high standards; and to recognize the challenges it faces in future decades in order to survive and develop.*

We felt that the challenges that faced Cathedral music in 2001 had been met positively, that there were now more success stories about recruitment than previously, and that there was a greater visibility of Cathedral music and of the benefits of choral singing in general.

2. *To encourage each Cathedral to devise or adopt a model of practice that can both satisfy its particular musical requirements and be sustainable in financial terms, having in mind the other demands for ministry and mission, and its total resources.*

On the whole, Cathedrals had responded realistically and creatively to the financial pressures facing them and had continued to show commitment to expanded musical programmes, even if the funding now had to come from a more diverse pool, or a greater burden to fall on chorister parents.

3. *To ensure that Cathedral music is a worthy part of all the worship of God offered in the Cathedral on behalf of the Diocese and the greater Church, representing the best and most creative praxis that is possible in each Cathedral.*

The relationship between music and worship in Cathedrals, and that encountered in the parishes of the Diocese needs to be reassessed periodically. There may be little connection between them. Some see a visit to the Cathedral as offering a kind of spiritual boost. Others feel that the disconnection is symptomatic of a growing misunderstanding of the value of formal, traditional worship.

4. *To encourage all senior Cathedral staff to consider carefully and creatively the nature and role of music and of skilled musicians within the context of the shared ministry and mission of their particular Cathedral.*

We felt it was important to get senior Cathedral staff and members of Chapter to reflect on music and worship. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that people don't have (or make) time because of general administrative overload. We would encourage Chapter members to prioritise time with the rest of the Cathedral staff to reflect on what they are

doing to develop their worship and mission and of the contribution of music and liturgy make to these areas.

While it is natural that music and liturgy departments take the initiative to reflect on the past and plan for the future, it is essential to feed this thinking into the wider structures. The creation of a Worship and Music Policy document may help this process and CLAM paper 15 provides a tool to help with this.

It was noted again that Cathedrals are now much more diverse in terms of the lay staff they employ and their specialist interests. In many places, commercial issues are, necessarily, at the forefront of strategic decisions.

5. *To encourage Cathedrals to be open to fresh ideas about ways of providing the most appropriate and best music in worship (no one model is right).*

Many Cathedrals show that they are open to fresh thinking about the most appropriate music for their worship. We would encourage more shared thinking about Diocesan services held in Cathedrals and how the style of worship reflects, influences and/or inspires what might be done in the parish situation.

We noted that there is a sort of Cathedral 'brand', some of which results from the style of broadcast services. There is something very unifying about this. The implicit priorities include the quality of repertoire and performance; careful choice of spoken texts; and integrity to the spiritual dimension which results from a group of people who share public worship together on a regular basis. These priorities can operate in a number of different styles, so openness to a diversity of expression in worship need not result in a dilution of the quality of what is offered.

6. *To seek to develop resources for boy and girl chorister training and for employed adult musicians to secure the future of Cathedral music, and to enable wide access.*

Both boy and girl choristers are now part of the normal pattern of music-making in many Cathedrals. Many Cathedrals have discovered that the admission of girls appears to help rather than endanger recruitment because it is possible to promote the choir to families knowing that all musical children could be potential choristers.

Vocal training is taken more seriously by more Cathedrals and there are other structured training schemes (the RSCM *Voice for Life*, in particular), which offer an appropriate framework structured musical and vocal training in schools and parish churches.

Training for organ scholars is now higher on the agenda, not only of individual Cathedrals, but of bodies such as the COA.

The provision of accommodation for lay clerks and other musical staff is seen as a priority for successful recruitment by some Cathedrals, particularly in situations where affordable housing near the Cathedral is difficult to find.

We felt that there had been a number of initiatives to widen access in ways envisaged by the 2001 report. In particular, we felt that Cathedral choirs appeared more frequently in the media. Many Cathedrals had worked hard to sell the attractions and benefits of being a chorister and wished to offer these opportunities to the most musical children. However, inevitably, less substantial scholarships make this more difficult to achieve.

We felt that the Cathedral music scene was less male-dominated than in 2001 and welcomed the fact that there were now a number of female directors of music.

In 2011, female altos have been accepted and welcomed at a number of Cathedrals, though this is a controversial development for some.

We felt that the COA had changed its role and was now trying to offer more professional development to its membership. CLAM has suggested that the Association might consider whether its name best reflects the role and diversity of its membership.

The sustainability of Cathedral schools, where they exist, was identified as a crucial challenge. In this respect, there are many models, sometimes existing alongside each other. At one end of the spectrum are places like Salisbury, where the boy and girl choristers are educated in the same school, receive the same level of financial support and sing an equal number of services. In other places, a mixed economy may be at work: the arrangements for the boys often involve historic funding and educational provision and so the girls' choir may have been, deliberately, set up on a different basis, perhaps with a higher age range for the girls. At the other end of the spectrum are the many successful Cathedrals, often former parish churches, where some or all of the chorister provision is managed on an essentially voluntary basis: these include Newcastle, Sheffield, Wakefield, Leicester and Birmingham.

In December 2006, Frank Field MP made the suggestion that some of England's choir schools might be in grave financial danger and that, if they were to close, this could put the Cathedral choral tradition in jeopardy. His suggestion of Choir Academies, government-funded schools that would educate Cathedral choristers alongside other students, proved to be of great interest to many Cathedral foundations. The Chapter of Bristol Cathedral and Governing Body of its choir school were quick to take up the suggestion. By September 2008 Bristol Cathedral Choir School was the first to be opened and is serving the choir extremely well. Although by 2011 there were many Church of England Academies in existence, only one of these (The King's School, Peterborough) educates Cathedral choristers. Elsewhere, the inclusive nature of the Academy ethos and its admissions policy has proved to be difficult to marry up with the selection of a skilled set of choristers.

We felt we should know more about the provision for choristers when they leave and were aware that some Cathedrals, for example Gloucester and Blackburn, have youth choirs which offer a means of progression and keep young people singing.

We observed that, as the wider church develops, Cathedral music adapts. In some cases

this is a managed process, in others it is a reaction to changing circumstances, in particular to changes in society. Since change is inevitable, this report would urge Cathedrals to engage with these issues and manage change in a way which helps to turn threats into opportunities.

B. Collective action by the English Cathedrals working together

- 7. To undertake collectively a national programme of promotion of Cathedral music.*

The most successful of the national initiatives to promote Cathedral music has been the choral foundations outreach programme which started in Truro in 2000. The use of choristers to promote singing in primary schools, particularly by boys, and the formation of junior choirs to support these initiatives and to build relations with other music providers has proved to be a significant part of the national singing programme. While funding was limited at the start, ongoing support has been provided by the national Music and Dance Scheme. For a number of reasons, foundations were slow, initially, to become involved but Lichfield, Hereford, Durham, Salisbury and Bristol were amongst the earliest to sign up. By the end of 2007, when funding had been increased significantly, some thirty-two foundations had signed up to the now flourishing scheme which was taken on by Sing Up in 2008. By the time the Chorister Outreach Project, as it became known, finished in 2011, forty-two foundations had become involved at the point at which government funding ceased. There was an expectation by government that participating choral foundations would take on the responsibility of the ongoing costs of outreach. Although support for the scheme remains strong, it has proved to be difficult for many foundations to meet their regular financial obligations and to fund outreach schemes. If this valuable and valued outreach work is to continue effectively, one possibility maybe to return to long-term and secure financial provision through determined and focussed discussions with government and other providers.

- 8. To undertake collectively the national promotion of opportunities and benefits for children of singing in Cathedral choirs.*

As a consequence of these initiatives, Jane Capon has been able to mount a very successful awareness-raising exercise for Cathedral music and choristers. There are now more success stories about Cathedral choirs in the press.

- 9. To develop and implement a national and co-ordinated strategy for the recruitment of musicians, children and adult singers to Cathedrals.*

In general, the coverage about recruitment isn't as alarmist as ten years ago, though we regret that fact that there is no co-ordinated national strategy for the recruitment of children, adult singers, choir trainers and organists to Cathedrals.

Salisbury was the first Cathedral to create and market an annual opportunity for children to *Be a Chorister for a Day*, a successful formula that has been widely adopted and adapted to local circumstances. A number of Cathedrals have recognised the value of investing in a short video about the choristers that can be shown in local schools or to parents of potential choristers.

We were gratified that choral music and the benefits of singing are more on the national agenda thanks to programmes such as Aled Jones' *The Choir*, a number of programmes about the motivational energy of choral directors working with local community groups (particularly Gareth Malone) and the popularity of television programmes which give people the opportunity to perform. However, some of these also create an expectation that singing needs to lead to a single high profile performance. Cathedral music demands a different kind of commitment, one that grows out of a daily discipline and building up musical and vocal skills in depth. There are also issues about different vocal and presentational expectations which some of these televised performances create. The low 'belt' voice of many pop singers is a poor model for young singers to adopt and the physical freedom of expression which is common among choirs singing in the secular arena can make the ordered and static world of Cathedral singing appear dull and staid, by comparison.

Some concern was raised about the fact that boys' voices seem to change ever earlier and this means that the effective vocal life of a boy chorister is relatively short. A happy and stimulating environment for the senior boys helps to keep them engaged and committed and this increases that likelihood that they will wish to keep singing for as long as possible, rather than dropping out at the first signs of vocal change.

In places where there is no clear contractual obligation to remain a chorister, other opportunities for music-making make it harder to retain children as choristers. This has been an issue in Newcastle, for example, as a consequence of the success of Sage Gateshead which provides opportunities for young musicians particularly those who are good instrumentalists. Similarly, the National Youth Choir of Scotland has a recruitment policy and rehearsal schedule that makes it difficult for successful applicants to keep their existing choral commitments to church choirs.

Teenage singers with changed voices can act as inspiring role models. Truro set up a youth outreach scheme in 2008 which was funded by the Music and Dance Scheme (£60K a year) and involved taking choral scholars into comprehensive schools and sixth form colleges with various programmes of learning activities. The scholars are also key members of the youth choir, giving a solid foundation to the lower parts of the choir which provides a natural path of progression for older members of our junior choir and ex choristers as well as those inspired to do more singing through the outreach visits.

It is hoped that one of the legacies of the Sing Up programme might be a greater willingness for Cathedrals to work together and also in partnership with other music providers.

In general, Cathedrals are now more proactive about recruitment and don't just wait for potential choristers to come to them. Some Cathedrals are aware of the value of creating opportunities to hear the choristers outside services. Truro holds 'cushion concerts' before Christmas, to which a young audience is invited to bring cushions and sit at the front of the nave. The choristers appear not just as singers but also introduce the concerts.

10. *To consider collectively how to provide centrally for sharing of good practice, provision of training, and opportunities for career development.*

COA and CLAM have both taken initiatives to share good practice, provision of training and opportunities for career development.

Individual Cathedrals have taken more decisive steps to do what is necessary to recruit according to their own circumstances. Since 2001, there has been a greater variety of approaches than previously. Some Directors of Music have followed the traditional career path of serving as an Assistant Director of Music in a Cathedral context or as the Director of Music in a church with a well developed choral programme. Other appointments have widened the pool, bringing into the Cathedral world musicians with greater experience of education, singing and work with other musical ensembles. CLAM has recently looked at these developments in some detail and now offers a revised version of a paper dealing with the appointment of Directors of Music. In the same way that that appointment processes for the clergy have become more transparent, the value of having an open application procedure and clear selection criteria should be clear. Greater common practice would help Chapters to assess the relative strengths of all applicants, including any internal candidates and those whose musical skills may have developed outside the Cathedral world.

11. *To undertake a comprehensive and systematic review of the provision, costs and funding of music in the English Cathedrals.*

It was felt unrealistic for CLAM to attempt a comprehensive financial review of the provision, costs and funding of Cathedral music. However, some general observations were made.

Sometimes, there are wide discrepancies between the funding of the boys' choir, which may be part of the original historic foundation, and various additional choirs which are formed later (in particular, girls choirs or voluntary choirs).

There is another discrepancy between the cost of the music provision by the Cathedral's own choirs and of the financial investment (usually minimal) in the provision by visiting choirs during the rest of the year. The great contribution made by visiting choirs should not be taken for granted. There is great value in making them warmly welcome and those Cathedrals that are provide hospitality, particularly to choirs who sing for a whole week, are clear that it is greatly appreciated.

Not all Cathedrals can attract sufficient visiting choirs of the appropriate standard and recently Peterborough has taken some initiatives involving worship led by cantors. This could offer a useful model for adaptation to a parish situation.

12. *To review collectively the future development and resourcing of music in English Cathedrals in a context which looks to the future with imagination and creativity.*

The 2001 report called for a collective review of the future development and resourcing of Cathedral music. The collaborative, inter-disciplinary approach represented in CLAM

seems a very good model. It was observed that choristers increasingly come from the local area so only those Cathedrals operating similar models of choirs and educational provision within a particular area are likely to be in direct competition. On the whole, therefore, collaboration should be seen as a positive development.

We wondered what Cathedral music will look and sound like in another ten years. We noted the challenge of some commentators (Fr Peter Allan, for example) who have questioned the relationship between Choral Evensong, in its present form, and the community for whom this is an expression of prayer.

The morning and evening offices have become polarised in terms of how they use music: typically, the morning Office is said with minimal use of music, while Evensong might be in danger of becoming an art-form instead of a genuine expression of the prayer of the community. The evening Office at the RC Cathedral in Leeds or at Notre Dame in Paris offers a different kind of model. While most of us wouldn't want to adopt that as a regular provision, there are occasions where Cathedrals may need to be more flexible if the Office needs to serve the purposes of an outside group. Salisbury regularly adopts a hybrid pattern, beginning with the blessing of the light, a reduced portion of psalmody and perhaps a single canticle, in order that there is space to allow the rest of the service to celebrate the work of a charity or some other kind of commemoration.

More generally, we wondered how we could get Cathedrals to feel more obviously like a place of prayer and worship while they are open to visitors. Can you bring together living heritage and education? We noted a tendency to see the different stakeholders within the community (worship, education, visitors, and heritage) as existing in isolation and wondered if there might be ways in which they could be brought closer together in such a way that each activity exemplifies important aspects of the Cathedral as a whole.

We felt that the formation, training and induction of the clergy who come to work in Cathedrals are vital in this respect. Similarly, as Cathedrals take on more specialist lay staff, it is important that there are places where the staff as a whole can find a way of sharing the core vision and values.

It was suggested that there might be a more radical use of the resources offered by the choristers: in many situations, it might make more sense (in terms of the impact on the visitors) if the choristers sometimes sang a midday Office or Eucharist while there are lots of visitors around, rather than always singing in the evening, when most people have gone away. While some might argue that this fails to acknowledge the purpose of the *opus Dei*, of worship offered to God for its own sake, there may be other ways (perhaps through the use of some sort of audio-visual experience) of allowing visitors to experience something of the activity to which Cathedral liturgists and musicians devote so much time and energy.

We observed that there is a changing relationship between parish churches and Cathedrals and that, in some settings, Cathedrals are becoming more successful, not least because they have the resources to present their worship well. We wondered if Cathedrals and parish churches are in competition or if they could find creative ways of working in partnership.

Some Cathedrals, such as Hereford, have taken opportunities to invite parishes on a regular basis for evening pilgrimages, and these visits can be mutually beneficial.

We also wondered if there might be opportunities for Cathedrals to work in partnership with parish churches on recruitment, primarily of choristers, so that the Cathedral

would encourage good candidates who do not get a chorister place to sing in their local parish church choir. There may be other opportunities for shared outreach and evangelism. In this way, it might be possible to turn threats into opportunities, competition into partnerships. It was observed that by taking down the barricades we create opportunities for new relationships.

The continuing success of Cathedral music and worship may rely on a regeneration of the culture from which they spring and to which they need to be reconnected. Rather than reducing our aspirations to the lowest common denominator we may need to engage with the far greater challenge of shaping the wider cultural experience of those we hope to draw in.

C. Establishment of good working practices and relationships

- 13. To recognize the need throughout the Cathedral for clarity in decision-making processes, built on wide consultation, proper negotiation and a clear definition of the bounds of responsibility.*

It was felt that there had been considerable progress in the areas of consultation and decision-making and that many Cathedrals probably have appropriate procedures and structures in place. CLAM's advisory papers provide a useful resource.

- 14. To ensure good relationships and effective communication between all engaged in the life of the Cathedral.*

While it is difficult to legislate for good relationships and effective communication, we felt that good induction procedures and opportunities for specific training were important and that more work could be done on these areas. An area of particular concern was the sensitivity required when the duty for pastoral care overlaps with employment issues.

The importance of on-going professional development continues to be raised by the COA and is now part of standard terms and conditions for clergy.

- 15. To ensure that all employees have contracts and job descriptions which clearly specify duties, responsibilities, expectations, terms and conditions, benefits and rights; and that those working sessionally or as committed volunteers have comparable letters of engagement.*

The 2001 report raised awareness of the importance of clear contracts and job descriptions and the work of CLAM has often touched on these issues. We also considered the question of whether assumptions about whether director of music, organists and lay clerks need to hold and practise the Christian faith were changing and what was appropriate. Some were concerned that there had been a reduction of expectation in this area because of concerns to follow good employment practice and avoid discrimination. Nevertheless, the role of the director of music as an educator of the choristers needs to be taken seriously. There is also a dangerous lack of integrity if those at the heart of the offering of choral worship would not subscribe to its core beliefs.

16. *To establish good working practices, together with regular opportunities for negotiated review and appraisal.*

In general, good working practices with opportunities for review and appraisal seem to be more common. Consideration might be given as to the best ways to make these effective and valuable, including training for those carrying out appraisals. The introduction of Common Tenure for clergy, which builds in review as an imperative, makes it natural that this should become a regular expectation.

17. *To examine the Cathedral's music from both administrative and musical points of view; and to make recommendations for good practice in terms of management, structure, teamwork and accountability, with the central aim of delivering the music in the most effective and inspired manner.*

The 2001 report encouraged Cathedrals to be more realistic about the administrative workload of the liturgy and music team and to provide proper support structures. The extent to which Cathedrals have been able to respond has varied widely. On the whole, it seems that there is a greater level of dedicated support for the music and liturgy team than was the case ten years ago. At the same time, obligations and expectations have also grown, not least as a result of a greater diversity of choral activity, more special services, and the desire to offer an experience which takes as its standard the professional level we have come to expect from a broadcast or recording.

D. Effective management and operation of Cathedral music

18. *To ensure that there is a policy on music in the Cathedral which is widely negotiated, affirmed, and communicated throughout the Cathedral and all its departments.*

CLAM paper 15 provides a useful resource to help formulate a music policy paper, as recommended in the 2001 report.

19. *To ensure that the needs of music and liturgy are adequately represented in the Chapter, preferably through a Canon Precentor and appropriate rights of access for the Director of Music.*

The importance of the relationships between Chapter and the musicians needs to be recognised.

In this respect, Chapters now often include external members, clergy and lay, who are not fully embedded in the Cathedral community. The Precentor's responsibility for effective communication in both directions between Chapter and the music team is crucial. In this respect, the Precentor's role needs to be reinforced. More generally, it is important to find ways in which effective dialogues can be established and maintained between Chapter and those responsible for turning policy into reality.

20. *To recognize that the Director of Music is responsible to the Chapter for the implementation of policy, and that it is important for the Director of Music to be involved and consulted about liturgy and matters affecting the Music Department.*

Within this framework, Cathedrals should ensure that directors of music, as senior members of the Cathedral team, are properly informed about future developments and consulted about matters which affect the music department. As Cathedrals become more complex organisations, effective communication needs to include wider collaboration with those responsible for the educational, commercial and fundraising arms of the organisation. As custodians of a space which needs to generate the income needed for the core purposes of the Cathedral, there should be proper debate about the most appropriate ways of doing this. Ideally, the core values and purpose should not only be respected and observed but also clarified and exemplified in the activities undertaken by the Cathedral, in such a way that they are apparent to those who visit and those with whom we work in partnership.

21. *To review the pattern of sung services on a periodic basis in order to bring about a closer correspondence between the sung provision and the actual and perceived needs of the Cathedral's worship; to ensure that the most creative and/or efficient use is being made of the human resources within the Music Department; to check the workloads of child and adult singers and those who train them.*

We welcome the suggestion of the 2001 report that the pattern of sung services and the general provision of music in and beyond worship would benefit from periodic review.

We were concerned that Cathedrals should ensure that they are clearer about the long-term viability and management of current initiatives. There is a danger in trying to do too many things. Musicians, in particular, are very aware of the amount of work needed just to keep this year as good as the last.

It was felt that we should reflect further on what has happened since 2001 in terms of new areas of work with which Cathedrals in general and worship and music in particular are involved.

We noted that a commercial analysis of what we do it can seem very challenging. For example, why do we sing Choral Evensong on a week night with only a few people present? We need to explain more effectively not only that this is part of the regular pattern of prayer and worship in which Cathedrals engage, irrespective of how many people come, but also that it is through this regular public performance that the choir gains the necessary experience and establishes the standard we have come to expect.

Sometimes, it is helpful to experience something of what is expected in order to understand it. At Guildford, for instance, it has been particularly effective to get the choir parents themselves to sing an Evensong towards the start of the choir year, because it convinces them just how much work goes into it and makes them more appreciative of the efforts of their children.

When major change is necessary, it is important to review expectations. For example, if chorister boarding comes to an end, then a different pattern of services and rehearsals may need to be put into place and expectations may need to be revised. Similarly, if

staffing has to be reduced it is unrealistic and unfair to expect that the same number of commitments can be sustained to the same level.

However, it was noted that change, properly handled, can bring opportunities. The skill comes in identifying these and engaging with all staff to bring about the best not the worst outcome. Much depends on a good cycle of communication from and back to Chapter, and the building and maintaining of trust between Chapter and the staff team.

The Director of Music

22. *To prepare a clear job description for the Director of Music (and thereafter, for other members of the music team), set in the context of the liturgy team, and to undertake review regularly, making adaptations in the light of changing circumstances.*

CLAM paper 20 deals with the appointment of directors of music and offers a useful framework and guidance on the appointments process and covers the other areas mentioned in the 2001 report. See A10 above.

23. *To select a Director of Music primarily on his or her musical gifts, but also with regard to his or her capacity to work with and in a team, and openness to training in appropriate management and administration skills.*

The qualities that might be needed are fully covered in CLAM paper 20.

24. *To offer the Director of Music appropriate training in administration, management, communications, choral direction, and vocal pedagogy.*

It would be helpful to identify appropriate training in management and administration which could be made more widely available to Cathedral staff who need help in these areas.

25. *To agree terms and conditions for additional work within the Cathedral, and for work undertaken outside the Cathedral.*

Terms and conditions for Directors of Music seem to vary widely but clarity is important. CLAM 19 paper, which deals with Remuneration and related issues, sets this in a wider context.

Other music staff, adult singers, support and resources

26. *To review the conditions, demands, expectations, training and remuneration of Assistant Directors of Music, Organ Scholars, Lay Clerks and Choral Scholars, and to consider better means of recruitment and retention.*

The appraisal system for the music department might usefully include choral scholars and organ scholars. Even if people might only be around the Cathedral for a year or so, there is still value in giving them appropriate feedback and training and getting feedback from them about what the benefits and frustrations of their time spent with the Cathedral.

We discussed the difficult issue of appraising singers and observed that the use of capability procedures can be particularly difficult to apply. Clear professional expectations should be laid out in contractual or other formal documentation.

It is clear that a number of Cathedrals have discovered that the provision of housing has proved a key factor for successful recruitment and retention of singers. At Hereford, a post was advertised without housing and those who sent for details but didn't apply were contacted. The common thread was that the provision of housing would have made the crucial difference. There is some discussion about housing issues in CLAM paper 19.

Another Cathedral (Ripon) had to increase the salary offered when they didn't get sufficient candidates with the necessary skills. In general, the whole package needs to be realistic and attractive. However, with a part-time post, the provision of housing as part of the package may encourage good candidates to re-locate. As with any post, the total package of remuneration needs to take into account what is required in terms of skills, previous training and experience, as well as the duties to be carried out.

It is more difficult to evaluate the extent to which the quality of community life attracts people to certain posts more than others. One offshoot of these discussions was the observation that part-time employees, such as lay clerks, often get overlooked in communications which reach other salaried staff or in social gatherings aimed at the Cathedral as a whole. On the other hand, the musicians are often seen, and may see themselves, as something of an elite group, at the heart of what really matters. It is important to try to address these issues otherwise gaps in perceptions and consequent misunderstandings start to develop.

27. *To ensure that there is proper support for the Music Department, particularly with regard to administration and financial management, and that resources—including provision of music scores and maintenance of the organ(s)—are adequate.*

The 2001 report argued for greater administrative support for the liturgy and music department in order that practitioners had enough time and energy to do their jobs well and so that essential administrative procedures didn't get neglected.

It was observed that there are many calls on available finances, some of which are often forgotten, including the cost of purchasing robes.

The finances of music support are often complex. In addition to the main departmental budget (normally held by the Precentor), there are often other support groups such as former choristers, choir associations and Friends' organisations. It is important to co-ordinate all these fund-raising elements, in order to reduce any sense of confusion or the feeling that they are in competition with each other.

Other major areas of expenditure within the music budget include music purchase and the maintenance and provision of pianos and organs. It is particularly difficult to make sufficient provision for the periodic re-building of the organ. At least one Cathedral

(Salisbury) builds a significant charge for the use of the organ into its standard charges and this helps to cover the costs of the annual tuning and maintenance of the instrument.

We noted that the provision of good pianos for use in the rehearsal room was often over-looked and that many Cathedrals cope with an instrument which is inadequate in terms of making possible the kind of musically well-shaped accompaniment that would inspire the choristers.

We observed that there is often confusion between capital and revenue needs when planning budgets and that many Cathedrals don't have a budgetary mechanism that allows them to plan for capital purchases that cannot be afforded in a single financial year.

Many Cathedrals have worked for a long time with inadequate rehearsal facilities, though there have been big improvements at a number of Cathedrals (Wells, Norwich, and Chester) and there are aspirations at a number of others. Some places simply accept what they have and try to make the best of that provision. However, the group felt that, if Cathedrals want to be seen as professional organisations, they need to plan for appropriate provision (this is an observation that also applies to other areas of provision: toilets, education facilities, decent provision for vestry staff, lockers for the use of volunteers, proper provision for flower arrangement etc). There is a danger that Cathedrals and those who attach themselves to Cathedral communities can become overly nostalgic about the past and fail to recognise that, alongside the continuity, Cathedrals, like other organisations and organisms that have survived through the centuries, need to evolve and develop.

Children

28. *To evaluate the important role of children in Cathedral music and to review the wide range of related issues including education, pastoral support, family implications, and recruitment.*

In a Cathedral where the choristers receive subsidised education and the lay vicars are salaried, the largest charge on Cathedral finances will be the choristers, then salaries, with other costs such as organ maintenance and the provision of robes and music falling far behind. The cost of educating the choristers has always been a serious drain on foundations' finances. In Truro, for example, the Cathedral contribution has fallen from 75% of the fees to 25% in recent years in order to balance the Cathedral budget. Several other foundations have taken similar action and increasingly choir schools are making up, as best as they are able, the short fall. Rochester choir school now funds totally their choristers' education and the Cathedral makes no contribution. In recognition of the very substantial contribution which falls on parents, in terms of time and commitment as much as financially, some Cathedrals try to provide lasting evidence of the expertise gained as a chorister. At many Cathedrals, choristers are prepared for external theory and singing exams, providing some measure of their progress and qualifications that they can use in the future.

In terms of our general approach to children, there have been big changes since 2001, some of which may derive from the discussions arising from the 2001 Report. In particular, the obligations for effective supervision of children when under the care of the Cathedral are now addressed with considerably more rigour. As in the wider educational world, there is now a standardisation of CRB procedures and the need for risk assessments. However, such procedures are time-consuming and reduce the amount of time which remains for other activity, some of which is needed for strategic planning.

Expectations still vary in terms of what is necessary or desirable in these areas.

29. *To ensure that an individual or group is charged with ongoing overview of the life, work and care of choristers. Where school and Cathedral are linked, there should be established processes for regular liaison between Cathedral and school; and where there is no link, there should be a forum in which parents can discuss these matters with the Director of Music and a designated member of the Chapter.*

In general, pastoral support of the choristers is probably better with a number of choir school Cathedrals engaging a chorister tutor who is responsible for the interface between the worlds of the school and the Cathedral and who acts as a common point of contact (eg Salisbury and Hereford). In non choir school Cathedrals, some of the roles concerned with the supervision of choristers outside the practice room may be taken by volunteers. The obligations to protect not only children but those who are responsible for them is not without cost, particularly in terms of the need to ensure there are sufficient responsible adults available to supervise the choristers whenever they are the responsibility of the Cathedral.

30. *To ensure that due processes and provision are in place for the musical, vocal, personal and spiritual development, and for the pastoral care and supervision of children—bearing in mind the appropriate legislation; and to ensure that such processes and provision are reviewed at least annually.*

In some situations, these layers of responsibility can cause problems. In particular, some Precentors have expressed frustration that it is difficult for them to build proper pastoral contact with choristers and their families. In some ways, this may be more of an issue in choir school Cathedrals, because of more substantial formal structures. There are some compensating advantages to those Cathedrals who work on a more voluntary commitment and draw choristers from a large number of schools.

CLAM is aware of these issues and there is currently a draft paper dealing with the pastoral care of choristers.

31. *To undertake regular review of the overall demands on individual children.*

While the benefits of being a chorister are immense, the demands on the children are considerable and some children find the pressures greater than others, particularly if they are experiencing other pressures. It is important to remember that the choir is a collection of individuals.

General concerns and issues

More generally we noted, with some concern, the way in which Cathedral music tends to set itself apart from the rest of the musical world. How do we find time to place Cathedral music in its wider musical context? We could/should be more aware of what is going on in terms of orchestral outreach and education. We need to lift our minds above and beyond a kind of self-imposed ghetto.

Closer to home, there are opportunities to build bridges with those in the congregation who may not be as familiar with the choral repertoire as we are. For instance, we could provide background notes on some of the music to be sung during the forthcoming period (Salisbury and Winchester do this).

We welcomed the availability and adoption of the pillar lectionary and felt that we need to take advantage of it to try to plan worship in a more holistic way.

We raised questions about the relevance of church music to the life of the nation and noted how central it had been to the wedding of Prince William and Katherine Middleton.

We observed that the skill sets of Cathedral musicians had become quite specialised and that it can be difficult to keep the bigger picture in mind when there is the daily necessity of preparing a choir to sing Choral Evensong.

We noted an expansion of organ recital provision and the greater impact and access that can result if the Cathedral has access to a screen and video links so that the audience can see the player.

We observed a greater emphasis on musical outreach by many Cathedral choirs to the local community and Diocese. At the same time, it appears that there has been a reduction in choir touring abroad as budgets have been reduced alongside raised expectations in terms of risk assessment and provision of accommodation where the care of the choristers remains under the supervision of the designated leaders.

Since 2001, Dioceses have changed. They have fewer clergy and there are more lay people involved. However, Cathedrals have held their own, particularly in terms of the number of people worshipping at the big Festivals. The excellence of Cathedral music has helped to give Cathedrals an aura of professionalism. We wondered again whether Cathedrals could work more in partnership. Canon Wendy Wilby (Precentor of Bristol Cathedral) prepared a short questionnaire for CLAM dealing with the relationship between Cathedrals and Dioceses.

We noted that the BBC remains committed to broadcast Choral Evensong as one of its flagship programmes. The group noted the continuing popularity of the programme and the important role it maintained in linking Cathedral music with a wider public. That the programme raises strong interest was proved in 2003/4 (?) when changes to the schedule were proposed. Clearly, the views of an informed and passionately interested constituency were heard by the BBC and subsequent lesser changes have been accepted more readily. CLAM met with producer Canon Stephen Shipley and from this came a summary guide which is helpful to Cathedral music

departments (especially to new personnel) in addressing the complexity and creativity of such broadcasts.

We felt the following challenges and questions remained:

- the liturgical formation of directors of music: how do we encourage them to select music that is liturgically appropriate?
- the liturgical formation of the clergy: the demise of residential training as the norm has had an adverse effect on their exposure to traditional forms of worship.
- How do we make the case for the relevance of Cathedral music?
- Will all Cathedrals be able/wish to maintain the present pattern of music provision? We looked in some concern at the proposed re-structuring of the Cathedrals of Yorkshire, and at the particular challenges that may arise when Cathedral music has to find its place in Cathedrals or Dioceses whose core priorities are focused on mission and evangelism.
- Do we need wider cultural references? Little of our repertoire recognises ethnic and cultural diversity.
- How to build more meaningful partnerships between Cathedrals and the parishes and structures of the Dioceses. What sort of music is most appropriate when diocesan services are held in Cathedrals?
- If Cathedrals wish to be places of meaningful encounter, what part can music play in this? How wide is the repertoire on which we draw?
- How does music take its place alongside other aspects of Cathedral life such as visitor development, educational outreach, commercial activity and fundraising?

We suggested the following as possible ways forward:

- joint conference on liturgical music for precentors and directors of music;
- improved training at a more local level, perhaps bringing together Cathedrals on a regional basis.

Conclusion

While there is no room for complacency, this brief review suggests that there is a positive feeling about the state of Cathedral music and of Cathedrals in general. The last ten years have seen a good deal of collaborative working and the benefits of singing seem to be much more part of the national agenda than in 2001. There is a sense in which many of the essential issues are being addressed. Even if there is more work to do, the process is well underway. The challenges that have emerged as a result of the discussion are at a higher level than the issues which were seen as needing most urgent attention in 2001. They reflect a debate within the Church about where its core values lie, and about an increasing disconnection between the Christian faith and secular society. Cathedrals have a unique opportunity to help to bridge this gap. They are embedded within society, they are seen as a valued part of our heritage, they are well resourced

(not least in terms of music and liturgy), they have the intellectual capacity and imagination to engage with the debate, and they can offer a space in which individuals of different views can meet. The future success of Cathedrals, and therefore of their music and worship, seems to lie in ensuring that they are seen as relevant, both within the wider church and to society as a whole.

Cathedrals Liturgy and Music Group, 4 April 2012