

REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2019-2020



CHAIR'S REPORT by LORNA AIZLEWOOD

This financial year has been one of highs and lows: high expectations for the 90th birthday events for Cecil Sharp House later in 2020, but ending the year on a low which no one could have predicted. Just as the programme of events for the building's 90th birthday was building towards the birthday itself in June 2020, Cecil Sharp House was closed to the public and staff on 17 March due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was the first time the House had closed since the Second World War.

We were also shocked and saddened by the very sudden death of our former Chair and Trustee, Alan James, who died on 7 April 2019, just before his 62nd birthday. Alan joined the Board in 2009 and served as Chair from 2011 to 2015, bringing his great energy and enthusiasm for music of all kinds, together with his professional knowledge from a career in arts programming, producing and funding, to help develop the vision of the organisation. We have named our creative bursary programme in his memory.

But between these sad and unexpected events, let me celebrate the events and developments that did take place in this year. At the start of the year we were involved in the BBC's #DancePassion online event with a record number of viewers for our Dance Development Manager and champion clog dancer, Laura Connolly's clog dance workshop video. Our youth education programme continued apace with our two youth ensembles, the National Youth Folk Ensemble and London Youth Folk Ensemble giving public performances around the country, and we welcomed our Sam Partridge as the new Artistic Director of the National Youth Folk Ensemble. We developed a new programme, Inclusive Folk, to deliver more activities with and for young people with disabilities and to create our Folk Unlimited ensemble.

Our three-year Musicians in Museums programme completed at the end of the year. Performances of the work created by the artists were delivered at the Cutty Sark (London), South Street Arts Centre (Reading) and at Cecil Sharp House. In partnership with English Folk Expo and So It Is Productions we commissioned a new stage production to mark the bicentenary of the Peterloo Massacre. *Rise Up Peterloo 2019* was created by Debs Newbold and Sean Cooney and toured in October to venues across the country. The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library increased its online resources with the development of the Folk Song Subject Index. The team also delivered a lecture and conference programme over the year including *Stepping On*, the first step dance conference which was delivered in partnership with the Historical Dance Society, University of Roehampton, and Instep Research Team.

EFSS continued to recognise the work of people in the folk sector by awarding its prestigious Gold Badge for services to the organisation and/or the wider folk sector to four individuals – Chris Coe, John Graham, Mike Norris, and Kate Rusby.

TREASURER'S REPORT by ED FISHWICK

Overall income on the Statement of Financial Activities is around 13% lower this year than in the previous year due primarily to a reduction in legacies, (£217,361 in 2018-19; £20,500 in 2019/20). A number of grants were received in advance of this year for projects delivered in this year so income and expenditure accounted for in different financial years. This accounts for the overall loss on the year.

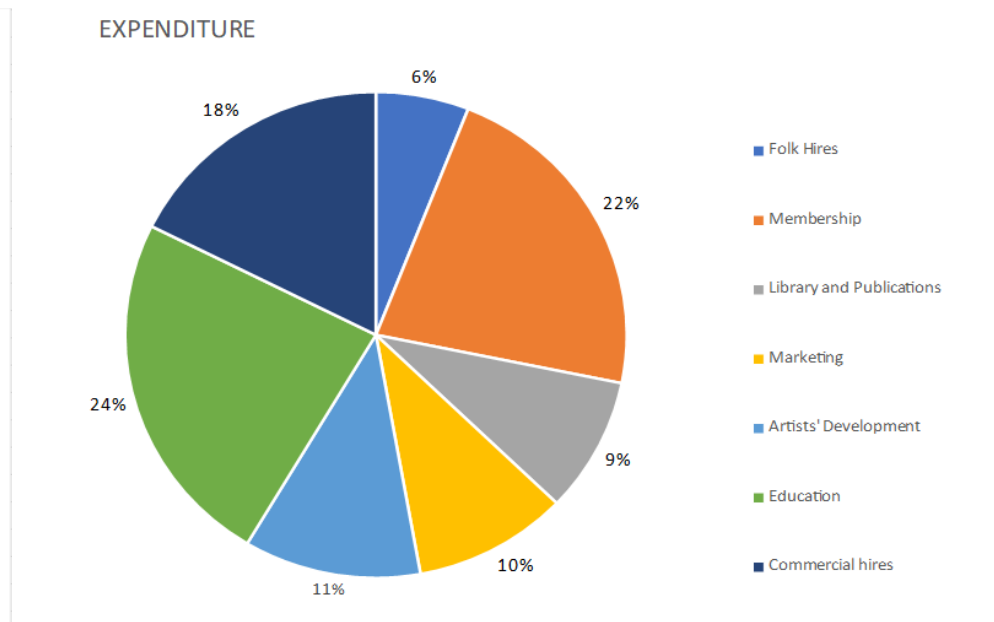
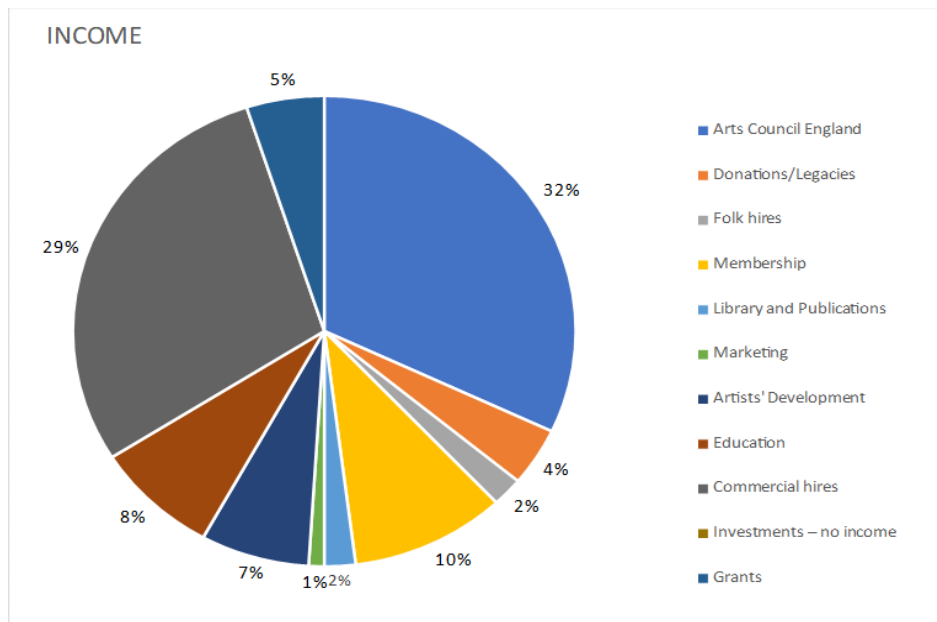
Income trends over the year showed a continued and steady increase in commercial hires, offsetting a reduction in membership fees, with overall expenditure remaining steady. Grant funded projects continue at reasonably modest levels within education and artists' development, as the competition for funding from trusts and foundations has continued to increase.

Our relatively steady state in our finances has been halted by the impact of covid-19 from mid-March 2020. The Society activities have been particularly affected, especially through the loss of income from commercial lettings, and more generally through the effective closure of Cecil Sharp House. However, the Society has made good use of the Job Retention Scheme and been successful in securing donations and a grant specifically to support its core costs in this difficult year. These income sources, together with legacies received this year and reduction in costs mean we are predicting a relatively small deficit at the end of the year, which is not reliant on any income not already received or confirmed.

EFDSS are very fortunate to have been able to accumulate free reserves over a number of years, creating a very welcome buffer to help ensure the financial security of the Society through this crisis. Clearly there remains a good deal of uncertainty around how the current crisis will evolve, and thus we continue to plan for a number of possible financial scenarios going forwards. Based on these forecasts, and having considered the resources available to the company from its own reserves and support from shareholders, the trustees are satisfied that the company has the financial resources to trade for at least 12 months from the date of approval of these financial statements.

Income: 2019-20 £1,463,780 (2018-19 £1,688,042)

Expenditure 2019-20 £1,680,689 (2018-19 £1,604,274)



Funds at 31 March 2020 £2,855,089 (Funds at 31 March 2019 £3,075,069)

A full copy of the Annual Report and Accounts is available from efdss.org/about-us/who-we-are/annual-reviews; paper copies are obtainable from membership@efdss.org or 020 7485 2206. English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) is a Charity Registered in England and Wales No. 305999, a Company Limited by Guarantee No. 297142, VAT No. 233 8664 49. Registered Office: Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London NW1 7AY