



## IMPACT REPORT 2017



“When you’re homeless, so much of what you experience strips you of your dignity. The Choir with No Name gave me hope and optimism. It was my North Star in a constellation of helplessness. It gave me my dignity back.”

**Ronnie, The Choir with No Name member**

# INTRODUCTION

**The Choir with No Name runs choirs for homeless and marginalised people. Our aim is to enable our choir members to make friends, build confidence, improve wellbeing, develop skills, and re-establish their place in the world. We currently run choirs in London, Birmingham and Liverpool.**

The effects of homelessness don't end when someone is handed the keys to a flat. Our choirs fill the gap between someone seeking support to move away from homelessness, and being ready to take on life's other challenges, such as seeking employment, enrolling in education or accessing

rehabilitation services. Ultimately we provide the much-needed humanity and personal connection that is so often absent from other services. Engaging in meaningful, communal activities can in itself be the catalyst for someone making steps towards long-term, positive change in their lives.

**This impact report covers the period between April 2016 and March 2017.**

**We are a small organisation with big ambitions, and are really proud of what we achieved in 2016/17:**

**795**

795 people sang with us at our choir rehearsals or singing workshops

**346**

We welcomed 346 members to 4 choirs in 3 cities (Birmingham, Liverpool and London)

**15**

We hosted 15 community outreach workshops reaching 450 participants

**51**

We performed 51 foot-stomping gigs to an audience of 15,000

**64**

64 members received additional tailored support through our Moving on Up project in North London

**We offered advice and consultation to 12 individuals and organisations on how to start their own choirs for vulnerable people.**





“At my first rehearsal I sang like nobody was listening, and had a thoroughly good time. Afterwards we always have a cooked meal which for me has sometimes been the difference between going hungry that day or not, but more than that, we bond - like a family where a conventional one doesn’t always exist”

**Stef, London choir member**



# A YEAR IN THE LIFE...

In 2016/17 we worked hard to reach as many people as possible, and spread the joy of singing far and wide. We provided a weekly rehearsal followed by a hot meal for each choir member, performed regularly at diverse and aspirational venues across the country, hosted singing workshops in hostels and day centres for those at risk of homelessness, and provided informal, friendly support. Our choir directors delivered inspirational, uplifting rehearsals 48 weeks of the year, while expanding the musical knowledge and skills of our choir members. Our choir managers not only looked after the administrative and operational side of the choirs, they also made referrals to external support services for members, as well as providing informal, but vital, pastoral care. Our invaluable volunteer teams prepared delicious meals, sang alongside our members, and offered them friendship and a sympathetic ear. Each rehearsal provided a safe, positive and supportive environment in which members could sing away their worries and flourish as individuals.

## SING WHEN YOU'RE WINNING

Our members love performing live, so we ensured that our choir gigs were spread over a wide variety of settings, from those that help members feel they're giving something back to society (such as performances at local older people's services), to thrilling, aspirational events that help build confidence and give us all something to look forward to. Our four choirs performed a whopping 51 gigs between them, collectively reaching over 15,000 people across the UK. Highlights



Performing helps members grow in confidence

included three Christmas singalong gigs (at Shoreditch Town Hall, Birmingham Bramall Hall and Brighton Dome), Birmingham's Festival with No Name and annual sell-out show at the MAC, London performances at the Southbank Centre and the Tate Modern, and Liverpool's Big Gig at St George's Hall.

Our gigs are important, for a number of reasons. Firstly, it gives members the chance to experience the thrill of thunderous applause and standing ovations, which can restore a sense of pride and self-worth. Secondly, it demonstrates to the wider public the amazing things our members can achieve.

Our Christmas gig is the highlight of our year



Through seeing our members perform and hearing their stories, we can change mindsets about homelessness and tackle the associated stigma that many of our members have experienced.

### COME TOGETHER

Our outreach programme reached a record number of 450 participants through our singing workshops and we worked in many new settings, including mental health and addiction support services. Our workshops are a brilliant way to introduce people to our choirs, as well as demonstrating the positive impact of communal singing on health and wellbeing.

We delivered informal consultancy to other individuals and organisations wanting to set up choirs for vulnerable people, and began a programme delivering singing workshops to businesses. Three choirs for homeless people have been started up with our consultancy in Wolverhampton, the Isle of Man, and Virginia (USA) as well as a choir for refugees in London.

We also ran our 'Moving on Up' project in North London, which aimed to increase members' participation in other musical activities in the community. The project coordinator regularly met with choir members on a one-to-one basis to support them in their musical aspirations, as well as directly providing them with opportunities to record music and perform. In spite of its success we took the decision at the end of the year to draw the project to a close while we focus on perfecting our new partnership choir model, in which we hope that other opportunities for progression will be available to our members through our homeless sector delivery partners.

### RAISE THE ROOF

In 2016 we launched a member ambassador programme. This was inspired by feedback from choir members who expressed a wish to take more responsibility for their choirs - in particular, increased opportunities to speak to others about their choir and its impact. Members also wanted to develop their confidence and skills within the choir environment. 23 of our members took part in the programme, and did a brilliant job welcoming new members and guests to rehearsals, supporting participants in our workshops, and talking to supporters, funders and the media about their choirs.

Our first public fundraising campaign, All Together Now!, was launched in January 2017 with the aim of encouraging



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choirs and music groups across the UK to host a fundraising event to celebrate the power of singing together. We contacted hundreds of choirs, singers and supporters across the country and raised £8,557 within the first three months of the campaign. Following this modest, but encouraging, success, we decided to roll out the campaign throughout the year, highlighting it at key points in the calendar (Spring term and Christmas). With this extended roll out, we are hopeful that the fundraising total will continue to rise!

### EVERYBODY'S TALKIN'

We received some great press and media coverage this year, with lovely articles in The Independent, Women's Weekly and Huffington Post, as well as local TV news in Brighton and Birmingham and Liverpool.

We are keen to work with others in the sector, so we were very happy to have been instrumental in establishing the UK Arts and Homelessness Forum. The first meeting was attended by twenty organisations, including Young Vic, Museum of Homelessness, Crisis and St Mungo's. The forum now meets quarterly and remains an excellent network and way of sharing resources and best practice.



# OUR IMPACT

Every year we ask our members to share with us what the choir means to them and the impact it makes on their lives, and we are really proud of the results. In 2016 over 90 members took part in our annual survey, and as a result of being a part of CWNN:

**96%**

of members said they made friends

**98%**

of members reported increased confidence

**97%**

of members learnt new skills (other than singing!)

**78%**

of members felt their mental health improved

**92%**

of members were motivated to try new things

**82%**

of members took up new activities or services outside of choir

**60%**

of members took up or maintained employment, volunteering or secure housing

4 of the individuals or organisations to whom we gave consultancy have gone on to start choirs for vulnerable people.

**Our choirs welcome anyone who feels they need a place to belong:**

**68%** had experienced homelessness

**58%** were street homeless or vulnerably housed when they joined the choir

**25%** stated having experienced an addiction

**48%** said that they had a disability



"I first started going to the choir while I was in a hostel and not in the best place mentally. The choir has saved my life without them even knowing it, because they helped lift me out of a dark place with their joyful and non-judgmental attitude and amazing friendly atmosphere. They helped me take my mind off everything and have no worries one night a week."

**Gareth, Liverpool choir**

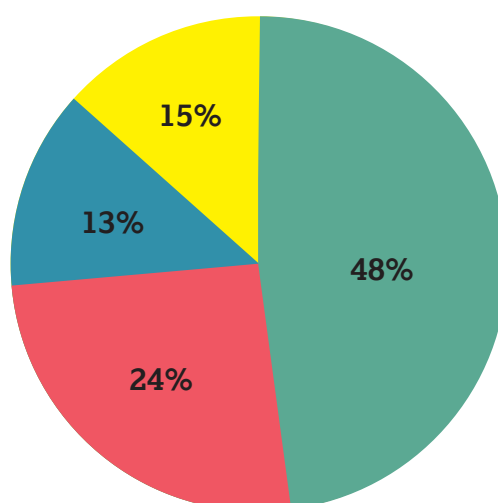
# FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2016/17 Income £279,612

2016/17 Expenditure £310,643

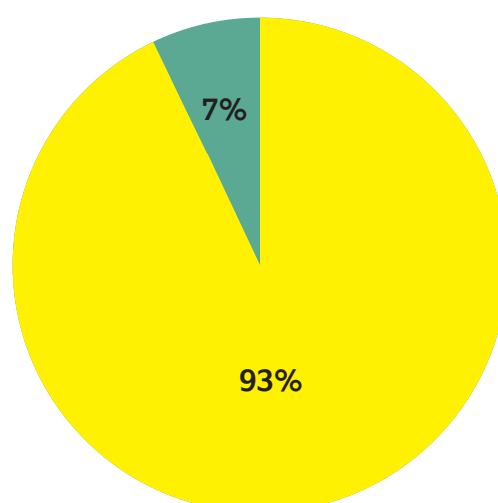
## Income Breakdown 2016/17

- Trusts & Grants
- Corporate Donations
- Individual Giving & Fundraising
- Self Earned Income & other



## Expenditure Breakdown 2016/17

- Charitable Activities
- Fundraising & Publicity



**For every £1 we spent on fundraising, we raised £15 for the charity**

# THE FUTURE

The big news is that in 2018 we'll be celebrating our 10th anniversary (though we remain very much young at heart!) Fingers crossed, we'll be announcing some exciting events next year - from local celebration gigs to a new album recording and the mother-of-all Christmas singalongs.

2017/18 will also see us move into a new and exciting way of working in partnership with homeless and arts organisations. Within this model, choir members will continue to meet weekly, sing, eat and get out and about to gigs (this is what we're all about!). Our partner organisations will share activity costs with us to ensure future financial viability, as well as enable us to offer more structured support and creative opportunities for our choir members. We'll be kicking off with this model in London in early 2018, merging our London choirs into one, before launching a new choir in Brighton later in the year.

At board level, we'll say goodbye to the truly marvellous Rachel Youngman, who has served us as Chair fantastically for six years, and is now retiring. This means we'll be welcoming a new Chair to lead the board and help to shape the organisation's strategic direction.

Finally, we want to keep diversifying our income, building new relationships with corporates and funders, and plan to build on our All Together Now! fundraising campaign as well as create local volunteer-led fundraising groups as part of our partnership model. We are embarking on a very exciting phase in the life of the charity and are looking forward to launching new choirs, broadening our reach and working with more people affected by homelessness across more areas of the UK over the coming years.

If you would like to get involved, or learn more about the work we do, please get in touch. We'd love to hear from you! [info@choirwithnname.org](mailto:info@choirwithnname.org) / 0207 202 6648



**"Music really does save people  
– this I know from personal  
experience - and through music  
Choir with No Name also  
saves people. It provides joy,  
encouragement and unconditional  
love. It's a place to discover  
yourself, and a place to be with  
others and encourage them on their  
own journey of discovery. Choir  
with No Name is a force for good in  
an often dark and lonely world."  
Mina, Birmingham choir member**



2018 will be a big year for us, as we celebrate our 10th Anniversary



# SUPPORTERS

We are proud and humbled to have received support from some amazing trusts, foundations and organisations throughout the year, without whom we could not continue our work:



## Huge thanks to:

Sovini Group, The Regenda Group, Adelphoi Music, Linklaters, Norton Rose Fulbright, Platypus Digital, Sing & Inspire, Open Fundraising, Woodford Investment Management, Stephen James BMW Blackheath, Lush White City, Lush Spa Liverpool, Blakemore Foundation, Post Office Communications Team, Lakeland, Sheldon Trust, The Hemby Trust, The George Fentham Birmingham Charity, Eveson Charitable Trust, The Alchemy Foundation, South Square Trust, Golden Bottle Trust, The Persula Foundation, The Goldsmiths' Company, Peter Minet Trust, The Constance Travis Charitable Foundation, The Diana and Allan Morgenthau Charitable Trust

We are eternally grateful for the support and generosity of the public, so an enormous Choir with No Name style THANK YOU to all who made donations, joined our fan club, came to a gig, signed up to our newsletter, shared our content on Facebook and Twitter, told their friends about us, and spread the word about our choirs and the work we do.



[www.choirwithno.name.org](http://www.choirwithno.name.org)  
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The Choir with No Name is a registered charity no. 1136173. Company number 06764584.

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