

Wells Operatic Society Limited
Minutes of the AGM and Members Social Evening
Friday 28th March 2025

7:30pm

Reception and drinks in the theatre bar

8:00pm

AGM held in the theatre auditorium. 33 full members attended (plus an additional 10 associate / junior members) and President of the society, Cllr Jasmine Brown Mayor of Wells.

Chairman, Ken Edmonds welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1) Apologies for Absence

Carol Phillimore

Emma James

Lesley Rickett

Ben Hutton

Sue King

2) Minutes of the 2024 AGM

The minutes of the AGM held on 22nd March 2024 have been shared with all society members and have been available on the theatre website for the past 3 months.

3) Matters Arising

None. The minutes from the 2024 AGM are agreed as a true record.

Proposer: Joanna Hartley-Scammell

Seconder: Sandra Marshall

KE will sign the minute book in due course.

4) Chairman's Report: Ken Edmonds

Transcript of report

This is the 123rd year of Wells Operatic Society Limited's existence. The society is registered at Companies House (registered number 1377655) and is also a registered charity (number 276308).

This last year has been busy with shows with Sister Act in May, Witness For The Prosecution in September, Nativity The Musical! in December and Equally Divided

earlier this month, all of which Tom will report on later.

Besides the shows the committee has had plenty of other business to be going on with.

During this year we have had gates installed at the Chamberlain Street entrance, the ladies front of house toilets have been refurbished, insulation has been installed over the workshop so set builders won't require Arctic gear anymore, hopefully.

We have purchased a new projector and Mac for running sound, the tree of doom has had a severe haircut, we have revamped the onstage working lights and there is now a switch near the props area so you no longer have to fumble your way up the stage left wing to get any lights on stage.

We ran a summer social at Henton Village Hall, and in me, we now have a new licensee.

Last month we ran a clear up day which saw us get rid of a lot of rubbish from areas such as the kitchen area in the rehearsal room, the stock room in the bar, the room behind the lighting box where we found arcane electronic items from a very definitely bygone age and in the area over boiler room we found parts from old seats which were the ones we had before the ones before the ones you're sitting in. Two lots of seats ago.

Thank you to everyone who came along and helped and please keep your eyes peeled as there is still more to do and many hands make light work.

We hosted Wells Comedy Festival again and Chorus of Disapproval choir for a successful concert.

Once again this year, we invited people to put forward shows they would like to direct and again we had plenty of suggestions with almost all our slots being filled for the next two years.

It is fantastic that we have so many people wanting to put shows on here.

So as you can see there is a lot that your committee does for the society beyond putting on shows and in the coming year we will have plenty to keep us occupied too I am sure.

In the past year, two members of the committee have stepped down and I would like to thank Glynn and Adam for everything they have done during their time on the committee.

At this AGM, a further three members of the committee are stepping down, in Graham, Liz and Dave, and I would like to thank them for everything they have brought to the committee in the past year.

I also need to thank everyone who is remaining on the committee this year—Pauline, Mike, Jo, Tom, Bobby, Natalie and Caroline—because without them the theatre could not continue to run. Thank you.

As you will see later, we have some fantastic new volunteers hopefully joining the committee this year, I can say definitely until after the official election, but I would like to thank them in advance.

I would like to thank Alisa and Julie for taking on the role of safeguarding lead and deputy for the theatre because without them we would not be able to have any under-18s involved in any aspect of theatre life and I would like to thank Adam and Lucy for putting us firmly on the right path with regard to safeguarding.

As always, we need more volunteers for the bar, bar supervisors and front of house, particularly for big shows such as pantomime and musicals when a lot of the usual volunteers are on stage. Please remember that the Society cannot function without people volunteering to take on some extra duties whatever they may be, and it can't just be left to a few people to do everything. If anyone would like to get more involved with any aspect of the theatre, please see a member of the committee who will be delighted to help.

We have a wonderful theatre here which offers friendship and laughter, among like-minded people, a community of all ages and ability, passionate about drama and all sharing a love of theatre.

5) Treasurer's Report for 2024 calendar year and Appointment of Accountants:

Pauline Perrin

Transcript of report

It is recommended that Webb & Co remain as our accountants and business advisers

Proposer: Pauline Perrin

Seconder: Mike Scammell

We had four extremely successful productions in 2024 with total box office sales amounting to almost £60,000. This was helped by an increase in ticket prices and three of our productions being complete sell outs.

Membership numbers have gone up and we have received a considerable increase in donations some of which enabled us to purchase a defibrillator for outside the building. The introduction of sponsorship for shows has helped us achieve this total.

Bar takings have doubled helped by higher prices and larger audiences.

Our total income for the year was £87,664. Our total expenditure was £83,056 giving us an overall increase in funds of £4608

Our unrestricted reserves are adequate to meet future requirements which will include further electrical and fire safety work, improving the condition of the shed and dealing with our neighbour's problems with THE tree!

I commend the accounts to the meeting and propose that they be adopted
Full details of the accounts are on the Home Page of the website and members are encouraged to read them.

Proposer: Pauline Perrin

Secunder: Sharon Edmonds

6) Members' Reports

Shows report: Tom Creswick

Transcript of report

Hello! I'll keep this short and sweet as we don't want anyone freezing to death. I have the fun task of talking about shows past and present.

Firstly, it's been another year of growth at the theatre, with audience numbers increasing, programme sales improving and another influx of new members have joined the theatre. 2023 saw an average of 76.5% of all tickets sold across 4 productions, whereas 2024 sold out an incredible 91% of all tickets. 2025 has started strongly indeed, with Equally Divided selling 77% of all available tickets, and Carousel looking like it's heading for a sellout. Thank you to everyone who shares our social media posts and for reading our mailchimp emails, they really do help. I would like to say a big welcome and thank you to Annalisa who has stepped up to become our box office manager, and has some very exciting plans for the future look of the box office. Yet again, I can't move on without thanking Elisha, who creates all of the content you see posted. We get lots of compliments and positive feedback on our content, and this is down to her creativity and design skills.

We have had record numbers of new members join us over the last two years, and I firmly believe this is down to the buzz and atmosphere that current members create, and the positive words and reputation we have within Somerset. Thank you to everyone in playing their part in continuing to make Wells arguably the most welcoming, friendly theatre group to join. It shows that we can still produce top quality productions, whilst remaining inclusive, fun and friendly. Long may it continue!

We've also noticed a massive increase in the number of theatre hirings. This is amazing news and is earning the theatre more much needed money,

So, onto the exciting bit, our upcoming shows! Carousel is our current musical and tickets are selling very well. We've added in an extra performance due to demand so it has now become our usual Monday-Saturday running time. Next up is Little Women, the play, directed by our very own Bobby. We've already had lots of interest shown in this so speak to her if you have any questions, there are lots of characters with varying

ages, so plenty for people to get involved in. This Christmas sees Vicky pen another spectacular panto, this time it's sleeping beauty getting the Wells little Theatre treatment!

Plans are already in place for 2026, with both our March and September plays already booked. Charlie Blanning will be directing The 39 Steps in March, a wonderfully inventive and gripping comedy thriller which features four fearless actors, playing 139 roles in 100 minutes of fast-paced fun and thrilling action, according to the official description! We then have theatre member Sam Elsby directing an Ayckbourn play, yet to be confirmed! We're still looking for a production team for our Christmas slot, usually a musical this time around, so if you have any suggestions or know people wanting to get involved, please get them in touch with us. I'm so excited to announce that our Spring musical will be Guys and Dolls, taking to the stage in May 2026.

As always, I'll end my little speech with a terrible poem, written about the events and productions of the past year.

*Here we are again then, our AGM 2025,
The world is at war, our bills are rising, what a time to be alive!
But in the walls of Wells Little Theatre, all has been well,
It's been a great year of theatre, there's been plenty to tell.
Sister Act finished, what an experience, what a musical,
The whole team were amazing and our hearts were all full,
The show has won awards, it's been given its due,
Even if we did manage to lose the case to Alans snooker cue.
Next came Witness for the prosecution, another great hit,
You simply can't beat a classic Christie 'who dunnit'.
To end 2024, We had to sparkle and shine,
The adults were great and the kids were just fine,
The costume changes were crazy, everyone did their best,
But by the end of it Vicky and her team had earned their well deserved rest.
Our most recent production was Equally Divided, about two grieving daughters with
stories to tell.
With so many lines to learn, all four of the cast did so well.
There's just one more thing to say as the temperature continues to nose dive,
Here is to a prosperous and successful Wells Little Theatre 2025!*

2) President's Address

Cllr Jasmine Brown Mayor of Wells attended and thanked the society for inviting her. She talked about her wonderful tour prior to the meeting and how there was so much more to the theatre than she thought, and that she could have easily spent the whole time looking at the costumes and props and fascinated by the history of the theatre and the society. She is very much looking forward to coming to see Carousel with the Mayoral party.

She described how important it was that we have grass root theatre in Wells, and it contributes directly to the areas community spirit . She also said it is the most fun

AGM she has been to as part of her term of office and she has attended many, and was excited to help with the balloting of the new committee. She was very pleased to hear how well the theatre is doing, and that people want to be a part of it, that things are growing and thriving. She thanked all the members for doing what they are doing and indicated long she hoped that it should continued to thrive well into the future with such enthusiastic and talented people in the group.

8) Election of officers and Committee

There has been one nomination for each of the following posts on the committee:

POST	<i>NOMINATION</i>
Chair	Tom Creswick
Vice-chair	Caroline Hoare
Treasurer	Pauline Perrin
Secretary	Vicky Orman
Publicity Officer	Tom Creswick
Stage Representative	Mike Scammell

Proposer

Jo Hartley-scammell

Seconder- Annalisa Checchi

There have been 11 nominations for the positions of 9 Committee members:

Jo Hartley-Scammell,

Bobby Bass,

Emma Hardy,

Caroline Hoare,

Natalie Hope,

Janice Holwill,

Sandra Marshall,

Charlotte Munckton,

Alan Watts

James Barnett,

Annalisa Checchi

Amy Hutton.

A vote was held with each member present voting for 9 of the nominations.

Ken Edmonds (Outgoing Chair), Vicky Orman (Secretary) and the Mayor Jasmine Brown (Society President) counted the votes.

The following members were appointed as committee members;

Bobby Bass

Annalisa Checchi

Emma Hardy

Jo Hartley-Scammell

Natalie Hope

Amy Hutton

Sandra Marshall

Charlotte Munckton

Alan Watts

9) Date of Next committee meeting

29th April at 7:30pm

10) Any Other Business

There have been no other issues raised in writing to the secretary before the meeting and no additional questions.

Meeting closed at 8.45pm