

ENGLISH FOLK DANCE AND SONG SOCIETY REVIEW OF THE YEAR 2022-23

Lorna Aizlewood - Chair's Report



This has continued to be a recovery year with the latent effects of the pandemic still in evidence. In this first full year of operation for three years, engagement in educational activities (adult and youth) has been very buoyant, and the hiring of spaces at Cecil Sharp House moving towards pre-pandemic levels. However, audiences for our concerts were still slow to return.

A vast array of activities was delivered at Cecil Sharp House and across England. Regional events included performances by the London Youth Folk Ensemble at Folk by the Oak in Hatfield, the National Youth Folk Ensemble at Purbeck Valley Folk Festival, Folk East Folk Festival and The Fire Station, Sunderland, and Cecil Sharp House Choir at Sidmouth Folk Festival. Through the National Youth Folk Ensemble's Engagement programme, we delivered activities with music hubs and other cultural organisations from the North East to the South West. We also delivered activities at U.Dance National Festival 2022 in Birmingham.

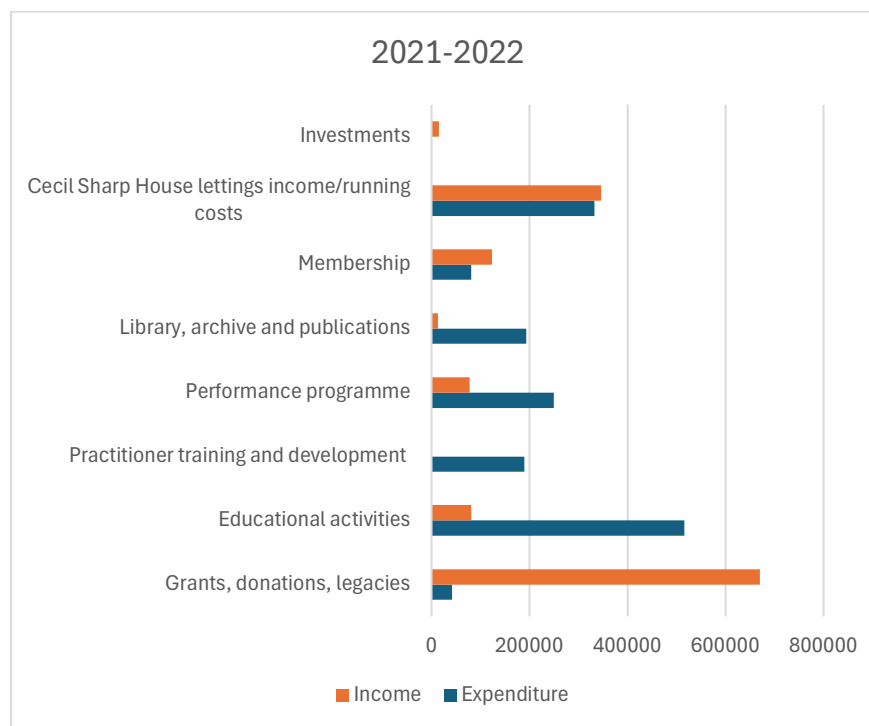
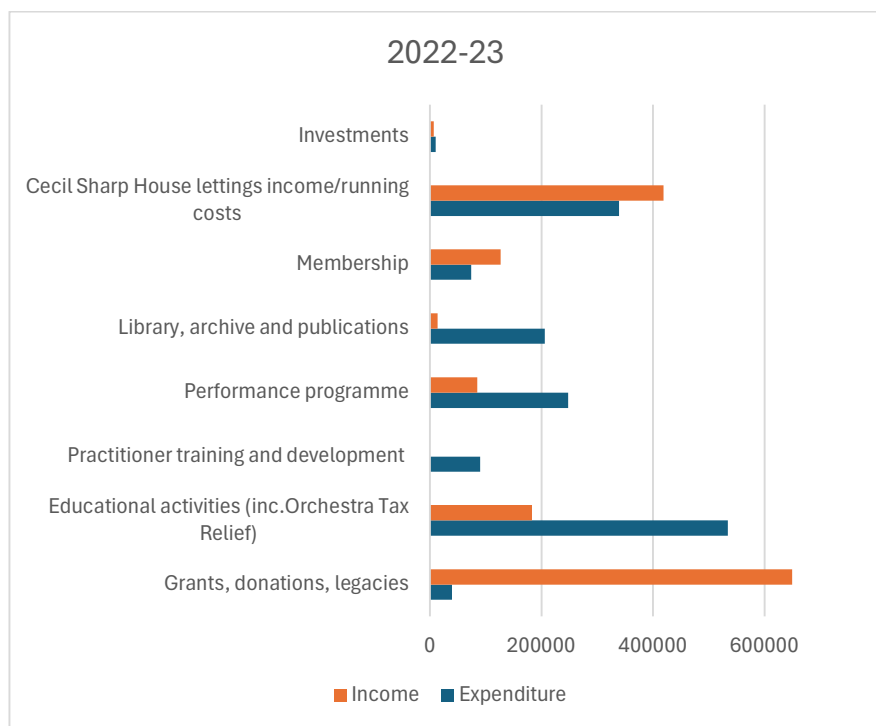
Professional development activities continued with Folk Education Development Days held in Preston and at Cecil Sharp House, and our artists' showcases at Sidmouth, Manchester, and Stage4Beverley Folk Festivals. The Alan James Creative Bursaries were awarded to four projects involving eight artists and a third year of the Micro Grants Programme saw six awards made benefiting 11 artists; Micro Grants were made possible by a further donation from Conrad and Jennifer Bailey.

We have also partnered with academic institutions this year to deliver research - Gypsy and Traveller Voices in Archives (Universities of East Anglia and Sheffield) - and supported the Access Folk research on communal singing (University of Sheffield). The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library delivered its online lecture programme, the annual Broadside Day and a two day conference marking the 150th anniversary of the birth of Ralph Vaughan Williams, EFDSS' first President.

The EFDSS Gold Badge for outstanding contribution to the folk sector was awarded to five people in this year - Gwilym and Carol Davies, Roger Watson, Lawrence Heath, and Madeline Smith.

Grant funding was received from PRS Foundation (Artists' Development support), the John Lyons' Charity (Inclusive Folk Programme for young people with disabilities) and Scops Arts Trust (National Youth Folk Ensemble Engagement Programme). Income from individual donations doubled in this year. We continued to partner with PermaCulture London to help maintain our gardens at Cecil Sharp House in an eco-friendly way.

Arts Council England (ACE) funding continued this year through their National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding, but we were very disappointed to receive the news in November that our grants for 2023-26, would be reduced by 32%. However, the significance of the National Youth Folk Ensemble and our wider youth education programme was recognised by the Department for Education by including the Ensemble in its cohort of National Youth Music Organisations from April 2023. On a brighter note the new financial year began with the award of a three year Transform grant from ACE to help us develop plans that will mitigate the reduction in our ACE NPO grant.



Ed Fishwick - Treasurer's Report

The charity has an overall deficit of £57,810 at 31 March 2023 (2022: £275,630). As in 2022, the deficit reflects ongoing spending of grant funds received in prior years. The income of the charity is £1,481,658 (2022: £1,321,071). The increase represents success in increasing the letting income from spaces at Cecil Sharp House, as well as a receipt of Orchestra Tax Relief, part of the Creative Tax Reliefs, which the charity was able to claim for previous tax years in relation to the activities of the National Youth Folk Ensemble. Expenditure in 2023 was £1,529,251 (2022: £1,602,146). The decrease is mostly in the category of practitioner training and development due to a one-off grant in 2022 to Folk Dance Remixed for the production *Hope*, funded by the Weston Culture Fund grant.

EFDSS holds Restricted, Designated and Free Reserves, totalling £1,680,609 (2022: £1,715,812); this includes a valuation of Cecil Sharp House. Free Reserves are defined by the Charity Commission as funds that are freely available to spend on the charity's purposes. Trustees review EFDSS's Reserves Policy and reserves levels annually as part of the planning process and are satisfied with the level of reserves at 31 March 2023.

A full copy of the Annual Report and Accounts is available from efdss.org/about-us/who-are-we/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. Registered Office: Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London, NW1 7AY.