

Endcliffe Orchestra Committee
15th January, 2026
Draft Minutes

Present: Chris, Alison, Clare (via Zoom), Karen, Katrin, Matt, Neil, Ralph and River

1. Apologies: Alex and John
2. Draft Minutes of the meeting of 27th November 2025

Items that we considered from the Draft Minutes are to be raised again in Agenda items. We have not heard back from Sir Paul McCartney and Chris has made a fresh approach and is awaiting a response.

The Draft Minutes were accepted as a true record.

Prior to considering Agenda items, Chris mentioned the Christmas collaborative concerts and said that these were a 'spectacular success' and that those participating had thoroughly enjoyed playing in a mega-orchestra.

3. Declaration of items for AOB. There was one item - the Orchestra Web Page.
4. Agenda Items

- a. Final arrangements for the January concert

Karen reported on the arrangements which were nearly all in hand. The front-of-house arrangements for the evening concert were covered and Sally and her team were covering refreshments, John W had the keys and arrangements had been made to transport the timpani etc. We have asked **Catherine Crompton** to arrange for materials for the children to colour in and also to arrange for a **notice that parents are responsible for supervising their children in the Church.**

The few things that remained were : front of house cover for the afternoon concert **River was going to ask SYO members if they could assist** (since this is a free concert no money transactions will happen). **Chris to arrange for flowers for Polly. Clare to do short programme notes for the afternoon concert (approx. 1 page A4) and send these to Lisa for printing.**

For the future, we agreed that we would state on publicity that **we accept card payment only.**

- b. Ticket sales and Marketing Report

Lisa commented on the capacity of St Marks and said that the maximum number of audience was 300. The afternoon concert was now full, but the evening concert had ticket sales of 78. We explored other ways of promoting the evening concert including emailing some of the afternoon audience asking whether, in the light of the fact it was a 'sell out', they might be interested in evening tickets. We also considered **asking for donations at the afternoon concert and have some buckets on the door for such donations.**

We discussed the **dress code** for the concert and suggested that we are in all black for both concerts but with 'hats' to put the sections 'in character' for Peter and the Wolf.

c. Progress Report on the Composing Competition.

River reported on the number of good entries that there had been for both the Junior and Senior categories. The judges for stage 1 of the judging process were now working on the entries.

River reminded us of the Workshop on 1st March 12:00pm- 5:00 where the orchestra would play through the chosen compositions and collectively make the final choice.

d. Report back on the use of Slack

We considered the orchestra responses for the use of Slack as a means of communication. There was a small majority in favour of Slack (17 to 14) but there were many members who had either not replied or who had mentioned considerable difficulty and, in some cases, impossibility in using Slack.

Several people had mentioned that current use of WhatsApp in sectional groups had proved to be very useful and people had no problems of access.

In the circumstances, it was felt that a method of communication had to be completely inclusive and ensure total equality of access and that Slack did not fulfil these requirements. We could and should have a pilot project examining WhatsApp as a method of general communication to the entire orchestra members as well as continuing with sectional groups. We could have an ability to make general Announcements including the

Rehearsal Schedule and also to upload Committee Documents etc. A point was raised as to whether it was necessary to show phone number details and this would be looked into.

Anne Leroux, who has had experience of using WhatsApp in large groups would help us with the pilot project.

The one thing that would not work with WhatsApp is the Newsletter.

Matt, who had 'edited' - effectively put out - the Newsletter for the past 10 years wished to resign from this role. The committee thanked Matt for all his work in doing this for us over such a long period.

If the orchestra still wants a Newsletter, then someone must volunteer to do this.

e. Hiring of music for the summer concert

Alison reported that the library copies of the Enigma Variations and of the other material have been given to Ralph, so that the string parts could be bowed and then be available as pdfs on WhatsApp. All the material is also available on IMSLP and so if any of the parts are missing from the library copies, these could easily be downloaded.

We noted that from our previous decisions, we had said that section leaders should be prepared to have some spare copies of the concert repertoire available for those who might be coming to try out the orchestra so that there is always some music for them to use.

f. Programme Planning for the next orchestral year.

We discussed the general pattern of concerts and concluded that the orchestral year should have two major concerts (as at present). In addition, as last year, we are very happy to continue with the **collaboration in a Christmas concert with the SYO** and the date for this is **5th December 2026**. We also would like to participate in some way in **Classical Sheffield** in 2026. This is during 12th-14th March. There are various options including a short session in the Winter Gardens or a longer concert where the organisers of Classical Sheffield will book a venue and we can either have an Endcliffe only concert or engage in a collaborative venture with other musicians.

It was agreed that River would put together some proposals for these concerts for the next meeting to consider.

g. Keys for opening and closing MMC

At the moment Chris has the keys for opening MMC. **Chris is to make an announcement asking for anyone who can regularly attend early on Mondays to take on opening and/or closing the building.**

5. AOB. Matt said that he wishes to resign from the upkeep of the Web Site. We were very pleased that Katrin stepped in to take on this role. If necessary we could consider the desirability and cost of designing a new Web Site at a later date.
6. Date and venue of next meeting: Thursday 19th February: 7:30 at Alison's ?
Grove Road