

Endcliffe Orchestra Committee
Thursday, 19th February, 2026
Draft Minutes

Present: Chris, Alison, Clare, Katrin, Ralph, (present via Zoom) River

1. Apologies

Alex, John, Lisa, Lindsay, Matt, Neil

2. Draft Minutes of the meeting of 15th January 2026.

Amendments were made to record that the two main concerts per year would consist of classical music, and the date of Classical Sheffield is 2027.

The Minutes were agreed as a true record of the meeting.

3. Declaration of items for AOB

One item was raised on feedback on marketing and this will be raised with Lisa who was not able to come to the meeting.

4. Agenda items

a. Reflections on the 31st January Concert

i. Marketing for this concert (see Lisa's Report)

We discussed all the items on Lisa's Marketing Report including the idea of 'early bird' reductions for those who ordered tickets well in advance of the concert. We considered that this was not really necessary.

Action: we discussed the idea that in principle adults should pay a modest amount for tickets for the 'children's concert' and children go free. The suggested amount was £2 - 3.

Action: we considered that, in order to encourage purchase of tickets prior to the concert, tickets on the door should be priced with an additional amount (surcharge) of say £ 2- 3.

ii. The rehearsal arrangements – is it too much to have a three-hour rehearsal and two performances on the concert day?

This was discussed and the reason why such a long rehearsal/performance was felt necessary this time was because Polly needed to go through the entire performance for assessing the narration interventions. Also, there were additional percussion instruments whose only rehearsal would be the morning one.

River was aware of the concern about the length of the rehearsal and would consider how we would deal with this in future.

iii. The venue

Various opinions were expressed about the venue - several were not complimentary. They concerned the acoustics, the seats for the orchestra, the fact that it was freezing cold, the arrangements for the storage of instrument cases, the lines of vision for the audience etc. Some comments were favourable; the kitchen space, the toilets. In sum, we had considerable reservations about using St Mark's again.

We were generally in favour of booking Ecclesall All Saints Church for both concerts despite some of its difficulties and also looking more widely for suitable, appropriate venues.

iv. Reserved seats on the front row -should there be a gap between orchestra and audience.

The reasons for this at this concert were explained. Much depends on the venue, but in general there needs to be a gap between the orchestra and the first row of audience seating.

v. Reception by the audience

It was agreed that the concert was overwhelmingly popular both with the audience(s) and with the orchestra.

We thanked Lisa for putting this Report together and for all the stalwart work she does in Marketing the Concerts.

b. Marketing - recruitment of an assistant Marketing Officer to help Lisa

It was recognised that there was a great deal of work to do in Marketing both concerts and the orchestra in general. We held over the details of the recruitment of an assistant until Lisa is able to be at the meeting.

c. Preliminary thoughts on the use of WhatsApp

- i. Is the balance correct so that orchestra members are not overwhelmed with messages?

We thought that the overall balance was suitable and that people could control the flow of messages by muting the ‘community’ they did not wish to receive messages from.

- ii. Guidance as to what information should go into which section.

This was an important issue - **it was agreed that Katrin would draft a proposal as to what information should go into ‘Announcements’ / General etc. so that there are clear lines and we avoid duplication.**

We also discussed how members could contact the Committee directly i.e via individual WhatsApp or a committee email.

This, too would be in the proposals.

We also discussed the relationship between WhatsApp (for all internal communications) and the Newsletter (for external marketing and information). **It was agreed that the Newsletter be produced quarterly and sent to all those who are interested in keeping up with information about the orchestra and our concerts. It would no longer be used as a method of internal communication between members of the orchestra.**

Katrin agreed to produce the Newsletter and commented that all internal information - like the Rehearsal Schedule - was available on both WhatsApp and the Website (under Members’ Page).

- d. Arrangements for the composing competition workshop and criteria for judging entries.

River explained his thinking on the procedure for the Workshop on March 1st. He had arranged the play-throughs so that there are breaks for all orchestral players and no-one is playing for more than two sessions before a break. If some pieces are particularly long or complex, then composers have been asked to select parts of the score to showcase the piece.

River will make available the scores and .mp3 of each of the pieces in advance of the day so that members can listen and look at their parts.

It was agreed that Katrin will duplicate the parts and prepare a ‘booklet’ of all the parts for each instrument (printing to be recompensed by the orchestra).

Also, voting forms will be available from the beginning of the Workshop so that participants can write down their recollections of the pieces throughout the day.

- e. Classical Sheffield Social (March 12) - representative from the orchestra. This is a good networking opportunity and River is attending. Anyone else wishing to do so should talk to River.
- f. Final rehearsals after the summer concert – request to perform non-shortlisted competition entry.

Action: We agreed in principle that this should go ahead and we play the non-shortlisted piece.

5. A.O. B.

We then discussed the programmes put forward by River after consultation with the orchestra:

Concert 1 - Saturday 5th December - Victoria Hall in collaboration with SYO. This would be the Christmas concert much on the same lines as the 2025 Concert featuring Christmas Classics maybe including the ‘Muppets Christmas Carol medley’

Concert 2 - Saturday 23rd January - venue to be agreed

The theme would be ‘ Heartbreak’ and would include:

MacLennan - Sonus Solaris

Bernstein - Overture to West Side Story

Prokofiev - Romeo and Juliet Suite No 2

Tchaikovsky - Symphony No 4.

(This programme could also lend itself to a child-friendly short concert of 25 minutes scheduled immediately after the morning rehearsal - thus leaving the afternoon free featuring the thematic material from the above pieces. Having a children’s taster concert would enable us to apply for funding to cover the hiring costs of the Bernstein and MacLennan).

Concert 3 - Saturday 13th March - part of Classical Sheffield w/end. - venue St Marie's Cathedral - time 4:30-5:30

This would be in the form of a workshop for Endcliffe members and others to perform **Terry Riley - In C** - this would be an opportunity to perform experimental music in a large space with many instrumentalists being involved.

Concert 4 - Saturday 17th July - venue tba

We discussed the proposed programme which might consist of a choice from the following:

(Provisional)

Rimsky Korsakov - Symphony No 1

Hiaishi - Links

Strauss - Die Fledermaus Overture

Shaprio - Beneath

Rachmaninoff - Variations on a theme of Paganini

Arnold - Symphony No 5

Shostakovich - Festival Overture or Symphony No 5

We also discussed and much favoured having a soloist(s) for this concert and it was suggested that Brahms - Double Concerto for Cello and Violin might be one to pursue; likewise Krommer - Concerto for two Clarinets and Orchestra.

Action: We were happy to recommend going forward with the first three concerts - Concert 4 is fixed as to date - but needs further consideration.

6. Date of next meeting.

Thursday, 19th March, venue - Chris's, S17 3EG