

# **EAST COAST COLLECTIVE CHORUS**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**4TH OCTOBER 2021**

**MEETING OPENED AT 7:30PM**

### **PRESENT**

Ben, Dan, David, Brian, Anu, Charlotte, Brenda, Keith, SqueakyDan, Wendy, Donna, Lou, Andy

### **APOLOGIES**

Chloe, Harold, Sarah, Sue, Tara, Michele

Please see attachments for full reports.

### **CHAIR'S REPORT**

Andy welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave his report, outlining the development of ECC since 2019 despite the difficulties of a global pandemic.

#### Proposal:

ECC become affiliated with other local groups the VIPs and Fever Pitch under the umbrella organisation Ipswich Barbershop Harmony Club.

Andy outlined the benefits, including access to copyright materials and could see no disadvantages.

During the subsequent discussion assurances were given affiliation would not restrict the type of music that we could sing.

The proposal was passed unanimously.

### **MUSIC DIRECTORS REPORT**

Ben's moving report received a heartfelt round of applause...

"Before the East Coast Collective was formed, singing was something that I enjoyed. I was already part of the VIPs and we were still in the early days of Fever Pitch. But since ECC began around this time two years ago, being a musical director has been the absolute highlight of my week, and as a result, singing has gone from something that I merely enjoy, to being the biggest part of my life.

From a technical and musical standpoint, I am hugely impressed by the amount of progress you've made in every area. Your tuning and vowel matching shows how your listening skills have improved, and that you've gained a greater understanding of how your respective parts should sound in relation to the others. In addition to this, you are also in a position where you can start to consider the emotional context of the songs which, in turn, is adding musicality to the way in which you sing. Instead of going through the motions of singing a song, you are, by default, thinking about turning the song into a performance.

All of this became apparent at our open day, where VIPs members who had attended our rehearsals previously said there was a noticeable transformation in the sound that we were making. In front of seasoned barbershoppers we sung with a unified sound and, for better or worse, you followed my direction to the letter!

Since restarting rehearsals a few months ago, the rate at which we've been able to learn new material is perhaps the thing which has impressed me above all else. I think this is due, in part, to your ability to adapt to the new exercises and tags I like to throw at you each week (even if it's for my own indulgence more than anything else), and I will continue to do this in future. Before long

we will be able to sing Country Roads without the music, and while it may seem tedious at times to go into detail on our existing repertoire, I believe that it will put us in good stead when it comes to learning new songs going forward.

From an emotional and personal standpoint, I struggled a great deal during the third lockdown in the early part of this year, as I'm sure a lot of you did too. There were many times where I felt lost and where I struggled to find motivation, which is why I am extremely grateful to Andy for making the effort each week to keep us connected via Zoom.

Ultimately, I felt re-invigorated when we restarted real rehearsals again. There's nothing quite like hearing that barbershop sound in-person. But as much as the musician in me loves to hear overtones, tags and ringing chords - the people involved are the real reason I love barbershop singing. Seeing you all each week has been an absolute privilege (except maybe Andy), and seeing the way that you've all grown and developed as singers fills me with an immense sense of pride.

With any luck, we'll be able to keep rehearsing without interruption from now on, and I look forward to taking on new challenges together!"

#### **OPEN DAY REPORT**

Andy reported that the open day was a success, raising funds for the Chorus and attracting new members.

There was some discussion about the format for next year, which will be continued.

The next event will probably be on 10th September 2022.

#### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Andy reported that the current balance stands at £143.19

Suggestions were accepted to improve the clarity and accuracy of the accounts:

“Extras” to be specified

Merchandise sales to be included, even though they are sold at cost

#### **MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

Andy reported that we currently have 20 members and talked about the balance of people in each part.

There was a discussion about some of us settling on the best part for us to be singing.

It was agreed that assistance is given with this, starting with vocal range checks.

#### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

All who were nominated were elected unopposed and by unanimous votes.

Chair	Andy Watkins
Treasurer	Tara Majoram
Hon Secretary	Lou Allen
Membership Secretary	Daniel Wesley
Vice chair	Brian Crockett
Music Officer	Wendy Hicks

#### **CONFIRMATION OF MUSICAL DIRECTOR**

Ben was appointed unanimously.

#### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### Singing out

It was suggested that we start to do some voluntary performances at community events. This idea was met with enthusiasm and will be taken forward.

To get this off the ground in the near future, we will attempt to learn 2 Christmas songs.

##### Social Events

Lou to go ahead and see what can be organised for a Christmas meal.

Possibly at the Boot, to include a performance by way of a thank-you for hosting us over the summer.

A 'live' quiz against the VIPs was suggested, but members were reluctant to do this at the expense of rehearsal time. No decision was taken.

#### Communication

It was agreed that the WhatsApp chat should be used to communicate important information rather than social chat. There is now an opportunity in the Teams App to have separate areas to be sociable in 'chat' and give information in 'messages'.

#### Recruitment

Singing in the community is seen as a way to recruit new members. Other ideas were suggested, including using Instagram and having a decent sized graphic display. Squeaky/Dan to look into the latter and report back.

A smaller group to be set up to explore recruitment in more detail and report back with proposals - let Lou know if you want to be involved.

### **ACTION TABLE**

Item	Inception	Item	Responsible	Status	Closed	Notes
20211	04/10/2021	Affiliate with IBHS	AW	Ongoing		
20212	04/10/2021	Organise Open Day for September 2022	AW	Ongoing		
20213	04/10/2021	Add detail to accounts	TM	Ongoing		"Extras" to be specified Merchandise sales to be included
20214	04/10/2021	Assist members with finding their most suitable part	BT BC	Ongoing		Eg. Range checks
20215	04/10/2021	Identify community events to sing at	Any member	Ongoing		
20216	04/10/2021	Identify Christmas Songs to learn	BT AW	Ongoing		White Christmas plus one
20217	04/10/2021	Organise Christmas social event	LA	Ongoing		Ideally meal at the Boot
20218	04/10/2021	Monitor efficiency of social media chats	AW	Ongoing		Information and social chat separated

Item	Inception	Item	Responsible	Status	Closed	Notes
20219	04/10/2021	Report on suitable graphic display	DW	Ongoing		Include costs
202110		Put forward ideas for recruitment	LA	Ongoing		Volunteers sought

Meeting Closed at 9pm

Date of next AGM  
3rd October 2022