

A wide-angle photograph of an orchestra performing in a large, ornate cathedral. The musicians are seated in the foreground, playing various instruments including violins, violas, cellos, and double basses. A conductor is visible on the right side of the orchestra. The audience is seated in the background, filling the nave of the cathedral. The architecture is highly detailed with Gothic-style arches and stained glass windows. The lighting is dramatic, with blue and white spotlights illuminating the scene.

Foundations for impact  
**Annual Report**  
**2023-24**

# Foreword from

2023-24 has been a year of significant growth and remarkable achievement for Manchester Camerata. As my term as Chair of this wonderful organisation comes to an end, I believe that we are in a stronger position than ever – true to our vision and heritage but relentlessly innovating in our pursuit of excellence.

My term as Chair was extended in order to see through a transition from Covid, the implementation of an updated strategy and to the appointment of a new Chair. As I look back on the accomplishments of the last 12 months, I can see the difference that the board's strategy is already making, both to Manchester Camerata itself and for the diverse audiences and communities it serves.

The significant impact we have made has only been possible thanks to

the time that the board and senior team have previously committed to crafting a clear and compelling long-term vision and strategy.

Those strategic discussions and previous investment decisions are now being translated into impact. We are supporting the next generation of musicians and delivering world-class concert performances and recordings. At the same time, we are building the organisation's capacity and continuing to drive positive change in communities.

Our artistic excellence continues to be the hallmark of the organisation, with our musicians consistently setting new standards in performance. This year I was delighted to see this recognised through a series of awards and accolades, accompanied by a substantial increase in national media coverage.

Last year, I wrote about the board's commitment to nurturing the next generation of talent. In 2023-24, we fully launched the Manchester

Camerata 360° Ruth Sutton Fellowship, generously supported by a major gift from the Ruth Sutton family trust. This year's intake of Fellows are making significant contributions across our concerts and community work, demonstrating the powerful synergy between Manchester Camerata's artistic and social missions.

The organisation itself continues to grow and evolve. In 2023-24, we have seen significant growth in our communications and marketing efforts, enhancing our ability to connect with diverse audiences. We have seen a step change in our fundraising too, with an ambitious aspiration and plan now in place to build a £10 million endowment fund.

Additionally, this year we also celebrated the exciting announcement that Manchester Camerata is to become the National Centre of Excellence for Music and Dementia. This is testament to the world-leading work we have been doing in this field for over a decade. Leading the new National Centre is also helping to transform the skills of our in-house team with the addition of two senior NHS leaders to the staff team who will complement our existing artistic capacity with established health expertise.

This has been a year of transformation, growth, and achievement for Manchester Camerata, and I am immensely proud of all that we have accomplished. As I step down as Chair, I leave a confident and successful organisation that is committed to the vision and to the values that have guided us to this point. I am confident that the best is yet to come.

Steve Dauncey, Chair

# Our Chair

# Our strategy 2022-2026

Manchester Camerata's strategy focuses not just on what we do, but how we work, drawing connections between the quality of our craft and the impact that we are seeking to achieve.

## 📍 Foundations

We will be an exceptionally well-run organisation with solid foundations of funding and governance in place to support transformational change.

## 📍 Talent

We do things brilliantly. Everything starts with the quality of our musicians, and we must value, nourish, and support them. Manchester Camerata is committed to being a best-in-class employer of musicians.

All our Concerts and Community programmes are aligned with these key strategic aims. Our Communications and Fundraising strategies support them. In combination, these four themes will build the reputation of the organisation as an acknowledged global thought leader when it comes to the transformative role culture can play in society.

## 📍 Innovation

We do things differently. We will be bold in identifying new ways of working and new ways to reach audiences in Greater Manchester and beyond.

## 📍 Impact

Manchester Camerata exists to make a difference. We believe music changes the lives of people and the prospects of places. Part of our mission is not just to say this but to prove it.

# Our impact 2022-2023

## Musicians

**33** Freelance members

**200** Deputies

---

## Audiences

**35k+** reached live

**1M** reached digitally

---

## Community

**Over 12,500**

participant contacts made through our community programmes e.g. in schools and for people living with dementia and their carers

---

## Turnover

**£2.24 million**

# Concerts

Throughout 2023–24, Manchester Camerata has once again demonstrated the power of music to engage and inspire.

As an orchestra committed to excellence, we continually challenge ourselves to explore new venues, present innovative programmes, and uphold our standards in every performance, whether that is on the streets of Gorton or the stages of world-class concert halls.

This year has been particularly rich in variety and creativity. We performed an electrifying Beethoven concert at the iconic Albert Hall and delivered a unique, curated concert, *Hearing Voices*, at Stoller Hall working alongside Kantos Chamber Choir and Scottish mezzo-soprano Karen Cargill.

Our performances of Mozart, again at Stoller Hall, and the world premiere of *Shikwa* at the Bradford Literature Festival, were well received by audiences and critics alike, showcasing our dedication to connecting with diverse musical traditions and audiences.

We have also continued to take our music further afield, including our successful tour of Romania. This tour not only expanded our international presence but also

reinforced our commitment to sustainability, travelling by coach rather than flying. This demonstrates that excellence can go hand in hand with environmental responsibility.

We were also delighted to launch the new artistic partnerships that will shape the next three years of our work, bringing fresh perspectives and new energy to our performances. The introduction of two new staff members has further strengthened our core team, enabling us to continue pushing the boundaries of what an orchestra can achieve.

This season, we also had the privilege of performing a brand-new, fully improvised work composed by one of our own members, showcasing the extraordinary talent within our ranks. Our new relationship with Company Chameleon has further expanded our creative horizons, leading to exciting collaborations that blend music with movement in innovative ways.

Manchester Camerata also continued to show its commitment to supporting research, building our understanding of the way that music can deliver maximum benefit to local communities. In 2023–24 we commenced a PhD project called “Putting an Orchestra in its Place”. This project will seek to uncover the impact of our music in the Gorton community. The learning



generated by this study will help Camerata and other organisations that are seeking to understand the role that music can play in place transformation.

A major highlight of the year was the launch of the Camerata 360° Ruth Sutton Fellowship, a pioneering programme that is setting new standards in talent development. This Fellowship offers recent graduates in the North of England a unique opportunity to immerse themselves in the full spectrum of work involved in a freelance career. With a paid stipend and unparalleled variety, the programme is providing new perspectives for our organisation and supporting the pipeline of talent.

## Looking forward ☞

As we look forward to 2024–25, Manchester Camerata remains unwavering in its commitment to supporting talent and pursuing excellence. We will continue to unlock new creativity by connecting with audiences, cultures, and musical traditions that inspire and challenge us as performers. Our work is guided by humanity, originality, excellence, and fearlessness, as we constantly redefine what an orchestra can achieve.

# Communities

Manchester Camerata exists to make a difference. In 2023-24, our work has not only deepened our connections within Greater Manchester and beyond, but has also underscored our commitment to research-driven impact, ensuring our efforts remain innovative, scalable, and effective.

A key achievement this year was the successful delivery of our Music in Mind Remote project. Developed in partnership with The University of Manchester, this initiative expanded our reach, offering valuable resources to professionals in community and care settings to support those living with dementia.

The insights from this project were pivotal in securing Manchester Camerata's leadership of the new National Centre of Excellence for Music and Dementia. As we embrace this national role, we are committed to deeper collaboration with academics and NHS stakeholders to assess the economic benefits of music-based therapies, building a compelling case for their broader adoption.

Our Music in Mind programme continues to evolve, with the development of the Music Champions model, which involves the transfer of skills from our musicians and therapists to paid and volunteer carers. This year, we successfully trained and supported over 60 Music Champions across Greater Manchester. These individuals are now equipped to deliver music therapy-based interventions, ensuring that the impact of our work continues to resonate within local communities long after the initial training has ended.

In addition to expanding our team of trained musicians and therapists, we enhanced our training materials and standardised our methods, making them accessible via the new Music in Mind website. This allows us to roll out the Music Champions model at scale, extending our reach to regions outside Greater Manchester. We also prioritised adapting our content to meet the needs of people living with dementia from diverse cultural backgrounds, ensuring inclusivity in our approach.

Our commitment to youth engagement remained strong, with sustained partnerships such as the one with Webster Primary School, where we are expanding to include teacher training focused on integrating more music into the curriculum.

Our collaborations with the YouthZone network have also flourished this year, with successful projects in Wigan and Gorton. These projects culminated in performances at sold-out Albert Hall concerts, where YouthZone participants shared the stage with our orchestra.

This year, we also partnered with Orchestras Live to produce another successful *Classically Yours* event in Withernsea and Hornsea, paying tribute to the lifesaving work of the RNLI. In Staffordshire, our work in 20 schools culminated in a celebratory concert in Cannock, showcasing local talent and creativity.

## Looking forward »

We have initiated a consultant-led review of our Young People's programme which will help us understand our strengths and refine our strategy. This will ensure our future efforts are aligned with our long-term goals and continue to deliver maximum impact.

As we continue to evolve and expand our community work, the stories of transformation we've witnessed this year reaffirm our belief in the power of music to create positive change. We are excited to build on this success, using music to connect, inspire, and make a lasting difference in the lives of those we serve.



# Communications



To have the biggest impact and change the most lives, Manchester Camerata must continue to tell its story to the world. We believe that music is for everyone, and that means we need to connect not just with our existing audiences, but also reach out to those beyond traditional classical music circles.

This year, we played live to over 35,000 people and reached 1 million more through our digital channels. The stories we tell are diverse, yet they all share a common thread – each demonstrates the ability that music has to transform lives.

2023–24 has also been a year of consolidation and growth of Manchester Camerata’s communications expertise. We expanded the team by welcoming part-time videographer Jay Cipriani

and full-time Digital Marketing Manager Reb Everett.

This increase in capacity has significantly enhanced the quality and regularity of our content. With the expanded team in place, we’ve produced a series of compelling short-form stories and interviews, deepening the connection with audiences through providing insight into what we do and how we work.

A major highlight in 2023–24 was the launch of the Camerata 360° Ruth Sutton Fellowship scheme. The success of this programme has been widely recognised, culminating in a feature in *Classical Music* magazine highlighting the benefits the Fellowship is already bringing to emerging musicians.

There have also been several significant awards and achievements in the last 12 months. We were delighted that our Mozart CD was once again named Classic FM’s Record of the Week, an acknowledgement of the continued excellence of our recordings. Additionally, our Principal Flute, Amina Hussain, received the prestigious Association of British Orchestras Award for demonstrating the unique power music has to improve lives. Our performances have also received glowing reviews from major national outlets, including *The Times*, *The Telegraph*, and *The Guardian*. This critical acclaim further cements our reputation as one of the leading orchestras in the UK with a presence and significance that extends nationwide.

This year also saw the launch of our first digital annual report, making our work more accessible and

engaging to a broader audience. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and it has set a new standard for how we communicate our achievements and goals.

Perhaps the most significant milestone of 2024 was the launch of our National Centre of Excellence for Music and Dementia. This initiative led to our largest volume of press coverage to date, with over 150 pieces of press coverage, including national TV features. Hosting the National Centre has consolidated our position at the forefront of using music as a tool for social good, particularly in supporting those living with dementia.

## Looking forward »»

As we move into the next year, Manchester Camerata will continue to explore new ways to shape and share our stories. With a robust communications strategy centred on digital engagement and a growing team dedicated to digital storytelling, we are poised to further inform, challenge, and provoke thoughtful discussion. We will continue to uncover and amplify voices that are not always heard, using our platform to challenge preconceptions about what an orchestra can achieve and the profound difference that world-class music can make.

# Fundraising

Manchester Camerata can only deliver the impact that it achieves through philanthropic contributions. Our fundraising work ensures we have the financial stability to deliver impact in all areas of activity.

In 2023-24, we began to see positive results from our work in previous years to develop and implement a new strategy for our fundraising. Our ambition remains undimmed, with the Board agreeing an aspirational plan to build a £10 million Future Fund to provide a financially stable future for the organisation.

We were delighted that the Grindrod family along with Penny & John Early renewed their gift to support Caroline Pether's Leader chair. On top of this we had fantastic new and ongoing support for other musicians' chairs, including Kathy Arundale (Anthony Banks & Daniel Storer), John Caine (Janet Fulton), Ron and Jill Robinson (Hannah Roberts), and Gill Williamson (Sophie McQueen).

A huge thank you to The Utleay Foundation for providing further support over the next 3 years to support our core costs. That helps to provide the organisational stability that underpins our operations in both concerts and community. The Utleay Foundation is also one

of a group of supporters who are contributing to the establishment of the new National Centre of Excellence for Music and Dementia, in which Manchester Camerata is the lead partner. The Foundation has been a longstanding supporter of our work in music and dementia, and this ongoing support will enable us to expand our activities and make an even greater impact.

This year also witnessed the early impact of the first cohort of Camerata 360° Ruth Sutton Fellows, early career musicians who are benefiting from holistic support to develop their craft. These fellows are already bringing enormous benefits to the organisation, audiences and communities. That impact has been made possible only due to the generosity of the Ruth Sutton Trust for Music which provided the first six figure gift to Camerata, representing a step change in the level of philanthropic support we are able to secure.

Alongside these high-profile successes, in 2023-24 we have also invested in building our organisational capacity to create the team and the mechanisms essential to succeed in an increasingly specialised fundraising environment. This year, we made significant strides by implementing a new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, Beacon, thanks to



a generous legacy donation and a digital box office, thanks to a grant from The Clothworkers' Foundation. These tools have enhanced our fundraising capabilities, allowing us better stewardship, data analysis, and the ability to attract new gifts.

We also launched the Director's Circle, a group of strategic philanthropists supporting Gabor's artistic vision and projects like *Mozart, Made in Manchester*, which has already garnered support from donors including: John and Penny Early, Michael & Kathryn Reeves, Ron and Jill Robinson, Geoffrey and Gay Shindler, Dr David Shreeve and anonymous donors. Furthermore, we introduced Camerata50, a direct debit/regular giving scheme for unrestricted support with great success.

## Looking forward ☺

In 2023-24 we started to feel the benefits of our shift to a new structure and approach to fundraising. As we move into next year, we will maintain this trajectory, leveraging real world examples from our Fellowships to show how philanthropic giving supports impact. This will enable us to continue to seek and secure further high-value philanthropic donations in line with the Board's agreed Endowment Strategy.

We also plan to extend Beacon's functionality to include audience data management and support our own box office operations.

# Governance

Robust governance provides the bedrock for all of Manchester Camerata's work, ensuring that there is the stability and leadership essential for our team's success.

During 2023-24, the Board has focused on refining our business planning and strengthening our financial management processes, ensuring that the organisation remains resilient and well-positioned for the future.

There has also been extensive work around succession planning with our longstanding Chair, Stephen Dauncey,

due to step down having been in post since 2017. Stephen has been the central driving force for this important work which has provided clarity and stability for the organisation.

With the new strategy now embedded, Manchester Camerata has commenced the process of recruiting a new Chair to lead the next phase of our journey. That new Chair will be supported by our expert and experienced board members, all of whom underwent a 360° appraisal in 2023-24, reinforcing our commitment to continuous improvement and strong leadership.

Another key activity in 2023-24 was the Board's implementation of new financial controls and the taking of significant steps to secure our reserves position. These measures are critical as we navigate an increasingly complex financial landscape. Taken together, they will ensure that our resources are managed in a way that delivers stability for our team and impact for our audiences.

There were further changes to our finance function in 2023-24, with long-serving Finance Director, Chris Pearson, stepping down to retire and the welcome of Rachel Durkin in post.

In 2023-24 the Board also played a critical role in ensuring that there was an in depth and informed debate around the merits and risks of our continuing work in the Middle East. Throughout the year, the board engaged in extensive discussions to ensure due diligence around these activities. After careful consideration and debate, a position paper was agreed, setting clear parameters for our

work in the Middle East and highlighting the financial and artistic value that it contributes to our overall mission.

The Board also played an important role in shaping our participation in the new National Centre of Excellence for Music and Dementia. When it became evident that only a charity could lead this initiative, the Board carefully evaluated the opportunity in relation to our existing associated company, Music in Mind Remote LTD.

As we move into this new phase, it is likely that Music in Mind Remote LTD, a non-charitable entity, will become dormant. The strategic decision to lead the new National Centre has effectively streamlined a previously complex structure into a more straightforward governance model, ensuring clarity around our leadership for this pioneering initiative.

## Looking forward »»

As we move into 2024-25, the Board will continue to drive Manchester Camerata's strategy forward, maintaining a clear vision that aligns with our core values. A new Chair will be recruited and the wider Board will continue to challenge the organisation to be bold and ambitious in serving our audiences, musicians, and the communities in which we work.





# Looking back

As we move into 2024-25, Manchester Camerata stands at the threshold of an even brighter future.

This has been a year of consolidation, growth, and impact as the organisation has reaped the benefits that flowed from the development and implementation of its new strategic vision. That provides the foundation for our talented musicians and team to set new standards in performance across a diverse range of settings.

The remarkable strides Manchester Camerata has made in 2023-24 are just the beginning. With a clear mission, unparalleled talent, and unwavering commitment, we are poised to reach new heights and continue redefining what an orchestra can achieve.

The foundation we've laid is solid, the momentum we've built is strong, and the possibilities ahead are limitless.



# to move forward

# Support our work

# Donate today

Donate online at  
[manchestercamerata.com/support-us](https://manchestercamerata.com/support-us)

Or scan this code



Connect with Camerata

 @ManchesterCamerata  
 @MancCamerata

 @manchestercamerata  
 /Manchester Camerata