

I hope that players will make the most of the opportunity the AGM brings to all; a forum to hear about the workings of the organisation and to offer up comments on past work and articulate thoughts about the direction of travel for the Society in the future, especially as we head towards our momentous 50th season in 2027/28. Solutions to problems are always welcome, as well as creative and/or innovative ideas!

I am sure the new committee, voted in at this AGM will be equally keen to hear your thoughts, as in the past. Maybe you can see yourself as a committee member? We very much welcome new members; please do put your name forward.

On that note, there have and will be a number of changes to the committee; refreshing to have new blood and new ideas. In no particular order, it was awesome to be able to welcome Phil to the committee to take on our website, which has been in my 'caretaker' hands for a while. I am particularly personally grateful to him for stepping up. Also on a personal note, I was saddened to hear from Catherine that she wished to bring to an end her tenure as Secretary; she has been brilliant! Super organised, very thorough and very supportive. A huge thank you to her for her commitment.

This year has also seen Allan Emery stand down as Stage Manager. The roles he undertook are yet to be covered, but the profile of the role will look different for the year ahead at the Marina. Any takers?

We also sadly noted the loss of Chris Greenhill, whose family we offered condolences, support and thanks for his huge contribution to the Waveney Sinfonia over many, many years, and more recently as Vice – Chair. Christine Adelson kindly agreed to take on this role.

As you will be aware, our 49th Season will see us based at the Marina Theatre in Lowestoft. This came about following an existential meeting just before Christmas, as we looked forward to the 50th Season and beyond. Without going into huge detail, the outcome was that we needed to go 'all out' to raise the profile of what is a hidden gem; Waveney Sinfonia. Various strands were looked at and explored including contacting the Battery of Ideas, an Arts organisation based in Lowestoft. The most fertile ground however, proved to be the team at the Marina. I had a number of meetings with key staff there and we came to an agreement for the coming season; a potential agreement which could deliver for both sides. The key thing for WS is that we are at a prestige venue which is central to the locality and that our concerts are featured in their widely circulated brochure and website and ticketing is managed by them too.

There is the potential for us to remain as Orchestra in Residence for the 50th Season.

Please note carefully the Treasurer's Report regarding Waveney Sinfonia's financial position, any thoughts about how we can generate greater income via additional audience members or other methods would happily be discussed at one of our committee meetings. We need to continue planning for the future! Friends are having a positive impact on our finances so please do let Caroline know of anyone whom you think might like to join this 'merry throng'. As we improve and increase our use of technology, it's even easier to donate to the society; two weekends of music making and performance under the baton of a professional conductor 'don't come cheap'! Maybe a suggested donation from players of £10 per concert wouldn't be unreasonable? I'll leave that thought hanging. Imagine the difference it would make though! A huge thank you to Christine, Allan and Alison Evans (Friend), who helped create some additional income by preparing and serving concert refreshments. Great work!

Cecilia has done a fantastic job keeping us all 'in touch' via the Newsletter, a well embedded part of the Waveney Sinfonia offer now. She works so hard, and has rightly asked for someone to help her with creating the programme for our concerts. Please do let us know if this is something you could help with. The role doesn't have a massive workload in itself, but makes the role Cecilia undertakes, on our behalf, huge. Please do offer your support.

Adrian, as always goes above and beyond, for which I am sure we are all grateful for. His energy and commitment to Waveney Sinfonia is outstanding, helping to keep high quality, varied classical music-making alive in the Waveney and Lowestoft areas. What an exciting season ahead, on the back of an exhilarating programme in 2025/26; well received and commented on by many audience members.

I always enjoy committee meetings, which blend serious and creative thinking, problem solving strategic planning and good humour. There are always plenty of emails flying back and forth between meetings; it's motivating and energising! A great team to be part of. Thank you!

Thanks to all involved in the family that is Waveney Sinfonia. Onwards and upwards, stronger together with a positive looking future. Please do your part to promote our concerts with family, friends and acquaintances, if they don't know about the concerts, they can't make a choice! The more 'bums on seats' the happier we'll all be.

Keep well, keep safe,

Michael

Chair – Waveney Sinfonia