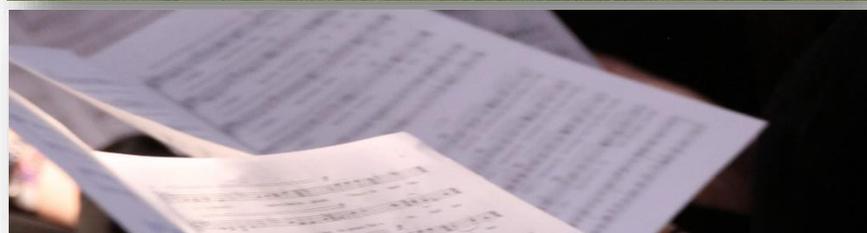




THE ROYAL SCHOOL OF CHURCH MUSIC



The Royal School of Church Music Strategic Plan 2019-2021



*Praise him with the sound of the trumpet,
praise him with the harp and lyre,
praise him with timbrel and dancing,
praise him with the strings and pipe,
Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.*

Verses from Psalm 150

Our Vision

A Church drawn closer to God through music

Our Mission

The Christian faith underpins everything we do; and as the Heart and Home of church music, the RSCM promotes “the study, practice and improvement of music and other matters relevant to the conduct of Christian worship.”



Introduction

The aim of this document is to provide a concise and straightforward account of the RSCM’s proposed direction of travel during this period. A Business Plan will set priorities for the work flowing from this Strategic Plan.

The intention is that it should underpin all our thinking within and beyond the next three-year period. Mindful of our forthcoming centenary in 2027, we wish to ensure that our priorities be set on a consistent path, which will enable us to be able to celebrate 100 successful years of supporting church music. It should also place us on a firm foundation for stability and growth for the future, supporting our activities and our ministry, as we work to be a positive influence and voice for all that is good in church music.

Context

This plan replaces and succeeds the Strategic Plan 2016-18. Real progress has been made in many areas of work within that time; this new plan affords the opportunity to build on the achievements of the last few years. It enables a fresh view of the future within the context of a fast-paced, rapidly changing society, within which the church has an evolving existence. The church itself is refocusing its energies and ambitions; since we exist to serve the needs of the church, we must be able to respond to that.

The new Strategic Plan is a flexible document; we need to be able to respond to unforeseen circumstances and adapt our work in the light of altered context. To that end, this is a document subject to regular review, and future amendment as may be necessary.

The RSCM has a significant role and position in supporting church music-making. We are mindful of the responsibility this places upon us; we exist both to serve and to lead. We are proud of our choral heritage and will continue to celebrate this as we support traditional choirs and organists both now and into the future. We also recognise the diverse nature of music making, in parallel to the extraordinary kaleidoscope of musical styles in wider society. As such, we also work with music groups of diverse kinds, and the many churches which have modest musical resourcing, or indeed none at all. This is not to dis-respect, nor dilute our heritage, but rather to re-imagine it in the twenty-first century context within which we work.

The Church of England remains the principal focusing agent of our work, since most of our membership is Anglican in nature. However, we are an ecumenical organisation and will be seeking to broaden our links with, and support for, other denominations through the life of this plan.

The RSCM has a particular interest in education. We work to establish patterns of life-long learning, which enable us to engage with people of all ages and from a wide range of backgrounds. Our work encounters and serves people at all skill levels, and it aims to encourage all of them onwards in their own personal Christian journey. We aim to inspire a culture of learning through study and practice, not least by example.

Specific details of the work of the RSCM are contained within our Annual Report; and full details of our general policies concerning those with whom we work are appended to this Plan.



Our Five Strategic Goals, which in combination serve to support our vision, values and mission, are to:

- 1. Influence both the church and society beyond it**
- 2. Advance our mission**
- 3. Build Financial Sustainability**
- 4. Develop Effective Communications**
- 5. Optimise our impact through technology**

These strands are explored in progressive layers of detail below.

Measuring Key Performance Indicators will ensure that we are on track to reach our goals and keep our work mission-focused.

Strand 1	Strand 2	Strand 3	Strand 4	Strand 5
Influence both the church and society beyond it	Advance our mission	Build Financial Sustainability	Develop Effective Communications	Optimise our impact through technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Represent in relevant places our work and mission b) Develop relationships with key policy-makers c) Engage with key media d) Influence clergy programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Relevant, desirable membership benefits b) Relevant, coherent education programme c) Broad and balanced training provision d) Relevant, coherent publications programme e) A source of help and support f) Website content development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Control cost b) Cultivate existing membership c) Increase membership d) Grow grant and voluntary income e) Re-focus legacies income f) Fund core costs from regular income g) Improve & diversify income streams (including trading) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Supply regular editorial to external recipients b) Develop relationship with church communications channels c) Develop new communication pathways d) Develop role as an influencer e) Improve internal communications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Website/web shop/intranet b) Technology as a tool for learning c) Online publishing – unlocking potential d) Better use of social media as a tool for interactive learning e) RSCM app(s)

1. Influence in society

a) **Representation in relevant places**

By identifying and cultivating critical groups, we will work to ensure we have a voice in conversations where church music is, or should be, an important, influential, or critical factor.

b) **Develop relationships with key policy-makers**

We will continue to identify and develop relationships with key policy-makers, so that we can better pursue our mission and goals, and in return act as a resource reference and information point for them.

c) **Engage with key media**

Using new and existing links, we will pursue a policy of active engagement with a variety of media channels and formats.

d) **Influence clergy training programmes**

We view the resourcing of clergy for effective ministry as an important part of our work. We will seek new opportunities for delivering clergy training and continue to remind the wider church of the importance of addressing music within formation programmes.



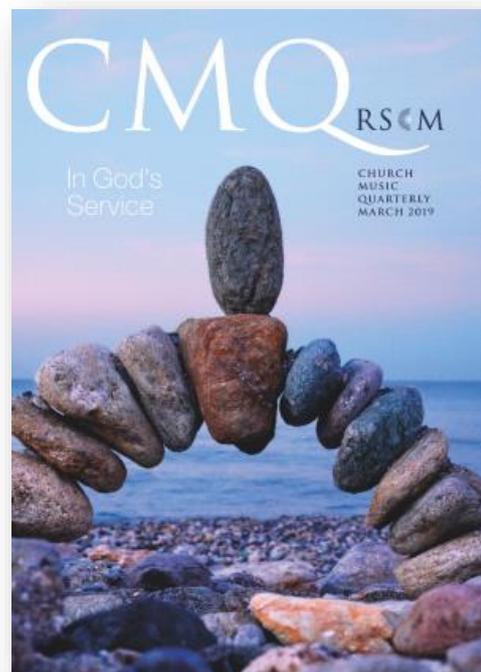
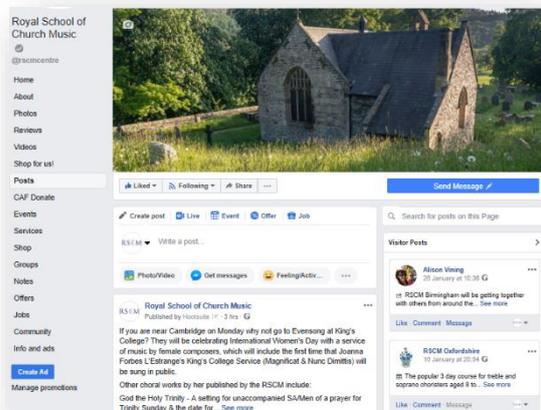
3. Financial Sustainability

- a) **Control cost**
The RSCM will continue to analyse its cost base, and will seek to contain and reduce these where appropriate without compromising our mission.
We will keep a close eye on cash flow.
- b) **Cultivate existing membership**
Through this plan's other strategic goals, we will seek to maximise our existing membership's contribution.
- c) **Increase membership**
We will seek to increase our membership income, since there exists a large body of churches and church schools, within and beyond the Church of England, whom we currently do not support.
- d) **Grow grant and voluntary income**
By increasing the strength of our relationships with our membership, and with wider aspects of the church, we will work to increase giving. Through more effective grant applications, we will strengthen our income streams to fund our missional activity.
- e) **Re-focus legacies income**
We are deeply thankful for the generosity of legators; much of the successful work of the last few years has been funded by this income stream. We seek to grow our long-term missional impact through responsible use and investment of legacies.
- f) **Improve & diversify income streams (including trading)**
We will identify new potential income streams, in order to increase funding available for our missional work. This will enable us to have a greater number of relational encounters with the public, which can raise awareness of our work but will not be allowed to be a distraction from our work in fulfilling our charitable aims and objectives.



4. Effective Communications

- a) **Regular editorial externally**
We will share news and details of our work both with those whom we already have as a connection, and with an increasing number of people through media channels.
- b) **Develop relationship with church communication channels**
We will work to utilise, at all levels, the existing communication channels that exist within the corporate and individual structures of churches. We will supply relevant, focused, interesting communications, which will be presented in a format that makes it easy for uptake and forwarding by each body.
- c) **Develop new communications pathways**
We will seek and develop new pathways for communication of our work and our message; this will include clergy training schemes, church schools, and other organisations that are sympathetic to our message, values and ethos.
- d) **Develop role as an influencer**
We will work to be a formative voice in helping to shape a dynamic future for church music, rather than simply being reactive.
- e) **Improve internal communications**
The mechanisms for internal communication will be revised and developed.



5. Optimise our impact through technology

- a) **Website/web shop/intranet**
We will continue to embrace changes in digital technologies, to ensure that our products are effectively communicated and available across a wide variety of platforms.

- b) **Technology as a tool for learning**
We will explore new tools, including the development of an online learning campus. Where appropriate, we will increasingly look to signpost, for example, online performances of music we are publishing, or are using at events.

- c) **Online publishing – unlocking potential**
We will work to develop the possibilities presented by online publishing, including enhanced content. We will, however, remain mindful that not all our users and members wish to engage in this way.

- d) **Better use of social media as a tool for interactive learning**
Online conversation portals will become a way of increasing our connection with our membership, and sharing best practice, experience and ideas.

- e) **RSCM app(s)**
We will explore how best to deliver new and existing resources through this medium where we believe this can and will enhance our current offering.



Appendices

General objectives

Beyond items contained in the specific 2016-2019 plan above, the long-term objectives of the RSCM are:

- (1) to uphold, model and encourage high standards for music in worship;
- (2) to develop a coherent offering of training, resources and support to promote its ideals and core values and serve church music;
- (3) to deliver a diverse range of high-quality products and help churches find imaginative solutions;
- (4) to influence debate and practice in music and worship within the Christian Church;
- (5) to inspire those engaged in music in worship;
- (6) to uphold and create a relational, caring and supportive RSCM family in which listening and responding are undertaken at every level;
- (7) to create an RSCM which fulfils its charitable objectives and delivers value in its charitable activities;
- (8) to create an RSCM which demonstrably represents value for money for its members and in its products and services;
- (9) to create a base of support, human and financial, to enable RSCM's objectives to be enacted.

Constituencies with which RSCM works

RSCM seeks to serve all Christian denominations confessing the tenets of the Apostles' Creed. It has a strong Anglican heritage reflected in a membership which is currently predominantly Anglican. Other significant groups within its membership are Roman Catholic, Methodist and URC.

It is a UK-based charity with subscribing affiliates and members in the UK and in around 40 countries across the world. It also serves partner organisations in five countries which are franchised to use the RSCM brand and receives a capitation fee on behalf of their members to defray the costs of doing so.

As a charity and a membership organisation, RSCM seeks to serve both members and non-members, the former receiving additional specialist content, benefits and discounts.

Constituencies who additionally benefit from RSCM's work

- (1) Congregations who encounter music within worship;
- (2) Others who encounter church music through broadcasting, community events, etc.;
- (3) Those individuals or institutions (e.g. theological colleges) with an interest in church music.
- (4) Church schools, especially where these have active links with local churches themselves.
- (5) Connected organisations

Policies applying across RSCM's work

The following policies apply to all areas of RSCM work and should be read in conjunction with those listed within the specific function headings following. These policies all presuppose that Council, acting through its senior management, will provide sufficient enabling resources to render them workable and credible:

- (1) The work of all RSCM departments, staff and volunteers should be integrated and not developed or pursued independently. The organisation works on the principle that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. The structure of the RSCM should enable it to offer a raft of products and services the diversity, quality, vision and integration of which cannot be found elsewhere;
- (2) RSCM communications, products and services should be stratified so that some are available to all enquirers, some to members only, and some available for payment, reflecting RSCM's charitable and member-based organisation;
- (3) Council, staff and volunteers all have servant relationships to others which should be identified, recognised and exercised. Servant-hearted ministry is required by all;
- (4) Subject to feasibility, value, and proportionate human and financial constraints, RSCM seeks to develop and maintain user-friendly and user-focussed products, communication and administrative systems;
- (5) Subject to feasibility, value and good governance RSCM seeks to develop and maintain staff-light administration systems so that where possible its human and financial resources may be directed towards adding value in content. In no instance should anything be allowed to divert resources where it neither adds missional value, nor supports internal governance (e.g. risk-management), nor has to be complied with for external regulatory reasons;
- (6) RSCM will manage its operational systems such that its resources are used efficiently, economically and effectively;
- (7) RSCM seeks to communicate its products well;
- (8) RSCM departments are required proportionately to use appropriate market research and other evidence-based processes where possible to inform decision-making;

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- (9) RSCM departments are expected to work to budget, agreeing additional expenditure through appropriate channels and keeping management up to date as to unplanned outcomes in mission, risk or finance;
- (10) RSCM departments are expected to engage appropriately as agreed with RSCM's partner organisations;
- (11) RSCM departments are expected to work far enough ahead to get resources to members and potential members for their early planning of worship and repertoire.

26th March 2019

