

ASSOCIATION OF CATHEDRAL VOLUNTARY CHOIRS

A meeting was held on Saturday 6th July 1996 in Vicars' Hall, Wells, Somerset attended by members of the Wells Cathedral Voluntary Choir (WCVC) and the following representatives of other Cathedral Voluntary Choirs (CVCs):-

Janet Love and Hazel Blackhall	-	Derby CVC
Margaret Williams and John Grant	-	Exeter CVC
Martin and Sheila Ham	-	Guildford Occasional Singers
Douglas Henn-Macrae	-	Rochester Special Choir
Bill and Rosemary Neale	-	The Minster Chorale, Southwell
Richard and Juliet Lingham	-	St Mary's Singers, Truro

Dudley Holroyd, Director of Wells CVC, was in the Chair.

The Chairman welcomed all those present and said that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the merits of forming a federation or association of Cathedral Voluntary Choirs and, if there was sufficient enthusiasm, what form it should take. The idea had come from WCVC's vice chairman, Lynne Browning, and the Chairman invited her to report on the reaction she had had from WCVC members and the results of her survey of cathedrals in England, Scotland and Wales.

Mrs. Browning said that the WCVC view was that any federation or association should be kept as informal as possible at this stage: no subscriptions or charitable status, therefore no central administration, treasurer, etc. Each event should be self financing. Of the 42 C of E cathedrals in England, 6 in Wales and St Mary's Edinburgh, only 12 did not reply to the survey. Of the 37 taking part, 16 have a voluntary choir, 14 of whom expressed interest in forming a federation or association of CVCs. 7 choirs were represented at the meeting and apologies had been received from Manchester, Salisbury and Worcester (and since the meeting Edinburgh) who wished to be kept informed.

There followed a very positive discussion. Some of the representatives were present as observers and were not empowered to make decisions on behalf of their choir but there was overall enthusiasm to pursue the idea. It was agreed by the meeting that we should form an association, not a federation, and that an article about the proposed Association should be sent to various church publications, national (**action WCVC**) and local (**action individual CVCs**), and to the RSCM quarterly (**action WCVC**).

The proposed objects of the Association were:-

1. To arrange events periodically on a national or regional basis, the form of which would be at the discretion of the host choir but suggestions were:

A combined evensong followed by a concert at which each choir could make its own contribution and some items could be rehearsed and sung together;

Workshops on a particular composer or period of music, or the combined learning of a modern work conducted by the composer;

2. Sharing or exchanging services between individual choirs;
3. To provide a channel for the exchange of information and discussion of mutually relevant matters.

