

STRINGS ATTACHED

Minutes of the 15th Annual General Meeting held on 16 March 2026 at 1200 at 9 Powis Square, Brighton

Present: David Botibol, Sandie Botibol, Jill Bourne (Chair), Christine Moon, Paul Moore, Margaret Polmear, Guy Richardson, Helen Simpson, Betty Skolnick

Apologies: Apologies for absence were received from Elisabeth Robson.

1 Chair's welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 To receive the minutes of the 14th Annual General Meeting held on 14 March 2025

The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

*Proposed: Betty Skolnick
Seconded: Helen Simpson*

3 To receive the Annual Report of the Committee of Strings Attached

The report was received.

The Chair drew attention to the fact that Strings Attached is fully funding free tickets for 8-25 year olds during the 2025/26 season as a result of funding by the Cavatina scheme having come to an end and that it expects to do so again during the 2026/27 season. She also mentioned that programme notes for all seasons of coffee concerts are now available on the Strings Attached website, that the current season has included a world premiere and two successful post-concert receptions, at one of which members of the Heath Quartet had been particularly engaged with audience members.

Thanks were extended to David Botibol for his invaluable technical support, to Chris Darwin for maintaining the calendar of concerts and local players directory and for access to his extensive library of programme notes, and to Guy Richardson for his contribution to the writing of programme notes.

4 To receive the financial accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025

The audited financial accounts for the year ended 31 December 2025 were received.

It was noted that expenditure had exceeded income. The Treasurer explained that reserves are likely to continue to decline as a result of funding free tickets for 8-25 year olds and that at some point it might be necessary to raise the subscription level which has remained unchanged since the inception of Strings Attached.

5 To agree the annual subscription rate for 2026/27

It was proposed that the annual subscription for the year 1 August 2026 to 31 July 2027 should remain unchanged at £10 (free for students).

Proposed: Paul Moore

Seconded: Christine Moon

6 General Data Protection Regulation: data protection policy and register of systems

It was explained that Strings Attached is required to present its data protection policy and register of systems for examination at each Annual General Meeting, the documents having been reviewed by the committee at its meeting prior to the AGM. The committee, it was reported, felt no changes were necessary to either document. This was accepted.

7 To appoint members to the committee

It was reported that nobody had come forward to join the committee, now reduced to five members as a result of Guy Ricardson's resignation at the

end of 2025, but that all remaining members of the outgoing committee are willing to serve for a further year. All were duly appointed.

*Proposed: Guy Richardson
Seconded: David Botibol*

Guy was thanked for his service.

The committee will consider how best to attract others to join.

8 Any further issues for consideration

- a) A member asked for further information regarding the reduced number of concerts in the **2026/27 season**. The Chair explained that Brighton Dome needs to maximise its income and, to this end, is hoping to make the Corn Exchange available for more income generating shows on Saturday evenings. It is not, however, possible to make the venue ready for an 11am event on Sunday following use of the Corn Exchange on a Saturday evening. If Brighton Dome's plans are unsuccessful, there might well be a return to the more usual number of concerts in 2027/28.

Another member wondered whether this was the beginning of a slippery slope and if Strings Attached should be considering holding concerts elsewhere with another strategic partner.

It was stressed that Lucy Davies, Brighton Dome's Chief Executive, is strongly supportive of the coffee concerts and that the committee is confident the concerts have a future under her leadership, although it might be necessary to consider changing the start time of concerts at some point in the future. It was, however, agreed to give members fuller information about the 2026/27 season than has so far been communicated in the regular newsletter.

- b) It was pointed out that the **freesheets** available at coffee concerts no longer include any biographical information about the players. It was agreed to take this matter up with colleagues at Brighton Dome although there was no appetite for abbreviating the notes about the pieces to be performed.

It was also agreed that providing a link in the newsletter to performers' websites would be useful.

- c) Attention was drawn to the fact that Brighton Dome members are charged a **booking fee** when buying a coffee concert season ticket online but not if purchasing tickets for individual concerts. It was agreed to take this up with Brighton Dome.

There being no further issues for consideration, the Chair formally thanked everyone for their attendance at and contribution to the meeting, Amanda Northcote-Green and the Brighton Dome staff generally for the smooth running of the coffee concerts and Margaret Polmear for hosting the meeting and arranging lunch of which everyone was invited to partake.

MP/18.03.26