English Folk Dance and Song Society
Review of the Year, 2024-2025

Fiona Butcher - Chair's Report

The EFDSS team have continued to deliver a vast array of events across England, working with children and young people, adults, teachers, artists and academics. Activities have taken place in every region of the country.

We saw the National Youth Folk Ensemble return to the Fire Station in Sunderland in February and at Sidmouth and Dartmoor Folk Festivals in August; and the London Youth Folk Ensemble made its regular appearance at Folk by the Oak Festival in July. We continued Inclusive Folk, our workshop programme for young people with disabilities, and expanded the programme for adults; and our awarded five Mini Grants programme for grass roots folk dance development.

The creative development of artists working with folk music and dance continued to be delivered through the Alan James Creative Bursary programme and the Micro Grants programme. In addition, we continued our partnerships with Sidmouth Folk Festival and Stage4Beverley Festival to support showcase performances of early career, EFDSS Creative Bursary and Micro Grant artists at these festivals.

The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library and Archive's annual conference – Collectomania: Folk Song and Music Collectors and their Worlds – focused on the song collectors and marked the anniversaries of a number of significant collectors including the centenaries of Cecil Sharp and Sabine Baring Gould. The Library also presented the annual Broadside Day with the Traditional Song Forum, and an online lecture series. The partnership with the Universities of East Anglia and Sheffield on Gypsy and Traveller music continued.

Of course, much of this work would not be possible without the support of members, donors and funders. We are very grateful to John Lyon's Charity, Seneca Trust, Camden Council (education); Scop Arts and Postlethwaite Music Fund (National Youth Folk Ensemble and engagement programme); PRS Foundation and the Cockayne Foundation (artists' development); Good Luck Charitable Trust; and donors Conrad and Jennifer Bailey (Artists' Development); and all our members and donors.

The EFDSS Gold Badge, awarded to individuals who have given exceptional service to EFDSS and/or to the folk arts, was given to three people this year. Tim Laycock, performer – singer, instrumentalist, and songwriter; Theresa Buckland, a defining exponent of English folk dance research; and David Atkinson, editor of FMJ, and editor and writer on folk music history. Congratulations to them all.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Trustees/Directors for all their work and support; to thank those who retired from the board, Lucy Hooberman and Eleanor Telfer, and to welcome the new members, Elsa Cardona, Nell Leyshon, Lisa Saper and Jeremy Simpson. I also wish to thank our Chief Executive, Katy Spicer, and her team for their professionalism, dedication and continued development of the organisation.

A full copy of the Annual Report and Accounts is available from efdss.org/about-us/who-are-we/annual-reviews; paper copies are obtainable from membership@efdss.org or 020 7485 2206. English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) is a Charity Registered in England and Wales No. 305999, a Company Limited by Guarantee No. 297142, VAT No. 233 8664 49. Registered Office: Cecil Sharp House, 2 Regent's Park Road, London, NW1 7AY.

Ed Fishwick - Treasurer's Report

The income for the year was £1,535,587 (2024: £1,548,519), the decrease was due to an overall lower level of grant, donation and legacy funding in the year compared to the previous year. Grants received include £65,757 from the Arts Council as the second year of funding of the Transform programme. Legacies in the year totalled £61,073 (2024: £93,275). Lettings income generated from space in Cecil Sharp House increased to £492,809 (2024: £449,871) and the capital development should allow this to grow when completed in 2025. Income from educational courses and the performance programme increased in a successful year of activities. Expenditure in the year was £1,635,563 (2024: £1,605,925). There was an increase in staffing costs and direct activity costs for the various projects undertaken in the year.

The charity has an overall deficit of £99,976 (2024: £57,579) which reflects depreciation on fixed assets (£95,912), as well as ongoing fluctuations as funding for multi-year projects spans financial years. The charity continues to work on efforts to increase its income to match expenditure. EFDSS holds restricted, designated and free reserves, totalling £2,592,770 (2024: £2,720,242) which includes the value of Cecil Sharp House. Of this, free reserves stand at £400,045 (2024: £399,974); the Trustees have agreed a policy for free reserves to maintained at a level of £400,000. Free reserves are defined by the Charity Commission as funds that are freely available to spend on the charity's purposes. Trustees review EFDSS's Reserves Policy and reserves levels annually as part of the planning process and are satisfied with the level of reserves at 31 March 2025.



