

Everyone,

Welcome to the first newsletter from Community Music Whickham and Swalwell. We are now half way through our first term as a fully fledged registered charity and we have had a fantastic start. It has been an incredibly exciting and busy few months, with new ventures, performances, funding applications and getting used to our new e-mail and invoicing systems.

The existing ensembles have continued to grow and our new groups already have a number of regular members and the next performance dates are in the diary! The aim of the charity is to provide opportunities for everyone, of all ages and abilities to participate in music and perform. The board of trustees has worked hard over the last year to ensure that we created the correct framework to deliver our vision and with the success of this first half term we are confident we are heading in the right direction.

Instruments and Aviva Fund Success

Instruments are expensive items, especially when children grow, improve their skills and instruments need be changed. One way in which the charity has begun to support our members is by offering the free loan of instruments, when available. We were delighted to be successful in the Aviva Community Fund application and are hugely grateful to all of you who voted for us. This £1000 award will fund repairs and restoration of a range of damaged and worn musical instruments that will become available to our students.



Our thanks are extended to a number of members and friends have also kindly donated unwanted instruments. These have all been distributed to students so that they can be used again to create beautiful music. One of the changes that we need to make as a charity is to monitor our assets, including instruments, so those of you with an instrument on loan will shortly receive a loan agreement to sign, just to formalise our arrangements with you.

Charity Online

The charity now has a new website, e-mail account and Facebook page. Like us on Facebook or check out the website to stay up to date with news and information.



As many of you will know we have set up a new e-mail invoicing and payment scheme for Community Music membership. We hope that you have found this system straightforward and easy to use. Huge thanks to everyone who has sent cheques or bank transfer payments already and we would appreciate any outstanding payments to be made ASAP.

Performances

In September we held an informative and exciting Shakespeare Lecture. Lucy Bloxham spoke passionately and eloquently about Shakespeare, The Man, offering fascinating and lively insights into his life and works. The entertaining evening was enhanced by music and songs from the 16th century to present day, with vocals from Lynne Bloxham accompanied by John Treherne. The lecture was extremely well attended and raised vital funds for the charity.



The viol ensemble were recently asked to play at Hexham Abbey as part of the celebrations for the opening of the Priory Buildings restoration project. The ensemble performed beautifully to visitors to the Abbey and Lord and Lady Carnaby! High praise was received from the audience and massive thanks to all musicians as every single member turned up!

New Groups

The new academic year has marked the start of some different exciting ventures for Community Music.

The 2Note Band is available to musicians of any age and any ability on any instrument. As long as you can play 2 notes you can join this exciting and diverse musical group that focuses on group music making by learning about rhythm, time keeping and improvisation. This group is thoroughly fun and often very energetic! Everyone is welcome!

Our new Handbell Ringing Group, Bells Up, has been extremely popular and already has two performances booked! The group are learning how to ring carols in preparation for the festive season and are progressing amazingly well, especially as the majority of new members had no prior experience and could not read music. Again this group is available to everyone and no previous knowledge is required.



Ever wondered how to create music? The new theory and composition class will explain all. The weekly classes are studying all aspects and elements of music, such as harmony, melody, rhythm and form and are open to everyone. These classes may be of particular interest to students approaching or working at grade 5 as preparation for the theory examination (and discounts are available for CMWS members!).

Christmas Performances

News of our Charity has spread and we have been asked to perform at a number of events running up to the Christmas period, including the Metrocentre, Blaydon and Swalwell Christmas Tree Festival, Carol Services and Whickham Hermitage Garden. We also have the end of term CMWS concert. These all provide fantastic opportunities for our musicians to perform to a wide variety of audiences. The musicians are vital ambassadors of the charity and their wonderful music is always the best way to display and advertise our vision and what we offer.

Obviously these are fabulous opportunities for the musicians but we do realise the effort it takes to attend events and practise, especially at this busy time. We have met with Mr Finnon, Mr Evans and Mr Treherne, our musical advisor and tried to distribute events across the various groups and individuals. Mr Finnon and Mr Evans will speak to the ensembles and musicians over the next week to check availability and discuss material. We really do appreciate the support and effort that both the musicians and parents give when we ask you to perform. In order to continue the charities work and expand we need funds and to advertise the activities we offer. The upcoming performances are vital to both aspects and we would be immensely grateful of your continued support.



Below is a list of dates for your diary:

Saturday 5th December, Holy Trinity Swalwell – Bells Up

Saturday 12th December Hermitage Garden, Whickham – Bells Up

Saturday 12th December Blaydon Christmas Tree Festival – Cello Ensemble

Sunday 13th December Metrocentre – Whickham Strings

Monday 14th December - CMWS Autumn Concert

Sunday 20th December - Carol Services