



'Music in the Castle'

Music in the Castle - Charity number: 1187306

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for the year ending

31 December 2024

Objectives and Activities

To advance the education of the general public and, in particular but not exclusively, schoolchildren in the arts by providing and assisting in the provision of classical music concerts, recitals and workshops in Devon and the surrounding areas.

Six evening concerts and three workshops for schoolchildren had been planned and advertised on the website for 2024. The events had been carefully considered to create a wide variety, thereby appealing to as many schoolchildren and the wider general public as possible. They included a Jazz Ensemble; a Brass Trio; Vocal Recital; Viola & Piano; a Flute & Harp Duo and Christmas Evenings.

The concerts began in Mid-March with the Jazz Ensemble from Wells Cathedral School. They also presented an afternoon concert for our local school children. Our next dual event for schoolchildren and the paying public was in April and featured the Solis Brass Trio from the Royal Academy of Music. They were well received by both the schoolchildren and the evening audience.

The third planned concert was an evening event only, and for the general public, with local 6th form Singers and Teachers from Exeter School.

The second half of the year began in September with the Toby Cook - Viola & Victor Lim - Piano. Toby was a 2023 Tillett Trust Artist. This was to be an evening only concert. This was then to be followed by the Hathor Duo (Flute & Harp) in November who completed the third of our afternoon concerts for schoolchildren, as well as a full-length evening recital.



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To conclude the year, the acapella vocal ensemble Amamus Cantare were asked to present two consecutive performances, further bringing local talent to Music in the Castle and creating an attractive and varied yearly programme for our audiences.

All events were agreed by the Trustees and given due and careful regard for the policies outlined in the governing document.

In addition, and for the first year – Music in the Castle invited audience members to sponsor a concert of their choosing, and this brought forward two sponsors for which we were very grateful. These two individuals were highly delighted with the events they sponsored, both for very personal reasons. Also introduced, was a special offer – purchase tickets for 3 events and receive a 10% discount. This has also proved to be popular with some and will continue.

Achievements and Performance

The March concert with Wells Cathedral Jazz Ensemble brought nearly 100 local schoolchildren to the Music room eager as ever to hear live music. The hour long concert with such a huge variety of styles and instruments enthralled and excited the youngsters and they eagerly engaged with the questions and answer section at the end. The evening concert brought a different, if slightly smaller audience to the music room for the change of genre, but they were no less welcoming or enthusiastic to see these youngsters still at school, work both as a team and individually in displaying their emerging musical talents.

The April concert took the same format and once again the popularity of free hour long concerts to schoolchildren saw another hundred or so arrive with their teachers for the next professional event of the year.

The three young ladies that made up the Solis Brass Trio from The Royal Academy of Music bonded well with the youngsters and created a fine and lively interactive event before delighting the general public in the evening with their natural and genuine love of music, their ability to connect with their audience, inform and play a huge variety of styles with nuance and intelligence.

The intimacy of the Music Room was the perfect setting for two 6th form students to present their ATCL diploma programmes to an audience seated at tables in an informal setting for a second consecutive year. The evening worked well and together with items of solo piano and teachers' vocal duets, the evening created a chance for the two young ladies to perform and receive audience feedback prior to their exams later in the month. They were very well received and they greatly valued the opportunity. Both went on to pass their Diplomas.



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After the summer break in September, Toby and Victor were looking forward to playing for us in such an historic setting. However, just 24hrs before the event Toby had an accident and damaged his hand and was unable to attend. Such was the closeness to the day and with no opportunity for the Tillet Trust to send us another artist, the decision was taken to cancel the concert. All ticket holders were informed and automatically given a refund via Ticket Source. Toby thankfully was fully recovered 2 weeks later.

The penultimate concert of the year brought the Hathor Duo to Powderham, for the final concert for schoolchildren of 2022. It was a real pleasure to welcome back Meera Maharaj on Flute who first played for us with her Guitarist back in 2021. They fully engaged with the children in the afternoon, responded instantly to the big age range and enthused with their natural and informal manner, coupled with some superb and intimate playing. The evening concert was no less engaging and saw some very fine playing from these players and their rapport with the audience made for a very natural and relaxed evening.

The final concerts of the year were presented by the ten singers of Amamus Cantare. Such is the popularity of our Christmas events it has become necessary to repeat the performances on two consecutive nights. These two nights brought a mixture of seasonal music to two capacity audiences, coupled with festive readings and audience Carols. There was something for everyone and the decorated music room came alive with wonderful music and interaction from the audiences, which brought everybody beautifully into the festive season.

From our Schools Co-ordinator.

During the year, a total of 288 young people (ranging from 7 to 16 years old) have attended - and in many cases actively taken part in - three afternoon concerts in Powderham Castle's wonderful Music Room. This represents a mixture of state schools and independents from many areas of Devon. This year, we have also welcomed a number of Ukrainian children being educated in local schools.

The Jazz Ensemble from Wells Cathedral School was especially popular as the performers were barely older than some of the audience; the mastery of their instruments was incredibly impressive. Brass players in the audience were full of questions in the Q&A slot and Mr Edward Leaker, Head of Woodwind & Brass, cleverly involved everyone in learning the various rhythms in jazz.

To offer a really wide range of musical styles, the other concerts incorporated a strikingly beautiful harp (whose tuning, string replacements and finger toughening issues were all fully discussed!), a range of flutes and excellent audience involvement guided by the Solis Brass Trio. All the performers are carefully chosen to be very sound and inventive communicators –



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to explain their instruments, their chosen pieces/composers and their journeys to be musicians.

The young people in the audience repeatedly comment on the amount of music 'that must be just in your head' (a seven year old) as scores are often not used. The hours of practice per day continue to seriously impress and phrases such as 'I'm going to learn the saxophone!' as the audience leaves the room are not uncommon.

*Ros Mason
Schools Liaison
Music in the Castle*

Evening audience attendance remains consistent since the pandemic, if still a little less than ideal, although capacity audiences for the Christmas events are always encouraging and as such our mailing list continues to expand. Those that do attend are always thankful and appreciative for what we provide and leave feeling content and satisfied that they have had an enjoyable evening of music. Live Classical Music is becoming more of a luxury, but an aspect of life that remains vitally important.

Future plans for 2025 include six more concerts throughout the year, three afternoon concerts for schoolchildren and two nights of the Christmas concert event have been scheduled to cope with demand. Concerts will include Solo Piano Recital, String Ensemble, Female Vocal Ensemble, Organ/Piano and Flute, Violin and Piano and our ever popular two performance of Messiah to conclude the year. We remain dedicated to including young musicians embarking on their professional careers.

Financial Review.

Thanks to incredible generous sponsorships and donations, finances are good. However, costs have risen significantly, particularly performers fees and their travel/accommodation costs.

Funds at the beginning of the year stood at £15,858.42.

Income generated, amounted to £8,428 (including donations/sponsorship) with costs arising to £9,766.01

A balance of £14,520.41 at end of December 2024, is now held in reserve.



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Policy on Reserves

Reserves are held to further promote and develop concerts and workshops for young people and the wider public, and to cover any future unforeseen fluctuations in income and expenditure.

Structure, Governance and Management

Music in the Castle – Constitution was adopted in January 2020 and is registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

Future Trustees are appointed following recommendations presented to the Board of Trustees.

Reference and Administrative details


Charity Name – Music in the Castle

Registered Charity Number – 1187306

Principal Address – 3. Gulliford Cottages, Lymptstone, Devon. EX8 5AQ

Trustees: Alison Burnett – Artistic Director
Rosalind Mason – Schools Co-ordinator
Bernard Hadley

Declarations

Signature(s)	
Full name(s)	Alison Burnett
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Artistic Director
Date	9 th August 2025



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Statement of Financial Activities as at 31st December 2024

	2023	2024
Opening balance:	£13,438.09	£15,858.42
<u>Income</u>		
Donations	£500	£85.50
Sponsorship	£5,000	£2,100
Charitable Activities	£8215.85	£6,242.5
HMRC Gift aid	£1,286.02	
Total Income	£15,001.87	£8,428
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Charitable Activities	£9,470.70	£7,153.60
Instrument tuning, Website, Admin, Printing	£3,110.80	£2,612.41
Total Expenditure	£12,581.50	£9,766.01
Total Unrestricted Funds carried forward	£15,858.42	£14,520.41

The trustees report that Music in the Castle has no outstanding debts against the Charity in this financial period.

9th August 2025