



Entered on the Register of Charities on 10th June 2020

Registered Charity: 1189871

Charitable Incorporated Organisation - "Lancaster & District Schools' Singing Festival"

Financial year: 1 July – 30 June

2022 Trustee's Annual Report & Accounts

Objectives of the charity

To educate the public in the art and science of music and in particular in choral singing for school children through their participation in the Lancaster & District Schools' singing festival, its affiliated choirs, competitions and related musical events. The Charity works in close partnership with the Lancashire Music Hub to achieve its objectives.

Activities and achievements in 2021

Background to the Singing Festival Charity

The Lancaster & District Schools' Singing Festival (LDSSF) started over 70 years ago, with a legacy bequeathal for the festival to use the Ashton Hall at Lancaster Town Hall for one week a year. In 2014 community music organisation, More Music engaged with the festival to develop the event alongside the Lancashire Music Hub as part of their on-going development of a countywide vocal strategy. The Hub began a rejuvenation of both the organisational and artistic elements of the festival using the existing committee of a local schoolteacher, a primary Head and a schools music coordinator alongside the Hub's Singing Lead, the Strategy Co-ordinator, professional musicians and the team at More Music.

Over a period of five years, the festival team changed the LDSSF model to reflect current best practice: clarifying and streamlining committee roles; creating teacher training opportunities; providing digital resource packs; recording tracks and performing with a live band and school workshops. After the event schools provide feedback digitally, helping to shape the future of the festival; both in its musical content and organisation.

There has been a significant increase in the number of schools and children engaging with the festival – in 2020 1420 children from 30 primary schools were due to take part, and the increase in numbers would have been accommodated via an additional KS2 concert on Friday afternoon. The schools involved represent the diverse geographical and social groups within our area; from small rural schools, to large, challenging, urban primaries. There is also participation of SEND students

from a specialist school within the community. The festival would have featured performances from local KS4 and KS5 soloists in the intervals (including musicians from LMS County Ensembles, local secondary schools and the Lancashire Youth Vocal Ensemble), which gives the children an aspirational insight into the potential future development of their instrument or voice.

2020 activities

Due to COVID pandemic the 2020 Lancaster & District Schools' Singing Festival (LDSSF) which was due to run from 19th-23rd March with 1420 children from 30 primary schools at the Ashton Hall in Lancaster was cancelled on 16th March 2020. Although it was not possible to hold a singing Festival in March, many of the schools and individual children from participating schools took part in a Virtual Big Sing in June 2020, with materials (warm-ups, rehearsal and instruction videos from the Lancashire Music Hub Vocal Leaders) made available for free on YouTube in advance.

2021 activities

The LDSSF organising committee booked the Ashton Hall in Lancaster Town Hall for the 15-19th March 2021, however they were advised by the Lancashire County Council team in October 2020 that the Lancaster Town Hall was going to remain closed until at least May 2021, and therefore the festival booking was cancelled.

Given the ongoing COVID restrictions in 2021 preventing large gatherings or singing events, the charity trustees worked closely with the Lancashire Music Hub, and supported their initiative to develop instructional videos, songs, warm-ups and vocal games on the LMS You Tube channel at no cost to schools or individuals. The trustees actively promoted the LMH "Jump Up and Join In" project to all the primary schools in their area.

2022 "Music in Me" project

The LDSSF organising committee worked with Emma Williams and the LMH Singing Strategy Group to develop virtual "Big Sing" opportunities for 2022 as COVID guidance meant in-person large singing performances were still limited. Again, the festival was able to benefit from some financial support from LMH to fund the project (Emma William's time). The festival also continued to engage with the Lancaster Town Hall team to continue the legacy of using the Ashton Hall for the festival, and they booked dates for March 2023.

The LDSSF organising committee wanted a way to work with the LDSSF schools and maintain their good relationships and the 74-year heritage of our singing festival.

Schools were offered the chance to be involved with the following the "Music in Me 2022" project. The project provided each school with:

- A FREE set of songs, chosen and arranged for schools including.
 - Lead sheets
 - Backing Tracks
 - Performance Videos
 - Teaching Notes and curriculum links
 - Both KS1 and KS2 options

PLUS

- A FREE singing Workshop visit for your school from Debbie Pilkington or Emma Williams.

Schools registered in March, online resources were circulated in April and workshop visits were made from May to July.

The aim of the project was for schools to be able to engage with this simple, achievable, and fun opportunity, and for the festival to continue to build their musical relationships across our area, through singing.

Selection of school feedback on the 2022 project

Bowerham Primary and Nursery School

Our school continues to engage with the festival, because of the high-quality teaching and celebration of singing. Giving experiences to all children so they can champion music, singing, and their voices. The songs were easy to learn and encouraged a full body response, as well as introducing harmonies and dynamic singing. We used them in our choir too. The best bit about the school workshop was how Emma helped the children grow in confidence and immersed the children in the music they learnt and performed.

Lancaster Christ Church CE Primary School

Our school love being involved with the festival, and we love the songs and production. The children really enjoyed learning the songs and benefited from the school workshop.

Ryelands Primary School

Our school loves engaging with the festival because of the community spirit and the experience for the children. The songs in the “Music in Me” project were a great mix of traditional, cultural and modern songs. It’s always great having a workshop in school so the staff and children can learn from an expert.

St Wilfrid’s CE Primary Halton

The festival is a lovely way to inspire the children. The “Music in Me” project provided a good range of songs to cater for the varying tastes of the children. It introduced the children to different styles, and they had loads of fun and Emma’s workshop and her voice was inspiring, and she had a good level of engagement and enjoyment from the children.

Silverdale St John's

Our school loves to engage with the festival because we love singing and coming together with other schools. The best bit about the “Music in Me” workshop was singing together as a choir and enjoying learning new songs.

The Cathedral Catholic Primary School

Our school would love to be part of a local singing event once they are back and happening in person. The children enjoyed the songs, and the best bit was Emma’s workshop at our school – her enthusiasm and the great choice of songs.

Financial Review

The Charity is engaged with the Lancashire Music Hub (LMH) in the development and delivery of the Singing Festival. LMH make an annual allowance of £3000 to the festival, which is used to cover the professional fees of the Singing Lead for the music service who oversees the festival programmes and delivery, delivers vocal workshops in schools and conducts the KS2 and assists with the KS1 concerts. The allowance also contributes to the cost of the live band both for recording the programme and playing at the concert rehearsals and concerts themselves, as well as covering the majority of the time cost for the Festival Secretary for the year. In addition, the festival charges schools a flat £2.50 fee for each pupil registered to take part; and charges for concert tickets and there is a retiring collection at the end of the concert. Schools are permitted to offset the cost of coach travel to the festival against ticket money raised, sending the festival any positive balance.

During 2021 the LMH did not make the allocation of £3000 to the festival as it could not take place. Instead, the LMH funded its vocal leaders and social media team to prepare, record and produce all the videos for the “Jump Up and Join In” project for the benefit of the LDSSF participating schools.

Following the cancellation of the 2020 singing festival, a financial overview was prepared by Ms Nicky Donnelly (Charity Trustee) and audited by Mrs Caroline Lindsay, School Business Manager at Slyne-with-Hest School and the closing balance concurred with the festival bank statement dated 12th June 2020 of £9,663.81. The Lancaster & District Schools’ Singing Festival was entered on the Register of Charities on 10th June 2020.

During 2021 there was no revenue nor debts incurred by the charity and the bank balance remained the same at £9,663.81.

During 2022, the festival undertook the “Music in Me” project with Debbie Pilkington and Emma Williams visiting schools to run workshops on the project songs. The fees for the workshop were £751.19 and LMH charged for Emma’s hours above her normal working week hours. As Debbie Pilkington is a Trustee of the Charity the Trustees met and agreed in advance her £461.19 fee for services and travel expenses before the activity. The closing bank balance for the financial year was £8,912.62.

Structure, governance and management

The LDSSF singing festival is run by a very small organising committee – 4 people (three of whom are trustees of the charity – Mr Paul Bowden, Mrs Debra Pilkington and Mrs Nicky Crosley and the Vocal Lead of the Lancashire Music Hub, Mrs Emma Williams) – with the focus being on the development and delivery of a high standard singing festival which is inclusive for diverse geographical and social groups within our area.

In addition, the charity has two more trustees – Mrs Sarah Griffiths (a teacher) and Mrs Elizabeth Wheildon, who review the overall annual plans and provide valuable comments.

All trustees who have direct contact with children are employees of Lancashire County Council and as such, complete annual training and certification in Child Safeguarding and have DBS certification.

Administrative Information

Lancaster & District Schools' Singing Festival is registered at Slyne-with-Hest, St. Lukes CE Primary School, 2 Arden Close, Slyne, Lancaster LA2 6JN

Due the COVID trustee meetings continue to be held via zoom meetings with full trustee attendance:

- 8 June 2021 (reviewing the 2021 activity to date; latest COVID guidance and making provisional plans for 2022)
- 1 February 2022 (reviewing 2021 activity; proposed activity for 2022 and the 2021 Annual Trustee Report and accounts for the Charity Commission)
- 6 June 2022 (reviewing the 2022 "Music in Me" project and initial plans for the 2023 LDSSF festival including discussion on the financial fees and other arrangements)
- 24 February 2023 (review of March 2023 LDSSF festival and approval of payments to be made to D Pilkington and N Crosley for services provided to the festival)
- 27 April 2023 (review and approval of the 2022 Annual Trustee Report and accounts for the Charity Commission)

The Charity Trustees are as follows:

- a) Debra Pilkington
- b) Nicola Crosley (Secretary/Treasurer – Charity Commission contact trustee) * Nicola (Nicky) Donnelly got married in November 2021
- c) Paul Bowden (Chair)
- d) Sarah Griffiths
- e) Elizabeth Wheildon

The 2022 Annual Trustee Report was approved at the zoom meeting on 27 April 2023

LANCASTER & DISTRICT SCHOOLS' SINGING FESTIVAL

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2022

RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

Item	2022	2021	Income 2020	Expenditure 2020	2019
Bank account balance as at 20 Jun 2020	9663.81				
Registration fees		0	3,420		2,902
Ticket sales		0	651		7,764
LMH support		0			3,000
Retiring collection					1,119.21
TOTAL	9663.81	0	£4,071		£13,829.21
Ridge – refund of registration				50	
Coach hire				0	4,445
Photographer				0	150
LMH vocal lead – programme design, recording, school visits & concerts	290.00			1,271.95	690
Nicky Donnelly: project management (over LMH hours)				Incorporated into LMH support (MM)	472.60
Debra Pilkington – school visits and concerts	461.19			578.02	685.34
Concert programmes				660	
More Music (MM) festival expenses Studio & Mixing Sound tech Band arrangements Compositions PA for concerts Hall decorations				265.78	3,416.10
Tiered seating				480	350
Hire of Ashton Hall (Friday at discount)				0	350
Sing Up				0	0
St John's Ambulance				0	414.72
Performing Rights				0	0
Sundries				0	49.27
Business legal – setting up charity 15/11/19				480	
Business legal – final payment for setting up charity 10/6/2020				470	
TOTAL	751.19	0		£4255.75	£11,033.03

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	30TH June 2022	30th June 2021	12th June 2020
Cash – opening bank balance 1/7/2019			£9,848.56
Cash funds – bank balance as of 12 th June 2020		£9,663.81	£9,663.81
Other monetary assets		0	0
Liabilities	751.19	0	0
Bank balance as of 27th June 2022	£8,912.62		

A financial overview was prepared by Mrs Nicola Crosley (Charity Trustee) and audited by Mrs Caroline Lindsay, School Business Manager at Slyne-with-Hest School and the closing balance concurred with the Charity's bank statement as of 27th June 2022.

Debbie Pilkington is a charity Trustee and the payment to her for services (delivery of school workshops and performances) was approved by the other Trustees prior to the activity happening.

APPROVED BY THE CHARITY TRUSTEES AT THE ZOOM MEETING ON 27th APRIL 2023