

# **Vive La Musique!**

## **Report to the Trustees for the period 06.07.2020 to 31.12.2021**

### **Overview**

For a charity whose main objects are, in broad terms, supporting musical performance, this first period since its registration has not been easy! Covid-19-related restrictions meant that until the latter part of August 2020 amateur groups could not rehearse, let alone perform. The legislative backdrop has been frustrating, however. Once it was legal to have gatherings for recreational purposes the act of music-making and singing was not banned by any regulations, but the decision-making of insurers, of the committees of community centres and of the PCCs of churches, where many groups rehearse and perform, was informed by Government guidance, not by the law. It was that guidance which suggested that certain aspects of music-making were especially risky, despite several studies coming out of other countries, in particular a German study published in mid-May 2020, which made it clear that singing was no more problematic than speaking.

Making Music, the body which assists and represents many amateur music groups, was campaigning hard to ensure that the performing arts featured as high as possible on the Government's agenda. That is why we took the decision to join within a couple of weeks of VLM!'s registration.

Almost as soon as the position was opened up, however, the "rule of six" was introduced with effect from 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020. While this did not prevent "permitted organised activities" under the regulations, it led to understandable confusion. This meant that any move to organise anything was accompanied by the need a) to be fully informed as to the applicable regulations at any given time, b) to reassure participants, c) to liaise with and reassure venues and d) to prepare the required risk assessment.

The relative freedom of September and October was set back when England was in lockdown from 4<sup>th</sup> November to 2<sup>nd</sup> December. Devon emerged from that into Tier 2 which required further research, reassurance etc as the rules altered. We were then plunged into Tier 3 with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> December and then into full lockdown once again from 6<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

Following publication of the Prime Minister's roadmap out of lockdown on 22<sup>nd</sup> February we were able to start planning with a degree of confidence. From the point of view of singing and performing the main stages were:

- From 29<sup>th</sup> March groups of up to 6 could gather outdoors – OK for quartet rehearsals but little else
- From 12<sup>th</sup> April "permitted organised gatherings" of any number (dictated only by the constraints of the venue and the requirement to socially distance) could take place outdoors, thus enabling rehearsals to take place outside
- From 17<sup>th</sup> May "permitted organised gatherings" could take place indoors, enabling rehearsals to move indoors. Theatres and concert halls were also

able to re-open to the public, but subject to the constraints of social distancing. The guidance, however, not the regulations, suggested that singing was in a category of its own and still subject to the social rule of six indoors, even though people could gather to play sport etc. Many groups felt unable to make a considered decision to set the guidance to one side, though we were not one of them. An odd exception emerged in any event for groups “operating in a professional context” and working towards a ticketed concert. In those circumstances even the guidance permitted indoor rehearsals.

- All restrictions were due to be lifted from 21<sup>st</sup> June but that was in the event put back by four weeks to 19<sup>th</sup> July

It is difficult to overstate the level of stress occasioned by trying to plan rehearsals and events against this background. Everything was like wading through treacle and the time and effort required to plan anything increased exponentially.

By the end of 2021 things had returned to a degree of normality though the emergence of the omicron variant of Covid-19 towards the end of November resulted in facemasks becoming compulsory once again in certain settings with effect from 12<sup>th</sup> December. Theatres, concert halls and churches could remain open, however, but the renewal of the facemask mandate did result in some loss of confidence. Curiously, singing having been demonised for so long, congregations were now exempted from wearing a facemask while singing! For people who had not had cause to follow the twists and turns of the regulations and the guidance the messages seemed to be very mixed but the reality was an underlying acceptance that singing was akin to speaking and that it had health benefits all of its own, not just in terms of the social side of being in a choir but the importance of diaphragmatic breathing to the promotion of healthy lungs and the control of conditions such as asthma.

Thus for the 18 months for which the charity has been in existence, amateur activity has realistically been possible for only about half that time and even then, until July 2021, subject to a variety of conditions and restrictions.

## **Teignmouth Classical Music Festival**

One of the things which we have always wanted to continue, having in a sense inherited the mantle from South Devon Singers, is the Teignmouth Classical Music Festival (TCMF). Since 2013 this has taken place on the first or second weekend of March each year, expanding in the last few seasons to cover two, sometimes three weekends. Because it involves so many groups the organisational work is substantial and the problems which might be caused by cancellation, not to mention the expense, would have been huge. We therefore decided in the autumn of 2020 that for 2021 at least we would aim only for single concerts. In the event that was sensible as the country was still in full lockdown in early March. Schools re-opened only on 8<sup>th</sup> March.

We discussed the possibility of broadcasting online performances but decided against it for several reasons:

- We did not have the relevant technical expertise or equipment to do a professional-looking job ourselves
- We did not have the time to learn how to do it

- The expense involved in getting others in to do it would therefore have been considerable
- The charity being very new had not built up any funds
- We have always tried to combine amateur and professional musicians working together (indeed it is one of the guiding principles of the TCMF) and amateur musicians, as discussed above, faced particular difficulties in rehearsing
- Given the availability of extremely professional online/live-streamed performances we were not confident that it would be easy to find a paying (or at least donating) audience to defray some of the expense. The additional buzz of a live concert and the ability, through refreshments, decoration of the venue etc, to turn it into a full event, are particularly important for amateur performances.

### **“They Sailed the Ocean Blue”**

We decided to concentrate on the performances of an original piece about the Pilgrim Fathers “They Sailed the Ocean Blue”, for the following reasons:

- It involved a small-scale group (13 in total) which was going to make a performance feasible even if a degree of social distancing was still required
- All the performers were known to us which made managing constantly-changing rehearsal schedules and performance dates rather easier
- The choir members were amateur singers but the three instrumentalists were professionals. One of the soloists was a semi-professional singer. One of the choir members, though an amateur singer, was a professional pianist.
- The performers were all local, which, at least when we were in Tiers, made it easier to manage as we were all subject to the same rules
- There is scope for its being performed in Cambridge Massachusetts by a group with whom we have contacts. An international connection, particularly with an area which is of such relevance to the story, will not do VLM! any harm.

We commissioned a young local artist to design the publicity.

We rehearsed as follows:

- 18<sup>th</sup> October in Kenton Victory Hall with 2m social distancing in place
- 6<sup>th</sup> December in Kenton Victory Hall with 2m social distancing in place but positioned in a big circle which made it much easier to hear one another
- Late April/early May outdoors in a friend’s orchard to comply with the requirement to be on business premises for a “permitted organised gathering”
- Late May/June and early July at Mamhead Church with 1m social distancing

We performed the piece on 4 occasions:

- 11<sup>th</sup> July at Mamhead Church to an invited, socially distanced audience of 27
- 18<sup>th</sup> July at the Pavilions in Teignmouth to a socially distanced audience
- 13<sup>th</sup> September at St Stephens Church in Exeter
- 14<sup>th</sup> November at All Saints Church in Kenton as the second in the series of “Kenton Koncerts”

Please see separate event reports for each concert.

## **Kenton Koncerts**

The aim of this series of concerts is that they should take place on an almost monthly basis and be as varied as possible, presenting very different styles of music and performance, different musicians, different instruments. We hope that across the series everyone will find something to their taste but also that people will be tempted to try something new. Not everything will suit everyone. VLM! will keep things under review as it will inevitably become clearer over time what works well and what is not so successful.

The main aim of the concerts is simply to enable everyone to enjoy the music but any profits from the events benefit All Saints Church and Vive La Musique! in equal measure. At the moment this is an arrangement which works well. Church members have an incentive to publicise the event and we also receive the help of the church's catering committee.

All Saints has had a difficult couple of years. It was partially closed in September 2019 following a plaster fall from the ceiling then, in common with all churches, fully closed when lockdown measures were first imposed in March 2020. The village community rallied round to raise the funds to undertake the necessary repairs and lockdown was conveniently employed to ensure that the work was done when the church was not otherwise being used. The church is a tremendous asset to the religious, secular and cultural life of the community but as a large building with its roots in the 13th century it is expensive to maintain and there is always something that needs doing. VLM! has an important role to play in helping to preserve this community asset.

The concerts which took place in 2021 were:

- Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm: Bugs Beasts and Birds – light jazz and classical with Alfie Pugh (piano, glockenspiel and organ), Rebecca Willson (violin, accordion and piano) and David Jones (guitar)
- Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November at 4pm: They Sailed the Ocean Blue – see above
- Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> December at midday: Exeter Recorder Orchestra – free lunchtime concert followed by lunch. NB, while this was promoted within the series of Kenton Koncerts this was technically not organised by VLM! All money was taken by All Saints Church. VLM! trustees assisted with refreshments and organisation. The connection is Rachael Shearmur who plays with ERO. ERO now rehearse in Kenton Victory Hall so there is a link with the village.

Please see separate event reports for each concert.

## **Free school concerts**

We did contact the three State primary schools in Teignmouth in October 2020 to offer free concerts, as we were able to organise in February and March 2020 as part of the Teignmouth Classical Music Festival. We acknowledged that the format might have to be different – possibly a series of shorter performances to separate year groups. We did not hear back and decided not to press the point

given all the stresses of the previous few months. In the event the schools were closed from January to early March 2021.

We hope that schools will be able to take us up on our offer in the academic year 2021/2022. The concerts which we organised in 2020 cost £200 each, so £600 in total. For that outlay we were able to reach in excess of 1,000 children, plus their teachers. We intend within our budget to earmark certain funds for future school concerts and to use that work as a focus for fund-raising.

## **Funding**

Attached are a table of expenses and a table of income. In the early stages the income came exclusively from donations from us. We had always intended to support the charity directly in this way. We hope that in due course we will be able to cover most expenses through ticket sales. We are both able to Gift Aid our donations and will therefore be able to register with HMRC and reclaim 25% of the value of the donations.

## **Insurance**

This is available through our membership of Making Music.

## **PRS payment**

Where applicable, returns are made via Making Music.

## **Plans for 2022**

### **1. Kenton Koncerts**

- **Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> January at 7pm** - Songs of the Seven Seas with C.A.S.K. and Batten Down The Hatches
- **Saturday 12th February at 4pm** - Isca String Quartet plays Beethoven and Haydn
- **Saturday 19th March at 7pm** - Isca Voices directed by Stephen Tanner
- **Sunday 3rd April at 4pm** - Seven Last Words from the Cross by David Heyes - with David Heyes (double bass) and The Gallery Singers (choral quartet)
- **Saturday 30th April at 7pm** - Volo Trio with Alex Wilson (piano), Ruth Molins (flute) and Claudia Alvarez Calderon (soprano)
- **Sunday 22nd May at 4pm** - Songs From the Shows - with Alfie Pugh (direction and piano) and Jim Rintoul (double bass)
- **Kenton mini-festival**
  - **Saturday 25th June at 7pm** - An Evening at the Ballet with Trio Exe - Alex Wilson (piano), Alexandra Ennis (violin) and Hilary Boxer (cello)

- **Sunday 26th June at 3.30pm** - Palm Court afternoon with Trio Exe - followed by a homemade cream tea
- **Saturday 24th September at 7pm - Flute Cake (flute trio)**
- **Sunday 9th October at 4pm - Bass Encounters with David Heyes (double bass) and pupils from Wells Cathedral School and Sarah Poole (soprano)**
- **Friday 18th November at 7.30pm - Light classical and jazz with Alfie Pugh (piano and tuned percussion) and Katie Hole (clarinet)**

## **2. Teignmouth Classical Music Festival 2022**

- **Friday 4th March at 7.30pm in St Michael's Church - Myth and Magic with Flute Cake (flute trio)**
- **Saturday 5th March**
  - 10am in St Michael's Church - mini-recitals
  - 3pm at the Pavilions - Bugs Beasts and Birds - animal-themed classical and jazz pieces with Alfie Pugh (keyboard and xylophone), Jim Rintoul (double bass), Rebecca Willson (violin and piano) and David Jones (guitar)
  - 8pm at the Pavilions - Exeter Camerata Orchestra directed by Tony Hindley with Joel Munday (violin) in a programme of Haydn, Mozart and Schubert
- **Sunday 6th March** in St Michael's Church
  - 3pm - Exeter Youth Orchestra
  - 6.30pm - Choral Evensong with the St Peter's Singers of Exeter Cathedral

## **3. School concerts**

We currently have two booked:

- Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February - Mill Lane Primary School Teignmouth
- Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> March - Hazeldown Primary School Teignmouth

We have contacted Kenton School, Exminster School and Our Lady and St Patrick's School, Teignmouth but have yet to hear.

**Rachael Shearmur - Treasurer**  
**Richard Walford - Chair**  
**Events Committee**  
**31.12.21**

# Vive La Musique!

## Accounts for the period 06.07.2020 to 31.12.21

### Income

Item	Amount	Subtotals	Total
<b>Donations from named individuals (see notes)</b>			
In tax year 2020/21	£2,314.25		
In tax year 2021/22 (to 31.12.21)	£2,055.00		
<b>Subtotal named individual donations</b>		<b>£4,369.25</b>	
<b>Donations from unnamed individuals</b>			
At concert on 11.07.21	£120.00		
<b>Subtotal unnamed individual donations</b>		<b>£120.00</b>	
<b>Other donations</b>			
Amazon	£5.00		
Michelmores LLP	£250.00		
<b>Subtotal other donations</b>		<b>£255.00</b>	
<b>Grants</b>			
From Alan Connett (Devon County Council)	£250.00		
<b>Subtotal grants</b>		<b>£250.00</b>	
<b>Hiring out equipment</b>			
Hire of keyboard to South Devon Singers	£20.00		
<b>Subtotal hiring out</b>		<b>£20.00</b>	
<b>Ticket sales at concerts</b>			
18.07.21	£444.00		
13.09.21	£310.00		
09.10.21	£774.10		
14.11.21	£707.20		
<b>Subtotal ticket sales</b>		<b>£2,235.30</b>	
<b>Donations for refreshments at concerts</b>			
13.09.21	£23.00		
09.10.21	£70.40		
14.11.21	£47.40		

<b>Subtotal donations for refreshments</b>		<b>£140.80</b>	
<b>Programme sales</b>		<b>£15.00</b>	
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>			<b>£7,405.35</b>

## Expenses

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Subtotals</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Professional fees (see notes)</b>			
Commissioned composition	£1,500.00		
Rehearsals	£550.00		
Performances	£2,000.00		
Poster and programme design for They Sailed the Ocean Blue	£250.00		
<b>Subtotal professional fees</b>		<b>£4,300.00</b>	
<b>Making Music membership including insurance and PRS</b>			
2020	£22.25		
2021	£132.00		
2022	£197.25		
<b>Subtotal Making Music</b>		<b>£351.50</b>	
<b>Venue Hire</b>			
Victory Hall Kenton for rehearsals	£60.00		
Pavilions Teignmouth for concert 18.07.21	£444.00		
St Stephens Church Exeter for concert 13.09.21	£85.00		
<b>Subtotal venue hire</b>		<b>£589.00</b>	
<b>Donations to Mamhead Church and All Saints Church in lieu of venue hire fees</b>			
11.07.21 (Mamhead)	£135.00		
09.10.21 (All Saints)	£250.00		
14.11.21 (All Saints)	£210.00		
<b>Subtotal donations to churches</b>		<b>£595.00</b>	
<b>Refreshments</b>			
13.09.21	£42.50		
14.11.21	£26.60		
<b>Subtotal refreshments</b>		<b>£69.10</b>	



<b>Gifts for performers not charging a fee</b>			
14.11.21	£10.00		
<b>Subtotal gifts</b>		<b>£10.00</b>	
<b>Bank charges (introduced from 05.11.21)</b>		<b>£8.36</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>			<b>£5,922.96</b>

## Profit

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Total income	£7,405.35
Less total expenses	£5,922.96
<b>PROFIT</b>	<b>£1,482.39</b>

**Represented by balance in HSBC account No 45667887 at 31.12.21  
£1,482.39**

## Notes

### Individual donations in tax year 2020/21

<b>Name</b>	<b>Total donations</b>
Rachael Shearmur	£2,014.25
Richard Walford	£150.00
Clive Kirkbride (SCH)	£50.00
Penny Barbour (SCH)	£100.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,314.25</b>

### Individual donations in tax year 2021/22 (to 31.12.21)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Total donations</b>
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Rachael Shearmur	£825.00
Richard Walford	£875.00
Toby Sherwin	£50.00
Ruth Wride	£20.00
Mrs J Burns	£30.00
Duncan George	£20.00
Celia Hadow	£30.00
Thomas Shearmur	£60.00
Sheila Townsend (SCH)	£15.00
Alastair Cuthbertson (SCH)	£100.00
Pat Fitzpatrick	£30.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,055.00</b>

### Professional fees

Name	Amount	Subtotal
Alfie Pugh		
Commissioned composition	£1,500.00	
Rehearsals	£550.00	
Performance	£500.00	
Alfie Pugh subtotal		£2,550.00
Ruth Molins		£300.00
Jonathan L. Wood		£300.00
Jim Rintoul		£400.00
Tim Hunt		£200.00
Sophie Brewer		£100.00
David Jones		£100.00
Rebecca Willson		£100.00
Laura McHugh		£250.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£4,300.00</b>