



# Deeside Cello Project

## Trustees Annual Report 2024



Charity no. SC052435

**Registered address** NESMS (North East Scotland Music School)

21 Huntly Street

Aberdeen AB10 1TJ

Trustees:



### Introduction

The Deeside Cello Project is the name for the new charity arising from the Aboyne Cello Festival, which has flourished as a summer school for nearly two decades, and now is working to consolidate, formalise and expand its work of bringing all things cello to the North East of Scotland. We promote the arts, bring the benefits of creativity and social interaction to people of all ages but especially young people, with a focus on ensuring that underprivileged people are assertively included.

Running concurrently with the summer school, and an integral part of the annual festival, is a series of professional public concerts across beautiful Deeside, bringing fantastic live music to communities and increasing tourism as well as inspiring the summer school participants.

## Overview of Outputs, Outcomes and Impacts:

### Outputs

Each year the Trustees consider a budget for the annual festival activities, including the public performances. Expenses includes tutor fees, transport, accommodation, food, publicity material and concert venue hire. Based on the expenditure budget and anticipated funding from concert takings, donations and other sundry sources, student fees are set, taking account of likely enrolment numbers. The ability of the Charity to proceed with the festival is dependent on the actual enrolments received (starting in the first calendar quarter) and the available reserves. The policy on reserves is discussed further below.

Since 2015 this model for funding the summer school and related activities has been successful, with festivals occurring each year, including the COVID years when many aspects of the festival were held online.

In 2024, this same model was applied, assisted greatly by some significant assistance from the MacRobert Trust (this is detailed further below). More so than in prior years, the trustees were able to direct some of the donations received specifically to reducing students' fees, and a highly successful festival, together with all five public concerts, went ahead.

### Outcomes

The festival happened and was successful, leaving no deficit. There were 34 active participants, and 544 attendees at the five public concerts. The Festival was financially successful, generating a modest contribution to reserves. Of the 34 participants, 22 were returning alumni; the trustees consider it useful to know how many students return for subsequent festivals, representing a major indicator of a successful and valuable student experience.

### Impacts

The Deeside Cello Project organises a vibrant live music festival experienced directly by nearly 600 people in Central Eastern Scotland, with its effects reaching many more.

- 16 residential students developing their skills, and confidence and forging links in the professional music arena, providing potential opportunities for their career development



- 1 Young Artist
- 1 Associate Artist
- 12 adult learners developing their skills and enjoying playing alongside up-and-coming young musicians
- 5 younger/less advanced learners taking part and many others watching performances
- 4 top professional cellists and educators as tutors
- 544 audience members enjoying world class classical music concerts at an affordable price.
- Local community involvement in the festival - the community hall in Tarland and artist's studio in Aboyne is the hub of activity with local accommodation, private hosts and local businesses benefitting together with many volunteers, including drivers of the Deeside community minibus.
- Alumni of the Cello Festival include many dozens of cellists who are now professionals in the UK and abroad. Representative examples of these are [REDACTED] who had attended for many years before becoming Young Artist in 2019 and is now an established cellist and teacher in Cambridge who returns to teach on the Summer School; [REDACTED], Young Artist 2023 who is busy playing with her quartet and touring the world with professional orchestras including the RPO, BBCSO, Philharmonia and Northern Symphonia; and [REDACTED], Young Artist 2022 and now Associate Artist, who is making waves all around the UK and abroad as a soloist and chamber musician and won the Royal Overseas League Competition in London with his Trio Archai.

## 2024 Summer School

The 2024 Aboyne Cello Festival Summer School was a great success as was evidenced by the glowing reports on the feedback forms which were circulated afterwards. The participants felt they had all developed skills, experience and confidence and on the way home some students created a countdown to next year! We had four tutors, including the principals of the London Symphony Orchestra and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, an international pianist, 16 residential students participating, 12 adults, some taking part in their own workshops and all joining with the students for 3 days in the Cello Orchestra, one Young Artist and one Associate Artist, with 3 volunteers on hand, and 4 hosts to keep it all running smoothly.



## Activities

The Summer School began with a day of Cello Orchestra when the participants had a chance to meet one another, the artistic Director of the festival and the adult amateur cellists who joined the orchestra. The adult cellists were both visitors to and residents of Deeside.

After this, the participants, the core group of which were conservatoire students and teenagers aiming to attend conservatoires, were kept busy with classes in which they had lessons in a masterclass format.

We hired the Deeside Community Minibus, further strengthening our ties with the local community, to meet and transport people to and from the train station at both ends of the summer school and for travel to the concert venues on the first, second, fourth and seventh evenings where the participants were treated to inspiring performances from world class musicians and young talent.

In addition to the core student group and the adults, there were lessons for some less advanced young people, again in a masterclass format, and they had a chance to discover the joy of playing chamber music and performed in the internal student concert on the Friday. We are anticipating that this group will increase in size next year, especially as we are cooperating with Sistema Scotland's 'Big Noise' Torry, to try and give their cellists more opportunities during our Summer School week.

## Wellbeing

The summer school has always been known for its extremely supportive, non competitive and friendly attitude of all involved. We are aware that safeguarding is of the utmost importance. and we have a Designated Safeguarding Lead, and best practice processes encompassed within a safeguarding policy. We identified the need, this year, to improve our provisions for neuro diverse participants and to this end our DSL has had meetings and training resulting in our processes developing for 2025, starting with some new questions on the application form including offers to discuss specific needs, give more advance information about accommodation details and create more safe spaces for time out during the summer school.

We also start the week with a fun session for all students from a kinesiologist, looking at how we use our bodies, exercises to help coordination and combat tension, and opening up the discussion about physical and mental wellbeing including handling performance nerves.



## Funding

As a registered charity, we have been able to access more funding from funding bodies including the Eilidh Trust and the David and June Gordon Memorial Trust which has been put towards bursaries to increase inclusivity. This year, thanks to the Eilidh Trust, we instigated an official bursary application process and supported five young people in need with bursaries which reduced their fee by 35%. We also used the David and June Gordon Memorial Trust grant to finance the Young Artist award position in which, by audition, a cellist on the brink of their career is supported with a full bursary to the summer school and a public recital with an international pianist.

As well as short term bursaries, the Trustees are looking to the future and have been able to secure a working relationship and some excellent support and funding from the MacRobert Trust for 2024 and the next two years, to build up the financial security of the organisation. We have been working hard to make financial forecasts and build on the success of the summer school and the concert series which helps to keep the summer school fees low.

## Finances

The Charity has a financial year running from 1 January to 31 December with the principal activity, the festival itself, taking place in late July, and with all operating income and expenditure in a financial year relating to the festival activities of that year. To date, there has been no capital expenditure.

Within each financial year, there is a strongly positive cash flow, with registrants paying course fees in advance of the festival and most significant operating payments being made in arrears.

With these conditions expected to continue throughout the forecast period, the income and expenditure forecast and the cash flow forecast are synonymous, with the one exception being the receipt of specific tied grant funds (e.g. for bursaries) and the provisioning for and use of funds for the Young Artist.



## Donated goods and services

It is a largely impossible task to enumerate the hours provided gratis by many willing volunteers who believe in the power of music to transform lives, but it must run into many thousands of hours per year!

### Administration:

All administration involved in the Deeside Cello Project is provided by volunteers. This includes:

- Summer School administration: Publicity, booking tutors, applications, transport organisation, bursary applications, catering for the residential group, social media advertising.
- Publicity distribution across Aberdeen and the whole Deeside area.
- We benefit from the volunteer drivers of the Mid Deeside Community Minibus which we hire for student transport.
- Concert series administration: Booking and liaising with venues and artistes for the concert series, putting together publicity material, generating advertising from local businesses.
- DCP Budgeting, preparation of annual accounts and all financial reporting and modelling, as well as oversight by independent accountant.
- All the Trustees are unpaid and work to fulfill their roles, including applying for grants.

### Venues:

- Newton Dee Village provided their excellent Hall and piano for one of the public concerts in return for free entry to the concert for their Camp Hill residents, 38 of whom attended the concert this year.
- Some venues for masterclasses in Tarland and Aboyne have been donated for free.
- The main residential accommodation is at present donated for a small charge to cover expenses.



*The David and  
June Gordon  
Memorial Trust*

## Donors:

The Deeside Cello Project is very grateful to the donors for the year 2024 which include:

- The MacRobert Trust
- The Eilidh Trust
- The David and June Gordon Memorial Trust
- A large donation was received from an anonymous donor and small donations received at concerts.

## Other Activity

### Increasing links with grass roots music

Our Trustees are building links to facilitate a relationship between the Artistic Director and the teachers of the excellent Scottish music charity, Sistema Scotland. We are hoping to host a visit from cellists who play in Big Noise Torry, to involve them and inspire them as much as possible.

### Investigating future instrument loan scheme

The Trustees are looking at models of other charities who have an instrument loan scheme and are aiming to gradually build up a number of cellos (student/professional level) which can be loaned to Scottish cellists who need a better instrument but cannot afford one.

### Investigating future suitable accommodation for the Summer School

The present main accommodation for the summer school may not be available from 2026, so Trustees are 'thinking out of the box' to try and find a suitable place in Deeside, hopefully not far from Tarland, where the Summer School can relocate without jeopardising the supportive 'family' feeling of the event, whilst keeping the costs affordable, despite it taking place in the tourism high season. There has been financial forecast modelling done which shows that an increase in the cost of accommodation will be sustainable with an increase in students taking part and to that end, we are upscaling our publicity, revamping the website, planning increased use of social media and starting our publicity further in advance from this year onwards.





# Deeside Cello Project

## Unrestricted equity reconciliation for the financial year ending 31 December 2024

		£
Opening balances	Bank	2,633.43
	Cash	50.00
	Creditor	(129.26)
	Commitments	(750.00)
	Opening equity	<u>1,804.17</u>
Net result		2,546.70
New commitments made		0.00
	Closing equity	<u><u>4,350.87</u></u>
Represented by:		
Closing balances	Bank	5,050.87
	Cash	50.00
	Commitments	(750.00)
		<u><u>4,350.87</u></u>

I have reviewed the above and accompanying three  
schedules covering the year ended 31st December 2024  
and confirm that, based upon my review, the schedules  
are a true and fair summary of the financial activities of  
the Deeside Cello Project for the said year.

Signed .....  
by ..... on behalf of O.I.L. Accountancy  
address : Unit 9, Aboyne Business Centre,  
Huntly Road, Aboyne, Aberdeenshire, AB34 5HE.  
Contact .....  
Contact .....



# Deeside Cello Project

## Income and Expenditure account for the year ended 31 December 2024

	£
<b>Income</b>	
Fees from students	9,300.00
Concert income	4,999.46
Other income	
Donations/fee support	4,820.00
Advertising	170.00
Sundry Other	183.74
<b>Total income</b>	<u>19,473.20</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Venue Hire	650.00
Merchandise and publicity material	813.02
Admin/IT	77.00
Fuel/transport	828.08
Accommodation	900.00
Food	882.50
Artists' fees	7,845.00
Director's fees	2,800.00
Pianists' fees	2,100.00
Other	30.90
<b>Total expenditure</b>	<u>16,926.50</u>
<b>Net result - surplus for the year</b>	<u><u>2,546.70</u></u>

# Deeside Cello Project

## Summary of bank account movements for the 2024 festival and financial year

			£
Opening balance at start of year - 1 Jan 2024			2,633.43
Net receipts and payments for current year			
Full Year	Receipts	19,473.20	
	Payments	17,055.76	
	Net movement	2,417.44	
Balance per December 2024 statement			<u>5,050.87</u>

# Deeside Cello Project

## Commitments - 2024 financial year

	£
Commitments brought forward from 2023	
Young artists	750.00
<b>New commitments made</b>	
Young artists	0.00
Other	0.00
Total new commitments	0.00
<b>Closing commitments</b>	<b>750.00</b>