

COMMUNITY MUSIC-MAKING FOR OLDER PEOPLE AND THEIR CARERS NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2010



Get Hampshire Singing Event



which has taken place. Hampshire County Council Community Support Team, the Older People's Wellbeing Team and Sing For Your Life worked together to provide this event for older people. The event supported the County Council's priority to improve older people's well being by organising participatory events.

The third Get Hampshire Singing Event Celebration took place at the new Hampshire County Council Offices on the 1st July 2010 which attracted over 80 older people attending from community associations, community groups and as individuals. Refreshments, lunch and subsidised travel were provided.

This exciting event was a celebration of all the singing clubs which have been started around the county and all the excellent singing

The singing was a huge success thanks to the facilitators from Sing for Your Life, and everybody thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon especially when musical instruments were introduced!

If you require any further information on the event please contact Abigail Walton on 01962 846022 or abigail.walton@hants.gov.uk

Singing for England

Football fever gripped much of the nation during this summer's World Cup and even spread to the Silver Song Club network. Clubs in Bracknell and Alton were both prompted to 'Sing it for England' (in the words of one of the many unofficial England World Cup anthems).

'We like to choose a theme for the sessions' said Barbara Rayner, the groups' Facilitator, 'And the more topical the better. In the last few months we've marked St George's Day, the general election, The Eurovision Song Contest and the anniversary of D-Day. To get ourselves into the World Cup spirit we sang songs ranging from English football club anthems such as 'One man went to mow' and 'When the Saints go marching in' through to songs with a more lateral-thinking approach, for example 'When the red, red robin comes bob, bob, bobbin' along' dedicated to all the clubs with the nickname of 'The Robins'. We even made up a few songs of our own to celebrate England's 1966 World Cup victory. Our flags may have been put away a trifle prematurely following England's World Cup demise, but we are looking forward to bringing them out again in September when we'll be celebrating 'The Last Night of the Proms' in our own inimitable style.'



Both clubs receive enthusiastic support from the local community including the host venues (the Age Concern Day Centre in Forest Park, Bracknell, and Orchard House sheltered accommodation in Alton) and members of Bracknell Choral Society and Alton Operatic & Dramatic Society, who help to boost the singing and to make participants feel welcome. For more information phone Barbara Rayner on 01420 80445 or visit www.singforyourlife.org.uk

Club News

Gosport

This Club has moved to Gosport Methodist Church in the centre of the town. Facilitator Ornella Strologo continues to lead hugely enjoyable sessions which are being supported by a number of local organisations working with older people in the area.

Lyminge

This club will be re-launched in the autumn with the help and support of a number of grass roots organisations in the village. Watch this space for further information.

Peacehaven

Sing For Your Life is supporting The WRVS Heritage Plus project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund in East Sussex by providing a singing workshop for 10 weeks. The workshop is being held at Downlands Court, Peacehaven which is a combined sheltered housing and daycare centre for older people.

Seaford

This club has been established following successful pilot sessions during our Roadshow project last year. The group meets in Seaford Baptist church and we are grateful to local volunteer Fred Weston and Heidi Edwards from the Alzheimer's Society for their help and support.

How Fred got started as a helper



My wife had Alzheimers, and when she died I decided I wanted to help the Alzheimers Society where I could. Fortunately I was friendly with the local Outreach Worker and she was able to find me little jobs to do at meetings and outings.

When, quite some months later, I was introduced to the Silver Song Clubs, I

thought "this is right up my street!" My wife and I were always singing the old songs together so I got quite excited about the idea.

At the first session we held, people were wandering in, unsure where they were and what they were supposed to be doing. But what a revelation. As soon as the music started they came to life. Faces lit up, hands were clapping, feet were tapping and they were singing away. Although we hand out songsheets, the majority knew all the words anyway!

Running a Silver Song Club is not only heartwarming it is very, very rewarding.

Fred Weston, Seaford Silver Song Club

Presentations and Outreach

Canterbury Dementia Conference

The Dementia Services Development Centre South East was established in 2007 as a partnership between Canterbury Christ Church University and the Avante Partnership.

Their first conference took place in June with an inspiring range of speakers including John Suchet and Barbara Pounton.

A joint presentation took place featuring the work of Sing For Your Life and the Sidney De Haan Research Centre for Arts and Health.

We also provided a brief singing activity to invigorate delegates at the start of the first day.

Ageing Well in Greenwich

This one day event was organised by Greenwich Council to encourage older people living in Greenwich to adopt healthy and positive lifestyles.

A wide range of activities were on offer including Tai Chi, yoga and healthy cooking on a budget.

Over 50 people attended a one hour Silver Song Club workshop and there was much interest in establishing a local group.

East Riding Carers Day

Although considerably outside our normal 'patch' a group of over 100 older people, mainly carers, took part in a Silver Song Club session as part of their annual carers day.

Singing was one of a number of activities on offer designed to promote health and wellbeing for carers and included such diverse activities as pottery painting, Indian head massage and reflexology.

Portsmouth

Silver Song Portsmouth is being hosted by the Friday Club, an older peoples social activity club run by Portsmouth City Council's Health Improvement and Development Service HIDS.

The Friday Club were treated to a taster session of the Silver Song club in May 2009 when Matthew Raisbeck, complete with keyboard and chimes brought a smile to everyone's face as they all joined in with the songs. It was such a great success that club members were continually asking "when is Matthew coming back?" In the spring of 2010 due to extra funding, Friday club members were granted their request. They became a 'seed' group in establishing a Portsmouth Silver Song Club. Friday Club members have been enthusiastically enjoying the Silver Song Club programme ever since, led by Nella Strologo. "It's brilliant, it's really good that we have song booklets, just in case we forget a word or two!" said one of the members.

Over the coming months Portsmouth Silver Song will open its door to a wider audience, encouraging residents of Portsmouth to enjoy the uplifting benefits of a good sing along. In the meantime Friday Club members are really having fun and everyone is singing!

Silver Song Clubs after the Election *Stuart Brown, Director writes:*

Every day we are informed of major changes which the new Coalition Government is introducing against a background of the financial crisis and the absolute necessity to make drastic cuts in public expenditure. I am sure that you, like me, are wondering how these changes and cuts will affect us as individuals as well as our work. Change is always upsetting and we often concentrate on the uncertainties and overlook the new opportunities which become available.

I have attended a number of seminars looking at the implications of the White Paper on Health and the concept of the Big Society. My overall conclusion is that the Silver Song Club model will fit well with these new policies. Funding for Silver Song Clubs comes from Public Health which is going to receive increased funding and operate within their local communities, supported by volunteers from those communities and therefore fit with the Big Society concept.

"In the absence of certainty, action should take the place of speculative thoughts"

Sing For Your Life is working closely with colleagues in Health and Social Services to identify the changes which will occur over the next few years and to develop the plans to ensure that we are able to manage the period of transition to the new policy framework as well as ensuring that the service meets the objectives of the new structure for the delivery of Health and Social services.

We can be absolutely certain of one thing – the demand for the service will continue to grow!

Sing For Your Life South West opens new Club in Sidmouth

Sing For Your Life South West is delighted to welcome new facilitator Pat Parkinson – seen here in the centre – and to announce the opening of another Club, this time in Sidmouth.

In conjunction with Sidmouth Choral Society, who provide a team of volunteer helpers, Pat is now giving regular sessions at the new club in Stowford Lodge. The South West Region has the highest incidence of dementia and Alzheimer's in the Country, and the clients at the Day Centre in Stowford Lodge are enjoying and responding to Pat's regular sessions.

Picture: left to right Penny Tupper (Stowford Lodge), Pat Parkinson (Sing For Your Life), Maggie Elwood (Stowford Lodge)



New Silver Song Club practises in Waterloooville

We have recently launched a new Song Club at Waterloooville Baptist Church, just north of Portsmouth.

Over 20 people took part in the first session- all ages, some in their 30s and some very elderly: two residents of a local nursing home came in wheelchairs accompanied by two Carers; several people came who have early dementia; some came who heard about it from our Women's Fellowship; two ladies from our exercise group, one who also brought a friend...

The session was led by Matthew and Nella from Sing For Your Life. Songs were popular, and ranged from O When the Saints (sung against Swing low, sweet chariot, You take the high road and She'll be coming round the mountain – so 4 parts at once) to Them bones, them bones with actions, and also included some Elvis!

There was a lovely atmosphere, lots of laughter, chime bars, percussion and piano playing... in all a very pleasing noise! We are going to start regularly in September, meeting once a month.



This is a joint project, funded partly by the County Council and partly from the church. We ask a small fee for refreshments and to cover costs. We have people who volunteer to serve refreshments and several others from the church who will come in support.

This is the 3rd Wellness activity organised in the church, each promoting health and wellbeing for the local community. The exercise class has an average 13 people each week, and the art group 11. We are hoping that the health benefits of singing and the fun and laughter will bring in many more.

Research for Patient Benefit – a Project Manager's View

Twelve weeks of Silver Song sessions were delivered in controlled research into whether singing is beneficial to the health of the over 60s.

Singing and musical activities brought participants together, working as a team and unexpectedly enjoying the challenge of doing something different, quirky, mentally and, in some cases, physically challenging. The newly retired, found a whole new community of other retired folk who could offer them advice as

to activities and clubs they could join. People who had suffered loss of loved ones, both before and during the intervention, found great comfort and healing in the social and musical interaction that their clubs offered.

I had such a privileged position and insight into how community in those groups developed. These people, some in groups from

completely different walks of life and life experience grew together in these sessions. It was an honour to be part of this process.

The project would have been nothing without the commitment and brilliance of the team of facilitators. Each venue spontaneously presented their facilitator with a gift which spoke volumes about the experience they had gained from taking part in the research.

Personal highlights? So MANY to choose from... Birchington and Newington's Macarena inspired 'Itsy Bitsy', Roddy's solo in Newington's rendition of 'Get me to the church on time' Betty at Broadstairs 'Yellow Submarine' moment...

*Michelle Harris,
Research for Patient Benefit Project Manager,
Sing For Your Life*



The Silver Song Club at Pulborough

Facilitator Pamela Nickels

Our Silver Song Club welcomes people from Pulborough and the surrounding area, with regular visitors from a residential home in Billingshurst and the RAF home in Storrington, and my approach there is to encourage people to reminisce and talk about their past experiences linked with the music which adds an extra dimension to the sessions.

With a musical background of solo and choral singing (now with Brighton Consort) and the piano, I really appreciate the

opportunity of facilitating at Pulborough, and several Billingshurst Choral Society members always help with the singing and provide tea and home-made cakes.

The Village Hall setting is very special, surrounded by magnificent open countryside with the Downs in the distance, which helps contribute to the very happy atmosphere. Everyone thoroughly enjoys these musical sessions and looks forward to their next Silver Song Club visit.



Funding and support

We are grateful to the following for their recent help and support:

Isle of Thanet Rotary Club

for supporting Ramsgate Silver Song Club

Hampshire County Council

for supporting Eastleigh Silver Song Club

Eastern & Coastal Kent PCT

for supporting Silver Song Clubs in East Kent.

chances4change
Improving health and well-being
for people in South East England

chances4change is funded by the Big Lottery Fund and co-ordinated by NHS South East Coast in partnership with NHS South Central, DH-SE, South East England Development Agency, RAISE and Portsmouth City Council



This Newsletter is published by
Sing For Your Life Ltd

**Sing For Your Life Ltd., Shepway Business Centre,
Shearway Business Park, Folkestone, Kent CT19 4RH.
Tel: 01303 298546/298549**

Email makmusse@aol.com

Website: www.singforyourlife.org.uk

Articles for the newsletter are welcomed and should be sent to The Editor.

Any opinion expressed in this Newsletter reflects the opinion of the author and is not automatically endorsed by Sing For Your Life Limited.

The Newsletter is published on the website but hard copies are available on application. If you wish to read the Newsletter regularly please register your Email address with us and we will send out an Email advice when each issue is published.