

Press Release 06/2016

Release date - Immediate



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Choir's Sell-Out Concert Raises £550 for Salvation Army's *Way Ahead Project*

Local community choir, Village Voices, had its biggest audience ever at its concert held in St Nicholas Church, Warwick, on Saturday 21st of May. With over 190 tickets sold, the choir has already raised over £550 from a raffle and donations for its chosen charity, the Salvation Army *Way Ahead Project*. In addition, £122 was raised via an exit collection. More funds will be raised at their Christmas concert at the Methodist Church, Dale Street, Leamington Spa, on December 17th and these, together with further profits from the May concert, will be presented to the charity at the end of the year.

Audrey Burbury, a project worker from the *Way Ahead Project*, was invited to speak at the concert about the project and she outlined the work they do with local people who are homeless, have mental health problems or have issues with alcohol or drugs. Whatever the reason for their difficulties, the project aims to help clients get their lives back on track.

Attached is a photo showing **Jill White**, a committee member who nominated the *Way Ahead Project* to be the choir's charity for the year, presenting the cheque to the *Way Ahead* Lead Project Worker, **Audrey Burbury**, who said:

"It's great that Village Voices are kindly giving their profits this year to the Salvation Army *Way Ahead Project*. The money will go to help people in the area who are homeless or with addictions to find accommodation and turn their lives around. We're here for people each step of the way, no matter where they're at."
For more details of the *Way Ahead Project* go to <http://www.wayaheadproject.org.uk/>

Notes for Editors

1. Village Voices Warwick

Village Voices is an established mixed voice community choir which celebrated its 20th Anniversary in 2015, with a special arrangement of O HOLY NIGHT by their MD, *Benjamin Hamilton*, sung at their Christmas concert in December. The choir rehearse Thursday evenings from 20:00 to 22:00 at Chase Meadow Community Centre. Their next is on 17th December at Dale Street Methodist Church, Leamington Spa. They are also taking part in the *Warwick District Remembers* concert at the Spa Centre on Friday 28th October. They always welcome new singers and there are no auditions. It is not all rehearsals and singing at Village Voices, as they have an active social agenda too, including a lunch club and trips to the cinema. Members of the choir are also available to sing at private functions, from performing at residential homes to weddings and parties.

Contact Claire Darlington, Chair of Village Voices, ☎ 01926 886408

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2. Next Concert - Warwick District Remembers

The next chance to experience this choir is on 28 October 2016, 7.30pm at the *Warwick District Remembers* concert when the choir will join Royal Spa Brass and Belle Harmonie for a concert and drum head service at the Spa Centre, Royal Leamington Spa. <http://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/royalspacentre/>

Village Voices Choir is pleased to be able to support the Warwick District Remembers initiative, and to be invited to sing at this event in recognition of those who sacrificed themselves for our freedom in WWII over 70 years ago. For more details of Warwick District Remembers contact Adrian on adrian@warwickdistrictremembers.com, <http://www.warwickdistrictremembers.co.uk/>

<http://www.villagevoices.co.uk/musicevents.htm>

If readers are interested in joining Village Voices, they will be recruiting new members during the summer ready for the Christmas concert in December. You can find them on Facebook at Village Voices choir

<https://www.facebook.com/VillageVoicesWarwick/> and you can register your email address on the website in order to be kept informed of future events.

3. Way Ahead Project

The Salvation Army has a long history of walking alongside people who are homeless or with broken lives. The Leamington Spa corps (church) is no exception and for years had helped out with food and old furniture.

The Way Ahead Project, formerly known as the Homeless Action Project (HAP) started around the year 2000. The Salvation Army officers (ministers) at the time were running a small café which attracted a number of people who were rough sleeping or homeless. As the officers found ways to meet their needs the HAP was born. Eden Villa hostel grew out of the HAP in 2003 later providing accommodation and support for 11 people.

In late 2008 the Salvation Army teamed up with the Saturday Friendship Group, based at St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church. We started opening on a Saturday, involving volunteers and providing a range of activities and consciously trying to create a positive community and culture where clients could take ownership of their project and contribute something back to wider society.

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<http://www.wayaheadproject.org.uk/about-us/>

4 Funds Raised Previously by the Choir

Village voices has raised funds for a variety of causes in recent years including these examples:-

- Springfield Mind chosen charity for 2015 - £1500
- SW Heart (South Warwickshire Heart failure Education and Cardiac Rehabilitation Trust chosen for year 2014 - £2280
- Alzheimer's Society chosen charity for 2013 - £560.
- Childhood Eye Cancer Trust 2012 - £280
- Myton Hospice October 2012 in memory of former member Roger Duclaud-Williams - £285
- Long Itchington Church restoration on 11 May 2012.
- Warwickshire Northamptonshire Air Ambulance,
- Galanos House residents - £570
- RNLI at Cubbington Hall, the choir helped to raise £600