

Press Release 07/2016

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For more information regarding this press release please contact initially, Terry Street, Publicity Officer press@villagevoices.co.uk mobile 07785916060 quote reference **VVPR1607**

Village Voices Warwick Choir presents “Deck The Halls” A Christmas Charity Concert for the Salvation Army’s *Way Ahead Project*

Local community choir, Village Voices, is using a different Venue for its Christmas Charity Concert on 17th December 2016; The Dale Street Methodist Church, Dale Street, Leamington Spa, CV32 5HL at 19:30 (Get direction here <http://www.dalestreet-methodist.org.uk/findus.htm>)

The Concert will include a mixture of traditional and modern Christmas songs by the Choir conducted by their MD Ben Hamilton, plus solos performances and narrations, and of course congregational singing. There will be a raffle and refreshments, as well as collections boxes for donations.

Tickets are expected to sell quickly and people wishing to support this event are urged to purchase their tickets in advance, either from choir members or as detailed below.

Tickets cost £8.00 each, and can be purchased from Yvonne Butler, via email tickets@villagevoices.co.uk or by post, enclosing SAE and cheques payable to Village Voices, to VV Choir Tickets, 18 Sir Thomas White Close, Warwick, CV34 5EN. Or purchase in person from **Salvation Army Charity Shop**, 136 The Parade, Leamington Spa. CV32 4AG. Tickets will be on sale at the door, and can be reserved for collection on the night.

The event will be supported by various local sponsors, providing refreshments and funding.

For more information please initially contact Terry Street *Publicity Officer for Village Voices*, ☎ 07785916060

The Dale Street Methodist Church has good wheelchair access to the ground floor, the entrance to the main car park is on Regent Street (west of Dale Street), and an entrance to a smaller car park is on Portland Place (West).

The Concert will raise more funds for the Charity: - the Salvation Army *Way Ahead Project*, which was chosen by members of the choir for this year. In May the choir had its biggest audience ever at its concert held in St Nicholas Church, Warwick, with over 190 tickets sold, the choir has already raised over £550 from a raffle and donations, and In addition, £122 was raised via an exit collection.

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Funds raised at the "Deck the Halls" Christmas concert, together with residual 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*, who spoke at the summer concert about the project, 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. Accepting the initial cheque she 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. They recently took a leading part in the *Warwick District Remembers* concert at the Spa Centre on Friday 28th October and have been invited back to commemorate the 35th anniversary of the Falklands War on Saturday 28th October 2017. . For more details of Warwick District Remembers contact Adrian on adrian@warwickdistrictremembers.com, <http://www.warwickdistrictremembers.co.uk/>

Some members of the choir will be singing at Guild Chapel in Stratford for the Springfield Mind charity on 8th December at 11am. They will be singing one or two of their own numbers (such as O Holy Night and Chris Last's In the Bleak Midwinter) as well as supporting the singing of the communal carols.

The Village Voices choir is a mixed choir and has successfully recruited some new singers and has developed a much stronger base and tenor section. However we 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 and theatres etc. 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. Salvation Army Way Ahead Project

The Way Ahead Project is part of the Salvation Army in Leamington Spa.

We provide drop in, advice and activities for 120 people each month who are homeless, or struggling with alcohol, drug use or their mental health. We're here to support people to turn their lives around.

We offer food, clothing, shower and laundry facilities but just as importantly somewhere people can find company; housing, addiction, employment and benefits advice; referrals to supported housing and a range of activities from small group cooking to art and first-aid. We encourage people to get involved in running the project and support people into voluntary and paid work.

We're not here to provide a sticking plaster for homelessness, but to help people turn their lives around and create a positive community where people can reach their full potential.

Contact: Jonathan Chilvers

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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:-

- Salvation Army Way Ahead Project - chosen Charity for 2016 (interim payment) - £550
- 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,
- Galenos House residents - £570
- RNLI at Cubbington Hall, the choir helped to raise £600

5 Images

See also images of the choir and copy of poster for concert enclosed with press release.