



Rising Voices Wessex

Community Choirs for people affected by cancer

Strategy for 2017 to 2020



Trustees

Alastair Smith

Rob Taylor

Jean Querol

Noeline Young

Susie Caesar

Our Mission

- To run, promote and provide community-style choir(s) in the locality that enable individuals affected by cancer to experience the benefits of singing as a means to aid recovery of health, wellbeing and confidence.
- To generate an income through donations and other fund-raising of £20,000 per annum needed to run these choirs and ensure longer term sustainability of our mission.

Introduction & background

There are well known associations between music and health, physical, emotional and spiritual. Involvement with music making is recognized as having benefits for specific conditions, including cancer, neurological disorders and dementia. Participation in music making has been shown to improve wellbeing. Music also has the ability to communicate with individuals at times of difficulty. These facts formed the background to

The increasing prevalence of cancer coupled with increased life expectancy as a result of improved treatments creates pressures on existing NHS service. There is thus a need to transform the way that the NHS cares for people affected by the disease, moving towards more supported self-management of follow-up after treatment and a generally more holistic personalised approach. There are similar issues for individuals bereaved as a result of cancer or who care for family members with the condition.

The aim is to offer people the opportunity for more individualised support in the community at large for there to be a range of appropriate supportive services - such as Rising Voices Wessex Choirs – that people can access independently. The intention to utilise participation in singing as an aid to recovery following cancer treatment underpinned the development of the choirs. Their aim is to encourage restoration of confidence, social interaction and wellbeing. Supporting people affected by cancer and their carers emanates from the key principles defined through the National Cancer Survivorship Initiative.

Top 5 Strategic objectives for 2017 – 2020

1. Ensure sufficient funding per annum to be able to sustain and continue to grow and develop Rising Voices Wessex.
2. To "normalise" post-cancer living by making available support through singing in the community in a safe friendly environment for people to have fun and regain their confidence.

3. To foster mutual help, co-operation and friendship for those affected by cancer in an empathetic environment
4. Improve public awareness of the benefits of singing (in a choir) through local and national promotion of the choirs and undertaking appropriate research and evaluation as to the benefits of music and singing to those affected by cancer - and to publish such work wherever possible and appropriate.
5. Promote a strategy that facilitates the development of other choirs within Dorset and Hampshire and enables networking with other like-minded choirs in the country and therein raise the National profile of singing to regain health and wellbeing.

Our funding requirement

To achieve our mission and deliver our strategy we need to generate an income of £20,000 per annum from the following sources:

- **Donations:** Weekly from members attending and ad hoc donations.
- **Earned income:** From performances and merchandise.
- **Statutory income:** From grants or sponsorship that is usually ring fenced.
- **Investments:** Not currently relevant.

Our Brand

Name and straplines

Rising Voices Wessex – community choirs for people affected by cancer

Choirs for people who have cancer, had cancer or lost a loved one to cancer.

“Spread the word and share the magic – singing is good for you!”

Logo and branding



Rising Voices Wessex logo will appear on all correspondence and information provided by the charity, shown without outline.

The brand colour is **royal blue** and this will be used with all information.

The brand colour **royal blue** will be used for clothing for performances with black and white as appropriate.

Similar Choirs

- **Tenovus Choirs** – Sing With Us - established, based mainly in Wales
- **Wessex Cancer Trust Choirs** – Sing For Life - ad hoc choirs in Southampton, Salisbury & Portsmouth

Unique Selling Point

Rising Voices Wessex is a registered charity set up and run to benefit people affected by cancer, using singing and music to help improve their health and wellbeing.

This Strategy sets out the 3-year aspirations of Rising Voices Wessex, identifying what the Trustees wish to achieve by 2020, where we are now and what we need to do to achieve these objectives as well as the likely costs. Each section has its own page.

Sections:	Page
• Weekly Rehearsals	5
• Membership of Rising Voices Wessex Choirs	6
• Events and performances	7
• Fundraising	8
• Communications, Marketing and Promotion	9
• Administration	10

- Catering 11
- Resources 12
- Rising Voices Wessex Network 13

Weekly Rehearsals

To foster mutual help, co-operation and friendship for those affected by cancer in an empathetic environment.

Rehearsals offer the fun and challenges of learning music together as well as forming a supportive social environment

What we would like to achieve by 2020

- Choirs that are visible and accessible to all people affected by cancer - that are seen to provide a supportive, “healing” environment and a sense of having “fun”.
- A sustainable strategy to support the Choir Director and support, cover and back-up for annual leave, sickness etc.
- An accompanist to support the choir and its director at rehearsals and performances
- Have at least two sustainable, fully subscribed active choirs.
- Regular attendance of members at both choirs with members taking personal responsibility for their own musical development to the best of their ability.
- An appropriate combination of core repertoire and new material covering a range of popular musical styles.
- A basic music/song library combined with improvements in the provision of printed song lyrics.

Where we are now?

- Choir Director who covers Bournemouth and Poole.
- A volunteer Deputy Choir Director - an experienced musician and choir member.
- No accompanist.
- Established venues at St John’s Church, Parkstone, and The New Church, Tuckton, for the Poole and Bournemouth choirs respectively.
- Regular attendance of members of about 40 – 45 at Poole choir and 20-25 at Bournemouth.

What do we need to do next?

- Identify cover for the Choir Director for holidays and events as required.
- Identify and engage an accompanist.
- Establish printed folders/booklets for lyrics and develop music library that includes backing tracks.
- Continue to make rehearsals interesting and “fun” for members, new and old.

- Continue to add to the repertoire and explore new ideas.
- Continue to promote the choirs and encourage regular attendance of members especially at Bournemouth.

What will it cost?

- Further costs will be incurred if an accompanist is engaged - amount will depend on experience and time commitment requested.
- Promotion and marketing of the choirs.
- Folders/booklets for lyrics.
- Backing tracks.

Membership of Rising Voices Wessex Choirs

Seeking to "normalise" post-cancer living by making available support through singing in the community in a safe friendly environment for people to have fun and regain their confidence.

What we would like to achieve by 2020

- Consistent membership of Bournemouth and Poole choirs, ideally a core membership of 100.
- Choirs seen to be easily accessible and welcoming to new members.
- An increase in the numbers of men joining the choirs.
- The establishment of a "Friends" or "Associates" of Rising Voices Wessex that would help support events, promote and aid fundraising through their own sponsorship or seeking external supporters and sponsors.
- A robust database, compliant with legislation, to facilitate communication with members, stakeholders and friends.
- Members involved in the running of the choir.

Where we are now?

- Regular membership of the choirs - 20 – 25 in Bournemouth, 45 – 50 in Poole.
- 30 new members joined the choirs in 2016.
- Database that contains relevant details about our members, stakeholders and friends.
- A Steering Group of members that oversees the ongoing running of the choirs and their activities .
- A board of Trustees that oversees the Rising Voices Wessex project and manages the charity as well as setting its strategy.

Relevant Policies: Social Media Policy, Equity and Diversity Policy, Safeguarding Adults Policy and Grievance Policy and Procedure, all available on www.risingvoices.org.uk in the About Us section.

What do we need to do next?

- Continue efforts through appropriate clinical and public networks to raise awareness of the choirs and encourage recruitment of new members.
- Improve links with and support from local NHS (and private) Hospitals, the Primary care community and Health Care Providers in the area to promote the choirs and "spread the word".
- Encourage regular attendance of members at rehearsals
- Ensure members are encouraged to consider becoming involved in appropriate aspects of running the choir.

- Maintain the database of members to ensure good communication and know whom to contact in an emergency.
- Encourage all members to be able to receive and respond to information via email and on the website.
- Ensure members who regularly attend are able to vote at AGM.

What will it cost?

- Promotion and marketing of the choirs.

Events and performances

What we would like to achieve by 2020

- Regional and National recognition of Rising Voices Wessex as community choirs for people affected by cancer.
- A clear strategy in place that involves three concerts a year with a specific emphasis on larger-scale fund-raising.
- Events accessible to all members with an emphasis that performances show enthusiasm and a sense of joy for the singers, rather than "technical perfection".
- Smartly dressed with appropriate clothing and brand colours for events.
- Periodic music workshops to help improve people's musical ability and confidence.
- Performances and "Big Sing" events that can offer links with other choirs in the area.
- Improved support from "Friends" in the organisation and running of choir events.

Where we are now?

- Sporadic engagements planned.
- Limited opportunities to showcase our work.
- Limited contact with other choirs in the area.
- Some parallel support from friends for events.
- Good equipment, PA and staging.
- Application form for events on the website.
- Not consistently generating sufficient income to cover costs.

What do we need to do next?

- Only undertake performances that will cover core costs.
- Promote the choirs to spread the word; we are available for performances and events.
- Continue to encourage members to seek opportunities for performances locally.
- Develop our event management capabilities.
- Link with other choirs and organisations in the area – i.e. the Wessex Cancer Trust and Tenovus choirs.
- Use a year planner (on the website?) to identify and plan events across the year.
- Add details of donations for performances to the application form on the website.
- Add people's thanks for performances to the website and on social media.

What will it cost?

- Performances should result in no net cost to the choirs and be expected to contribute funds that will contribute to the choirs' sustainability.
- Time and efforts of members, friends and Trustees in promoting Rising Voices Wessex and its work.
- Limited costs toward provision of a corporate identity for performances – by means of badged or branded items of clothing.

Fundraising

Ensure sufficient funding per annum to be able to sustain and continue to grow and develop Rising Voices Wessex.

What we would like to achieve by 2020

- Sufficient funding to be sustainable without raising our suggested weekly donations beyond the levels of inflation.
- Able to attend events and cover our costs for choir director and transport.
- Three major fundraising events a year.

Where we are now?

We have received:

- Start-up funding from Dorset Cancer Network.
- Macmillan Cancer Support development funding.
- Big Lottery and Peoples Lottery Grants.
- Funding from Going for Bust.

We receive funds from:

- Weekly donations.
- Limited donations coming in from performances.
- Donate page on the website linked to Just Giving.

Relevant Policy: Fraud Policy and Response Plan, available on www.risingvoices.org.uk in the About Us section.

What do we need to do next?

- Develop and implement a fundraising policy.
- Publicise opportunities to donate via "Just giving" (or similar) and also maximise potential of Gift Aid donations
- Apply for further grants and sources of funding.
- Explore options for business or company sponsorships - for events or annual donations
- Develop repeatable and popular fundraising events or concerts each year.

- Only undertake events capable of covering costs and providing the facility for donations to Rising Voices Wessex.
- Maximise use of local contacts from within the choir to seek performance opportunities and enhance recruitment.
- Trustees to ensure they undertake some training in fund-raising.

What will it cost?

- Marketing and promotion.
- Cost of any appropriate further training for Trustees.

Communications, Marketing and Promotion

Improve public awareness by promoting the choirs, conducting and engaging in research/evaluation as to the benefits of music and singing to those affected by cancer (publishing the useful results for the public benefit).

What we need to achieve by 2020

- Members actively involved in promoting the choir helping to develop a network of regular contacts, friends and organisations capable of promoting the choirs.
- Influential 'champions' and patrons.
- Portfolio of press releases and case studies.
- A dynamic website that is exciting, fun and informative.
- Raised public awareness that music is good for your health and aids recovery.
- Qualitative and quantitative survey of members to identify benefits of singing with a choir.

Where we are now?

- Limited network of contacts, friends and organisations involved in supporting the recovery of people affected by cancer.
- Two Patrons and two Clinical Champions.
- No portfolio or case studies collated.
- Website in place that needs further development and regular updates.
- Good video on the website and Youtube.
- Social Media, Facebook and Twitter presence established.
- Annual quantitative surveys using Survey Monkey undertaken.
- At the request of Tenovus members have completed research questionnaires on choir participation – an exercise demonstrating potential for wider research cooperation and networking.

Relevant Policy: Communications and Marketing Policy and Annual Reports are available on www.risingvoices.org.uk in the About Us section.

What do we need to do next?

- Ensure that people see us first and foremost as a choir.
- Receive support from local NHS and Private Hospitals and Health Care Providers.
- Promote the choirs to - spread the word and share the magic.
- Further publications.
- Produce a demonstration CD/Mp3 to show what Rising Voices Wessex can achieve.

- Develop and support friends i.e. people who are interested in our work and can support and promote us.
- Link to other recovery projects locally.
- Ensure local libraries and entertainment venues have posters and leaflets.
- Ensure local media, newspapers, TV and Radio understand and support the choirs.

What will it cost?

- Costs of developing CD/Mp3.
- Cost of publicity in the media.
- Advertising materials, banners, posters, leaflets etc.
- Costs for developing and maintaining the website.
- Survey Monkey for annual survey.

Administration

What we would like to achieve by 2020

- Appropriate Trustee board and structure for strategic management.
- A dynamic Steering group for day to day operational management.
- Processes in place for accounts to be audited annually.
- Requirement for accounts to be formally audited annually.
- Clear audit trail, annual audit, reports and appraisals.
- Newsletter for members, friends and stakeholders.
- An up-to-date set of governance documents.
- Be in the position to consider appointment of a Charity administrator/Manager.

Where we are now?

- Registered with the Charity Commission in England and Wales 1165053.
- Seven Trustees (three with sign off for accounts).
- AGM and Annual Report.
- Trustees have appropriate indemnity and public liability insurance.
- Several governance documents in place.
- Steering group developed.
- Process for funding and bookkeeping in place.
- Annual appraisals of Choir director in place.
- Website and database manager.

Relevant Policy: Data Protection Policy and Terms of Reference for Trustees and Steering group available on www.risingvoices.org.uk in the About Us section. Minutes from Steering Group are available in the members section of the website.

What do we need to do next?

- Maintain regular Trustees and Steering Group meetings to ensure good communications and organisation of the choir.
- Establish clear audit trail and annual audit.

- Maintain indemnity and public liability insurance.
- Continue annual appraisal of Choir director.
- Continue provision of an annual report prior to the AGM.

What will it cost?

- Trustees expenses.
- Steering group expenses.
- Maintaining registration with NCVO.
- Indemnity and Public Liability insurance.
- Auditor for the accounts.
- Payment for administrator/manager.

Catering

What we would like to achieve by 2020

- Income from weekly donations meeting catering costs and contributing to the running costs of the choir.
- Sustain provision of simple refreshments and catering at rehearsals and events.
- Clear process/rota for providing catering.
- More active involvement of Friends or sponsors involved in catering for events.

Where we are now?

- Teas, coffees and biscuits at meetings and rehearsals.
- Homemade or bought for Birthday cakes rota.
- Donations £3 per person do not cover catering and infrastructure.
- Members contribute food for events.

What do we need to do next?

- Ensure that members are aware of the need for weekly donations (or equivalent) and that they are a key part of ensuring the sustainability of the choirs.
- Ensure health, hygiene and safety standards are upheld in the preparation areas.
- Seek support from friends and sponsors especially for events.
-

What will it cost?

- Cost of providing the dry ingredients for teas, coffees and biscuits.
- Cost of providing refreshments or food for events.

Resources

What we would like to achieve by 2020

- Resources available for fundraising and marketing e.g. CDs, DVDs.
- Simple merchandise such as badges/mugs/pens/pencils available for sale to supporters.
- Clothing available for all members for events, as required.
- Banners and balloons etc. available for events.
- Printed Lyric packs available to all new members with logo and sponsorship.
- Lyrics available for members to access electronically on the website.
- Appropriate equipment available for performances.
- Office/storage base.

Where we are now?

- CD yet to be produced.
- Video available on the website.
- Pin badges, bags, scarves and ties for sale.
- Stock of clothing available.
- Lyrics printed by choir director.
- Lyrics and backing tracks available in the members section of the website.
www.risingvoices.org.uk
- PA system and staging available for performances.
- Small and medium boom boxes for rehearsals and performances.
- Music stand.
- iPad/android to store backing tracks.
- Laptop for presentations.

What do we need to do next?

- Organise/commission recording of a CD.
- Review cost of producing an updated DVD/video clip.
- Seek support from friends and stakeholders especially for events for selling items.

- Produce a professional standard format covering lyrics of core repertoire.
- Review storage of equipment with a view to having designated office/storage space - that may need to be rented.

What will it cost?

- Commissioning CD.
- Design and purchase resources for resale.
- Purchase clothing etc.
- Folders or booklets for the lyrics.
- Office/storage space.

Rising Voices Wessex Network

Promote a strategy that supports the development of other choirs within Dorset and Hampshire and forges appropriate musical and cultural links with other like-minded choirs.

What we would like to achieve by 2020

- Recognised for offering a great opportunity to aid recovery for people affected by cancer through music and singing.
- A Network of choirs in Wessex developed on a similar model to current choirs, offering the opportunity to people affected by cancer to enjoy music and singing.
- Performing in the Wessex and wider area to showcase the work of the choirs.
- Performing with live musicians.
- Work with other organisations on researching the benefits of music and singing for people affected by cancer.

Where we are now?

- A choir at The New Church, Tuckton, Bournemouth.
- A choir at St Johns Church, Parkstone, Poole.
- One choir whom we initially funded (and who use our logo) in Bridport with whom we currently have little contact.
- Annual quantitative survey using Survey Monkey.
- Working with Tenovus for research.
- Linked to Arts and Health South West, Living Well Active and the National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO).
- Communicated with Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra organisation to link, where appropriate with their community outreach work on music and health.

What do we need to do next?

- Contact the Bridport choir.
- Link with the Wessex Cancer Choirs in the area.
- Develop a 'How To Guide'.
- Link to Tenovus and other local choirs for a Big Sing.

- Explore other areas/avenues that may be interested in developing a choir.
- Develop a contact list of musicians suitable to play with us.
- Support Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra in the development of their orchestras for people affected by cancer.
- Work with a local University for a more in depth research including qualitative analysis of the benefits of music and singing for people affected by cancer.

What will it cost?

- Funding to help other choirs set up and get started.
- Choir Directors/accompanist.
- Funding and organisation of a Big Sing.
- Support in helping other choirs to set up with the information they need – ‘How To’ Guide.
- Research costs – University fees.