

MUSIC4WELLBEING NEWSLETTER



Seaside Singers' long-standing volunteers

Mission: Music4Wellbeing is a charity dedicated to improving the lives of individuals facing various life challenges

Vision: Creating a community where individuals are empowered to live fulfilling lives

Approach: M4W provides **free**, research-led, creative activity groups led by professional Therapeutic Arts Practitioners



Celebrating Our Volunteers: The Heartbeat of Our Sessions

During **National Volunteer Week, 2-8 June**, we celebrated the incredible individuals who bring Music4Wellbeing to life. Their kindness, patience, and creativity make every session not just possible – but meaningful.

Whether offering a warm welcome, supporting participants through each beat and breath, or simply sharing a smile over a cup of tea, our volunteers foster connection, trust, and joy.

They don't just support the music – they are the rhythm that carries it forward.

If you are interested in volunteering for Music4Wellbeing, please contact us at welcome@music4wellbeing.org.uk or 01304 699007.

Why Your Support Matters

At M4W, every donation helps us turn connection into a lifeline. Whether it funds a cup of tea at the end of a session or helps bring music to someone living with dementia or isolation, your generosity makes it possible for people to feel seen, heard, and valued. Together, we create joy, build community, and restore confidence, one rhythm at a time.

Thank you for making this harmony possible.



Community Impact

- Sarah's Story:** Sarah, who has learning and movement disabilities and early-stage dementia, attended the weekly Sandwich Singers group for six months. Her initial agitation transformed into active participation and relaxation, making her an integral member of the group.
- Beneficiary Feedback:** Participants and volunteers have shared positive feedback, highlighting the joy, connection, and sense of belonging fostered by the sessions.

Activities

- Creative Activity Groups:** Regular sessions include singing, music-making, dancing, and socialising
- Therapeutic Arts Practitioners:** Led by professionals using research-based methods
- Community Engagement:** Sessions create a safe, bonded environment for physical, mental, and social thriving

Achievements

- Growth:** From five groups in 2015 to 18 in 2025, delivering 220 activity sessions per year for approximately 600 participants across various locations
- Expansion Goals:** Aim to increase to 250 sessions per year by 2026 and grow the practitioner workforce

Raising Our Profile in Medway

Volunteer Week at Rochester Cathedral

On 5th June, we were thrilled to attend the **Creating Community Connections event at Rochester Cathedral** – a truly inspiring day celebrating the power of community and collaboration!

The event included a warm welcome from Medway's new mayor, Cllr Trevor Clarke, an insightful talk by Music4Wellbeing's Director, Trish Vella-Burrow, on the Power of Music Medway network, a lively COPD Singalong session led by Kate Mechedou from Mrs Bakers Medway Theatre Company and beautiful performances by the Rochester Cathedral Volunteer Choir.

M4W's Director, Trish demonstrates M4W's activities at Rochester Cathedral



A new partnership with Medway Sunlight Rotary

Members of Medway Sunlight Rotary joined in with an illustrative talk given by Trish about our work and chose M4W as a recipient of their fundraising event at the annual Dragon Boat Race in Medway.



Trish and Medway Sunlight Rotary members make beautiful tone chime music together



Trish joins the fundraising stall at Medway's Dragon Boat Event this summer

Singalong for COPD groups in Medway

As part of our Power of Music Medway (POMM) Network project funded by The Power of Music, and practice-sharing initiative funded by the Canterbury Cantata Trust, M4W is partnering Kate Merchedou, Director of Mrs Baker's Medway Theatre Company, with her Singalong for COPD project. Other POMM partners include Karen Reeves-Toppin, Director of the choir, Medway Can Sing and Derek Blease from Medway Music Association.



Participants of Twydall's first Singing for COPD session, July 2025

Donate to M4W for free by using Easyfundraising



A big thank you to our amazing supporters who raise free funds for us on [Easyfundraising](#). If you're not signed up yet, please join today and you can raise free donations for Music4Wellbeing every time you shop online this year. All the big names like John Lewis & Partners, M&S, Argos, eBay and many more are ready to make a free donation at no extra cost to you!

If you would like support with registration, please contact Gemma at gemma@music4wellbeing.org.uk or call 07985 219280.

Sing from the Heart: Where Every Voice Matters

Sing from the Heart Community Music Project

Our Thanet-based **Sing from The Heart project**, led by M4W lead practitioner, Charlie Hannah, included an intergenerational, interactive 'singing tea party' at Ramsgate Arts Primary School. Members of our Seaside Singers group from Margate spent a fun afternoon at the school singing and sharing stories with the children.

Sing from the Heart was more than just a music project – it was a shared breath, a warm welcome, and a reminder that we belong.

In a world that often rushes past quiet voices, our Sing from the Heart project allowed us to listen, uplift, and celebrate everyone!



Pupils from Ramsgate Arts Primary sing from their hearts



The [Sing from the Heart film](#) was shown at the Palace View cinema. Visitors were inspired to donate over £100 in donations towards the next phase of the project!



Audience Members & Billboard from the premiere of Sing from The Heart

By popular demand, the project is continuing with Sing from The Heart II now underway. If you are keen to donate towards this project, please do get in touch!

Bluebirds Dover



BlueBirds exercise upper body movements and flow to music

M4W's Bluebirds group in Whitfield, Dover was among the first created in partnership with Parkinson's UK. Now also part of the global Skylarks, the Sing to Beat initiative run by [Canterbury Cantata Trust](#), Bluebirds is one of five M4W singing groups with a special focus on improving speech, movement and cognitive function for people living with neurological conditions.

Quotes from participants illustrate the physical, mental, cognitive, social and motivational benefits of sessions:

"I find it very enjoyable and very challenging... singing lifts my spirits the minute I start."

"Singing itself is much better... singing here is much better than home... it gets me going."

"The purpose to come and do something... it makes you come... you're amongst friends, you can share concerns and all the links [to other services] are there."

"I enjoy the physical activities. Singing itself is much better for speech and language."

"People with quite extreme conditions go out so much brighter... it's the overall experience of meeting other people... there's a reason behind everything we do."

Music4Wellbeing at the Deal Music and Arts Festival

We were delighted to be part of the **Deal Music and Arts Festival in July**, with a special interactive singing event hosted by Music4Wellbeing. Held on Saturday 12th July at St George's Church, the event brought together singers from ten local choirs as part of our ongoing SingUnited project. Participating groups included Singing for Pleasure, Living Lively, The Landmark Show Choir, The Astor Choir, Skylarkers Deal, The Manwood Singers, Melody Makers, Sandwich Singers, and The Deal Hospital Choir. Together, these groups shared a selection of co-written songs that reflected and celebrated the spirit of their communities. The event was a joyful and uplifting afternoon of music-making, collaboration, and community connection. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to all the singers, facilitators, and supporters who made the day such a success. It was a powerful reminder of the joy and wellbeing that singing together can bring.



SingUnited participants filled St Georges Church



A fun, interactive contribution led by David Smith and
The Manwood Singers

Seeking Volunteer Social Media, Website & Comms Creator

We are seeking a volunteer to help us to create content for and update our social media, newsletter and other comms including the M4W website.

If you are able to offer between **3-5 hours per week** to help raise our profile and support people to live well and thrive, please get in contact with our Manager of Operations, Gemma Warren – gemma@music4wellbeing.org.uk or 07985 219280.

Meet the Music4Wellbeing Team

At the core of Music4Wellbeing are three passionate people who make everything come together:



Trish leads our training and research which brings deep care and creativity to every session, always tuned in to the needs of the group and ready with a smile. Helping participants feel relaxed, included, and uplifted - while equipping the practitioners to deliver the very best sessions for our beneficiaries.



Gemma keeps everything in rhythm behind the scenes, leading operations with warmth, energy and a brilliant sense of fun. She coordinates sessions and supports the team to ensure everything runs smoothly.



Claire, our newly appointed CEO, champions our values of inclusion, kindness, and community - shaping the vision and culture that guides all that we do.

Together, they create the safe, joyful spaces where music does its most powerful work - connecting people.

Thank you to our partners and most recent funders



Parish of Rochester

All Saints Birchington
with Acol and Minnis Bay

**For more information, please contact the team:
welcome@music4wellbeing.org.uk or 01304 699007**

**Thank you for your continued support and
dedication to Music4Wellbeing!**