

Seaview Singers, Swalecliffe, host a Christmas music and fundraising event

With their usual verve, Seaview Singers went the extra mile at their final session of 2024, making excellent Christmas music together and holding a raffle to raise more funding for the group. Thank you to all who donated the wonderful prizes, and to the volunteers for sourcing them and organising the event, and for their stalwart year-on-year support.



Seaview Singers is also blessed with the frequent presence of our wonderful all-rounder, and youngest M4W volunteer, Daisy. As a Year 13 student at a local school, Daisy attends sessions twice a month when her lesson timetable allows. Together with Mum (Lisa), other volunteers, Frank (pictured right), Esther and Ruth, and Community Services Manager, Whitstable and Herne Bay AGE UK, Audra Streeting (pictured left), Daisy greets participants, completes the register, co-organises and serves refreshments and is on-hand to help practitioner, Charlie, leading harmonies and rounds. We feel privileged that Daisy chooses to spend her free time with us.

Click [here](#) for session information for Seaview Singers, Swalecliffe

Sandwich Singers ring the bells for the Christmas festive season

Sandwich Singers are one of two M4W intergenerational groups that include older living with life challenge and younger adults with additional needs. A joyful time is had by all in the weekly sessions held at Age Concern, Sandwich. As seen throughout the year, and particularly during the festive season, love and compassion abounds between participants.



Click [here](#) for session information for Sandwich Singers

Seaside Singers, Margate, revel in the success of their *Sing From the Heart* project with children from Ramsgate Arts Primary School



With their usual vigour, and under the excellent guidance of M4W TAP, Charlie Hannah (pictured below right), members of Seaside Singers, Margate, took up the mantle together with children from Ramsgate Arts Primary School to co-write a new song, entitled Sing From the Heart. They went on to perform the song at a grand event at Queens Road Baptist Church.

Broadstairs. The event, which involved over 200 people, was hosted by The Gap Project. Members of the audience, which was made up of parents, family and friends and other M4W group members, enthusiastically joined in with interactive singing activities. The project launched a strong partnership with the school, which Head Teacher, Nick Budge, wants to nurture. He said: "...absolutely lovely, best event RAPS [school] has hosted... really keen for this to be a long-standing relationship as I think it is uplifting for all."



Click [here](#) to see view the Sing from The Heart Celebratory video

Click [here](#) for session information for Seaside Singers

M4W personnel, Trish and Gemma, join voluntary groups in Herne Bay in a bid to strengthen community and City Council links

This month M4W's Director, Trish Vella-Burrows and Manager of Operations, Gemma



Warren, joined a whole host of voluntary sector organisations at Canterbury City Council's (CCC) Voluntary Sector Engagement Event in Herne Bay. The all-day event, called Collaboration, Codesign and Community: Working With The Voluntary Sector To Deliver Greener, Better, Fairer and Stronger Communities, saw everyone come together to work out how we can all rise to the challenges set out in CCC's Sustainable Development Goals.



A special festive event celebrates our first collaborative project with The Beaney, Canterbury

A special festive session was held to celebrate our end-of-2024 Sounds Beaney project in Canterbury. M4W was commissioned by The Beaney House of Art and Knowledge's Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, Leanne MacDonald, to deliver monthly sessions focused on people living with dementia and their carers. The project continues until 2027, so we look forward to more celebration events along the way.



Click [here](#) for session information for Sounds Beaney, Canterbury

Fond farewell to staunch group leader, Phil



Sing For Your Life and *Sing To Beat Parkinson's*, and with whom M4W collaborates regularly.

Trish joined another Christmas singing event at The Beaney to celebrate Phil Self's long-term commitment to both Music4Wellbeing and our sister organisation, Canterbury Cantata Trust (CCT) and to say farewell as he steps aside from community singing leadership. Phil is moving on to focus on his other myriad musical skills and engagements. He is photographed here with Professor Grenville Hancox, the legendary driver of singing-for-health research and the concept of 'caring through singing', and founder of CCT,

M4W's Charlie Hannah leads Margate's Union Singers in a fabulous seasonal event

Our most recent addition to singing groups focusing on people living with Parkinson's joyfully raised the roof at Union Church, Margate, at their Christmas celebration event. The righthand photo pictures M4W practitioner, Charlie (2nd in back row), and the hard-working volunteers who make possible the slick running of the sessions, serve refreshments, including home-made cakes, and organise regular fund-raising activities to help fund the sessions.



Click [here](#) for session information for Thanet Union Singers

M4W's Songbirds group celebrates Christmas at Age UK, Canterbury and combines festive singing with research

A prize for the most flamboyant Christmas attire goes to our Songbirds group, which thrives through our partnership with Age UK Canterbury and the amazing work of Dementia Outreach Manager Judy Arys (pictured right dancing with Songbirds member, Tina) and her wonderful team of volunteers.

In addition to regular participants enjoying the special Christmas session, delightful medical student, Bihter Gergoz and her medical doctor partner, Maaz (pictured centre) joined the event. Afterwards, Bihter invited participants to take part in a research project about the experience of living with dementia. We look forward to hearing the results.



M4W practitioners complete Sing To Beat Parkinson's (STBP) training



M4W practitioners Jon Beetham, Rick West and Hetty Pound have completed stage 1 of the STBP training programme, which is collaboratively delivered by Canterbury Cantata Trust and M4W. Director, Trish, Jenny Blackwell and Charlie Hannah have completed stage 2

of the training with Charlie delivering a module for stage 1 on improvisation. Both Charlie and Jenny will be attending the advanced stage of the training in February 2025 in Folkestone, on which M4W Director, Trish, and practitioner Charlie, will be teaching.

Click [here](#) for more information on the Sing To Beat Parkinson's training programme.

A new singing group in Deal joins the M4W family

From 1 January, a new singing group, Astor Community Choir (ACC) from Deal joins the M4W family. For their final session before joining us, members of ACC visited the Walmer Day Centre for a jolly interactive Christmas sing. The choir, previously led by coincidence by one of our original Therapeutic Arts Practitioners, Phil Self, will be led by a newer member to our practitioner team, Hetty Pound (pictured below right, in yellow, waving). We are delighted to welcome Hetty and ACC singers to our family.



M4W extends an invitation for people living with Parkinson's in Deal

In collaboration with Deal-based Social Prescriber, Katherine Shonk, M4W's established Deal Skylarkers group is opening its doors to people living with Parkinson's in and around Deal. This has been enabled through Skylarkers' practitioners, Jon, Jenny and Hetty (pictured right) having undertaken various stages of Sing To Beat Parkinson's training. We are looking forward to building a great relationship with Katherine, who runs a monthly Parkinson's Cafe in Deal, and with the Parkinson's café members who may wish to give Skylarkers a trial run!



Click [here](#) for session information for Skylarkers Deal

New partnership for M4W in Folkestone



During the festive season, M4W Director, Trish, and President of Kent County Bowling Association, Margaret Mortimer, opened a discussion about setting up a new M4W group in 2025 at Folkestone Indoor Bowls Club - our first group in the town.

(Photo - Trish, Margaret and Club President, David Farrar as Trish, in her capacity as Ambassador for Dementia UK, collects a donation from the Bowls Club for the dementia charity).

Meadow View Care Home, Hersden, Canterbury welcome M4W practitioner, Jon, to share music with residents

Responding to an email from Meadow View's Activities Co-ordinator, Chrissy Reading, Trish and practitioner Jon (pictured right), were invited to lead a fun music session for residents. The activities, which followed our established goals for people living with dementia to maintain/improve physical and memory function and mental and social wellbeing, were enthusiastically taken up by the residents. We are delighted to be working with Chrissy and Meadow View residents and look forward to more sessions in 2025.



M4W secures funding from grant funders

M4W has been lucky enough to secure grant funding from various organisations to continue our services. We would particularly like to thank [The Henry Smith Charity](#), [The Utley Foundation](#), [National Lottery Community Fund](#), [Canterbury Cantata Trust](#), [Music for All](#), [The Fore](#), [the Cole Charitable Trust](#), [Canterbury City Council](#), [the Chatham Maritime Trust](#), [Involve Kent](#) and the [Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust](#).

