

WILTSHIRE RURAL MUSIC SCHOOL BUSINESS PLAN

Summary

WRMS was started in 1933 to keep music alive in the rural areas of Wiltshire. As a fully inclusive registered and since 1965 incorporated charity it has enhanced the quality of life of the community by promoting music making.

It is now the victim of its own success in that it has outgrown its present premises, of which it holds the freehold, and being constrained in its activities is unable to develop further as it would wish. The Margaret Stancomb building would provide the venue for this development for which WRMS has been searching since 2003 especially in its more commanding position with the surrounding new commercial and social development.

- The many ways in which the community benefits at present as well as past achievements and opportunities for the future are outlined in Section B, pages 2 & 3 of the Business Plan and illustrate how this asset can promote the Council's goal of promoting a "strong and resilient community".
- i) Section C describes the legal status of the WRMS and shows the sound financial basis on which the organisation operates, resulting from good management and forward planning.
- ii) This with the Feasibility Study show that no continuing financial liability to the county will arise from the proposed transfer of the building to WRMS.

With plans and capital already in hand to adapt the existing WRMS centre in Gloucester Road to make three self-contained housing units, for letting at affordable rents, the continued basic income will be assured and the development of the Margaret Stancomb building will be staged so as not to overreach the existing assets and any further capital available through grants. It is not intended that any future expenditure should be beyond available resources. Since the existing operations will transfer with the WRMS the income from this will continue and since it is intended to provide a home for any other music organisation that can be accommodated, can be expected to increase.

- i) For over 75 years WRMS has operated adapting its contribution to the community as the needs of the latter have changed. It has therefore demonstrated its experience, capacity and capability to satisfy an ever changing demand whilst retaining its own integrity and independence.
- ii) The transfer of the property to WRMS is not therefore likely to be of risk to the Council being the result of a patient long term plan which it is hoped will now come to fruition.
- iii) It is hoped that Wiltshire Council will agree to transfer the Margaret Stancomb Old School Building, together with adequate parking, to Wiltshire Rural Music School preferably as freehold or on a long term lease in time for the School to reopen in the building in September 2010.

A. Introduction

1. Who we are.

- Since 1933 the charity Wiltshire Rural Music School (WRMS), a fully inclusive organisation, has enhanced the quality of life for the whole community by promoting enjoyment through the study and practice of music in its social and cooperative forms among students of all ages.

2. What we do

- Occupying its own freehold premises since 1965 WRMS provides affordable directed playing opportunities, courses and teaching for amateurs, recitals and concerts, bursaries/sponsorship for schoolchildren and students, information, instruments, music and rooms for hire for teaching, examinations, group and individual practice.

3. Need to relocate.

- An appraisal of the organisation in 2002 recognised that the premises were no longer fit for purpose.
- Growing popularity in adult playing sessions meant rooms were approaching maximum capacity at times but use was limited by noise problems under new legislation and the building was consequently underused.
- Other problems identified were lack of parking space, possible but not easy disabled access, the main room too small for use by other music organisations needing affordable accommodation in the area and the attitude of the tenants to our activities causing endless unpleasantness.
- It was therefore necessary to relocate.

4. Action Resulting.

- An assessment of requirements was made and all likely possibilities considered. An early solution was a new centre on the John of Gaunt School Site, with the cooperation of the school and WCC, but this sadly floundered when, after site borings and the submission of the plan for Lottery Funding, new conditions were introduced such that WRMS was no longer able to continue. Since then no possible alternative has been ignored.
- Of the many sites inspected the old section of the Margaret Stancomb building held most promise and WRMS approached WCC in March 2007 registering interest in acquiring it.
- Members of the Governing Council visited the building and found that this landmark building dating from 1893, fulfilled the requirements regarding space (with 217sq m of more easily accessible usable space compared with 182sq.m in its present centre), location near to the centre of the town, within reach of public transport, and easily accessible for members from other areas of the county. It would therefore be ideal for its purpose, subject to a sufficient area of parking being available, bearing in mind the problems of players carrying heavy instruments and regularly travelling from as far afield as Wootton Bassett and Salisbury.

B. Benefits to the community

1. From present operation

a) Children benefit from:

- i) weekly Minimusicians sessions for preschool children
- ii) bursaries for lessons, grants for instrument purchase
- iii) lessons on the premises
- iv) termly examinations in a friendly atmosphere with warm up and pre-exam practice facilities
- v) concert opportunities organised for the ABRSM (Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music) for successful candidates
- vi) subsidised instrument hire either through the county or directly

b) Students benefit from:

- i) Annual award of £1000 with concert opportunity in prestigious venue for a Wiltshire student progressing to a music college. WRMS manages this award for the donor who has secured it legally in perpetuity.
- ii) Regular theory classes for the essential Grade V exam. for the ABRSM for students of all ages wishing to progress with practical exams beyond this stage and which schools are often unable to provide.

Table showing children and schools benefiting from WRMS operations in school year 2009 -2010

Activity	Number of children	No of Sessions	Schools whose pupils benefit
Minimusicians	1) 15 2) 22	30 p.a.	Pre school
Bursary awards	13	3 payments per school year	St.Lawrence School,, Hardenhuish, John of Gaunt, Aloverick, St.Patrick's Corsham
Private Lessons	Est. 20	40	Various
Exam. Candidates	Ave.24 per day	24 days	All Trowbridge schools, Aloverick P.School,,Matravers, George Ward School, Melksham, Christchurch B.o.A.,Frome College, St.Lawrence School, Kingswood, Hilperton, Overflows from other schools when available dates clash.
Pre exam practice sessions	20 -30	14 hours X 3	Any teacher from any school wishing to use this facility
ABRSM concerts	16	Annual	St.Lawrence, Matravers, St.John's, St.Augustine's, Corsham, Sheldon, The Mead, Hilperton, King Edward's Bath
Subsidised Instrument Hire	34 direct 220 through Wilts.County		All schools
Liz Lawrence Award	1	Annual Award	Available to any student in Wiltshire. Publicised through all schools direct and through Wilts. County Music Service
Grade 5 Theory Classes	Ave. 5	3 sessions X 10 weeks .	All schools

Benefits to the community (contd.)

c) Adults benefit from:

- i) 70 playing sessions per year in friendly supportive atmosphere
- ii) 40 choir meetings per year with occasional opportunities to sing with other groups and in residential homes.
- iii) Encouragement to take up an instrument in later years with cheap hire, and playing opportunities and advice.
- iv) The opportunity to continue playing when no longer able to sustain regular rehearsals in other orchestras
- v) Opportunities to revise instrumental skills abandoned on leaving school
- vi) Information about teachers
 - vii) Carers enjoy brief respite when dependants join music sessions; one of our older members had been in a Residential Home until other members provided transport for him to continue to enjoy his life long passion for violin playing.
 - viii) Information about concerts and other music opportunities

d) Other organisations benefit from:

- i) availability of music for hire
- ii) harpsichord , keyboard or other instruments for hire
- iii) publicity of events
- iv) beginners and those revising long abandoned skills move on to other organisations having gained sufficient confidence in their playing at WRMS
- v) Music for the community; WRMS has provided the accompaniment for Wiltshire County Carol Service for many years as well as Trowbridge Civic Dinner.
- vi) The school has provided groups of players for school visits on request in collaboration with the Music Service.
- vii) Small groups of amateur musicians have been supported in mounting concerts for charities e.g. Concerts by Ludmila Bezpalcaya for the last 6 Years which have increasingly drawn in members of the Russian and Polish community.

e) All ages benefit from:

- i) Information on all aspects of music in the area.
- ii) Concerts either organised or sponsored by WRMS; at present these take place in other venues but in the Margaret Stancomb building a licence would be obtained and the hall allows for in-house recitals and small concerts, thereby reducing the overhead costs of these.

In effect WRMS acts as an interface for musical matters across the community bringing together musicians and would be musicians with teachers, examiners, Examination Boards, Leading Music Schools and other education centres, instruments, music, tuners & repairers, concerts and venues. This, together with close contacts with the County Music Service and informed opinion from experts in the field place it in a position to comment and advise on music provision at County and National Levels.

Vision for the Future

Further opportunities identified for expansion

- I. WRMS has long been aware of the beneficial qualities of music but recent medical and social research has drawn attention to this..
 - The following are already identified for introduction when appropriate accommodation, which the Margaret Stancomb School would afford, is available
 - a) Music therapy
 - b) Music participation for the disabled, particularly adults with learning difficulties for whom there is no other provision
 - c) Group singing for the elderly and Alzheimer sufferers (WRMS has contacts and experience in this)
 - d) Provision for other ethnic groups.
 - e) Music appreciation for all ages.
 - f) Partnering with U3A
- II. Other possibilities identified:
 - Music technology and composition opportunities
 - Youth music groups e.g. Jazz, Saxophone, Folk (care would be taken not to interfere with any existing groups)
 - Dance studio (two enquiries have already been received)
 - Other live music clubs, especially those offering more culturally diverse music.
 - Rehearsal space for other existing music associations at affordable, subsidised rates; TSO and TAOS already interested.
 - Extension of use for private lessons by teachers facing noise “nuisance” problems at home.
 - Availability for private practice by any individual with problems as above
 - Revival of the Trowbridge Music Festival from which WRMS holds the presentation cups.
 - Base for outreach groups of other organisations e.g. Wiltshire Music Centre
- III. Availability to other organisations.

It is recognised that music activities are not likely to occupy all available time but the centre will be available for other community use already members of the Trowbridge Cloth Road Arts Trail and the Civic Society have expressed an interest.

3) Past contributions still benefiting the community;

- WRMS initiated and managed the County Music Service until 1970
- WRMS started and ran the Wilts & Swindon Youth Orchestra until the County Music Service was started.
- WRMS similarly started West Wiltshire Young Musicians which was managed from the WRMS building until the opening of Wilts. Music Centre.
- WRMS initiated the idea of the Wilts. Music Centre, which was originally planned as a community rehearsal building and has now become a much valued and significant concert venue, bringing internationally renowned artists to the area. Close links are maintained with the Centre to our mutual advantage as we promote our complementary activities.

C. Legal Status and administration of WRMS

1 Legal Standing

- The charity is registered with the Charity Commission and also with Companies House as a Company Limited by Guarantee and not having a Share Capital.
- The financial year ends on 31st March and examined and signed accounts presented to members at an AGM in July.
- The company's auditor is Thomas Chippendale of Chippenham.
- WRMS has a voting membership of 150 but non members are always welcome at its activities
- The company's Solicitors are Sylvester Mackett of Trowbridge.

2.....Management

- WRMS is managed by a Governing Council which comprises President (Lord Bath), elected Life Vice Presidents, annually elected Treasurer, 22 elected members of whom a third stand down each year but are available for re-election, and three Nominated Wiltshire Council Representatives because of the historical close links with the council..
- The day-to-day management of the WRMS is at present in the hands of a part-time manager.
- Management costs of the charity are carefully monitored and kept to a minimum through the use of volunteers.
- It is recognised that operation in the Margaret Stancomb building will necessitate extra staff but it is envisaged that the interim period between occupation and completion of development and subsequent letting of Gloucester Road will be covered by extra input from volunteers and once the old centre is let the income from this will be available for extra staff as the need arises.

3. Financial Position

- WRMS holds the freehold of its existing premises. At the last valuation this was estimated at £200,000.
- The two upper floors are occupied by registered tenants enjoying life long security of tenure at a rent determined by the Rent Officer (currently £448 per month) providing a regular reliable income for the charity.
- On relocation the WRMS has plans prepared to convert the ground floor into three self-contained units to be offered to some housing association for affordable accommodation, thereby increasing its property income by around £1500 per month. Discussions have already taken place with interested leaseholders.
- On vacating its present building WRMS is advised that a revaluation of the rent from the upper floors can be made which should result in an increase since the disadvantage of living above a Music School will have been removed.
- In anticipation of a move to new premises WRMS has been fundraising since 2003 and therefore has sufficient reserves to cover the cost of the project in addition to the one year's income held in reserve under its operating policy.
- Thanks to sound management and support of volunteers the charity succeeds in operating at a profit in spite of having to double its bursary awards during the last 2 years. Any surplus funds have been transferred to an account with the COIF for either the New Building Fund or a Deposit account.
- A designated Bursary Fund underwrites the award of bursaries but to date the awards have been possible from annual income and the interest on the capital accumulated.
- Shares in M& G Charifund have provided long term security and since it has not been necessary to draw on these they yield a welcome annual income

Financial Position 11 February 2010

	£
Current Account	500.00
Treasurer's Account	4,464.00
COIF Reserves (Deposit Fund) (05.02.10)	34,262.00
COIF New Building Fund (05.02.10)	146,369.00
COIF J.H & F Bursary Fund	10,815.00
M&G Charifund (31.12.09)	18,313.18

Forecast of estimated Income and Expenditure 2010-2011 based on previous years

Since WRMS expects to continue its activities in its new centre, other than the very limited use by JoG School which has declined dramatically, it can be assumed that the revenue from these will continue as will income from other sources.

Increase in income will not occur until the conversion of Gloucester Road is completed although an increase in lettings at the Margaret Stancomb will eventually provide a further increase in revenue.

Similarly the expenditure on activities and administration will be comparable, the increases being in Insurance, council tax/business rates and the heating of the new larger building. However research is being made into possibilities of installing an energy saving heating system.

The expense of converting Gloucester Road and preparing the Margaret Stancomb building will be covered by the capital accumulated in the New Building Fund.

Total Income for 2010-2011 based on previous years;

	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10	2010-11			
			*		<u>Glocs. Rd</u>	<u>M.S.Centre</u>	<u>Total</u>
	£	£	£		£	£	£
	35,568	32,057	30,250E				30,000E

Most of the fall in income is a result of the plummeting in interest rates on the Deposit and New Building Fund accounts.

Expenses

Salaries 5117		5407	5515E				5800E
Bursaries	2121	3676	4000E				4000
Courses 1460		1300	1900E				2000E
Repairs							
Premises	3994	591	2050E	500		Capital	500E
General	408	283	670E	500			500E
Instruments			573				200E
Rates	504	582	663			700E	700E
Light & Heat	1127	690	1150E	200E		1800E	2000E
Insurance	1900	1767	1739	500E		2000E	2500E
Telephone	271	270	270				270E
P.P.P & s 107		220	516				500E
Cleaning	288	326	300(Inc.Garden)				600E
Accountancy	514	636	515				550E
Sundries 245		273	200E				250E
Piano Depn.	906	774	400E				200E
Office	232	124	300E				330E
							20,900

Based on Statement of Income and Expenditure at 31 Jan.2010

Notes Buildings element in insurance covers property £650,000-1,000,000 so should remain same in Margaret Stancomb. Assumed cover in Gloucester Road will be for building only with tenants paying contents.

Feasibility study of planned relocation in Margaret Stancomb School

When members of the Governing Council visited the school before it closed they considered that the building would be adequate for their immediate needs with little expenditure other than the final clearing of the kitchen. Unfortunately vandals have now broken windows and ripped out the wiring and parts of the heating system and this will have to be rectified before occupation. Fortunately money is available in the Building Fund to cover this as well as the conversion of the present centre into affordable housing units.

Available in New Building Fund £146,000

A) Stage 1 Financial Year 2010-2011

1. Conversion of ground floor of Gloucester road premises into three self-contained units;	£
a) Planning permission	670.00
b) Cost of conversion	<u>125,000.00E</u>
c) Amount available at present for initial move	<u>21,330.00</u>
2. Costs of restoring Margaret Stancomb for immediate occupation;	£
a) Window replacement	1,500.00
b) Removal of rubbish	188.00
c) Rewiring of building & repair of Fire Alarm	3,700.00
d) Installation of Fire Alarm if necessary	2,600.00
e) Installation of burglar alarm systems and Fire Extinguishers	6,000.00
f) Replacement of heating system(25,000.00
£400 may be available towards more efficient boiler)	-400.00
g) Removal of kitchen hood and protruding pipe work from kitchen	1,000.00
h) Legal expenses	1,500.00
i) Removal costs	780.00
j) Installation of telephone and other services.	600.00
k) Removal of boarding over windows	500.00
	<u>42,968.00</u>
	Available from New Building Fund
	<u>21,330.00</u>
	From Reserves in Deposit Fund
	<u>21,638.00</u>

Since the building contains sufficient rooms for existing requirements further development will be staged over the following five years depending on financial resources and perceived demand.

This expenditure is well within our reserves at present leaving over £10,000 for contingencies.

B) Stage 2

Future Expenditure 2011 onwards

Once Stage 1 is completed it is expected that further adaptation of the MS building to suit WRMS needs will take place. This will require the services of an architect and will depend on funds still available for the project and grants available.

Any work will be in stages so as not to interrupt the activities of WRMS and is not expected to be completed in less than five years.

By this time the income from Gloucester Road will have increased by a gross £18,000 which with any further increases from lettings of the new centre will allow the introduction of new sponsored activities and the employment of a part time Music Director once the increased running costs have been met.

Expenditure Forecast;:

- Architect
- Insulation of building to reduce heat loss
- Opening up of area above present kitchen to create library storage area, with staircase access.
- Installation of balcony in main hall.
- Music Director
- Provision of access to site.

Availability of grants and sponsorship for these items is being researched.

Support for the Project

WRMS enjoys support from the following:

1. Lord Bath, WRMS President, who welcomes us to Longleat for our Liz Lawrence Concerts.
2. Trowbridge Town Council who have supported us with grants.
3. Schools throughout the wider area that use WRMS as an Examination Centre and who are represented on the Governing Council by the Head of John of Gaunt School.
4. Local members of Trowbridge and Bradford Area Boards.
5. Wiltshire County Council with nominated representatives on the Governing Council.
6. Trowbridge Future Planning Group.
7. BA14 Culture Group
8. Trowbridge Symphony Orchestra
9. Trowbridge Amateur Operatic Society
10. West Wilts Young Musicians, who gave a fund raising concert for WRMS
11. The Vallis Ensemble who also gave a fund raising concert
12. The Mistral Ensemble similarly performed for us.
13. Warminster Orchestra providing a quartet as a publicity effort for WRMS
14. Wessex Concert Orchestra
15. Persimmon Group for whose site openings WRMS is providing a musical input.
16. One of the first trustees of the Margaret Stancomb building being a Sainsbury, which is a Wiltshire family known for its support of music, the firm has been approached in the hope of enlisting their support.
17. As part of the Transforming Trowbridge project WRMS in the Margaret Stancomb building would be in a prestigious position to encourage the regeneration of the area through all aspects of community music making.
18. Members of the public support the project as voiced in the local press.

Conclusion

Having visited the site and discussed the possibilities of the Margaret Stancomb Old School building the Governing Council of WRMS are unanimously agreed that it is well suited to their needs to expand their activities more widely within the community subject to it having adequate parking on site for users. Although there are public car parks within walking distance these are too far away for children and elderly musicians carrying heavy instruments such as cellos and double basses.

With its close association with teachers, examiners, other music groups, schools and individual musicians the need for its non-profit-making activities is as great now as it was when WRMS was founded in 1933. It is particularly concerned with examiners' reports that the decline in numbers of children taking music exams in Wiltshire is not found in other areas of the country.

WRMS was established as part of an organisation to keep instrumental music alive in rural communities. It has a proven record of success over the years.

It operates on a sound financial base and hopes that Wiltshire Council will decide to provide it with the Margaret Stancomb building as freehold or on a long lease in order for it to expand and develop its activities and so continue "to promote the study and practice of music,....in **its social and cooperative** forms among students of all ages" throughout Wiltshire as its Articles require.