



LCN APRIL 2026

Together in Tone - update

Introduction – Caz Besterman

- ▶ Together in Tone = **community project** for Wellington and Wiveliscombe LCN, funded through SALC
- ▶ Main actions: **strengthening links** between local music groups; reaching those who may **not currently engage** in music.

AIMS

- Support and improve health and wellbeing through creativity
- Reduce social isolation, improve connection
- Raise awareness of local music activities and events
- Create opportunities for participation (accessible, inclusive)



Summary

Significant engagement has taken place with **music groups** since January. This has included:

- ▶ Direct engagement: choirs, bands and ensembles (18 and counting!)
- ▶ Mapping of local provision, opportunities and gaps
- ▶ Building relationships with group leaders and stakeholders
- ▶ Attended meetings, rehearsals and concerts







Summary

- ▶ Reached out to **parishes across the LCN** via clerks
- ▶ Followed up emails, phone calls
- ▶ Established contacts within parishes who are familiar with/ key in the amateur music scene
- ▶ Some parishes connected me with their local musicians
- ▶ Met and engaged with arts and music enthusiasts
- ▶ Identified strengths and opportunities in parishes



What we've learned

- ▶ W & W already have a strong and active music scene
- ▶ Many amateur groups are well-established and **already connected**
- ▶ Some already collaborate regularly and have **collaborative concerts** – summer, Christmas



DAY OF MUSIC

St. Andrew's Wiveliscombe

Saturday 27th June

9am-9pm

A full day of non-stop live music, including

- Brass
- Percussion
- Strings
- Singers
- Woodwind
- And more..

Take part and help raise funds to keep the organ playing!

- Refreshments served all day
- Under 5s area

Find details, and how to take part or donate, here

www.linktr.ee/StAndrewsOrganAppeal



The 2025 Wiveliscombe Community Christmas Concert was held in St Andrew's last night. A very special thanks to:

All performers: [Wiveliscombe Community Wind Band](#), [High Park Community Music Project](#), The Community Choir, [Wivelele](#), and us!

The leaders of these groups: Hilary Wickham, Tom Morrell, Dave Williams, and Charlotte Stus. Bob Croft, the fab compère.

All local businesses and band members who donated items for the raffle.

And of course to the rector, churchwardens, and volunteers at St Andrew's.

The evening was a massive success, and we all had so much fun. Merry Christmas Wiveliscombe!



What we've learned

- ▶ Several groups focus on learning/ **enjoying** rather than concerts
- ▶ Interest in additional joint activity, but concern about feasibility (numbers, scheduling, band logistics)
- ▶ Talented leaders: dynamic and experienced
- ▶ Well-resourced opportunities already exist to 'come and try'



Wind Bands – Big Blow



Come and Sing



Saturday, 13th June 2026, 9.30-12.30pm

Wellington Prep School

Free of charge



Free parking at the rear of the school building.

Mozart Mass in C Minor, Verdi Requiem, which will be a good preview to our forthcoming concerts.

Bring your own drink. Cake provided.

This is a great chance to come and sing with us and see if you would like to join us with rehearsals starting in September.



www.wellingtonchoralsociety.org.uk

Charity Number 1051501 / Follow us on X @wellychoral1



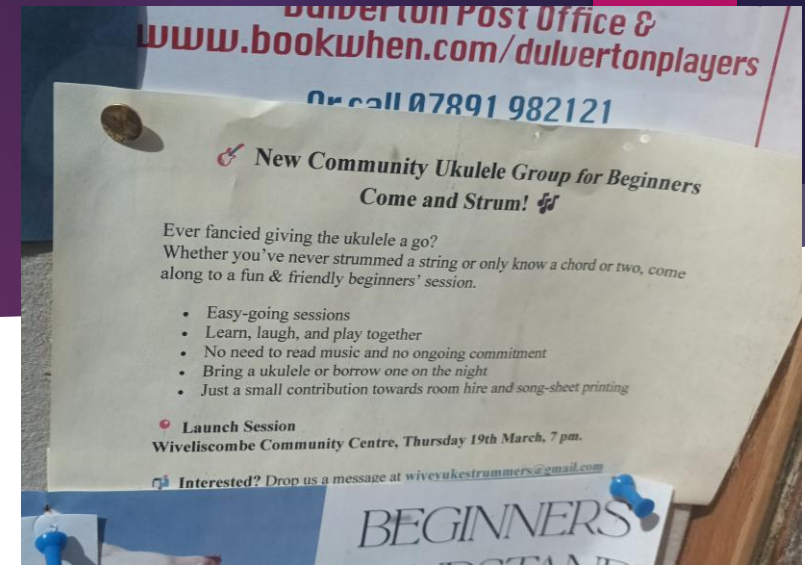
Wellington
CHORAL
Society

making
music



What we've learned

- ▶ **Not all groups are widely known**
- ▶ Groups need greater **promotion and visibility**
- ▶ The **health benefits** of music making need to be promoted more widely



Wivey's newly formed ukulele group

WIVELELE is our name and playing the ukulele is our game! The first meeting of the newly formed Wivey ukulele group was held on Tuesday 26th July.

Eighteen people turned up, and we now have 27 on the books. We meet every Tuesday evening at the Silver Street Centre from 7pm to 9 pm.

Do you play, or are you interested in playing, the ukulele? Then why not come and join us? We are a friendly, welcoming bunch who enjoy playing, singing and learning together.

We can be contacted at wivey.ukulele@gmail.com.

Alicia Arthur

What we've learned

- ▶ Some residents feel unsure about joining
- ▶ Need to encourage **community engagement**
- ▶ Good long-term provision for **beginners** linked to bands

Opportunity to learn to play brass

THE Wiveliscombe Town Band has started training new players in a learner class on Mondays at 6pm at the band room in the Silver Street Centre.

Could this be your contribution to your community?

There is no age limit (though children need to have their second teeth), instruments are provided free. A term

fee of £10 is refundable when you play in a band engagement.

I'm an optimist, so that could be the Christmas Carol season, which is a great fun and friendly time to get to know your fellow townsfolk.

For more info call me on 01984 624065.

Charles Donald



Wellington Silver Band







What we've learned

- ▶ Key opportunity: reach under-represented residents
 - ▶ Knowledge of groups is poor – need better channels for promotion
 - ▶ Access may be a barrier: awareness, transport
 - ▶ Parishes would like more music there
- (N.B. previous 'come and sing/ play' events not attended; advertising?)
- ▶ Nothing for strings / no orchestra



Core actions met

- Supported local groups with visibility – concerts and events
- Social media posts about the wellbeing impact of music participation
- Started a list of all groups (long-term directory to facilitate new members)
- Initiated contact and strengthened communication between groups





As part of our [#TogetherInTone](#) initiative, we will be highlighting our local music groups. This month we are looking at [Skintight Samba](#)!

Skintight Samba are a large community samba band based in Wellington. If you have ever been to a street market in town you may well have heard their funky beats! The group meets to practice every Tuesday between 7pm and 9pm and are always ready to welcome new members.

Skintight Samba perform throughout the county and their most recent performance was at Wellington Independent Market on 4th April. They will be at events throughout the summer so check out their social media pages to stay up to date.

Together in Tone is funded by [SALC - Community Health & Wellbeing](#).





THE BENEFITS OF MUSIC

PART 1: MEMORY



occurs in all parts of our body - including the brain.

You may find yourself struggling more with **short-term memory** and not being able to recall information as quickly as you

emotions. This is why listening to songs associated with a meaningful life event can bring memories flooding back - even from when we were very young!

This effect is good for us as it

memories. Listening to or playing music activates emotional and sensory areas of the brain such as the **amygdala** and **hippocampus**. These work together to encode and stabilise

TOGETHER IN TONE

[Home](#) [Community Development](#) [Together In Tone](#)

Music, wellbeing and community connection across Wellington and Wiveliscombe Local Community Network.

Together in Tone is a community music project that celebrates the power of music to support wellbeing, reduce isolation and bring people together across Wellington and the surrounding area.

WHAT IS TOGETHER IN TONE?

Together in Tone focuses on connecting and strengthening existing music activity, supporting local groups and musicians, and creating opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to take part in music in ways that feel welcoming, inclusive and low-pressure.

The project is being shaped through listening and collaboration, building on what already exists locally and exploring how music can reach people who may not currently be accessing it.

WHAT THE PROJECT AIMS TO DO

- ♥ Support wellbeing through creativity and social connection
- ♥ Strengthen links between choirs, bands, musicians and community groups
- ♥ Improve visibility of local music activity and events
- ♥ Explore outreach opportunities and informal participation
- ♥ Ensure music opportunities are accessible, inclusive and community-led



Next phase (until Sept 2026)

1. PROMOTION AND VISIBILITY (core output)

- ▶ Collate and share opportunities for engagement
- ▶ Develop communications between key members
- ▶ 'Together' – sense of shared objectives and ethos
- ▶ For the community: improved signposting to existing groups and activities, grow the directory

Also -

- ▶ Exploration of printed materials - clinics, shops
- ▶ Local promotion channels (radio, community networks)



List of Groups in the Area

Blackdown Community Choir

Non-audition community choir

Blackdown Community Choir consists of an enthusiastic group of singers. The choir sings rousing songs in glorious unaccompanied harmony, for the sheer joy of singing! All kinds of songs from around the world are sung, as well as traditional songs from these shores – from folk to French, American to African, Georgian to gospel, pop to pavenes. The atmosphere is deliberately informal – people feel welcome and unpressured.

- Meeting time: Thursday evenings
- [Website](#)
- Contact: blackdownchoir@gmail.com

Makaton Singing Choir

Inclusive group bringing music to life through Makaton singing

This group is fun, friendly, and inclusive and encourages people of all abilities to get involved with singing and Makaton signing.

- Meeting time: Fortnightly on Mondays 5:30–7pm, Wellington Methodist Church Hall
- Contact: makatontutorjennie@gmail.com



FREE Sign • Sing • Connect

Makaton Signing Choir

Join our fun, friendly and inclusive group where we bring music to life through Makaton signing!

- No experience needed
- Everyone welcome
- Relaxed, supportive environment
- Learn new skills & have fun
- Singing is optional!

etc.... 20 groups and counting!

Next phase (until Sept 2026)

2. MAKING MUSIC MORE ACCESSIBLE

- ▶ Pilot some friendly, low-pressure, small-scale sessions
- ▶ Delivery through existing settings (e.g. hubs, carers)
- ▶ Presence at local events e.g. fairs, open gardens weekend, Jubilee Park, 10 Parishes fair
- ▶ Target hard-to-reach older residents, isolated individuals
- ▶ 'Have a blow/come and strum' at community groups
- ▶ Monitor engagement with sessions



Next phase (until Sept 2026)

3. DIGITAL CONTENT (agreed spend)

- ▶ Creation of a **video reel about our local provision** to celebrate and raise awareness
- ▶ Longevity; sustain the promotion of local music groups over several years
- ▶ **Well-being impact video** (including case studies): sharing residents' voices, demonstrating benefit
- ▶ Finish commissioning digital content (in progress)



Not proposed (at this stage):

- ▶ A large-scale performance event for 'all' singers/ players this year

Rationale:

- ▶ Delivery not feasible within timeframe - most groups scheduled
- ▶ Essentially non-participatory - does not align with emerging need
- ▶ Lack of large venue (c350 pf +audience)
- ▶ Concerns over space, difficulty of playing 'together' (bands)
- ▶ Length of concert, if each group were to be sufficiently featured



Recommendations to LCN

- ▶ Note progress of project and its findings
- ▶ Approve the proposed direction of travel:
develop signposting to existing groups; promotion (various media); smaller, community-based activity; digital content & case studies

Support continued engagement across parishes:

- ▶ Share information about music activities
- ▶ Enable communication pathways
- ▶ Distribution for parishes



Ideas (beyond September)

- ❑ Drop-in sessions at community centres e.g. Wiveliscombe Community Centre, King's Arms
- ❑ Ongoing interaction in existing community settings
- ❑ Explore transport options to enable access e.g. Wivey link, no 27 bus ?
- ❑ Continue promotions about health benefits of music

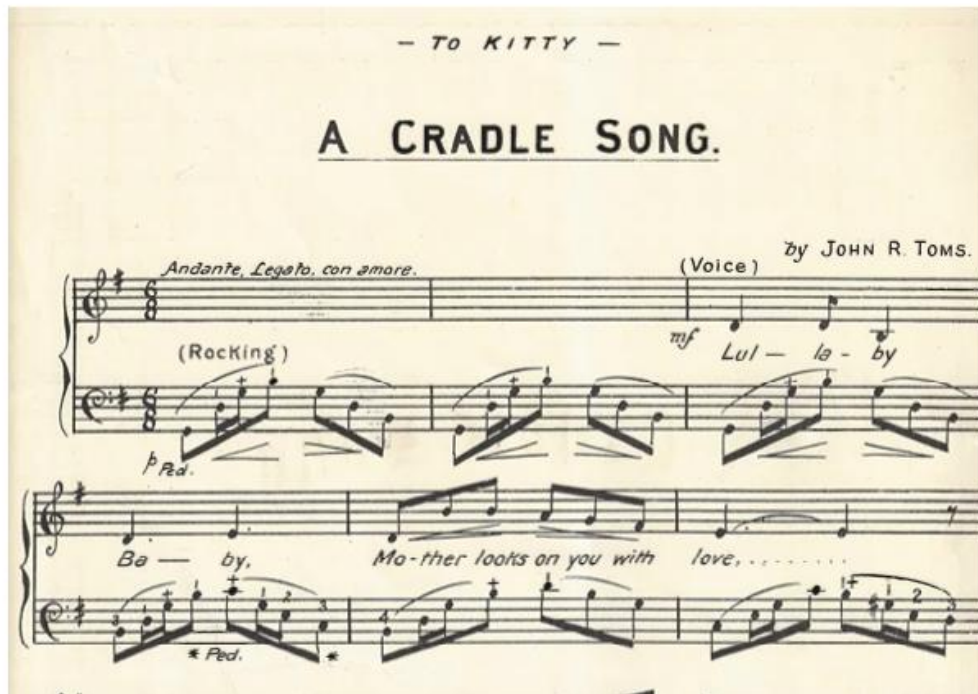


Ideas (beyond September)

- ❑ “Talent in Tone’ concerts in parishes/ village halls (interactive, feature local musicians)
- ❑ Choral collaboration on a large work (Spring 2027) - All local *singers*; e.g. Carmina Burana...
- ❑ New commission for choral event, or local material



A lost lullaby....



John R. Toms was a celebrated musician, and the father of William Toms. William was a pianist and violinist who created the 'perfect violin string' which was sold all over the world.

John was a composer; this gorgeous lullaby song can be viewed in the newly refurbished Museum.



Feedback welcome

- ▶ Actions so far
- ▶ Delivery approach
- ▶ Opportunities within parishes
- ▶ Any gaps or priorities

Together in Tone – welcomes LCN feedback

caz@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk

