

CHESTER MUSIC SOCIETY  
SHOWCASE REPORT FOR AGM, VIA ZOOM, 23 SEPTEMBER 2020

Our season was abruptly cut short when the Covid Lockdown was introduced in March 2020. Five concerts were completed up to that point. A decision was taken in May to run Virtual Concerts from June until at least the end of the calendar year. Two Virtual Showcase Concerts were premiered on the 24<sup>th</sup> June with Bethan Griffiths and 15<sup>th</sup> July with Heather Heighway and Joseph Buckmaster taking us to the end of the Showcase year which concludes on 31<sup>st</sup> July. The Annual Gala Concert due on the 13<sup>th</sup> May was lost due to the lockdown and is planned to take place the following season, all being well.

All the concerts, both real and virtual have been excellent. The usual problem of low audience numbers for Showcase Concerts pervades. The first three being worryingly poorly attended. However, salvation came with a much better attendance than last year for the Young Musician Winners and Jan Modelski attracted its normal large audience.

It is interesting to note that the virtual concerts so far have given much higher exposure for the artists involved than would be obtained at a normal concert. For example, only 34 attended Heather's first live concert in November but probably more than 350 people have viewed her video with Joseph Buckmaster.

I would like to thank all the Showcase Committee and other volunteers for their continued excellent work. This year we have been confronted with new and demanding challenges, but I am sure we will come through it as a better team.

After nearly 25 years of service Gordon Linnell has decided to retire from the committee. Thank you, Gordon, for all the hard work you have put in over the years. In particular, your interval announcements and in-depth votes of thanks will be greatly missed.

The figures shown are for actual audience numbers and do not include paid up members who did not attend. There was a total of 293 people attending the five normal concerts. Figures cannot easily be compared with previous years as there was no Gala and two normal concerts cancelled, but I believe we were on track to meet our anticipated attendance of 495. The number of subscribers was the same as last year at 32. A table of attendances for the season is given below: -

Date	Performance	Attendance
16/10/19	Stewart Smith and Friends	48
06/11/19	Heather Heighway	34
27/11/19	Chester Brass Band & Training Band	46
15/01/20	Young Musicians	67
05/02/20	Jan Modelski Community Orchestra	98
08/05/20	Arlington Quartet Cancelled due to Covid-19 Lockdown	0
24/06/20	Bethan Griffiths (VIRTUAL CONCERT)	270 Views*
15/7/20	Heather Heighway & Joseph Buckmaster (VIRTUAL CONCERT)	271 Views*
TOTAL	(There were 32 paid-up Members for the season, the same as the previous year)	293 Normal 541 Virtual

\* Views of CMS Channel Video as of 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2020. Views probably means at least 1¾ times as many people saw it. This is considerably higher than any normal Showcase Concert, and far exceeds the maximum capacity of St Mary's Creative Space.

We cannot predict at this time when we will be able to resume normal service. Therefore, Virtual Monthly Concerts are planned up to March 2021, these being shared with a series of Virtual Celebrity Concerts.

Mick Clarke,  
SHOWCASE CHAIRMAN