



Wychavon Festival of Brass

Business plan 2021-2023

June 2021



Business Plan – 2021 - 2023

Introduction

We aim for this third three-year business plan to be as successful as previous plans in meeting our charitable objectives:

Our Mission Statement (reflecting the Charity's objectives)

The advancement of the education of the general public, musicians, arrangers, composers, children and young people in all aspects of brass band music.

Hence:

Wychavon Festival of Brass (WFB) was formed in 1989 to promote the public enjoyment of brass band music, the first entertainment contest being held in September 1990. The contest has been held each year since that date continuing a tradition of brass band contests that stretches back over 150 years. WFB registered as a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) in June 2016 having previously been an unincorporated charity. The main area of operation for WFB is within Wychavon District, part of the County of Worcestershire.

During the three years covered by the first business plan (2016-2018) the contest grew in popularity to the extent that entries to some sections of the 2019 contest had to be curtailed due to lack of space in the available timetable. WFB has gradually accumulated various assets which will need replacing on a life cycle basis entailing some annual renewal. WFB is managed by a committee of trustees with assistance from a loyal body of volunteers on the day of the contest. In addition to an increase in contesting bands, audiences have also increased each year, approaching 400 paying guests at the 2019 contest.

A key objective of WFB is to encourage young people's participation in brass band music and a three-year pilot scheme supported and financed jointly between Worcestershire Music Service (later Severn Arts) and Wychavon Festival of Brass (WFB's contribution was drawn from its own reserves and grant making organisations). The project was successful in that a committed cohort of primary school age children was formed which met regularly and performed in public several times. The

original intent was to form a band of around 25 young people (the standard number of players in a brass band ensemble). However, organisational issues and fluctuating teaching staff allied to the inevitable constraints that governed what was essentially an activity that was an extension of a normal school day affected the development of this project. Such issues as the health and safety of both players and staff members and, more especially, the prerequisite of any activity lead by practicing teachers in the public sphere to ensure equal opportunities to all-comers regardless of ability or progress resulted in some divergence in the understanding of the purpose of this project between the active parties. Whilst these matters might have been resolved over time as all parties were keen to work together, the project was finally suspended when junior schools (who provided the players) selected alternative instruments to cornets for their whole class music tuition programmes from which our cohort was drawn. The reasons for this are many but included initial costs of setting up the schemes in schools, the difficulty of learning a brass instrument when compared to some other options on offer (usually the ukulele), the volume of the instrument and its storage.



After the closure of the scheme, WFB hoped to run a further project by enlisting the help of a local school that had an in house brass teacher or by aligning itself with the proposed music group to be set up by Severn Arts and operating locally in Evesham. However, at the time of the Covid outbreak such a group was still in the planning stage so no further action has been taken. Some funding for this project, or something similar, has been set aside in the hope that in the future WFB can initiate another youth project. Some brief discussions with the West Midlands Brass Band Association have been held regarding the possibility of mounting a joint project with them in the near future. As they presently run a successful solo, duet and quartet competition which attracts players nationwide, and in its online form this year, from around the world, then their extensive contacts would enable us, jointly, to run training weekends that would benefit young players both locally and nationally. This exciting project is very much in its embryonic stage of planning but presents both parties with many opportunities to collaborate to the benefit of both organisations and, more particularly, those who participate as players.

One of WFB's other objectives is the commissioning of new works (preferably by young and local composers) in order to inform and educate the public about brass music. In 2019 WFB commissioned a new work for brass band performance which was supported by a local County Councillor and Brass Bands England. This will receive its first public performance in November 2021 in Evesham and in the presence of its locally born composer, Dan Price.



Resources

Financial

The 2019 financial year, the last full year, opened with bank balances totalling £11,071, representing total financial resources. Net expenditure over the previous two years has averaged this amount, but there can be considerable fluctuations within expenditure heads. 'Everyday' expenditure in the current and following two years is estimated to be in line with this figure also.

Income is more volatile. The previous generous support from donors and grantees cannot be relied upon. WFB is therefore in process of seeking financial stability by attracting longer term donors either by way of lump sum or agreed annual grant. It is acknowledged that WFB will never have sufficient capital to fund operations without the support of donors.

WFB works within known income that ensures the continuance of the contest.

The effect of the Covid-19 pandemic for WFB is to amalgamate 2020 with 2021, consolidating the two years as one.

A two-year (2018 -2019) summary of income and expenditure is appended below, and the detailed accounts for the past three years are attached.

Contingency reserve remains at £10,000.

Human

The chair of the CIO trustees, Dr Valerie Trim, is the prime mover for WFB. She is supported by Mike Pawson, the Festival Secretary who organizes the volunteers and stewards. The other trustees, seven in number, including the secretary and treasurer, give steady support throughout the year. The trustees form an effective management structure and team that enables WFB to work towards fulfilling the Mission Statement.

The trustees meet seven times a year to discuss the year to date, latest financial position, progress with the contest and any other relevant business. The AGM is concerned with the previous year's outcome and the Annual Return to the Charity Commission along with the election of officers to hold office until the next AGM. Regular communication by email, subgroup meetings and informal discussion groups take place throughout the year. WFB has undertaken safeguarding training with Brass Bands England and has developed a policy in respect of engaging with under eighteens.

Facilities and Equipment

WFB does not own any real estate; trustees work from private premises. The purchase of additional assets to support the contest highlighted the need for more storage, which led to the purchase of a trailer that has proved its worth on contest days. Music stands, carpets, curtains and ancillary equipment are now stored in the trailer rather than trustee's private premises, although some smaller items are still stored at trustee's private premises.



Trophies are awarded to the highest achieving bands. These are retained by these bands during the year for return prior to the following year's contest.

Markets, Competition and Activities

The market for the Entertainment Contest comprises the total number (512) of nationally registered brass bands throughout the UK. Elite bands, such as Black Dyke and Cory, are not expected to enter our contest but bands seeking to improve standards of performance have the opportunity to enter ours and other contests throughout the year. The Bolsover Festival of Brass Entertainment Contest is possibly our main competitor. This takes place a few weeks before WFB contest. Both these contests provide an avenue for selection to the next level of attainment at the Spring Festival at Blackpool, the Senior Trophy, thus encouraging strong competition between bands. The next levels up from the Senior Trophy are the Senior Cup, the Grand Shield and the British Open, effectively the world championship. Like Bolsover, the WFB contest is considered a step towards higher achievement, and both contests maintain a healthy cohort of interested bands. Bolsover is able to provide a summer school (supported by its local council), an activity which, at present, is beyond WFB's resources.

WFB has two main activities. Firstly, the annual entertainment contest held in the autumn and secondly the development of the young persons' scheme, which is unfortunately in abeyance at present, though tentative steps are being taken to address this deficit.

WFB has built up a good reputation for the Entertainment Contest and it is essential that the standards already attained are maintained and improved upon providing the stimulus for enhancing our reputation. The Entertainment Contest is advertised in the brass band media early in the calendar year with entries required by the beginning of September at the latest. A national list of bands to approach for our contest was drawn up at the beginning of 2019 with the help of all trustees as in previous years. This effort has resulted in the 2019 contest fielding 56 performances (and over 70 performances) which included two bands from Norway and Germany, the first international competitors. A performance timetable is drawn for each of the five sections enabling each band to

plan for their performance on the day of the Contest at the end of October/beginning of November, depending on the timing of the school half-term autumn holiday.

Partnerships

To date partnerships have been in the form of donors and grantees. These have provided financial and practical support for the contest.

Overview

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Strengths Committed and supportive trustees Trustees who have suitable capabilities and knowledge (e.g. management skills, banding knowledge, financial and business capability, etc.) Good reputation History of success for over 30 k hyears</p> | <p>Opportunities Wider publicity for the contest Increase number of trustees. Create new links with related organisations in the band world Increase sponsors and donors</p> |
| <p>Weaknesses Uncertain funding Just enough trustees Near capacity for Contest</p> | <p>Threats Possible reduction in donations and grants Loss of vital trustees</p> |

Development/ Growth Plan

The present trustees are able to comfortably manage the entertainment contest with the help of a loyal body of volunteers on the day. Whilst higher numbers of contestants are a welcome sign of the contest's reputation there are limitations regarding the facilities that can be provided on the day of the contest. All contests since 2015 have been held at the De Montfort High School, Evesham, and will be for the foreseeable future. The campus accommodates the five sections in the school halls but would be under considerable pressure should there be a large increase in the number of entries in the lower sections. Apart from this there appears little room for development in contesting terms other than to enhance the quality of the facilities that are provided, which is accomplished each year and the maintenance of the contest's standing within the brass band and wider community. The possibility of using different premises for the contest will also be kept in mind since this might offer other opportunities for contest development.

There are, however, two other options for immediate or future development outside of the contest itself:

Firstly the expansion of the contesting weekend to incorporate and expand on the idea of the festival aspects of our activity. A pilot concert was run on the eve of the 2019 contest where our two overseas

bands were given the chance to play in front of a local audience. This proved popular and gave these bands, who had invested deeply in making the trip to Evesham, a very welcome opportunity to demonstrate their musical capability beyond the limitations of the 20 minute programme that the contest demands. The audience consisted of many local people as well as other bands performing on the night. This was a free concert and utilised the Championship Hall at no extra cost since it was already set up for the following day. So successful was this pilot that it is intended to run it each year (when conditions allow) and when bands staying in the area are available.



The second area for development is to strengthen the tenuous link that we have with the West Midland Brass Band Association to the mutual benefit of both organisations. It might be possible to work together to create a brass band weekend/day which incorporates some tuition and ensemble experience. The links that WMBBA has in terms of having access to a cohort of players plus the WFB expertise in running complex events and its own links to professional conductors, serious players and teachers furnishes the opportunity for meaningful activities to be arranged for young and aspiring players and (possibly) composers. There is much work to be done here including the production of a full financial plan when a strategy has been fully discussed and agreed.

A two-year financial summary and budget for the contest activity is appended below.

Action Plan

To recruit more trustees to provide back up for current essential trustees.

To develop the festival and educational aspects of our activities.

Development/ Growth Targets

Short to Medium Term (3 years)

- Develop funding strategy to include larger and/or longer-term donors.
- Achieve financial stability for 3 years.

Long Term (4+ years)

- Less reliance on grants with a more sustainable business model. (This remains an aim though recovery from the Covid pandemic will likely curtail any business interest).
- A ring-fenced reserve that would cover two years' operations. This is estimated at £20,000.

Risk Assessment

The main risk to WFB is in respect of personnel. The worst case would be for the chair, Dr Val Trim, not being able to continue. Dr Trim is pivotal to the whole enterprise. The contest secretary, Mike

Pawson, performs a central role although this may be able to be conducted by another person. The principal risk could be alleviated by attracting an understudy to Dr Val Trim, someone with experience in brass banding (and such an understudy may already have been found. A new recruit to the WFB team has brass banding experience as both a player and competition organiser plus the necessary drive and ambition and professional experience to succeed. So - fingers crossed!). The same consideration applies to Mike Pawson, where a suitable assistant would be an advantage.



Derrick Watt

WFB Treasurer



WYCHAVON FESTIVAL OF BRASS

THREE YEAR FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Contest account

| | | 2018 | | 2019 | | 2020/ 2021* |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|--|--------|--------|----------------|
| Income | | | | | | |
| Donations and grants | 6,232 | | | 6,532 | | 2,005 |
| Ticket sales | 3,080 | | | 3,670 | | - |
| Trade stands and adverts | 500 | | | 1,340 | | - |
| Friday night concert | - | | | 363 | | - |
| | | 9,812 | | 11,905 | | 2,005 |
| Expenditure | | | | | | |
| Contest prizes | 6,870 | | | 7,100 | | |
| Percussion hire | 3,344 | | | 3,344 | | |
| Fireworks | - | | | 2,000 | | |
| <i>Wychavon Sketches</i> | - | | | 1,600 | | |
| Adjudicators | 1,415 | | | 1,354 | | |
| Premises hire | 1,250 | | | 1,375 | | |
| Advertisements | 875 | | | 885 | | 1,393 |
| Hire of drapes | 654 | | | 1,554 | | 388 (dep) |
| Programme booklets/signs | 620 | | | 618 | | |
| Student assistance | 530 | | | 180 | | |
| New music stands | 396 | | | - | | |
| Signage | 395 | | | - | | |
| Insurance premium | 395 | | | 410 | | 413 |
| Music stand banners | 343 | | | - | | |
| Trophies | 335 | | | 598 | | |
| Presentation table cloths | 331 | | | - | | |
| First Aid cover | 251 | | | 282 | | |
| Van hire | 250 | | | - | | |
| Donation to BBE Emergency Fund | | | | - | | 250 |
| School pathway contribution | - | | | - | | 220 |
| Music licence | - | | | 171 | | |
| PA system hire | - | | | 138 | | |
| Trailer repairs | 150 | | | - | | |
| Roll-up banners | 130 | | | - | | |
| Wristbands | - | | | 123 | | |
| Safeguarding training | - | | | - | | 120 |
| Items under £110 | 686 | | | 625 | | 394 |
| | 19,220 | | | 22,357 | | 3,178 |
| Entry fees | 9,215 | 10,005 | | 9,872 | 12,485 | 6,820 |
| Net surplus/deficit/surplus | | 193 | | - 580 | | 5,647 |

* = 2020 activity ended in March. 2021 activity January to June has been combined as the 2021 Contest is effectively spread over two years.

Entry fees: most bands elected to 'roll over' their 2020 entry to 2021.

Refunds were offered to those that withdrew.

| WYCHAVON FESTIVAL OF BRASS | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|----------------|--------|----------------|--------|----------------|
| THREE YEAR BUDGET | | | | | | | |
| | | | 2021 | | 2022 | | 2023 |
| Income | | | | | | | |
| Donations and grants | | | 5,000 | | 3,500 | | 3,000 |
| Ticket sales* | | | 3,500 | | 3,500 | | 3,500 |
| Trade stands and advertisements | | | 500 | | 600 | | 700 |
| Contest entry fees | | | 8,000 | 17,000 | 9,000 | 16,600 | 9,000 |
| | | | | | | | 16,200 |
| Expenditure | | | | | | | |
| Contest prizes | | | 7,000 | | 7,000 | | 7,000 |
| Percussion hire | | | 3,500 | | 3,500 | | 3,500 |
| Adjudicators | | | 1,500 | | 1,600 | | 1,700 |
| Premises hire | | | 1,500 | | 1,500 | | 1,500 |
| Advertisements | | | 1,000 | | 1,100 | | 1,100 |
| Hire of drapes | | | 1,600 | | 1,700 | | 1,800 |
| Programme booklets | | | 650 | | 650 | | 700 |
| Volunteer assistance | | | 500 | | 500 | | 500 |
| Music stands | | | - | | 450 | | - |
| Signage | | | 250 | | 250 | | 250 |
| Insurance premium | | | 410 | | 430 | | 450 |
| Trophies | | | 500 | | 500 | | 500 |
| First Aid cover | | | 400 | | 425 | | 450 |
| Music licence | | | 200 | | 200 | | 200 |
| PA system hire | | | 150 | | 160 | | 170 |
| Roll-up banners | | | 150 | | - | | 150 |
| Wristbands | | | 150 | | 160 | | 170 |
| Safeguarding training | | | 120 | | - | | 140 |
| Sundry small items | | | 600 | 20,180 | 600 | 20,725 | 600 |
| | | | | | | | 20,880 |
| Net deficit | | | - 3,180 | | - 4,125 | | - 4,680 |



| | | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|------------------|-------------------------|-------|------|------|
| Donations | | | | |
| Evesham | Anticipated | 2,000 | 2000 | 2000 |
| Fleece | Sponsorship | 1,000 | 1000 | 1000 |
| Rowlands | Capital spend (carpets) | 2,000 | 500 | ? |

*Ticket sales: Based historical figures 2018/2019
Who knows for 2021?

