

Groundbreaking new music hub launches in Stockbridge

A new community music hub – the first of its kind in Scotland – will be launched on Friday at Stockbridge Parish Church. This exciting and valuable initiative is generously supported by Amati Global Investors and Chamber Music Scotland.

The community project is to be spearheaded by professional cellist and community musician, Clea Friend. Previously she has played with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, and Friend also has over 20 years' experience of working with children and adults with additional needs.



Speaking of her appointment, Friend said: “I am delighted to be leading the Music Hub which seeks to promote health and wellbeing, communication, integration and inclusion through music making and listening to music.

“As a professional cellist and a trained community music practitioner, I have a fusion of skills that feed off each other and understand how music affects the brain and the body and how it can be used to improve people’s lives.”

A promising and highly inclusive array of music classes and activities has been planned to engage people across the local

community. These include a 'Culture Club' where recordings of opera, theatre and musicals will be beamed on a big screen and then discussed, either in person or online.

There will be weekly individual and group music sessions for autistic children and young people aged 6-20 in partnership with [Hear My Music](#) and 'Music Makers', a group for adults with additional needs and their care workers. The particular aim of these groups will be to promote health and wellbeing through singing, playing and song-writing.

For pre-schoolers and their parents/carers there will be regular [Recitals for Wrigglers](#) events in the church. Since their launch in 2014, these (short) interactive classical concerts have gained a great following. For teens, the group 'Making Tracks' will be an informal opportunity to socialise with fellow music lovers, discover new music, and perhaps even make it together in groups. In addition, there will be a 'Cello Choir,' open to players of all ages and abilities.

The Music Hub leader, Clea Friend, will also work with local schools, care homes and others, in addition to staging regular performances with Artisan, an Edinburgh-based professional classical music ensemble.

The Minister of Stockbridge Church, Reverend Dr John Cowie, said music already played a big part in the life of the congregation and members were "delighted" to host the new community outreach project.

"I love music. It draws people together, and the Music Hub is an exciting addition to the life of the church which has the tagline "Friendship through Music."

Visit musiclub.uk for more info.



Reverend Dr John Cowie and Clea Friend in Stockbridge Parish Church