

Ashington Vocal Spring 2026 Edition

Welcome to the seventh edition of Ashington Vocal, the newsletter of Ashington & District Male Voice Choir.

The newsletter, which will normally be produced quarterly, is aimed at keeping the community, patrons and stakeholders better informed about what is going on or will be happening in the Choir. You will automatically receive future editions unless you opt out.

Each newsletter will also be posted in a sub-section under 'News' on the Choir website, <https://www.ashingtonmalevoicechoir.org.uk>

Uniform Update Our New Uniform Jackets complete the purchase of uniform items, Outdoor jackets, ties, and Dress jackets. the final invoice for the jackets alone was £10211.

Echoes of the Wansbeck and Beyond” The Ashington Heritage Music Suite The choir are very grateful to Neil Morton who has put in a tremendous amount of work in preparing the choir to perform all five New Songs. Special thanks go to Alan Beattie a choir member who gifted Glossy Black Diamonds his composition to the Choir, this was then arranged by Neil as part of the suite.

Heritage Concert 2026 Graeme Danby our guest gave a great performance and got the audience laughing with the humour in his song choices, a full house at St Johns Church with tickets sold out three weeks in advance of the event showed just how much support there was in the community.

Fr Sam and all the helpers at the church were perfect hosts and already the choir is planning the 2027 Concert on May 15th.

The Choir was especially Honoured to have the Lord Lieutenant Deputy Keith Green Present on behalf of King Charles.

ADMVC would like to thank all those who helped on the day with front of house, meeting and greeting, tickets, programs, raffle, and refreshments, we are incredibly grateful. THANK YOU!

Below are just a few of the comments received if you had some you would like to add please feel free to drop an email prowcc@googlemail.com.

Heritage Concert Feedback Comments

Lord Lieutenant Deputy Keith Green had this to say ADMVC put on a great show for a full house. Special guest Graeme Danby helped make the event even more memorable.

The Choir is celebrating its 110th anniversary this year and today's performance included some absolutely amazing new material as well some of their older stuff, along with some well-known regional favourites too.

The music was fantastic, but the lyrics are something else. Covering subjects very dear to Ashington, like mining, football and even the river Wansbeck, the words of the songs really meant something to the audience, who gave rousing applause after every song they performed.

This show was a couple of years in the making. Numerous rehearsals absolutely paid off, with the amazing arrangements performed to the highest of standards.

This choir is a credit to the town. Unsurprisingly, they have a load of bookings for the rest of 2026 already, and I'd urge anyone who hasn't seen them to get along to at least one event.

It was great for me personally to see some people I knew but hadn't seen for ages some performing and some just enjoying the event. The guys in the choir are such a friendly group.

Just a super day, well-organised with loads of volunteers chipping in, showing just what Ashington is capable of, and what amazing local talent we are lucky to have in such abundance.

Such a privilege being invited to represent the Lieutenancy of Northumberland in the capacity of DL.

Ian Lavery MP

A fantastic Saturday afternoon spent at St John's Church.

Ashington & District Male Voice Choir always put on a great show.

Special guest Graeme Danby helped make the event even more memorable and brought great humour with the likes of the "Long Benton Leek" and the "Sloth."

This year the Choir is celebrating its 110th anniversary and going from strength to strength and new members are always welcome at the weekly rehearsals.

A special mention to Neil Morton, the Choir's fantastic musical director, who created and arranged new songs for the show including 'Glossy Black Diamonds' written by Alan Beattie and arranged by Neil, and tells the story of the rise and decline of heavy industries in the North, and the hope for the future, another new number performed and getting us ready for the derby today 'Heroes of Our Team' which celebrates the sporting history and legacy of the area and the hope of those who want to pull on the black and white stripes of Newcastle United.

Great show and with many performances coming up to celebrate 110 years I'd recommend seeing the choir in action.

Ian Lavery

Dick Quinby

Hi Colin

I am a relative new boy in the team but I it is the best I can remember.

The reaction of the audience was very special to me; they were "wowed"!

We have sung the Fell 'em doon songs many times but yesterday they bought a tear to my ee!

Neil's Heritage suite came together very well, and we peaked at the right time.

[Congratulations](#) to us all!

Thanks to Neil and Derek for staying patient with us! Well, done Andrew for your excellent MC work and you, Colin for keeping the wheels oiled; it is a pleasure and privilege to sing with you all,

Dick

Graeme Danby

Good morning, Colin

Greetings from 28,000 feet en route to Belfast and I trust all is well

Just a quick thank you for last Saturdays Concert. AMVC were in great form - Neil and Derek do such a superb job both in training you and getting the best out of you on in a concert - bravo - a very appreciative audience too.

Graeme

Lorna Kirkup

Sorry I had to rush off after the concert on Saturday, I had to collect my granddaughter.

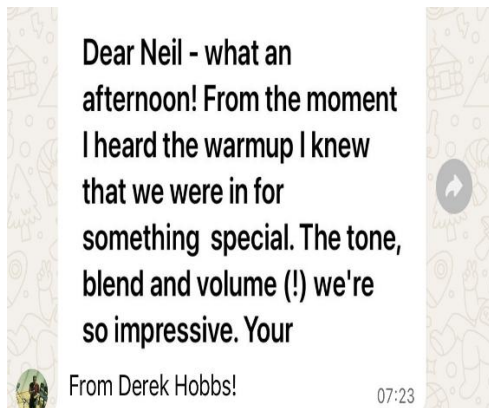
I would just like to thank you very much for inviting me. My friend and I thoroughly enjoyed it, although I still find it difficult to listen to Michael's songs. The choir sounded wonderful and Graeme was so funny. It was also good to chat with Derek and Margaret Hobbs during the interval: our paths don't cross so frequently these days.

Thanks again,
Lorna

Glen Sanderson

I so much enjoyed the concert, Colin.
Please pass on my thanks to everyone involved.
Glen

[Councillor Glen Sanderson](#)
[Leader of Northumberland County Council](#)



Colin Prow

Hi Lads

I thought I would share this with you for those who do not see Facebook. This is among many of the comments and expansive feedback I personally received yesterday after the concert when we were all undoubtedly at our very best Thanks to Neil and Derek.

My own family said it was a real Celebration and the best Concert they ever attended in the 15years they have been supporting us!

Neil Morton

Echoes of the Wansbeck: The Ashington Heritage Music Suite.
My first, and hopefully not my last, commissioned choral work.

It has been a pleasure and an honour to be part of this journey.

Ashington and District Male choir, thanks for the faiths and the enormous effort learning this work that, let's be honest, could have been a lot easier!

You did a fantastic job!

Thank you, Alan for Glossy Black Diamonds, it's an amazing song. Thanks also for the gift, it will have a special place in my home.

Neil Morton

Glynis Deedes

Well, that is amazing and so full of energy! **Congratulations** everyone, I know I've missed a stunning occasion. You captured the big heart of Northumberland in those rolling, rousing Melodies. Excellent! Be very proud 😊 xx

Glynis Deedes

Ashtones Update the MC are considering how best to structure the restart of the group and Members are invited to contribute to the discussion talk with a member of the committee.



Blyth Celebrates got off to a great start but audience numbers at subsequent events proved challenging, however we battled on and have now fulfilled all our commitments to the grant process.

The MC had long looked at Blyth as a recruitment opportunity and Blyth Celebrates provided that to enable the experiment at no financial cost to the choir.

Heritage Concert Series additional dates are in the diary please check the schedule or website for dates and venues; a number of these events are being sponsored by the Community Foundation by Grant Funding.

Music Team ADMVC are truly blessed having Neil and Derek and they really are a team to be proud of their hard work and dedication made for a great start to our 110yr Celebration.

We should also mention Declan Flannery and Nick Parker who at short notice sometimes have taken up baton and keyboard. THANK YOU ALL.

Charitable Status the MC and in particular Neil Rule is investigating application towards achieving CS and the benefits it might bring to the choir.

Annual General Meeting 6th March 2026 saw twenty-three members present and the nominations and election of officers was completed, new to the MC this year Tim Court and George Stoker welcome gents. Sue Lewis continues to support our marketing and social media campaigns in an advisory role.

Treasurer Neil Rule gave detailed accounts for year ending and the financial status was sound with sufficient funds to cover all upcoming costs.

Neil asked members who pay cash currently to think about paying by Bank Transfer or Direct Debit, details from Neil if you are interested.

What's Next no time for standing still, County Hall Concert is a charity event the choir will receive payment and any monies raised are going to Young Lives V Cancer our host Cllr John Beynon is looking forward to the event in great anticipation.

Woodhorn Museum the MC has tried for a number of years to engage with the museum in a similar way to the Beamish events, this year being 110yrs since the Woodhorn Disaster members of the committee met with event organisers at the museum and secured the date 13th August the Anniversary of that tragic event. We hope to make this a yearly event, and it will become a firm fixture in our choir diary One guest will be allowed entry free with each Choir member, so bring a picnic and make it a social gathering.

The Management Committee is looking at various recruitment opportunities but if you have an idea, please let us know.

Christmas music planning is in progress and repertoire for 2027 is being discussed at Music and Repertoire meeting on 16th April. If you have any suggestions, please let us know.

Finally, a nice surprise, a donation of £2400 has been received from the NMPC fund thanks to Dick Quinby who approached the fundholders on a different matter and mentioned our heritage, background, and the legacy of the music we perform. The fund was being wound down, and we were promised a donation so a very Special thanks to Dick who just happened to be at the right place at the right time well done Dick.

C Prow March 2026