



Hertfordshire
Music Service

County Youth Music Groups

2023-24



Hertfordshire

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| Introduction

Welcome to the new County Youth Music Season 2023/24.

I am pleased to welcome you to an exciting upcoming 2023/24 season of activities with our Hertfordshire Music Service County groups. For this season, we have taken the lead from professional ensembles around the country in our approach to deliver the best possible experience we can offer.

From a revamped process for auditions, to a greater emphasis on thematic programming for our concerts, we hope that our refreshed range of collaborations and concert venues will inspire our current generation of players and look to encourage a next generation to take the step into county level music making.

If you're new to county activities or have participated in previous seasons we are happy to have you join us for a sensational year of activities which will bring together the brightest young musicians from across the county to learn and perform together; this brochure details what is on offer, and how you can be involved.

We have a short two-minute video showing what current members of our County Youth Orchestra enjoy and gain from being part of county activities: youtu.be/efdyED-s2kY.

My team and I look forward to seeing you at one of our courses and concerts soon!

Sean Law
Head of Musical Progression



Scan me
or visit youtu.be/efdyED-s2kY





| Why apply

Music making at county level enables you to develop confidence in a range of musical skills whilst working in a supportive, yet stimulating environment. The activities, experiences, and coaching on offer are designed to support you in fulfilling your musical potential.

County level music making offers you the opportunity to continue your musical journey, helping to prepare you for future opportunities whether that be further study, a life in the music profession, or to keep enjoying music making as a hobby for years to come.

The types of experiences, friendships, and memories made through county music making stay with people for a lifetime. If this sounds like something you are interested in, then we would love to hear from you.



Scan me
or visit hertsmusicservice.org.uk/HMSCYMG

"I wish I had joined earlier!"

Heidi, Clarinet

How do I get involved in county music making?

I haven't played in an orchestra, band or choir before.

I have lots of experience playing in orchestras, bands or choirs and/or play at grade 7 or above standard.

I have some experience playing in orchestras, bands or choirs and/or play at grade 5 or above standard.

Playing in ensembles is really exciting – you should try it! You can look out for opportunities at your local music centre or school to develop your experience, or look out for a County Experience Day to help develop your skills and get you on the way to being a member of a county group.

County Wind Sinfonia


County Brass Band


County Youth Jazz


County Youth Choir


County Youth Orchestra


Hertfordshire Schools' Symphony Orchestra


Guitarists usually perform in the Hertfordshire Schools' Gala only.

Instrument legend

-  I play a woodwind instrument
-  I play a brass instrument
-  I play a string instrument
-  I play percussion
-  I play a keyboard instrument
-  I play a guitar
-  I sing
-  I play rhythm section

Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra

Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra is an orchestra for advanced Woodwind, Brass, Strings, and Percussion players in Hertfordshire. The orchestra members are confident musicians (typically grade 8+ standard), with good experience in ensemble playing. Members have often progressed into the orchestra from HSSO as a next step in their orchestral development and many members continue their membership with HCYO into their twenties. As a member of HCYO you will experience repertoire and opportunities designed to develop confidence in your orchestral skills at the highest level of county music making. Each HCYO course offers the opportunity to work alongside professional conductors and experienced sectional tutors, including professional orchestral musicians from around the UK.

Upcoming courses

Looking back / Looking forward 27 – 30 December 2023

A look back at what we achieved in 2023, including music referencing our trip to France and the King's Coronation, as well as looking ahead to what 2024 has to offer.

CONCERT: 30 December at 7.30pm - Haileybury Big School auditorium.

CYO Opera Gala 2 – 5 April 2024

A chance for the County Youth Choir to work with some inspiring young opera singers, and perform what they have learnt in one of London's most beautiful and historic concert venues.

CONCERT: 5 April at St John's Smith Square, London (rehearsals to take place in Hertfordshire).

Summer of music from the screen 19 – 23 August 2024

We will be celebrating film and video game music in all its forms across all County ensembles, for our 2024 Summer courses.





| Hertfordshire Schools' Symphony Orchestra

Hertfordshire Schools' Symphony Orchestra is one of two county orchestras and is for Woodwind, Brass, String, and Percussion players. Members of the orchestra are confident musicians aged up to 18 (typically grade 6 – 7 standard), who will have played in their area youth orchestras or had other similar level orchestra opportunities before auditioning for HSSO. Performing in HSSO gives you the chance to work with experienced musicians, conductors, and sectional tutors, as well as developing your orchestral skills and confidence across a varied repertoire.

Upcoming courses

New Year's Concert 27 – 30 December 2023

Welcoming in the New Year in the Viennese tradition, but with a refreshed approach, combining the old with the new.

CONCERT: 30 December at 1pm - Haileybury Big School auditorium.

Peer Gynt 10 – 13 April 2024

A fantastic opportunity to perform a unique arrangement of 'Peer Gynt' alongside the County Youth Choir and soloists.

CONCERT: 13 April 2024 - venue to be confirmed.

Summer of music from the screen 8 – 11 August 2024

We will be celebrating film and video game music in all its forms across all County ensembles, for our 2024 Summer courses.

"I loved taking part [in the Hertfordshire Schools' Gala], it felt like a very special event and one I will remember for many years. I hope that there was a young bassoonist in the audience or choirs who saw the orchestra and thought that maybe they could do something like that one day!"

Eva, Bassoon

Hertfordshire County Youth Brass Band

Hertfordshire County Youth Brass Band is open to Brass and Percussion players from across Hertfordshire. The group welcomes players up to the age of 21, who can typically play at grade 5 or equivalent standard. As a member of HCYBB you will discover, play, and perform a wide range of repertoire for Brass Band, whilst working with experienced conductors and sectional tutors who work to support you in developing your skills with performing in a band.

Upcoming courses

Day visit to Wellington Barracks with Hertfordshire County Youth Wind Sinfonia
24 – 25 October 2023

Join us for a day of rehearsals followed by a trip to Wellington Barracks on 25 October, to see and perform alongside The Grenadier Guards Band! Participants will also see the Changing of the Guard, and have a tour of the building/facilities.

Easter holiday brass course
6 – 8 April 2024

We look forward to welcoming back county brass players in our popular Easter brass course.

Summer of music from the screen
29 – 31 August 2024

We will be celebrating film and video game music in all its forms across all County ensembles, for our 2024 Summer courses.

Hertfordshire County Youth Wind Sinfonia

Hertfordshire County Youth Wind Sinfonia is HMS' county-level Wind Orchestra, and is open to a range of Woodwind, Brass, and Percussion players who can typically play at grade 5 or equivalent standard. HCYWS is open to players up to the age of 21 and has opportunities for Keyboard and Double Bass players to get involved. It provides players with the opportunity to explore the breadth of wind band repertoire with peers in a variety of rehearsal and performance environments.

Upcoming courses

Day visit to Wellington Barracks with Hertfordshire County Youth Brass Band
24 – 25 October 2023

Join us for a day of rehearsals followed by a trip to Wellington Barracks on 25 October, to see and perform alongside The Grenadier Guards Band! Participants will also see the Changing of the Guard, and have a tour of the building/facilities.

Folk Music!
15 – 16 February 2024

Save the date for two days working on repertoire inspired by folk music, and ending with a recorded performance.

Summer of music from the screen
27 – 28 July 2024

We will be celebrating film and video game music in all its forms across all County ensembles, for our 2024 Summer courses.

“Fun and collaborative experience where you get to meet new and funny musicians. Venues are great!”
Henry, French Horn



Hertfordshire County Youth Jazz Collective

New for 2023-2024, our Hertfordshire County Youth Jazz Collective is a student Jazz community for musicians up to the age of 21, who can typically play at grade 5 or equivalent standard. Open to a range of Brass, Woodwind, and Rhythm Section instruments, members have the opportunity to work in a variety of large and small ensembles. There are also additional opportunities for vocalists, as well as non-traditional Jazz instruments such as strings to take part. This group gives young musicians the opportunity to engage with Jazz repertoire, improvisation, and different approaches to creating music in a supportive environment.

Upcoming courses

Challenging Times 26 – 27 October 2023

Join us on our first County Youth Jazz Collective course, looking at the way unusual time signatures are used to great effect in jazz music, ending in a concert on 27 October.

Motown 25 – 27 May 2024

For the next County jazz course we'll be looking into Motown and its influence, ending in a concert on 27 May.



Hertfordshire County Youth Choir

Hertfordshire County Youth Choir is open to vocalists up to the age of 18, who would like to engage with high quality and varied choral repertoire with likeminded singers from across Hertfordshire. HCYC meet for weekly rehearsals and offer inspiring performance opportunities throughout the year. Singing in HCYC will help support you in improving your abilities as a singer in an ensemble, as well as developing your sight reading and aural skills.

Rehearsals at 6.15pm every Wednesday evening at Mid Herts Centre for Music and Arts.

AUTUMN TERM – 20 September – 13 December (half term 25 October)
SPRING TERM – 10 January – 23 March (half term 14 February)
SUMMER TERM – 17 April – 13 July 2024 (half term 29 May)

Upcoming courses

Hatfield House Chamber Music Festival 30 September – 1 October 2023

A fantastic opportunity to perform with leading singers and performers at the finale concert of the Hatfield House Chamber Music Festival.

REHEARSAL: 30 September
CONCERT: 1 October – Hatfield House

Autumn term concert: TBC – look out for more information!

VENUE: TBC

Spring term concert: 'A Spring Garden' 23 March 2024

Peer Gynt 11 – 13 April 2024

A fantastic opportunity to perform an arrangement of 'Peer Gynt' alongside the Hertfordshire Schools Symphony Orchestra, ending with a concert on 13 April.

Summer term concert 13 July 2024

More details to come!

Training choir

We are piloting a training choir in the Autumn term. If you are interested in joining the County Youth Training Choir (School years 6 – 8) and would like further information, please contact Beth Hopkins on countymusicenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk to discuss.

How to apply

To apply for one or more of our County Youth Music Groups, you will be required to sign up through our Speed Admin application form, where you will be asked questions about your level of playing experience. You will be prompted to log in with your Speed Admin account (if you already have an existing account), or if you are new, you should create a new account.

Please note that when you add the membership to your cart, you will not be charged at this point. You will only be charged for membership of groups where we have confirmed your place after your application and any relevant audition process.

Please be sure to have filled in and registered your interest for any county groups by the deadline of **Friday 22 September 2023**.

If you are applying for HCYO/HSSO for the first time, don't forget you will also have to submit a video audition. More information can be found on our Auditions page.

If you have any questions whilst completing the application form, please don't hesitate to contact the County Activities team by emailing countymusicenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk.



Scan me
or visit ukhertfordshire.speedadmin.dk/registration#/course/69

Auditions

The **Hertfordshire Schools' Symphony Orchestra** and the **Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra** are auditioned ensembles. Having some experience in preparing and submitting audition tapes is great experience for your musical life after your time in our county ensembles. Please note that although you can audition for both ensembles you will only be able to play in one or the other.

A guide to the standard is HSSO – Grade 7+ and CYO Grade 8+, please note this is only a guide and you do not have to have completed exams to apply.

Once you've filled out the application form and indicated that you're interested in either HSSO and/or HCYO, you can begin preparing a short video submission comprising of a 3–5-minute piece of your choice, and the relevant orchestral excerpts, which can be found on our Auditions Page.

- Video auditions must be recorded in one take with both audio and video, and uploaded to YouTube as an 'unlisted' video. When the video is uploaded and is set to 'unlisted', rather than 'public', it will only be made available to those who have the link. This is the most effective way to share your audition with our conductors and tutors.

- Please indicate the name of the piece you have chosen and which excerpt you are playing in the description of the YouTube video.
- Ensure you are clearly visible in the middle of the camera frame and arrange the camera and lighting so that you and your instrument are clearly visible. For string players, ensure that the bow and fingerboard are in full view.
- Make sure the sound is as clear as possible – don't cover up your device's microphone!

Please send your video audition to countymusicenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk with the following email subject line: **HCYO/HSSO AUDITION** [delete as appropriate] – **NAME – INSTRUMENT**.

Please address the email to the County Activities Team. The deadline for submission of your audition tape is **Friday 29 September 2023**. You will hear back regarding the outcome of your video audition by **Friday 13 October 2023**, and if successful, you will be invited to a trial day on **Sunday 22 October 2023**. The purpose of the trial day is to get the orchestras together ahead of the first course, to confirm everyone's seating positions for the year to come.

Audition FAQs

What if I already play in HSSO or HCYO and want to continue as I am?

If you already play in either HSSO or HCYO and want to continue, then you do not need to send in an audition tape. However, it's important that you still complete the application form and join us at the trial day so that we can seat you appropriately.

What if I already play in HSSO but think that I'm ready to move up to HCYO, or to have the chance to play in a principal position?

Please indicate this in your application form. We will require an audition tape as this would be a new ensemble for you, and it is important that you attend the trial day so we can seat you appropriately.

Can I audition for both?

Yes, you can indicate that you would be happy to be considered for either ensemble, but if you are successful then you'll be offered a place in one or the other of the orchestras.

What if I can't attend the trial day?

If you get a place in one of our auditioned orchestras but there is an exceptional reason why you can't attend the trial day then do let us know. In this case you will need to send in an audition tape, even if you are an existing member of either orchestra.



Scan me
or visit hertsmusicservice.org.uk/groups-in-hertfordshire/cymg-auditions.aspx

Fees

Our fees are set to be able to cover all costs of running our county activities, such as hire of venues, conductors, tutors, and music hire. Our standard fees exclude food, drink, and transport unless otherwise stated. Please remember that **bursaries are available** and we would be happy to discuss these on a case-by-case basis by contacting us on countymusicenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk.

Instead of signing up course-by-course, we are asking all members to sign up for the year. Commitment to the ensemble is important. We expect all members to commit and be at all courses for the ensemble they sign up for, but if there is one course you can't make then please do get in touch with us to discuss individual circumstances. We are here to help wherever possible! Fees will be billed termly as indicated below.

If you get a space in one of our auditioned orchestras (HCYO or HSSO) and want to also sign up for another ensemble such as County Choir, the Jazz Collective, the Wind Sinfonia or Brass band then the fee for this extra ensemble will be reduced to an 'add on fee', to make it more manageable to join more than one. Please see our table below for all fees.

	Yearly membership fee	Add on fee to HSSO or CYO membership	Per course fee*
Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra	£558 (billed £186 per term)	N/A	£220
Hertfordshire Schools' Symphony Orchestra	£498 (billed £166 per term)	N/A	£200
County Youth Choir (weekly rehearsals)	£390 (billed £130 per term)	£189 (billed £63 per term)	N/A
Hertfordshire County Youth Brass Ensemble	£189 (billed £63 per term)	£99 (billed £33 per term)	£110
Hertfordshire County Wind Sinfonia	£189 (billed £63 per term)	£99 (billed £33 per term)	£110
Hertfordshire County Youth Jazz Ensemble	£189 (billed £63 per term)	£99 (billed £33 per term)	£110

*the per course fee is payable per course instead of the yearly membership fee for students who are not able to commit to membership across all courses for your ensemble(s) for the year.

Who's who

County Activities team

- Sean Law - Head of Musical Progression
- Beth Hopkins - County Orchestras and Ensembles Manager
- Daisy Enfield - County Events and Courses Coordinator
- Lucy Buckland - Project Officer – Events and Courses
- Audrey Gray – Maternity Cover Project Officer – Events and Courses

We are lucky to work with the following fantastic principal conductors for our county ensembles:

- Peter Stark (Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra)
- Patrick Bailey (Hertfordshire Schools Symphony Orchestra)
- Dave Gordon-Shute (Hertfordshire County Youth Wind Sinfonia)
- Paul Fisher (Hertfordshire County Youth Brass Band)
- Duncan Fraser (Hertfordshire County Youth Jazz Collective)
- James Slimings (Hertfordshire County Youth Choir)



Course information

Preparation

You should always arrive at rehearsals and concerts with your parts well prepared. This will allow you the best platform to develop your own skills, and help support the development of your colleagues within the group.

Before most courses, you will be able to access your music via our members page so you can look at your parts and familiarise yourself with the scores. A link will be sent to you ahead of the course to access this.

This also gives you the opportunity to take your parts to your teacher in case you are unsure of any passages or parts of the music.

One way to engage with the course repertoire is to listen to recordings of the music and follow your music to help with recognising entries, understanding different tempi, and getting a feel of the different sound worlds that the repertoire uses.

If you are in one of our ensembles that meet weekly, you will have regular access to your scores. Please still ensure you are engaging with the music, so you are prepared for rehearsals!

What to bring

What to bring with you to a County Youth Music Groups course (music and stands will be provided):

- Your instrument!
- Food and drink for each day of the course (for some courses food may be provided but, unless indicated you must bring your own food)
- 2b Pencil – any soft lead pencil will be fine, but 2b is the industry standard.
- Relevant accessories (such as mutes, rosin, spike holders, instrument stands etc.)
- Doubling instrument (if required on course)

If you require additional instruments for one of our courses (such as A Clarinets, piccolos, contra bassoon), then please get in touch and we can discuss the options available!

Weekly term-time rehearsals: music and stands will be provided. Bring your own instrument (if required), water, accessories/equipment etc.

Timekeeping

It is important that for any rehearsal or concert that you arrive in good time and ready to play at the rehearsal start times. Arriving between 20 and 30 minutes before a rehearsal is due to begin will allow most instrumentalists the time they need to sign in, un-pack their instrument, get seated, and warm up before the whole ensemble tunes and rehearsal begins. Singers should also aim to arrive in good time to allow a good vocal warm up.

You should also ensure that you are seated and ready to begin at the scheduled start times after any breaks, including lunch, as it allows everyone to get the most out of the rehearsal time available.

These professional level standards prepare all of our group members for the standards set not only in the music industry, but in other industries.

We appreciate that sometimes players may be late to rehearsal due to circumstances outside of their control – all we ask is that you give us a call to let us know on the day, using the details we provide you ahead of the course.

Concert information

For most of our courses, there will be concert opportunities for the students to demonstrate what they have worked on. These can vary from informal open rehearsals to formal evening concerts.

During the informal performances, audience members will be invited in towards the end of the rehearsal and the musicians will have the opportunity to perform the repertoire they have been rehearsing on the course. Tickets are not required for these performances, and anyone is welcome to come and watch!

Our formal concerts are generally ticketed events; audience members are required to purchase e-tickets ahead of the concert and links for these will be shared in advance of the event. Performers will be required to wear smart black concert clothes for our formal performances.

If you have any questions about the course, you can always get in touch with the County Activities team by emailing countymusicenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk. We are always happy to help you get the most out of each course you attend!

“It was great to be given the opportunity to sing Vivaldi together like that with a string quartet at our Spring Concert. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with James throughout his time at HCYC (James goes well beyond the call of duty to make sure that he gets the best out of everyone at HCYC, and his leadership has really enabled the choir to bond well and flourish – some strong friendships have been made and everyone looks forward to Wednesday evenings!).

I feel very lucky to have such great teachers and inspiration.”

Lizzie, Voice

2023

September

- **20th**: Start of Hertfordshire County Youth Choir (HCYC) autumn term rehearsals
- **22nd**: Application deadline
- **29th**: Audition tape submission deadline (for Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra + Hertfordshire Schools' Symphony Orchestra)
- **31st**: Hertfordshire County Youth Choir (HCYC) Hatfield House Chamber Music Festival

October

- **1st**: Hertfordshire County Youth Choir (HCYC) Hatfield House Chamber Music Festival
- **22nd**: Trial Day (for those successful in joining Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra and/or Hertfordshire Schools' Symphony Orchestra)
- **24 - 25th**: Hertfordshire County Youth Wind Sinfonia (HCYWS) + Hertfordshire County Youth Brass Band (HCYBB) course
- **26 - 27th**: Hertfordshire County Youth Jazz Collective (HCYJC) course

December

- **27 - 30th**: Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra (HCYO) course + Hertfordshire Schools' Symphony Orchestra (HSSO) course
- **Date TBC**: Hertfordshire County Youth Choir (HCYC) Autumn term concert

January

- **10th**: Start of Hertfordshire County Youth Choir (HCYC) spring term rehearsals

February

- **15 - 16th**: Hertfordshire County Youth Wind Sinfonia (HCYWS) course

March

- **23rd**: Hertfordshire County Youth Choir (HCYC) spring concert

April

- **2 - 5th**: Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra (HCYO) course
- **6 - 8th**: Hertfordshire County Youth Brass Band (HCYBB) course
- **10 - 13th**: Hertfordshire Schools' Symphony Orchestra (HSSO) course
- **11 - 13th**: Hertfordshire County Youth Choir (HCYC) course
- **17th**: Start of Hertfordshire County Youth Choir (HCYC) summer term rehearsals

May

- **25 - 27th**: Hertfordshire County Youth Jazz Collective (HCYJC) course

July

- **13th**: Hertfordshire County Youth Choir (HCYC) summer concert
- **29 - 30th**: Hertfordshire County Youth Wind Sinfonia (HCYWS) course

August

- **8 - 11th**: Hertfordshire Schools' Symphony Orchestra (HSSO) course
- **19 - 23rd**: Hertfordshire County Youth Orchestra (HCYO) course
- **30 - 31st**: Hertfordshire County Youth Brass Band (HCYBB) course

| Frequently asked questions

How do I know which ensemble is right for me?

Please refer to our ensemble flow chart, which will guide you towards which ensemble may be right for you. If you're unsure we would much rather hear from you than not, and we can always help direct you to another regional ensemble if we feel you're not quite ready!

Please get in touch with countymusicenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk if you have any questions about this.

I already play in HSSO or HCYO. Do I need to reaudit to stay in the ensemble?

No, you will not have to submit an audition video to stay in the same ensemble you already play in – but you will need to be available for the trial day so we can make sure we get you seated in the right place within the orchestra.

Please see 'Auditions' on page 18 for further information.

I'm in HSSO and would like to audition for HCYO – what steps do I need to take?

You will need to submit a video audition in this case.

Please see 'Auditions' on page 18 for further information.

What happens on the HSSO and HCYO trial day?

Our trial day is designed to get our returning orchestra members, and successful auditionees together at the beginning of the year so that everyone can get to know each other, and allow our tutors to decide upon seating positions within the orchestra that will support your development. On the day, tutors will move people around within the sections, and may try different players in Principal or Sub-Principal positions to get a sense of your leadership skills. Not all players will be trialed in every seating position within your section, and you will only be trialed for a principal position if it is something you are interested/comfortable with. You can also indicate on your application form if you are keen to be considered for a principal position.

I have never taken part in a County Youth Music Group and I'm not sure I'm at the right level or have the right experience to become a member.

The best thing to do is to sign up or get in touch – County Youth Music Groups are a really supportive environment and we will do whatever we can to support you on the next steps of your musical journey. For auditioned groups, even if the opportunity isn't right for you just yet, you will gain useful experience and feedback being involved in the process.

I am really interested in auditioning, but I can't make the trial day or one of the course dates – what should I do?

Please get in touch with countymusicenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk to discuss your specific situation.

Is there a limit to the number of ensembles I can be a part of?

No! However, for our two auditioned orchestras, you will only be offered a place in one or the other if your audition is successful.

What happens if I'm signed up for a course and can't make it?

Part of being a musician in a county level music group is the commitment to your development across the year, and the commitment to the support of your colleagues on all of the courses. As the fees are for the year and to be paid in advance of each course, you should make every effort to attend all the courses for your group(s).

If something comes up that impacts on your attendance for a course, you should contact us straight away via countymusicenquiries@hertfordshire.gov.uk. For any member where regular attendance levels have a negative impact on the group, we may look to offer your place to someone on our reserve list.



Making Music

Improving Lives

Hertfordshire Music Service
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01438 844851

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