

# BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY GROUPS

2026 - 27 Season



**BMT**   
Love Bucks, Love Music

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE MUSIC TRUST

# WELCOME TO THE NEW SEASON



The Buckinghamshire County Groups exist to provide access to high level repertoire. Working with the best young musicians in the county, our programmes will also include partnership and masterclass opportunities with established professional musicians.

We recognise that at this level, many young people are pursuing music seriously, and so the schedules for these groups are designed such that you can participate in more than one group should you wish.

All groups are open to any young person up to the age of 22 who is of the required standard. Applications are considered for anyone currently or previously residing in, or attending school in, Buckinghamshire and from any adjacent area where similar provision is not available. We are happy to welcome university students who wish to return to Bucks to take part.

The 2026-27 programme will include 5 or 6 days of rehearsals for each group plus a residential course and a performance at the Royal Albert Hall.

The Buckinghamshire County Groups perform at major venues and festivals in the UK and Europe, including Sinfonia Smith Square in 2025. They have previously toured in Spain, Belgium, Jersey, Prague, Budapest and Iceland.

## Buckinghamshire County Youth Orchestra (BCYO)

Musical Director: Tom Horn | Manager: Carolyn Sewell

Comprising the county's finest young orchestral musicians, BCYO has earned a reputation for exciting, high quality performances. Each season, the ensemble tackle challenging orchestral repertoire with performance opportunities not only in Bucks, but also at prestigious venues in the UK and abroad. Under the expert guidance of conductor Tom Horn, members are also supported by professional tutors who challenge them to achieve their highest standards in playing.



**Tom Horn** developed his passion while studying Music with Acoustics at Southampton University. He trained with notable conductors like Peter Stark, Peter Ash, Toby Purser, and Robin Browning. Tom has worked with various Youth and Amateur Orchestras in the South of England, collaborating with renowned musicians including Nicola Benedetti, David Owen Norris, and Sir Mark Elder. He currently serves as the Musical Director for multiple ensembles, including the Pelly Concert Orchestra, Marlow Orchestra, Aylesbury and Slough Youth Orchestras. Additionally, he is involved with the Haslemere Music Society and founded the Charity Symphony Orchestra.

## Buckinghamshire Youth Wind Ensemble (BYWE)

Musical Director: Ed Hodgson | Manager: Fay Hayhurst

The high levels of musicianship in this ensemble means that it produces performances of exceptional quality, playing repertoire designed to challenge each player and provide them with a unique ensemble experience.



**Ed Hodgson** studied the French horn and conducting at the Guildhall School of Music, followed by a postgraduate course at the Royal Academy of Music. He has enjoyed a varied musical career performing with orchestras including the BBC Concert Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Istanbul Philharmonic, Cyprus Symphony Orchestra and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. His West End experience includes playing in shows such as Oliver!, Wicked, Les Miserables, Gypsy, Miss Saigon, Kiss Me Kate, and Warhorse. He has been a conductor on Mack and Mabel with Michael Ball, Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Sinatra, Mary Poppins UK tours and has conducted the BBC National Orchestra of Wales brass ensemble during their lockdown recording series. He also featured on the soundtrack to Doctor Who, Hidden Kingdom, Atlantis and Crimewatch!

## Bucks County Youth Choir (BCYC)

Musical Director: Edwin Pitt Mansfield | Manager: Carolyn Sewell

BCYC is an auditioned choir for experienced young singers and musicians who enjoy learning and performing a variety of music to a high standard. It is a county-wide ensemble performing mixed choral repertoire in a friendly and supportive environment while building key choral singing skills, accompanied by Felicity Davies. The 2026/27 season will feature an eclectic range of music, from Baroque to Contemporary genres and across multiple languages along with a concert of Christmas music.



**Edwin Pitt Mansfield** Edwin is an educator, performer and musical director based in London. As a baritone, he has sung for opera companies, choirs and choruses throughout the UK and France. He is a leading teacher of young voices and gifted teenagers. Edwin is Head of Choral Music at Tring Park School for the Performing Arts and deputy vocal teacher at the Royal College of Music's Junior Department. Most recently he was chorus master for the Children's Choir in ENB's Nutcracker at the London Colosseum. He has previously taught at The Royal Ballet School and Stowe School. He is an examiner for Trinity College London and Chair of the Association of Teachers of Singing (2022 - 2024) and is a board member of the European Voice Teachers Association. Edwin regularly leads workshops, teacher training days, and conference sessions across the UK, particularly on the male voice change. He is a contributor to Music Teacher magazine and Musical Director of both the Buckinghamshire County Youth Choir and Aylesbury Consort of Voices.

## Bucks Youth Jazz Collective (BYJC)

Musical Director: Ralph Wyld | Manager: Fay Hayhurst

The central ethos of this new and exciting group is improvisation. Most time is spent in small groups focusing on interaction, listening and leadership, with opportunities to work with established players. In addition to preparing for performances, there is a strong emphasis on process - ensuring our young jazz musicians gain the skills to play in and lead jazz ensembles and preparing them for further studies. In recent years BYJC have performed at Sinfonia Smith Square, Watford Jazz Festival and High Wycombe Jazz Festival with high profile guests including Emma Rawicz and Yazz Ahmed.



**Ralph Wyld** is an award-winning vibraphonist and composer, known for his original, contemporary music performed with artists like Yazz Ahmed and Stan Sulzmann. He has played at venues and festivals on five continents and released an album on Edition Records described as an "outstanding debut" by MOJO magazine. Ralph is also a tutor for the National Youth Jazz Collective and holds a Licentiate of the Royal Academy of Music in jazz education.

<b>BCYO</b>	<b>BYWE</b>	<b>BCYC</b>	<b>BYJC</b>
5 Sep			
24 Oct - strings only	25 Oct	4 Oct	
		15 Nov	1 Nov
22 Dec		20 Dec 21 Dec Concert	20-21 Dec
	2-3 Jan		
19-21 Feb Residential		7 Feb	14 Feb
	30-31 March		
	1 April Concert	6-9 April Residential	6-9 April Residential
<b>BMT CELEBRATION CONCERT AT ROYAL ALBERT HALL 10 May 2027</b>			
16 July Evening Rehearsal 17 July Concert	22-24 July Residential		+ one tbc

# HOW TO APPLY

All prospective and existing applicants must complete an application form.

Applications for all groups close on Monday 6th July 2026.

## **BCYO & BYWE**

Open to players at Grade 6+ (or working towards it with teacher recommendation)

## **BCYC**

Open to singers at Grade 6+ (instrumentalists also welcome)

## **BYJC**

Open to players of any instrument with a passion for jazz and improvisation; must be senior-band level or equivalent

Apply online [www.bucksmusic.org/county](http://www.bucksmusic.org/county)



# AUDITIONS

All new applicants will be required to audition. These will be held in person at Aylesbury Music Centre on Sunday 12th July and Tuesday 14th July. You will be required to play a short piece (accompanist not required) and there will be a short sight reading test. BYJC auditions will be run as a workshop for which applicants won't need to prepare anything in advance. If you are applying for more than one group as an instrumentalist we will try to facilitate one audition for all your applications (excluding BYJC). If, after auditioning new members, we are oversubscribed in a particular section, we reserve the right to re-audition existing members to ensure a balanced section. If there are spaces in a section we may consider late applications.

## Eligibility: Under 22 on 1st Sept 2026

### Membership Fees:

1 group	£495
2 or more groups	£550

### Subsidies available:

50% for FSM/low income
20% for siblings

Fees include all elements of the programme, including the full cost of the residential. Subsidies are available for students eligible for FSM (50%) and siblings (20%). Payment plans can be arranged to spread the cost across the year.

Access to all senior county groups is driven by ability and opportunity. We want all eligible and committed young musicians to be able to take part. If the cost presents a challenge, please contact the Director of Music at BMT for a confidential discussion via [director@bucksmusic.org](mailto:director@bucksmusic.org)

Joining any of the senior groups requires the commitment to attend all the dates listed. Do not send any payment now – once registered you will be contacted to agree your payment plan. Apply here for the 26/27 season: [www.bucksmusic.org/county](http://www.bucksmusic.org/county)



**For more information:**

Fay Hayhurst

[fhayhurst@bucksmusic.org](mailto:fhayhurst@bucksmusic.org)

[www.bucksmusic.org/county](http://www.bucksmusic.org/county)

