



## Press Release

March 21, 2016

### **Volley of voices along the valley**

Choirs from around the region are being offered a fantastic chance to showcase their singing at key events during this year's Wye Valley River Festival.

"It's a chance for established choirs in and around the Wye Valley to bring themselves to the attention of new audiences. We are calling on them to join in with a unique event which brings together internationally renowned artists and local actors, singers, musicians and dancers for a series of magical events taking place between Hereford and Chepstow, from April 29 to May 15," said Sarah Sawyer, community links officer with the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

"Choirs – come and sing at the festival for anything from 15 to 45 minutes. It can be your best party pieces or whatever you want to share with an audience – and we'd love as many watery themed songs as you can muster! Let us know which events you could attend and we'll work with you to decide on optimum time slots and best locations."

Festival dates and places where choirs will be welcomed are May 1 at Ross on Wye where from 12noon to 6pm the full complement of festival actors and others will perform and present activities; May 6 and 7 in Monmouth, between 12 noon and 6pm, when festival activities will take place around the town and outside the Shire Hall; May 14 at Llandogo, from 12noon to 6pm where there will be entertainment from the full festival ensemble, bands and more; finally at the fabulous festival finale on May 15 at Chepstow Racecourse from 2.30pm to 10.30pm. All locations are outdoors so choirs should be prepared for variable weather. For details, please get in touch with [jon@desperatemen.com](mailto:jon@desperatemen.com) tel: 0777 628 2916 / 0117 939 3902

Meanwhile individual choir members and singers of all abilities are invited to sing along with the massed Wye Valley Festival Choir at sessions in Ross-on-Wye, Llandogo and Monmouth. Led by Helen Vincent from Singplicity, the choir is gathering to learn songs about water and rivers from a variety of genres. Anyone over the age of 16 who wants to sing and be part of the festival can join up at any time. The fun sessions are free, there is no need to book and singers can mix and match which venues they attend. Groups from all the venues will be brought together for two final, joint rehearsals on April 16 and 18 and a dress rehearsal on April 28. The choir will then sing with the Lydbrook Band and other musicians at the launch of the Wye Valley River Festival; then in Monmouth on May 7 and lastly at the grand finale. Join in the fun – the choir will meet at Shire Hall, Monmouth on April 4 and 11, 7pm to 9pm and on April 9, 2pm-4pm; at The Larruperz Centre, Ross-on-Wye on April 1, 8 and 15 (7pm – 9pm) and at Llandogo Village Hall on April 2 from 2pm to 4pm. For details please contact Helen Vincent at [singplicity@btinternet.com](mailto:singplicity@btinternet.com)

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-2-

The Wye Valley River Festival, from its spectacular launch in Hereford on April 29 to the fabulous finale at Chepstow Racecourse on May 15 will celebrate the River Wye and its connections to other rivers and people of the world, under the theme Global Arteries. It's a biennial event inspired by the landscape and led by the Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) unit and arts professionals working with local communities. Visit the website [www.wyevalleyaonb.org.uk](http://www.wyevalleyaonb.org.uk) for more information about the Wye Valley River Festival; follow on Twitter: @wyebeauty #wyevalleyriverfestival or like the festival on facebook: [www.facebook.com/wyevalleyriverfestival](http://www.facebook.com/wyevalleyriverfestival).

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**Notes to editors:**

***The Wye Valley River Festival***

The Wye Valley River Festival 2016 is a Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership initiative with funding from the Sustainable Development Fund, a Welsh Government Initiative in the Wye Valley AONB, The Arts Council England, Arts Council of Wales, supported by the Welsh Government and the Heritage Lottery Fund, Big Lottery, Environment Agency, Ernest Cook Trust, Forestry Commission England, New Grove Trust, Hereford River Carnival, Ross Town Council and in-kind support from The Shire Hall, Monmouth, numerous volunteers & local communities; main business sponsor Eat Sleep Live Herefordshire and media sponsors Sunshine Radio and Live 24-Seven. For a full list of sponsors see [www.wyevalleyaonb.org.uk](http://www.wyevalleyaonb.org.uk).

***Desperate Men***

To find out more about the festival's artistic directors Desperate Men visit: [www.desperatemen.com](http://www.desperatemen.com).

***For further information about the Wye Valley River Festival 2016 please contact:*** Andrew Blake, Wye Valley AONB Officer, 01600 713977 email: [aonb.officer@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk](mailto:aonb.officer@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk)

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