



## Thanks to Jean!!

Last week, as a result of Jean's persistence, the Harborough Mail finally published the photograph and report of our presentation in January! Without her tenacity the whole event would have been overlooked by our local newspaper! Thank you Jean.



Kate Hawkins (Young Carers Manager) receives a £1000 cheque from Mandy Stott (Songbirds Committee Member).

## Songbirds Ladies Choir Celebrates Young Carers Awareness Day

After a year of fundraising activities and concerts, Songbirds Ladies Choir, Market Harborough presented a cheque for £1000 to VASL Young Carers Group on Thursday January 30th which just happened to be National Young Carers Awareness Day.

Kate Hawkins, Young Carers Manager, received the cheque on behalf of the group and talked to choir members about the activities and outings their money would support in the year ahead. All the children and young people in the group help to care for a loved one with an illness or disability and the Young Carers Group provides members with some time and opportunity to be themselves.

Songbirds all-female choir has been singing for more than ten years. During that time there have been a few alterations in line-up and three changes of Musical Director, although several of the founder members are still Songbirds. Currently there are around 35 members.

Performances take place once or twice a year and are often held in the summertime and at Christmas. Fundraising activities are run throughout the year to raise money for a local charity.

For more information, visit the Songbirds website: [HarboroughSongbirds.weebly.com](http://HarboroughSongbirds.weebly.com)

## Virtual Choirs

I've seen two large scale virtual choir projects that have kicked off in the last week – you might want to give these a go and, of course, there will surely be other opportunities out there. Love of song and singing is obviously one of the things that joins us all together so, while we can't all meet up as a choir, let's try and keep our vocal chords fit and well exercised!

Kate Wood sent me a link to **Gareth Malone's Great British Home Chorus initiative** – you can register to take part here: <https://decca.com/greatbritishhomechorus/>

I have tried Gareth's Home Chorus once so far and I enjoyed it very much. It's easy to get on to - all you do is click on the link (above) and supply your name and email address. Gareth 'replies' to you and tells you to expect an email from him. This links to YouTube where, at 5:30pm each evening, Gareth runs a warm up and singing session. You can download the music he will be using and currently, we are learning 'You Are My Sunshine'. I understand there will be a range of songs to learn and then perform for a record.

There were 13,415 other people on YouTube with me and Gareth the other evening!

There's another virtual choir project from **Mark De Lisser's Sing and Stay Connected** <https://instabio.cc/markdelisser>. He's going to record a new song each week, we learn it, then record ourselves singing our parts, send it back, and his team mixes it into a fully recorded song. He's creating an album of all the songs. I don't have experience of this one currently but I feel sure it will be straightforward to link on to it.

Andrew Lloyd Webber is also doing his bit, he seems to be playing one of his many famous tunes each day on **Facebook (See link below)** for people to sing along and, should anyone want to, you can record yourself and send it to him on Facebook. If you don't belong to Facebook, at least one of these sessions can be found on YouTube and maybe others will be put on there too.

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=10157903588448445&id=124575513444?sfnsn=scwspwa&d=w&vh=e&extid=1eINesULqcp8Ti1w&d=w&vh=e](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10157903588448445&id=124575513444?sfnsn=scwspwa&d=w&vh=e&extid=1eINesULqcp8Ti1w&d=w&vh=e)

Of course, if you just fancy a good old sing, then why not go on to YouTube and type in the title of a favourite song followed by the word 'karaoke' - it's good fun, good exercise and you can imagine yourself on the stage at Woodstock, Glastonbury or the Albert Hall so it's an all round positive experience. I can recommend it!

## Songbirds Bunting Project!?

There must be choir members who like to knit? Well, I might be wrong I suppose but I did wonder if some of you fancied having a go at knitting some bunting. We could put it all together when our isolation is over and decorate the hall with it when we do, finally, perform again. If you feel like knitting one or one hundred pieces then please do - see the patterns below.

*Bunting is always a really fun little project to do!*

*It's a great way to use up left over bits and bobs from your stash, or colour co-ordinate it with new yarns. Bunting is perfect for any occasion, but works especially well in an English garden in summer, birthdays, weddings, high days or holidays, in fact use it any way you like!*

*This is a pattern for simple garter stitch bunting in dk or chunky, garter stitch has 2 advantages 1) it doesn't curl at the edges and 2) it looks good from either side! Size 19cm x 19cm.*

*Abbreviations: yo – put the yarn at the front of the work before you knit the next stitch ( this creates a hole and an extra stitch) k2tog – knit the next 2 stitches together as if one stitch (decreases by 1 stitch)*

## Garter stitch bunting



### Chunky bunting (green one)

Using 5mm needles cast on 31 stitches

Row 1. Knit

Row 2. Eyelet holes row K1, \*yo, k2tog, repeat from \* to end

Rows 3 & 4. Knit

Row 5 k3, k2tog knit to last 5 stitches, k2tog, k3

Rows 6 & 7 knit

Repeat rows 5 – 7 until 9 stitches remain, ending with a row 7 row

Tip shaping:

Row 1 k2, k2tog, k1, k2tog, k2 (7)

Rows 2 & 3 knit

Row 4 k1, k2tog, k1, k2tog, k1 (5)

Rows 5 & 6 knit

Row 7 k2tog, k1, k2tog (3)

Rows 8 & 9 knit

Row 10 k2tog, k1 (2)

Row 11 k2tog. Break off yarn, weave in ends, decorate if you fancy, string up and smile!

*(Free pattern from The Spotted Sheep)*

### Double knitting garter stitch bunting (pink one)

Using 4 mm needles, cast on 41 stitches

Row 1. Knit

Row 2 Eyelet holes row. K1, \*yo, k2tog, repeat from \* to end

Rows 3 & 4 knit

Row 5. K4, k2tog, knit to last 6 stitches, k2tog, k4

Rows 6 & 7 knit

Repeat rows 5 – 7 until 11 stitches remain, ending with a row 7 row

Tip shaping:

Row 1. K3, k2tog, k1, k2tog, k3 (9)

Rows 2 & 3 knit

Row 4. K2, k2tog, k1, k2tog, k2 (7)

Rows 5 & 6. Knit

Row 7 (k1, k2tog) twice, k1 (5)

Rows 8 & 9. Knit

Row 10. K2tog, k1, k2tog (3)

Rows 11 & 12. Knit

Row 13 k2tog, k1 (2)

Row 14 k2tog.

Break off yarn, weave in ends, decorate if you fancy, string up and smile!

Obviously, accomplished knitters might wish to create more complicated patterns and that's fine, but maybe try and stick to the same size triangle of 19cm x 19cm x 19cm. If you do knit some bunting, let me

know and I can keep a check on numbers (the more the merrier) and it's a more innocent project than the one pictured below!!!!

**QUARANTINED WITH HUBBIE FOR TWO WEEKS  
- GERTRUDE IS KNITTING SOMETHING SPECIAL  
FOR HIM! 🤔**



Keep safe and well everyone, until we can rehearse again.