

Ukey Hooky

Learn to Play, Make New Friends, Have Fun!

Newsletter 1; October 2023

(quarterly)

Hello everyone, and a warm welcome to this first Newsletter. I hope everyone is well and in good health. Ukey Hooky has now been going shortly over a year, and reflecting over this time we have achieved quite a lot in a short time including:

- Ran 3 Complete Beginner Classes (2 x 6 week classes, and a 12 week class)
- Produced a 'Getting Started' Guide, and 4 Song Books
- Hosted 3 Showcases
- Received a £300 funding grant
- Got our Website online
- Became a registered Community Interest Company

So we've done pretty well considering the short time we've been going, and with more exciting things yet to come I thought it would be good to have a quarterly newsletter to keep everyone up to date with what's going on, and as an opportunity for members to share any Ukulele news and updates you may have.

Welcome!

Welcome to our New Members

First, I would like to welcome our new group members who have recently joined us; Tom, John, and Lorraine. It's great to have you on aboard and hope you continue to enjoy coming along to the Strumalong on a Tuesday evening. Well done Lorraine in coming straight into the Lion's Den!

New Recruits



Tom Grant



John Thomson



Lorraine Watt



I would also like to give a special shout out to Alan P. and Susan who have been coming along to the group regularly now for just over a year! Thank you both for being so committed to the group, and continuing to turn up when we only had a couple of members. It really does make a difference.

Longest Serving Members



Alan Penman



Susan Wright

Funding and Finance

As some of you may be aware we recently received a £300 grant from **Creative Lives**, which was used to get the website up and running, and to register the group as a Community Interest Company.



Creative Lives

We are currently in a good position financially. We don't have a huge amount of available funds but thanks to all our members we have steadily built a reasonable pot of cash over the past few months.

As of **7/10/23**, the total amount of funds we have available is **£183.68**

The Breakdown

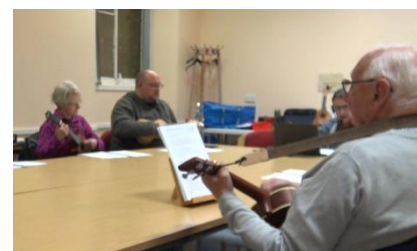
In the Tin we have: £149.55

And the Bank Account has: £34.13

Total Amount Available: **£183.68**

Thank you to all group members

The funds have been generated through our weekly contribution at the Strumalong group (half to the Community Centre and the other half to our tin), Song Book Sales, and Annual Membership, minus printing costs, stationery, and expenses. So a huge thank you to everyone for making this happen. Without your contributions and regular attendance at the group it simply would not have been possible.



The Website is MORE than just a Website!

The recent funding from **Creative Lives** has really helped to move things forward, especially now that we have a Website.



Our Tuesday evening Strumalong is the foundation of the group and regular group meet ups is often the main reason why people join a Ukulele group, and we are no exception, so long may we continue to meet up regularly and do what we enjoy most; playing the Ukulele!

But I'm looking to do so much more with the group. As part of becoming a registered CIC I was asked to provide details of what our main activities are, and how this will benefit the community, so here's a snapshot of our 4 main objectives:

1. **Regular Group Meet ups** (in other words, our weekly Strumalong)
2. **Accessible to Everyone** (online lessons and activities for people who can't access the group)
3. **Public Performances** (opportunities for the group to perform in public)
4. **Group and Individual Development** (opportunities for group members to become more actively involved in activities)

You can find more details about these objectives on the 'About' page on the website but hopefully the information above provides an indication that there will be a lot more going on over the coming weeks.

Accessible to Everyone (point 2) is often overlooked but is actually quite important. Most of us can usually join a Ukulele group and take part in the regular Strumalong and meet other 'Ukeists' but some people may not be able to make it along due to a health condition, other commitments, or they may simply be uncomfortable meeting new people or joining a group. So, by including a Complete Beginner's Course on our website and song books that can be downloaded for only £20 (membership) for a full year, it provides an opportunity for people to learn to play the Ukulele who previously may not have been able to, so Ukey Hooky is for *all* members of the Community.



Membership Benefits

The Annual Membership is fairly new, and I'm delighted to welcome our latest members who

have all signed up. The idea behind having an annual membership came about as an alternative to increasing the Weekly Strumalong from £2 to £3. The good news is the £20 a year Membership costs less in the long term than increasing the cost of the weekly group, but **membership provides so much more** than just keeping down the cost of the weekly group.

In addition to being able to **download the song books** and have full access the Complete Beginner's Course online, and other sections of the website, it also **includes entry to our mini-Ukulele Festival** (*this doesn't mean that all the Ukulele's are going to be Soprano's, ha, ha! No!*). Next June (2024) will be the first time for the mini-Festival. It is going to be a one-day event where Ukulele Groups across the Central Belt can come together, make connections, jam with each other, and of course have the opportunity to perform. And hopefully this will become an annual event. It's going to take place in Camelon Community Centre so you already know how to find the venue. Over the past couple of months I have been in contact with a few of the groups to share this idea and invite them along, and everyone so far is very excited and keen to be a part of it. I will keep everyone updated on how things are developing over the coming months.

Opportunities to get involved

I am aware that some people are very keen to become more actively involved, and helping out in group activities, which is great! There will be plenty of opportunities to get more actively involved. With the group recently having received funding and now a registered CIC I need to ensure I have certain processes



in place before throwing out loads of opportunities for members to help out, and take more of a lead in activities, but rest assured there will be plenty of opportunities to get involved in. I am looking at providing opportunities for members to co-facilitate workshops, or perhaps become more involved in running a beginner class! But like I say, I need to have certain things in place first before that can happen. All I ask is that you hold tight for now, and just keep an eye out for opportunities to get involved.

I will soon be adding an **Opportunities** page to the website so keep an eye on it if you're interested in getting more involved. You will need to sign up and log in to the website to access this page. It doesn't cost anything to sign up, so as long as you have an active Annual Membership it's completely FREE to sign up to the site and access the 'Opportunities' page. Site members will also be able to download the song books and have access to loads more yet to come, so if you haven't yet signed up, now is the time! And if you're not sure how to sign up, I'm more than happy to help, or just ask anyone else who has already signed up.





Volunteers needed

Speaking of opportunities to get more involved, I am looking for volunteers to help with the money collection at the weekly Strumalong, and to help set up and pack away at the end of the night. It's fairly straightforward and doesn't take up much time but now that the group is starting to grow, an extra pair of hands would be really helpful. If you're interested in helping out just send me an email: info@ukeyhooky.co.uk

Open Mic

Starting on **Tuesday 10th** October there will be an opportunity at our weekly Strumalong from **7.45 – 8pm** each week for anyone who would like to do a short open mic. This is a great opportunity to build your confidence and experience in performing, but is completely voluntary of course.



You can chose a song from any of the song books, or play any other song you found elsewhere. It doesn't even need to be a song, it could be something you would like to share with the group; upcoming event, or a recent gig you have done, anything at all really (as long as it's Ukulele related). And if it's a song or something that's of general interest to the group, I can add it to the website.

If you're interested in taking part in the Open Mic but don't feel quite ready to perform on your own you can ask **one** other person to accompany you; just make sure the person you want to accompany you knows what you are going to play beforehand! It can literally be anything, even if it's simply a couple of verses of Drunken Sailor, or strum a 12 bar-blues, it's all experience and character building.

Only 2 rules

1. When someone is performing in the open mic, **everyone else must put down their Ukulele!** It's always tempting to have a wee strum whenever we have a Uke on our person, which can be distracting to the person who is performing.
2. **Limit your performance time to no more than 5mins.** We only have a 15min slot for this section so hopefully this will give everyone an opportunity to have a go. And if we get oversubscribed some people may need book a slot the following week.



Winter Showcase

It's getting to that time of the year again when we start looking at putting something together for our Showcase, and now that we are into October we can start to look at some songs we can perform as part of Christmas Showcase. The last Tuesday before Christmas this year is the **19th**, so we still have 10 weeks to go. For those who have recently joined the group we normally do 2 showcases a year; one in the last week in June, and another one the week before Christmas. The Showcases are an opportunity for anyone to invite people along to see us perform a few songs. We usually perform about 12 songs so it normally lasts about 40mins. It takes place in the same room we use every week. We usually have about 6 people who come along to watch so it's very informal and there's a small budget for snacks and refreshments, and a chance to have a chat with the 'audience' at the end.

Share your news

I hope you find this first newsletter interesting and informative (or any other choice words you have in mind). If you would like to include anything in the next newsletter please let me know. Simply email me the details by **Tuesday 19th December**, at the latest: info@ukeyhooky.co.uk



Hope you enjoyed this first Newsletter.

Happy Strumming

Brian