

48th GENERAL MEETING SHERBORNE 11– 14 April 2024

NEWSLETTER 3

SHERBORNE, 8TH MARCH 2024

“Well-being through Nature and Music” is the theme chosen for the GM 2024 here in Sherborne. With the onset of Spring connecting with nature and being outdoors has many benefits for our physical and mental health. We are pleased that so many of you will be joining us in exploring the Dorset countryside and enjoying a selection of musical entertainment.

A Registration Form is attached as Appendix 1 to enable us to determine full details of those attending including a choice of workshops and excursions. Please complete and return by **22nd March 2024 at the very latest.**

DELEGATES

A reminder that **passports are essential** to gain entry to the U.K. We have invited 5 delegates from each town, 2 for the General Meeting, 1 for the Education Meeting and 2 Youth delegates aged over 18 and no more than 25.

NON-DELEGATES

A number of non-delegates are attending. The charge for non-delegates is **£340** per person, and for youth non-delegates **£287** per person. Concessions will be made for those settling their own hotel account. Individual invoices with the payment details will be sent out separately.

TRANSPORT

Transport will be provided for those delegates arriving at Bristol Airport or Sherborne Railway station. Please indicate your travel arrangements on the attached Registration Form.

- By air to Bristol International Airport
- By air to another UK airport and onward travel by rail
- By road from your town

Details of coach travel from the airport will follow when all flights are known. Incoming trains will be met at the station for those travelling from London airports.

All participants are requested to register their attendance at the Digby Hall, Hound Street, on Thursday 11th April from 3 pm onwards.

ACCOMMODATION

Understanding our financial position with no EU or national sources of funding, and limited accommodation in the town, we have made use of facilities in the independent schools' boarding houses. Will those staying in boarding houses please note that **you are required to bring your own towels.**

Youth delegates and Education delegates will stay at Aldhelmsted East, a Sherborne Girls School boarding house, for bed and breakfast, where the Youth meeting will also be held. Rooms are either single or twin. Education delegates will be on a separate floor in single rooms.

General Meeting delegates and non-delegates will stay either:

- at Harper House, a newly modernised Sherborne School boarding house close to the Digby Hall where the General Meeting and Education Meeting will be held.
- with residents in the town and friends of Douzelage who have offered homestay accommodation in their family home,
- at a limited number of hotels in the town centre.

Any additional nights will be at the delegate's expense.

CATERING

All lunches and dinners, and breakfast for those staying in Sherborne School, will be provided by the Sherborne School Catering department in their Dining Hall. Would you please indicate any special dietary requirements on the Registration Form.

PREPARATION FOR THE MEETINGS ON THE THEME

Youth Meeting

Preparatory work on the theme of Well-being through Nature and Music has been agreed with the Youth Board. For group work and discussions delegates are invited to prepare by researching their towns strategies of well-being and the environment and the opportunities offered musically! Well-being walks with activities are included on the Friday afternoon – please select from the Excursions below.

Would all Youth delegates who wish to play in the orchestra please confirm as a matter of urgency the instrument they play and if they are bringing their own instrument or need the use of one while here. Please complete the “Musicians “ section on the Registration Form. Once the musicians have been confirmed, a link will be sent out to a folder that contains all the relevant music. The rehearsal will take place on Saturday from 9 am.

Education Meeting

The Education President, Rikka, and the Vice-President here, Rachel, have compiled an exciting programme for the Teachers Meeting based on the theme. On Friday morning they would like delegates to give a presentation of best practice on how well-being is promoted in their schools and local community, either through musical participation or a connection with nature and the outdoors. Rachel will discuss the programme for Music and well-being and community music-making that is run at Leweston School. Please send the presentations in advance, with a summary in the email and a PowerPoint, uploaded to the following folder: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1qli4pc7brJLBYR_h8kxien6Phr0Og81S?usp=drive_link. The final submission date is the **1st April**. It is not obligatory to present, and we will be selecting those presentations that we think are the most informative and relevant for our teaching community

In the afternoon there will be a visit to the Forest School at Leweston School.

General Meeting

WORKSHOPS GM ONLY

On Saturday morning, on opening the General meeting, a keynote speaker from the Stepping into Nature initiative, part of the Dorset National Landscape Partnership hosted by Dorset Council, will give a presentation. This will be followed by 4 workshops:

1. **Future projects that do not require EU funding**, chaired by Michael Balfour, Sherborne. An opportunity to link up groups from your town with the people of Sherborne including arts and music groups, sports teams, walkers and school exchanges. Bring your ideas and meet local organisations keen to arrange exchanges and discuss joint projects, with own funding.

2. **Future projects within CERV and Erasmus+ programmes**, chaired by Agnes Lepold, Koszeg. Presentation and discussion on the opportunities available in education, youth, sport and culture drawing on funding from the EU programmes.

3. **“Well-being through Nature”**, chaired by the GM keynote speaker. An opportunity for discussion and for a number of towns to share presentations on how well-being through nature is being promoted in your town.

4. **“Well-being through Open Spaces”**

The Sherborne Town Council invite all Mayors and Town Councillors to exchange best practice in our towns at a workshop in the Council Chamber led by Cllrs Jon Andrews and Jane Carling, supported by the Town Clerk. Discussions to include Council maintained town gardens, nature reserves, playing fields and allotments.

Please indicate your choice of workshop on the Registration Form.

Well-being through Music will be covered in Education and Youth Meeting workshops.

EXCURSIONS

We have planned a number of excursions with guided well-being walks, showcasing a variety of landscapes and wildlife, including the Jurassic Coast, that Dorset has to offer to support our well-being. Please indicate your choice on the Registration Form.

All excursions will depart from the Dining Hall immediately after lunch at 2 pm. Sturdy footwear, rainproof clothing, drinks and snacks for the afternoon are advisable.

Youth delegates - Friday 12 April 2024 - Choice of 2 visits – 20 to 25 people in each **Ryewater Nursery**, Bishops Down, Sherborne, Dorset (Private nature reserve)

Conservation of butterflies, moths, native species of wildlife and a variety of habitats across the reserve. The reserve includes a small lake for wild swimming! It might be cold in April but if you wish to jump in bring your swimming costumes and towels!!

No website available.

Kingcombe Meadows National Nature Reserve (Dorset Wildlife Trust)

An area of ancient grassland, hedgerows, flower meadows and woodland with a traditional working farm, untouched by fertiliser and pesticides:

<https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/nature-reserves/kingcombevisitorcentre>

Using nature as a source of inspiration here there will be an opportunity for developing your creativity by sketching and writing – materials supplied.

All delegates – Saturday 13th April – Choice of four visits – 30 to 35 people in each

Wild Woodbury Project (Dorset Wildlife Trust) Bere Regis

A re-wilding and restoration project to re-establish and conserve waterways and native species of

wildlife and habitat:

<https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/what-we-do/conservation-work-land/wild-woodbury>

Wild Chesil Centre (Dorset Wildlife Trust) Chesil Beach

A marine protection area of the Chesil Beach and Fleet Lagoon, protecting birds, marine habitat and the unique shingle beach - the largest tombolo in the UK. (Tombolo: a sandbar or spit connecting an island to the mainland):

<https://www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk/wildchesilcentre>

RSPB Arne (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds)

A nature reserve within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, this is a unique habitat of many endangered species of birds and other wildlife beside Poole Harbour.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/days-out/reserves/arne>

Sherborne town

An optional programme will include a tour of Sherborne, a guided tour of the Abbey and School and, if open, access to the Castle grounds and a tour of the newly refurbished Sherborne House.

We look forward to welcoming you all for what we hope we have arranged as an exciting and uplifting programme

CONTACTS

- General Enquiries:
Secretary Mary Clothier
Email: marydmc38@gmail.com
Tel: Landline 0044 1963 251255, Mobile 0044 7525 218974
- Transport and Accommodation:
Conference Co-ordinator Moira Western
Email: moiraawestern@yahoo.co.uk
Tel: Landline 0044 1935 815377, Mobile 0044 7870 268615

Atts:

Appendix 1 Registration form