



# South Wessex Organ Society

Promoting the art and appreciation of organ music through  
**education, training, concerts & recitals**

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## Press Release

1 September 2017

For immediate release

### **Newly formed South Wessex Organ Society will promote the art and appreciation of organ music**

A new charity is promising to encourage organ playing and the appreciation of sacred and secular organ music across the region. The South Wessex Organ Society – the successor to the well-established Lyme Regis Organ School – will realise its purpose both through recitals and concerts and through practical courses that will encourage existing organists on their musical path.

The society will have access to the world-class Škrabl organ in St Michael's Church, Lyme Regis, with its 50-rank, three-manual mechanical action, as well as to many other fine organs in Devon and Dorset.

Membership of the society is open to all, organists and non-organists alike. Annual membership is £15 single and £25 for a couple. Members' subscriptions will provide a vital source of income, but equally important is their involvement in helping the society to achieve its aims.

"We welcome everyone who shares our love of this magnificent instrument, and who is keen to share in the excitement of making an important contribution to the artistic life of South Wessex," says Chairman Philip Sturrock MBE.

The benefits of membership will include special members' events, including an annual president's reception, as well as priority booking for other society events and a regular newsletter. Members will also take part in electing the board of trustees who manage and direct the society.

### **Stunning musical event to launch the society**

The society will be launched on Sunday 22 October at a reception following a special choral evensong and recital at St Michael's Church in Lyme Regis. Evensong will start at 4pm and will include works by Mozart, Purcell and Praetorius. A choir and string ensemble will be formed especially for the event and will be led by Peter Parshall, the society's artistic director. Alex Davies, organist at St Michael's, and Peter Lea-Cox will play the organ.

The recital, at 5pm, will be given by David Halls, Director of Music at Salisbury Cathedral and a patron of the society. David's programme will include music by Bach, Mendelssohn and Widor. No tickets are necessary, and audience members can just turn up; the society guarantees a warm welcome and an outstanding musical experience.

### **Lyme Regis Organ School**

The Lyme Regis Organ School, which was founded to encourage the development of capable organists, will continue as a central activity of the South Wessex Organ Society. The school offers workshops and individual lessons for anyone interested in taking up the instrument or extending their existing abilities. The highlight of this programme is the highly acclaimed three-day winter workshop, which will be held in February 2018.



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## Further information from:

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## Notes for editors

1. The South Wessex Organ Society is a charitable incorporated organisation, registered and regulated by the Charities Commission, with the number 1173820
2. The president of the society is respected organ tutor and recitalist Dr Richard Godfrey, and the patrons are David Halls, Director of Music at Salisbury Cathedral, and Andrew Nicholson of Nicholson Engineering, one of the largest bell hanging companies in the world
3. The chair of trustees is Philip Sturrock MBE of Bridport; a past chair of the St Albans International Organ Festival Society
4. The Society's artistic director is Peter Parshall, Director of Music at Axminster St Mary and an accomplished organist and choir trainer