



Media Release

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Funding leads the way to musical success for young people across Berkshire

Local music education charity Berkshire Maestros is celebrating fundraising success after winning funding for its biggest musical event of the past three years. Local funders have been generous in their support for the project, which will take 1,800 local school children to perform in a gala concert at the Royal Albert Hall!

Berkshire Youth Symphony Orchestra and Berkshire County Youth Choirs will perform with primary and secondary school children from across the county – for many, a once-in-a-lifetime experience to perform on the UK's most prestigious stage. Performers will include young people with special educational needs who, as part of this project, have been working with musicians from the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra to create their own musical responses to Aaron Copland's *Hoe Down*. Vanessa Harbutt, Marketing and Fundraising Officer for Berkshire Maestros, said: "We have been delighted that our funders have seen the educational benefits that this experience will provide for our young musicians. Nearly every organisation we approached has granted us funds and this support of our students is invaluable."

Supporting funders included Greenham Trust, Payne-Gallwey Charitable Trust, Louis Baylis Charitable Trust, Newbury Town Council, Gordon Palmer Memorial Trust, Englefield Charitable Trust and private donors, raising £3,500. Working in partnership with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra to seek funding to support the workshops being run in three special schools across the county, further funds were raised from the Wates Foundation, St James's Place Foundation, Boshier-Hinton Foundation, Youth Music, Cardy Beaver Foundation and the D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust.

Louise McGahon, Head of Voice at Berkshire Maestros and project manager of the event, said: "We are so grateful to all the funders for enabling us to achieve our targets. This ensures that not only can we give these children a fantastic experience making music but also that we will be able to secure a legacy for the future that will extend the opportunities to other special schools in Berkshire."

The gala concert, titled *Music Leads the Way!*, takes place at the Royal Albert Hall on Monday 11th March. Tickets are still available from the Royal Albert Hall box office or via the Berkshire Maestros website.

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Notes for Editors:

Berkshire Maestros:

Berkshire Maestros is a long-established children's charity offering musical education opportunities to children across Berkshire, regardless of ability, background or circumstance. We work closely with schools across the county to allow all children access to music and the opportunity to play an instrument. Through our local music centres, we offer children of all ages the chance to sing, play instruments and enhance their life-skills through music.

Our choirs, orchestras and ensembles perform at prestigious venues across the county and beyond – helping the children to develop their team-working and communications skills as well as building their confidence.

Headquartered in Reading, the organisation has centres in Bracknell, Caversham, Newbury, Windsor and Wokingham.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra:

For more than seven decades the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (RPO) has been at the forefront of music-making in the UK. The Orchestra's regular performances at its London home Cadogan Hall are complemented by a distinguished series at the Royal Festival Hall, a hugely popular series at the Royal Albert Hall, frequent visits to its seven principal regional residencies across the UK, together with the work of its award-winning community and education department RPO Resound. With a wider reach than any other UK large ensemble, the RPO has truly become Britain's national orchestra.

Alongside its concert series and busy international touring schedule, the RPO embraces twenty-first-century opportunities, including recordings with pop stars and on film and television soundtracks, whilst its artistic priority remains paramount: the making of great music at the highest level for the widest possible audience. This would have been lauded by its Founder and first conductor, Sir Thomas Beecham, who set up the RPO in 1946, leading a vital revival in the UK's orchestral life after World War II. As the RPO proudly looks to its future, its versatility and high standards mark it out as one of today's most open-minded, forward-thinking symphony orchestras.

More about the event:

<https://www.royalalberthall.com/tickets/events/2019/berkshire-maestros-music-leads-the-way>