**WELCOME TO THE SHEPHERD GROUP BRASS BANDS**

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**BAND HANDBOOK**

This booklet is intended to give you an understanding of The Shepherd Group Brass Bands (SGBB), the way they operate, what is expected of you and also general information about rehearsal facilities, instruments, uniform and behaviour.

The SGBB hopes that your time with us is mutually beneficial and helps you on your path in banding.

**Who are we?**

We are The Shepherd Group Brass Band (SGBB) is a family friendly brass band organisation sponsored by the local York based Shepherd Group. A very warm welcome is extended to all new players from all our members. Whether you are an absolute beginner or someone with years of experience we welcome you to our bands. Young or not so young, whatever gender, irrespective of your personal circumstances, background, religion, ethnic origin or disability, we will do our very best to ensure your association with us is a happy and mutually beneficial one.

As at present, November 2019, the SGBB organisation runs 6 band ensembles catering for what ever level of musical ability you have. The bands are called Brass Roots, Academy Band, Youth Band, Project Band, Concert Band and our Championship Section Brass Band, which is sometimes referred to as our Senior Band.

We are sponsored by The Shepherd Group who take a very healthy interest in our organisation, its progress and players.

**Where are we?**

The rehearsal facilities are located on The Portakabin site;

*Portakabin Ltd New Lane Huntington York YO32 9BE*

Our rehearsal building is called Hi-Bay and rehearsals take place for the various bands on different days and at different times. It is also used by the Company during the day as well.

**Brass Roots:** Mondays 6:30pm to 7:30pm; The present Conductor is Sally Mansell.

**Academy Band:** Mondays 6:30pm to 7:30pm. The present Conductor is Richard Wilton but other senior players do sometimes take rehearsals.

**Youth Band:** Mondays 7:30 to 8:30pm. The present Conductor is Craig Brown

**Concert Band:** Wednesdays 7:30 to 9:30pm. The present Conductor is Mike Pratt.

**Senior Band:** Tuesday and Fridays 8:00pm to 10:00pm. The present conductor is by Richard Wilton. Richard is also the overall Musical Director of all the bends.

**Project Band:** This has only just been set up and realised. The aim of this band is to draw players from the Academy, Youth and Concert bands with the aim of contesting.

There is more than ample parking. The site is fully enclosed and the entrance is via the main Gatehouse entrance off New Lane, which is manned 24/7, 365 days of the year.

**Safeguarding**

SGBB has a strict Safeguarding Policy and we take this most seriously. We also have a Safeguarding Officer and several deputies.

All conductors, occasional and guest conductors, members of the Band Committee and all other adults who need to be are fully DBS certified.

**Parental Duties**

When Parents and Guardians take their children to Band rehearsals at Hi-Bay or concert jobs SGBB insist that they must be taken into the Hi-Bay or the place of the concert and have them registered as being present. Similarly for picking them up. We cannot let any minor leave Hi-Bay or a concert venue until there is a responsible adult there to collect them and take them home. We cannot accept them just being dropped off in the car park and left to find their own way to Hi-Bay or the concert location.

**Conduct on site**

Although the car park is fenced off from the manufacturing areas, it is still a working area 24 hours a day. Care and attention should be exercised at all times as production traffic, possibly including fork lift trucks, vans, HGVs and workers on shifts, may be using the car park. All cars coming onto the site have to be registered and show a Portakabin sticker in the windscreen to comply with Company Rules. These can be easily obtained from the Gatehouse after filling in a simple registration form. The car park is very long and at rehearsal times generally empty but a speed limit of 10mph is in force at all times. There is coverage by CCTV.

**Rehearsals**

Rehearsals are held in the main Hi-Bay hall. Players are expected to attend the majority of their rehearsals on a regular basis. Wherever possible you should notify the conductor of your band if you are unable to attend. Players should turn up early not just to help set up the chairs and stands but to be warmed up and ready. Full attention should be given to the conductor during the rehearsal. Due to The Hi-Bay being used for training, lectures and seminars during the day it must be kept neat and tidy with only water being allowed in.

**Playing at Jobs/ Concerts**

Generally there will be at least several weeks notice given of any concert. A request for player availability will be issued at the same time and a timely reply is required to determine numbers. Exact details and logistics of the job will be made available at least a week prior. Transport to and from the job is the players responsibility but the SGBB does encourage car sharing wherever possible. Unfortunately no travelling expenses can be paid.

Wherever possible the transport of equipment before and after a concert is done by band members. Occasionally a van will be hired but due to costs this is only as a last resort.

Again the setting up and taking down of the kit and equipment at venues is the responsibility of all players, as is the unloading afterwards back at Hi-Bay. Whilst representing the SGBB you should be on good behaviour. Any conduct unbecoming to the SGBB will be frowned upon.

Concerts and Events will vary from band to band but generally there are many throughout the year. These will vary from large Joint Band concerts at Christmas and Spring at the JoRo Theatre for all 5 bands, through to fetes, fairs, concerts, garden parties, weddings, charitable fundraising etc. The list is endless. These events and concerts are the reason we practice and rehearse to play at the best standard we possibly can to both entertain the public and enjoy ourselves.

**Practice**

Regular home practice is expected of all players. Without this musical progress in any shape or form will not be made.

**Instruments**

The SGBB will lend an instrument to all new players if they do not already have their own but it is expected that it is treated as if it were your own. All damage should be reported and in the case of serious damage the Band Committee will determine who pays for the repair, dependant on the circumstances. Borrowed SGBB instruments may be used in non-SGBB musical events but permission to do so has to be given by the Conductor of the relevant band. Instruments should be oiled, greased, kept polished and maintained and kept in good working order.

**Uniform**

Generally this will be;

Polished black shoes

Black socks/tights

Black trousers/skirts

White shirt/blouse

Band tie/black dickie bow.

Band waistcoat

Band Blazer/walking out jacket.

Whilst on a band job your appearance should be neat and tidy. For rehearsals anything may be worn within reason.

**Movement between Bands**

When a player is thought to be good enough to move onto the next band the 2 relevant band conductors will have a private discussion and then make the appropriate decision. The player in question will then be approached and asked if they wish to move. If a player feels that they wish to move to another band themselves then they must first approach the conductor in their own band, who if they agree, will then speak to the other conductor.

**Library**

The SGBB has a comprehensive music library from which the conductors draw their music. It is catalogued and an index is kept for quick reference. Players are not normally allowed into the Library but if access is needed then a Conductor or Committee member should be approached and asked. We have over 2,000 pieces of music in the Library, many of which are not in print and are irreplaceable. Their value is incalculable and great care must be taken with the older sheet music. We are presently digitising all music to ensure longevity.

**Instrument Store**

The large Portakabin Unit outside Hi-Bay stores the majority of our instruments along with other miscellaneous kit and equipment. At the right hand end is the locked store with the brass instruments in. If you need one of these instruments then a Conductor or Committee member must let you in and log out the instrument you have taken. All instruments are audited at least once a year and a register is kept of who has what, along with its serial number, description and condition. Brass Roots also rehearse in this building at the left hand end of the unit.

**Social Media**

The SGBB has a good website www.shepherdgroupbrassband.co.uk that we try and keep as up to date as possible. This has information about all the Bands, contacts, jobs etc and we greatly value positive news or items that we can post on it. We also run Facebook pages for the different bands and again welcome all positive comments, photos, news etc on them.

However the SGBB takes a very dim view of postings on social media that not only reflects badly on the SGBB and their players but also on other brass bands and brass players. Sanctions will be taken should any such negative comment be found.

**Summary**

To recap, the SGBB welcomes all existing and aspiring brass players into the Organisation to enjoy the music making within the various bands. We also have many social events ( sometimes subsidised ) throughout the year that we hope you will take full advantage of.

**Appendix**

To view our full Safeguarding Policy and Constitution please go to our Website and look under the Policies and Procedures tab.

D, Gregg 4th November 2019