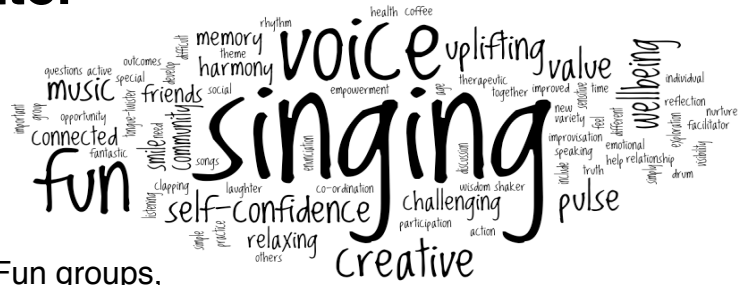


# Rachel's Singing Newsletter

May 2011

Since I started working as a community musician in Oxfordshire early in 2009 I've had the pleasure of leading singing with groups right across the county and beyond: working with numerous care homes and day centres, Mind UK projects, Age UK Singing for Fun groups, Alzheimer's Society Singing for the Brain groups and many others.



This year I'm taking a new step on my journey to use music to make a difference, starting a Music Therapy Masters degree. Although this means I'm not going to be able to keep running so many regular groups across Oxfordshire, this newsletter lets you know some of the ways I hope to be able to keep singing together with you all.

## Music Workshops

Building on the success of The Big Sing in Abingdon, Sing Fest and Wittfest I'm planning to run a series of occasional half-day and full-day large group singing workshops - a chance for different groups (and individuals) from across the area to come together to sing for fun.

To join a mailing list to hear about any upcoming singing workshops, send me an e-mail ([rachel@rmsmith.org.uk](mailto:rachel@rmsmith.org.uk)) or give me your address details when we next meet.

## Training and support for tutors

There's a lot of demand for singing activities in the local area. From August I'll be offering bespoke training and mentoring support for tutors looking to set up or take on facilitation of a Singing for Fun group, or wanting to develop their skills to lead singing in care homes, day centres and other group settings. I'm also working with the Alzheimer's Society on Singing for the Brain training.

Drop me an e-mail if you would like more details.

## Training as a Music Therapist

From September 2011 I'm going to be studying for a Music Therapy Masters degree with the the Nordoff-Robbins Music Therapy Centre in London. Music therapists work in a wide range of contexts, from hospitals, hospices and care homes, to prisons, schools and in community settings. Music therapy training gives the skills to work with people with profound emotional, physical and mental disabilities. Music therapists are members of the Health Professionals Council. I'm really excited about the opportunity to develop new skills and discover new ways to use music.

During the two years of my course I will be spending time with a number of learning placements. I don't know where they will be yet - but I hope to be able to work with local groups during my training. You can find out more about Nordoff-Robbins and Music Therapy at <http://www.nordoff-robbins.org.uk/>.

## Welling Open Space Event

On the 8th April around 20 music practitioners got together at an open space event to talk about singing for health. You can find photos and notes from the day at <http://welling.org.uk/>

I hope to organise more practice sharing days like this in future.

## Singing for the Brain<sup>(R)</sup>

There are now Singing for the Brain groups up and running in Grove, Didcot, Banbury and Bicester.

I'm hoping to keep facilitating as many of these groups as possible next year (study schedule permitting), and there are plans for more groups to develop soon.

## Keep in touch

You can find me online through my blog: <http://rmsmith.org.uk>

I'm also on Twitter as @oxfordsing.

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