

**Welcome to Lympstone Academy Brass**

This letter is for those who are thinking about or have newly joined the Band. It tells you a bit about us and what our band life looks like. We hope that you find this useful and enjoy being part of our Band. If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to ask any of us.

Hi

**Who are we**

We are the training / academy band for the SW Comms Brass Band which is a Championship section band sponsored by South West Communications. You will often hear us referring to the SW Comms Band as “The Main Band”.

Our aim as an academy band is to encourage people, especially the younger generations, to enjoy brass banding and, if they progress and want to, to ultimately join The Main Band. We have a mix of abilities, ages and experience from new starters to experienced players with years of brass band experience and we are open to all to come and join us. We have players who live in the village, but also come from Exeter, Exmouth and even further afield.

Our conductor is Roger Riggs who has had a long association with both the Main and the Academy Band.

We have a close relationship with the Main Band. They kindly let us use their practice rooms in Chapel Road, Lympstone and a number of their players will come to our practices to sit alongside our less experienced players or help us out at gigs when some of us are away.

**Music standards for new joiners**

Whilst we are a training band, our playing standards are good for a band of our nature. In order that you can take part fully in our playing, we would like all those who join us to be able to read music prior to joining and if you have not played a brass instrument before we would ask that you have some private tuition outside of the Band before joining in. Our Band Members use a number of locally based music teachers and we’d be happy to provide recommendations if needed.

**Our practices**

We practise every Saturday from 10am to 12pm in the practice room on Chapel Road, except those Saturdays when we have gigs. The door is always open for anyone to come in and listen to us. We have a tea/coffee break at around 11am and there is a tuck shop to buy sweets (always popular with the younger Band Members). Tea, coffee and squash is free during our tea / coffee break.

**Gigs**

We do a range of public events locally, from concerts to providing music at fetes and events and play about 15 gigs spread over the year. These raise band funds for us. We do some events for charity where we will share the proceeds. We are not a contesting band.

**What equipment etc do I need**

If you have your own instrument this would be an advantage, because, although we have some spare instruments, they are not always available.

When you join us, we will provide you with music and a folder to keep it in. There is a photocopier in the practice room for us to copy parts.Please bring the music to practices. For gigs, Roger will send out a list of music in advance and Band Members are expected to organise their music accordingly.

We provide cornet mutes. Given the younger nature of some of our players, we only use cup mutes. These are in a box in the practice room and those playing cornets are asked to collect one before practice starts and then return them afterwards. We do not use mutes for other instruments.

**What Uniform do I need**

We have 2 uniforms:

* a more formal uniform – black shirts, red bow ties, black trousers/skirts, black socks/tights & black shoes; and
* a more informal uniform - red polo shirts (with the band logo on), black trousers/skirts, black socks/tights and black shoes.

At the final band practice before a particular gig Roger will confirm which uniform we will wear for that gig.

The Band will provide you with the bow tie and polo shirt, but ask that you provide the black shirt, black trousers/skirts, black socks/tights and shoes please. If this is an issue, please do talk to our Uniform Coordinator (see contact details below).

All players pay £1 a week at band practice as band fees. This is collected in a pot by the front door. If you are away for any reason, you don’t have to pay.

**How do we help run the Band?**

As you can imagine running a Band of over 40 players takes some organisation; so we have a Band Committee to share the tasks, whose members currently include the following:

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| * Roger | who is the centre of our Band, he is our conductor (MD) and organises the music and the gigs |
| * Gill | who looks after new joiners and is also the Treasurer |
| * Emily | who is our Safeguarding Officer and GDPR Administrator (Roger is also a Safeguarding Officer) |
| * Cathie | who coordinates our attendance and equipment at gigs |
| * Bomber | who oversees uniforms |
| * Fiona | who helps us keep our library of music in order, and is also our Parent Rep |
| * Beth | who oversees communications |
| * Sally | who is our Band Members’ representative |
| * Isaac | who is our children / young people’s representative. |

**Safeguarding**

We have safeguarding procedures within the Band to ensure our children, young people and adults are protected. If you are leaving a child under 14 years old with us for a practice or concert, we will need you to provide us with a contact telephone number.

Our Safeguarding Officers are Roger Riggs and Emily McGrath.

**Useful contact emails/numbers**

Apart from discussions at band practices, the main way that we keep in contact is via emails.

Roger’s email is rogerjohnriggs@aol.co.uk. His telephone number is 07954 194 322.

We have a band WhatsApp group to help us keep co-ordinated.

If you would like to join, please let Emily or Gill know.

Emily’s email is ejsefton@hotmail.com and her telephone number is 07909 968 057.

Gill’s email is [gill.preston@lighthouse.myzen.co.uk](mailto:Gill.Preston@lighthouse.myzen.co.uk) and her telephone number is 01395 278159.

If you have any questions when you join, please do ask Gill.

Bec Housley, aka “Bomber”, is our Uniform Coordinator who will order new/different size polo shirts as our younger players grow and also collects any donations of uniform (trousers, skirts and shirts) that our younger players grow out of, to hand onto others.

Bomber’s email is [bechousley@mindless.com](mailto:bechousley@mindless.com) and her telephone number is 07757 130 691.

Cathie May organises our online availability register for gigs. It is a google documents form where we indicate our availability to play. Email Cathie to register cathiesmay@gmail.com.