

## What is the Cookham Festival?



The Cookham Festival is a Feast of the Arts held every other year in May. The next Festival will be in May 2019. The very first Cookham Festival was held in 1967 and over the years the scope and attendance has grown so that it is now the largest community activity in Cookham as well as being one of the major arts events in the area. We attract more than 15,000 people and we have a policy of making the ticket prices exceptional value and curating a range of events for all ages from bumps and babies to our community's oldest residents and all in between.

The Festival's key aims are:

- to create opportunities for our local communities to enjoy the highest standard of music, arts and other cultural activities.
- to celebrate local talent and to encourage people of all ages to engage in artistic activities.

The village and our surrounding areas have a history of artistic endeavour and Cookham is famous as the home of one of the 20th Centuries leading artists Sir Stanley Spencer. However the Festival is a celebration of the arts in its widest sense with events from poetry to pottery, Shakespeare to Strictly Cookham dancing classes and Bach to boogie.

We are fortunate to have a great depth of artistic endeavour in our local communities and the Cookham Festival acts as a focal point for the expression of that talent. The festival is very much about celebrating that and providing a platform and organisation to promote it.

The Festival typically runs over 11/12 days and involves a mix of concerts (various scales from major 300-audience events to minor recitals for perhaps 30-40 people), performance (theatre, poetry, comedy), exhibitions (with a local angle), talks, art/craft workshops, children's events and artist open studios. In 2009 a new feature was a rock concert, known as Let's Rock the Moor, which now has a life of its own and is an annual event. The next Festival is scheduled for May 2019.

The Festival is a Charity, run entirely by volunteers, and the monies we receive from sponsors and through ticket sales go directly to support individual events or the Festival as a whole and any proceeds are recycled to support the arts both within Cookham and our surrounding communities, with particular emphasis on the younger members and our schools.

Malcolm Stork, Chairman, Cookham Festival