

“HANDFULS OF HARMONY” COMPETE FOR LOTTERY CASH IN THE PEOPLE’S MILLIONS VOTE ON ITV WEST COUNTRY EAST.

Handfuls of Harmony is one of six groups chosen to take part in a regional TV competition that could win them up to £50,000 from the Big Lottery Fund to transform the lives of local people.

The People’s Millions 2014, which takes place on ITV West Country East at the end of November, will see local community groups go head-to-head over the course of three nights in a bid to win National Lottery funding for life-changing projects.

Handfuls of Harmony will be seeking public votes to win the funding to develop its work with South Bristol schools, local organisations and businesses, residential care homes, youth work provision, arts centres, and other creative groups. Their vision is to grow an intergenerational choir which touches every part of our shared community.

They aim to engage with 1,000 people, many who have never been in a choir. The singing workshops, led by Ali Orbaum (co-founder of the nationally acclaimed Gasworks Choir and a Bristol Happiness Champion) will start in Spring 2015 and the project will end with a big public performance later in the year.

Currently Handfuls of Harmony brings together children from BS3 schools to sing with parents, grandparents, teachers, school staff, and other adults from the wider community.

“Singing is for everyone, not just an elite few or “good singers”” says Ali Orbaum. “Singing with other people helps you feel connected and there’s considerable evidence that it improves people’s health and wellbeing.”

Handfuls of Harmony is the brainchild of the **South West Bristol Co-operative Learning Trust**. The Trust was created in 2010 to strengthen the collaboration between schools in the area and to ensure their valuable assets (buildings and playing fields) remain under the control of local people. The Learning Trust is supported by UWE, Bristol City Council, Tobacco Factory, Bristol City Football Club and the Co-operative Group. The idea of an inter-generational choir emerged from the Trust in 2013.

On Wednesday 26th November ITV West Country East will feature **Handfuls of Harmony** on its regional evening news programme at 6.00 p.m.

Voting numbers will be available on the day the projects are due to appear on ITV with telephone voting lines opening at 9am on each day and closing at midnight, and winners announced the following day.

For more info go to www.handfulsofharmony.org

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Notes to Editors:

The schools already working with Handfuls of Harmony are Ashton Gate, Ashton Vale, Ashton Park, Compass Point and Luckwell.

Handfuls of Harmony was the idea of Roger White who chairs the South West Bristol Co-operative Learning Trust.

The adult handfuls of Harmony choir currently meets on Thursday evenings at Ashton Park school in preparation for a public performance with the children at St Francis Church Bedminster on Sat 29th November.

This is the ninth year that the Big Lottery Fund and ITV have teamed up to give the public the chance to choose where the Lottery good cause cash goes in their area. Since it began in 2005, the competition has funded over 599 diverse community projects across the UK with an incredible £31.3 million in Big Lottery Fund good cause money.

The People's Millions is a partnership between Big Lottery Fund and ITV which gives the public the chance to have a say in how Lottery funding is spent in their community through a telephone vote.

The competition funds projects that improve the lives of people and communities across the UK.

This year 76 awards of up to £50,000 are up for grabs across the UK – four awards in each ITV region (including a bonus award for the runner-up with the highest number of votes).

To date 599 good causes across the UK have been awarded grants through the contest, sharing in £31.3 million of Lottery funding. Over 3.3million votes have been cast by the public.