

Case Study: Grayshott Concerts



THE BRIEF

Grayshott in East Hampshire is a lively and thriving village and is gathering an ever expanding following of music lovers. The local church, St Luke's has, in the past five years, become host to an array of classical music performances organised by Grayshott Concerts, the brainchild of parishioners Peter and Vivien Harrison.

Initially a concert was organised to raise funds for the church, which was so successful and popular, that more continued, with more prestigious performers, a growing reputation and a wider following.

The musicians would perform on a stage made from rather heavy, bulky and unstable wooden blocks. The local school and a nearby church however had, and highly recommended, a staging system which was demountable, portable and could be built up in a variety of formats and, thanks to the community spirit, was available to borrow. Since using the staging and finding it the perfect platform for the concerts, using it in various configurations and heights, the organisers were keen to invest in their own.

THE END RESULT

With little capital available, but the necessity for quite a substantial amount of staging, funding needed to be sought. After a lot of research and many applications, community grants were awarded by 'Awards for All' (National Lottery), Co-operative Community Fund, East Hampshire District Council and SITA Trust. The bids were based on the concept that the funding would buy the staging for their own concerts, but the equipment would also be available to other groups in the community, allowing others to transform almost any hall or church into a theatre.

With the funding in place, Grayshott invested in Q-build staging and Q-stand tiering. This combination would allow for flat and multi-level staging platforms, plus tiering that could accommodate a full choir, and by bridging the platform over the altar rails, the limited space in the church could be fully utilised.

Q-plus
modular tiering

Q-build
demountable staging.

WHAT THEY SAID:

Now producing five concerts per year, Grayshott Concerts are attracting world-class performers. The largest concert to date was in March 2009, when an audience of more than 300 people, tightly packed into the church listened to a beautiful setting of 'Stabat Mater' by Welsh composer Karl Jenkins OBE. Tickets were a sell out, attracting more new supporters and even the composer himself was in the audience.

Plans for the next concert are underway, featuring an international pianist who will perform on the stage playing a classic grand piano. Funded by sponsorship as well as ticket sales, these high profile performances are taking Grayshott Concerts into a new league, as organiser Peter Harrison states: "None of this would have been possible without Stage Systems. They've helped us to solve three big problems. First, their kit is so versatile, enabling us to use effectively, every inch of space needed to show off our huge productions. Second, it's proving so easy to handle and store the units on site – our helpers love it. And finally, it's taken months of planning to raise funding, but the people at Stage Systems have been immensely helpful and supportive throughout. Nothing has been too much trouble and they've been full of good ideas to help us find the right cost-effective solutions. Much of our success is down to them!"

