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MEDIA RELEASE

Men United choir raises £57,000 for Prostate Cancer UK

Nottinghamshire volunteer choir Men United in Song has raised more than £57,000 for Prostate Cancer UK over the course of three sell-out concerts and a surprise flash mob performance.

The choir, which came together in March as part of a national pop-up singing project, revealed the final total it has raised for the charity following its swan song at Nottingham's Victoria Centre recently, where 70 singers surprised shoppers with a medley of their favourite tunes.

More than 250 local men with little or no singing experience enquired about joining the Nottinghamshire Men United choir for the chance to learn a new musical skill while making friends and supporting a worthy cause. The local project was organised and supported by the Radcliffe on Trent Mail Voice Choir (RoTMVC).

Almost 150 men came to find out more and have their voices listened to, and just over 100 started the rehearsals. They underwent an intense nine-week rehearsal programme with RoTMVC's music team to prepare for a spectacular sold-out concert in front of more than 600 people at Southwell Minster, where they performed alongside the main RoTMVC choir and Mansfield's Cantamus Girls' Choir.

They also performed with similar volunteer choirs from the other areas participating in the national Men United in Song campaign – Peterborough, Northampton, Welwyn Garden City and Worcester – for another sold-out show at Nottingham's Albert Hall. The Men United choir then gave a special final performance for friends and family at St Giles Church in West Bridgford in June, before bringing the campaign to a close with the flash mob in July.

During the project, the men collected more than £57,000 for Prostate Cancer UK in sponsorship and donations, smashing their initial fundraising target of £10,000. The flash mob alone raised £610 in bucket collections.

Seren Evans, Head of Events and Community Fundraising at Prostate Cancer UK, said: "We hugely appreciate each and every one of the men for getting involved in this amazing project and spreading awareness of prostate cancer in their communities.

"The phenomenal funds raised will have a huge positive impact and help us invest in a future when no man dies of prostate cancer."

Malcolm/Rod, from RoTMVC, added: "The response to Men United in Song Nottinghamshire was fantastic from all involved, from the volunteer singers to the businesses and audiences who supported us in making the concerts possible.

“We were initially hoping to get 40 volunteers to take part and raise around £10,000 to cover our costs and make a donation to Prostate Cancer UK, but it really took off. We never expected to get so many men taking part or raising as much money as we did.

“Many of the guys in the Men United choir had little or no singing experience when they joined, but throughout the nine-week programme, we’ve given them the skills and confidence to go out there and sing in such beautiful venues, alongside renowned professional choirs, and hold their own. In fact, many of the men who signed up just for the Men United project loved the experience so much that they’ve joined our main choir to continue their new-found passion, which is great.

“Many were affected in some way by prostate cancer, whether personally or through someone they know, so it’s helped to bring them together and given them a space to talk about their experiences and support each other through whatever they’ve been dealing with.

“And that’s been the whole point of the project. Prostate cancer kills one man every 45 minutes in the UK – more than 12,000 a year. With more than 52,000 men diagnosed with the illness every year, initiatives like this are vital for improving awareness among those most at risk and raising essential funds for research.

“We’re delighted to have played a part in this by raising such a big total for Prostate Cancer UK, which will help fund vital research to support the ongoing fight against this deadly illness.”

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