

New Choir Aims to be Accessible for All



Facenoise Choir's taster session in October (Source: Kate Griffin)

A new choir is set to launch in Neepsend this January, giving people of all abilities the chance to come together and enjoy community singing.

Facenoise's director, Timothy Peters, 29, says his decision to set up the group stems from a lack of accessible, music focused hobbies in the city, particularly for people of working age.

Recent statistics show the growing interest in such activities. At the start of 2024, [19% of 18-24-year-olds](#) listed taking up a new hobby as their top New Year's resolution.

According to [data from last year](#), Sheffield North - where the choir will be based - experiences higher levels of isolation and has less community facilities than the rest of Sheffield and England.

Seeking to tackle this, Mr Peters says Facenoise Pop Choir will offer a low-pressure environment focused on building community rather than delivering performances, encouraging people to give it a go regardless of experience.

He says: "It's about the group aspect - there's no risk, and you can't fail."

Margaret Lewis, CEO of mental health charity Mind UK, says initiatives like Facenoise are important for building social connections in an easy way: "Hobbies such as singing give us

the opportunity to be around people, but in a situation where the focus is on the activity, rather than a face-to-face encounter.”

Facenose’s low-pressure, group-focused approach is encouraging novice residents to try singing for the first time.

“The chance to try something new with no expectations feels comforting” says Sophie White, 26, a Customer Support Advisor from Kelham Island. “Especially compared to the anxiety of doing something alone.”

As well as complete amateurs, Mr Peters is keen to welcome those with more musical experience, especially those who may feel isolated by what he describes as the “hermit-like” experience of working as a solo performer.



Singer Cesca Cornell rehearsing at home

Cesca Cornell, 26, a singer and actress from Kelham Island, attended the choir's October taster session.

“A lot of the time when you're working as a musician it can be quite isolating - you tend to get stuck in certain spaces”, she says. “This choir has already introduced me to lots of different people I hadn't met before - it’s going to be a really amazing space.”

Facenose Pop Choir rehearsals will begin at The Mowbray in mid-January.