




Harlow

A steelband for young people...

THAT IS GOING FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH!

Harlow steelband was established as a community organisation in June 2003, with the support of the Harlow Council and free weekly classes for adults and young people began in January 2004 at a local school. The band was set up with the help of the Ebony Steelband, who played a gig at the Harlow Playhouse in the summer of 2003, which got the ball rolling. Ebony still supports the band by providing their tutor, Samuel Dubois.

Within a short space of time the band has transformed from a drop-in activity for adults and young people to a practicing band for 9 - 21 year olds that are committed to rehearsals and performances. At present, their membership is around fifteen with many of their players with the band since its inception. After various moves, they are now based at the Sumners Recreation Centre in Harlow, Essex.

Samuel has been the band's tutor for just over two years and is instrumental in their development. He takes rehearsals on Monday evenings and plays with the band at events, predominately in the local area, throughout the year. Performances include an annual concert at Harlow's Black History Showcase, the Essex Youth Games in Southend, the local Town Show, the Harlow Summer Carnival and numerous other community events. They were filmed for BBC Look East and 2007 performance requests are already coming in.

Their founding objectives are that all its activities should be completely free to all young people and that the band should welcome a diverse mix of young people. These principles still apply and form the basis of the band's development. The band is promoted to young people through continued activities in the local community and they have a steady stream of new members attending their sessions.

Their aspiration for the future is to be bigger and better. They will be purchasing more pans, thanks to the funding received from the Essex Youth Service, allowing them to expand their membership. They hope to get involved in more national events and recently became a member of the British Association of Steelbands.

by Kelly Lean

To find out more go to:
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