

SIR DONALD WOLFIT



Donald Wolfit was born in 1902 in Balderton, Nottinghamshire and his first public appearance was at The Robin Hood Theatre, Averham which he continued to support all through his long and distinguished career.

He made his first appearance at the Old Vic Theatre in 1929, where he scored an important success as Claudius. In the early 1930s he began

to save his earnings from working in films to enable him to start his own theatre company. His first attempt at management was a week-long drama festival in Newark in 1934. In 1937, a year after his Hamlet in Stratford-upon-Avon had lifted him to the ranks of the leading players of the day, he formed the Donald Wolfit Shakespeare Company. Although he was generally believed to be a better actor than manager, his productions were initially a financial success.

The start of World War II disrupted theatrical activity in Britain but he was able to turn the upheaval into triumph by performing during the London blackout to good reviews, a courageous effort for which he was belatedly recognized when, in 1950, the Queen made him a Commander of the British Empire. Wolfit's 1944 Lear marked the first time he was broadly recognized as a great actor. His lifetime of service to the theatre and to Shakespeare was rewarded in 1957 with a knighthood. Sir Donald Wolfit died in February 1968 after a brief illness.

The Sir Donald Wolfit Charitable Trust

(Registered as a Charity in 1997 No.1065634)

The object of the fund is to give grants of money or materials to students of drama or musical theatre who have gained admission to an accredited drama school or university. These students must be resident in Newark or Balderton, or educated at secondary schools in Newark or Balderton.

Secretary and

Festival Organiser: Carol Wilkinson – Tel: 0781 6080874

Email: carolwilkinson2012@gmail.com

Website: www.wolfitendowmentfund.org.uk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/wolfitendowmentfund

The Twenty-Fifth Wolfit Festival of Drama, Music & Verse Speaking

to be held at

HIGHFIELDS SCHOOL (Drama, Verse Speaking and Musical Theatre)
LONDON ROAD, BALDERTON NG24 3AL
and
HOPE METHODIST CHURCH (Singing)
BARNBYGATE, NEWARK NG24 1PX

on

Wednesday 18 March 2026 (Singing)
Friday 20, Saturday 21, Sunday 22 March 2026
(Speech, Drama and Musical Theatre)

SYLLABUS

Adjudicators:

David Beer (Singing and Musical Theatre)
Louise Manders (Speech and Drama)

Closing date for entries:

1 February 2026

For information and test pieces:

TEL: Carol Wilkinson on 01636 672295

Affiliated to The British
& International Federation
of Festivals



Supported by:-



www.wolfitendowmentfund.org.uk

ADJUDICATOR: SINGING AND MUSICAL THEATRE**David Beer BA(Hons),FLCM,PGCE**

David is a professional conductor and pianist. He taught music in schools, before embarking on a full-time career as a freelance conductor and pianist. He has conducted many West End and international touring shows including Fame, Guys and Dolls, Me and My Girl, We Will Rock You, Scrooge, Cats, Aspects of Love, Jesus Christ Superstar and Joseph and appeared on TV, radio, played on film soundtracks, and recorded 3 original cast albums. He was Director of Music at the BRIT School for Performing Arts, Director of Performance at the Academy of Contemporary Music and has been a vocal coach and singing teacher at many leading drama colleges (Guildhall, GSA, Italia Conti, RADA, Arts Educational Schools, Hurtwood House, Emil Dale Academy, Stella Mann, ACM). He was also regular Musical Director for student shows at Arts Educational Schools London, and Chichester University. David is an examiner for London College of Music, and was recently awarded an FLCM for Professional Achievement. He has been a Music Mentor for Music For Youth for several years, is an Adjudicator member of the British and International Federation of Festivals and has adjudicated many festivals nationwide.

He now lives in Lincolnshire, teaches singing and piano, and conducts and accompanies adult and children's choirs.

ADJUDICATOR: SPEECH and DRAMA**Louise Manders LLAM ALAM GODA MSTSD (Adj)**

Louise was born in Westcliff on Sea and first trod the boards when only five days old and has never looked back. Her varied and interesting professional theatrical career began with Haymarket Stage Productions progressing from stage management to acquiring her Equity card as an actress. She enjoyed touring the UK and appearing in all aspects of theatre including repertory and musicals, as well as appearing on television and in films. Louise is presently not only an adjudicator for the British and International Federation of Festivals and the Guild of Drama Adjudicators, but is also an adjudicator member of the Society of Teachers of Speech and Drama. She was Artistic Director of the Phoenix Youth Theatre in Southend, formerly the New Focus Theatre for many years. Louise's extensive work as an adjudicator has taken her all over the UK and abroad. She has adjudicated for festivals in Hong Kong, Sri Lanka and Canada. During the pandemic, Louise also adjudicated online. She runs workshops and master classes, directs plays (including open air productions) and musicals, devises original drama compositions, writes poetry and has written many musical plays for children and students. She teaches speech, drama, musical theatre, mime and dance drama to all ages of students, including adults and specialises in the LAMDA examinations. Louise is an experienced theatre director and even finds time to dance flamenco! A festival is a celebration and enables all entrants to bring their creativity and enthusiasm to fruition. Louise is really looking forward to coming to the Wolfit Festival in Newark and sharing in these celebrations.

COSY UP FOR CHRISTMAS WITH

DAN HADFIELD AS
GARY BARLOW
TRIBUTE SHOW

THE ROBIN HOOD THEATRE
CHURCH LN, AVERHAM, NEWARK NG23 5RB
WEDNESDAY 17TH DECEMBER 2025
7.30PM **£20**
TICKETS AVAILABLE FROM WWW.RHTC.CO.UK
PROCEEDS IN AID OF
SIR DONALD WOLFIT CHARITABLE TRUST

Please do come along and support this fundraising event held at the Robin Hood Theatre where Donald Wolfit first performed.

Tickets available from the Robin Hood Theatre website.

CODDINGTON HISTORY GROUP

Coddington History Group run very interesting talks by speakers from around the local area. Events are open to both members and non-members.

Trinity House by Captain Michael Vlasto
Coddington Village Hall
Thursday 21 November 2025 at 7.30pm
Members free, non-members £2

NEWARK CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

29 November to 7 December 2025
The Mezzanine, Buttermarket, Newark

Come along and support your local charities



JUST SING!

The choir where everyone's welcome. We are a group of people who sing music from all around the world in a friendly, fun and musically rewarding atmosphere.

We sing at the back of London Road Congregational church every two weeks on a Saturday from 10 am to midday.

Why not come and join us. See website for further details.

Justsingnewark.co.uk

GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

The use of sound recordings, video or photography including mobile phones is strictly prohibited during a performance or adjudication and at all other times while the Festival is in progress.

1. All entries must be made on the official form accompanying the syllabus or downloaded from the website. Photocopies may be submitted for multiple entries. Cheques should be made payable to The Sir Donald Wolfitt Charitable Trust. Closing date for entries will be strictly adhered to.
2. The Committee reserve the right to refuse an entry and to cancel or amalgamate any class for which there are insufficient entries. In the event of cancellation the entry fee will be returned.
3. The Festival classes are open to amateur performers only. An amateur is defined as a person who does not derive the main part of his/her income from that section of the art which he or she proposes to enter.
4. Festival entrants must comply with the age limit.
5. The adjudicator's decisions are final and no correspondence will be entered into.
6. Details of own choice test pieces must be given on the entry form and a copy submitted with the entry form. Failure to comply will result in disqualification from that class.
7. A set piece from another class may be offered as own choice.
8. Time limits will be strictly adhered to. Adjudication will cease after the limit and the adjudicator may ask for the performance to cease or will stop adjudicating at that time.
9. An own choice test piece may not be performed in more than one class.
10. Adjudicator's report – one copy only will be available after each class.

11. The order of competing will be shown in the programme. This order can only be varied by arrangement with the adjudicator's steward.
12. Certificates and awards may be withheld if, in the opinion of the adjudicator, competitors have not reached a sufficiently high standard.
13. In accepting a trophy the winner undertakes to keep it safely and return it adequately packed and in a clean condition to the Festival Organiser, Carol Wilkinson, 9c Church Lane, Balderton, Newark NG24 3NW by the 1ST March 2027.

MARKING SCHEME

Developing (65-69) – a performance demonstrating an awareness of technical skills, requiring more consistency and artistry

Progressing (70-74) – a performance showing development of technique and/or communication and commitment

Merit (75-79) – a competent performance, showing some artistic awareness and/or technical ability

Commended (80-84) – a convincing performance technically and artistically, with increasing stylistic and communication skills

Honours (85-89) – an excellent performance, demonstrating fluent technical and artistic skills with emerging individuality

Outstanding (90-94) – an impressive performance technically and artistically, displaying spontaneity and clear individuality

Exceptional (95+) – a superlative performance, displaying exceptional artistic individuality

Photographs, Video Recording and Press Photography

Video recording, sound recording and photography of any kind are prohibited at all times during the Festival. The Festival Chair will invite photographers from the local press in order to publicise and promote the Festival. It is hoped that anyone invited to appear in these photographs will be happy to comply. Parents who do not wish their children to be photographed should inform a member of the committee. All invited photographers will be working to a code of conduct as set out by their employer. Independent photographers invited to this Festival will provide evidence of a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.

MUSICAL THEATRE

CLASS 60 Musical Theatre/Film Solo (Age 18 and over) £4.50
Solo song from any musical show or film.
Suitability of choice must be considered with regard to age group. One hand prop allowed but no costumes. Not to exceed 5 minutes.

CLASS 61 Musical Theatre/Film Duet (up to Year 6) £8.00
One hand prop is allowed but no costumes.
Suitability of choice must be considered with regard to age group. Not to exceed 4 minutes.

CLASS 62 Musical Theatre/Film Duet (up to Year 10) £8.00
One hand prop is allowed but no costumes.
Suitability of choice must be considered with regard to age group. Not to exceed 5 minutes.

CLASS 63 Musical Theatre/Film Duet (age 16 and over) £8.00
One hand prop is allowed but not costumes.
Suitability of choice must be considered with regard to age group. Not to exceed 5 minutes.

CLASS 64 Musical Theatre Ensemble (age under 16) £10.00
(An ensemble (as opposed to a choir) is defined as one voice per part)
Own choice from any musical show or film. No props or costumes allowed. Not to exceed 15 minutes.

CLASS 65 Musical Theatre Ensemble (age 16 and over) £10.00
(An ensemble (as opposed to a choir) is defined as one voice per part)
Own choice from any musical show or film. No props or costumes allowed. Not to exceed 15 minutes.

Backing track CD allowed for accompaniment (instrumental only) or piano.

The Sir Donald Wolfitt Charitable Trust would like to thank Highfields School and Hope Methodist Church for allowing us to use their premises for our Festival.

MUSICAL THEATRE (SUNDAY 22 MARCH 2026)

Performers will be expected to show an understanding of their character through their singing, movement (not dance) and dramatic content.

CLASS 54 Musical Theatre/Film Solo (Years 3 and 4) Solo song from any musical show or film. Suitability of choice must be considered with regard to age group. One hand prop allowed but no costumes. Not to exceed 3 minutes.	£4.50
CLASS 55 Musical Theatre/Film Solo (Years 5 and 6) Solo song from any musical show or film. Suitability of choice must be considered with regard to age group. One hand prop allowed but no costumes. Not to exceed 3.5 minutes.	£4.50
CLASS 56 Musical Theatre/Film Solo (Years 7 and 8) Solo song from any musical show or film. Suitability of choice must be considered with regard to age group. One hand prop allowed but no costumes. Not to exceed 4 minutes.	£4.50
CLASS 57 Musical Theatre/Film Solo (Years 9 and 10) Solo song from any musical show or film. Suitability of choice must be considered with regard to age group. One hand prop allowed but no costumes. Not to exceed 4 minutes.	£4.50
CLASS 58: Musical Theatre/Film Solo (Years 11 and 12) Solo song from any musical show or film. Suitability of choice must be considered with regard to age group. One hand prop allowed but no costumes. Not to exceed 4 minutes.	£4.50
CLASS 59: Musical Theatre/Film Solo (Year 13) Solo song from any musical show or film. Suitability of choice must be considered with regard to age group. One hand prop allowed but no costumes. Not to exceed 5 minutes.	£4.50

CHORAL VERSE SPEAKING

CLASS 1 (School Years 1 & 2) a) Test: 'Spell of the Raingod' by Leslie Norris b) Own Choice (not to exceed 1 minute)	£4.50
CLASS 2 (School Year 3) a) Test: 'The Four Friends' by A A Milne b) Own Choice (not to exceed 1 minute)	£4.50
CLASS 3 (School Year 4) a) Test: 'The Crocodile' by Roald Dahl b) Own Choice (not to exceed 1 minute)	£4.50
CLASS 4 (School Year 5) a) Test: 'Cat' by Eleanor Farjeon b) Own Choice (not to exceed 2 minutes)	£4.50
CLASS 5 (School Year 6) a) Test: 'The Storm' by Walter de la Mare b) Own Choice (not to exceed 2 minutes)	£4.50

VERSE SPEAKING

CLASS 6 (up to School Year 2) a) Test piece: 'Ten Dancing Dinosaurs' by John Foster	£4.50
CLASS 7 (up to School Year 3) a) Test piece: 'The Morning Rush' by John Foster b) Own choice (not to exceed 1 minute)	£4.50
CLASS 7a (up to School Year 3) a) Test piece: 'I know Someone' by Michael Rosen	£4.50
CLASS 8 (up to School Year 4) a) Test piece: 'Hot Food' by Michael Rosen b) Own choice (not to exceed 2 minutes)	£4.50
CLASS 8a (up to School Year 4) a) 'Rooty Tooty' by Carol Ann Duffy	£4.50

CLASS 9 (up to School Year 5)	£4.50
a) Test piece: 'Nature Trail; by Benjamin Zephaniah	
b) Own choice (not to exceed 2 minutes)	
CLASS 9a (up to School Year 5)	£4.50
a) 'Daytime Moon' by David Harmer	
CLASS 10 (up to School Year 6)	£4.50
a) Test: 'Birthday' by Simon Armitage	
b) Own choice (not to exceed 2 minutes)	
CLASS 10a (up to School Year 6)	£4.50
a) 'The First Woman on the Moon' by Bernard Young	
CLASS 11 (up to School Year 6)	£4.50
Test: Celebrate Poetry by writing and reciting your own poem (not to exceed 2 minutes)	
CLASS 12 (School Year 7 and over)	£4.50
Test: Celebrate Poetry by writing and reciting your own poem (not to exceed 2 minutes)	
CLASS 13 (up to School Year 8)	£4.50
a) Test: 'Mrs Scrooge' by Carol Ann Duffy	
b) Own choice (not to exceed 2 minutes)	
CLASS 14 (up to School Year 10)	£4.50
a) Test: 'Ozymandias' by Percy Bysshe Shelley	
b) Own choice (not to exceed 2 minutes)	
CLASS 15 (up to School Year 12)	£4.50
a) Test: Own choice (not to exceed 4 minutes)	
Two contrasting items of verse	
CLASS 16 Adult Verse and Prose Reading	£4.50
a) Test: Own Choice (not to exceed 6 minutes)	
Two contrasting items, one of verse and one of prose	

SINGING DAY – WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH
(Schools take part in the afternoon, adults in the evening)

CLASS 45 Junior School Choirs (Years 3 – 6)	£12.00
Own Choice (two contrasting songs not to exceed 8 minutes)	
CLASS 46 Secondary School Choirs (Years 7 and 8)	£12.00
Own Choice (two contrasting songs not to exceed 10 minutes)	
CLASS 47 Secondary School Choirs (Years 9 and over)	£12.00
Own Choice (two contrasting songs not to exceed 10 minutes)	
CLASS 48 Youth Club/Junior Organisation Choirs	£12.00
Own Choice (two contrasting songs not to exceed 8 minutes)	
(Entry Fees for adult choirs will be £2.50 per choir member with a minimum entry fee of £15)	
CLASS 49 Barbershop Groups: Open	
Own Choice (two contrasting songs not to exceed 10 minutes)	
CLASS 50 Women's Choirs: Open	
Own Choice (two contrasting songs not to exceed 10 minutes)	
CLASS 51 Men's Choirs: Open	
Own Choice (two contrasting songs not to exceed 10 minutes)	
CLASS 52 Mixed Choirs: Open	
Own Choice (two contrasting songs not to exceed 10 minutes)	
CLASS 53 Duet: Open	
Own Choice (two contrasting songs not to exceed 10 minutes)	

DRAMATIC GROUPS

- CLASS 41** (ages 5 years to 11 years) £12.00
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 35 minutes, including setting and striking)
- CLASS 42** (ages 12 years to 18 years) £12.00
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 35 minutes, including setting and striking)
- CLASS 43** (aged 18 years and over) £12.00
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 35 minutes, including setting and striking)
- CLASS 44** Special Needs Category (any age) £12.00
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 35 minutes, including setting and striking)

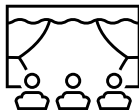
Candidates with special needs may enter this specific section but it does not exclude them from entering any of the other classes.

Photographers invited to this Festival will provide evidence of a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.

The Sir Donald Wolfit Charitable Trust

Our charity gives financial assistance to local students who are studying at an accredited Drama School or course at University. This assistance is usually given during the final year of the course.

An application form is available on the website.



- CLASS 17** (up to School year 6) £4.50
a) Test: Write and perform a rap (not to exceed 2 minutes)
- CLASS 18** (School Year 7 and above) £4.50
a) Test: Write and perform a rap (not to exceed 3 minutes)

NARRATIVE PROSE

(entrants will be asked to read a passage chosen by the adjudicator from the Chapter indicated)

- CLASS 19** (School Year 3) £4.50
Test: 'The Hen Who Wouldn't Give Up' by Jill Tomlinson (Chapter: 'Follow that Egg' page 59 to page 68)
- CLASS 20** (School Year 4) £4.50
Test: 'First Prize for the Worst Witch' by Jill Murphy (Chapters 12 and 13 – page 69 to page 79)
- CLASS 21** (School Year 5) £4.50
Test: 'The Garden of Lost Secrets' by A M Howell (Chapter 13: 'Notebook' from page 96 beginning 'Will's enthusiasm' to end of Chapter 14 on page 107 '.....brothers'.)
- CLASS 22** (School Year 6) £4.50
Test: 'The Cotton Keeper' by Wilf Morgan (All of Chapter 8 starting 'The mangrove swamps stretched as far as the chimps' eyes could see.')
- CLASS 23** (School Years 7 and 8) £4.50
Test: 'Our Castle by the Sea' by Lucy Strange (Chapters 24 and 25 – pages 162 to 174)
- CLASS 24** (School Years 9 and 10) £4.50
Test: 'Noughts and Crosses' by Malorie Blackman (Chapter 32, 'Callum')

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Speeches should not be read but notes may be used.

CLASS 25 (School Years 8 and below)	£4.50
Test: a) A speech of general interest not to exceed 2 minutes	
Test: b) An impromptu speech on a subject chosen by the adjudicator, not to exceed 2 minutes	
CLASS 26 (School Years 9 and above)	£4.50
Test: a) A speech of general interest not to exceed 3 minutes	
Test: b) An impromptu speech on a subject chosen by the adjudicator, not to exceed 3 minutes	
DRAMATIC SOLO	
CLASS 27 (up to and including School Year 4)	£4.50
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 3 minutes)	
CLASS 28 (School Year 5)	£4.50
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 3 minutes)	
CLASS 29 (School Year 6)	£4.50
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 3 minutes)	
CLASS 30 (School Years 7 and 8)	£4.50
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 3 minutes)	
CLASS 31 (School Years 9 and 10)	£4.50
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 4 minutes)	
CLASS 32 (age 16 years and over)	£4.50
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 4 minutes)	

SHAKESPEARE SOLO

CLASS 33 (Up to and including School Year 8)	£4.50
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 2 minutes)	
CLASS 34 (School Years 9 and 10)	£4.50
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 3 minutes)	
CLASS 35 (aged 16 years and over on 31.8.25)	£4.50
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 3 minutes)	

DRAMATIC DUOLOGUE

CLASS 36 (up to School Year 5)	£8.00
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 4 minutes)	
CLASS 37 (up to School Year 7)	£8.00
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 5 minutes)	
CLASS 38 (up to School Year 9)	£8.00
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 6 minutes)	
CLASS 39 (aged under 17 on 31.08.25)	£8.00
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 6 minutes)	
CLASS 40 (aged 17 years and over on 31.08.25)	£8.00
Test: Own choice (not to exceed 6 minutes)	

CHILD PROTECTION

A Child Protection Policy has been drawn up in line with the Federation of Festivals of Music, Drama and Speech to ensure the safety of children at the Wolfit Festival of Drama, Music, Musical Theatre and Verse Speaking.

A copy is available on our website, www.wolfitendowmentfund.org.uk