

Bexley RSPB 40th Anniversary Celebration of Nature Concert

– May 11th 2019

Like the gala dinner, another event two years in the planning – a 40th Anniversary Celebration of Nature concert with the Sidcup Symphony Orchestra which took place on Saturday 11th May to a packed audience in St. John the Evangelist Church, Sidcup.

The concert was planned to celebrate our anniversary and also an opportunity to introduce the Sidcup Symphony Orchestra audience to the RSPB and vice versa. More than 70 RSPB Bexley Members and friends joined the usual SSO audience and the large high roofed church proved the ideal venue.

The programme of music proved very popular, (a full copy of the programme and notes is posted as a separate file) designed to appeal to everyone – all with a wildlife/pastoral theme. One of the features of the programme was two poems (the Skylark by John Clare and Firebird (Russian Lore) by Terry Sledge) read by Ralph Todd and Stuart Banks respectively. I'm sure the highlight for most of the audience was The Lark Ascending by Vaughan Williams with 17 year old Abigail James soloist on violin – she moved at least one audience member to tears.

The Committee of SSO were delighted with the audience size (over 230) and response from RSPB members and all agreed it was a most enjoyable and successful evening, indeed it was the largest audience the SSO had had for many years.

Whilst this was not intended as a fundraising event – we were delighted to be able to share £1400 with SSO and also add to our £700 a further £349 from the raffle/exit collection which SSO agreed should all go to RSPB.

This wonderful achievement would not have been possible without the support of the following sponsors: Wildlife Worldwide, W.Uden and Sons, Dyer & Co Sidcup, Playle and Partners Sidcup and our own generous member, Sally Jacobs. Thanks also to the donors of raffle prizes: Princeton/Wildguides, Simon Ginnaw (Exploring the Wild), Norman McCanch (wildlife artist) and members of the RSPB Bexley Group.

Finally a big thank you to James Ross (Musical Director/Conductor), the Committee and members of SSO and all members and friends who supported the concert – we hope you enjoyed the evening as much as I did.

Ralph Todd