



NCBF North Regional Festival

Sunday 2nd November 2025

Crompton House Academy

Oldham

It's with excitement that we welcome you to the 2025 North Regional Festival of the National Concert Band Festival at the venue here at the Crompton House Academy, Oldham.

Today's bands are performing their programmes for our two adjudicators who will measure what is seen and heard with a particular level of musical achievement as per the NCBF Criteria.

Those bands receiving a Platinum award (and maybe some Golds) will be invited to perform at the NCBF National Festival to be held at the RNCM Manchester on Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th April 2026.

Our thanks to Crompton House Academy for hosting today's festival with special thanks to Helen Nixon and the staff involved for the support we have received.

We hope you enjoy the day – you have a vital role to play in creating the atmosphere.

Have a go yourself at seeing how the bands performance meets the criteria at the end of this programme.

***Please remember that there is Food and Drinks
available in the refreshments area.***



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Today's Programme

1100 Rochdale Community Wind Band (CWB)

Conductor: Cathie Brooks

Prelude for Hampstead Heath

Martin Ellerby

Serenade

Derek Bourgeois

Prelude from 49th Parallel

Vaughan Williams arr. Osman

Eine Kleine Yiddische Ragmusik

Adam Gorb

1135 Huddersfield Wind Band (CWB)

Conductor: John Turnbull

Choreography

Robert Sheldon

A Quiet Moment

Philip Sparke

Beyond the Horizon

Rossano Galante

1210 Manchester University Wind Orchestra (OWB)

Conductors: Dewi Thislewood & Romano Bezzi-Codetta

Ignition

Todd Stalter

March from A Moorside Suite

Gustav Holst

Fate of the Gods

Steven Reineke

1245 Wrexham Concert Band (CWB)

Conductor: Scott Lloyd

The Land of the Long White Cloud

Philip Sparke

1320 AWARDS PRESENTATION



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1415 Werneth Concert Band (CWB)

Conductor: Jonathan Parkes

Ghosts

Stephen McNeff

1450 Altrincham Grammar School for Boys Concert Band (SWB)

Conductor: Mike Monument

Encanto

Robert W Smith

Wind of Change

Peter Meechan

Dark Ride

Randall D Standridge

1525 Barnsley Town Concert Band (YWB)

Conductor: James Roberts

Young Wizards

Bruce Fraser

Sky Dance

Richard L Saucedo

1600 Altrincham Grammar School for Boys Big Band (SBB)

Director: Mike Monument

Blue Bossa

Kenny Dorham arr. M Sweeney

Dreamscape

Robert Curnow

I Wish

Stevie Wonder arr. Mike Tamaro

1635 AWARDS PRESENTATION



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Todays Adjudicators:-



GERARD BOOTH was, until recently, the Head of the Oldham Music Service and Director of Music for Oldham. He studied at the RNCM with Stuart Roebuck, Andy Duncan and Brian Kingsley. Gerard's performing experience includes performing with the Halle, BBC Philharmonic and East of England Orchestras. He still regularly plays with the Mowbray, St Cecilia and Stockport Symphony Orchestras as well as the City of Leeds Sinfonia and freelancers with other various ensembles.

Gerard has appeared with and been a member of many of the country's top brass bands, including Grimethorpe, Brighouse and Rastrick, Leyland and Foden's bands amongst others. He was a member of the world famous 'James Shepherd Versatile Brass' group for over ten years and still enjoys performing occasionally with various chamber ensembles. He has acquired a breadth of experience both as an educator and performing musician and continues to work on a daily basis with young people.

As the Head of the Oldham Music Service for over a decade, he is responsible for overseeing around 40 different ensembles which rehearse on a weekly basis at the Music Centre and in community locations serving almost 1,000 people. In addition to this Music Service staff deliver high quality musical opportunities to over 10,000 young people in Oldham schools every week during term time. As the musical director of various young people's ensembles, Gerard has conducted at all of the country's major venues including the Royal Albert Hall, Symphony Hall, Bridgewater Hall, Royal Festival Hall and many others. His work as one of the directors of the Greater Manchester Music Hub also sees him working regularly with the North West's principle music educators including the RNCM, Chetham's School, Salford University and many others.

Gerard has also been the NW advisor to the foremost, national music education body, Music Mark, a position that he held from 2020 until 2023.



SIMON PLATFORD MBE - Simon hails from East Anglia and began his musical career playing the trumpet as a seven-year old. By 13 he had passed grade eight and at 16 had gained a music scholarship to study with the renowned cornet player Philip McCann in Yorkshire. The pair worked together for five years with the final three at the Birmingham Conservatoire where Simon left with a First-class honours degree in performance and he was a grand finalist in the BBC Radio 2 Young Musician of the Year Competition.

Simon is currently acting Headmaster at Wrekin College, Wellington, Telford, a position he took up in September having been Director of Music (where he still has a major input) for eleven years. His previous schools have included The High Arcal School where he led a band of 17 beginners to become National Concert Band Festival Platinum award winners in six years and Abraham Darby School, Telford, where as Head of Music he led a department that accumulated an amazing 23 National Awards and four international awards, including a performance at the Isaac Stern Auditorium, Carnegie Hall, New York.

As a performer, Simon's main instrument is the Cornet. As a teacher he has been a national finalist in the Classic FM Music Teacher of the Year Competition and in 2017 was nominated for the Musician's Union Inspirational Teacher award. In October 2014 Simon was awarded an MBE by Her Majesty the Queen, for his services to music education.

Simon has adjudicated for NCBF on numerous previous occasions, he is delighted and honoured to have been asked back to adjudicate at this regional festival.

Outside school Simon is also a keen golfer and enjoys coarse and sea angling.



Today's Compere

Barrie Johnson



Barrie Johnson was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, gaining early musical experiences through Salvation Army brass bands and choirs, his playing career included being principal euphonium with bands in Newcastle & Kettering. He has also featured on tenor horn, tuba and trombone with bands in London, Kettering and Birmingham, including City of London Brass. During this time he also took part in performance tours to Norway and Canada, featured on radio and LP recordings and performed in many major concert venues throughout the UK.

Barrie has been conducting school, youth and community groups in all musical genres for many years. As a school music teacher, he has taught in primary, middle and secondary schools, heading up very successful music and expressive arts departments for over 35 years, retiring as Director of Music at Northampton School for Boys in 2015 after 14 years in post. Directing groups, including Wind Bands and Big Bands, from 3 different schools to regular top award-winning performances at the National Concert Band Festival and the National Festival of Music for Youth, programming challenging music, was key to raising standards and student aspiration. It also allowed him to direct performances in some of the country's top performance venues including Symphony Hall, Birmingham, Royal Albert Hall and Royal Festival Hall, London, and The Sage, Gateshead. At NSB, he formed two community bands - Cripps Hall Jazz Orchestra and East Midlands Wind Orchestra - as exemplars to further raise aspirations in the school's top groups. Regular successful performance jazz tours for his Big Band and Jazz Vocal Group, to New York, Los Angeles and Florida were also organised to further raise standards by partnering with high performance American school groups and receiving coaching from such international stars as Gordon Goodwin, Eric Marienthal, Wayne Bergeron, Jeff Jarvis, Chuck Owen and Tom Brantley.

As well as school groups he has also conducted many area and county youth bands (both brass and wind), community bands and choirs, and has conducted groups, and acted as Musical Director, on a variety of residential holiday music courses.

He has also been involved with IAJE (International Association for Jazz Education), adjudicated regularly at various music festivals and, together with Keith Allen, is responsible for keeping NCBF Repertoire lists and the Criteria Sheet up-to-date and relevant.

Since retiring from full-time teaching he has continued to teach A-level, act as a freelance Music Education consultant, adjudicate, guest conduct, lead workshops/holiday courses and compose and arrange for Wind Band and Big Band.



	PLATINUM	GOLD	SILVER	BRONZE
TOPE	☐ Excellent tone quality ☐ Sound always focussed ☐ Excellent range of tone colours	☐ Good tone quality ☐ Sound generally focussed ☐ Good range of tone colours	☐ Competent tone quality ☐ Sound not always focussed ☐ Reasonable range of tone colours	☐ Tone quality is limited ☐ Sound occasionally focussed ☐ Tone colours need further exploration
TUNING	☐ A well tuned performance ☐ Intonation is generally excellent	☐ Majority of instruments well tuned ☐ Intonation is generally good	☐ Some lack of control with tuning is evident ☐ Intonation is generally competent	☐ Tuning needs attention ☐ Intonation is generally variable
BALANCE & BLEND	☐ An excellent sense of balance is demonstrated ☐ Soloists are accompanied most sympathetically ☐ Sections blend well together throughout	☐ A good sense of balance is achieved ☐ Soloists are accompanied well ☐ Sections blend well together for the majority of the performance	☐ A competent sense of balance is achieved ☐ Soloists are accompanied well in parts ☐ Sections blend well for a portion of the performance	☐ Balance is adequate some of the time ☐ Accompaniment requires a greater degree of sensitivity ☐ Sections and individuals tend to dominate
DYNAMICS	☐ Wide range of dynamic variation is evident ☐ Dynamic contrast handled most effectively	☐ Good range of dynamic variation is evident ☐ Good control of dynamic contrast	☐ Competent range of dynamic variation is shown ☐ Competent control of dynamic contrast	☐ Dynamic range tends to be limited ☐ Some control of dynamic contrast is evident
RHYTHMIC ACCURACY & ENSEMBLE	☐ Rhythmic accuracy is excellent ☐ Pulse and tempo changes very well managed ☐ Performance shows a high degree of cohesion	☐ Rhythmic accuracy is generally very good ☐ Most pulse and tempo changes are managed effectively ☐ Band and sections mostly well co-ordinated	☐ Rhythmic accuracy is mostly good ☐ Some pulse and tempo changes are managed well ☐ Band shows reasonable co-ordination	☐ Rhythmic accuracy is inconsistent ☐ Tempo and pulse changes disturb the musical flow ☐ Co-ordination is shown only in the more straightforward passages
ARTICULATION & PHRASING	☐ Articulation is excellent throughout ☐ Excellent attention to detail ☐ Phrasing shows a high degree of understanding and presentation	☐ Articulation is generally good ☐ A wide range of detail is portrayed ☐ Phrasing is good and generally precise	☐ Articulation is competent ☐ A reasonable range of detail is portrayed ☐ Phrasing is competent	☐ A reasonable level of articulation is shown ☐ Some detail is portrayed ☐ Phrasing is in need of development
STYLE & INTERPRETATION	☐ The band responds vigilantly to the conductor's directions ☐ A mastery of style is evident throughout ☐ Your interpretation produced a highly musical performance	☐ The band responds well to the conductor's directions ☐ A good range of styles is displayed ☐ Your musical interpretation enhanced a good performance	☐ The band respond to the conductor's directions most of the time ☐ Some awareness of the style of music is shown ☐ The musicality displayed some of the time lifts the performance	☐ The band only responds to the conductor's directions for some of the time ☐ The style of the music is limited in its characterisation ☐ A basic understanding of musical interpretation is shown
CHOICE / SUITABILITY OF PROGRAMME	☐ A challenging programme that really displayed the musicianship and technical skills of the performers	☐ A balanced programme that provided a good level of challenge, developing the musicianship and technical skills of the performers most of the time	☐ The programme provided a good level of challenge in parts. It could be better balanced, with the band appearing capable of tackling music of a higher technical level and/or musical challenge overall	☐ A programme that, perhaps, needs a little more thought in balance and/or technical and musical challenge for the perceived current ability of the performers
IMPROVISATION	☐ Excellent skills shown by the soloists	☐ Soloists display a good range of skills	☐ Soloists mainly use printed solos, but there is some attempt to free themselves from the copy; or display a basic range of skills	☐ Soloists only use printed solos