

**For immediate release:**

**Singers raise the rafters in community Christmas event**

Photos show the MUF Choir, Irlam Male Voice Choir, Jess Kemp and local students at the event.

Local singing talent came together to form a heavenly choir in praise of community groups and volunteers at the first-ever Hamilton Davies Trust Community Christmas Service.

The Manchester United Foundation (MUF) Choir, the Irlam Male Voice Choir, local singer-songwriter Jess Kemp and talented local students entertained over 250 people from Irlam and Cadishead at the event.

The first of its kind organised by local charity the Hamilton Davies Trust (HDT), the celebration at Irlam and Cadishead College (ICC) featured festive fare such as readings and carol singing.

**Neil McArthur, HDT Chairman said:** “This was a great way of bringing many different parts of the local community together at Christmas and recognising the huge contribution of local community groups and volunteers.

“We’re lucky that we have some amazing local singing talent and are grateful for the support of the MUF Choir. It provided a memorable Christmas experience for everyone who attended. “

Jess Kemp, the young Irlam musician whose European tour this year was funded by HDT, said: “It was an honour to be involved in the first-ever HDT Christmas celebration.

“I was made up when I was asked to come down and play as I felt it would be a great opportunity to show what I do.

“Additionally, it was great to be able to play for Neil and everyone at HDT as a thank you for the support I received earlier in the year for my Amsterdam tour. **“**

**Notes for editors**

HDT was founded by Neil and Anne McArthur in 2004 with the aim of supporting the local communities of Irlam and Cadishead in Salford, with additional support given to Rixton-with-Glazebrook (Warrington). Neil is a founder of the Talk Talk group.

With a strong leadership with local roots and working closely with local people, it has invested £6m of private funds to date into the area.

This includes distributing over 450 grants to local organisations and projects and, with partners, funding a number of major, high-quality infrastructure projects such as the building of a new sixth form college, the refurbishment of the local leisure centre and the refurbishment of Irlam Railway station.

A key partner is NC Developments Ltd (NCD**)**, a property company owned by Neil McArthur which delivers building and public realm projects part- or full funded by HDT to improve life in Irlam and Cadishead.

According to a 2014 report by Commission for the New Economy, the work of the HDT and partners is supporting significant social and economic improvements in the area, and local people identify the charity as the key driver of regeneration.

<http://neweconomymanchester.com/media/1468/irlam-cadishead-report.pdf>