



# Seaham : Music Academy



**Jim Bagley**  
Trustee at Seaham  
Music Academy



## BACKGROUND

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Seaham Music Academy teach children and adults to play music and provide lessons that can help people progress from beginner to exam and performance level. They are a registered charity and their finances are secured through grant appeals and payment through lessons they provide.

They formed as a charity in 1992 and Jim joined the charity in 1999. They are a group of 25 teachers, four of those are volunteers and hold classes every Saturday morning. They work in partnership with Trinity College London for music grading exams and organise concerts at the end of every term for the children and concerts for churches, garden parties and clubs. Their age range spans from 4 to 84, from primary school children to adults who are retired who would like to take up a hobby they had when they were younger.

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## SUPPORT FROM DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION

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In the past, Seaham Music Academy were registered as Seaham Philharmonic Society when they started their charity and were asked by previous grant funders to change their name to Seaham Music Academy to be awarded a grant. After applying for another grant last year, they were asked to update their safeguarding policies in order to be given the funding.

Jim got in contact with Durham County Council, who put them in contact with Durham Community Action.

After sending across safeguarding policies to Durham Community Action, Jim met with Community Development Officer Anne-Marie to discuss updates to their safeguarding policies and with help from the VONNE website, he was pointed in the right direction to improve his charity's policies. Anne-Marie also informed Jim about training and events Durham Community Action offer. As a result of this Jim attended a Safer Culture North East seminar which gave him more guidance for his charity and helped developed a new relationship with Safer Culture North East. The advice and guidance provided by Durham Community Action helped Jim to learn more about wider organisations; which in turn showcases the importance of working with other voluntary sector agencies.

## FEEDBACK FROM SEAHAM MUSIC ACADEMY

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As part of guidance from Durham Community Action, Jim was signposted to similar organisations who could offer support and guidance, such as Ann Craft Trust, a charity focused on children's safeguarding. This enabled him to create a complaints policy, an equality, diversity and inclusion policy and whistleblowing policy too and further showcases how combining the knowledge of multiple organisations can impact and improve the voluntary organisations that we work with.

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Durham Community Action has made a lasting difference as Anne-Marie made us aware that as much as creating the policies, it's just as important to update them and have annual reviews to create a long-lasting impact as a charity.

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## DURHAM COMMUNITY ACTION

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As a charity, our role is to support organisations within the voluntary sector with information, advice and guidance. Supporting Jim with his safeguarding enquiring echoes the ethos of Durham Community Action by tackling specific queries, issues and concerns and helping to find solutions to problems and by developing existing relationships with voluntary organisations.

We work with external organisations, such as ACRE, which acts to improve the visibility of rural needs through policy development and research.

We also work closely with Safer Culture North East and ACRE to highlight the importance of safeguarding training and resources across the North East.

By combining our knowledge as a charity by working with external partnerships, it equips us with the skills and expertise to offer voluntary organisations with the support and guidance they require.