

Chris Hodgkins retires as Director of Jazz Services Ltd.



After 29 years at the helm, Chris Hodgkins has taken the decision to retire and step down as Director of Jazz Services Ltd.

Throughout his tenure at the head of the organisation, Chris has been instrumental in the development of Jazz Services as a resource for the music, championing its cause and offering his advice to anyone who required it. Among his many successes, he helped to establish the National Touring Support Scheme with Debbie Dickenson, which has enabled the careers of hundreds of artists over the years, along with the organisation's Rural Touring Support Scheme (with the National Rural Touring Forum), the Jazz Promoters Award (with the PRS for Music Foundation) and the Online Music Business Resource, which offers free career advice to anyone who needs it.

"Chris has been a truly wonderful person to work with. I have been helped on numerous occasions, for a variety of different projects that have toured and recorded. They simply would not have happened without the help and guidance of Chris, and his brilliant leadership of Jazz Services. It is a vital service within the UK, especially at this time. I wish him an obscenely happy and creative retirement!" – **Robert Mitchell, pianist and composer.**

Chris also helped to set up the annual Parliamentary Jazz Awards to recognise jazz talent and ensured the Arts Council's continued support of Jazz Services. His influence and guidance have been crucial to the careers of many of the UK's top jazz artists, and his enormous contribution to the wider scene has already been recognised by the receipt of a BBC Jazz Award and a British Jazz Award - both for Services to Jazz.

"As director of Jazz Services, Chris Hodgkins ran a truly neutral organisation supporting jazz musicians equally across all styles, focussing on talent and integrity. He always made himself personally available when advice was needed and I benefited from his guidance and enthusiasm through good times and tough times. He encouraged me to develop my writing and as a musician himself, was able to offer valuable insight and ideas. The Jazz Services Touring Support Scheme enabled me to grow as a performer, band leader and writer, giving me the opportunity to play gigs all over the UK. Chris is leaving a great legacy to the jazz community. We're grateful but we will miss him very much." – **Christine Tobin, vocalist and composer.**

Chris' departure comes at an appropriate time for Jazz Services, which is eagerly anticipating a renewed period of development having recently submitted its funding bid to the Arts Council. It's also timely for Chris himself, who looks forward to pursuing the interests that have so far remained largely incompatible with his directorial responsibilities - including spending more time playing the music to which he has devoted his working life!

As Chris himself says, *"It's extremely satisfying to be able to look back on my time at Jazz Services with pride; not so much for myself, but for the work the whole organisation has done for the jazz scene and for the artists and promoters who have come through its schemes over the years. To have been so involved in the scene and in the careers of the many fantastic players and volunteer promoters who have used Jazz Services is quite humbling, and something I will always cherish. I wish to thank all the trustees at Jazz Services and everyone I've worked with over the years for their contribution."*

- ENDS -