

# About Us

## A Brief History

In 2007, Blackpool Music Academy became a registered company, BMA CIC, by Guarantee. Within a year, John recruited Tom Vernon as a specialist tutor for younger students and attracted over 80 youngsters for affordable musical classes.

In 2008, Blackpool Music School registered as a charity, securing future funding. BMA CIC became the trading arm for the charity.

In 2009, Phil Roberts introduced exams, with options for guitar and percussion (Rock School) and keyboard, piano, and organ (ABRSM or ICMA).

In 2010, the Academy expanded outreach work with MIND and care-home residents, and provides music therapy sessions for the deprived and disabled.

With a £200,000 investment and the Social Enterprise Loan Fund, John who had always seeked improvement, relocated the BMA CIC to its own premises on Waterloo Road in Blackpool. Tragedy struck in May when Phil, dedicated to the academy, passed away to leukaemia.

The derelict premises required extensive renovations to comply with Health & Safety and Fire Regulations. Facing financial constraints, John sought free legal advice and found Banks Carrington Solicitors in Blackpool town centre. They provided free advice, helped set up the mortgage, and waived legal fees.

Inspired by this generosity, John approached local businesses for donations. To his astonishment, 48 businesses generously donated materials worth £45,000. With overwhelming support from the local community, the BMA CIC and the Blackpool Music School charity opened their new home in June 2012.

The academy offers recording facilities, a conference room, a stair lift, a disabled toilet and a breakout area. It also hosts community events like sing-along sessions and sells musical instruments and accessories.



## Meet John, Our Founder



### John Shaw

Founder & Head of Trustees

John faced a life-altering injury that left him unable to work. Despite initial setbacks, he founded the Blackpool Music Academy to provide accessible music education for disabled individuals, aiming to bring joy and aid in their rehabilitation (as it did for him after his surgery).

## Meet The Tutors



### Ray Jones

Saxophone, Clarinet & Aerophone Go Tutor

Ray studied music at Poulton School of Music and joined the Royal Air Force Music Services, touring internationally, playing for dignitaries and at major sporting events. Later, Ray played in various bands, studied multimedia, and currently performs in the jazz trio 'Take 3'



### Thomas Durkan

Electric & Acoustic Guitar Tutor

Tom has over 20 years of guitar playing experience, 15 years of professional performance, and extensive experience in sound engineering and music education. He has a BSC in Sound Engineering & Design and pursuing an MSC in Sound Design.



### Peredur Ab Alan

Piano & Vocals Tutor

Originally a Welsh language speaker, Peredur has a passion for music - he trained in piano and performing arts and sang with musical theater companies, travelled the world performing, and currently teaches piano, vocal, and beginners guitar. He enjoys songwriting and performing with various musicians.



### Joe Hugill

Drums & Percussion Tutor

Joe, a professional drummer and music teacher, offers drum lessons for all ages and skill levels. He has a passion for recording and production and has credits on several albums and singles.



### Glen Armitage

Drums & Percussion Tutor

Experienced drummer and backing musician with 30+ years of experience, teaching jazz, funk, soul, rock, and sight reading.



### Edith Thompson

Piano Tutor

Performed at Fleetwood Music & Arts Festival; Blackpool Unitarian Church; weddings; and art galleries. She has a grade 8 in pianoforte and learned under Lanceford Roberts (of Nice Opera).



### Megan McGuinness

Drum Tutor

With over 8 years experience and a grade 7 at distinction level, Megan has experience in teaching fun lessons based on students interests whilst still developing the students technical ability to allow them to work towards their grade exams and/or end goals. Megan plays live gigs across multiple genres and currently plays with Poulton Brass Band as their kit player.



### Lucy Ray

Vocals Tutor

With over 40 years of experience, Lucy specialises in pop, contemporary, rock, and jazz styles. A former lecturer in Commercial Music and Songwriting at Bath Spa University, Lucy has performed across the UK at venues including The Hackney Empire, Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club, and Butlins. She has toured nationally and released four acclaimed albums in the 1990s that received international airplay and press coverage.



### Leanne Farrer

Piano & Music Theory Tutor

Leanne is the musical director for stage shows, including Beautiful: The Carole King Musical. She has a particular love for music theory and arranging Church performances.



### Willy Fluss

Acoustic/Electric Guitar & Bass Tutor

Willy is an experienced guitarist across genres including pop, jazz, blues and reggae. He has previously played alongside Geno Washington, Courtney Pine and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.



### Tom Vernon

Acoustic/Electric Guitar & Bass Tutor

Experienced musician and guitar teacher with a diverse background in live performance and studio work. Offers a holistic approach to musical learning, incorporating creativity and musicianship skills.

## Registered Charity

Charity Number: 1120716

Without the support and generosity of local companies and volunteers, Blackpool Music School would not be what it is today.

### Activities - How the charity spends its money

To advance the musical education for the benefit of the public, primarily but not exclusively for those who are disabled, and those who have need by reason of their social or economic circumstances. This will be achieved through the provision of classes and performances

