

**PRESS RELEASE**

Thursday 2 April 2026

## BSO hits right notes with super summer season of spectacular open-air music, picnics and fireworks



*The BSO's Meyrick Park Proms in the Park ©Corin Messer*

- **Proms in the Park returns to Bournemouth for two nights this August**
- ***Now That's What I Call Symphonic Music!* kicks off the weekend**
- ***Symphonic Smash Hits – the 90s!* features the decade's top songs**

**Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (BSO) is all set for another super summer of stunning open-air concerts featuring brilliant music, picnics and spectacular fireworks.**

Featuring some of the world's best musicians, the ever-popular BSO Pops will be back in Meyrick Park, Bournemouth on Friday 7 August and Saturday 8 August for two al fresco concert occasions – perfect for a sumptuous picnic and a glass of bubbly.

The BSO's annual outdoor weekend, sponsored by **Lester Aldridge Solicitors** and supported by **BCP Council**, features two distinctly different themes – symphonic and movie classics and smash hits of the 1990s – with plenty for all tastes to enjoy and is a firm seasonal favourite for all the family.

Friday August 7's *Now That's What I Call Symphonic Music!* is a celebration of big-name composers and beloved symphonic classics from the bombastic to the sublime, as well as an aural feast from the world of cinema with big blockbuster soundtracks ranging from galaxies far away to Middle Earth.

Expect John Williams' Oscar-winning Star Wars and ET themes alongside Howard Shore's Lord Of The Rings score and Hans Zimmer's emotional music for the sci-fi epic Interstellar. Also featuring will be music from Stravinsky's *The Firebird*, Mussorgsky's *A Night on the Bare Mountain*, Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending*, Rachmaninov's Symphony No.2 and Johann Strauss's *Die Fledermaus Overture*.

The following night, Saturday August 8, it's time to dust off your bucket hats, chokers and butterfly clips and get ready to party like it's 1999 as *Symphonic Smash Hits – the 90s!* hits the Meyrick Park stage ready to entertain you.

Featuring the biggest tracks of the decade from the likes of superstars Robbie Williams, Cher, The Spice Girls and many more 1990s' hitmakers, this unmissable celebration the decade's music will see the BSO in full flow and plenty of dancing in the park.

**Dougie Scarfe OBE**, CEO of Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, said: *"We are delighted to be returning to Meyrick Park this summer for these two fabulous concerts which not only demonstrate the superb versatility of our musicians but also gives them a chance to let their hair down for the best party of the summer season."*

*"I absolutely love it when the park is packed with picnickers as far as the eye can see and always marvel at some of the extraordinary items our audience members bring along to enhance their culinary experience."*

**Kurt Lee**, Partner and Head of Private Client at Lester Aldridge: *"We are delighted to continue our support for the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra and its wonderful summer programme. These concerts bring such joy to our community, offering families and friends the chance to come together and enjoy music in a relaxed and memorable setting. It is a real pleasure to help make events like this possible and to celebrate the creativity that enriches our region."*

The BSO is also returning to **Portsmouth's iconic Guildhall Square** landmark in July – in partnership with **The Guildhall Trust** – following two successful events last year, featuring music from Abba and blockbuster films, which were attended by more than 2,500 people.

On Friday 17 July, *The Best of Williams & Zimmer* is a symphonic spectacular concert of award-winning soundtracks from some of the most iconic films of all time. And on Saturday 18 July, it's party time with *Symphonic Smash Hits – The 80s!* featuring top tracks from the likes of Madonna, Michael Jackson, David Bowie, A-Ha, George Michael, Elton John and more. Supported by **Portsmouth City Council**, the events are part of a special Centenary Concert Series in celebration of Portsmouth's 100 years of city status.

The BSO is also performing *Symphonic Smash Hits – The 80s!* at **Corfe Castle** on Saturday, 25 July as part of **Love It Local Events' Summer Nights at the Castle** season. Conductor Pete Harrison will lead the orchestra and guest singers through a programme of classic hits from the era of new romantics, big hair and even bigger shoulder pads, with a backdrop of an amazing light show on the castle walls.

Two other events at Corfe that weekend feature BSO musicians. On Friday, 24 July, a 14-piece ensemble will perform *West End to Hollywood*, a concert of film and stage music from the West End to Hollywood, including James Bond, Moulin Rouge, Toy Story and Harry Potter.

On Sunday, 26 July it's the turn of *Curious Creatures & Adventurous Animals*, a symphonic adventure through verdant forests and across the open ocean featuring music by Mancini, Elgar, Williams, de Falla, Bjork and Vaughan Williams, as well as music from the blockbuster Moana.

See <https://bsolive.com/whats-on/bso-pops/> for full details.

[ENDS]

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

For more information please contact:

Cliff Moore | [Cliff.Moore@deepsouthmedia.co.uk](mailto:Cliff.Moore@deepsouthmedia.co.uk) | 07469 158458 or Claire Rawles | [crawles@bsorchestra.co.uk](mailto:crawles@bsorchestra.co.uk) | 07860 776646

1. Event listings – full booking at [bsolive.com](https://bsolive.com)

Friday 17 July, 7.30pm

*Portsmouth Guildhall Square*

### **The Best of Williams and Zimmer**

Pete Harrison, conductor

The two giants of Hollywood go head-to-head in a concert featuring music from the most enduring film scores.

Tickets from £20

Saturday 18 July

*Portsmouth Guildhall Square*

### **Symphonic Smash Hits – the '80s**

Pete Harrison, conductor

Join the BSO in celebrating the greatest pop hits from the '80s as it unites with singers Emma Kershaw, Katie Birtill, Oliver Tompsett and Patrick Smyth.

Tickets from £20

Friday 24 July, 7.30pm

*Summer Night at the Castle* [Corfe Castle]

### **West End to Hollywood**

A 14-piece ensemble from the BSO takes you on a journey from the historic charm of London's West End to the bright lights of Hollywood.

Tickets from £30

Saturday 25 July, 7.30pm

*Summer Night at the Castle* [Corfe Castle]

### **Smash Hits – the '80s**

Pete Harrison, conductor

Join the BSO in celebrating the greatest pop hits from the '80s as it unites with singers Emma Kershaw, Katie Birtill, Oliver Tompsett and Patrick Smyth.

Tickets from £30

Sunday 26 July, 7.30pm

*Summer Night at the Castle* [Corfe Castle]

**Curious Creatures & Adventurous Animals**

A 14-piece ensemble from the BSO enjoys a symphonic adventure through verdant forests and across the open ocean.

Tickets from £30

Friday 7 August, 8pm

*Meyrick Park: Proms in the Park*

**Now That's What I Call Symphonic Music!**

Enyi Okpara, conductor

A night celebrating the most enduring classical music of all time, from *The Lark Ascending* and *The Firebird* to firm film favourites including, *Star Wars* and *ET*.

Earlybird tickets from £33.

Saturday 8 August, 8pm

*Meyrick Park: Proms in the Park*

**Symphonic Smash Hits – the '90s!**

Pete Harrison, conductor

Celebrate the greatest pop hits from the 1990s in full symphonic glory, spanning music from the Spice Girls to Cher, Robbie Williams and more.

Earlybird tickets from £33.

2. **High-resolution [images available here:](#)**

Selection of shots from: The BSO's Meyrick Park 'Proms in the Park' ©Corin Messer

3. **[About Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra | bsolive.com](#)**

Chief Conductor – Mark Wigglesworth | Artist-in-Residence – Roderick Williams OBE

Principal Guest Conductor – Chloé Van Soeterstède | Associate Guest Conductor – David Hill MBE

Conductor Laureate & Artistic Director, Voices from the East – Kirill Karabits OBE

Conductor Emeritus – Marin Alsop | Conductor Laureate – Andrew Litton

Calleva Assistant Conductor – Enyi Okpara

One of the UK's best-loved orchestras, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is known for championing the role of culture in people's lives. Based at Lighthouse, Poole, the Orchestra is resident in Bristol, Exeter, Portsmouth, Southampton, and Yeovil, and performs in towns and villages across the region. A leading arts charity, it is the largest performing organisation in the South West of England, serving one of the biggest and most diverse regions in the UK.

The Daily Telegraph described Mark Wigglesworth's opening performance as Chief Conductor in 2024 as "a fine, fierce debut". Celebrated globally for his outstanding musicianship, extraordinary interpretations, and breadth of repertoire, Wigglesworth's first season has magnified the BSO's reputation for the highest quality music-making. The Orchestra boasts an enviable list of named conductors, including Principal Guest Conductor Chloé Van Soeterstède, Marin Alsop, David Hill MBE, Kirill Karabits, and Andrew Litton.

In 2025/26, the BSO welcomes baritone **Roderick Williams OBE** as Artist-in-Residence: Williams performs five times across the season, including Zemlinsky's *Lyric Symphony*, Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*, and a 24-song cycle, *An English Winterreise*. The Orchestra also introduces **Dani Howard** as its Celebrated Composer, a series that shines a spotlight on new British music. It shares seven performances of Howard's music, including the UK premiere of her *Saxophone Concerto* with **Jess Gillam**. Further highlights of the season include debut performances from organist **Anna Lapwood**, cellist **Hugo Svedberg**, guitarist **Plinio Fernandes**, viola player **Timothy Ridout**, among more. The Orchestra's celebrated **Digital Concert series** continues into its sixth year, with 19 live performances broadcast globally from Poole.

The Orchestra is celebrated for its pioneering community-based **BSO Participate** work, spanning partnerships with health and care providers to inclusive events in schools and with music education hubs. In the 2025/26 season, highlights include the expansion of its creative health programme with **Dorset County Hospital** and **Arts in Hospital** into further **Dorset HealthCare** sites, and an extension of its **Community and Wellbeing Orchestras** supporting a range of needs across the region from Bodmin, Boscombe and Bristol to Chard and Wincanton.

Following international attention for igniting change, **BSO Resound** — the world's first professional disabled-led ensemble at the core of a major orchestra, and winner of the 2019 Royal Philharmonic Society's Impact Award — continues to challenge perceptions. The group unites with Calleva Assistant Conductor Enyi Okpara and members of the **National Open Youth Orchestra** to share its live music in schools in 2025/26.

A National Portfolio of Arts Council England, the BSO is a registered charity and relies on generous philanthropic support from individual donors, gifts in wills, corporate partners, and charitable trusts and foundations. In 2024, the Orchestra was delighted to receive its largest ever funding pledge from a charitable trust: a grant award of £300,000 over three years (2025-27) from the **Garfield Weston Foundation** towards BSO Participate.

The BSO's Principal Broadcast Partner is **BBC Radio 3**.  
The BSO is **Classic FM**'s Orchestra in the South of England.

4. **About Lester Aldridge** | [Lester Aldridge](#)

Lester Aldridge is a leading regional law firm with a national and international presence, supporting businesses, individuals and families with clear and practical legal advice. Our specialist teams work closely with clients to provide guidance that is straightforward, accessible and tailored to their needs. With a strong reputation for high-quality service, recognised through our Lexcel accreditation since 2007, we are committed to building long-lasting relationships based on trust. Our Private Wealth experts help clients plan for the future with confidence, offering friendly support with estate planning, wealth protection and key life matters.