

Islington Folk Club Bookings Officer Report for December 2024 AGM

Covering the year: 1st January - 31st December 2024

A variety of methods used to book guest artists including: direct approaches from artists or their agents, contacting known performers, following suggestions from Committee members, scouting at other clubs/festivals, looking at past performers on the web-site.

- The venue: all events held at the Brewhouse & Kitchen with just one evening becoming unavailable at short notice - we moved to The Alpaca in Essex Road (Maggie Holland). Artists comment favourably on the Brewhouse room and on the Club as a whole. They are happy to return.
- 41 Club evenings were held comprising: 38 guest nights (including one 3-way split) and 3 sing-arounds (held at the end of term).
- The Club was closed for 11 weeks in the year: one week at Easter, throughout July and August, and one week at Christmas,
- Fees: artists given an agreed guaranteed fee or, if greater 95% of the door.
- Entry charges: members £7, non-members £9 (Jan-June), members £8, non-members £10 (Sept-Dec). Note: membership £2 pa is used for admin, rather than for paying performers.
- We are competing locally with at least two clubs who don't charge entry or (presumably) guarantee their artists a fee (sometimes the same artists as us).
- Gender equality in artists booked: 27/41 acts involved women performers
- A variety of performer formats (solo, group etc), instruments and musical styles was represented. Musical categories included: English traditional, singer-songwriter/contemporary, American old-time, music hall, blues, political, humorous/eccentric, bluegrass, some world music.
- Advance tickets were sold, members £10, non-members £12 for An Evening with Peggy Seeger.
- Artist cancellations, there were five. Oka Vanga replaced by a 3-way split, Nick Dow replaced by The John Ward Trio, Reg Meuross replaced at short notice by a SingAround, The Embers replaced by Georgia Shackleton & Aaron Bennett, Nick Hart replaced by Dave Ellis and Boo Howard.
- A few weeks before their evening each artist is sent confirmation of fee agreed, details of the Club evening and practical information such as travel/parking etc
- A few artists used amplification (usually their own, occasionally provided by a member of the committee), a few others might have benefitted from it, particularly on busy nights.
- Attendances: highest 72 (cf. 77 in 2023), lowest 24 (cf. 26 in 2023), average 48.8 (cf. 43 in 2023). With competition it is very important that artists attract their own crowd.
- Surplus on artists of £338 (cf. £400 in 2023) over the year.

- Most acts exceed their guaranteed fee. - helped by £1 price increase from September. Only three failed to reach their guarantee.
- Two solo artists and one trio required accommodation (provided by the booker)
- Competition from other Clubs is a factor. We have an informal agreement not to book acts too close to one another.
- More young people and women seem to be attending.

Roger Trevitt, Booking Officer Jan -Dec 2023

Maggie Chadwick, Bookings Officer Jan-Dec 2024