**Seb Valentine - Nomination for President’s Award**

**The Blue Light Symphony Orchestra**

The Blue Light Symphony Orchestra is a UK registered charity that aims to promote, encourage and support music making at a local level within the UK emergency services to support the mental health and wellbeing of ‘blue light’ first responders.

Brain-child of Police Detective and formally trained opera singer, Seb Valentine, orchestral workshops provide the opportunity for musicians within the emergency services to come together and play music. Based on the positive results of the BLSO Music Therapy pilot programme, the BLSO is currently developing access to music therapy services for emergency personnel.

**Testimonial**

Working tirelessly to promote, advance and develop the charity service offering and impact, Seb Valentine has expanded the board of trustees to incorporate professional representation from across the different services, he has coordinated a weekend workshop, spoken at paramedic training sessions and emergency service conferences. He is not only a passionate and committed president of the charity, his musicianship is exceptional and his love of music is evident as he conducts the workshop orchestras with compassion and sensitivity. Workshops are highly praised by participants. A survey of participants at the last workshop identified:

* 43% were attending a BLSO workshop for the first time​
* 86% are very likely to recommend a BLSO workshop to a friend​
* 50% of attendees rated the workshop as ‘Excellent’, ​ 49% rated it as ‘Very Good’, 1% rated it as ‘Fair’​
* 79% felt the material was ‘Just right’ in terms of complexity
* 95% said they felt the workshop improved their mood​
* Most participants commented on the pleasure of making music in a relaxed environment​

A video about the BLSO can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/DgBMHwt6BK8>

Seb applied for and was awarded a lottery fund grant for a music therapy pilot programme that was run in partnership with East Surrey Police. This programme was considered a success, and further research was recommended as a result.

A video about the pilot programme can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/J-J-odPKvGI>