

MUSIC



Solo soprano Bridget Howarth performs at the concert

'Emotional' concert fundraiser marks independence day

A concert to celebrate Ukrainian independence has helped raise hundreds of pounds for a humanitarian group working in the country.

Stamford Diversity Group promoted Sunday's event, with Helping Our Ukrainian Friends, which was held at Stamford venue Browne's Hospital to mark the Independence Day of Ukraine.

The concert supported HUGS, a charity working in the Eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv, and featured music by soprano Bridget Howarth, pianist Fergus Black, and husband and wife viola duo, Katherine Parsons and Leon King.

A prize draw was also held for Browne's Hospital.

Ukrainian Mila Matvienko, who now lives in Stamford, was amazed to hear her native tongue sung by Bridget.

"We are delighted to hear native Ukrainian words," she said. "All the songs are about the Ukrainian soul, the sun, nature. It's very touching!"

The programme featured works from Ukrainian composers, opening with Andrii Didorenko's Postcards From Ukraine,



and ending on a poignant note with Prayer for Ukraine by Mykola Lysenko.

Yvette Diaz-Munoz, Stamford Diversity Group chair, said: "The concert was a roaring success. We had a full house and people were in raptures throughout. The musicians got a standing ovation at the end and there were not many dry eyes in the room. The Prayer for Ukraine at the end was particularly emotional."

The concert was opened by Mayor of Stamford Coun Amanda Wheeler, while district and county councillor Richard Cleaver also attended.



Husband and wife viola duo, Leon King and Katharine Parsons