

Seniors can learn piano without pain

A revolutionary online course is helping older people learn the piano – and improve their well-being – without having to read traditional music notation

IF YOU'VE always wished you could play the piano, there's now an easy-to-use resource for people aged 50 to 90-plus to learn without the barrier of reading 'traditional music'.

Designed with well-being in mind, this revolutionary piano method has achieved outstanding results.

Students report wide-ranging social, mental and physical benefits, and the method is easily accessible to absolute beginners, as well as those suffering from arthritis, sight problems and dyslexia. The thriving online community also gives students an opportunity to make new friends and access support in a fun environment.

The DecPlay method removes the biggest barrier to learning piano by translating traditional music into an ingeniously simple format, which beginners can understand within minutes, and is flexible enough to enable advanced playing styles. Because of its uniqueness, the DecPlay format has been awarded a patent.

Many of us were born during an era when some of the greatest music was being played for the first time, including



Elvis and The Beatles to name just two. We witnessed the global emergence of music, including jazz, folk, blues, ballads, musical theatre, rock and pop but often without the facilities or belief to pursue it ourselves.

This inspirational course is dedicated to people from that era and proves that age is no barrier for music lovers to be able to play the songs they love and to realise those childhood dreams.

The DecPlay.com online course enables students to progress at their own pace, with step-by-step videos which can be accessed using a computer, tablet or mobile phone. Song sheets can be viewed online or printed out, and if the student does not have a piano keyboard, information where to obtain one at a reasonable price is supplied.

There is a vibrant, like-minded community as well as a dedicated team available for individual advice and support.

Already a 'hit' with those aged 50 to 90-plus, the students' stories of how this new resource has enhanced their lives are truly heart-warming. These stories

include achieving lifetime ambitions, experiencing joy again after tragedy, mental and physical well-being, fun with family and friends and reducing feelings of isolation. The success of students like Harry, who learnt to play aged 90 and Pam aged 59 who struggled with traditional music, give encouragement to those who feel they could never master playing the piano later in life.

Created by classically trained musician and IT entrepreneur Declan Cosgrove, left, the resource is endorsed by the BBC, and Oscar-winning song-writer Glen Hansard, and has attracted students from 72 countries across the globe.

Declan decided to develop his idea after hearing years of complaints from friends and families about how they would love to play piano but found traditional methods just too hard. Having spent years studying both classical music and alternative methods used by popular musicians such as Sir Paul McCartney and John Lennon, Declan set about creating a method that enabled people to bypass the barriers that prevent many people from being able to play piano. In response to requests from students, additional resources were created to make the course accessible for people with challenges such as poor sight and arthritis.

Declan said: "I set out to make the joys of playing piano accessible to everyone, especially those who doubted they would ever learn. The rewards of watching seniors achieve lifelong dreams and a new purpose have made this journey more worthwhile than I could have ever hoped for."

■ **A free beginners' video lesson is available on the website: (www.decplay.com).**

