



[Chancer's Cabaret](#)

at The Carlton Club

Reviewed by [Katie Leicester](#) February 2018

The Carlton Club is Whalley Range's premier social club, once an old Gentleman's Club, and situated in the heart of the community. This big old Victorian mansion is quite shabby in an 80's kind of way but oodles charm, now hosts events organised by the loyal locals to keep this community hub alive.

Martin Oslo and his team have been hosting open mic nights to showcase the talented locals for around 15 months - initially bimonthly they proved so popular they now run on the first Wednesday of every month.

After the horrific Manchester Bomb at The Manchester Arena, Paul Jenkins created #Mancsgiving, a charity to raise funds for needy organisations in the city, by hosting evenings of Cabaret alongside money raising raffles, and food supplied by Stretford Canteen - all adding to a community feel with a purpose of positivity.

All artists are locals living within a mile radius of the Carlton Club, and none of the performers are paid any money, but young emerging bands/performers are given the opportunity to get a better experience than in the usual venues by the warm community atmosphere of their local club.

Tonight's charity was for 96.9 ALL FM with an audience of around 100 people, entrance is free but you are encouraged to buy a raffle ticket for £2 to win prizes which have been donated. Stretford Canteen supplied a choice of two delicious dishes, one being a vegetarian choice at a cost of £5, with the proceedings going to the charity of choice.

First up was **Joshua Ben Joseph** whose dad had played in the same venue in the 1950's

adding to the family feel, declaring he was sure his dad's spirit was 'still wafting around the club' dressed in his working man's attire of a donkey jacket and flat cap. Joshua wowed the audience with his poignant storytelling lyrics, his songs were poetic and smooth as he sang solo with his acoustic guitar.

Second up was **Katbrownsugar** singing her silky sultry tunes 'sweet vibrations', 'turn it up' and 'higher'; followed by a train crash of a comedian who actually to be fair, had the ability to laugh and accept his own awkwardness of laughless jokes.

The highlight of the evening was two extremely talented individuals. Firstly **Helgi**, a young man who was one of the original performers in the Chancers Cabaret, armed with his electric guitar captivated me with his original songs 'breaking up' and 'baby steps'. Secondly singer songwriter **Lewis Clarke**, the man with no band and just his electronic keyboard, blew me away with his talent and vocal tone as he sung his cleverly written lyrics of 'bleed us dry' and 'time and a place', which were created by himself in a bar in Chorlton just one month ago.

The evening closed with **Nomei Scotellaro**, reciting her poetry by using her phone as a prompt left me feeling I wish I had left on a high after Lewis. To be fair though, it's local talent and takes some confidence to stand up in front of an audience who have had access to cheap booze from early evening, and recite as she did.

This type of cabaret brings back what the British love - an old style working man's club, cheap alcohol, wholesome homemade food and live entertainment, with pure hidden gems just waiting to get their lucky break and exposure as an artist. Great Community feel with a humbling theme.