

# **Octave,** **High Street North**

## **Hitting the right notes**

Dunstable has enjoyed a long history of family-run music shops, starting with Jerry Allen and his shop in High Street South in the 1970s and early 80's. He passed the business on to his sons; the shop moved premises to where Octave stands today in High Street North.

Barrie Freeman took over the business in 1986; he rebranded the shop, 'Octave Music'. Throughout the 11 years Barrie was at the helm, his family members were well and truly part of the team. His wife, Lynn was responsible for the accounts; Barrie's parents, Charlie and Ivy, were regularly in the shop, chatting to customers and helping out.

When Barrie left retail, his own children too young to take over the business, he sold it to his assistant, Russell Kelly. He had joined the team on leaving school in September 1988. 9 years of experience under his belt, Russell was more than ready to take on the challenge.

"I have owned the business for 23 years seeing many changes both in the music business, and in retail. I have developed an online presence while maintaining a reputation for excellent customer service. Octave is still a family business in every sense;, I met my wife in the shop and she supports me behind the scenes - repainting the walls during a refurbishment; writing adverts and even producing Covid safe signage!"

With two teenage children beginning to consider their career prospects, who knows where this family business could end up.