



# Gone in the Air

Young people, Music and Rural Isolation

Research undertaken by NYMAZ, funded by the National Foundation for Youth Music as part of the Musical Inclusion programme for North Yorkshire

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*'When you hear music, after it's over, it's gone in the air,  
you can never capture it again.'*

**Eric Dolphy, jazz musician, 1928-1964**

## **1. Acknowledgements**

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All photos courtesy of NYMAZ

## 2. Foreword

There are many advantages of living in a rural area, especially one as lovely as North Yorkshire. The combination of stunning landscape, a strong sense of community and high quality of life can make such places seem almost idyllic. But the very advantages that make them so desirable can also hide the difficulties faced by some of those who live there, including people on low incomes, those living with ill health or disabilities, the old and, not least, the young. In sparsely populated areas, it can be particularly tough to access the services they need, such as transport, social care or youth work, since the numbers using them will always be small.

Growing up in a rural area can be a time of real isolation. Outside school hours, young people's contact with their peers can be very limited: it's not unusual to be the only teenager in the village nowadays. The life available to young people in towns and cities – after-school groups, leisure facilities and simply keeping company – is often inaccessible to young people in rural areas. Even social media is of limited value if you can't get a phone signal or your internet connection keeps dropping.

That's why the opportunities to make music provided by organisations like NYMAZ are so important, although, as this report shows, they are not easy to sustain. Many young people are passionate about music, not just because they enjoy it, but also because it provides a framework for exploring their identity and place in the world. Indeed, in playing with others and extending their experience of musical cultures, they discover the world in cooperative and informal ways. It's precisely because young people living in rural areas have fewer chances to mix with their peers, to stretch themselves creatively and to test future career ideas that the extra effort needed is so worthwhile.

This report makes a really valuable contribution to our understanding of the challenges faced by many children and young people living in rural areas and the contribution that informal music services can make to their learning, social networks and confidence. NYMAZ's calls to action will be challenging for public bodies with shrinking budgets but even small amounts of funding can make a big difference. And young people living in rural isolation, like young people everywhere, deserve the best start in life we can give them.

**François Matarasso**

### 3. Introduction

Working to develop non-formal, inclusive music activities with children in North Yorkshire for many years, NYMAZ's work and the way it is delivered has always been characterised by the rural nature of the county. Covering an expansive area that's nearly the same size of Cyprus, we are constantly challenged by the dual barriers of limited transport options curtailing young people's access to such opportunities, and the cost of specialist music leaders in travelling to isolated areas.

Our aim in undertaking this project has been to gather evidence of the opportunities and challenges faced by young people living in rural areas and of the particular benefits that participatory music can offer to their life chances, and to make recommendations to influence practice and policy accordingly. We were keen not to duplicate existing published research, but rather review these findings in light of the actual experience of ourselves and our peers today.

Our methodology has been to use existing research and statistics, combined with case studies from seven organisations delivering non-formal participatory music activities with children and young people in rural areas of England, many of whom are supported through the National Foundation for Youth Music's *Musical Inclusion* funding programme. For the purposes of this research we have not looked at music education in formal education settings.

The seven organisations or projects visited or consulted were: *SoundWave* (Cumbria), *Cymaz Music* (Cornwall), *Remarkable Theatre* (Music4U, East Riding of Yorkshire), *B Sharp* (Dorset), *RAM Jam* (NYMAZ, North Yorkshire), *Wren Music* (Devon) and *The Music Pool* (Herefordshire). Organisations working in the youth music sector were invited to submit evidence and volunteer as case studies through a call out on the Youth Music Network<sup>1</sup>.

For the case studies we visited each organisation and observed a participatory music workshop in session (with two exceptions, *Cymaz Music* and *Remarkable Theatre*), spoke to young people taking part in the activity and interviewed the music leader and manager or administrator responsible for overseeing the project. Information from case study organisations is used throughout the report, and the case studies are included in full in the Appendices at the end of this report.

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<sup>1</sup> The Youth Music Network is a free, online community for those who work in and around music education in the UK. It is run by the National Foundation for Youth Music: <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk>

## Location of case study organisations and projects



NYMAZ has focused this research on organisations working in England. However, we believe that many of our findings will not be unique to the youth music sector in England and we hope that this report will prompt dialogue with organisations operating in other UK nations. In some sections of this report we have used UK-wide statistics.

The geographical distribution of case study organisations would appear to show that there are no organisations delivering activities in the east of England, particularly within predominantly rural counties such as Norfolk and Lincolnshire. NYMAZ would like to emphasise that this is not the case; non-formal participatory music activities are being delivered in these areas, but in carrying out this research NYMAZ worked with those organisations that came forward as a result of our call out.

#### 4. Context: Rural England statistics and defining rural isolation

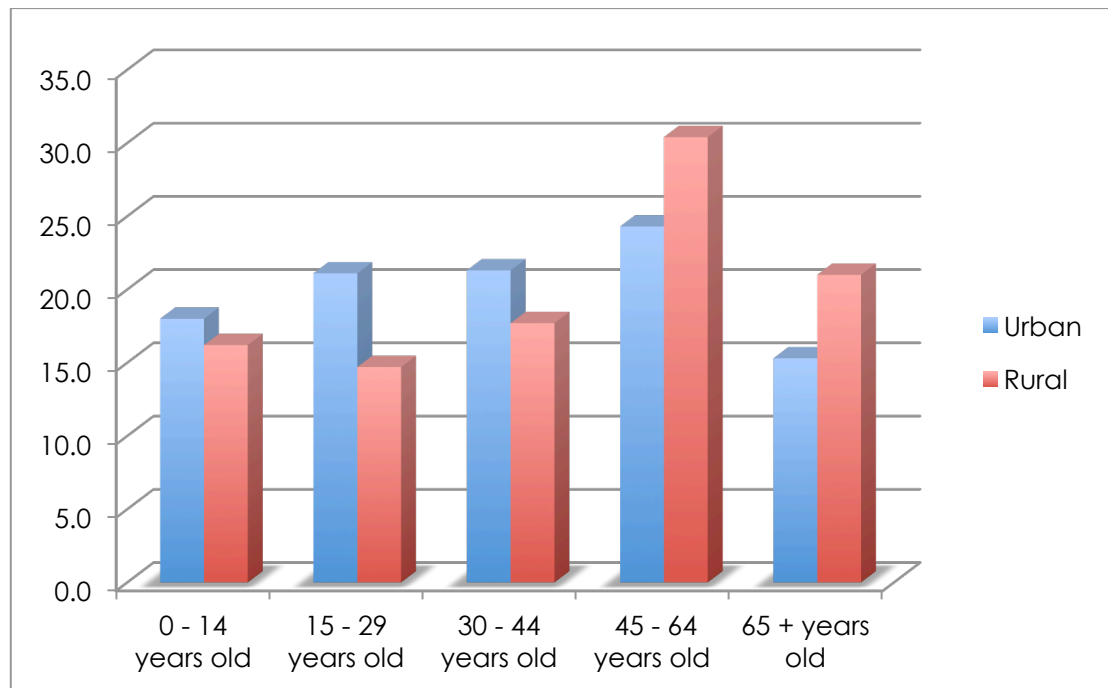
At the 2011 Census, 9.3 million people, or 17.6% of the population, were living in rural areas of England. All regions, with the exception of London and the South East, include extensive areas that are rural and sparsely populated, with the most rural counties in England being Cornwall, Norfolk and Yorkshire.<sup>2</sup>

The Rural-Urban Classification is used to distinguish rural and urban areas. The most recent classification defines areas as rural if they fall outside of settlements with more than 10,000 residents. There are classifications with various levels of detail according to size of geographic area classified; at the most detailed level applied to Census Output Areas, there are 10 classifications ranging from *urban: major conurbation* to *rural: hamlets and isolated dwellings in a sparse setting*. At Local Authority level there are 6 classifications.

North Yorkshire, where NYMAZ operates, is classified as predominantly rural, with five of its seven Districts classified as the most sparsely populated *Rural-80* (districts with at least 80% of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns) and the remaining two Districts classified as *Significant Rural*.<sup>3</sup>

There is a greater proportion of older people living in rural areas; as the table below demonstrates, using population data from the 2011 Census:<sup>4</sup>

**Table: Population of England by Age (%)**



<sup>2</sup> DEFRA, 2014: 9

<sup>3</sup> Districts with more than 37,000 people or more than 26 per cent of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns.

<sup>4</sup> Table generated using data from 2011 Census, cited in DEFRA, 2014:10

Over 50% of the population in rural areas were aged 45 and above, compared with around 40% in urban areas. In urban areas 21.2% of the population were aged 15 to 29 years, but in rural areas this fell to 14.6% of the population. For the 0-14 year age range this gap is still evident, but less severe: in urban areas 18% of the population were aged 0 – 14 years whereas in rural areas this falls to 16.2%.<sup>5</sup> This trend is set to continue; the over 85 age group in rural areas is set to increase by 186% by 2028 in rural areas, compared to just 149% in the UK as a whole.<sup>6</sup>

In undertaking this research, NYMAZ has used the following definition of rural isolation offered by the Big Lottery Fund:

*Rural isolation is the feelings of powerlessness and disconnection experienced by individuals or groups as a consequence of living in a rural area.*<sup>7</sup>

The Commission for Rural Communities identified three ingredients contributing to rural isolation:

1. Lack of income and employment
2. Lack of access to transport and other services
3. Lack of contact with, and help from, relatives, friends, neighbours etc.<sup>8</sup>

It is important to distinguish between being isolated and feeling lonely. Age UK notes that isolation refers to separation from social or familial contact, community involvement, or access to services, whereas loneliness reflects an individual's 'personal, subjective sense of lacking these things to the extent that they are wanted or needed. It is therefore possible to be isolated without being lonely and to be lonely without being isolated'.<sup>9</sup>

It also does not follow that everyone who lives in a rural area should be deemed to be suffering from rural isolation. In *Impact on Reducing Rural Isolation*, prepared for the Big Lottery Fund to examine the impact of the funder's grants programme in tackling rural isolation (2011), the authors comment that 'The majority [of the rural population] possess the mobility, resources and social contacts not to experience feelings of disconnection or powerlessness as a result of this life choice.'<sup>10</sup> However it should be recognised that for children and young people, living in a rural area is almost invariably not their own choice – and younger children do not have responsibility for their life choices at all – but rather the choice of their parents/carers, or as a result of their parents' or carers' circumstances.

Similarly, the Big Lottery Fund highlights the need to recognise that isolation for some people may not always be linked to economic disadvantage; affluent people can be socially isolated too. However, where social and economic

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<sup>5</sup> Data from 2011 Census, cited in DEFRA, March 2014: 10

<sup>6</sup> Age UK, 2013: 4

<sup>7</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 11

<sup>8</sup> Commission for Rural Communities, 2006, *Annual Review*, cited in Leisure Futures, 2011: 11

<sup>9</sup> Age UK, 2009, *Loneliness and social isolation review*, cited in Age UK, 2013: 30

<sup>10</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 12



disadvantage combine, 'the cumulative effect causes particularly acute isolation.'<sup>11</sup>

Although this research will be drawing attention to the challenges of rural living, it is imperative to recognise the many positive aspects that living in a rural area can bring. The Big Lottery Fund highlights evidence from research conducted by IPSOS Mori in 2009 which found that those living in rural areas reported a high level of satisfaction with their area, with 46% of those living in urban areas reporting that they are very satisfied, compared with 60% or over for those in rural areas. Quality of life was also perceived as high, with residents of rural areas significantly more likely to rate their quality of life as good compared with those living in urban areas.<sup>12</sup>

This perception of high quality of life was borne out by many of the young people consulted through our case study organisations, who identified many positive aspects to living where they did. At RAM Jam, many participants described enjoying the 'freshness' of the Yorkshire Dales and said that they enjoy the views, outdoor activities such as walking and the overall quietness: '*There are fewer cars, when I visit people in towns it's a lot louder than here.*' However other young people characterised the quietness of their local area as 'boring' (SoundWave participant).

There are several factors contributing towards the occurrence of higher levels of rural isolation. The Big Lottery Fund identifies a number of socio-economic causes including changes in demography, economies, community identity and ethnicity, but states that of these, an ageing population is the key issue:

*The structural demographic change towards an older population in the UK is much higher in rural areas than in towns and cities and is the single most significant factor in increasing the prevalence of rural isolation.*<sup>13</sup>

The significance of an ageing rural population for younger residents is that children and young people could feel more isolated in rural areas because there are fewer of them. As a direct consequence, services for children and young people might find it hard to justify themselves due to the smaller numbers they are working with, and a more obvious need to promote services for older people.

The report goes on to say that children and young people in rural areas are often the demographic group least affected by isolation, compared to older people and those with disabilities:

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<sup>11</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 15

<sup>12</sup> IPSOS Mori, 2009, *Rural Insights Survey*, quoted in Leisure Futures, 2011: 12

<sup>13</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 19

*Young people do experience rural isolation but to a lesser extent as most will experience some degree of engagement with their peers. For children up to age 16, going to school generally mitigates problems of rural isolation.<sup>14</sup>*

This is somewhat of a generalisation in that it glosses over the importance of out-of-school social opportunities in combating isolation, especially given that some children can themselves be isolated in school due to having few friends, perhaps due to others' perceptions of them. It is unrealistic to expect children to rely on school for all their social opportunities. It also doesn't recognise the proportion of children and young people who do not attend school, whether through home-schooling, exclusion or for other reasons.

Finally, Jodie Bray also points to recent evidence, which suggests that rural isolation 'may have been exacerbated by the 2008-2012 global recession and subsequent ongoing funding cuts'.<sup>15</sup>



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<sup>14</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 62

<sup>15</sup> Bray, 2013: 59

## 5. Life challenges for children and young people living in rural areas

Of the many life challenges evidenced by recent research focusing on those living in rural areas, some challenges are particularly applicable to children and young people, or can affect them with particular severity. Many of these are linked and include:

### i. Poor transport links and cost of transport

The necessity of travelling considerable distances to access most amenities and activities<sup>16</sup>, limited bus and train services (including schedules which stop running in the evening or at weekends) and the high cost of public transport combined with lack of disposable income are all significant factors affecting the lives of children and young people in rural areas, presenting barriers to accessing services, education, training, employment and friends.

*If you want to buy something then you can't always find it immediately. Our village shop has just shut down.*

RAM Jam participant

Where services and social opportunities are not within walking or cycling distance, young people are often reliant either on family or friends to offer lifts or else when they are old enough, be able to afford to drive, run and insure a car.<sup>17</sup>

*There is some public transport, but not trains that are near where I live. To get to a train station you would have to drive anyway.*

RAM Jam participant

*I don't like not being able to go out on my own independently; having to drive a long way to get anywhere like the library, shops and parks.*

Survey respondent<sup>18</sup>

Other practical considerations such as the weather can also affect travel, with activities and educational settings sometimes shut, cancelled or postponed due to travel issues caused by snow, ice, strong winds and knock-on effects such as power cuts:

*Flooding can stop you getting in to town, and to Livewire [music project] if you are on the wrong side of the river. It's tricky to get to see your friends.*

The Music Pool participant

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<sup>16</sup> The Statistical Digest of Rural England reported that in 2008/12 people living in rural villages, hamlets & isolated dwellings travelled around 10,000 miles per year on average, compared with around 6,200 miles per year in urban areas. DEFRA, 2014: 58

<sup>17</sup> Commission for Rural Communities, 2012: 4

<sup>18</sup> NYMAZ, 2014, *Young people and music in rural North Yorkshire survey*

## ii. Inward and outward migration

Older people moving to rural areas on retirement or purchasing second homes in the countryside is contributing to an increase in the older population. This in turn has a knock-on effect on children and young people.

*The ageing of the rural population can be expected to lead to further falls in school rolls and will not help the viability of facilities for young people.<sup>19</sup>*

Consequently as many young people move away from rural areas, often permanently 'to study, find work and an affordable place to live, the economic sustainability of local assets (e.g. village halls, shops, pubs, garages, post offices) and services (e.g. social care and young people's services) increasingly comes under threat'<sup>20</sup>

*If a community is to be truly sustainable, vibrant and equitable it needs young people to not move away... These younger residents can, and should, be a determining factor in the future character of their communities. There is a real danger of communities becoming unbalanced if the population is skewed towards an older demographic.<sup>21</sup>*

## iii. Hidden disadvantage

Those living in rural areas can sometimes be experiencing socio-economic disadvantages which are not always immediately obvious due to the perceived idyll of country living, surrounding affluence, methods of measuring deprivation and the overall more positive health outcomes and lower crime rates in rural areas compared with urban areas. As the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) noted: 'beneath the often proportionately more positive rural statistics lie some very real and difficult challenges'<sup>22</sup>, whilst the Big Lottery Fund highlights the need to use deprivation statistics with care when seeking to target rural areas.<sup>23</sup>

*Pockets of disadvantage exist in rural areas, surrounded by relative affluence, and these pockets of disadvantage also go unnoticed in areas of low population density. Unlike urban areas, the isolation of those living in rural areas can be well hidden and rural pride can exacerbate the problem as it prevents them accessing services they are entitled to or that could help them because they feel they are "not for them"'.<sup>24</sup>*

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<sup>19</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 20

<sup>20</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 21

<sup>21</sup> ACRE, 2014: 2

<sup>22</sup> Commission for Rural Communities, 2012: 4

<sup>23</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 4

<sup>24</sup> The Young Foundation for Carnegie UK Trust, 2007, *Mapping Rural Needs*, cited in Leisure Futures, 2011: 12

The CRC highlights that the invisible nature of disadvantaged rural young people makes it easy for their needs to be overlooked in terms of funding allocations: 'This could leave young people in rural areas under-served, and result in a vacuum in the understanding of the issues being faced by young people living in rural areas.'<sup>25</sup>

#### **iv. Education, Employment and Training**

Living in a rural area presents barriers to young people's educational attainment and subsequent employment. DEFRA's 2014 Statistical Review of Rural England highlights that since 2010/11 the proportion of pupils at rural schools achieving 5 or more A\* -C grades has been lower compared with those attending schools in urban areas since 2010/11 with the gap widening every year.<sup>26</sup>

Young people participating in Wren Music's activities in Devon perceived they had a more limited choice in courses and options when it came to GCSE and A Levels than their urban counterparts (in particular, participants noted having to travel to Exeter to undertake the International Baccalaureate).

Numbers of young people in rural areas (aged 16-24) not in education, employment or training (NEET) have increased from 9.4% to 12.9% between 2008 and 2012. The Commission for Rural Communities stated that 'this is a significant rural issue: whilst the proportion of young people NEET is higher in urban areas, the speed at which levels have increased has been greater in rural areas.'<sup>27</sup>

In terms of work, for those young people who do remain in rural areas rather than moving away, they are 'more likely to be in low paid work, insecure employment or working within smaller firms than their urban counterparts.' Access to quality and impartial careers advice can also act as a barrier.<sup>28</sup>

#### **v. Social isolation**

Living in a rural area can mean that young people are socially isolated, even when they do have opportunities to interact with peers within formal education settings. This is due to a lack of external social opportunities in the first instance and transport and cost barriers presented by those few opportunities that do exist.

*Young people growing up in rural areas have particularly limited access to services and out of school social opportunities.<sup>29</sup>*

Being at home in a sparsely populated area can be very isolating; this lack of contact with friends, neighbours and relatives and a curtailed ability to share

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<sup>25</sup> Commission for Rural Communities, 2012: 9

<sup>26</sup> DEFRA, 2014: 108

<sup>27</sup> Commission for Rural Communities, 2012: 3

<sup>28</sup> Commission for Rural Communities, 2012: 6

<sup>29</sup> Matarasso, 2005: 17

common experiences can mean that children and young people miss out on developing important social skills and friendships.

*There aren't as many things outside of school, you don't get sports clubs, music clubs out of school other than RAM Jam.*

RAM Jam participant

Ways for young people to socialise with peers have changed and developed rapidly over recent years with the advent of mobile telephones and online social networking, and this can make a positive difference for those in rural areas who may have fewer face-to-face social opportunities in enabling them to connect with their peers. However rural areas of England often have poorer broadband and mobile phone signal compared to urban areas, affecting access to social opportunities and services:<sup>30</sup>

*This impacts greatly on young people as most (over 93%) use internet or mobiles to arrange their social activities, as well as their training and vocational opportunities.<sup>31</sup>*

Several young respondents to NYMAZ's *Young people and music in rural North Yorkshire* (2014) survey said that they experience poor internet signal in their local area, and that this affected them in some way:

*Very slow – limited streaming.*

Male participant from Leyburn, age 15

*Takes ages to get on email and You Tube.*

Male participant from Leyburn, age 15

*Communicating is sometimes difficult.*

Male participant from Thirsk, age 19

*Often messages won't send on my phone, and the Internet on my computer won't load.*

Female participant from Leyburn, age 14

Children and young people in rural areas have fewer positive young role models, caused by the outward migration of young people and through social isolation can be more susceptible to depression and mental illness.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Average broadband speeds in rural areas are considerably lower than speeds in urban areas. In 2012 the average broadband speed in sparse hamlets & isolated dwellings was 4.4 Mbit/s compared with 14.8 Mbit/s in less sparse urban areas. DEFRA, 2014: 69

<sup>31</sup> Momentum, 2010: 1

<sup>32</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 15. For a small proportion of young people, such as those with special educational needs and disabilities and those who speak English as a second language, this can be exacerbated. Momentum, 2010: 16

*They probably don't see a lot of people making lives for themselves around them, they see everyone moving away. People going to University just disappear out of their lives.*

Richard Ormrod, Music leader, RAM Jam

## **vi. Attitudes to diversity and difference**

Growing up in sparsely populated areas can mean that children and young people have relatively little interaction with people from different ethnic backgrounds, people with additional needs or LGBT (lesbian, gay bisexual and transgender) residents.

This can result in a lack of understanding and awareness of difference, resulting in negative attitudes towards diversity from children and young people, whilst also having an isolating effect on people from these communities:<sup>33</sup>

*New arrivals to rural areas in the UK from black and minority ethnic communities can experience profound feelings of isolation whether as a result of lack of English language skills, financial hardship or negative attitudes shown by people in their new communities with different socio-cultural customs.<sup>34</sup>*

Other factors which impact on children's life chances in rural areas include changes in rural economies (such as mechanisation of farming, increased tourism), low income and fuel poverty.

The cumulative effect of these life challenges is that children and young people who are rurally isolated experience a range of problems. They can find it harder to meet and make new friends, build positive relationships with adults and peers, lack confidence in their own abilities, be less resilient, find it harder to imagine what they may like to do with their lives, be constrained by lack of exposure to new experiences and different world views and be less likely to find employment where they grow up. Richard Ormrod summed up some of these social problems when he spoke about the character of some of the young participants that he works with:

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<sup>33</sup> Momentum, 2010: 1 and Leisure Futures, 2011: 16

<sup>34</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 23

*You do get some quite mature, shy children, they don't get the same kind of social friction that children in built up areas do. You get lots of smart, intelligent kids, but not loud kids. You really have to encourage them to put themselves forward. I wonder where they are going to find their place later on, are they going to get a real shock when they move into somewhere more metropolitan?*

Richard Ormrod, Music Leader, RAM Jam





## 6. Benefits of participatory music for children and young people living in rural areas

In what ways can the effects of rural isolation be mitigated for children and young people? A survey conducted by the Big Lottery Fund of its grantees<sup>35</sup>, found that project leaders found the following types of project most effective in reducing rural isolation (across all age groups):

1. Increasing contact with others
2. Improvement to local services
3. Transport support
4. Building capacity of rural voluntary and community organisations (VCOs)
5. Increasing access to IT/internet
6. Employment support

The Commission for Rural Communities also noted that 'Good quality youth work can make a big difference to the lives and future employability of young people in rural areas' (2012, p. 8).

Participation in the arts can play a significant role in enhancing and improving the lives of people in rural areas, as Matarasso highlighted in a 2005 Arts Council England publication, whilst also reinforcing the areas described by the Big Lottery Fund above:

*The arts are also strengthening voluntary organisations, supporting community development...they are bringing people together in community events and reducing isolation...the arts are at the heart of rural communities' future.*<sup>36</sup>

Matarasso goes on to describe why the arts can be so powerful in helping those in rural areas understand and reflect their experiences:

*The arts are how people imagine and express themselves. As rural communities adjust to new ways of life, artists have a vital role in reflecting on the changes, and in responding to them with equally new ideas...Artists create symbols, metaphors and experiences that open hearts and minds, and focus questions, debate and action. Above all, art creates opportunities for people to articulate and define their own lives – to be the subject, not only the object, of change.*<sup>37</sup>

The report also highlights ways in which the arts are contributing to the rural economy and the regeneration of rural market towns, and well as combating social isolation and improving attitudes to difference:

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<sup>35</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 62

<sup>36</sup> Matarasso, 2005: 6

<sup>37</sup> Matarasso, 2005: 6

*The changing character of rural communities can leave...residents feeling isolated...The arts are an enjoyable way for people to work together on projects and strengthen a sense of community...They help people meet and can span divides between age, background and interests<sup>38</sup>*

Matarasso also draws attention to the work of organisations such as Connecting Youth Culture in North Yorkshire, which provides 'vital creative and social opportunities' for young people growing up in rural areas (2005, p. 7).

Existing research and evidence collected by the National Foundation for Youth Music, NYMAZ and other organisations working in the sector suggests that within the arts, participatory music in particular can play a role in contributing to positive outcomes for children and young people living in rural areas.<sup>39</sup>

In terms of the outcomes observed and recorded by case study organisations amongst the children and young people they are working with through participatory music activities, we have grouped these within outcome areas used by the National Foundation for Youth Music when monitoring the impact of their grantees' work: Musical outcomes, Personal outcomes and Social outcomes. We recognise that often these outcome areas can be linked, and overlap one another.

The activities we visited as case studies were all non-formal, inclusive projects (i.e. delivered outside of formal education settings and time), and were working with young participants through a breadth of musical genres and approaches including folk, jazz and improvisation, DJ-ing, musical theatre, brass bands and rock and pop music. In all cases the young people were working alongside a professional music leader/s, often supported by other staff members from the organisation, youth workers or volunteers. The case studies are reproduced in full at the end of this report and describe the delivery approaches and activities from the sessions observed.

Of central importance is that the organisations visited are providing opportunities and new experiences that would not otherwise be available or accessible for children and young people in rural areas, something confirmed by Youth Music's own findings:

*[Grant holders] demonstrated that local music-making opportunities were patchy or non-existent and that in-school provision was often very limited (and being further reduced) in the rural areas targeted...all ten projects reported that they have been successful in*

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<sup>38</sup> Matarasso, 2005: 17

<sup>39</sup> For a literature review of musical, personal and social outcomes in non-formal music-making, see Lonie, 2013: 5-7

*plugging this gap.<sup>40</sup>*

*For many participants, provision funded by Youth Music represents the first contact they have with music-making outside an academic environment. One rurally isolated project found that for 84% of participants this was the first time they had taken part in music-making outside school.<sup>41</sup>*

### **a. Musical outcomes**

Participants, music leaders and project managers could identify multiple musical benefits arising from their involvement in case study activity, ranging from the development of individual instrumental technique to skills achieved through playing in an ensemble, such as better listening.

Specific outcomes recognised included:

#### ***Improved instrumental and vocal technique***

This covered children both learning new musical instruments and their progression in learning and practicing new techniques on instruments they already played. At one organisation we observed young music leaders delivering a physical and vocal warm up which explored the vocal range and techniques.

*It's good practice for how to play your instrument.*

*You can be inspired to learn different instruments, like I've started to learn bass guitar.*

RAM Jam participants

Participants engaging in formal music education could identify a knock-on benefit from their involvement in non-formal activity in terms of their progress in ABRSM exams:

*I have progressed through my grades really quickly and am now grade 5 working on 6.*

Survey respondent

#### ***Increased knowledge of musical concepts***

In visiting case study organisations we observed music leaders introducing young participants to a range of musical concepts such as pitch, rhythm and tempo, as well as explaining any specialist vocabulary such as 'vamp' and 'groove' (RAM Jam).

*It has helped me a lot with my sense of rhythm.*

RAM Jam participant

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<sup>40</sup> Bray, 2013: 62

<sup>41</sup> National Foundation for Youth Music, 2014, *Learning Report 2013-14*: 13-14

### **Composition, arranging and improvisation skills**

Encouraging creativity through devising original music and arranging existing works was a common feature of much of the work we visited. For example at The Music Pool we observed a group of young women, many of whom were playing guitars, devising a song – working on lyrics and arranging the guitar parts so that there was a range of textures and differentiated parts for young people of different abilities.

*The best thing about being involved is that I can arrange music.*

Survey respondent

*I feel less embarrassed about improvising, because I'm more confident.*

RAM Jam participant

One young person from B Sharp also commented that the rural nature of their local area provided an inspiration for writing musical material.

### **Increased understanding of different musical genres**

As young people in mono-cultural rural areas can often lack exposure to diversity, music is a valuable way for them to learn about different cultures through exploring new genres:

*It's helped with my musical awareness of different styles*

*I've learnt a lot more types of music than I already knew.*

RAM Jam participants

*I have learnt more about jazz.*

Survey respondent

### **Developing skills in music recording and production**

Many projects that we learnt about, such as those run by Remarkable Theatre in Bridlington included a recording aspect, or allowed participants to learn new skills in music technology and production. These skills and experiences were clearly highly valued by participants.

*I am a lot more confident in areas of music technology that I had no clue about before.*

Survey respondent

*The most enjoyable thing about being involved in the project has been volunteering as a sound engineer at festivals, as well as a day spent in a recording studio*

Survey respondent

### **Increased ensemble and performance skills**

Playing in a group and having access to live performance opportunities was an attraction for some participants:

*I took part because I wanted to work towards playing in a concert.*

Survey respondent

Wren Music also reported that through their work young people were able to access wider live music opportunities, such as tours and gigs.

### **b. Personal outcomes**

Personal outcomes reported by case study organisations and by other Youth Music grantees included:

#### **Improved sense of emotional wellbeing**

The ability of music to lift people's mood, to comfort and to calm (and also to stimulate) is well documented, and enjoyment and happiness were often quoted by participants engaging in activity.

In particular, one SoundWave teenage participant told us how concentrating on making his own music helps to calm him down if he's angry or upset.

*It gets me out of the house, makes me happier.*

Survey respondent

*It's really fun, so that's good, if you're bored you could come.*

RAM Jam participant

*Participants have improved confidence, happiness, and can give compliments.*

Marilyn Tucker, CEO, Wren Music

#### **Improved confidence and self-efficacy**

90% of projects working in predominantly rural areas analysed in Youth Music's *Up Hill and Down Dale* report said that improved confidence and self-esteem were a key outcome, though Bray points out that this is a common outcome for all projects supported by Youth Music, not just in rural areas.<sup>42</sup>

*I've gained confidence through being involved in this activity.*

Survey respondent

Both Marilyn Tucker of Wren Music and Rob Strawson of The Music Pool noted that their young participants had gained in self-confidence and self-esteem. Young people were also seen to have greater belief in their ability to achieve things, or overcome obstacles:

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<sup>42</sup> Bray, 2013: 64

*If I hadn't done B Sharp I would never, ever  
have sung a solo, but this has given me something  
to aim for, and hope.*

B Sharp participant

Dave Roberts from SoundWave describes one of the ways that music leaders nurture confidence in the disaffected teenagers they work with in Cumbria:

*They can work on their own with headphones if they're  
scared of working in a group right away, or they can join  
in discreetly by using a Wii controller to make small  
changes to the music, and still 'look cool' to their mates.*

Dave Roberts, Programme Manager, SoundWave

### **Communication skills**

Rob Strawson also reported improved communication skills amongst participants and the ability to take turns and share. Jane Staffieri echoed that Cymaz Music also saw their projects bring about a positive impact in terms of improved communication and social interaction between young people.

### **Transferable skills**

Young people noted transferable organisational and leadership skills developed during music programmes that would come in useful in other areas of their lives. Other Youth Music grant holders working in rural areas also identified transferable skills such as team-working and computing being gained by young participants.<sup>43</sup>

*I feel I can lead and organise events on my own.*

Survey respondent

### **Gaining accreditation**

Organisations such as Wren Music and The Music Pool reported that through involvement in their music activities, participants had been able to work towards gaining the Silver or Gold Arts Award.<sup>44</sup> This arts-based qualification managed by Trinity College London in association with Arts Council England can prove valuable accreditation for young people in rural areas who face barriers to accessing education or in areas with lower than average attainment.

### **Raising awareness and aspirations of career options within the creative industries**

Helping participants to recognise employment opportunities, particularly in relation to music and the wider creative industries, is a recurring outcome for many case study organisations and youth music grant holders working in rural areas:

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<sup>43</sup> Bray, 2013: 64

<sup>44</sup> <http://artsaward.org.uk/>

*Inviting music industry professionals to lead workshops and share advice was highly valued by the participants, with several identifying new career paths and plans to enable them to achieve these ambitions.<sup>45</sup>*

This outcome has significant potential to improve the life chances of young people in rural areas, who may struggle to identify, or have limited access to, training and employment options.

NYMAZ has worked with Arts Council Bridge Organisation CapeUK and the North Yorkshire Music Education Hub to organise events highlighting career opportunities and progression routes within the arts sector, recognising the significant contribution that the growing creative industries sector makes to the rural economy in North Yorkshire.

The young people that SoundWave works with in Cumbria perceive limited career options for themselves, with many aspiring to jobs at the Sellafield nuclear plant nearby, and high youth unemployment in some areas.

SoundWave finds it necessary to educate parents and schools about the potential for a sustainable career in the arts, having experienced young people with a real flair for music being discouraged to take it any further by adults.

Part of SoundWave's programme involves providing training opportunities for NEETs which demonstrate the options for a career in music. One young man who started working with SoundWave as a NEET is now on an 'Aspiring Leaders Programme', with SoundWave as the host organisation, working towards a BSc degree in Social Enterprise Leadership from the University of Cumbria.

*Being involved in the work of B Sharp has raised the musical aspirations of the young people involved, given them a drive and made them think: 'I want to do that'.*

Fran Williams, Director, B Sharp

### **c. Social outcomes**

#### ***Making new friends***

Case study organisations reported in almost all cases that activities had enabled participants to make new friends with like-minded individuals, acquire social skills and negotiate group dynamics – something that young people in rural areas can struggle to do outside of formal education settings due to the large distances and transport barriers involved.

*It's a good way to make friends, people you wouldn't know through school.*

RAM Jam participant

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<sup>45</sup> Bray, 2013: 62

*The most enjoyable aspect is that it's sociable.*

Survey respondent

*When you're making music you can be in your bedroom on your own, but you don't necessarily have the opportunity to come together to make music with others. Running these projects gives young people that opportunity.*

Mark Howley, Remarkable Theatre

*It's an informal social gathering, so they've got to work out their own social relationships. Some of them are very quiet...There's all kinds of aspects of working with people, playing with people, being with people, relying on other people.*

Richard Ormrod, Music Leader, RAM Jam

This tallies with the National Foundation for Youth Music's own findings from analysed final reports for projects they supported which ended in 2012-13, where at least 50% of participants were listed as rurally isolated: which found that '50% of projects reported that young people benefitted from opportunities to form friendships and expand their social networks'.<sup>46</sup>

As already described, the ability of music activities in different genres to enable young people to experience new cultural opportunities and learn about different cultures is also valuable given the often mono-cultural make-up of some rural areas, facilitating a more positive attitude towards difference and diversity.

*They become more culturally aware – of their own culture and of other cultures – and feel a sense of community, and reconnect with the art of 'people being with people', especially during the residential courses.*

Marilyn Tucker, CEO, Wren Music

### **Community cohesion and perception of young people**

The impact of young people's engagement in participatory music can also be seen to have wider social benefits in terms of community cohesion, creating a greater sense of social awareness through cooperative making music alongside peers and changing perceptions of young people within the community:

*Projects reported that performance events were central to 'bringing people together'...In addition to showcasing young people's musical talent, workshops and performance events were instrumental in helping to change perceptions of young people within their local community.<sup>47</sup>*

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<sup>46</sup> Bray, 2013: 62-63

<sup>47</sup> Bray, 2013: 64



Bray also found in Youth Music's 2012-13 Impact Report that 70% of projects analysed reported on the positive impact that they had on improving community cohesion and strengthening relationships between parent and child.<sup>48</sup>

### **Positive role models**

Case study organisations also demonstrated how they were able to mitigate against some of the effects of the outward migration of young people from rural areas by providing participants with positive young role models. Mark Howley of Remarkable Theatre described how participants were 'in awe' of a drummer who joined their project. One current participant's brother joined B Sharp at the age of 10 and has gone to study at Goldsmiths, University of London, and comes back to speak to the current cohort of young musicians and also to teachers and schools involved in B Sharp's work.



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<sup>48</sup> Bray, 2013: 62-63

## 7. Why music?

Many of the personal and social outcomes cited above could be seen as the benefits of any form of participation more generally. In undertaking this research we have reflected on why music is deemed to be different, or particularly effective, in bringing about these benefits and outcomes for children and young people compared with other art forms or indeed any other participatory act that brings people together, such as sporting activities.

Anthony Everitt sums this up wonderfully in his influential survey of participatory music for the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, *Joining In* (1997):

*Cultural participation of any kind is acknowledged as a basic human right. But participation in music stands in a class of its own: it should not be ranked alongside (say) horse-racing or bingo; scientific and educational research has made it clear that it speaks to human beings' profoundest impulses; more than words, it is the very language of the brain, the seat of intellect, emotion and the control of physical behaviour. It is the aesthetic analogue of the electrochemical firings of millions of neurones inside our skulls.<sup>49</sup>*

Everitt points to scientific investigation showing that music and our responses to music are deeply rooted in the genetic and neural make up of our brains, as well highlighting music's use in alleviating pain and anxiety and as a social activity:

*It is a means by which a social animal is able not simply to socialise at leisure, but to embody its sense of shared community in public ceremony. Furthermore, the institutional infrastructure which enables music-making to take place – the clubs, societies and associations – makes a significant contribution to the contemporary polity and is a valuable support for the maintenance of a thriving and balanced civil society.<sup>50</sup>*

This social aspect is of particular relevance in rural areas where populations are in flux through inward and outward migration and where social isolation can be prevalent.

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<sup>49</sup> Everitt, 1997: 31

<sup>50</sup> Everitt, 1997: 31

We asked our case study organisations to reflect on the reasons that music might be particularly useful at engaging children and young people in a rural area, and the specific benefits that music could bring. Music leaders and project managers reported a variety of reasons, including the non-competitive nature of music,<sup>51</sup> its ability to foster individual and collective creativity, and its transience when played live:

*In other things you tend to make something and you can examine it, edit it or disclaim it. Once you've played something musically you have to deal with what you've done straightaway, there's no walking away from it. I think that can be quite scary for shy children, it can be quite empowering in quite a giddy way. Eric Dolphy [American saxophonist] said that When you hear music, after it's over, it's gone in the air, you can never capture it again'.*

Richard Ormrod, Music Leader, RAM Jam

Others drew attention to the universal enjoyment and appreciation of some kind of music amongst almost all young people, coupled with an inclusive community music approach as being key to engagement:

*The environment in a music workshop, where everyone is wearing the same hat, and they're all there because they like music, it's a different vibe altogether from the normal environment. Often people's defences come down.*

Dave Roberts, Music Leader, SoundWave

This is echoed by the young participants who attended the SoundWave session we observed. They report that they enjoy the DJing workshops they attend because they listen to music at home, so it doesn't feel like work, even though it helps them to concentrate.

*[Music] has currency with young people... a child or a young person might have all sorts of things going on with their lives but often a community music approach works. It's not just about music but about the style of teaching, group dynamics, professional relationships that are formed.*

Jane Staffieri, Co-Director, Cymaz Music

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<sup>51</sup> We recognise that music is often used in competitive contexts, and that musicians may often make value judgements about their own and other's abilities, but music in itself is not competitive and in the non-formal settings that we visited it was not used as a competitive activity.

## 8. The broader landscape

The activity and organisations researched during this project are supported through a mix of funding sources, with the main funder being the National Foundation for Youth Music (mainly through Youth Music's strategic investment *Musical Inclusion* module).

Other sources of funding complementing this include: Arts Council England, Trusts and Foundations, individual giving, Local Authorities, commissions from Music Education Hubs (Department for Education monies distributed by Arts Council England) and affordable participant subscriptions. Many activities also rely on in-kind support from partner organisations such as Youth Services, further education institutions, statutory services and referral agencies.

The National Foundation for Youth Music's most recent Impact Report shows that in 2013-14 the funder invested £9.2 million in 165 organisations by awarding 182 grants. The report also reveals that children experiencing rural isolation continued to be the most frequent category of challenging circumstances reported by Youth Music's grant holders, at 22.4% of participants.<sup>52</sup> This is an increasing trend: Youth Music's 2012-13 Impact Report noted grant holders reported 18.1% of the children and young people participating in their activities were experiencing rural isolation, whereas their 2011-12 Impact Report gave a figure of 16%.<sup>53</sup>

All of these figures seem unexpectedly large, especially given what we know both about the smaller proportion of children and young people living in rural areas compared with urban ones, and taking into account that not all those living in rural areas can necessarily be said to be suffering from the effects of rural isolation. It may be the case that some Youth Music grant holders are using the challenging circumstances category 'rural isolation' in their reporting to refer to any child or young person living in a rural area participating in their activities, without a clear definition of the term.

Bray notes in Youth Music's 2012-13 Impact Report that for many projects supported by Youth Music, reducing rural isolation is not an explicit aim: 'Nevertheless it is recognised by those responsible for these projects as an important outcome for the young people they work with.'<sup>54</sup>

Much of the activity covered by this report is also delivered under the umbrella of Music Education Hubs (and in some cases nationally Youth Music Musical Inclusion grant holders are also lead organisations for their local Music Education Hubs). Music Education Hubs were created by the Department for Music Education in response to the National Plan for Music Education (2011) to provide access, opportunities and excellence in music education for all children and young people, and to bring together all formal and non-formal music education providers within a geographic area.

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<sup>52</sup> National Foundation for Youth Music, 2014, *Impact Report 2013-14*: 6-7

<sup>53</sup> National Foundation for Youth Music, 2013: 28; National Foundation for Youth Music, 2012: 64

<sup>54</sup> Bray, 2013: 62

A total of 123 Music Education Hubs were established and started work in 2012. Data from Music Education Hubs in 2013 has been submitted to Arts Council England and analysed by the National Foundation for Educational Research. Of the total Music Education Hubs income of over £187 million in the 2012-13 financial year, income from the Department for Education grant (33.5%) and schools (31.4%) accounted for nearly two-thirds of hubs' total income overall.<sup>55</sup>

Music Education Hub statistics offer, amongst other key performance indicators, numbers of children and young people engaging in whole class ensemble tuition within school settings and numbers engaging in ensembles led either by the Hub or by schools. Data shows that 618,952 children and young people regularly attended at least one school- or hub-led instrumental ensemble or choir,<sup>56</sup> but although this figure is broken down to show the proportion of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and those receiving subsidies, data is not available as to the proportion of participants living in rural areas, or the level of activities supported in rural areas. It can be argued that the types of data requested of Music Education Hubs by Arts Council England does not fully capture the types of non-formal participatory music activity described in this report or its impact on those living in rural England.

Youth Music notes that 'While there have been some advances in the activity and outcomes of Music Education Hubs - some working very strategically and inclusively with [Youth Music] Musical Inclusion grant holders providing expertise and services - the Hub data returns are still showing below-average participation of children from poorer backgrounds, and limited access to provision beyond traditional instrumental tuition' (Youth Music Impact Report 2013-14, p. 19).

A recent review of the National Foundation for Youth Music commissioned by Arts Council England noted areas of overlap between ACE and Youth Music and called for greater strategic alignment between the two funders, noting that:

*Young people's charities face public funding cuts of almost £405m from 2011/12 to 2015/16 and the arts have been disproportionately hit by local authority cuts. The beneficial personal, social and economic outcomes of a high quality, universally available, music education make it all the more imperative that the increasingly scarce funding is used purposefully and strategically.<sup>57</sup>*

The report also recommends that 'Youth Music's expertise is deployed to maximum effect in supporting the Music Education Hubs to grow into their role' (p. 4).

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<sup>55</sup> NFER, 2014: 7-8

<sup>56</sup> NFER, 2014: 6

<sup>57</sup> Avis & Jobson, 2014: 11

## 9. Challenges to delivery

Organisations delivering non-formal participatory music activities with children and young people in rural areas reported a number of challenges affecting their delivery of such activities as follows, with some factors interlocking:

### i. Transport

Transport for participants to attend participatory music activities and for music leaders to travel to deliver them remains a constant challenge for organisations, presenting logistical, time and financial barriers.

*Over half the projects analysed reported that transport limitations were a key challenge in delivering their project in a rural area. A lack of transport, or the need to travel substantial distances was cited as a problem for practitioners (travelling to rural areas from an urban base) and also participants and their families (trying to access provision outside of their rural locality).<sup>58</sup>*

A small survey of young people engaging in participatory music activities in North Yorkshire found that on average participants travelled 15.5 miles to attend music sessions.<sup>59</sup>

At RAM Jam in the Yorkshire Dales, organisers report that one participant has progressed to a musical level where he is ready to join the Dales Jam adult group, but his parents aren't able to transport him there due to childcare arrangements for his siblings. Another participant describes a complicated weekly transport arrangement between his school, mother's work and RAM Jam which takes a good deal of forward planning and a round trip of approximately 50 miles to attend each session.

Participants are often reliant on parents, carers and other relatives to transport them to music activities, which can mean that those in challenging circumstances who aren't supported by their families to engage with such activities can miss out.

SoundWave notes that it is perfectly normal for their practitioners to travel 60 miles to deliver an hour-long workshop, which could mean a half-day or more of work even before planning is taken into account. This limits the amount of work the organisation can take on, both in terms of Music Leader fees, and how much delivery can be achieved by a small number of associate musicians in the time available. However, they find it hard to convince some funders to support transport costs:

*We find when applying for funds that nobody wants to fund transport...when funders look at our projects, they don't understand that if you miss the bus on Friday, that's it*

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<sup>58</sup> Bray, 2013: 60

<sup>59</sup> NYMAZ, 2014, *Young people and music in rural North Yorkshire survey*

*till Monday! One lad occasionally turns up, depending on whether his father can drop him off on the back of a tractor. We have to provide transport for participants; it's a massive part of what we do. We understand they want their money to pay for the 'shiny bit'. But as far as we're concerned, there should be no shame in funding the part that makes the shiny bit happen.*

Dave Roberts, Programme Leader, SoundWave

## ii. Location and venues

Organisations differ in their approaches to locating activities in an attempt to ensure ease of access for participants; some find that centralised provision in a larger town works well and so subsidise participants' travel costs to get there and back. However in some larger geographic areas there is no convenient central location that all participants can easily access. This is certainly the case in North Yorkshire where, although there is a central corridor to the county with towns such as Northallerton and Thirsk situated close to the A1(M), young people from the most easterly point of the county in Scarborough or Whitby and those from the most westerly point in Ingleton would still have to travel significant distances of between 40 to 60 miles to access provision in these 'central' locations.

Other organisations choose to deliver outreach activities in smaller villages for ease of access, sometimes using mobile van facilities.<sup>60</sup> This approach can have knock on effects in terms of small numbers of participants recruited and not being able to run activities with the same frequency as in one central venue.

*We can't deliver to very rurally isolated places, so we set up in market towns... It's not doing very much for the kids who can't get a lift... I can't solve rural transport.*

Marilyn Tucker, CEO, Wren Music

Apart from finding convenient geographic locations from which to deliver activities, access to suitable spaces for participatory music can be challenging in rural areas, as Matarasso notes when discussing rural arts in general: *'The facilities tend to be multi-purpose or borrowed. The practical obstacles to putting it on, and seeing it, are often much greater.'*<sup>61</sup> Relying on community spaces in rural areas such as village halls, churches and schools can present difficulties in terms of suitability for participatory music (such as complaints from residents of excessive noise levels, or not having separate spaces within a venue to break into small for groups to practice), lack of equipment and poor kitchen and toilet facilities. In some cases venue choice can affect whether or not participants attend as to how welcome they feel, as the The Music Pool found for their Livewire project:

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<sup>60</sup> Bray, 2013: 60-61

<sup>61</sup> Matarasso, 2005: 8

*Very little of the work for young people happens in the Arts Centre as it is a space that some people won't access – it's not their space. The Music Pool works to find spaces that are psychologically accessible.*

Rob Strawson, Artistic Director, The Music Pool

### iii. Workforce

Issues with access to appropriately-skilled music leaders can often arise, as Youth Music notes: 'A number of projects reported that professionals have been recruited from further afield due to a shortage of local music leaders in rural localities.'<sup>62</sup> This was confirmed by some case study organisations.

Lack of specialist music leaders often means that choice is limited in rural areas – young people may be confined to learning certain instruments by the availability of tutors in the local area, or there may be no ensembles accessible to them which specialise in different musical genres – which in turn can hamper their further musical progression compared to their urban counterparts.

Increased travel costs for practitioners can make activities seem low value for money and affect frequency of delivery within a limited budget. It also makes it more likely that activities cannot be sustained.



Cymaz Music reported that for one of their Musical Inclusion projects in Cornwall they had agreed to invest in a music leader for some community music activity in a particular rural location, but stipulated that the project could only continue if someone from the local community was willing to put in

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<sup>62</sup> Bray, 2013: 60



the time to train as an emerging music leader, alongside the Cymaz Music music leader. This meant that when the funding ceased, there was a legacy for the work.

Music leaders' skill, knowledge and understanding of young people's point of view are especially key considerations for organisations working in rural areas seeking to bring about varied outcomes for isolated young people:

*Addressing socio-personal issues requires music leaders in particular to be the best they can musically, both individually and collectively.<sup>63</sup>*

#### **iv. Cost and sustainability**

Sustainability remains an issue for many music activities in rural areas. Organisations reported that short-term funding agreements can create a sense of activities being 'parachuted' in to particular communities for a brief period of time, creating a vacuum and sense of loss when they had concluded and leaving areas with no more opportunities than previously. This sense of valuable cultural engagements in rural areas being truly 'gone in the air' when the funding stops, resonates with Eric Dolphy's famous quote (p.3) giving this report its title.

*Finite funding means targeting resources whilst managing expectations of the sustainability of projects.*

Jane Staffieri, Co-Director, Cymaz Music

In some cases there may be a case for not sustaining activities, for example if a particular issue has deemed to be addressed through activity in an area, or if the activity has not fulfilled its intended purpose or been shown to be beneficial in other ways.

To mitigate against this, The Music Pool decided for their Livewire project, to have sustained provision in the centre of the county, rather than having pockets of short term work in market towns which create a 'sense of loss' at the end of the 6 weeks. Before projects there are taster sessions or recruitment sessions to attract participants. Other organisations reported ensuring sustainability through working with local partners and investing in local workforce development to ensure skills and resources were left in communities as a legacy from the project.

Organisations claim that some funders too often look at value for money as cost-per-head. This means activities in rural settings can be seen as offering poor value for money as there has to be a much higher cost-per-head for the same quality and quantity of work (Musical Inclusion Gathering 3, Rurality discussion).

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<sup>63</sup> Deane *et al.*, 2014: 18

## **v. Recruitment and signposting**

Youth Music's analysis shows that '50% of projects reported they had challenges with recruiting participants, professionals and volunteers in a rural setting...several reports noted that young people were unaware of existing activities that were happening on their doorstep.'<sup>64</sup>

Bray argues that organisations need to understand how young people find out about opportunities in their area: 'Social media is regularly cited as a key resource and the majority of projects are using Facebook and/or Twitter to promote sessions and share information.'<sup>65</sup>

However, if children and young people are living in a rural area with poor broadband and mobile phone signal, this could create barriers to them finding out about opportunities using these popular online methods: 'Communicating is sometimes difficult.'<sup>66</sup>

The case study organisations consulted for this project did not draw attention to participant recruitment issues, though one project did find that participants struggled to commit longer term to their sessions. This would suggest that in these cases projects have been effectively targeted and delivered in areas where there is a genuine need and desire to engage in such activities.

## **vi. Progression**

Linked to signposting, many participants and organisation reported that it was difficult to access other music-making opportunities either through lack of awareness of opportunities, limited opportunities within easy access or by other organisations being unwilling to pass on information to children and young people. Cymaz Music commented on the challenge of trying to coax formal education settings to appreciate the less formal approach of Cymaz Music's music activities and to understand the values and the benefits to the students.

It is clear that talented young musicians in rural areas who enjoy family support go to considerable lengths to access progression opportunities. One young person attending RAM Jam reported that they also attend the Westmorland Youth Orchestra, where rehearsals are held in Kendal, some 30 miles away from Settle. Some RAM Jam participants are fortunate in benefitting both from schools with strong music provision and from the financial, transport and moral support of their parents/carers, but that other easily accessed out-of-school music opportunities are few and far between.

For another RAM Jam participant, there were no obvious progression opportunities in sight, with her grandmother commenting that the group provides a vital opportunity to play in an ensemble context, as she's not able to access instrumental tuition at her small rural school – being the only flautist

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<sup>64</sup> Bray, 2013: 61

<sup>65</sup> Bray, 2013: 61

<sup>66</sup> Respondent, NYMAZ, 2014, *Young People and music in rural North Yorkshire survey*

at the school it was not seen as economically viable for the school to buy in the Music Service for lessons. Similarly, in Cornwall, county music ensembles are centralised in Truro, and many parents and young people can't afford – financially or in terms of time – to travel.

Lack of choice is exacerbated in rural areas where there are fewer organisations to offer children and young people a broad palette of cultural activities in different art forms and genres; for example, though North Yorkshire is the largest administrative county in England by area, it only hosts five organisations that have been designated Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations for 2015-18.<sup>67</sup> Although some of these organisations do offer music activities within their programme, none has music as their primary focus.

**vii. Music Education Hub emphasis on formal activities**

The advent of Music Education Hubs as part of the National Plan for Music Education outlined an ambition for all organisations delivering music education activities to work together to coordinate provision in a particular area, both in and outside of formal education.

Recently, there has been a strong emphasis from the Department for Education, Arts Council England and OFSTED on Music Education Hubs focusing their work on supporting music teaching in formal education settings. This, combined with a shift in the National Foundation for Youth Music's funding guidelines which allows grantees to deliver activities within school time, means that there is a risk that out-of-school, non-formal musical opportunities could be side-lined in favour of activity that is easier to organise and deliver within formal education settings.<sup>68</sup>

In areas where rural isolation is prevalent this could mean that young people miss out on the types of out-of-school social opportunities that they most need, contributing to their further isolation, and that the impact of a non-formal, community music approach with these young people is watered down.

**viii. Reduction in youth services**

Several case study organisations reported that they worked in partnership with Local Authority youth support services to deliver activities. Such partnerships benefited projects in terms of providing qualified youth workers to support activity, helping target particular groups of children in challenging circumstances, and providing other in-kind resources such as venues and equipment and existing contexts such as Youth Clubs to work in.

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<sup>67</sup> Chrysalis Arts Development, Crescent Arts, Harrogate Theatre, Rural Arts and Stephen Joseph Theatre.

<sup>68</sup> Previously Youth Music funded activities were only to be delivered in school time with a clear rationale for doing so, such as when working in Pupil Referral Units or Special Schools where the infrastructure of the educational setting would provide significant support for activities.

Recent figures demonstrate that spending by Local Authorities on Youth Services has been cut by 36% in two years, from £1.2bn in 2010-11, to £791m in 2012-13 (though interestingly, Cornwall saw a 20% increase during this same period).<sup>69</sup> The impact of these cuts is keenly felt by youth music organisations:

*There is less youth work infrastructure to work in partnership - so, for example, recruitment through youth clubs and signposting young people has been adversely affected.<sup>70</sup>*

#### **ix. Access to musical instruments**

Both Cymaz Music and B Sharp mentioned that lack of access to musical instruments was a hindrance to their activities. One organisation has limited access to musical instruments, and made an offer to their local Music Education Hub to host an instrument hire base, which wasn't taken up, leaving many disadvantaged young people without access to instruments.

Cymaz Music in Cornwall faces difficulty in accessing a range of instruments, particularly strings and brass, and the costs associated with doing so. They are looking at the feasibility of creating an 'instrument library' along the lines of an existing 'toy library'.



<sup>69</sup> BBC website, 25 March 2014, *Youth services spending down by one-third*

<sup>70</sup> Youth Music grant holder quoted in Reid, Youth Music Network blog, 10 July 2014

## 10. Working towards success

The Big Lottery Fund identified a number of factors, which contributed to the success of their grantees' project interventions in reducing rural isolation. These included:

- Inclusion of a transport element
- Multi-year funding
- Partnership working and involving beneficiaries
- Strong project leadership
- Recognising and supporting volunteers<sup>71</sup>

Many of these factors resonate with the experience of the organisations we spoke to, and we have compiled our own list of common ingredients for making projects more successful when delivering participatory music activities in rural areas or activities, which seek to reduce rural isolation:

### i. Identifying local champions and grassroots partnerships

Key to the success of many music activities in rural areas has been organisations working in partnership with local community grassroots groups and individuals. This ensures that activities are led by the needs of local communities, bolsters participant recruitment, offers in-kind resources such as space and volunteers, and contributes to the future sustainability of activities.

Cymaz Music reported that their work uses a community development model, wherein they find a 'local champion' or activist working in a rurally isolated area to support activities: '[the local champion] knew who to invite and were able to persuade people to get their guitars out of the back of the cupboard' (Jane Staffieri, Co-Director, Cymaz Music).

Similarly in North Yorkshire the RAM Jam project is part of the NYMAZ Musical Inclusion programme and is coordinated on the ground by Dales Jam, an adult community jazz ensemble based in Skipton. The on-the-ground presence of Dales Jam within the small communities of the Yorkshire Dales ensures signposting to the younger group through word-of-mouth:

*One of my family's friends goes to Dales Jam, and she said that I should come as I play musical instruments.*

RAM Jam participants

Similarly both Youth Music and the Big Lottery Fund identify strong local partnerships and networks and 'personality' as key ingredients for success.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 4

<sup>72</sup> Bray, 2013: 62; Leisure Futures, 2011: 4

## ii. Tailoring activities around transport considerations

Although case study organisations acknowledged that it was unrealistic for them to 'fix' issues of transport in rural areas, they gave considerable thought to how travel and transport would impact on their project delivery. Tailoring their activities accordingly around these issues was seen to be of vital importance in successfully engaging young participants:

*When planning a project, questions we ask include do the session times fit with the train times? Can we arrange volunteer drivers?*

Jane Staffieri, Co-Director, Cymaz Music

*We have to provide transport for participants; it's a massive part of what we do.*

Dave Roberts, Programme Leader, SoundWave

*For the most part we run weekly groups on an evening at 5 o'clock so that children can come home from school and be delivered.*

Marilyn Tucker, CEO, Wren Music

## iii. Engaging and involving parents and carers

A common characteristic of some participatory music activities in rural areas is a higher level of parental engagement than in urban contexts. Often this is because of the necessity of families to transport children significant distances to music sessions, but it can add an important and rewarding element to music activity in terms of embedding it within the local community:

*[RAM Jam] isn't just an event in their children's lives, it's actually an event in their [parent/carer] lives, and they're really pleased it's happening, it...I don't think I've ever done something in the middle of Leeds and had four parents turn up 20 minutes early so that they can sit and listen, the pace of life just doesn't allow for that. [In rural areas]they often chat, they've got stuff to tell me about what they've been doing about what their kids have been doing, about concerts they've been to. You get to be a bit more of a focus for cultural discussion.*

Richard Ormrod, Music Leader, RAM Jam

#### **iv. Communicating effectively with young people**

Effective communication is of vital importance for those trying to engage with children and young people in rural areas, in making them aware of music-making opportunities:

*In this model of working, one of the most important aspects of working with rurally isolated young people is communication; to ensure that the young people outside of the city know about the opportunities available to them, whilst being responsive to advocates and activists on the ground who would support projects.*

Rob Strawson, Artistic Director, The Music Pool

#### **v. Investing in workforce development**

As previously discussed, organisations working in rural areas can struggle to access high-quality music leaders, and therefore activities which include a strong local workforce development element are more likely to become sustainable and bring permanent benefits for the community.

Some case study organisations, such as SoundWave, B Sharp and NYMAZ, have invested in young music leader programmes to this effect, although this is in the knowledge that many young people seeking a career in music are likely to leave rural areas for larger conurbations with greater employment opportunities.

#### **vi. Adopting a needs-based approach**

Linked to the ingredient of 'local champions' is that of ensuring that activities and initiatives are 'needs-led', responding to the needs of the area in which they are targeted.

Jane Staffieri of Cymaz Music explains that in Cornwall this includes consulting with and identifying the needs of the community, but also working to the 'strategic needs' including local authority agendas such as community cohesion and Raising Aspiration and Achievement Standards (RAAS).

The Big Lottery Fund identified that in order to facilitate effective interventions, the needs of rurally isolated young people (not just the elderly or those in hardship) must be recognised.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Leisure Futures, 2011: 4

## **vii. Prioritising inclusive, non-formal delivery**

Adopting an inclusive, non-formal, community music approach was also seen to yield results, particularly in engaging with children in challenging circumstances in rural areas, an approach which is fully supported by Youth Music's current funding policy:

*Youth Music believes that true musical inclusion can only happen if there are opportunities for children and young people to be supported as musicians across all genres and styles, by practitioners who understand their needs and worldviews and who are equipped to help them on their individual learning journeys.<sup>74</sup>*

Participants who can see there is no 'hidden agenda' to participatory music activity, and who can identify a clear distinction between project activity and formal education where teaching may appear more didactic, are more likely to engage:

*It works because of the way we run the sessions. We're not a youth organisation or a school, so we're not going to bring out informative leaflets about contraception, drugs or alcohol. Young people are not stupid, and they don't appreciate that kind of approach.*

Dave Roberts, Programme Leader, SoundWave

*Non-formal music-making practice represents a specific way of working which views musical, personal and social outcomes with equal importance, turning its focus to the aspects requiring most attention at any one time for participants to progress.<sup>75</sup>*

## **viii. Securing multi-year funding**

Longer-term funding agreements can have a significant effect on delivery of effective interventions with rural communities, with The Big Lottery Fund identifying multi-year funding agreements and 'continuation funding' as a key ingredient for success (Leisure Futures, 2011, p.4).

As identified by Youth Music, projects 'need to allow more time for recruiting young people and to establish a project in a rural location, ensuring that sufficient groundwork is done to promote the project'. (Bray, 2013, p. 61). This can give organisations the chance to truly embed activities within communities and effect substantial change, rather than concentrating on short-term initiatives.

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<sup>74</sup> National Foundation for Youth Music, 2014, *Learning Report 2013-14*: 6

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*: 29



The National Foundation for Youth Music draws attention to how its funding programme is proving successful in terms of 'establishing opportunities for young people to make friends and widen their own social networks. This can be seen throughout the Musical Inclusion module work which has allowed for investment in rural communities considered to be geographic and cultural 'cold spots' (Bray, p. 63).

Youth Music highlighted in 2013 that in response to Big Lottery Fund recommendations around rural proofing, it was considering introducing a small grants programme (now introduced and operating as Fund A), with a shorter application process, with the aim of 'supporting smaller initiatives and/or organisations with limited capacity' (Bray, 2013, p.65).



## 11. Call to action

We have demonstrated that children and young people living in rural areas can see their life chances and opportunities affected by a number of issues including poor transport links and cost of transport, inward and outward migration, hidden pockets of socio-economic disadvantage, limited access to education, employment and training opportunities, increased likelihood of social isolation through lack of contact with friends, relatives and neighbours, negative attitudes to diversity and difference (both from and towards young people), changing rural economies and poor broadband and mobile phone signal. We have also evidenced that simply living in a rural area does not necessarily mean that children and young people are 'rurally isolated', and that it can be difficult to identify those whose life chances are challenged through a combination of circumstances and barriers.

Children and young people's participation in the arts, and in particular in music, have been proven to bring about numerous benefits which can help to mitigate against the effects of rural isolation. Organisations and young participants spoke about the impact of engaging in participatory music in achieving a breadth of musical, personal and social outcomes.

However a number of challenges exist for those delivering and accessing participatory music activity in rural areas, including transport and travel issues, chosen location and venue space, lack of high quality local workforce, high costs of activities and sustainability, recruitment and signposting of participants, musical progression and changes in Music Education Hub policies.

Organisations are being resourceful in finding ways of working that address some of these challenges, whilst also recognising issues that cannot be 'fixed' by the youth music sector, such as transport policy or quality of broadband connections. This project has identified a set of key ingredients for success for organisations delivering work in rural areas, including identifying and working in partnership with local champions, tailoring activities around transport considerations, parental engagement, effective communication and signposting, commitment to workforce development, adopting a needs-based approach, using an inclusive, non-formal delivery model and having access to long-term funding agreements.

In response to the challenges and good practice found during this research, NYMAZ makes the following policy and practice recommendations, accompanied by our own pledges for action, which are intended to spark discussion and influence the way in which non-formal, inclusive music provision is funded and delivered:

- 1. We call upon Arts Council England and youth music organisations to value and support the role of non-formal, inclusive music provision as part of a rounded music education in rural areas.**

Sidelining such provision in favour of a mainly in-school focused approach implied through the language of recent Government music

education policy risks increasing the prevalence of rural isolation for children and young people in rural parts of England, for whom such out-of-school creative social opportunities are vital. Arts Council England, Bridge Organisations, Music Education Hubs, Local Authorities and Arts and music organisations working in the non-formal sector in rural areas should resist such 'formal creep' of activities.

**Our pledge:** NYMAZ will continue to advocate for and develop non-formal music provision in North Yorkshire within the context of the North Yorkshire Music Hub.

**2. We call upon youth music organisations and Music Education Hubs to invest in workforce development in rural areas and make young people aware of employment opportunities within the creative industries.**

Access to specialist music leaders is still a challenge in many rural areas, and building a pool of skilled and knowledgeable music leaders should be a priority for ensuring sustainability of this work. Given the growth of the creative industries in some rural areas and the valuable role they can play in the rural economy,<sup>76</sup> young people should be encouraged and supported to explore career options within the creative industries. We are already seeing the worthwhile results of investing in young people's music leadership skills, and should use this evidence to counteract the common perception that music does not offer viable career opportunities.

**Our pledge:** NYMAZ will invest in appropriate and relevant professional development opportunities for both experienced and emerging music leaders working in North Yorkshire, ranging from one to one advice to bespoke training workshops and peer mentoring opportunities. NYMAZ will endeavour to roll out the *Creative Industries Unmasked: On Tour* model to further North Yorkshire Districts to raise awareness of employment opportunities in the creative industries.

**3. We call upon youth music organisations and Music Education Hubs to test and invest in appropriate digital technology solutions.**

Delivery organisations should be encouraged to seek out existing good practice, to help combat common issues when working in rural areas such as transport barriers and the high cost of activities.

Few organisations reported using digital technology solutions such as video conferencing to increase their reach and extend the impact of their work in rural areas, though some reported that they were planning to do so (Musical Inclusion Gathering 3 Rurality discussion). There is a strong argument for the employment of such solutions in rural areas within the arts sector:

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<sup>76</sup> In North Yorkshire and York, the creative industries had just over 37% more employees than agriculture in 2008, compared with just under 30% more in 2003. BOP Consulting, 2011: 1

*Artists working in rural areas have been quick to take up new technology, not least as a way of overcoming the problems of rural isolation.<sup>77</sup>*

Added to this, the National Plan for Music Education, setting out the Government's vision and funding arrangements for music education up to 2015, recommended the use of technology to improve music outcomes for all children 'including those in rural areas who cannot access specialist tuition'.<sup>78</sup>

*Compared with those in urban areas, some children in rural schools may have reduced access to a diverse range of music teaching. With the support of hubs, schools [and non-formal settings] may be able to address this through the use of video technology...Video conferencing facilities and software applications that allow users to make voice and video calls over the internet can provide face-to-face access with tutors, other schools and wider music education providers. This can reduce the cost and necessity for travel and can enable more children to access diverse music teaching opportunities.<sup>79</sup>*

Delivery organisations and Music Education Hubs are yet to fully embrace this recommendation, and NYMAZ hopes that its own action research project *Connect: Resound*, which is examining how digital technologies can be used to deliver music education and enrichment activities to children living in rurally isolated areas, funded by the Digital R&D Fund for the Arts, will provide a valuable business model for Music Education Hubs and arts organisations working in rural areas.<sup>80</sup>



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<sup>77</sup> Matarasso, 2005: 19

<sup>78</sup> DfE & DCMS, 2011: 16.

<sup>79</sup> DfE & DCMS, 2011: 39

<sup>80</sup> [www.nymaz.org.uk/connectresound](http://www.nymaz.org.uk/connectresound)

NYMAZ also argues that digital technology solutions should not replace valuable face-to-face interactions, but be used in combination:

*Collectivity can be virtual. This...offers dazzling and universal opportunities for cultural involvement and creative expression. But...the widespread popularity of music-making in the traditional manner among all sectors of the population suggests that many feel the need to balance the potentially solipsistic power of the new media with real sharing by real people in real space.*<sup>81</sup>

**Our pledge:** NYMAZ will promote the use of digital technology solutions to deliver music activities by rolling out learning and business models starting with the *Connect: Resound* Digital R&D Fund for the Arts project, both within its own network of partners and across Music Education Hubs nationally.

**4. We call upon more funders and stakeholders to take account of higher-than-average per unit costs for activities in rural areas, have the confidence to invest in less attractive elements like transport and offer multi-annual funding agreements.**

Major funders of participatory arts and music activities and National Lottery distributors such as Arts Council England, the National Foundation for Youth Music and the Big Lottery Fund already take into account the challenges of delivering activities in rural areas and have taken steps to 'rural-proof' their grant programmes in response to this. We welcome in particular Youth Music's commitment to playing 'an active role in tackling the issue in rural isolation' (Bray, 2013, p. 65).

When recognising the value of participatory music activities for rurally isolated children and young people, funders should acknowledge that supporting less attractive elements such as transport costs can facilitate important, positive outcomes for children and young people and be prepared to support such costs. Offering multi-year funding agreements enables delivery organisations sufficient time to embed projects within rural communities and effect significant change.

**Our pledge:** NYMAZ will advocate for the benefits of supporting non-formal music provision in rural areas and highlight the challenges to delivery through the dissemination of *Gone in the Air*, its findings and Calls for Action to funders and stakeholders nationally.

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<sup>81</sup> Everitt, 2007: 31

**5. We call upon all music leaders and youth music organisations working under the umbrella of Music Education Hubs in rural areas to take responsibility for signposting children, young people and parents/carers to quality musical progression opportunities.**

Participatory music opportunities may be more limited in rural areas compared with urban ones, but too many children and young people are missing out through lack of awareness of opportunities. It is imperative for all practitioners and organisations working within the context of a Music Education Hub to be fully aware of musical progression opportunities in their area across a range of musical genres (or know how to access such information), whether formal or non-formal music-making, through word of mouth, online or printed materials. Lack of joined-up thinking and protectiveness over the progression of young musicians is particularly damaging where such opportunities are already limited in a rural area and is not in keeping with the original vision of Music Education Hubs.

**Our pledge:** NYMAZ will continue to offer an online signposting resource on behalf of the North Yorkshire Music Hub, [www.nymaz.org.uk/discover](http://www.nymaz.org.uk/discover), and will work with the Hub to promote increased signposting across formal and non-formal provision amongst all music leaders.

**6. We call upon youth music organisations to enhance and support parental engagement in activities and advocate about the benefits of participatory music for children and young people in rural areas to more parents and carers.**

Some families of children and young people living in rural areas show considerable tenacity and commitment in enabling their children to access high quality music experiences, and in some cases activities are providing a cultural focal point within rural communities. Delivery organisations should build on this by exploring ways to enhance parental engagement, for example through volunteering opportunities, acting as ambassadors or by simply encouraging car-sharing. Organisations delivering this work should collaborate with other community organisations, statutory and referral agencies to advocate for the benefits of participatory music, with the aim of increasing support and engagement amongst parents and carers of children and young people in rural areas.

**Our pledge:** NYMAZ will work with its delivery partners to devise effective ways to engage and support parents and carers in project activity. NYMAZ will also further develop its signposting resource [www.nymaz.org.uk/discover](http://www.nymaz.org.uk/discover) to offer more information to parents and carers about how they can support their child/ren to progress musically.

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## Appendix i.

### Case Study: RAM Jam

RAM Jam (Ribblesdale Area Musicians) is a community jazz ensemble for young people aged 9 – 19, which meets every week at Settle's Victoria Hall in the Yorkshire Dales. Settle sits within the district of Craven denoted as the most sparsely populated classification at local authority level, Rural80. The district has a population of 53,600, giving it a density of 44 people per square kilometre, which is in the top ten lowest population density councils in England. (The UK average is 245 people per sq km) [Source: <http://www.cravencd.gov.uk/article/418/Statistics-and-Census-Information>, accessed 17/12/14]

The ensemble is open access for all abilities and instruments with participants drawn from Settle and surrounding villages in the Ribblesdale area of the Yorkshire Dales. Led by musician Richard Ormrod, young people have the chance to devise, improvise and perform new works, with a particular emphasis on jazz and world music. The project stimulates communal music-making and creativity in a relaxed, positive environment. The ensemble has been running for several years, coordinated by community music ensemble Dales Jam, the Victoria Hall and currently supported financially through NYMAZ's Musical Inclusion programme for North Yorkshire (funded by the National Foundation for Youth Music), and by participant subscriptions. The project each year typically consists of 12 weeks of workshops ending with a gig at the Victoria Hall with Dales Jam and a special guest soloist, but recently year-round activity and extra performance opportunities have been supported thanks to additional funding from a BBC Performing Arts grant.

Richard delivers a series of workshops and rehearsals aimed at teaching young participants about the dynamics of playing as an ensemble, with opportunities to improvise, arrange, compose and perform. Repertoire includes ska, funk, soul, music from around the world and jazz classics, all in arrangements made by Richard himself. Several members of RAM Jam have gone on to rehearse and perform with the adult Dales Jam band on a regular basis (with a couple persuading their parents to join too) and have also gone on to form their own, smaller ensembles.

At the group's regular rehearsal, we find sixteen young participants working on some arrangements for a forthcoming Christmas performance, giving well-known carols a more contemporary treatment. At present they are polishing up a reggae version of *Away in a Manger*. The participants are sat in a semi-circle with Richard facilitating at the drums, grouped by instrument types – there's a wide variety of instruments being played - rhythm section, guitars, saxophone, clarinet, flutes, keyboards, accordion, violin, trumpet and ukulele. Richard is supported by a volunteer, who plays saxophone in the adult Dales Jam ensemble. The volunteer transports her granddaughter to RAM Jam as the participant's mother is unable to. She says that it's a vital opportunity for her granddaughter to play her flute in a group context, as she's not able to access instrumental tuition at her small rural school – she's the only flautist at the school and it's not economically viable for the school to bring in the

Music Service for her lessons.

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It's clear that the young participants value where they live. Many of them describe the 'freshness' of the Dales and say they enjoy the views, outdoor activities such as walking and the quietness: *'There are fewer cars, when I visit people in towns it's a lot louder than here.'*

The participants do not perceive themselves to be particularly disadvantaged in terms of their later life chances and many comment that the quality of their schooling will offer them good opportunities. However they are quick to highlight the challenges of living where they do in terms of limited public transport and long travel distances from shops and peers:

*There is some public transport, but not trains that are near where I live. To get to a train station you would have to drive anyway.*

*If you want to buy something then you can't always find immediately. Our village shop has just shut down, so we can't buy sweets. For example if I wanted to go to a well-stocked music shop I'd probably go to Morecambe (1 hour's drive away)*

*Friends can be quite far away, you don't all live in one big area. There's not quite as much to do. There's plenty to do outdoors, but not the kind of thing you would get in cities.*

The practicalities of transport in a rural area is a key barrier to participants attending RAM Jam, and the majority of young people get lifts to the workshops from their parents, apart from those living in Settle itself. Richard notes that one participant has progressed to a stage where he is ready to join the Dales Jam adult group, but his parents aren't able to take him due to the commitments of his siblings. One participant describes a complicated weekly transport arrangement between his school, mother's work and RAM Jam which takes a good deal of forward planning and a round trip of approximately 50 miles to attend each session. A knock-on effect is that it's not possible to organise activities immediately after school, organisers have to allow participants time to get to the session.

The participants also agreed that there were fewer out-of-school activities than in urban areas:

*There aren't as many things outside of school, you don't get sports clubs, music clubs out of school, other than RAM Jam.*

*There are more varied things in cities, this is the only one we have.*

Many of the young participants reported that they do access other music-making opportunities, in most cases during school time such as peripatetic instrumental lessons and playing in school ensembles. One young person

attends the Westmorland Youth Orchestra, where rehearsals are held in Kendal, some 30 miles away from Settle. Another takes private instrumental lessons whilst one is currently teaching himself how to play the guitar. One participant says he used to play in a local brass band, but decided to join RAM Jam instead. It's clear that some RAM Jam participants are fortunate in benefitting both from schools with strong music provision and from the financial, transport and moral support of their parents/carers, but that other easily accessed out-of-school music opportunities are few and far between.

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Back in the workshop session some of the group are using written notation, with personal parts made with their names on the top rather than instrument name. Richard sings or plays individual parts to participants to demonstrate if needed. He asks one of the guitarists to play on their own and also explain which chords are being used for the benefit of the other guitarists. He makes sure that participants are not left behind, and explains new technical terms and jargon such as *vamp* and *groove*. Participants are involved in musical decisions: 'Could we have a backing figure there – what do you think?' asks Richard.

During the piece Richard asks if any of the participants 'wants a noodle' (i.e. to improvise). The young people are mostly reluctant which prompts a discussion based around 'How do you know what kind of notes to play?'. 'How else can you work out what sounds good?' prompts Richard. To reduce participants' self-consciousness, Richard numbers everyone either 1 or 2, and asks them to improvise in groups, which proves to be an effective technique. He talks about the social support of belonging to an ensemble, and suggests that participants should try not to make each other giggle during solos.

Richard thinks that young people growing-up in the Dales often share some characteristics that may impact on their later life chances:

*Although you do get some confident children, you do get some quite mature, shy children, they don't get the same kind of social friction that children in built up areas do. You get lots of smart, intelligent kids, but not loud kids. You really have to encourage them to put themselves forward. I wonder where they are going to find their place later on, are they going to get a real shock when they move into somewhere more metropolitan?*

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At break-time the participants take turns to prepare the refreshments, and when the session restarts some of the young people have swapped instruments – the bass guitar player is now on trumpet so that the saxophonist can have a turn on bass. Towards the end of the session several parents come into the Hall to listen, rather than waiting in their cars. One notes that even though the RAM Jam sessions come after a long day at school for their son, he is still keen to attend. The parent attributes this to the quality of

Richard's musicianship and his communication with the participants.

Richard notes that the high level of parental engagement is particularly distinctive in his work with RAM Jam:

*I think in an urban setting the parents would be a bit more 'Oh, right, it's another thing that's happening' and there are so many things happening that they just turn up, drop the children off and go. Because everything out here that happens is a bit more specific and it's something that's happening and it's an event, the parents engage more. It's not just an event in their children's lives, it's actually an event in their lives, and they're really pleased it's happening, they enjoy it. I don't think I've ever done something in the middle of Leeds and had four parents turn up 20 minutes early so that they can sit and listen, the pace of life just doesn't allow for that. They often chat, they've got stuff to tell me about what they've been doing about what their kids have been doing, about concerts they've been to. You get to be a bit more of a focus for cultural discussion.*

A strong sense of community permeates the project, and many participants report that they got involved with RAM Jam through family connections or recommendations from friends:

*I got bored of watching my sister in the concerts, so I decided that I wanted to join as well. My brother is here as well.*

*One of my family's friends goes to Dales Jam, and she said that I should come as I play musical instruments.*

Richard identifies the outward migration of young people from the Dales as impacting on younger participants in terms of role models and their perceptions of career options:

*They probably don't see a lot of people making lives for themselves around them, they see everyone moving away. People going to University just disappear out of their lives.*

He also notes that working in a group setting with quieter, more self-contained children can mean that it takes more time to engage them, and that the social benefits of RAM Jam's out-of-school context are key:

*It's an informal social gathering, so they've got to work out their own social relationships. Some of them are very quiet, some of them are quite talented and then they find themselves in a situation where they are not the star all the time, and that's as important as quieter children being given the opportunity to be in the limelight a bit.*

*There's all kinds of aspects of working with people, playing*

*with people, being with people, relying on other people.*

Gaining confidence through musical achievements is a common benefit identified by both the young people and music leaders:

*It gets your confidence up when you perform on the night.*

Richard reflects that part of the reason that music specifically is such a good tool with which to engage young people is it's communal, non-competitive (technically) nature, its ability to unlock creativity and its immediacy:

*The creative aspect, not just in being able to create their own music, in terms of being able to examine their own creativity and accept that they've produced something and it exists, it has happened. In other things you tend to make something and you can look at it and examine it and change it and edit it or disclaim it. Once you've played something musically you have to deal with what you've done straightaway, there's no walking away from it. I think that can be quite scary for shy children, it can be quite empowering in quite a giddy way. Eric Dolphy [American saxophonist] said that 'When you hear music, after it's over, it's gone in the air, you can never capture it again'.*

The participants are quick to identify benefits in terms of musical skills and knowledge that they have gained from the project, which can be transferred into formal education:

*It has helped me a lot with my sense of rhythm and my musical awareness of different styles, and also my sight-reading, I think that really helped my exams.*

*I've learnt a lot more types of music than I already knew.*

*You can be inspired to learn different instruments, like I've started to learn bass guitar.*

Finally, young people also voiced their enjoyment of the sessions, the project's relaxed atmosphere, as well as identifying personal and social benefits:

*It's really fun, so that's good, if you're bored you could come. Also you learn lots of new things, it's good practice for how to play your instrument.*

*I feel less embarrassed about improvising, because I'm more confident.*

*It's a good way to make friends, people you wouldn't know through school.*

**Workshop observed on 04/11/14, Heidi Johnson**

## Appendix ii.

### Case Study: SoundWave

SoundWave is a music outreach charity based in Workington, Cumbria. Originally set up as one of the Youth Music Action Zones, the organisation works in communities across the county, from Carlisle in the north, to Barrow-in-Furness in the south, as well as the towns along the west coast and in the Lake District National Park area. Cumbria has a population of 499,900, or density of 73 people per km<sup>2</sup>, and one of its districts has the lowest population density in the country – Eden – at 25 people per km<sup>2</sup>. [Source: <http://www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk/Census/2011censusbriefings.asp> accessed 19/12/2014]

The majority of SoundWave's music activity is delivered by members of staff and a small number of associate musicians, while its partners around the county, including Brewery Arts Centre in Kendal, and Rosehill Theatre in Whitehaven, provide venues for the activity. In addition, the organisation regularly works in partnership with local youth support agencies, such as Young Cumbria and Cumbria Youth Alliance, engaging with targeted groups of young people in areas of social and economic disadvantage.

On a Friday evening, we're invited to join Programme Leader Dave Roberts, and Associate Music Leader Steven Pearson, at the first in a series of weekly DJing workshops that have been commissioned by Inspira, previously 'Connexions', on a council estate near Whitehaven. Dave and Steven arrive at a youth club session where around 15 young people are already sitting on sofas and around tables, listening to music and chatting. As they begin to set up their equipment on a table in one corner, a number of young people wander over to talk to them, asking questions about the equipment and the activity. For the rest of the session, they are free to come and go, trying out the DJing technology in small groups at a time.

The sessions are part of a project supported by the Copeland Community Fund, that was brought about to tackle a huge problem with under-age drinking in the district, leading to double the national average of under-18s admitted to A&E with alcohol-related injuries. Inspira commissioned a range of activities in local youth clubs on Friday evenings, from music, to sports, to a touring Rodeo Bull. But Dave and Steven hear from youth workers that nothing draws in the young people like the music does. They explain why they think music is so effective as a tool for engagement.

*The environment in a music workshop, where everyone is wearing the same hat, and they're all there because they like music, it's a different vibe altogether from the normal environment. Often people's defences come down, and you start to see peer mentoring between young people who've never met.*

Some of the participants at the youth club echo this, telling me that they enjoy the DJing workshops because they listen to music at home, so it doesn't feel like work, even though it helps them to concentrate. One also comments

that concentrating on making his own music helps to calm him down if he's angry or upset. During the DJing workshop, Dave and Steven allow the young people to explore the technology on their own, while offering hints and tips every now and again when it's appropriate, with an encouraging "have you tried that button, there" or "see what happens if you do this..." When they feel the activity has come to a natural conclusion, Dave and Steven pack up the gear and leave them to socialise, which they find works best in a youth club setting. Their approach helps the hesitant to engage with the activity.

*They can work on their own with headphones if they're scared of working in a group right away, or they can join in discreetly by using a Wii controller to make small changes to the music, and still 'look cool' to their mates.*

SoundWave has a reputation for being particularly successful at engaging hard-to-reach young people, and they have been brought in to deliver CPD for other youth providers who struggle to get those same young people through their doors. Dave puts it down to the fact that they provide music activities with no hidden agenda.

*It works because of the way we run the sessions. We're not a youth organisation or a school, so we're not going to bring out informative leaflets about contraception, drugs or alcohol. Young people are not stupid, and they don't appreciate that kind of approach.*

Dave and Steven describe much of west Cumbria as being cut off from the rest of the country, and "always the last place that new cultures and trends get to – everything drives past on the M6". They are often struck by the way audiences don't seem to know how to behave when they come across cultural performances in public, because they're so unused to seeing them. With funding from Youth Music under their Musical Inclusion programme, SoundWave have recently prioritised tackling 'cold spots', or areas of the county where there is little going on culturally. But they struggle with what is often called 'parachuting in' to communities for a short period of time, providing activities with the small amount of funding available and then moving on to the next place, leaving the participants behind with no more opportunities than they had before. So they also provide weekly drop-in activities in a fixed location, which are popular and have been running for a number of years, partly, they feel, because there isn't much competition when it comes to music opportunities.

Young people from the Whitehaven project say that they don't mind living on the estate, but that it can be boring, especially as there is usually nothing to do. Many of them attend the youth club twice a week where they can socialise with friends and listen to music, but activities at the club aren't very common. The only local music-related activity any of the young people can recall is Radio 1's 'Big Weekend', a free pop music festival which was held in Carlisle (40 miles away) for one year only, in 2011.

Another symptom of this isolation and lack of cultural experiences is that young people perceive limited career options for themselves, with many

aspiring to jobs at the Sellafield nuclear plant nearby, and high youth unemployment in some areas. Dave had also witnessed a culture of young parenthood in one village, where he noticed that a number of under-18 year old female participants would bring their babies along to his workshops. Part of SoundWave's programme involves providing training opportunities for NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training) which demonstrate the options for a career in music. One young man who started working with SoundWave as a NEET is now on an 'Aspiring Leaders Programme', with SoundWave as the host organisation, working towards a BSc degree in Social Enterprise Leadership from the University of Cumbria. They believe the best support is about building the whole person, encouraging their participants to help out in new ways such as setting up rooms for workshops or running events, pushing them to take on more responsibilities and therefore feel more adult and capable.

It isn't only young people with a limited view of careers in Cumbria. Dave feels strongly that it is also necessary to educate parents and schools about the potential for a sustainable career in the arts. He has experienced young people with a real flair for music being discouraged to take it any further by their school teachers. The lack of young role models in the arts is also a challenge that compounds the issue, with SoundWave having seen a number of their own participants become motivated to pursue music into further and higher education, but having to leave Cumbria altogether to do so, and tending not to return.

For the organisation itself, there are challenges presented by working in such rural areas. SoundWave's staff wouldn't think twice about travelling 60 miles to deliver an hour-long workshop, which could mean a half-day or more of work even before planning is taken into account. This limits the amount of work the organisation can take on, both in terms of Music Leader fees, and how much delivery can be achieved by a small number of associate musicians in the time available. Dave also talks of his frustrations about funders unwilling to pay for the less 'shiny' elements of project work, like travel costs for participants. SoundWave has even resorted to running rehearsals on a bus to make the most of the costs. He believes that funders rarely understand the importance of a sufficient travel budget in a rural area.

*We find, when applying for funds, that nobody wants to fund transport. For organisations south of Manchester it isn't an issue, because wherever you are there will be buses every five minutes. So when funders look at our projects, they don't understand that if you miss the bus on Friday, that's it till Monday! One lad occasionally turns up, depending on whether his father can drop him off on the back of a tractor. We have to provide transport for participants; it's a massive part of what we do. We understand they want their money to pay for the 'shiny bit'. But as far as we're concerned, there should be no shame in funding the part that makes the shiny bit happen.*

**Workshop observed on 07/11/2014, Millie Watkins**



## Appendix iii.

### Case Study: The Music Pool

*Interview with Rob Strawson, Artistic Director*

In Herefordshire more than 50% of people live in relatively isolated villages or indeed farmhouses out on their own. That said, the distances involved are not so great whereas the number of people involved is significant. Hereford City is almost at the centre of a fairly circular county. Everybody is very aware of the City as the centre of a 'hub', and although there are bus services, which are not too bad in the daytime, they don't go on late at night. Getting into Hereford is not an easy thing to do; lots of young people rely on parental help to get to sessions. There is a deceptive deprivation, a much higher proportion of low incomes than people tend to think.

*Because it is generally accepted that Hereford is in the middle, and everything that goes on, more or less, is in Hereford... it is something of a given that you have to come in to Hereford to access sessions. People are used to making [transport] arrangements for themselves.*

There is occasional provision in market towns where there is a particularly proactive youth or community worker who can be on the ground supporting and delivering the project. As a 'policy decision' work is centered in Hereford.

Very little of the work for young people happens in the Arts Centre as it is a space which some people won't access – it's not their space. The city is divided, and young people from South Hereford wouldn't go into several buildings in North Hereford. The Music Pool work to find spaces that are psychologically accessible.

Young people involved in the project have improved self-confidence, communication, cooperation in a group, turn taking, sharing, production management and event management, quite apart from the creative aspect and improving musical technique. Everything is seen as equal value, if you have a teenager who can only play one note on a bass guitar you structure your work around that in an 'egalitarian and inclusive way'. Some of this development is music specific as, when you're singing, you are carrying your instrument, it is non competitive and it encompasses transformative power of performance.

In this model of working, one of the most important aspects of working with rurally isolated young people is communication; to ensure that the young people outside of the city know about the opportunities available to them, whilst being responsive to advocates and activists on the ground who would support projects.

The Music Pool is also a 'cradle to grave' organisation running early years sessions, choirs for retired and older singers and SEN work alongside their youth programmes.

*The biggest challenge is trying to deliver work without support on the ground. There needs to be a 'respected and welcoming host' to these sessions, because otherwise it's all down to the relationship formed in the first session. When trying to run a block of 6 sessions, if the music leaders don't immediately form a warm relationship with the young people who are there, they're not going to come back, even more so when you are coming from 30 miles away.*

Young people travel from across the county and beyond, and they are responsible for organising their own transport. There is a varied and diverse range of musical interests and genres which young people access and the interesting bit of the project is to combine them.

The vast majority of funding for the youth music projects comes from Youth Music, and participants also contribute subscriptions. There is also fundraising for specific work – recordings etc. – and some of the money is coming from contingency funding, particularly in the gap between Youth Music funding rounds. For the organisation as a whole, there are about 15 different funding streams including Arts Council England, Local Authorities, Trusts, Foundations, Donations and other sources. The Music Pool also receives commissions from their local Music Hub. They also work closely with a young people's drop in centre, Close House, and work in conjunction with the College of Arts, Youth Service and Hereford Voluntary Organisations Support Service.

*Interview with Jack Sibley, Youth Music Project Manager*

Jack is a music graduate who has worked as musical director for Yorkshire's only homeless theatre company and has experience of working across a range of art forms.

Herefordshire has the second lowest wages in the UK, and there is as such massive outward migration of young people. There is an artistic draw in the Hereford College of Arts where they can continue their creative study. There's quite a lot going on in the City, and the Livewire project is centered in the City. As such there are some young people who are unable to access the project because of transport challenges.

Nova Training is signposting young people to musical opportunities at The Music Pool. There is a 'surprisingly low attainment' for young people attending schools rated Outstanding by OFSTED, and the project aims to improve the extracurricular provision. The Music Pool has also worked in a local Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) to deliver Silver Arts Award to a cohort of young people.

The Music Pool, the Arts College and Close House are developing a joint Young People's Steering Group to have an impact on gigs and projects.

There have been massive personal and social outcomes for the young people. Young people arrive who have felt isolated elsewhere, get a band together and make friends. It has helped a young person with dyspraxia to improve her coordination and movement, and she does not get on with music at school – she loves to sing but her heroes are Hendrix and Dylan, and her voice doesn't 'fit' into the 'normal' conventions of singing in school.

The Music Pool decided, for their Livewire project, to have sustained provision in the centre of the county, rather than having pockets of short-term work in market towns, which create a 'sense of loss' at the end of the six weeks. Before projects there are taster sessions or recruitment sessions to attract participants. On a map, young people travel from a fairly broad spread of the county.

One of the main challenges is finding appropriate space to rehearse and to perform. There are also challenges around ideas and perceptions of music – a division between 'proper' classical music and pop, and a reticence to let the two combine.

Core funding comes from Youth Music, recording funded by The Rowlands Trust. The Music Pool has a dynamic approach to partnerships and if opportunities come up to collaborate they are always explored.

*Discussion with three The Music Pool participants aged 12 – 16 years old*

Living rurally feels like a more comfortable, safer place compared to where one participant used to live (urban Kent). Schools have Alpacas, shops aren't too busy and it's more chilled out. There are lots of outdoor things to do.

They perceived that there weren't many opportunities to get involved in activities. Flooding can stop you getting in to town, and to Livewire if you are on the wrong side of the river. It's tricky to get to see your friends.

The young people talked about a lack of performance spaces, particularly for under-18s, and a lack of opportunities to see performances. However, because people know each other, if your music is out there and heard you're likely to be invited to perform.

Two participants are relatively new to the group and were recruited to the sessions through Jack having visited their club and college respectively, and another participant has been involved for 3 or 4 years, having been signposted from Art College.

Livewire gives the young people something to do – gets you out of the house and off the street, there aren't many things to do. Through the group they have made new friends and had new musical experiences. They have developed confidence, new skills, received encouragement, found direction and focus and helped them work towards the Arts Award and started a band.

To improve the project the space could do with a renovation and it could do with more people taking part. At school, you have to play proper music that other people choose, until you get to GCSE level. There was also extra-curricular provision at the Art College until that stopped.

### *Workshop observation*

The session found around 15 young people working in three spaces. In one room an older, more experienced group was working with a music leader rehearsing a Stevie Wonder track for a forthcoming gig. The three young people who spoke with me were in another room transcribing and working out a song they had chosen to work on, again with the support of a music leader. In a third room a larger group of girls, many of whom were playing guitars, were devising a song – working on lyrics, arranging the guitar parts so that there was a range of textures and differentiated parts for young people of different abilities.

The music leaders took different roles depending on their group. With the older group, the music leader was playing with the band, directing the rehearsal in a fairly soft touch way, making suggestions as to what might be the next course of action. With the trio trying to learn a song, the music leader was transcribing chords and teaching them to a young and inexperienced, but enthusiastic and successful, pianist whilst the vocalists supported one another to build their confidence with her support. In the song-writing room, the music leader was playing guitar, and working hard to keep the teenage participants focused on playing their own guitar part and singing.

Each group was busy and productive but very individual, and the music leaders were supporting the activity in complementary but different ways. At the end of the session the group with the newly transcribed song and the group with the newly devised song shared their work with one another in a supportive and constructive way. There was much praise, and again this was individual for participants and the music leaders demonstrated a good awareness of the achievements and ability of each musician. There were also clear suggestions as to what would be tackled next week, giving the project direction and shape.

The Pavilion is a multi use building with a large commercial kitchen, and several conference style rooms of various sizes and various layouts. The more experienced band were in an empty, large room, whereas the song-writing took place around what could best be described as a boardroom table. One of the great advantages of this space is that The Music Pool is able to store their equipment in a large, secure cupboard from one week to the next.

**Workshop observed on 18/11/14, Sam Dunkley**

## Appendix iv.

### Case Study: Wren Music

Wren Music is a Devon based charity providing education work that explores English folk music, and treats it as one might 'World Music', exploring and promoting this diverse tradition and introducing it to young people and adults who might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience and explore it.

*Interview with Marilyn Tucker, CEO*

There are examples of geographical isolation and a limited range of activities for young people. There is also a lack of aspiration from schools; whilst they pursue academic excellence they do not necessarily raise the aspirations of the young people. This is anecdotal, from the experience of Marilyn, the director of the organisation, who has lived and worked in the community for some 30 years. State schools don't always use their alumni to raise the aspiration of the current cohort of students.

The projects that Wren Music runs work on different levels, some of the work is with young people at elevated risk, other work includes the Roots Music School, which has progression for 8 -16 year olds through weekly sessions, and from the age of 13 young people can attend a more advanced monthly session where they also receive training as young music leaders. This is in built progression within the project. Young people are also able to take part in trips which have visited South Africa and Turkey, amongst other projects. There is an aim for each level of group to take part in one intensive residential each year.

When the Youth Council meets, the young people don't know where one another's towns are and so this brings communities from the large county together.

Marilyn devised the way of working having met musician Paul Wilson and explored music as the 'Art of the people'.

Young people have developed self-confidence and self assuredness through working in the projects. They become more culturally aware – of their own culture and of other cultures – and feel a sense of community, and reconnect with the art of 'people being with people', especially during the residential courses.

There is an aspiration that participants will not be afraid to make music part of their life – as a professional or not. That they would happily go in to a shop and pick up an instrument and play, that they will write and arrange. It is also creating a generation of young people engaged in a minority art form.

*We can't deliver to very rurally isolated places, so we set up in market towns... for the most part we run weekly groups on an evening at 5 o'clock so that children can come home from school and be*

*delivered. It's not doing very much for the kids who can't get a lift... I can't solve rural transport.*

*We are looking at doing more outreach so that we can go out and encourage more people to come to a session, and very often in rural settings people will give each other lifts.*

There are challenges with transport and with getting young people to commit to the regular activities. Also, there are challenges with the quality and availability of practitioners in a rural area.

The activity is funded by Devon Music Education Hub, Youth Music and participant subscriptions. Young people in receipt of free school meals have their sessions paid for by Devon Music Education Hub. Weekend residentials have suggested donations of £50, £30 or £20, while weekly sessions cost £5 each, or £45 for a 10 week term.

*Discussion with five Wren Music participants, aged between 8 and 18 years old*

Both the younger and older participants considered that the positives of living in the countryside included it being peaceful, with fewer cars and more farms and animals, is the opportunity to take more walks, to take more time and rural young people 'see more and look wider', taking in more of what is around them.

Perceptions of what they miss out on varied from the younger to older participants, the younger participants thought there would be 'more things to do' in a town or a city, the older participants thought that living rurally meant they may, in fact, be offered more because of their rurality and that there may be less competition for opportunities, courses and jobs.

That said, they perceived there was a more limited choice in courses and options when it came to GCSE and A Levels (in particular, having to travel to Exeter for the International Baccalaureate), access to resources (major shops), and a concentration of professionals – having to travel 40 minutes to an hour for singing lessons in Exeter. They also thought they relied on the support of their parents and help with travel, and having to be more proactive to find opportunities.

Young people had got involved through outreach sessions in their schools, and Alyse in particular had been involved for 7 years having first accessed the project in Year 7 and currently being an intern for Wren. They had been involved in Arts Award, and taken part in young leaders programmes.

For the younger participants the project was an opportunity to see friends and make friends, for the older participants it was an additional opportunity to make music, to access wider opportunities; tours, gigs etc, and to work through confidence and emotional issues.

Through taking part in the project, young people have learned songs and got better at music. The older participants have improved confidence, happiness, can give compliments, have gained Gold Arts Award, have made friends and have had the opportunity to work with like-minded individuals from all over the county.

Challenges perceived by young people included the noise spill from the adjoining room in the hall with a dance class next door and the internal temporary dividing wall not reaching the vaulted ceiling, wanting the sessions to happen more often, but balancing that with the challenges of their other commitments and transportation.

One participant got her internship having taken part in the young leaders group and worked through from being a young participant.

Other music making opportunities included instrumental and vocal tuition in school, school classroom lessons, community choirs, Wren Orchestra, flute choirs and local orchestras.

#### *Workshop observation*

The session was delivered by a professional artist supported by volunteers from an adult Wren group and by young leaders from the more advanced youth group. Professional artists used by Wren are employed by the organisation for a number days a week. This means that they can be called together for training and there is a consistency in the delivery across the weeks, as well as allowing time for practitioners to visit schools to promote the projects.

The group observed was a folk choir for children aged 8 -16, and was quite a new ensemble. There were some boisterous and energetic boys who struggled to focus at times, but the young leaders modelled positive behaviour and the group leader rearranged places within the group when needed.

The leader and the young leaders delivered a physical and vocal warm up which explored the vocal range and techniques, with the leader encouraging and prompting the young leaders when required.

Songs were taught by ear and attention was paid to pitch, rhythm and diction throughout. Once the songs had been taught, words were available to those young people who wanted them.

Singing was often in parts and was largely secure, in new and more familiar repertoire. There was a relaxed yet productive feeling throughout the session and young people were engaged.

There were a couple of young people in the group who had additional needs and they were kept on task well – there were moments of absolute focus and clarity and these will only increase as the group, and the young people individually, mature and become more familiar with the environment.

During the session a lot of work was being done on new repertoire, but when the choir performed for me a piece they had been working on for several weeks it was very impressive.

The volunteers and young leaders were well used throughout, leading by example, helping those who needed it and supporting the practitioner in her work.

**Workshop observed on 12/11/14, Sam Dunkley**



## Appendix v.

### Case Study: B Sharp

*Interview with Fran Williams, Director*

B Sharp was established in 2007 as a collaboration between Fran Williams (Director) and Jacques Verhaeren when they met on the Lyme Regis seafront. Jacques was a young busker, Fran got talking to him, and learned that he was disenchanted and planned to move away as there was no musical future for him in the town. Fran and Jacques held a big public meeting to take forward the creative ideas and aspirations of young people and together with a small committee of adults and young people they created what is now B Sharp.

B Sharp became a charity in 2012 and now has a board of trustees with experience and expertise across the music, arts, health and business sectors. Young people and music leaders attend meetings and advise the board.

B Sharp adopted a music focus after consultation with groups of local young people, schools and the community. Fran comes from a social work background rather than a music background and this experience underpins the whole organisation. Her youth work training and experience leads the focus of the work to be as much about the young people as a whole, as it is about the musical outcomes.

There are 'few resources in terms of mental health, family support, citizens advice, youth services' in the area. In order to get support young people, including those who are excluded from school, have to travel away from Lyme Regis to access these services.

As well as filling a musical gap, B Sharp aims to bring young people from the two sides of the town together:

*On the east side of town are those from council estates, with all of the local families and young people who would go to the youth club and access the local amenities. And on the other side of town you have incomers who are more affluent, middle class. Historically on the whole the young people don't mix and there is quite a lot of division between them. If there was an event you don't usually get the two sides of town mixing together. Each group can have their own issues that include isolation, troubled families etc.*

The young people also face other challenges presented by their rural location;

*Transport cuts mean there actually aren't any buses after 6 o'clock in the evening, and on Sunday there aren't any buses at all. The nearest mainline station is about 30mins away and the nearest big towns are an hour away.*

*In Dorchester there are more things happening, but I sent [the young people] on public transport and it took them an hour and a half to get there, and because of the timetables they arrived to the training late and had to leave early.*

B Sharp has, as its core value, an ethos of inclusion. From their very beginnings they have worked to bring together, for example, a grade 8 saxophonist doing 5 A levels at the local school, and a young person who had been excluded from school and didn't play music but was interested in organising events. Both might join the board.

Their projects combine good youth work practice with 'Every Child Matters' social work practice and artistic excellence. Music practitioners who join the project sign up to the ethos, as do the young people, who have created a code of practice, which they oversee and nurture.

B Sharp has created their own Young Leaders programme to cascade skills and their ethos, building a team of music practitioners who fundamentally understand the work. There are music leaders, assistant music leaders, young and apprentice music leaders, all of whom are mentored by Fran and support each other.

In every workshop and project run by B Sharp there is a member of staff with a Learning and Participation remit who has a responsibility for ensuring that everybody is fully engaged. B Sharp uses music as a tool to develop social confidence and the young person as a whole. As well as developing musicianship, B Sharp has taken young people on to their projects as technical trainees. One of these young people has gone on to work for the theatre in Lyme Regis and to study at university, having arrived with the organisation with dyspraxia, a stutter that meant you could barely understand his speech at times, and being bullied in school.

A decision was taken to concentrate the work of B Sharp in one geographical 'cold spot' area, so that there was a core of work, participants and a reputation developed in a town, and around that projects have taken place in schools. This has been, in their experience, the best way to engage with different young people in rural communities in a very inclusive way. By running a singing project in primary schools and secondary schools, and then bringing them together for an outcome event, they have been able to signpost routes into community music activities.

Where transport budgets are available for projects, taxis are arranged for participants, for example a rurally and socially isolated young carer, which has a big impact on accessibility. For the singing project in schools, a coach was provided for parents to get to the performance as well as the young people, which encouraged audience attendance as well as performer participation.

Venues can be a problem in rural working. The Hub, the building, which hosts much of B Sharp's activities, was put up for auction by the committee which

ran it, without anyone telling the community. So B Sharp – which had recently been established – led a community campaign to independently buy the building to run it as a young people's centre and then a national campaign winning the People's Millions lottery fund to renovate it.

Other challenges include a lack of instruments; B Sharp does not have access to Music Service instruments because of distance. They have offered to host an instrument hire base in Lyme Regis, but have not been successful, leaving many disadvantaged young people without access to instruments. It takes a long time to build relationships based on trust and confidence and to find the right gatekeeper as a way into a school, particularly in the secondary sector.

The constant challenge is bringing children from different cultures, backgrounds and mind-sets together in an interesting and meaningful way. As well as their participatory projects B Sharp runs community events such as an annual music festival for young performers, for which they will make sure that all young people can feel part of it either as participants, production team or audience. For example running a series of DJ and music technology workshops targeting youth service members who don't play musical instruments.

There is a challenge in accessing quality, experienced music leaders for the range of work from grassroots to high-end productions. There is a skill shortage for rounded musicians, with good youth work and musicianship and also for people who could come in to work with B Sharp in an organisational development way, such as arts administrators. It is difficult to find people who are experienced and can hit the ground running and help with demand and capacity.

Activities are financed 80% through Youth Music, which has been 'one of the best organisations [Fran has] ever worked with'. They get match funding from West Dorset Council, Lyme Regis Council, and Dorset Community Foundation as well as participant fees and donations. Schools are also beginning to contribute financially to projects, which they are commissioning, and project commissions are increasing.

*Discussion with young apprentice leaders and emerging music leader, Jacques.*

Young people said that living in a rural area is calmer than it would be in a city, you can think more. You get to know everyone, see familiar faces when you walk from one place to another. There is licence to express yourself and great material to inspire music making and songs.

That said, they perceived that there would be more opportunities and more for them to do in a more urban setting; 'without B Sharp, what would we do?' Because there are fewer things to do there is an attitude that 'if it's not there, we can't do it'. B Sharp creates opportunities, but it can be a challenge to get information out to smaller towns – participation isn't always as high as it could be.

Travel is a challenge if you are off the bus route. There are not many venues in the area, and those that do exist often don't programme for young people – either as audience members or performers. In a bigger town or city, there might be more of an opportunity to get your music heard by someone with an influence in the music industry, rather than singing in the same few open mic nights to the same few people.

Fran suggested that the young people were answering questions from the point of view of being involved in B Sharp, and that their answers might be very different if they weren't involved in the project. Should they answer as if B Sharp weren't there? Jacques, for example, explained that he didn't study music and didn't start learning music until he was 16 and realised that he was only really able to busk on his own:

*There wasn't a platform or a community of people playing live music, I hated it, it was rubbish. Now, in some respects it's actually quite a thriving area, you just have to know where to look.*

When Jacques was a teenage musician, before B Sharp, there were few music leaders or community musicians to work with. By working with B Sharp he provides a role model to the young people on the projects; they can see a progression, a future. The younger musicians in this interview struggled to perceive a 'lack of opportunity' in the future because they see the work that Jacques is doing. It is a strong model.

One participant's brother, for example, joined B Sharp at the age of 10 and has gone to study at Goldsmiths, University of London, and comes back to speak and work with the current cohort of young musicians and also to teachers and schools involved in B Sharp's work.

Young people variously became involved in the work of B Sharp by taking part in school projects, seeing articles in the newspaper about trainees and through watching a performance.

Being involved in the work of B Sharp has raised the musical aspirations of the young people involved, given them a drive and – through working with Jacques – made them think 'I want to do that'. It has motivated them to want to be better and gives them a belief that music is a possible career. There wouldn't be a lot of live events for young people without B Sharp and it has given them the opportunity to work with great musicians, opening their mind to new and different styles of music.

Young people have gained self-confidence, self-esteem, self-worth and a sense that they are musically valued.

*When I was doing my music at open mic nights I felt like just another act, but here when I was talking with Fran she wanted to know what I do and what I could bring to the project. That and the fact that I'm helping other people; I'm not a professional but the little knowledge I have can still help someone.*

*If I hadn't done B Sharp I would never, ever have sung a solo, but this has given me something to aim for, and hope.*

*B Sharp has given me so much – I don't know really because I'm so used to having it there the thought of it not being there is just weird.*

*What has B Sharp given me? What hasn't it! Anything that a musician needs, I've found it or improved it through B Sharp.*

Throughout the work Fran and Jacques respond to the needs of the participants, it's participant led. Young people thought that the work could only be improved by letting more people know and doing it more often, but expressed an understanding of the funding constraints.

*If there was something we wanted to change we would let them know because it would make it a better project and that's why we're there. We're not there to say 'oh we like music and that's it'. If there's something better to do we'll do it because we want to branch out and work with more people.*

*We can tell Fran our ideas because it's our project. It's the participants' project.*

Outside of B Sharp, young people were involved in school music making, open mic nights, busking and the local gig scene.

#### *Workshop observation*

The music session observed was a Hub Jam session, which took place on a windy, rainy Tuesday evening.

There were 4 spaces in use in The Hub, from a large hall with a stage, to a small studio office and each had a group of young musicians. The bands working in these rooms varied in size from 6 to 15 and each had either a music leader, or one or more young music leaders.

The standard of music-making was impressive with each group having an individual feel and vibe for the track that they had created and were working on. There was a collegiate environment, especially in the groups facilitated by the young music leaders. Their younger colleagues appreciated that, whilst they had obviously received training on facilitation and workshop leading, they were exploring that process.

There was a range of musicians in the sessions, from an experienced, talented young jazz pianist who led his small, advanced group from the keyboard, to a young musician in their second session in a group playing a conga drum.

There were challenges presented by some of the spaces available; for example one group met in the room behind the stage. It was a narrow, long room, which had probably been built as a storage or changing space, yet

contained an impressive number of musicians making great music. But its dimensions and layout meant that the 'performance' aspect was more difficult to rehearse – almost everyone had to be against a cold wall.

In each room there was a productive feeling of young person-focused music-making. The young leader scheme that has been devised means that young people leading groups are paid a fee for their service and are supported by the more experienced music leaders.

There is also a hive of activity in the kitchen where the pastoral support worker for the project is based with drinks and refreshments, and a chat.

Visiting this project it is clear to see that the ethos that Fran articulated in my conversation with her, and which the young people alluded to and embodied in my conversation with them, is writ large in the work being delivered and the practice being developed. There is passion, care and community.

**Workshop observed 11/11/14, Sam Dunkley**

## Appendix vi.

### **Case Study: Remarkable Theatre**

Remarkable Theatre is a small, not-for-profit organisation working in Bridlington, a coastal town in the East Riding of Yorkshire. The East Riding of Yorkshire covers an area of 933 square miles, with 95% of the land area being agricultural and a low population density of 1.4 people per hectare (source: East Riding of Yorkshire Rural Strategy, 2013-16).

Remarkable Theatre is run by husband and wife Mark and Rebecca Howley. The organisation's main activity for the past two and a half years has been offering free musical theatre group places to 7-16 year olds in Bridlington, providing a fun and safe environment in which to experience music, drama and dance. They have their own studio in Bridlington and will soon be expanding to take on an existing drama group for people with disabilities.

Mark is also a peripatetic music teacher, and has in the past run two music-based projects through Music4U's Musical Inclusion programme for the Humber Region, funded by Youth Music. One was a Rock Orchestra & Choir, the other was called 'Making Music' and gave young participants the experience of making their own album. As both of these projects had already concluded, we spoke only to Manager Mark Howley rather than project participants as well.

#### *Interview with Mark Howley, Artistic Director*

Sometimes young people living in this area experience barriers in terms of their life chances. In the East Riding we have areas of affluence such as Beverley, but then you have places like Goole or Bridlington that are more deprived. So some young people do experience barriers, and some don't. There's not always a lot going on around here, but we do have Hull just down the road, and Scarborough nearby, which has a lot of cultural activities. A lot of it comes down to wealth; if you've got the money you can get your children into opportunities. Similarly you have access to better schools.

We specialise in working in Bridlington, which is high up on the league tables of multiple deprivation, so the town gets a lot of European grants on that basis. There are a lot of single parent families and a high proportion of flat occupancies.

Both of our projects sought to mitigate barriers to access. With our Rock Orchestra project it was free to be in the choir, and 50p per session to play in the orchestra. For the Making Music project participants paid £5 for the whole project. We had one boy attend who had been referred from Family Services, whose Mum wouldn't pay the fee, so we (the organisers) paid it for him.

When you're making music you can be in your bedroom on your own, but you don't necessarily have the opportunity to come together to make music with others. Running these projects gives young people that opportunity. In somewhere like Driffield young people wouldn't have the opportunity to do

that. Having said that, even though those young people are isolated, they can switch on the internet, and access sites like Sound cloud where they can share their ideas and music. But even those sorts of things can be difficult [re. broadband coverage].

In our Rock Orchestra project we had 36 young participants, 16 of who were musicians. They were all of different abilities, and they all gained new musical skills. We had a drummer who was fab, and the participants were in awe of him.

Socially the participants got on really well. Some already know each other as they went to school together. We did two free performances and it was one of the most positive experiences that I've been involved with.

For the Making music project, we were making an album, so participants came to the studio in smaller groups to lay down tracks. The musical outcomes were really good, and participants learnt about working in a recording studio. Some kids who had never even played an instrument before got to put down a few chords on a track.

Our projects weren't really tailored for delivery in a rural area. They took place one evening a week always in the same place, so people knew what they were doing on that day. East Riding of Yorkshire Council's Family Services referred quite a few children to us who were interested in music but didn't have other opportunities to participate, many of whom were excluded from school, for example.

We've experienced challenges in terms of transport for participants living in rural communities. There were a couple of times that participants travelling from further away were not able to attend due to transport issues. By the end of the project some parents were car sharing, but it wasn't until the end that they realised it would be worth them doing that.

The Rock Orchestra & Choir was funded by Youth Music, via Music4U's Musical Inclusion programme, with some subscriptions from participants. Making Music was partly financed by Remarkable Theatre and Music4U.

In terms of sustainability, we are running something similar to the Rock Orchestra in January, as participants were keen to take part in more activities. Beyond that it's difficult as we're not sure if there is going to be further funding available in the future.

**Phone interview undertaken 15/12/14, Heidi Johnson**



## **Appendix vii.**

### **Case Study: Cymaz Music**

Cymaz Music is a charity and non-profit company based in Cornwall. Cymaz music believes in the positive power of music to change lives and communities. Cymaz music works with partners to build sustainable, high quality music making provision aimed to increase musical, personal and social outcomes for individuals and communities.

#### **Context**

Cymaz Music was invited by NYMAZ to contribute a regional Case Study towards their Young People, Music and Rural Isolation research.

Both organisations share several commonalities in that we commenced in 2001, focus on targeted music making activities and resources to children and young people living in challenging circumstances, we both work in rurally isolated areas and were part of and contributed to the development of a national network of Youth Music Action Zones supported and funded by Youth Music.

Like NYMAZ we continue to evolve and develop our practice and services and since the cessation of Youth Music Action Zones, we have been delivering the Musical Inclusion programme funded by The National Foundation of Youth Music working towards a set of intended outcomes. Musical Inclusion aimed to increase the number of sustained music making opportunities, for children and young people living in challenging circumstances, support their progression opportunities and to actively affect change by improving the quality and standards of music making and sharing that learning.

To mark the end of the Youth Music Action Zones (YMAZ) we have now formerly changed our name to Cymaz Music.

#### *Challenges, Benefits and Opportunities of working in Rurally Isolated Areas*

*Cornwall has an estimated population of 535,300 residents living in 255,0662 households dispersed across the County's 3,559 sq km. It has been growing since the 1960s, and has consistently grown quicker than the rest of the South West region, and is amongst the fastest growing areas in the UK.*

Cornwall is a large and expansive geographical region. Our public transport system does not yet match the needs of our population. It can therefore become a challenge to physically access services (if they exist) if you are living remotely.

Unemployment, poverty, low educational attainment, seasonal jobs, wages (below the national average) low aspirations and poverty are all socio-economic issues which impact upon the health and wellbeing and social

cohesion of communities. If people are unable to access services then their chances of social mobility are lessened and the cycle of poverty, poor educational attainment and low aspirations continue into the next generation.

In 2013 Cymaz Music carried out a piece of research and consultation to identify the main barriers that prevent young people from accessing music making activity. This piece of research identified the following barriers:

- (access to) Information • Financial • Physical/logistics • Workforce (suitable and relevant) • Lack of progression • Gap between formal and informal and attainment gaps

#### *Key ingredients/factors to consider for working with rural communities*

- **Transport:** For us this may include allowing extra budget for travel costs to perhaps commission a minibus and driver, booking taxis if we are working with very vulnerable children and young people i.e. young people in care, or working with partners other organisations in the area to see what resources they may have available to offer. We check timings of public transport when we plan programmes. Budget for transport is essential, if they can't get to us, there's no project. Fortunately, our primary funder The National Foundation of Youth Music recognises that funding transport is essentially linked to making music accessible and inclusive to children and young people living in rural settings.
- **Community Assets:** Village Halls, scout huts, schools, churches are all community assets, however without the person who is willing to come and open it up and make it nice and warm for you, they remain underused and become a liability to the community. We have found that people are the biggest community assets! Local people who care about their communities, people who are respected, who know what's going on, who have local knowledge and respect in their community

*My son seems to be enjoying it and it gets him away from the computer. I've also managed to dismantle his guitar, mend it and put it back together with the wires in the right places!*

Parent from Ponsonooth

- **Partnership:** working collaboratively has always been the bedrock of our work, we have no venue and we work across the county. There is a strong sense of community in Cornwall, put simply we try to help each other. Frontline services have long recognised the benefit of working collaboratively to ensure that children and young people get the best offer. Cymaz Music is a member Cornwall Youth Work Partnership which has over 40 members made up of youth organisations working in the voluntary sector.
- **Sustainability:** Raising expectations by offering a service only to take it away can cause more harm than good. Where possible we try to

ensure that music activity can continue after our programmes have completed. This could be through;

- Seeking and securing other funding, from community funds or through generating income from individuals, parents, the community etc
- Pooling resources and making the most of volunteers and other community assets

*Adults who used to play brass have already pledged their time to work with the pupils one has already asked for training so he can teach brass when the project ends. We are a small community around 2000 people spread over 5 islands. Whatever our young people engage with will have a knock on effect into the wider community. This Brass project is an ideal way to get different generations playing and learning together and will help our young people to have positive role models and learn how to form good relationships with adults outside their family group.*

*Five Islands School St. Mary's Isles of Scilly*

#### *Developing a framework*

Cymaz Music is developing a strategic programme with Cornwall Music Education Hub, Cornwall College 11+ Commission Team Cornwall Council, RIO (Real Ideas Organisation) Isles of Scilly and other strategic partners to develop Area Music Plans (AMPs) in identified areas of need (informed through detailed mapping and research).

The AMPs aim to address the lack of participation by breaking down the barriers identified above, using multi-agency/collective approaches, which co-design inclusive, inspiring, sustainable, high quality and progressive music making opportunities for young people, with mutual benefits contributing to 1) educational attainment, 2) community cohesion and 3) economic growth.

Through partnerships and collaboration, we will prioritise;

- The upskilling young people in rural communities through apprenticeship schemes
- Training and mentoring for individuals and organisations
- Creating jobs and opportunities so people are not forced to leave their homes, are not forced to take jobs that keep them impoverished
- Creating sustainable, high quality and needs led music provision with an infrastructure to support it

We value intergenerational co-operation, utilising and making the most of existing resources. Working together we can all be part and parcel of bigger regeneration programmes to rejuvenate and re-invigorate rurally isolated communities. Cymaz Music fully endorses

and supports NYMAZ's call to action and commitment to improving access for rurally isolated children and young people.

*They were really thrilled to win 'Ponsanooth's Got Talent' competition open to any individual or group within our village. They were enabled to do this through the remarkable way that Giles, their teacher, is able not only teach them, but relate to and encourage each individual. Many people have commented on the change in attitudes within our village over the last few years which some say is because of a growing respect for each other and especially between the older and younger generations. We are grateful that Cymaz is one of a number of things that have contributed to this".*

*Chris Trewern Pastor Ponsanooth*

NYMAZ is a youth music development charity which champions the transformative potential of music for children and young people. With a passionate belief in the power of music to change lives, we deliver high quality music-making activities across North Yorkshire, working across a wide range of genres and with the latest technologies.

Our music projects are focused on raising aspirations, facilitating personal development, improving social skills, enhancing career prospects as well as increasing enjoyment of music and supporting the progression of the musically gifted and talented. In parallel, NYMAZ runs professional networks designed to enable musicians and practitioners to develop their skills and learn from one another.

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