



Gone in the Air

Findings from the NYMAZ Young People, Music and Rural Isolation research project 2015

Gone in the Air

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.

Limited transport options curtail young people's access to music opportunities and the travel costs for specialist music leaders going to isolated areas can be prohibitive.

We are certainly not alone in facing this dual challenge. Gone in the Air was conceived to learn about and share the experiences and expertise of similar organisations across England.

The final research report lays out the 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; a summary of which can be found overleaf.

Crucially, the research has enabled NYMAZ to make policy and practice recommendations which it is intended will spark discussion and influence the way in which non-formal, inclusive music provision is funded and delivered.

'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

What are we calling for?

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

Credits

Thanks to the young people who participated in this research project and to the case study organisations SoundWave (Cumbria), CYMAZ (Cornwall), Remarkable Theatre (Music4U, East Riding of Yorkshire), B Sharp (Dorset), RAM Jam (NYMAZ, North Yorkshire), Wren Music (Devon) and The Music Pool (Herefordshire).

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Funded by the National Foundation for Youth Music as part of the Musical Inclusion programme for North Yorkshire.

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Gone in the Air: The facts & figures

WHAT IS RURAL ISOLATION?

"The feelings of powerlessness and disconnection experienced by individuals or groups as a consequence of living in a rural area."

Leisure Futures / Big Lottery Fund

17.6%

of the population live in rural areas of England

The most rural counties are Cornwall, Norfolk and Yorkshire



There is a greater proportion of older people living in rural areas:

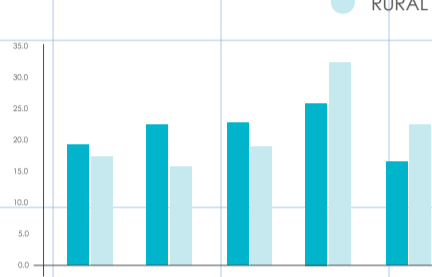
"The structural demographic change towards an older population in the UK is much higher in rural areas than in towns and cities and is the single most significant factor in increasing the prevalence of rural isolation."

Leisure Futures / Big Lottery Fund

In urban areas 21.2% of the population is aged 15–29 years. In rural areas this falls to 14.6%

In urban areas 18% of the population is aged 0–14 years. In rural areas this falls to 16.2%

Table Population of England by Age (%) - 2011 Census



What are the factors contributing to rural isolation?

- Lack of access to transport and other services
- Lack of income and employment
- Lack of contact with relatives, friends and neighbours

Youth Music's 2013–14 Impact Report reveals that children experiencing rural isolation continued to be the most frequent category of challenging circumstances reported by their grant holders, at

22.4% of all participants.

"Cultural participation of any kind is acknowledged as a basic human right. But participation in music stands in a class of its own... 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."

Anthony Everitt



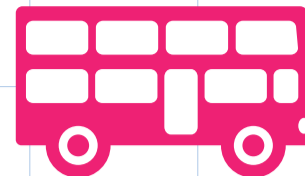
"[Music] has currency with young people... a child or a young person might have all sorts of things going on with their lives but often a community music approach works. It's not just about music but about the style of teaching, group dynamics, professional relationships that are formed."

Jane Staffieri, CYMAZ

Concentrating on making my own music helps calm me down if I'm angry or upset.

WHY IS LIFE DIFFICULT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN RURAL AREAS?

- Poor transport links and cost of transport
- Inward and outward migration
- Hidden disadvantage
- Limited access to education, employment and training
- Social isolation
- Negative attitudes to diversity and difference
- Changing rural economies
- Poor broadband and mobile phone signal affecting access to social opportunities and services



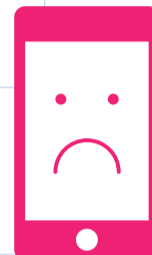
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There is some public transport, but not trains that are near where I live. To get to a train station you would have to drive anyway.

”

Young people growing up in rural areas have particularly limited access to services and out of school social opportunities.

François Matarasso



WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF NON-FORMAL PARTICIPATORY MUSIC?

Participatory music activities in rural areas demonstrated a huge range of benefits to children and young people, including:

Musical outcomes

- Improved instrumental and vocal technique
- Knowledge of musical concepts i.e. pitch, rhythm and tempo
- Composition and improvisation skills
- Greater awareness and understanding of different musical styles
- Skills in recording and music production
- Ensemble and performance skills

Social outcomes

- New friends made
- Improved social skills
- Greater sense of social responsibility
- Improved community cohesion
- Improved community perceptions of young people
- Improved attitudes towards difference

Personal outcomes

- Improved emotional wellbeing
- Improved confidence and self-efficacy
- Accreditation
- Greater awareness of employment opportunities within the creative industries
- Transferable skills

“

Before I would never, ever have sung a solo, but this has given me something to aim for, and hope.

”



The activity and organisations researched 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), and others including:

- Arts Council England
- Trusts and Foundations
- Individual giving
- Local Authorities
- Commissions from Music Education Hubs (Department for Education monies distributed by Arts Council England)
- Participant subscriptions
- In-kind support from partner organisations

“

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

”

WHAT ARE THE INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS?

- Local champions and partnership working
- Tailoring activities around transport considerations
- Parental engagement
- Communication and signposting
- Workforce development
- Adopting a needs-based approach
- Inclusive, non-formal delivery
- Long-term funding agreements and clear plans for sustainability



“

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

”

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY?



- Transport issues
- Location and venues
- Workforce
- Cost and sustainability
- Recruitment and signposting
- Musical progression
- Music Education Hub emphasis on formal activities
- Reduction in Youth Services
- Access to musical instruments

"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 'til Monday!"

Dave Roberts, SoundWave



“

Video conferencing facilities and software applications...can provide face-to-face access with...wider music education providers. This can reduce the cost and necessity for travel and can enable more children to access diverse music teaching opportunities.

National Plan for Music Education

”

FIND OUT MORE

To download and read the full report, please visit www.nymaz.org.uk or email heidi@nymaz.org.uk for a copy