

**Connecting young people
with sound opportunities**

AMP

Annual Review 2023–24



“My biggest takeaway is that I should believe in myself more because sometimes I stop myself doing things in apprehension that I’m not going to be good enough... but by doing this, I know I can achieve good things.”

Participant from AMP Producers Programme

A note from the Director



Welcome to our Annual Review! This is one that we've really been looking forward to welcoming you to, because it's our first Annual Review under our new name AMP.

We're all feeling energised by our new brand. We're so proud of everything we've achieved as NYMAZ, and we're looking forward to taking it to the next level as AMP. This is where it begins. It's more than just a new name and a fresh look, it's also given us a renewed sense of purpose and a commitment to amplifying young voices, and making sure that all children get the opportunity to experience the life-changing power of music.

In 2023-24, we're pleased to say we've expanded our reach and found some new audiences for our work, which

means we've brought music into the lives of even more young people. We've run beatboxing residencies, conducted brass bands, and even brought orchestras to rural communities—always finding new ways to make music fun and meaningful.

The year has seen a collaboration with Opera North, ON Tour, bringing the magic of their orchestra directly into classrooms. The live streamed performance introduced Key Stage 2 students to the instruments of the orchestra in a fun and interactive format. Musical Journeys and Little Notes continued to take children under five on sonic adventures which we hope will last a lifetime. Elsewhere, our Early Years Conference and our Early Years and SEND early career bursaries have offered support for professionals.

A note from the Director



For us, music and inclusion are always part of the same conversation, and we don't want to see anyone left behind.

That too was behind our major research report, *Gone in the Air*. Did you know that only 10% of the rural young people we spoke to had ever attended a concert? We found that many young people in rural areas love where they live, but are missing out on the benefits of musical participation that are available to their counterparts in larger towns and cities. We want to change that, and that's why we've produced a list of recommendations for what needs to change.

We've continued to put Youth Voice at the heart of our work. Our board has two young trustees, and 55% are aged 30 or under, including our Chair!

AMP Producers delivered a brilliant music festival, *Come As You Are*, receiving mentoring on everything from programming to marketing and sound design. We couldn't be more proud of them.

It's been a great year for our work in diversifying musical leadership. Our conducting masterclass and Young Women Conductors' Placement, AMP Generators, with Brass Bands England is an opportunity to reshape an entire sector which has been male-dominated for too long.

What's more, our professional networks have grown and we're more excited than ever about the potential of music to transform lives.

It's been a brilliant year. We hope you enjoy reading about it!

Sarah McWatt
Director, AMP

Making an impact

Our music projects target under-25s living in North Yorkshire and beyond, many of whom are facing challenging circumstances ranging from economic deprivation to rural isolation.

93%

of core participants aged 6-25 were facing barriers to participation or in challenging circumstances

96%

of participants reported improved listening skills

100%

of Young Producers felt proud of their achievements

62%

of the young people who tried it felt that they improved at playing music in a group

55%

of our board are aged 30 or under, including our Chair

92%

of project participants strongly agreed or agreed that their ensemble skills improved

Our year in numbers

We run a range of projects, delivered by our in-house team and specialist local partners, which are designed to improve the participants' musical, social and personal skills. We want to make a real, positive impact on their life opportunities.

1,566

children and young people engaged in person with our events

11,639

children and young people engaged online*

285

in person sessions held

93

individuals engaged in training and CPD

78

freelancers worked with, including young people

40

organisations we partnered with - welcome to many new faces!

* This figure is calculated by applying a conservative multiplication of 20 to the individual views where livestreams were broadcast in school classrooms.

Spotlight on Gone in the Air

In 2015, our previous incarnation NYMAZ launched *Gone in the Air*, a campaign to improve out-of-school music education so that children in rural England have equal life chances. This year, Helen Mahoney updated our report for us, and we were thrilled to be able to update this vital research.

Since the publication of the first report a lot has changed, with factors such as the Covid-19 pandemic, Brexit and difficult economic circumstances having a huge impact on many areas of life. However, despite progress in some areas such as digital delivery, many of the challenges of delivering better music education opportunities for young people in rural England remain.

This new research builds on the original *Gone in the Air* report, looking to explore where we are now, what needs to change and what needs to happen next. We found that many young people in rural areas love where they live, but are missing out on the benefits of musical participation that are available to their counterparts in larger towns and cities.

The music organisations and individuals who are trying to provide those opportunities identified a range of barriers to addressing this need. The report provides 15 recommendations for funders, and 10 recommendations for music delivery organisations. We hope that this report will be a catalyst for change.

The programming and research that informed this report were conducted in our previous incarnation, NYMAZ. Since our relaunch as AMP in spring 2024, this report's research will continue to inform our work around rural isolation. This project was funded by Youth Music.

Gone in the Air's 10 recommendations for Music Delivery Organisations

1. Provide more informal opportunities for young people to make music and socialise.

2. Use digital participation to address rural barriers as part of a hybrid offer to young people.

3. Develop a distinctive rural practice that responds to the local context.

4. Explore a wider scope of partnerships to support work in areas where there are few music or cultural organisations.

5. Listen to what young people in rural areas want.

6. Be proactive about developing a future workforce who are equipped to work in the rural context.

7. For music organisations based elsewhere who want to work in rural communities, local consultation is vital.

8. Consider hyper-local approaches that "go where young people are."

9. Explore co-location and hub approaches to transport issues.

10. Help develop a louder voice and higher profile for rural youth music.



Remembering Helen Mahoney



We would like to pay tribute to Helen Mahoney, who died in 2024.

Helen was a valued member of the AMP team, and contributed a huge amount to the Yorkshire arts sector. She was passionate about making change and providing opportunities for people living in rural Yorkshire, and she tackled this via many angles, which demonstrated her varied talents as a researcher and producer: via gathering evidence and research to demonstrate the challenges and solutions in both her Developing the Rural Creative & Cultural Landscape report and the 2023 Gone in the Air report; setting up a network to create connections across the arts community (Ryedale Arts and Culture Network); and making exciting things happen on the ground, like Noisy Villages gigs.

Helen was also the Director of the North East branch of Live Music Now for a number of years, during which time we shared an office at our base in Clements Hall.

Helen was a change-maker, but did all this with a gentle yet determined composure. Her contribution to the artistic landscape in Yorkshire has been huge, and will not be forgotten.

We are so touched that she chose AMP as the charity she would like people to donate to in her memory, and we are extremely grateful to her family, friends and colleagues who have contributed. We will be using these donations to establish a bursary in her memory, to support an AMP Producer for three years.



Sensory play at Little Notes.

Photo: Songbirds.

“He rated day one 9.5/10. He’d never stayed in a hotel room on his own before; he managed to stay alone all night with no disturbances.”

about a PRU Participant on Residential Trip



Conductors of the future.

Photo: Opera North.



Getting hands-on at ON Tour.

Photo: Opera North.

“R now has more confidence being in close proximity to other children and performing in front of them. He previously would avoid being too close to other young children.”

Parent from Little Notes



Joining in at Bentham.

Photo: Grace Knill.

Spotlight on Youth Voice

We believe passionately in Youth Voice, and we want to put young people at the heart of our decision making.

We want to amplify young people's voices as participants, consultants, young producers, mentors and at governance level as young trustees on AMP's and other organisations' boards. We know that begins with our own practice, and how we work with and for young people. 55% of our board are 30 or under, including our Chair. We also consulted with young people on our new brand and name – making sure that we are representing them in a way that feels meaningful to them.

As part of our work, we have been collaborating with young people, our partners network and FORGE, to create a set of Youth Voice Pledges which we will adhere to, and support our partners and collaborators across the region to uphold.

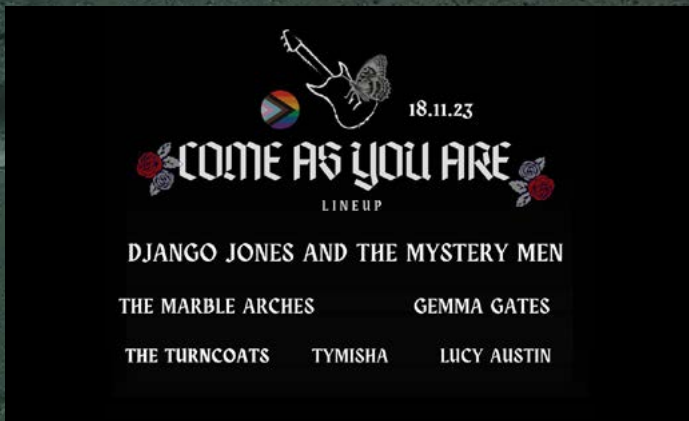
AMP Producers is our programme for young producers. We give young people the opportunity to get involved with music production and create things for their peer

group. This year, we built on the success of our Rural Fest festival, and empowered six young producers to fully curate and brand their own events.

Come As You Are music festival gave young producers the chance to programme, run and market an event aimed at their peers. It provided a platform for young artists to showcase their creativity and skills, and we hosted it in the wonderful surroundings of Tadcaster Barn, bringing a youth-focused music event to the area.

The young producers were provided with mentoring from a professional in their field. The result was a brilliant day, featuring performances from local artists as well as zine-making workshops and more.

We're pleased to say that 100% of the young producers expressed pride in their achievements. We're proud of them too!



Come As You Are was a music festival designed, programmed, produced and marketed by our AMP Producers collective of 18-25 year olds.

The event, at Tadcaster Barn, featured a range of music performances, as well as inclusive activities like a zine-making workshop.

Each AMP Producer was mentored by an industry professional, giving them a taste of a creative career. You can follow their work at the [AMP Producers podcast](#).



Above: Event poster designed by AMP Producers.

Below: Tymisha.

Opposite, top to bottom: Django Jones and the Mystery Men, The Turncoats, Lucy Austin.

All photos by CLOUDPOIZON (Kahal Mallaghan).

For Professionals

Building a support network for music educators.

We know that supporting music educators means giving them more than just resources—it means creating a community. Our professional networks have been growing, with over a thousand members and free basic membership, we love building a community of music professionals who share our aims.

Our Five a Day early years singing resource continues to be valued in schools. We've worked closely with ten schools across North Yorkshire, providing dedicated one-to-one support helping to build confidence, share best practice, and most importantly get children singing!

We continued to deliver training and CPD to professionals this year. We collaborated with 40 partner organisations and we've been thrilled to strengthen and diversify



Sharing knowledge at our Early Years Conference.
Photo: CLOUDPOIZON.

partnerships over the last year. Similarly, our digital resources, including live streams, grew significantly to 11,639 views, doubling the previous year.

We're continuing to grow our young workforce, providing employment opportunities to 78 freelancers, including 13 young people—we're at our best when we can support young artists and practitioners.

We're excited about what our future holds as AMP.

AMP Director Sarah McWatt interviewed by Ben Lee

Why have you changed your name from NYMAZ?

The name NYMAZ is very much rooted in North Yorkshire given that the NY historically stands for North Yorkshire itself. A lot of our work has grown in terms of reach, and our reputation has grown through programmes such as our digital programme, Connect: Resound. Through our youth voice work, we're getting more recognition widely, as we have given training to national organisations such as Brass Bands England, and we have presented about youth voice to the national Music Mark conference in Southampton.

Because we deliver a lot of our work in a hybrid fashion or online, it feels like our reach can easily go beyond the boundaries of North Yorkshire. Our vision and mission will be staying broadly the same. We want to continue to provide music opportunities for young people in challenging circumstances, and working in rural isolation will remain a key feature. We feel it's a more fitting, vibrant brand that reflects the energy of the work we do.

What led to being rebranded as AMP?

When we rebranded our youth led programme, we spent a lot of time talking to the young producers we worked with.

We really liked that the branding was very much led by young people. We talked to all our trustees, including young trustees, and our young producers, and AMP felt like a name that could be embedded in our youth voice identity very easily. It's a word linked to music, such as amplify. We feel that reflects what we want to do, as we want to increase our impact and grow. So, it feels aspirational as well.

Why is being a youth-led charity important for you?

If we're going to appeal to young people, what they're interested in, and the promotion of skills that would be of use to them, we need to listen to their ideas rather than decide on their behalf. It feels like a very balanced approach.

Being led by young people is just the right approach. Young people deserve to have their voices heard. That's a responsibility that youth charities should take very seriously and facilitate in a way that's confidence building for young people. All these things become positive experiences that filter into well-being, mental health, and promoting agency in your own life.

Ben Lee took part in AMP: Producers programme as a journalist, and is now a professional journalist and an AMP trustee.

For Young People

Putting young voices at the centre of our work.

We're so proud of the young people we've worked with over the last year. Our programmes have involved everyone from babies experiencing music for the first time, to 18-25 year olds taking their first steps in a creative career.

Musical Journeys: A Day at the Pond / Mausam, our educational created in collaboration with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and South Asian Arts-uk, continued to take under-5s on a magical journey. Narrated by Seetal Kaur, the resource includes four themed films, a celebration performance, and bespoke activities to make learning fun.



Having a blast at a project exploring environmental themes.

Also for early years, our Five a Day early years singing resource, developed with Flash Company Arts, continues to get children singing, building foundations for a lifelong love of music.



Experiencing A Day At The Pond live in Settle.

For Young People

This year we were thrilled to launch ON Tour, bringing Opera North directly into classrooms. Streaming from Skipton Town Hall, we brought 14 brilliant musicians from the Orchestra of Opera North right to students' screens. Led by conductor Ellie Slorach and presenter Nicholas Shaw, the programme was designed to make classical music accessible, exciting, and absolutely unmissable for Key Stage 2 pupils.

And at the end of this year we were thrilled to team up with Brass Bands England and Shepherd Brass Band for AMP Generators, our Young Women Conductors' Placement.

This gave two brilliant young female conductors, Annie Wilkins and Becky Lund, the chance to step up to the conductor's



Learning about all the elements of an orchestra.
Photo: Opera North.

podium in a world that's traditionally been highly male dominated.

Mentored by the legendary Katrina Marzella, Annie and Becky were able to embark on their journey as conductors.



Becky Lund, Annie Wilkins and Katrina Marzella at our Young Women Conductors Placement with Brass Bands England and Shepherd Brass Band.



Double Dutch at Sound Collective.

“Working independently with the school and developing skills in managing a project overall has provided stepping stones and been really helpful.”

SEND Practitioner Intern

“S now has better emotional self-regulation when things don’t go ‘his way’.”

Parent from Little Notes



Creative Activities at Come As You Are.
Photo: CloudPoizon.



Relaxed music performances for parents and carers for the project All Together Now.

Environmental impact

Here at AMP we are looking at ways to improve our environmental impact.

Having engaged in training alongside our core partners and trustees, we are proud to report that our core staff team are all Carbon Literacy Project certificate holders. Following this training, we set ourselves tasks as individuals and as an organisation to reduce our impact on the environment. This affects how we work together as a team, what resources we use, and how we design and deliver projects.

You may note that our Annual Review is now available only in digital format.

This is one way we will be reducing our carbon footprint by not using print whenever possible. We have also introduced environmental themes into our project delivery. In 2023-24 we put plans in place to deliver environmentally themed projects as part of our upcoming delivery, including ENERGY, an online concert that explores the climate crisis and helps us understand the difference we can make to the world; and a project at Welburn Hall creating instruments from recycled materials.

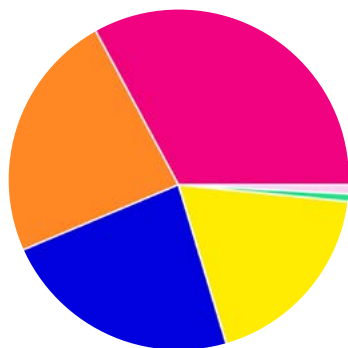
We know that this is one of the most important issues of our lifetime, and we are committed to holding ourselves to account on ways to improve our impact year-on-year.

Finance

Extract from independently examined accounts, 2023/24

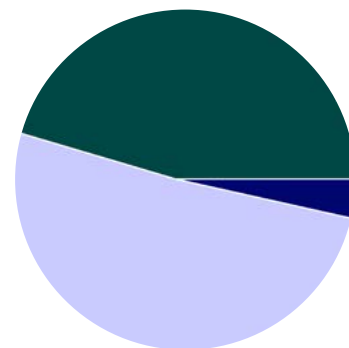
Income

Youth Music
 Arts Council
 Match funding
 Other foundations
 Earned income
 Bank interest
 Miscellaneous income



Expenditure

Project delivery
 Staffing and overheads
 Accounting and legal



Total income	£213,056
Youth Music	£70,000
Arts Council	£50,000
Match funding	£49,706
Other foundations	£40,000
Earned income	£1,529
Bank interest	£1,770
Miscellaneous income	£51
Restricted funds	£11,193
Designated funds	£6,216
Unrestricted funds	£68,666
Total charity funds	£86,075

Expenditure	£238,836
Project delivery	£108,485
Staffing and overheads	£122,005
Accounting and legal	£8,346

Extract from Reserves Policy

As AMP's operations are sustained through a combination of multi-year and single year grants [...] the Trustees also feel that it is prudent to maintain a sufficient amount in reserves to allow time to consider other options to raise money or to cover operational costs or costs associated with winding the Charitable Company down, should sufficient funding no longer be available after that date.

Our partners

Accessible Arts and Media
Arcade
BlueBoxt
Brass Bands England
Bryony Harris Music Moves
Flash Company Arts
Jessie's Fund
Live Music Now
Made With Music
Music Mark
North Yorkshire Music Education Hub
North Yorkshire Libraries
Note Weavers
Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment
Opera North
Orchestras Live
Pioneer Projects
Shepherd Brass Band
Skipton Town Hall
Songbirds
South Asian Arts (SAA-uk)
The Barn
Technology in Music Education: TiME
Wiltshire Music Connect

Our team

Sarah McWatt, Director
Teah Lewis, Programme Manager
Abby Seton, Administrator and Networks Manager
Tessa Norton, Marketing Consultant

Our funders

Arts Council England
The Ashley Family Foundation
Awards for All
The Foyle Foundation
Garfield Weston Foundation
North Yorkshire Council
North Yorkshire Music Hub
North Yorkshire Together
The Shears Foundation
Youth Music

Our trustees

Sarah Baumann (Chair from January 2024)
Helen Dawson
Rebecca Denniff
Eleanor Gill (Chair until Dec 2023)
Jonathan Gregory (Treasurer)
Sarah Beckett
Ben Lee
James McPherson
Sophie Rudge (until Sept 2023)



Little Notes at
Catterick.
Photo: Bryony
Harris.

With warm thanks to
our funders & supporters.

**YOUTH
MUSIC**






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