

# Written evidence submitted by Making Music

## Introduction to the organisation and reason for submitting evidence

**Making Music** (the trading name of the National Federation of Music Societies) is a [charity](#) (registered in England & Wales no. 249219 and in Scotland no. SC038849) and the **UK association for leisure-time music groups, with over 3,800 groups in membership (or around 28% of the total sector), comprising around 220,000 hobby musicians.**

[Music groups can be found in every area where there is population in the UK](#) and range from brass bands to choral societies, amateur orchestras to community choirs, jazz ensembles, folk groups, volunteer-led promoting societies, male voice or ladies' choirs, ukulele groups and drumming circles, Barbershop or glee clubs, saxophone ensembles and gospel choirs, and more, across the full spectrum of musical genres and across demographics in terms of participants' ages, sexes, ethnicities, disabilities and socio-economic backgrounds.

Leisure-time music groups are volunteer-led and run, 86% of them are 'kitchen-table' charities, 70% of them with an annual turnover of less than £14,500. They fund themselves with subscriptions from their participants (almost all offering concessionary rates), ticket sales on their events (e.g. workshops) and concerts (of which around 23,000 each year, to audiences of approx. 1.8 million), and individual donations and fundraising. 70% of groups break even every year, 21% make a loss, 9% make a surplus.

**Making Music is making a submission to this inquiry** in order to **make the committee aware of the significant positive role leisure-time music groups can play in the Levelling Up agenda.**

## SUMMARY

For each question, we offer more detail and examples/case studies of leisure-time music groups in the government's [education investment areas](#) and/or [Arts Council England priority places](#).

### 1. How can culture reanimate our public spaces and shopping streets?

Through regular performances and annual festivals in public spaces during retail hours

Through regular performances in city centre venues, supporting the sustainability of venues and hospitality businesses after retail hours

#### What could be done?

- Facilitate performances in public spaces, e.g. streamline red tape/licensing requirements
- Support local festivals, especially open air/public space ones, e.g. with space, publicity
- Ensure there are fit for purpose performance venues in all levelling up areas to host leisure-time music groups as well as other amateur or professional performing arts

### 2. How can creatives contribute to local decision-making and planning of place?

#### What could be done?

- Use creative activity to engage the community (e.g. workshops)
- Reach the community via trusted community organisations, such as leisure-time music groups

- Create an event for the community, in partnership with leisure-time music groups and other community arts organisations, to start building relationships and launch greater involvement

### **3. How can the Government support places without established artistic infrastructure to take full advantage of the opportunities that the levelling up agenda provides?**

**3.1** There is infrastructure everywhere – but it may be invisible to the policy maker: non-dedicated spaces (e.g. community halls), artists who are residents, a vast range of (unfunded and therefore un-counted) leisure-time music (and other arts) activity.

**3.2** Leisure-time music groups contribute to their local communities in three main ways:

- *They promote high quality local musical events for local audiences on their doorstep*
- *They offer all members of the community accessible opportunities to actively engage in music-making in their locality*
- *They actively contribute to communities with performances, social activities & fundraising*

**3.3** What support do these groups need to thrive?

3.3.1 Two kinds of affordable spaces: to rehearse/practise in (hyper-local); to perform in (size)

3.3.2.1 Local accessible transport and/or parking

3.3.2.2 Availability of sheet music of a wide repertoire, locally and at an affordable rate

3.3.2.3 A pipeline of talent from schools to leisure-time music groups, and resident professional musicians and ensembles to teach the next generation, and provide artistic leadership to leisure-time music groups

3.3.3 Music education for all

#### **What could be done?**

- Ensure that existing community spaces are maintained and new housing developments include community spaces which can be hired easily and affordably
- Develop plans for at least one large suitable first class performance venue for music and other performing arts in each Levelling Up area
- Require venues to operate two tiers of charges, with a lower one for the local community
- Ensure local transport plans include evenings; are safe and frequent; provide for parking
- Ask local authorities/library services to offer sheet music hire/provide it with a neighbouring authority in a regional hub; ask the British Library to develop a national service
- Work with the Music Publishers Association and other interested parties on lower pricing for sheet music for amateur performances, especially for modern and new music
- Put dedicated and trained music teachers into every school – they will also teach adults out of school, conduct the local choir, run the amateur orchestra, organise concerts, perform at local events etc.; benefitting not just the school age population but the entire community
- Offering every child in school the opportunity to take part in music, free/low cost, from day 1 of primary school to the last day before GCSEs or A-levels

**4. How might changes to the UK's broadcasting landscape affect investment in cultural production outside the capital, what could be the consequences be for artists and communities?** No submission to this question.

**5. How should Government build on existing schemes, such as the UK city of Culture, to level up funding for arts and culture?**

These highly effective catalysts should be required to build on and augment what is already present in a community, and there should be follow-up support for community activity initiated or supported, in order for a community to continue setting their sights high.

## 1. How can culture reanimate our public spaces and shopping streets?

There is perhaps a perception that culture could reanimate public spaces and shopping streets by taking over empty office or retail spaces in town centres. This may be helpful for some leisure-time arts or crafts activity (e.g. a temporary amateur photographic exhibition), but not for leisure-time music groups which need affordable and accessible spaces available *long-term*.

However, music groups can support the reanimation of public spaces and shopping streets in terms of **performances** (e.g. open air in squares and pedestrian areas; and indoor public areas, e.g. shopping centres, libraries, train stations), either regularly (e.g. a different group every Saturday morning) or coming together in **festivals or celebrations**, at various points in the year.

One festival which could be used as such a tool is the **(global) [Make Music Day](#)**, an annual celebration with three rules: events must take place on 21 June, they must be free to the public to attend or participate in (e.g. singing workshop), and they must take place in a public space. The city of Hannover in Germany doubled its financial and logistics support (e.g. policing, first aid) for this event, after an evaluation discovered that hosting this celebration in the city centre increased footfall by 80% compared to a normal day.

There are also many **local music festivals** which showcase leisure-time music groups, bring prestigious professional musicians and ensembles into an area, and offer local young and aspiring professional musicians accessible platforms and opportunities. Examples from our membership are [Classical Sheffield](#); the [Budleigh Festival](#) in East Devon; the [Lincolnshire International Music Festival](#); the [North York Moors Music Festival](#). These not only contribute to animating places, they also offer valuable activity and out-of-school educational opportunities to young people, including in [Educational Investment Areas](#), and adding to the Youth Offer the government wishes to strengthen in those areas and in [Arts Council England's Priority Places](#).

Some music events are part of a **wider festival**, e.g. [Creative Oundle](#) (Northamptonshire) which includes, amongst other things, a cinema and a food festival; the [Tenterden Folk Festival](#) which includes crafts; or the [West Norwood Feast](#), started as a monthly community food market which now includes musical performances by local bands (e.g. [Crystal Palace Progress Band](#)) regularly.

Such festivals and the thousands of local performances (approx. 82,000 a year across all leisure-time music groups, to annual audiences of 6.4 million) also attract audiences to town centres at times when there is no retail traffic and contribute to the economic sustainability of venues and hospitality businesses in those areas. For example, the [Turner Sims](#) music venue in Southampton find that hire of rehearsal and performance space to leisure-time music groups is a crucial part of their income as well as allowing them to connect to the local community in a meaningful way.

### **Case study from Chesterfield, Derbyshire**

*The centre of Chesterfield with its market square and surrounding shops provides a perfect location for performance in a public space and the [\[Chesterfield Philharmonic\] choir](#) has performed at local events and supported community activities in the space at its own expense. However, these are sporadic and constrained by the lack of facilities available. Performing in December in the open air with only a gazebo to protect performers from the elements, as we have done on several occasions, is best described as challenging!*

*Identifying and funding an all-year round programme of outdoor performance that is free to individual music and drama groups, supported by performance hubs in the town which are 'known' sights, and in designated safe spaces for performance would bring the arts to a wider audience, generate pride in the town and attract visitors from elsewhere.*

#### **Case study from Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire**

- *Busking - This takes place during the weekends through out summer and over the Christmas period. [Newcastle-under-Lyme Community Orchestra](#) (NULCO) does this in multiple locations across the borough; Street Busking in Newcastle town centre and Indoor Busking at Freeport Affinity Shopping Centre. These are great for community and public interaction as people will stop and listen - some even grab a coffee and to sit and watch us and enjoy with whomever they are out with. On the odd occasion we get requests whilst out playing mostly by children and young adults which we do our best to do or something similar.*
- *Public activities - before the pandemic - NULCO would put on regular community socializing events such as quiz nights, bingo nights, pop up coffee mornings and craft fairs. We found this a great way to bring the community together to meet new people and socialize.*

#### **What could be done?**

- Facilitate performances in public spaces, e.g. streamline red tape/licensing requirements
- Support local festivals, especially open air/public space ones, e.g. licensing, promotion
- Ensure there are fit for purpose performance venues in all areas to be re-animated to host leisure-time music groups as well as other amateur or professional performing arts

## **2. How can creatives contribute to local decision-making and planning of place?**

**2.1** Creative activity can be utilised to encourage and inspire people to get involved, to get a message across and to carry out consultations, e.g. through workshops using art, music, drama.

**2.2** Local grassroots groups, such as leisure-time music groups, are trusted by their communities, so contacting people that may be difficult to reach through such groups will usually bring a higher rate of success in encouraging involvement.

**2.3** Music can be used to build a sense of community where this does not exist, as a starting point for more engagement and involvement with local decision making.

#### **Case study from Maidstone, Kent**

*[Maidstone Area Arts Partnership](#) organised a concert in October 2021 to thank front line staff from statutory, private and voluntary organisations for their efforts to support the community during the pandemic. The concert involved around 250 performers from 10 performing arts organisations and 34 different organisations were represented in an audience of around 700. It was hugely successful, with phenomenal feedback.*

*It was not part of a wider community engagement activity, but it did provide a fabulous sense of community, and it would have been a great base to initiate community activity. We could therefore imagine a themed celebratory concert, perhaps linked to a creative exhibition that tells a story about a local community, and which brings all key players together, creating the*

*togetherness and feelgood factor that can kickstart a community action programme of improvement.*

### What could be done?

- Use creative activity to engage or consult the community
- To activate the community, talk to local leisure-time music groups to reach hard-to-reach audiences
- Work with the local leisure-time music (or other arts) groups to create an artistic community event which can be used to build trust and encourage involvement

### 3. How can the Government support places without established artistic infrastructure to take full advantage of the opportunities that the levelling up agenda provides?

3.1. There is perhaps too narrow a definition implied here of 'established artistic infrastructure'. We assume the question refers to *professional* artistic infrastructure, buildings, ensembles etc., because if you do not limit the definition in this way, it becomes clear **there are no places in the UK that do not have established artistic infrastructure**. It is just that such infrastructure may be made up of non-dedicated arts spaces, individual professional artists who are simply local residents, and a vast range of leisure-time music (& other arts) activity.

**This artistic activity is often invisible to the eye of the policy maker because it is almost entirely self-funded** and therefore not counted or registered in official statistics. And the buildings it uses may serve a variety of activities and therefore not register as artistic infrastructure, for example the community hall which accommodates the Scouts, the ballet class, the over-50s watercolour class, the amateur orchestra, the community choir, and regularly stages professional music and theatre events as well.

This does not mean that this activity does not need support – it does, and we believe **that it offers relatively easy and cost-effective ways in which the government could make significant inroads into its levelling up goals.**

3.2 Leisure-time music groups contribute to their local communities in three main ways:

- ***They promote high quality local musical events for local audiences on their doorstep***, at affordable prices (often free), either by local players or singers, or bringing prestigious performers and ensembles into their community, and/or giving performance opportunities to young musicians still in education or aspiring to a professional career; see for example [Haslemere Concerts](#); the [Hornsea Music Society](#); the [Leicester International Music Festival](#); the [Luton Music Club](#).
- ***They offer all members of the community accessible opportunities to actively engage in music-making in their locality***, e.g. [Over Wyre Community Choir](#), the [Buxton Community Choir](#), the [Wombourne & District Choral Society](#) near Dudley in the West Midlands, the [Newcastle-under-Lyme Community Orchestra](#), all in education investment areas/Arts Council England priority places, bringing with them all the now well-known benefits for

individuals' physical and mental well-being, combating social isolation and loneliness, enhancing skills, developing confidence, building bridges in communities ([Beyond Skin](#) in Northern Ireland), facilitating learning about musical genres, e.g. . [Pandit Ram Sahai Sangit Vidyalaya](#) for South Asian music, or [Scots Fiddle Festival](#) for Scottish traditional music

Many cater specifically or as part of a wider inter-generational group for young people, e.g. the [Traditional Youth Marching Band Association](#), or the [Young Music Makers of Dyfed](#).

These opportunities are not fleeting: they achieve their impact by being available year in year out; our members have been in existence for an average 48 years (many much longer).

- **They actively contribute to their communities**, e.g. by performing at civic events, personal celebrations (weddings, birthdays), festivals, anniversaries etc., providing social activities & support to individuals, and raising considerable funds for local charities (e.g. [Blackpool Symphony Orchestra](#) whose award-winning video of Over the Rainbow in 2020 raised thousands of pounds for the local foodbank); thus engendering pride of place and making areas desirable for residents and businesses

#### **Case study from Barrow-in-Furness in Cumbria**

[Furness Music Centre](#) operates primarily in the Barrow-in-Furness area of Cumbria, one of Arts Council England's Priority Places. It is a community-based organisation with two main strands:

*Firstly, we operate Furness Music Centre, meeting on Saturdays in term time and providing a Training Orchestra for relative beginners, a Community Orchestra and Chamber Music Group for more advanced players and a Community Choir which attracts singers with a wide range of abilities. We are an 'all-age' group, with people of all ages from 7 to 70+ participating on an equal basis, with our ensembles having players from primary, secondary and tertiary education plus adult players and singers. We aim to offer everyone an opportunity to make music together, whatever their circumstances and income. We keep our fees as low as possible (currently £30 a term for adults, £25 for under 18s for each orchestral or choral session). We also discreetly offer free places where we can identify the need.*

*Secondly, we operate FMC Juniors, which provides lessons in violin, flute and clarinet for about 50 primary age school children in Ulverston. Led by two of our members, we currently work with three schools in the area - two primary schools with differing catchment areas, and the local secondary school which has a thriving music department and which provides a venue for us to hold a primary orchestra each week in term time as an after school club. In a conscious effort to enable all pupils to access instrument lessons, we provide an instrument for the time that the child studies with us, and we teach in pairs of pupils to reduce the cost as far as possible. We are currently able to provide lessons at £17.50 a month or £70 a term, and we also provide a small number of targeted free places. We would love to expand the offering to other schools, particularly in the Barrow-in-Furness area which has more deprivation, but we are limited by the availability of capable teachers who are willing to commit the time. To provide after-school music activities, capable and qualified music teachers need to be available. Providing training for players to become teachers could be an element to support a levelling up agenda.*

*We are a registered charity and receive approximately £6,500 funding each year via Cumbria Music Hub in recognition of the opportunities that we provide for under 18s to experience and enjoy playing and singing in ensembles outside school.*

*As someone who grew up in a poor, white, working-class family, music was a key factor in my own route to gaining a degree and professional qualifications. The opportunity to sing in a highly*

capable church choir which opened up access to many other musical opportunities, made it possible for me to imagine that I would be the first of a very large extended family to go to university. I read Engineering, not music, but it was my success in music that gave me the confidence to succeed in engineering. Alongside the other trustees of Furness Music Centre, I now am putting something back into the musical life of my local community.

### **Case study from Gainsborough, Lincolnshire**

[Gainsborough Choral Society](#) have incorporated members of local school choirs (primarily Gainsborough High School) in various concerts we have put on. Also, we joined forces with 5 other local choirs (Scunthorpe and District Choral Society, Grimsby Bach or Philharmonic, Louth Choral Society, Lincoln Choral Society, Lincoln Cathedral Choir (juniors)) plus a Choir from Neustadt (twinned with Lincoln), together with the Lincolnshire Chamber Orchestra for a performance of Britten's War Requiem in Lincoln Cathedral in November, 2018, the centenary of the end of the first world war, in remembrance of those fallen in all wars.

### **Case study from Dorset**

We are [Dorchestra](#), Dorchester's community orchestra, open to all adults including those who are new to playing in a group and we are run entirely by volunteers but pay our conductor. We number around 45 members many of whom travel from outside the town (up to 20 miles or more) to be with us. We do not hold auditions and do not restrict numbers of any particular instrument. We provide a welcoming environment, providing music which is suitable for musicians who are relatively new players to those who have been playing for many years. We play on a Sunday afternoon which many people find much more accessible such as senior citizens and those who prefer not to drive at night. Our members appreciate that we only have a concert for friends and family at the end of the spring and autumn terms. This eliminates performance angst which many folk find stressful.

There is a lack of support within Dorset for small funding opportunities for adult activities such as playing music. Playing music is often a skill many adults take up later in life. Finding a suitable local group to play with is often difficult. Our main need is for help to part fund our workshops, for new music and paying for halls which enable us to follow Covid secure arrangements (many older people have co-morbidities, but can still venture out as long as they are careful), with a comfortable environment (heating, clean toilets) and large enough for our group.

*Testimonials:* "Even before the pandemic, the Dorchestra was one of the highlights of the week. I welcomed the opportunity to meet like-minded people and play in an all-comers welcome, non-elitist orchestral setting. During Covid it was a shining beacon, offering something either live or online when almost everything else had closed. For many who are perhaps rather isolated, it provides an opportunity to get out".

### **Testimonials from Norwich, Norfolk**

"I've been singing with the [\[Fine City\] chorus](#) for 6 years and it has brought great joy to my life. Just singing with others and working together to improve our performance puts a real spring in my step. Our rehearsal evenings and sing outs are high points in my life and play a significant part in my well-being. But there is a financial cost, which is sometimes a stretch for me. Any funding would be welcome which would help people in Norfolk to access this music. Norfolk doesn't seem to have rehearsal spaces and performance venues which are cheap to hire, and I would welcome the provision of a public music venue with a concert hall and rehearsal rooms."

*“The music I have enjoyed at Fine City Chorus for the last 27 years have given me a pleasure in not only improving my wellbeing and musical education, but also by creating the ability with my fellow members to present concerts around Norfolk at minimum cost, thus permitting our audiences to raise funds for very worthy charities that might otherwise not have been possible.”*

*“As an active member of a singing group in Norfolk, this has undoubtedly helped me through a turbulent time in my life and could undoubtedly help others.”*

### **3.3 So what support do these groups need to thrive?**

#### **3.3.1 Two kinds of spaces are crucial:**

- **spaces to rehearse or practise in;** spaces that are hyper-local (within 20 mins walk), accessible, affordable, flexible in terms of opening times, with storage facilities, large enough (a full symphony orchestra is up to 85 players, including large instruments such as percussion; some choirs number over 200 members), and with adequate ventilation (Covid!)
- **venues to perform in,** in a region, which are large enough to house, e.g. a choir and an orchestra performing Handel’s Messiah to an audience of up to 500 and with good acoustics

**In many areas, especially left behind areas targeted in the Levelling Up agenda, these spaces and venues do not exist, are not large enough or are too expensive for community groups.**

#### **What could be done?**

- Ensure that existing community spaces are maintained – not replaced by housing or commercial properties; and that new housing developments include community spaces which can be booked or hired easily and affordably
- Develop at least one large suitable first class venue per region for music and other leisure-time performing arts in each of the Levelling Up areas which would obviously also host professional performances and many other activities. See [Sage, Gateshead](#), for instance.
- Require performance venues, whoever their owners, to operate two tiers of charges, a lower one for local community activity, a higher one for professional activity, conferences, etc.

#### **Case study of two groups in Cumbria**

*The amateur **City of Carlisle Orchestra** is made up of a group for players of (musical exam) grade 8 and above, based in Carlisle and drawing players from across North Cumbria. We are mixed ages, and the orchestra often includes two or three talented school children. We meet to rehearse every week, under the baton of a professional conductor from Glasgow. We are a full symphony orchestra, performing three concerts a year in Carlisle, which are generally well attended.*

*The Sands Centre, the largest venue in North Cumbria, used to put on a Classical Music programme, bringing orchestras such as the Halle to Carlisle. That stopped when The Sands came into private ownership. Carlisle has very occasional visits from The Royal Northern Sinfonia (which is based in The Sage, Gateshead). We are therefore proud to be the main provider of large scale symphonic works in this region, even though lack of funds may mean we cannot afford a harpist, or a contrabassoonist!*

***Cumbria Rural Choirs** are a large choir, with singers from a wide area of North Cumbria. We aim to perform a large scale choral work, with a professional orchestra and soloists, and directed by a well-known choral conductor, every year. Our biggest problem is the lack of large venues up here in Cumbria. The Sands Centre is not ideal, too dead a sound; the Cathedral has poor lighting and a lot of pillars, restricting audience sightlines. There are no churches big enough for a large choir, full*



*orchestra and big audience anywhere in North Cumbria, from the Borders down to Keswick, from Silloth across to the Pennines!*

### **Case study from Exeter, Devon**

*We are a large amateur choral society located in Exeter with around 100 singing members and some 25 'friends'. We rehearse weekly and aim to perform five concerts in the local area each year, including two carol concerts. We are open to any adult singer who can pass a simple audition/music test and our members come from all over Devon to sing with us. Our main objects are to promote and educate the public in the South West in the appreciation of choral and other music and we work with other local music organisations in putting on our concerts. This year the choir celebrates its 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary, making it one of the oldest continually performing choral societies in the country.*

*As a large choral society we have a great deal of difficulty finding suitable venues in which to perform (and rehearse). Most of our concerts takes place in Exeter Cathedral, but whilst this is a wonderful building, it is in fact on the small side for our growing number of singers, especially if you include an orchestra. It is also expensive. This limits our repertoire and the number of members we can welcome or our ability to collaborate with other choirs, e.g. youth choirs. There is a pressing need for a purpose-built concert facility in Exeter/ the South West. This would not only enable music groups such as us to expand, perform more often and take on more collaborative concerts, but it would also enable other music groups to visit on a more regular basis, enriching the musical education and experience of local youth and the general public. Such a venue could include open spaces where local groups and schools could perform without huge charges, as happens regularly in the South Bank Centre in London.*

### **Case study from Glasgow**

*[Glasgow Orchestral Society](#) usually performs 4 concerts per year. We play classical music, have different conductors throughout the year and a very loyal membership of about 75 people. Finding suitable, affordable concert spaces in Glasgow is very difficult. We are a victim of our success because the bigger the orchestra is, the more space we need at a venue. There are lots of small, affordable venues that would be suitable for an audience but unsuitable for the orchestra. The bigger venues that can accommodate our orchestra are very expensive and difficult to book. This is the BIGGEST thing that could change relatively easily. Our venues in Glasgow; The New Auditorium, Glasgow Concert Hall and City Halls are very expensive and can only be booked 9 -12 months in advance as the professional orchestras get 'first dibs' on dates. For an amateur group that needs to plan ahead for soloists, conductors and orchestra members this makes life very difficult. You can't advertise a concert if you can't finalise the date! All it needs is for local Council groups to recognise local amateur performing groups as part of their booking strategy - we only want 4 bookings a year!*

*The cost of these venues is very expensive and Councils should have a 2 tiered pricing system - one for local amateur charitable performing groups and a higher tier for professional, corporate, business type functions. This would help amateur music groups to perform in larger venues and increase their reach in to their local communities by having the ability to increase the audience size.*

*We have one Church we play in which costs us £650 for the afternoon and evening hire. We think the cost is very reasonable. We paid to have a platform built, specific to the venue, to increase the space for the orchestra, so that we could continue to use the venue when it got too small for us. We can usually fit in an audience of around 200-250 max. The Church store the staging for us and we allow other groups to use it.*

*However, if we want to do a bigger programme that requires extra musicians, harp, lots of percussion etc, we need a bigger stage. The next venue up is the New Auditorium, part of the*

*Glasgow Concert Halls set up which costs £1,800 inc VAT. We can fit a bigger audience in, approx. 400, but that is a big jump for us. We can't charge the same ticket price as the professional orchestras, so affording £1,800 just for the hall is massive for us.*

*For us to add a choir means hiring City Halls which is £3,200. You can fit a huge audience in, but we might not always achieve a sell out, which makes it difficult to commit to. There are 2 things there, affordability but also playing to a half full hall is quite uninspiring.*

### **Case study from Chesterfield, Derbyshire**

*Having performed for over 50 years in Chesterfield, one of our greatest challenges has been to find venues that allow us to maximise our impact and potential. With no dedicated artistic venue tailored to the needs of choral singing it is very much a case of making the best of more limited venues such as local churches, schools and community halls. We currently have no venue able to accommodate our choir of 80 plus singers alongside a large orchestra and solo singers. In some venues overall safety restrictions on numbers means that audience numbers have to be limited as well.*

*Investment in the Chesterfield artistic infrastructure would offer groups the opportunity to perform in dedicated multi-function arts spaces, greatly enhancing the cultural skyline.*

### **3.3.2 Other crucial infrastructure**

**3.3.2.1 Local accessible transport and/or parking facilities**, including in the evenings, and safe and affordable enough for young people or those on limited incomes. Otherwise, some members of the community are excluded from participating in or attending events. In one example from our members, even in London which has a wealth of musical events and opportunities, bad transport links from Eltham in SE London mean young people are prevented from taking up world class opportunities just a few miles up the road from where they live.

#### **What could be done?**

- Ensure local transport plans include evenings and are safe and frequent; as well as providing for parking in areas where cars will have to be used

**3.3.2.2 Availability of sheet music** of a wide repertoire accessible locally and at affordable prices.

This used to be available easily to most communities via their public libraries hiring out sheet music at low cost and obtaining additional materials from other libraries via Inter Library Loans. However, the squeeze on library budgets in the last 10 years has meant more and more local authorities closing this provision or removing Inter Library Loans, meaning users have to buy or hire from music publishers at prices they cannot afford or end up with no access to modern repertoire.

- Supporting this provision via local libraries or regional hubs (such as the [award-winning service](#) developed in Nottingham for the county and neighbouring Leicestershire) would require little financial input beyond initial investment into a functioning self-service IT system (developed in Nottingham), which will ultimately allow the service to break even financially, whilst delivering massive positive impact for the local community
- In South Korea, music publishers have to provide a two-tier pricing system, with lower hire and purchase prices for amateur music groups; in the UK, hiring or buying music, especially modern music or arrangements of popular music, i.e. music in copyright, is often outside the financial reach of a leisure-time music group, but they could grow their participants and audiences with a broader selection of music, e.g. Music from the Movies, if it was affordable.

### What could be done?

- Ask local authorities to ensure that sheet music is part of their offering or to combine such a service with neighbouring authorities into a regional hub
- Work with the British Library to offer such a service on a national basis where local authorities are unable to continue providing it
- Work with the Music Publishers Association and other interested parties to develop dual pricing for amateur and professional performances in terms of costs for sheet music

**3.3.2.3 Pipeline of talent from schools to leisure-time music groups**, and professional musicians and ensembles resident in an area to inspire the next generation, and provide artistic leadership to leisure-time music groups (98% of them engage professional musicians, either regularly, e.g. Music Director, or occasionally, e.g. as ensembles for concerts, as players or accompanists, etc.).

- Issues with this might be geographical, here is an example from Devon: *The South West is hampered by not having any professional orchestras in the area. Not only does this mean that residents and local youth seldom have a chance to experience large-scale professional music, but the choir itself is forced to hire expensive orchestras from London, with whom we only get to practice on the day, and who have to depart very early. It is impossible to grow music and culture in the South West without also growing the local pool of musical organisations, and for some of those to be of a professional or semi-professional nature. I grew up in Hertfordshire and had ready access to the musical venues and theatres of London. As a child I would attend on a monthly basis. However, since moving to the South West I have not seen a single professional concert, opera, or play. It is no wonder that without such stimulation the musical scene in this area is so restricted and underdeveloped.*
- It is necessary to make levelling up areas attractive to live and work in, so for music professionals, one secure employed post, such as music teacher in a school, could encourage relocation, and they could then also teach adults, run a choir, perform locally etc..

### What could be done?

- Put dedicated and trained music teachers into every school – they will also teach adults out of school, conduct the local choir, run the amateur orchestra, organise concerts, perform at local events etc.; benefitting not just the school age population but the entire community
- If musicians have one secure remunerated post in an area, they will be motivated to relocate there, and provide these additional benefits to the community

### 3.3.3 Music education for all

Leisure-time music groups can have a significant impact on levelling up, including offering developmental opportunities for young people and adults not in work, but much more so if there is **free or very low cost long-term music education available to those of school age in their area**.

We welcome the government's commitment to music education shown through its implementation of the first **National Plan for Music Education** in 2012, due to be refreshed and re-published shortly, and the investment it provides. Increasing this investment to extend the length and reduce the cost of music education for all under-25s would reap discernible medium-term financial and social returns as evidenced in the 2018 [Creative Health: the Arts for Health and Well-being report](#) by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Arts, Health and Well-being.

In return, leisure-time music groups can offer educational opportunities outside school, high quality artistic experiences, performance platforms, school visits and much more, complementing and enhancing the in-school educational offer and showing a community purpose and pathways for those under-18s who will not become professional musicians (i.e. 95%).

It is undoubtedly not a coincidence that the government's Education Investment Areas overlap almost entirely with Arts Council England's Priority Places.

### **Case study from St Ives in Cambridgeshire**

*Here in Cambridgeshire we are very proud of our local chamber orchestra & our contribution to local society. We are very lucky to have the support of our local church who allow us to use the building without charge. We provide a welcoming & free place to play for our members who also offer their time for free to provide monthly chamber music recitals that entertain the more isolated locals who love to come along, have lunch in the church cafe & socialise afterwards providing people who have no-one a chance to feel part of a wonderful community. We raise money for the church where we can through asking for donations & donate an average of £150 per month.*

*Our members are all ages & backgrounds & also really enjoy the social aspect of meeting regularly to work through our favourite orchestral music. Our members do not pay a fee to belong.*

*What we, along with many other orchestras right now are struggling with is finding violinists! In the 70s & 80s there was a real boom in children taking free violin lessons at primary school. As our older members leave us, this legacy is now waning & as the cost of music tuition has increased in recent years, we are finding it more & more difficult to find younger members to replace them. Where schools do provide violin tuition, it is not ringfenced so pupils often choose wind or brass instruments instead, leaving orchestras like ours with long waiting lists before members can join us on popular instruments such as the clarinet or flute whilst there are many violin seats left unfilled (we typically need at least 8 violins to 1 clarinet). I thank Sir Edward Heath & his party for their support in the latter part of last century but can only hope our current government can see the lifelong benefits we were given & reinstate free small group violin lessons throughout primary school so that we don't lose the great amateur orchestra tradition built up over many decades. Without enough violinists we will become merely a wind band & many lifetimes worth of symphonic & chamber music will sadly be left unplayed & unreachable by many communities.*

### **Case study from the South West**

*The choir is in the process of launching a recruitment drive. However, we face a number of difficulties, most obviously due to the provision of music education. This starts in local state schools, few of which offer any music education/experience. Yet without music while young, whether through learning an instrument, singing in a school choir, or attending concerts and other performances, very few state school children will grow up to participate in music and similar cultural events.*

*Our choir aims to collaborate with local youth singers in our concerts, as we did last Christmas, teaming up with ISCA Voices, a local singing group consisting of young singers from the Cathedral. However, while the Cathedral is an elite singing institution, making the same connections with local state schools is impossible. The children simply do not have the musical education or the confidence to participate in such events. Nor do the schools have the staff free and willing to take on the organisation of musical education and collaboration. The provision of music education to state school children in this area is dire and if there is to be any future levelling up of arts and culture in the South West, it must improve as a priority.*

**Case study from Leatherhead/Surrey how leisure-time groups could contribute:**

*Leatherhead Concert & Arts Society runs weekly lunchtime concerts in the local Methodist Church. The church itself is also the rehearsal space for The Downsmen, a barbershop group, and for Leatherhead Choral Society. It occasionally hosts other musical events and has the benefit of a good grand piano. It has a more relaxed atmosphere than the nearby, larger, parish church which makes the Methodist Church a good venue for bringing new audiences to high quality musical performance.*

*The Society also has activities with Leatherhead Trinity School. These are funded by collections at the lunchtime concerts. This state primary school has 420 pupils on roll and has Church of England, Methodist and United Reformed representation on its governing body. One third of pupils are supported by pupil premium funding, and the number of SEND pupils is above the national average (England). (Source: Ofsted Report 11 June 2019.)*

*The Concert Society introduces to an audience of school pupils and teachers to high standard performers of a particular instrument or group of instruments. The performers are postgraduate, professional musicians who have been trained at the Royal Academy of Music, and similar conservatoires in the UK, Europe and around the world.*

*Teachers tell us that the pupils have rarely heard live music beyond that performed by their peers. Teaching during these short sessions will include recognition of the sounds an instrument makes, how it makes them, and the difference between a small high-pitched instrument and a larger lower-pitched one. They often pick up a rhythm and respond to it by clapping in time. The performers will play snatches of familiar tunes, whole familiar works, and whole classical pieces. There is always time for questions, and sometimes selected pupils will be able to have a brief chat with the musicians at the end of a session.*

*This work is an important, foundational part of widening youngsters' experience of live music. One simply does not know what impact it may have on a life, what expectations it may promote in a child.*

*For example, a family was out shopping in the County Mall, Crawley, W Sussex. A harpist was playing and their 5-year old daughter was intrigued. They could not get her away from the harpist. At home Heather announced that she was going to play the harp. A phase, thought the parents. It will pass. It did not. So, a few months later they sought out a harp teacher. Heather went on to study at the Royal Academy of Music, gaining both her BMus and post-graduate qualifications. She is now a working professional harpist.*

*Just one experience can form a life. At a public school, pupils are exposed to a wide variety of such experiences, providing more opportunity for one event to appeal. Funding makes this more difficult to achieve in state schools. That is the Concert Society's motivation for this project. It would be wonderful if more music, art, dance, drama and other cultural groups, professional and amateur, could take the best of their work to show school pupils the richness and the breadth of England's cultural life and encourage them to participate.*

**Case study from Perth, Scotland:**

*Music, along with other arts and cultural activities, is at the heart of the community and a proven contributor to people's well-being, mental health, self-esteem and self-expression. It is an important indicator of an area's cultural health and richness. It is relevant to the debate about levelling up, because great inequalities exist in opportunities to make, listen to and participate in music.*

*[PCM](#), as one of the network of local music societies and providers across Scotland, has experience of these inequalities. People travel great distances to attend our concerts because of lack of opportunities nearer to home.*

*The geographical inequalities have been evident in our education work taking professional musicians into schools across our region. Children in primary schools on inner-city estates and in small rural villages in particular have limited access and exposure to musical experiences and we are currently trying to target our workshops towards these schools.*

*We have found ways to keep our school workshop programme going during the pandemic by using online technology, but so far as we know they have been the only such workshops anywhere in Scotland and school isolation continues.*

*What would really help would be a community development approach at regional and national level. A small number of outreach posts could target resources on identified areas where access to arts and music is limited or problematic. This could not only underpin core activities but also publicise and build on local initiatives (like the Perth Chamber Music workshop programme).*

### **What could be done?**

- A trained professional music teacher in every school, but particularly in all the schools in the Education Investment Areas outlined in the Levelling Up paper
- They will often also – and should be encouraged – to teach and educate in music outside of school, e.g. with adults and community groups
- Offering every child in school the opportunity to take part in music, free/low cost, from day 1 of primary school to the last day before GCSEs or A-levels

## **4. How might changes to the UK's broadcasting landscape affect investment in cultural production outside the capital, and what could the consequences be for artists and communities?**

We are not making a submission to this question.

## **5. How should Government build on existing schemes, such as the UK city of Culture, to level up funding for arts and culture?**

Schemes such as the UK City of Culture and the [2022 Unboxed Festival](#) are crucial as catalysts which can kickstart the regeneration of an area. The media would usually report on the big spectacles associated with these events, but they generally also undertake and engage with a lot of grassroots activity, and in the longer-term the legacy of this is the most valuable asset created by these one-off large-scale festivals or events.

These spectacular schemes are incentives to start or incentivise existing local activity, they lift an area's horizons and if the community is activated by them, they will not allow those horizons to drop again. It is therefore crucial that such schemes include a requirement for a legacy, include follow-up support, and that the scheme or festival, whilst a one-off, builds on and augments what was already there as well as creating additional activity.

Allowing communities to have a dream and apply to plan something together, will raise their ambitions in the longer-term and would undoubtedly increase applications for arts funding from areas currently not doing so.

### **What could be done?**

- Ensure any such spectacular one-off events or time-limited schemes work with the community before, during and after the high profile media-friendly highlights end.