

Written evidence submitted by Mike Purton Recording Services

MPR SUBMISSION TO THE DCMS SELECT COMMITTEE by MICHAEL PURTON B Mus M Mus

I was for many years a professional performer and teacher (Principal Horn in the Hallé Orchestra and have played as Guest Principal with orchestras such as the London Symphony Orchestra, the Philharmonia, the BBC Philharmonic, the CBSO, the Royal Northern Sinfonia and many others). Due to a muscular problem I had to give up my playing career in 1986 and since then I have worked in both Music Education and in sound recording. I'm now retired from full time educational work and work full time as a recording producer and editor plus having a teaching position (in recording) at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester.

As well as working for a variety of labels such as ASV, BMG, EMI, Hänssler, Linn, NAXOS, Signum, SRC, Three Worlds and Warner Classics, I have my own record label MPR and run it from my house in Five Oak Green, Kent. I go out on location to make recordings but do all the planning, editing, project management etc from home. One of my specialisations is to record and release albums of British chamber music that has not been previously recorded of which there is a vast amount. I also record military bands. My British Chamber Music series includes four recent recordings of music by Arnold Cooke who lived in Five Oak Green (he died in 2005 at the age of 99). You can see what I do at: www.mikepurtonrecording.com and my recordings have received many excellent reviews.

A typical budget for me to make a recording for example of music for violin and piano over three days in a suitable venue such as Henry Wood Hall in London would be approximately:

Venue and piano hire	£3,000
Piano Tuning	£500.00
Recording Engineer	£1,200.00
Mechanical Copyright Licence*	£350.00 (if music in copyright)
Artwork and design	£350.00
Programme notes	£200.00
Manufacture	£800.00
TOTAL	£6,400.00 (I am VAT registered so can claw that back)

This includes nothing for the performers and nothing for my work as project manager, session producer and editor. The performers often accept CDs to sell at concerts in lieu of payment.

For three days' recording my work involves many hours of planning, at least 18 hours actual recording and probably between 30 and 40 hours editing, proofing the audio, organising and proofing the artwork, compiling the MCPS Licence, registering the recording with PPL, manufacturing and marketing the CD.

My recordings are also streamed and are available for download. If you download a recording you pay properly for it and you then own a copy of the recording (in your computer). When someone streams a track from one of my recordings, as rights holder I receive an average of **0.0027p per track** streamed, so someone can listen to a whole 12 track CD of mine and I receive less than a penny. I make a small amount selling CDs via my website and might sell between 10 and 20 CDs per release this way if I am lucky.

MY CDs are distributed worldwide by NAXOS via Willowhayne Recordings (a 'family' of small labels such as mine) and I receive just under £5.00 per sale, although the CDs retail at between £12 and £15 inc VAT . With average sales per album of around 300, I have to make up the difference between costs and income by obtaining grants from composer family trusts, including the Ralph Vaughan Williams Trust and contributions from the performers themselves in return for CDs they can sell and use to promote themselves. It's very rare these days that businesses want to give anything. I have a personal rule that apart from in exceptional circumstances I must cover my costs before the CD goes on sale. However I am fortunate if I gain more than £400 per release for the work I have listed above.

Per hour I am working at far below the National Living Wage.

During the 3.5 years I have been with Willowhayne (who take a small commission) I have sold circa:

Streams and downloads	425,665	Income £1,430.92 (around 90% from streaming)
Physical sales	1245	Income £6,225.00

which is divided between 12 releases. **Clearly many people are enjoying and probably sharing my recordings, but I am not receiving adequate financial reward.**

The biggest record companies mainly have shares in the major streaming companies, so they receive dividends. Small labels such as mine, who are providing a real service in recording for example in my case forgotten British chamber music, are being starved of income. It is clear that streaming has a significantly detrimental effect upon physical sales – why would you buy a CD if you can stream it or hear it without payment on YouTube?

There needs to be legislation to ensure that the streaming companies pay the rights holders properly and that consumers pay properly for the music they listen to. We can then make more recordings, pay the musicians properly other than by giving them free CDs to sell at concerts - when concerts start happening again. By creating more recordings we can also provide more income to performers, venues, recording engineers, artwork designers, the MCPS and we can provide more enjoyment to the public, plus (in my case) documenting Britain's rich musical heritage. And more tax would be paid to the State. Streaming is a rip off on a grand scale but while the consumer benefits, we the product creators are financially bleeding to death and running out of the will to create new projects.

Apart from any other reason, there is a very large amount of Britain's musical heritage that simply cannot be recorded because there is not enough guaranteed income.

If the big record companies, paid us properly for streaming, they would easily cope, **0.0027p per track** is unacceptable and I would say that 1p per track is an absolute minimum.

Michael Purton M Mus B Mus
(Mike Purton Recording Services)

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