

HIGHNOTES

The power of information

What your data tells us about the leisure-time music community • PAGE 8

A NEW CONCERT EXPERIENCE

Designing concerts for a different audience • PAGE 14

PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

How can they support music making in local areas? • PAGE 17



Support Making Music today by donating!

Share me with your group!



Making Music Awards

Census Comparison Survey

INCLUDE

*Celebrate with your very own
Original Piece of Music!*

Join the many community groups who celebrate with specially commissioned pieces of music from over 80 of today's best composers.

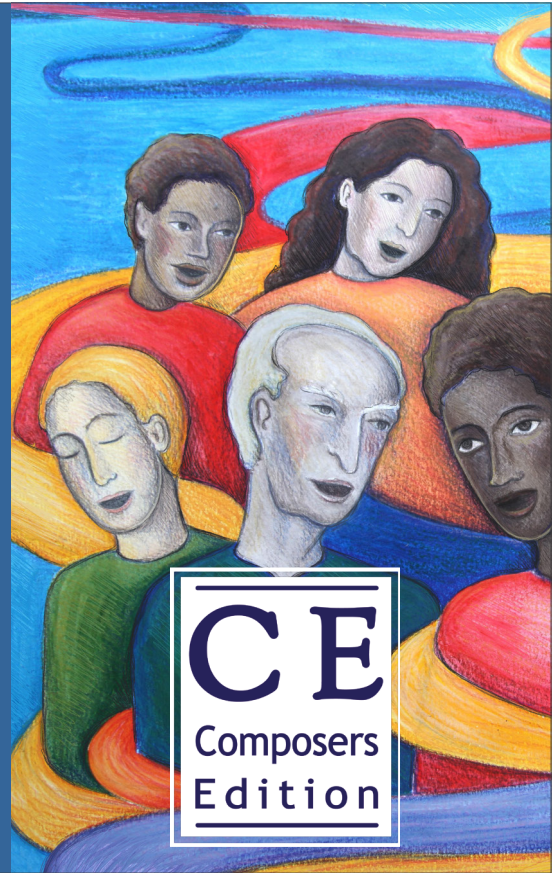
Composers Edition's supportive, straightforward commissioning service is designed to help you find the right composer and ensure you and your community enjoy a truly memorable performance.

Find out more

composersedition.com/commissioning

0330 223 0558

commission@composersedition.com



**Help
Musicians**

“

The charity supported me during my Masters and their help was absolutely invaluable. Now is an especially challenging time for musicians, both financially and emotionally, and charities like Help Musicians are vital during these difficult periods.

- Isata Kanneh-Mason
Pianist & Help Musicians Ambassador

Let the soundtrack to your life live on by leaving a gift in your will to Help Musicians.

helpmusicians.org.uk/giftinwill

020 7239 9142 | legacy@helpmusicians.org.uk



Registered Charity No. 228039



CONTENTS

NEWS

- 5 The bigger picture
- 6 Member news

FEATURES

- 8 The Big Survey 2022
- 14 Concert for younger audiences
- 17 Parish and town councils

FROM OUR TEAM

- 12 Membership and services
- 15 Projects and opportunities
- 22 Making Music people

MEMBERS

- 11 Blow your trumpet
- 19 Drop the mic
- 20 Corporate members
- 21 Readers' page

If you have suggestions or would like to contribute to *Highnotes*, please contact 020 7939 6030 or email editor@makingmusic.org.uk

The copy deadline for *Highnotes* Summer 2024 (published 1 May) is 28 February.

Any views or opinions expressed by external contributors may not necessarily represent those of Making Music

Commissioning editor: Corina Tilea
Layout designer: Nazia Tamanna

Highnotes is the official journal of Making Music, The National Federation of Music Societies, 8 Holyrood Street, London SE1 2EL
020 7939 6030
info@makingmusic.org.uk
www.makingmusic.org.uk

A company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales no. 308632

Registered charity in England and Wales no. 249219 and in Scotland no. SC038849

If you need us to make any of this information more accessible, please get in touch

£6 where sold, annual subscription £15 (3 issues)

Designed by Cog Design
Printed by Micropress

Advertising: Contact Sharon Maslen at Space Marketing: 01892 677742
sharon.maslen@spacemarketing.co.uk

Cover image: Pico Players at Cadogan Hall
Credit: Luke Toddrey, Patrick Massey



**SUPPORTING AND
CHAMPIONING
LEISURE-TIME MUSIC**

Welcome

Another year has started with challenging events, both at home and abroad.

So how do we carry on and not get weighed down by the troubles of the world?

We cannot go wrong by making music; we cannot go wrong by making music with others; we cannot go wrong by extending the hand of friendship to all who want to join in our music-making or attend our performances. And those are the things that you do!

I often remind myself that Making Music members' activity is always a positive: it improves individuals' lives, it cheers audiences, it gives pride to your community, it provides the soundtrack of your area. It's a win-win, no downsides at all.

So please go on and bring us another year of musical joy and happiness and connection with each other. And if you do have a moment of tiredness or of being ever so slightly fed up, just think that what you do makes our society a better place to live, and be proud.

Barbara Eifler

CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MAKING MUSIC

Email: barbara@makingmusic.org.uk



Photo: Barbara Eifler
Credit: Viola Halfar



For all your
music education
& *performance* equipment



Sound-isolating
Music Practice Rooms

Music Stands,
Lights & Accessories

Music Folders

Music Chairs & Accessories

Instrument & Sheet
Music Storage

Conductor's Equipment

Staging & Risers

Acoustic Products

Music Folders for Choir & Orchestra



-elegant, lightweight, high-quality
music folders to help you organise
your sheet music.

Personalised gold-blocking
service available.

www.blackcatmusic.co.uk

Just call us on Freephone **0800 072 7799**



**Sing Mozart's
Requiem
at the Royal
Albert Hall!**

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

**Join The Really Big Chorus and Brian Kay
7pm Sunday 12 May – Royal Albert Hall**

THE REALLY BIG CHORUS
championing choral singing
from 1974 to 2024

Book now – visit our website for full details: www.trbc.co.uk



THE BIGGER PICTURE



Photo:
Bristol Reggae
Orchestra

JPN CONFERENCE IN BIRMINGHAM

Making Music CEO Barbara Eifler attended this year's event and spoke at two sessions. A majority of jazz promoters and festivals are volunteer-run and have the same challenges as volunteer promoters in any genre: ageing audiences, difficulties with funding and venues to host regular events, and a lack of volunteers. The promoters were therefore interested in what support Making Music can offer. Our recent event for promoter members on ticket selling strategies highlighted their interest in our resources, connecting with others like them, both to validate their own experiences and learn from their peers. Know a volunteer promoter group? Guide them to our promoter membership benefits leaflet: makingmusic.org.uk/resource/membership-benefits

BENEFITS OF ARTS ENGAGEMENT

'Evidencing impact: what arts and cultural participation means for health and wellbeing on a population level' is the latest report by Professor Daisy Fancourt's team in the Social Biobehavioural Research Group at UCL. The strength of their work is finding ways to mine large population datasets for information in a meaningful way, leading to robust conclusions. The case of the arts benefitting wellbeing is a tremendous one. Fancourt summarised the findings at a recent event: 'Arts, culture and heritage engagement have tangible, measurable effects on public health including helping to maintain positive wellbeing, reducing the risk of developing mental health problems, maintaining good cognitive functioning, [and] protecting against age-related physical decline.' Watch webinar at: staff.living-knowledge-network.co.uk/webinar/evidencing-impact

#MakeSpaceForMusic: update

Our latest campaign raises concerns about the lack of space for leisure-time groups to meet and make music

In September, Making Music started working on its campaign to ensure music groups have access to suitable, affordable local spaces for their regular activity.

Intelligence from members shows that in many areas this crucial infrastructure is under threat of closure or negligence, due to a lack of finances or of understanding (from building owners or policy makers) of its enabling function for local communities.

As a first step, Making Music has created a leaflet (see link below) and convened an online forum for building owners and managers, to discuss challenges and work together to ensure community spaces remain available to groups.

One such challenge is the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill. Its draft was consulted on by the Home Affairs Select Committee earlier this year, and it is included

in the King's Speech for the coming legislative period. The government announced that 'ahead of introducing the Bill in Parliament, [it] will launch a consultation on the standard tier to ensure the Bill's measures strike the right balance between public protection and avoiding undue burdens on smaller premises such as village halls, churches and other community venues.'

Concerns about such undue burdens were raised by Making Music and its members, so it is good to see the government listening. We will be contacting members about the consultation in due course.

Enclosed with this *Highnotes*, please find a leaflet to take to a space you already use or one you are looking to encourage hiring to community groups. You can also download and print or share it electronically from: makingmusic.org.uk/makespaceformusic

* FUN FACT*

In Scotland, there are at least 56 leisure-time orchestras (38 Making Music members), and only 9 professional ones.

MEMBER NEWS

If you have any news you would like to share, email editor@makingmusic.org.uk



Making Music Awards 2023

Find out who came out on top at our Awards ceremony

The annual Making Music Awards celebrate the outstanding talent and contributions of the leisure-time music community. The 2023 awards ceremony was held online on 5 October and presented by our President Debbie Wiseman OBE.

The evening's first award, Best Music Creator, was presented to Richard Blackford for *Babel*, written to celebrate Camden Choir's 50th anniversary. The piece draws inspiration from the stories of Noah's flood and the Tower of Babel.

The recipient of the Best Arranger award was Fran Carter, for her arrangement of the Harry Styles song *Treat People with Kindness* for Vocal Dimension Chorus. The panel praised the message of hope conveyed by Fran's arrangement.

The Best Project (with a focus on new music) was awarded to the GSA Choir for their ambitious project, *Composeher*. The project shines a spotlight on seven female composers by commissioning each of them to compose a new

choral work.

Christopher Green of Trianon Music Group was awarded the Lady Hilary Groves Prize for his contribution to the leisure-time music scene in Suffolk and Essex for over sixty years, and his dedication as an artistic director and principal conductor of the group for 64 years.

Derwent Brass was honoured with the new Green Award for their commitment to improving their environmental sustainability by launching six sustainability pledges, aimed at helping them make a meaningful and measurable impact on their day-to-day operations.

The final award of the night, The President's Award (decided by public vote), was awarded to Brian Woodley of the Blackheath Choir. Fellow singers praised him as extremely competent and a tower of strength, whose efforts have significantly attributed to the growth of the choir. Read more at: makingmusic.org.uk/news/2023-mm-award-winners-revealed

NI CONCERT BAND ANNIVERSARY

The Northern Ireland Concert Band celebrated ten years together last October with a concert in Stormont, the Parliament Building in Belfast. Joined by Anselm McDonnell, their 'adopted' composer from Making Music's Adopt a Music Creator project, and by special guest Grosvenor Choir, this anniversary concert was a joyous celebration of ten years of music making. The group have had many highlights over the decade, including touring Spain and winning the North of Ireland Bands' Association contest twice – and now they can say they have performed in Stormont as well. It was a poignant performance, particularly as it included the premiere of their Adopt a Music Creator collaboration, a new piece called *Sometimes I Dream of Blue*. The band is looking forward to the future and to many more years of music making!

facebook.com/NIConcertBand

24-HOUR FUNDRAISER CONCERT

In September, Labrador Events partnered with the Royal School of Church Music to raise funds for St George's Church with a 24-hour livestreamed performance of Handel's *Messiah*. The church, a Grade I listed building and Handel's own parish church when he lived in Brook Street, is in urgent need of repairs as the portico has collapsed. The concert was on a 'drop-in' basis, with performers singing *And the Glory of the Lord* on repeat for 24 hours. Many eminent conductors helped by rotating conducting slots, including Making Music's very own trustee, Dr Edward-Rhys Harry. The event was also livestreamed on YouTube. The groups raised almost £10,000 and are planning a repeat performance in April. If you'd like to join them or donate, visit: labradorevents.com rscm.org.uk

FUN FACT

In the last 20 years, Making Music membership has more than doubled (1931 in 2001 to 3972 in 2022).

Member announcements



New appointments, anniversaries, awards and projects

Delia Meehan retired from the **Chipperfield Choral Society** after 32 years as their Music Director. A musician, teacher, conductor and animateur, Delia had the extraordinary ability to make every single member of the choir feel special. She said goodbye to her group with a final performance of Handel's *Messiah* last April at a sold-out concert in the Barbirolli Hall, celebrating her exceptional contribution to music. Delia will continue as a Patron of the Chipperfield Choral Society.

chipperfieldchoral.co.uk

The **Ukulele Buddies** and **North West Ukulele Project** have launched a free ukulele lending library, in collaboration with the Atkinson and Southport library. Adult members can now borrow a ukulele the same way they would borrow a book. Additionally, members get access to online resources from the Ukulele Project and a six-week beginner course with a local tutor. After the launch event in October, all 28 ukuleles went on their first loan along with all the first course places.

ukulelebuddies.co.uk

ukuleleproject.co.uk

London Oriana Choir is celebrating its 50th anniversary with its 2023/24 programme. From its humble beginnings in 1973 as an evening class, the choir has grown immensely. Highlights from the anniversary celebration include: '50 Years of Song' – a gala concert and reception, a film covering the choir's first 50 years, alumni events, raising funds for the Music for Dementia charity, a new commission from Cecilia McDowall, and more. To support their costs, you can donate at: cafdonate.cafonline.org/24023 londonoriana.com

Four choirs – **Godalming Choral Society**, **Epworth Choir**, **Horsley Choral Society**, and **Oxshott Choral Society** – collaborated on a performance of Verdi's *Requiem* at Grange Park Opera's Theatre in the Woods last September. Conducted by Sam Hayes, the sold-out concert showcased the talents of Anita Watson soprano, Kate Symonds-Joy mezzo-soprano, Ben Thapa tenor, and Alex Ashworth bass-baritone to an audience of 600 people. godalmingchoral.org.uk / epworthchoir.org / horsleychoralsociety.com / oxshottchoral.org.uk

60-second interview

Brian Woodley from **Blackheath Choir** tells us about winning **The 2023 President's Award**.

Could you tell us a little about your music group?

The Blackheath Choir is a friendly mixed choir based in Blackheath, South-East London. We perform three main events per year in St Margaret's Lee, with some additional events like carol singing for The Samaritans at Canary Wharf underground station. We aim to present a wide-ranging repertoire to a high standard. The choir was first founded as The Ascension Choir in 1971 by Andrew Wright and was affiliated with the Lewisham Adult Education Institute, rehearsing and performing in the Church of the Ascension. We changed name and venue in 2001.

Tell us about your involvement with the group?

I started singing with the choir in October 1976, and within the year was the 'go-between' of the choir and the Institute. In 1986 Andrew left and we had to interview for a new Music Director, coordinating with the Institute and the church. I was the secretary of the committee formed for doing that and I've been on it for most of the time since then. I'm now the choir's Concert Manager and I sing tenor.

60
second
interview



Photo: Brian Woodley (left front) of Blackheath Choir

Tell us about winning the 2023 President's Award. What was your reaction, considering it was down to a public vote?

I was surprised and delighted to be nominated by the choir, let alone to find out I'd been shortlisted! It was lovely to feel that I'm appreciated for everything I've done over the last 47 years. I'm very grateful to the choir members and other friends who voted for me.

Do you have any special plans/projects in the works?

We are scheduled to perform the world premiere of Fraz Ireland's *Sing Something New* in December 2023, as part of Making Music's Adopt a Music Creator 2023 project. blackheathchoir.org.uk

The Big Survey 2022

The amount of data collected in Making Music's Big Survey 2022 is huge – and incredibly useful.

First, our thanks (and apologies...) to the 913 groups that valiantly answered 50+ questions to paint a vivid picture of our membership and of leisure-time music groups. Those 913 represented 23% of our membership, a robust foundation for our analyses and conclusions.

Members also (helpfully) responded in numbers roughly reflecting our membership make-up: vocal groups (54%), instrumental groups (36%) and volunteer promoters (10%).

Versions of this survey have been running since 2001, so in some instances we are also able to compare how groups have changed over 20 years.

Who and what is the information useful for?

We are frequently asked about our members: How many groups, choirs, participants? How do they manage financially? How do they interact with professional musicians? How many events, audiences? Do they commission new music, who are their participants – and so on. The people doing the asking vary: from journalists and media outlets to

civil servants and politicians. It is great to be able to answer their questions with solid numbers – and they like that, too.

A practical use for members is that groups can find out what others are doing (from auditioning to performance times) or paying (for venues or Music Directors, for instance).

Making Music can also make use of the data for specific pieces of work. Our #MakeSpaceForMusic campaign highlights the need for local community spaces for regular activity such as rehearsals. The Big Survey supports this campaign with data on cost, what types of venues are being used, the size of groups rehearsing.

The survey also helps us identify where we could make more difference to members. One example: Gift Aid. 85% of performing groups (57% of promoters) are eligible to register, but only 65% (38%) of them are. Here is potentially a steady stream of income which groups are not using to its maximum potential – and where Making Music can help with more guidance and resources.

And what does the Big Survey 2022 tell us?

Picking just one topic – income.

Performing groups' sources of income have remained steady over the last three surveys, with the biggest chunk coming from membership subscriptions (45%), followed by trading income (32% - e.g. ticket sales, fees, advertising, programmes, merchandise). Donations from individuals (e.g. legacies, giving at fundraising events like cake sales, other donations, friends/patron schemes) have increased by 60% (to 13%), perhaps helped by Covid-19 when many participants generously supported their groups. In kind or cash support from businesses (e.g. sponsorship) was always small but has halved since 2016 (to 1.3%) and funding income, again, only ever a small, and fluctuating, part, in 2022 stood at 5%.

Take-up of available tax reliefs (Gift Aid, Orchestra/Theatre Tax Relief) has doubled, but is still tiny at 3% of income. Far more groups than the numbers currently claiming these reliefs are eligible to do so – the data tells us we have more work to do to highlight the benefits to members and help them take advantage of them.

Promoters' sources of income, on the other hand, show there has been a significant collapse of membership subscriptions (from 35% to 21% of income). This was the classic model by which promoters operated: individuals join to subscribe for

a season of concerts, giving promoters the cashflow to book professional artists. The change seen now was perhaps accelerated by Covid-19, but is mainly due to changing audience behaviours: fewer people subscribing to a season, far more booking last minute or turning up for events on the door.

To compensate, promoters have increased their trading income (to 35% from 28%) and their donations from individuals (from 15% to 22%). Funding has always been a more significant percentage of income for promoters than performing groups, and it has held steady at 17% for the last 7 years.

Where can I see more?

That was summarising just two of the 50+ questions we asked, each meriting at least as many paragraphs. We have therefore decided to break the report on survey results down into smaller chapters, so you can pick and choose the topics you are interested in, and get in-depth information on these.

There will ultimately be a short summary to highlight some of the findings, and we may also publish separate statistics, e.g. on the interaction of leisure-time music groups with the professional music sector.

Find out more at:
makingmusic.org.uk/big-survey-2022

Photo: UX Indonesia
(Unsplash)

FUN FACT

Our members between them raise nearly £1.9m a year for other charities.



TRINITY LABAN

Professional Development for Musicians at London's Creative Conservatoire

MA Music Education

MA Music Education and Performance

MEd Music Education (Online)

Creative Music Making - a one year distance learning course in partnership with The Open University

Find out more about how to grow your skills and professional practice:

trinitylaban.ac.uk/music-department/music-education



BLOW YOUR TRUMPET



Derwent delight at Green Award

Chris Leonard of Derwent Brass discusses winning the first Making Music Green Award and their group's sustainability pledges.

All of us at Derwent Brass are thrilled to have our sustainability efforts recognised by being the first recipients of the new Making Music Green Award. As we head into COP28 (the 28th Conference of Parties on climate change held by the UN) with greenhouse gas emissions still on the rise, it is important, now more than ever, that we act. Responsible practice is increasingly encouraged in business and to an extent in our home lives, so it is a very positive and welcome move by Making Music to foster this within our leisure-time activities.

We strive to lead the way for sustainability within brass banding, so it was important for us to develop a mindset that heavily influenced not just our own activities, but also that of our followers and the wider music community. At the core of our approach are six sustainability pledges

which we selected to have a meaningful and measurable impact on our day-to-day activities, covering emissions, waste, eco-alternatives and more. We launched these pledges to coincide with a full performance of Holst's *The Planets* in Derby Cathedral in 2022 and it quickly generated interest in our efforts.

By evaluating the most significant environmental aspects and impacts you make, and taking action against them, you can demonstrate a material difference. We would recommend this approach to other groups especially if, like us, you want to be credible and avoid greenwashing.

Next for us is to share more about our progress online and to begin mapping our efforts against the UN Global Compact (UNGC) Sustainable Development Goals. Once again, thank you Making Music for the opportunity and for advocating



Photo: Derwent Brass

positive climate action that isn't easy, but necessary.

Congratulations to all groups that were shortlisted and particularly fellow Making Music group Maldon Orchestra for their well-deserved commendation!

To view the band's pledges and forest, visit: ecologi.com/derwentbrass

Connecting with our community

Mike Alexander, chair of the Alnwick Music Society, shares how his group became more involved in their local community.

After retirement, I moved to Alnwick where I joined the Alnwick Music Society and, a mere five years later, also joined the committee. Our regular venue, the Alnwick Playhouse, had just closed for refurbishment, and I was tasked with finding a new venue.

This started a journey of trying to find ways to tap into the local community in engaging ways. As we waited for the Playhouse to reopen, we used different venues and tried new things, like organising a workshop for local singers led by an early music group or putting together a children's concert inspired by Roald Dahl stories.

The Playhouse reopened in 2020, which

was quite bad timing Covid-wise. I kept rearranging our concerts because it is quite important for artists to have them booked. Apart from three concerts lost that season, we managed to put on the rest. In the process we lost neither membership nor audience, because people stayed along for the ride once they saw our commitment.

The Artistic Director of the Playhouse suggested we try putting together an entire weekend of events, which is how the Weekend Festival of Music came to be in April 2023. We branched outside our regular repertoire with genres like jazz, folk and opera, and involved local groups and musicians, plus well-known national and international professional

musicians and young artists. We staged a number of interesting events, like a silent film screening with live piano music, violin and piano masterclasses, and an open stage event for any local performers who wanted to share their music.

The festival attracted over 1,000 people, and it made a big difference on how we're seen in the community, and how we operate with the local music groups. I'm thoroughly enjoying my retirement as part of Alnwick Music Society!

To find out more about the Alnwick Music Society, visit: alnwickmusicsociety.co.uk

MEMBERSHIP AND SERVICES

Helping you get the most from your membership

CONTACT US

info@makingmusic.org.uk / 020 7939 6030

Census Comparison Survey

A new tool to help you get to know your community



Understanding the demographic make-up of your members or audiences and how this compares to your local area can be helpful. It will show you who you're already doing a good job of engaging with, and who you might be missing out on. This data can help you when planning where to target your recruitment efforts or where you could apply for funding.

You can access demographic data about the population of your local area in the government's UK Census. Making Music has created a Census Comparison Survey to help you easily collect data from your group that you can compare with the UK Census data. This is an online demographics survey that you can send to the people that interact with your group so they can anonymously tell you about themselves.

The Making Music survey includes questions on: age, gender, gender

identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, country of birth, disability, employment status, and highest level of qualification. Every question is optional, so people can answer as much or as little as they feel comfortable with.

If you've never explored the data from the UK Census before, don't worry - we've also produced resources that guide you through how to find data from the census for your area.

We've developed this tool as part of the INCLUDE programme. If you have any suggestions about how we can make this even more useful for you, please get in touch via include@makingmusic.org.uk

Access Making Music's Census Comparison Survey at: makingmusic.org.uk/resource/census-comparison-survey

CHARITY COMMISSION TEMPLATES

To reflect the changes being introduced by the Charities Act 2022, the Charity Commission have published updated template constitutions for organisations wanting to register as CIOs (Charitable Incorporated Organisations). Any group wanting to apply for CIO status in England and Wales will now need to adopt one of the new Charity Commission models to do so. Any organisation that already has CIO status is not required to convert to one of the new versions, but may choose to do so. This change was brought into effect from 1 November 2023 and more information can be found at gov.uk/government/publications/charity-commission-regulations-charitable-incorporated-organisations-constitutions-2023/guidance-changes-to-the-cio-constitutions-in-the-regulations

NEW online resources

- MMSafe safeguarding service
- Financial policy template

Corporate members

- YOURACCOMPANIST

Access and inclusion resource

- Removing barriers to participation

Webinar recordings

- Climate Change Network
- Social prescribing

UPDATED resource

- Recommended rates for engaging professional musicians

For all resources visit makingmusic.org.uk/resources

FUN FACT

Being part of a leisure-time music group is affordable: you can join more than half of our member groups for a subscription of between £5-10 a month.

CONTACT US

info@makingmusic.org.uk / 020 7939 6030
We are here Monday to Friday 10am to 5pm

Spring events

- Inclusive marketing and communication
- Treasures meetup
- Northern Ireland member meetup
- Scotland member meetup
- Wales member meetup
- Marketing skills

Save the date

- Thurs 15 Feb, 5pm: Climate Change Network

For all current events, confirmed dates and how to book your **FREE** place, visit:

makingmusic.org.uk/events

Corporate members

ChoirCommunity is a digital marketplace for choir music of all types. They are partnering with the Royal National Lifeboat Institution to celebrate their bicentenary in 2024 with the 'Sing To Save Lives' initiative, and a large repertoire of maritime-themed music is available for free on their website, including two specially-commissioned pieces.

Visit choircommunity.net

Naxos offers two fantastic resources: Naxos Music Library, with nearly three million tracks, and Naxos Works Database, with over 150,000 programme notes and biographies to help you with your group's programming and learning needs. Making Music Members receive 20% off Naxos Music Library, and 30% off Naxos Works Database. To redeem your discount, visit makingmusic.org.uk/naxos-discounts

New members

A warm welcome to our 53 new members who joined between 16 July to 15 November!

Barrow Male Voice Choir

Birmingham Jazz

Bournemouth Youth Marching Band

Brass Sounds Inverclyde

Bristol All Voices Aloud Choir

Bristol Chamber Orchestra

Cancer United's OutSingCancer Choir

Canford Cliffs Community Choir

Cantorion Colwyn Singers

Cardiff Baroque

Chiltern Chamber Choir

Clyst Valley Choral Society

Colliers Wood Chorus

Concord

Contrast Steel Band

Dales Jam

East of England Musical Theatre Orchestra

Farmers' Choir Northern Ireland

Fellas Male Voice Choir

Giocoso Concert Band

Greenalls Brass Band

Harborough Singers

Joyful Voices

Leighton-Linslade Gala Orchestra

Les Conteurs Singers

Lochaber Music for All

London Video Game Orchestra

Manchester Balalaika Society

Manx Festival Chorus

Meon Valley Orchestra

Molesey Musical Theatre

Mosaic Orchestra

Myriad

New Mills Band 1812

North Norfolk Sinfonia

Northern Rose Voices

Osmotherley Brass Band

Our Lady of The Assumption and The English Martyrs Youth Choir

Plymouth Community Orchestra

Sangstream Productions

Saxon Drain

Shefford Community Choir

Sine Nomine

Sing 4 Life

Sound Company

The Raffidy Dumitz Band

TheFunkyChoir

Uckfield Concert Brass

Warboys Voices

Warwick Orchestral Winds

Waves Of Harmony

Wight Diamonds Marching Band

Wyre Forest Chamber Choir

Designing a concert for younger audiences

Bradley Wilson, conductor and trumpeter, talks to us about his work with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra in designing a new type of concert experience.

The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra's (CBSO) Youth Ambassador programme is an opportunity for young people (aged 16-21) to curate, programme and promote a concert with no creative restrictions.

I was one of ten young ambassadors for the 2021-2022 academic year. We spent the first few months in workshops, learning about concert programming, marketing and finance. The goal was to take all our newly-gained skills and organise our own concert for March 2022.

We had to settle on a specific goal for this concert, and chose getting a younger audience through the door – we felt we could empathise with what people our age wanted to see. The regular CBSO audience tends to be older, and tackling this would be a battle between pleasing that pre-existing audience and trying to do new things to attract a different audience. Also, people tend to become set in their ways and don't want to listen to new music, especially if concert tickets are price-prohibiting – if you can only afford one yearly concert, you're going to see something you know you'll enjoy.

We initially started by picking out the music, but found that limiting, because then all other aspects of the concert had to fit around the music. We refocused on creating the concept first. We asked ourselves, 'what do young people like doing?'. Many young people like going to nightclubs – what is it about nightclubs that's not obviously different to concerts, but you wouldn't necessarily consider? Well,

many nightclubs have multiple rooms playing different music in each. We decided to recreate that with a three-part concert, each part themed around a different style of music, with its own look and atmosphere. We called our concert 'Triptych' and took the audience on a journey: from an unseen choir singing in complete darkness, to a brassy, epic fanfare, to a concerto for turntables.

CBSO's marketing strategy was to use printed brochures and Facebook ads, but those weren't going to reach the audience we wanted. We instead focused on Instagram and TikTok and printed posters with deliberately little information to get people to scan the QR code to find out more. We also reduced the ticket price to £5 to remove any affordability barriers.

We tried to give it a festival vibe, and talked to the audience during the performance. To break the expectation of people leaving straight after, we asked them to attend the after-party at the bar, which had a live brass ensemble. Front of house reported the highest number of attendees at the bar for any CBSO concert.

This experience taught me that music was not the most important thing for getting a younger audience in – it's how you frame and market it, and all the things you do around it to make an immersive and accessible experience.

Read Bradley's full blog at: makingmusic.org.uk/news/designing-concert-younger-audiences

Photo: Mr Switch closing out the Triptych concert
Credit: CBSO

'We initially started by picking out the music, but found that limiting, because then all other aspects of the concert had to fit around the music.'



PROJECTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Keeping you up to date with projects and programmes



An update on our INCLUDE programme

Making Music launched INCLUDE, our new inclusion-focused programme, on 25 September 2023. We held an online launch event that featured presentations from our members groups and sector experts on a range of topics relating to access and inclusion. It was great to hear from member groups Bradford Festival Choral Society and Alnwick Music Society about some of their inclusion work and the positive effect this has had on their groups.

We also introduced the four music groups that will be taking part in INCLUDE, and they are:

- Great Bowden Recital Trust (North Northamptonshire)
- Luton Choral Society (Luton)
- Cancer United's OutSingCancer Choir (Arun)
- Scunthorpe and North Lincolnshire Concert Society (North Lincolnshire)

We aimed to select groups that reflect our membership: two vocal groups, one instrumental, and one promoter, and they cover a range of styles, musical genres, and ask for different levels of experience from their members.

Over October and November, our INCLUDE manager visited each group to set baselines for their work, identify their challenges and opportunities, and start to get to know their communities. We used the Making Music Census Comparison Survey to investigate how their membership compares to their local area and what they might like it to look like in the future.

We'll continue to share updates about INCLUDE over the next 18 months, including blogs from the INCLUDE groups.

Watch the launch event recording: makingmusic.org.uk/resource/include-webinar

ADOPT A MUSIC CREATOR: A 2023 RETROSPECTIVE

Our flagship project has now inspired over 120 works and performances by music creators and leisure-time music groups since beginning in 2000. Our 2023 cohort of groups and creators is no different, with new pairings collaborating to create ambitious new music.

Over in Northern Ireland, Anselm McDonnell collaborated with the Northern Ireland Concert Band to create *Sometimes I Dream of Blue*, a percussion-heavy rhythmless experiment for the band's 10th anniversary.

In London, Joshua Kaye premiered his new piece *Notes on Joy* with Orchestra of the City, inspired by joyous stories shared by the ensemble. Also in London, Fraz Ireland and Blackheath Choir worked together on *Sing Something New*, a series of celebratory snapshots. Meanwhile in Surrey, Peter Falconer has created an energetic and optimistic piece to celebrate the resilience of leisure-time ensembles with the Band of the Surrey Yeomanry.

On the Collaborate Pathway, Georgina MacDonell Finlayson joined the Shenstone Roses and Shenstone Singers to create *Salt of the Earth*, a song celebrating strong women of the Black Country, past and present. The second Collaborate Pathway was between Robin Fiedler and her two groups Camden Brass Band and Regent Brass Band, who collaborated on a piece that evokes an adventure comic book experience.

We congratulate our 2023 cohort for a very successful year of music making! Find out more at: makingmusic.org.uk/AaMC

FUN FACT

There are around 13,800 leisure-time music groups in the UK. Making Music represents around 29% of these.



**CALELLA & BARCELONA,
CATALONIA (SPAIN)
OCTOBER 24-28, 2024**



**Early Bird deadline:
March 18, 2024**

**Registration deadline:
May 27, 2024**

VIAJES TAURO
50 años de experiencia

AN INTERKULTUR EVENT

Ajuntament
de Calella

SING-FOR-GOLD.COM

how to make

your choir

sound



SCAN ME

awesome

the ultimate vocal warm-up book

Lucy Hollins & Suzzie Vango



**Sing
for
Pleasure**
Shaping Choral Futures

**CELEBRATING
60
YEARS!**

SfP celebrates its 60th Anniversary in 2024 with a year-long programme of events. Come and join us!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- 10-11 Feb: London Weekend for Conductors & Singers
- 1-2 Jun: Bromsgrove Weekend for Conductors & Singers
- 10-17 Aug: Summer School at Keele University
Including new music and a celebratory dinner!
- 2-3 Nov: Manchester Weekend for Conductors & Singers
- 22 Nov: SfP60 Schools' Day, (Manchester & online)
- 23 Nov: SfP60 Conference, Manchester
With sessions on: singing and arts policy; singing and health; singing in schools and community settings.

Plus more events to come - keep an eye on our website!

www.singforpleasure.org.uk



What do you know about parish and town councils?

Alison Reeves, Deputy CEO, discusses how parish and town councils can support their local music making activities.

As part of Making Music's advocacy and lobbying work, we've been building our understanding of democratic structures. Following events on government and local authorities, we turned our attention to local councils in October, and hosted an event for members to find out more about their structure and role, and how members can better interact with them to the benefit of their group and their community.

There are 10,000 parish, town and community councils in England collectively known as 'local councils' (700+ in Wales), the first tier of local government. 35 million people in England are represented by over 100,000 elected councillors, with new councils being set up all the time. They receive a small share of council tax to re-invest in their communities, with the largest receiving over £1m and the smallest only a few thousand. No part of the country is obliged to have a local council – about 30% of England does, and 70% of Wales (Scotland and Northern Ireland don't have local government at this level).

So how can these councils support music making and events? Their core purpose is to improve the communities they serve, and we all know how music can do that. Some councils are proactive in organising events you could take part in. We heard from Will Austin, town clerk of Bridport, about how they support local events with funding, box office support, practical support (road closures, stewarding), promotion, and how they

prioritise the inclusion of local artists. Some have grants to support your activity, such as a council in Lancashire that supported a music group for children with grants and rent-free space. Grants are simple to apply for, if you can demonstrate the impact and reach of your proposal.

But local councils also make decisions that could affect your groups, so knowing how you can influence them is important. They can support and build the facilities and venues you use, by accessing other funding and loans and including spaces for music in neighbourhood plans. Some councils own and run spaces and parks, and we've learned that local councils in Wales are taking over more of the management of these from local authorities. They can develop cultural strategies and include culture in their budgets, as in Bridport, committing to supporting its development.

At our event we met local councillors, who reminded us that councillors live and work in the communities they serve, so they understand and care about the area and are great allies. They are easy to access through council offices or their websites and you are always welcome at council meetings, so approach them to see how you can work together.

To learn more about applying to be a councillor, visit: nalc.gov.uk/our-work/local-elections
Watch our webinar at: makingmusic.org.uk/resource/webinar-influencing-councils

Photo: Mathias Westermann (Pixabay)

* FUN FACT*

Members spend £25m a year on 50,000 engagements of professional musicians.

EXPLORING MUSIC

Readers tell us about the music they love. Email editor@makingmusic.org.uk

Jukebox

Readers share how a particular piece of music inspires them

Photo: Rosemary Arber with singing teacher Chloe Spencer



Summertime, from 'Porgy and Bess' George and Ira Gershwin, Du Bose and Dorothy Heyward

Inevitably it will be the words of a song that grab my attention although, of course, the music must also

have emotional appeal. I need to be able to conjure a setting and story for the piece.

Many songs do all of this but *Summertime* from the opera 'Porgy and Bess' is a song that I have loved since my teens. It

speaks to me of the longing of slaves for a better life, especially for their children. It's a hot summer's day with the singer imagining a scenario far different from their actual existence. The melancholy in the music is belied by the uplifting nature of the words – especially the triumph of 'One of these mornin's you goin' to rise up singin', spread yo' wings an' you'll take the sky'. A free and wonderful future with the love of 'Daddy an' Mammy' always there for support.

My love for this song was particularly reinforced when my granddaughter performed it totally unaware of my attachment to it!

Then, my wonderfully inspiring singing teacher Chloe Spencer helped me to enjoy my own rendition. What more can you ask of a song?

Rosemary Arber
Windsor Soundswell Choir
windsorsoundswell.co.uk

Bespoke performance tours across the UK, Ireland & beyond

Sound Escapes UK PERFORMANCE TOURS

New for 2024! Choir Tours to Europe
 France, Belgium & The Netherlands

View the 2023/24 tour brochure

PTS Protected Trust SERVICES

Tel: UK 0044 (0) 115 874 6396
www.soundescapesuk.com

[f](#) [t](#) [i](#)

Rehearsal Orchestra

Orchestral repertoire courses for advanced players

Weekend courses in London and Manchester plus Edinburgh summer residential week

"The Rehearsal Orchestra does invaluable work on the quiet and with the minimum of fuss."
 Sir Simon Rattle

Artistic Director Levon Parikian

Follow us on Facebook [Twitter @RehOrch](#)

rehearsal-orchestra.org

Registered Charity Number 237816

LYNOAKES

LOOKING GOOD, SOUNDING GREAT.

- SUPPLIERS OF QUALITY CLOTHING TO CHOIRS AND BANDS.
- EXCELLENT SELECTION OF COLOURS AND CLOTHS FOR JACKETS AND TROUSERS.
- EXTENSIVE RANGE OF ACCESSORIES AVAILABLE.
- FULL EMBROIDERY SERVICE.
- FULL OR PART SUPPLY.

WE VISIT AND MEASURE AT YOUR CONVENIENCE.
 PLEASE CONTACT US TO DISCUSS YOUR NEEDS.

Tel: 01298 827360 | Web: www.lynoakes.co.uk | Email: sales@lynoakes.co.uk

DROP THE MIC

If you have any software, hardware or performance tips you would like to share, email editor@makingmusic.org.uk



Music notation software

Jenni Pinnock, composer, discusses software for music notation



Finding the right arrangement of a piece can be a challenge for any group, and it's sometimes easier to arrange our own. There are some free options for basic notation production, but let's look at paid solutions with more sophisticated features.

Sibelius (£90-£169/year, subscription model) has been on the market for around 30 years, and it was acquired by Avid in 2006. The original development team went on to create **Dorico** (£85-£497, one-time purchase), a next-generation notation programme owned by Steinberg.

Starting with the basics, both solutions guide you through the process of starting a new score. In Sibelius, you can select note values via an onscreen keypad, and enter notation via mouse click, keyboard or MIDI input. The keypad can help with voicings, articulations and rests, while more complex elements can be accessed via the top menus. However, these can be quite tricky to navigate, and leave you hunting for that one button you're after.

In contrast, Dorico modes

– setup, write, engrave and play – mean the workspace is less cluttered, and features are generally easier to find. Notation entry has more flexibility, and most of the commonly used features are available via the main panels.

Both solutions automatically create parts from larger scores. Sibelius tends to require more tweaking to ensure all the right elements end up on the right part, whereas Dorico tends to require less editing. Both are highly customisable though, letting you change layouts to make scores and parts suit your needs.

They both have a variety of pricing options, as well as mobile apps and stripped-down free versions (**Sibelius First**; **Dorico SE**). As a long-term user of both, Dorico is hands down the winner for me – its intelligent features mean I spend more time arranging. Try them out to see which works best for you!

If you have any software, hardware or performance tips you would like to share, email editor@makingmusic.org.uk

Photo: Sibelius logo (left) and Dorico logo (right)

HOW TO MAKE YOUR CHOIR SOUND AWESOME

How To Make Your Choir Sound Awesome is a one-stop resource for choral directors. Using their decades of conducting and vocal coaching, authors Lucy Hollins and Suzzie Vango have created something great here, thanks to engaging presentation and a focus on vocal pedagogy.

Winner of the Choral Publication of the Year at the Presto Music Awards 2022 and finalist for the Outstanding Music Print Education Resource 2024, this book cleverly combines warm-ups for the body, the breath and the voice into an intuitive mix-and-match format. Any director should be able to open this book and use it instantly in their next rehearsal! Exercises are shown in easily-described stages, with info on technical benefits and desired outcomes. This is followed by brain workouts and songs from around the world.


I'm struck by how practical it is, even down to providing piano chords as accompaniment to the exercises. If I had a criticism, it would be that both authors are best known for working with younger singers in a broadly classical tradition. While this book should be widely applicable, a few exercises may be less useful with older participants or in other genres. Overall though, this is an enabling and confidence-building resource, and I will definitely be using it!

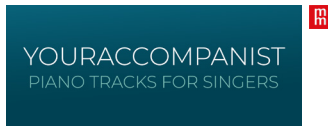
Review by soprano Felicity Hayward. You can find more information about Felicity at: felicityhayward.co.uk
Purchase your copy of the book at: howtomakeyourchoirsoundawesome.com

FUN FACT

Tchaikovsky would hold his chin with his left hand while conducting with his right hand because he had an irrational fear that his head would fall off.

PREMIUM CORPORATE MEMBERS

Our corporate members play an important role in supporting leisure-time music. Member music groups can use exclusive discounts, subsidies and offers (indicated by  below) to save on everything from sheet music to booking artists and making recordings. For more information, visit makingmusic.org.uk/discounts



youraccompanist.com



ticketsource.co.uk



gb.abrsm.org/en



thechoralhub.com



naxosmusiclibrary.com



choircommunity.net



halleonardeurope.com



musicgurus.com



composersedition.com



pml.org.uk



accustom.com



steinberg.net



trybooking.com



rayburntours.com

CORPORATE MEMBERS



CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

360 Music 
 Black Cat Music
 Entertainment Nation

Gig Heaven
 Last Minute Musicians
 Music Tutors Online

Opera Anywhere
 Score Exchange
 The International Music Exchange

READERS' PAGE

Got something to say? We'd love to hear from you: editor@makingmusic.org.uk

Coming out to your music group

I'm writing about my own experience 'coming out' to my own choirs.

To put that into context, I have been crossdressing for even longer than I have been singing. But although my singing has been in public for 60 years, my crossdressing was a guilty secret for many years. It became public when Michelle was 'born' in September 2007, not long after I joined Exeter Festival Chorus. In November 2013 Michelle had a day out, but my train back was late and it was choir night. I had time to either grab some food or get changed. I emailed the chairperson (who already knew about Michelle) and she was happy for Michelle to come! It was with considerable trepidation that I walked in, but the reaction was overwhelmingly positive, even more so when they read my grateful email to the choir the following day. Only after my retirement in late 2018 did I begin going to rehearsals regularly as Michelle.

The rest, as they say, is history. Since then, I've done

four concerts as Michelle. My colleagues in the choir are so welcoming, so supportive that it is doubly pleasurable - singing AND being out as Michelle.


What began in November 2013 as an evening of quivering nerves and near panic has become a wonderfully self-affirming leisure-time activity. I would urge you to be as open-minded as my choirs have been. We aren't freaks, we're not dangerous, we're not a threat to other women - we're just trying to live a life doing the sort of things other people do.

My closing plea would be, to quote St Luke's gospel - 'Go, and do thou likewise'.

- Michelle

Read the full version of this blog at: makingmusic.org.uk/news/coming-out-your-music-group

Read our resource at: makingmusic.org.uk/resource/working-transgender-singers



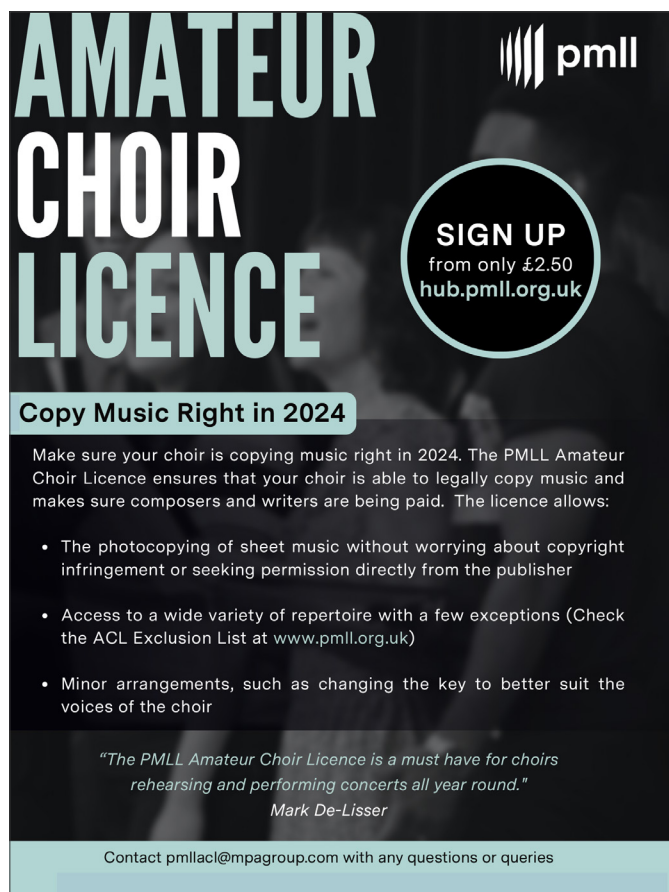
BENSLOWMUSIC

Are you a choral society, chamber ensemble or concert band looking for a place to rehearse or even to run your own course for the weekend?

Benslow Music is located just thirty minutes by train from central London. Our stunning campus offers a range of fully equipped practice spaces, ensuite, standard and shared accommodation, four acre gardens and locally sourced fresh produce.

CONTACT [BENSLOWMUSIC.ORG/HIRE](https://benslowmusic.org/hire)

Benslow Music, Benslow Lane, Hitchin, Hertfordshire SG4 9RB
Contact: info@benslowmusic.org | 01462 459446



AMATEUR CHOIR LICENCE

SIGN UP
from only £2.50
hub.pml.org.uk

Copy Music Right in 2024

Make sure your choir is copying music right in 2024. The PMLL Amateur Choir Licence ensures that your choir is able to legally copy music and makes sure composers and writers are being paid. The licence allows:

- The photocopying of sheet music without worrying about copyright infringement or seeking permission directly from the publisher
- Access to a wide variety of repertoire with a few exceptions (Check the ACL Exclusion List at www.pml.org.uk)
- Minor arrangements, such as changing the key to better suit the voices of the choir

"The PMLL Amateur Choir Licence is a must have for choirs rehearsing and performing concerts all year round."
Mark De-Lisser

Contact pmlacl@mpagroup.com with any questions or queries

MAKING MUSIC PEOPLE

Meet the people behind the scenes

BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

CATHERINE TRAVERS

TRUSTEE



What attracted you to the role?

I've seen the call for trustees from Making Music several times and always wanted to apply – and then finally, I had the time to do it! I'm passionate about how music making, at every level and of every kind, lifts the spirit, forges connections and enriches life. Becoming a trustee feels like a great opportunity to use the skills I've gained in my career to benefit the musical community we all value so much.

What do you do for a day job?

I've been working in educational publishing for two decades. These days I work freelance or take fixed-term contracts to better fit with family life. Most recently I did a maternity cover as Head of Researcher Training Solutions at Springer Nature. I led a team delivering training for scientific researchers, with a particular focus on improving the digital accessibility of our e-Learning.

What are some of your hobbies/interests outside the arts?

I have two young children and don't have a lot of time for hobbies beyond music – but if I had more time, I'd fill it with reading, travel, community volunteering plus the odd long-distance hike. Although in reality I'd probably just end up doing more music!

Tell us about one of your favourite pieces of music and why?

This one is easy! I picked *Scheherazade* (Rimsky-Korsakov): I used to dance around the lounge to it as a child and whenever I hear it still makes me want to sway. I also picked *Black Jack Davey* (Steeleye Span), which reminds me of childhood car journeys with my family, along with several angsty/cathartic offerings by Radiohead/Muse etc. I'm a sucker for almost any Requiem too. Though most recently, I've had the *Hamilton* soundtrack on loop - each time I listen it seems to get even better.

STAFF MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

ELIZABETH PALMER

INCLUSION FOCUS PROGRAMME
MANAGER



When did you join Making Music?

June 2023.

What does your role involve?

I manage the INCLUDE programme, which is a new project. I'm working with four of our member groups to help them explore how they can include a wider range of people in their regular activities. Everything we learn will help us create new resources to support all our members.

Where did you work previously?

I've always worked for a couple of different charities since graduating from university, but my last job was for the youth charity Scouts, supporting its growth in new communities.

What attracted you to work for Making Music?

I studied music at university and wanted to work in music, and I have a real admiration for the work done every day by volunteers that run leisure-time music groups and other community groups across the country. When the opportunity to work for Making Music came up, it seemed like a perfect combination!

Do you play or sing yourself?

I play the flute in a wind orchestra and I sing in a choir, both based in Yorkshire. I enjoy both of these as they've given me the opportunity to meet other musical people and perform in some really cool concerts!

If you had to pick a favourite piece/song/composer, who/what would it be any why?

I absolutely love Tchaikovsky's music, especially his *Swan Lake* ballet, as his music is full of beautiful melodies and drama. It's always been a dream of mine to perform this in an orchestra.

viscount *Classical* organs

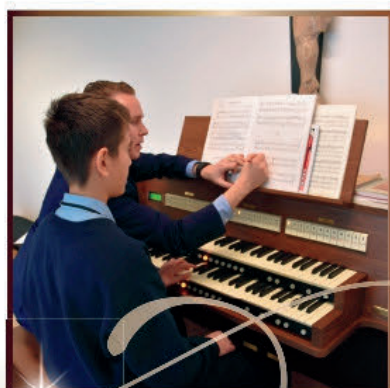


FACILITATING MORE PLAYING TIME FOR YOUNG MUSICIANS

For more than 16 years we've worked with music schools, teachers, students and parents to select the right practice instruments for their needs. We're pleased to have welcomed The Guildhall School of Music, Swansea University, Radley College, and King's College as customers over the years.

While we're best known for the selling and hiring of high-quality digital church organs, you may not know how deeply vested we are in creating more opportunities for young players to enjoy our instruments. We are committed to keeping organ music alive through the next generation of organ players and sponsor various young organist initiatives.

Interested in an organ for your school? Get in touch, we'd love to hear from you. We are all organists ourselves and can walk you through instrument needs, specifications and assist with budget discussions.



Your Trusted Digital Organ Partner

The UK's leading provider of digital church organs
to churches, cathedrals, schools, music teachers, organ scholars and home users.

Viscount Classical Organs, Prestige House,
23 Telford Road, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX26 4LD

T: 01869 247 333 E: enquiries@viscountorgans.net
www.viscountorgans.net





TM

SIBELIUS FOR MOBILE

Create and edit music on the go, in the classroom, and at home

Built on the award-winning Sibelius desktop application

Work directly on Sibelius on an iPad – not a render of the score

Go between desktop and iPad without any conversion process

Changes shared across the desktop, the cloud, and mobile app

Touch gestures and Apple Pencil support add new flexibility



Regular and educational pricing available at:

