



**SUPPORTING &
CHAMPIONING
VOLUNTARY MUSIC**

Making Music
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The Duchess of Kent *Patron*

Bethan Sayed
Chair, Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
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1 August 2018

Dear Bethan,

I was delighted to meet you on the 14th June at the Senedd for the launch of the report *Hitting the Right Note*, following the Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee's Inquiry into funding for and access to music education.

I understand that you weren't aware of Making Music at the time, and therefore I have included an overview of who we are, and why we are getting involved. On the following page, please find Making Music's response to the report.

About Making Music

Making Music, founded in 1935 and a registered charity in England, Wales and Scotland, is the UK wide body for leisure-time music groups, numbering in membership over 3,400 such groups (representing about 190,000 individuals), of which 168 (or over 9,000 individuals) in Wales.

Our members are: 59% vocal groups (choral societies, community choirs, gospel choirs, youth choirs etc.), 28% instrumental groups (amateur orchestras, brass bands, folk and ukulele groups, jazz ensembles, handbell ringers, drummers and more), 13% amateur promoters (presenting professional musicians, but run and programmed by a volunteer committee).

We support the leisure-time music sector with practical services and musical resources, by celebrating and highlighting their achievements, by commissioning research and collating data, and by speaking on their behalf on a range of issues which affect them.

Why we are writing

Our groups are overwhelmingly made up of over-18s – as an organisation we're about adult leisure-time music groups. But time and again our members tell us of their concern about the current lack of access to music education for under-18s, quite often comparing what is available to today's young people unfavourably with the chances they themselves had as children.

Our members feel that having had musical opportunities at an early age has proved of immense benefit to them in their adult lives as individuals, deriving social, physical and mental well-being and many other benefits from their musical activity (benefits now well documented by a variety of academic studies).

Their communities are benefitting, too: community-based and –led music groups such as theirs help to make places worth living and working in, bringing communities and generations together, celebrating and generating civic pride, amongst other benefits.

Members' concern therefore is that today's under-18s will not be able to take advantage of these benefits if they are not able to access music education and instrument tuition at a young age (and accessibility for many young people means that this has to be free), and that consequently music in the community, and communities themselves, will significantly be impacted in future.

Thus Making Music has a mandate from its members to make sure that their concerns are heard in the right places and by the right people – including those, such as yourself, who are able to act on the Hitting the Right Note report and really make a difference to young people's lives, and by extension to the future communities they will come to live and work in as adults.

Making Music Response:

I wanted to congratulate you first and foremost on a report that feels like a rousing call for change within music education in Wales. There are some bold recommendations within the report that will require organisational shifts and big change, probably not before time. Whilst we are aware there has been some discontent about a few of the suggestions in the report, we feel that this is a step in the right direction.

However, **implementing the recommendations will require adequate funding to make them work**, an issue I'm sure you're aware of, but that is the main concern we have about what has been put forward.

I have highlighted some of the key recommendations below, which particularly resonate with Making Music.

Recommendation 1 – transferring responsibility to a national arm's length body

We agree that this could be a good option to ensure the delivery of music education is of a high standard and equitable across the board. It does require adequate funding, and also accountability measures - appropriate (not tick-box!) ways of evaluating for outcomes agreed with the right stakeholders in music and music education.

If there is any current organisation in Wales to take this duty on, NYAW would indeed seem best placed to do so. However it would mean considerable change to the organisation, and we have therefore become aware of concerns from within current local authority music services that NYAW would struggle to take on this huge responsibility. As well as delivering such a new body and making it effective, it therefore seems paramount that the expectations of staff within current delivery services are carefully managed, and their opinions sought and considered via proper consultations.

Recommendation 2 – a Welsh Government National Action Plan for Music

We agree that this would be a positive step forward, and that the creation and regular review of it should be entrusted to a group of expert key stakeholders. This should lead to a more joined up approach amongst different providers and available activities, something which we would welcome, as well as demonstrating the Welsh government's commitment to this important area of education.

Recommendation 6 – more joining up with the music sector

I work for a number of different organisations with expertise in music and music education, including Only Boys Aloud, Tenovus Cancer Care, and Making Music. The expertise of these charities is currently under-utilised and could make a greater contribution to young people's music education.

Recommendation 9 – more funding for instruments

It was great to see the government has pledged £10,000 to each local authority, in order to help with musical instrument costs, however we are pleased that you agree that this is a mere drop in the ocean, and does not nearly meet that actual requirements of local authorities. Making Music's recent survey on music education also identifies the cost of instruments as a major barrier for under-18s (and indeed for over-18s, too).

Recommendation 12 – less traditional forms of music and rock/pop national ensembles

Encouraging the teaching of less traditional forms of music means more young people will discover a genre of music that they can be passionate about, and will increase the grassroots participation which can later feed into community-based music, but also into the professional music sector in Wales. Having just attended a concert with Only Boys Aloud Academi, I can't begin to tell you how amazed I was that the boys were singing

in Punjabi, as well as Welsh and English. We owe it to the children to educate them properly on what is out there!

Recommendation 14 – national ensembles representative of all social groups

Ensuring that every child gets the same experience and opportunities is imperative, but will heavily depend on the amount of funding provided to implement the recommendations in this report. For many young people, access that requires any financial contribution from their families means they will miss out on instrument tuition and music education early on and therefore will never be in a position to apply for these ‘top of the pyramid’ national ensembles.

This inquiry is obviously the result of a long road, where you and your team have worked tirelessly to provide a sensible solution to a really big problem. Thank you from Making Music and from me personally for your efforts. As a professional musician myself, I cannot thank the music services and the people who have given me all the opportunities I had whilst growing up in Wales enough. I hope that these recommendations are accepted and implemented swiftly. If there is anything that either I, or Making Music can help with please do let me know.

Diolch o galon,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Iori Haugen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Iori Haugen
Manager, Wales
Making Music