

### Topic 3 – Development activity, including musical

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#### OVERALL SUMMARY

This report highlights a range of development activities our members undertake.

In terms of musical development, it seems many groups can either not afford or are not convinced of the benefits of programming music in copyright or by living composers, or commissioning new music themselves. Making Music is looking to instigate more research, alongside the case studies it already has, on such benefits. We will also be advocating for making sheet-music for new pieces more affordable to hire or buy, and for better information on - and publishing of - living and more diverse music creators.

A new question about arranging existing music for groups to perform highlights how significant that is for many. There is more to be done to make arranging more accessible, to educate groups on how - and when - to seek permissions, and to showcase and celebrate those who excel at this most crucial skill for many leisure-time music groups.

For the first time, too, we asked a question about booking of EU based artists - and as expected this has dropped substantially post-Brexit.

The report also shows UK groups do not engage much with activities outside the UK, e.g. touring, linking up with similar groups abroad or attending festivals or competitions, potentially a funding issue. However, they do show enthusiasm for collaborations in their locality or within the UK.

How to select participants for a group? Auditions feature, but there is a variety of ways in which groups assess new participants' musical experience, with processes accessible to all.

For the first time, we also asked about members' engagement with diversity and inclusion. This was still patchy at the time of this survey. Since then, Making Music has created a programme of work to help members understand how there may be barriers faced by potential newcomers to their groups, and how they have it within their grasp, even as a time-poor volunteer-run group, to dismantle or minimise some of these barriers successfully.

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#### 1. Musical development

## 1.1 Performing music in copyright, performing music by a living composer

### **Performing groups (3,572 in 2022); how many concerts a year contain at least one piece of music in copyright/by a living composer**

Key: **yellow** - all concerts; **blue** - more concerts with music in copyright/a living composer in this category than there are in all concerts; **green** - fewer concerts with music in copyright/a living composer in this category than there are in all concerts

Concerts per year	All concerts	Concerts music in copyright	Concerts living composer	Percentage all concerts of this number	Percentage copyright music concerts	Percentage of living composer concerts	Percentage copyright concerts compared to all	Percentage living composer concerts compared to all
0	0	0	0	5.8%	15.7%	21%	+171%	+262%
1	891	955	1180	5.5%	10.5%	15.3%	+90%	+178%
2	2305	1709	1374	14.2%	18.8%	18%	+33%	+27%
3	3719	1293	1066	23%	14.2%	14%	-38%	-39%
4	4216	1709	1275	26%	18.8%	16.6%	-28%	-36%
5								
6	1850	824	721	11.4%	9%	9.4%	-21%	-18%
7								
8	3231	2610	2065	20%	28.7%	27%	+43%	+35%
9								
10								
11+								
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16,212</b>	<b>9,100+</b>	<b>7,681+</b>					
<b>Perc. all concerts</b>		<b>56%</b>	<b>47%</b>					

### **Promoters (400 in 2022): how many of your concerts each year contain at least one piece of music in copyright/by a living composer**

Concerts per year	All concerts	Concerts music in copyright	Concerts living composer	Percentage all concerts of this number	Percentage of copyright music concerts	Percentage of living composer concerts	Percentage copyright concerts compared to all	Percentage living composer concerts compared to all
0	0	0	0	n/a	7.4%	8.7%	n/a	n/a
1	11	53	116	0.02%	13.2%	29%	+560%	+1350%
2	22	141	186	0.04%	17.6%	23%	+340%	+475%
3	33	212	209	0.06%	17.6%	17%	+193%	+183%
4	296	471	296	5.7%	26.5%	16%	+365%	+181%
5								
6	882	141	35	17%	6%	1.4%	-65%	-92%
7								
8	3951	471	186	76%	11.8%	4.3%	-94%	-99.5%
9								
10								
11+								
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5,195</b>	<b>1,489+</b>	<b>1,028+</b>					
<b>Perc. all concerts</b>		<b>29%</b>	<b>20%</b>					

Music remains in copyright for 70 years after a composer's death, so some of the music in copyright performed here will not be new as such, but there will still be royalties going to the composer or their estate if they are no longer alive.

There are two stories in these data.

The good news - 1:

Making Music Members represent around 30% of the sector (with reference to the 2008 'Our Creative Talent' report by Arts Council England and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport), meaning there are 28,000-33,000 concerts a year by leisure-time music groups or presented by volunteer promoters which include at least one piece of music in copyright and/or a piece by a living composer.

The good news – 2:

30% of groups and promoters feature at least one piece still in copyright and/or by a living composer in at least one or two concerts a year.

A further 30% (43% for promoters) respectively feature such pieces in 3-5 concerts annually.

But that is very little good news if you consider that only 20% of performing groups (and fewer than 1% of promoters!) have only 1-2 concerts a year, 80% perform 3+ times (and 99% of promoters put on 3 or more concerts a year).

**Only 56% of concerts (29% for promoters) feature at least one piece of music in copyright and only 47% (20% for promoters) one by a living composer.**

To note: this does not examine how long these pieces are or what percentage of the actual concert programme they make up.

These questions were not asked in the same way in 2016, so comparisons have to be made cautiously. However, it does seem that there are now fewer concerts with music in copyright and/or by a living composer, both for performing groups and promoters, than there were pre-pandemic, which is concerning. It is unclear whether that is a specific Covid effect (e.g. 'playing it safe' programming-wise post-pandemic) or a consequence of fewer concerts during the two Covid years, and 2022 (the year of the survey) still being felt by many groups as a recovery and untypical year.

Overall, the percentages of concerts featuring new(er) music seem low. So what could be the barriers? The main one raised by members is cost – whether that composer is dead or alive. Performing groups are literally counting down the years to 2027 and 2028 when Sibelius and Vaughan Williams come out of copyright.

For living composers, apart from cost, lack of information anecdotally appears to be significant. It is not always easy to find out about newer repertoire – composers nowadays choose many avenues to publish and disseminate their work. There is no recognised central 'repository' of information. Furthermore, it can be difficult to find sheet music for some.

For promoters, though, whilst there is the cost of royalties for performances of material in copyright, there is not the difficulty of finding, evaluating the suitability and procuring newer repertoire – the professionals they engage will have done this work and will have such pieces in the programmes they offer promoters. This seems to suggest that promoters deliberately choose older repertoire to present or rather ask the professionals they engage to focus on such older repertoire.

There is a potentially interesting side story – though difficult to be sure of, due to small numbers. It seems the groups performing fewer concerts per year (2-5) (probably larger classical repertoire amateur orchestras and choral societies) are less likely to include at least one piece of music in copyright compared to groups doing 6 or more concerts a year.

- This could be because the frequent performers are either very large groups (e.g. national youth groups) better able to finance the use of music in copyright
- Or because the frequent performers are often ones such as community choirs, Barbershop choruses, brass bands, concert bands and single-instrument groups (e.g.

flute choir) with less out of copyright material or indeed much material in general available to them, meaning they will rely more on new music and new arrangements

- Those kinds of groups would also usually play/sing a greater number of short pieces per concert (versus a full symphony, for instance, or a classical oratorio, which would be each usually at least 40 minutes long). Music in copyright will therefore also be more affordable for them.

## Comment

Part of musical development and interest in a leisure-time music group for both participants and audiences is the performance of music in copyright and by living composers. Case studies of members (e.g. [Sheffield Philharmonic Orchestra](#), [Orchestra Tax Relief case studies](#)) show existing and new participants and audiences are attracted by music groups and concerts featuring newer repertoire. Standing still, musically speaking, may be more affordable in the short term when considering the cost of sheet music or royalties, but in the long run could endanger a group's sustainability if participants drop off and audiences stay away.

Groups have to balance their books – and they are not funded at all for the most part, nor do they want to charge their players or singers an inaccessible subscription to take part, or their audiences unaffordable ticket prices. Yet with the help of small funding applications and the use of, for example, creative tax reliefs, more expensive musical planning is possible.

But that is only part of the story – groups need to understand why such engagement with more recent repertoire is essential, not just musically, but for the continued sustainability of the group. So this area would benefit from further research to back up individual case studies with some larger numbers.

As far as promoters are concerned, their deliberate focus on older repertoire may be to satisfy what they perceive as their current audience's preference. Whilst keen to reach new and younger audiences, they seem to focus their programming on their current, older, audience which is gradually disappearing. Without programming for a future audience, they could well face an existential threat in future.

## What will Making Music do?

- **Continue to organise two events a year to focus on recent repertoire, including what is available, where from, and what the benefits of programming it are**
- **Seek to encourage or commission more research and/or case studies on the effect of new music on recruitment and retention of participants and audiences**
- **Continue to negotiate with individual corporate members, e.g. publishers, for discounts for members**
- **Start a fresh conversation with the Music Publishers Association about discounts for leisure-time music groups on new music**
- **Keep celebrating and highlighting PRS for Music's 50% discount for amateur groups**
- **Work with classical promoters in particular to consider programming**

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## 1. Musical Development

### 1.2 Commissioning new music and arrangements

***Performing groups commissioned just under 500 new pieces of music each year over the last five years. However, it seems that 30% of members were responsible for that commissioning, and 70% did not commission at all.***

We don't know how long these pieces are and how much these commissions are worth in monetary terms to the professionals. Indeed, some of this new music will be written by participants in the groups or by their musical leaders either for no payment or as part of their wider contract with the group.

It is also worth noting that that is a decline compared to the 2016 survey (approx. 700 pieces per year), particularly if considering Making Music's increased membership numbers between 2016 and 2022 (+25%). We do need to remember though that 2022 was still heavily influenced by the fall-out from Covid.

Performing groups also commissioned around 1430 arrangements each year over the last five years. This question has not been asked previously, but with an increase in membership of non-classical and more varied instrumental groups in particular (e.g. brass bands which rely heavily on arrangements), this seemed an important matter to find out about.

As with commissions of new music, a small percentage of members, in this case 25%, are responsible for commissioning arrangements, 75% of members don't use them.

Again, we don't know about the length of these pieces or how much an arranger was paid for them; even more so than new commissions, many of these will have been done by the musical leaders of the groups. And this work is crucial for many groups, allowing them to engage with a wider repertoire, repertoire written for different forces or voices, etc., but the skills are not widely recognised or celebrated. Hence Making Music's introduction of an annual award for best arrangement for a leisure-time music group.

***Promoters*** commissioned just over 60 pieces of new music per year over the last 5 years; this would indicate an even steeper decline compared to the 2016 survey (from 140 pieces a year) than for performing groups. It could be to some extent that different cohorts responded to the survey, but nonetheless this seems an alarming turning away from commissioning. And it is 24% of promoters who are responsible for all the commissioning, 76% of promoters do not commission.

It may be that funding (or rather the lack of available funding) bears most of the responsibility for this.

### **Comment**

There will be barriers to commissioning new music which are financial, but they also centre around fear of an unknown result and sometimes a lack of confidence from the musical leader of a group who is the chief facilitator for such commissioning, acting as lynchpin between the group of hobby musicians and the music creator. These issues we know can be addressed successfully by Making Music's long-running Adopt a Music Creator programme. Whilst only pairing a handful of groups and music creators, the project leaves a legacy of increased confidence for both parties, and the learning is also cascaded to groups and music creators not themselves involved in one of the funded projects.

Arrangements, though, are huge – our findings will be but the tip of the iceberg and hide an important and little acknowledged contribution to the leisure-time music sector by very skilled professionals. There is no doubt that there are arrangements that 'work' and ones that don't, but there has been little focus that we can see on supporting, developing or indeed celebrating these skills and these professionals.

The reason much of this arranging is likely to be hidden and under the radar may be due to the uncertainty around how and when to seek permissions for arranging, what qualifies as an arrangement and how to ensure that all involved – the original music creator and the arranger – are fairly recompensed. Hence the popularity of the 'Arrange me' portal by publisher Hal Leonard which gives arrangers confidence that everything is 'above board'.

Promoters seem to have noticeably withdrawn from commissioning new music, and that will be to a great extent related to cost. But more research will be needed into the barriers to commissioning for both promoters and performing groups.

### What will Making Music do?

- **Keep working with member groups on the value of commissioning new music and help them develop the confidence to do so successfully**
  - **Celebrate arrangers, perhaps, rather than individual arrangements, in Making Music's annual awards**
  - **Run an event about arranging annually**
  - **Seek to raise the profile of arranging as a musical skill and to encourage specific training or mentoring to widen the pool of musical leaders and others to increase arranging skills and experience**
  - **Continue to run the Adopt a Music Creator projects, but finding increased ways of disseminating the learning and positives to those not directly involved**
  - **Run a focus group on barriers to commissioning with promoters; take action from the findings**
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## 2. Building connections

### 2.1 Touring (performing groups only)

75% of groups are not planning to tour in the next three years; 12% are considering it; and 12% will tour, abroad or within the UK.

In 2016, the question was asked retrospectively, i.e. whether groups had toured abroad in the previous five years. Similarly to 2022, 75% had not; but of the rest, 14% had toured once, and 11% 2-5+ times, so for many this was an annual event. Also, domestically, a third had visited a different part of the UK with their group.

Clearly, Covid played its part in disrupting this for a few years. But there may be other factors at work: touring, unless there is funding, is an activity for groups whose members can afford to pay for the travel and accommodation. It is likely, therefore, that groups which are unable to subsidise members' participation prefer not to tour, in order not to create a two tier choir or instrumental group.

Costs will also have risen dramatically since Covid, and Brexit consequences will have made some touring harder or at least more complicated – e.g. taking instruments to Europe (carnets may now be required which are not just tiresome to complete but also cost money), groups being paid for performances abroad etc..

### Comment

For a number of years now, Making Music has realised, through connections with similar networks in Europe, that UK based leisure time music groups are not engaging with their counterparts in other countries to the extent that those in other countries interact with each other.

For instance, Interkultur, the company which organises international choir events, festivals and competitions throughout the year and throughout the world, shows no UK choirs featuring in its next two events (at time of writing) and in its world choir rankings, UK choirs only appear 6 times in the top 300, and 4 of these are youth choirs. It is also difficult to find any UK orchestras involved in international amateur orchestra festivals, such as those run by the European Orchestra Federation or Eurorchestries. To note though that UK brass bands do compete (and win) in the European Brass Band Championships regularly.

Funding may well be a part of that, especially for access-conscious UK groups; and perhaps small funding pots for the purpose of touring and/or engaging with international festivals and competitions may work wonders.

It is clear where groups do undertake such activity that it cements their internal group relationships, ups the game on the team spirit and on their musical performance, as well as helping groups gain confidence through comparison and acclaim from non-UK groups, audiences and adjudicators (in the case of competitions and adjudicated festivals).

Many of the arguments for competing advanced in the UK, e.g. by brass bands, would also apply to non-UK competitions, showcase festivals and touring activity in general, in that they offer a goal to work towards, encourage technical development and enable the social aspects of a leisure-time group to flourish.

### What Making Music will do

- **Keep seeking out and disseminating member case studies on the benefit of touring, competing and attending UK or non-UK festivals**
  - **Offering connections to such activity abroad**
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## 2. Building connections

### 2.2 Collaborations and exchanges (performing groups only)

For the first time, we asked **performing groups** if they were interested in connecting with groups abroad, e.g. to organise an exchange.

Whilst 53% are a straight 'no', 9% - i.e. 321 groups or so – are interested, and 27%, or 964 groups are a 'maybe'. 7% already have such connections, that is, 250 groups.

We also asked about the appetite for collaborations with other groups, another activity, like touring and attending festivals or competitions, which help groups build connections, validate and compare their own activity, and amplify their reach and impact.

36% of them already do – that would be a whopping 1286 groups; and 51% were either interested or a 'maybe'.

A note of caution – a number of comments referenced the difficulties which can be experienced when engaging in collaborations and some have been put off by having had a negative experience.

### Comment

That half our members are interested or already connect with similar groups in other countries, that a third already collaborate with other groups and a further half are interested in doing so – these are hugely encouraging data. They show that despite barriers to touring or travelling, groups are finding ways and are spending effort on connecting with others in the UK and abroad.

The numbers would suggest that this is a useful area for Making Music to explore in terms of further resources (we already provide a collaboration template) or signposting to relevant organisations and events for members to facilitate them building such connections to develop their group and inspire their participants.

### What Making Music will do

- **Explore ways to signpost members to facilitate UK or international connections**
- **Explore a greater connection with Interkultur (organisers of international festivals and competitions), to bring such an event to UK or encourage member attendance outside the UK; and with other international festival organisers, e.g. European Orchestra Federation**
- **Explore further helpful resources on collaborations**

- **Find and disseminate more case studies on connections and collaborations between groups**

## 2. Building connections

### 2.3 booking overseas artists (promoters only)

This is the first time of asking this question, to establish whether post-Brexit regulations were causing any issues for our promoter members.

#### Do you book overseas artists for performances?

Yes - EU (about the same number now as before Brexit)	26.76%
Yes - EU (fewer since Brexit)	19.72%
Yes - EU (only before Brexit)	11.27%
Yes - from beyond EU	19.72%
No	33.80%

These data seem to suggest that 31% are now either booking fewer EU artists or stopped doing so altogether.

This is to the loss of local audiences, but our promoters, being volunteers, have quite clearly stopped doing something which is now proving too difficult and/or expensive.

## 3. Auditions (performing groups)

Just over half of members (51% in 2022) have no entry requirements, the other half do - but they are quite varied. We ask this question to find out whether and how member groups select participants musically. In 2016, 58% were not auditioning in any way. Both times, 7-8% of groups re-auditioned regularly.

In 2022, we asked for some more detail. (Respondents were asked to 'tick all that apply'.)

We audition once on entry	20.19%
We have a trial period	26.36%
We have a recommended entry standard, e.g. Grade 5 and above	19.25%
Other (please specify)	5.98%

This illustrates that auditioning is not the only way in which groups select potential participants. Notably, 6% select differently to the options listed above, including via voice/voice placing tests, by invitation or by recommendation. A number specify that they operate different systems for their different constituent member groups, e.g. if they run a youth group (non-auditioned) and an adult group, or a community band and an orchestra etc..

## 4. Engagement with issues of equity diversity and inclusion

This is the first time we asked this question. We want to track how many of our members are taking action to widen the diversity of members in their groups, and if this increases as Making Music puts more time and resources into guiding on access and inclusion.

#### ***Does your group plan and take action to include a broad diversity of people?***

Answer	Performing groups	Promoters



Yes, this is a key priority for us	6.6%	12%
We have a plan (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion or something similar), but we would like to do more	11.5%	10%
We have talked about this but don't have a plan or taken action yet	34.6%	38%
We haven't considered this	38%	32%
Other (please specify)	9.2%	9%

An encouraging 18% of **performing groups** were already taking action at some level to ensure their activities and performances are open to a wide range of people in their communities when this survey was run in 2022. A further 35% had considered, if not yet tackled, the topic.

However, this means that nearly 50% had not looked at this issue yet at all.

Since asking this question in 2022, Making Music has delivered a structured program of events, projects and resources to support members with dismantling barriers to new participants and audiences, so it will be interesting to see what the next iteration of this survey shows on this topic.

**Promoters** are a step or so ahead - with 22% actively engaged and a further 38% having considered the topic but not acted yet. Only 32% had never yet looked at this challenge.

But note that the open comment responses to the survey suggest many performing groups and promoters believe that this issue is not crucial for them and do not see it as related to what they perceive to be their most urgent problem, namely the recruitment and retention of participants and audiences.

### Comment

18%/22% active engagement and a further 35%/38% with this topic on their radar - this is impressive in particular because Making Music member groups are run and organised by volunteers who not only have day jobs and/or many other commitments in their life, but also are primarily involved in a music group to play or sing or present concerts. Yet if they agree to help organise matters, they also find themselves having to deal with money and health & safety, contracts and venues, social media, constitutions and much more.

And one of those additional things, which often doesn't seem to be as pressing as finding the sheet music for next term, making sure everyone knows which bandstand to go to on Sunday or that there are enough ushers for the concert, is that of access and inclusion. Is this really necessary, or urgent?

Well, probably not today, but perhaps tomorrow and almost certainly the day after: when groups start looking to the long term, to their sustainability, they will quickly stumble across barriers which may stop new people attending their activity or events, remaining in the group, joining the committee... Discovering and removing these barriers will then become urgent, to prevent their group from folding.

Our understanding is that there are two barriers for members engaging with this topic.

The first is understanding how fundamental it is or could be to the future of their group - how, however inadvertently, there clearly are or must be barriers to taking part in their activity or attending their events or surely their group would have enough members and plenty of audiences.

The second is understanding that they are not powerless. If they look at access and inclusion through the lens of users facing barriers, then groups understand that barriers are things which can be dismantled or minimised, and which they have it in their power and capability to dismantle or minimise. They may not be able to fix music education, but they

can do something practical about making their concert accessible to those who have not benefitted from much music education, in the way that they describe and communicate it, for instance.

### **What Making Music will do**

- **Disseminate the learning from the current INCLUDE project**
- **Keep seeking out and publishing case studies on the impact of engaging with issues of access and inclusion**
- **Continue running events and publishing resources on access and inclusion, to help members understand what thinking about this can bring them and to enable them to take practical action**

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