



# Power of Music

A plan for harnessing music to improve our health, wellbeing and communities



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# Foreword



**Nadine Dorries MP**

Secretary of State for the Department  
for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Over the last two years, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on many people's physical and mental health. Thanks to the huge personal sacrifices we all made, as well as a successful mass vaccine rollout, we are now able to deal with the virus in a very different way: moving away from government restrictions and towards personal responsibility. Now we must turn our attention to the long-term rehabilitation of our personal wellbeing, local communities, and national health.

In my previous role as Minister of State at the Department of Health and Social Care, I led on mental health, suicide prevention and patient safety. In that role, UK Music and Music for Dementia invited me to help kickstart this Power of Music project. At the launch meeting last April, we shared moving personal stories of how dementia had affected our families and friends. I was incredibly touched to hear how music can be used as a powerful tool to help care for patients, staff, and families alike, and it was clear to me that more should be done to understand the social value of music as well as the opportunities it presents.

One year on, I am delighted to introduce the outcome of this work in my role as Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). Having consulted across a number of sectors and individuals, this report presents a number of recommendations. These include proposals for establishing a cross-government taskforce to respond to the Report's recommendations, brought together by a Power of Music Commissioner appointed to spearhead this work.

Since arriving at DCMS, I have seen first-hand the positive impact music and the creative sectors can have to improve lives. That is why we put the creative industries at the heart of our COVID-19 recovery plan and committed £2 billion to the Culture Recovery Fund during the pandemic. It is also why we continue to see the creative sectors as key to our levelling up aim of unlocking the potential of left behind towns and cities. This Government knows what music and the arts mean to people, and we appreciate it is something the UK is truly great at. I look forward to working with you to harness the power of music and boost its untapped potential to support health and wellbeing.



**Neil and Nicky Utley**  
Founders and Trustees,  
The Utley Foundation

The Utley Foundation is a private family foundation established by Neil and Nicky Utley to make a difference to causes close to their hearts. In 2018, the Foundation established the Music for Dementia campaign.

UK Music and The Utley Foundation are proud to present this report and are grateful to the many organisations and individuals who got involved and had their say in its production. The result is an exciting vision for the future, with practical recommendations about how we, as a country, can use music to make us all healthier and happier.

Harnessing the power of music is a cause dear to the Utley Foundation's heart. Since 2014, the Foundation has invested almost £3 million in the music and dementia movement and established the Music for Dementia campaign. A personal playlist can become a point of connection for family members and friends. A visit from a music therapist can calm a person in A&E. Knowing to sing someone's favourite tune at bathtime can help a carer in their work.

Practical lessons like these from music and dementia organisations are combined in the report with lessons from across the music sector, from those working in mental health, music education, music therapy, the music industry and musicians themselves.

Born of partnership, the report is a rallying cry for what can be achieved if we all work together to share the power of music and presents a blueprint that, if followed, will weave music through the nation's COVID-19 recovery plans.

# Chapter One: Why Now and What's Needed?



**Jamie Njoku-Goodwin**  
Chief Executive  
UK Music



**Grace Meadows**  
Campaign Director  
Music for Dementia,  
The Utley Foundation

Welcome to this innovative report from Music for Dementia and UK Music. A first of its kind, this report sets out a big vision plan for how we can harness the untapped potential of music to enhance our health and wellbeing, as well as supporting our recovery and rehabilitation from the pandemic.

Music played a pivotal role during the pandemic in supporting people through the daily challenges of isolation, loneliness, uncertainty, loss and stressors that none of us could have predicted. Music was to people what they needed it to be in that moment – motivation, inspiration, comfort, distraction, stimulation, solace, connection, joy. As UK Music's 2021 This is Music report states, 57% of people say music has helped them cope with lockdown and 59% said music has helped their mental health and wellbeing. This data, along with an emerging broader body of evidence, powerfully demonstrates how music supported our individual and collective mental and physical health and wellbeing. We witnessed that for ourselves as we watched, listened and were amazed at just how creative we can be with music as human beings to sustain us in the face of adversity.

We do not think, we know music transforms lives.

But why this report and why now?

COVID-19 has taken a huge toll on our health and care systems, on our health and care workforce, and on our country's collective mental and physical health.

There is an urgent need to reimagine health and social care in this country, and the need to do things differently is already being recognised by our health system. The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) 'Good for you, good for us, good for everybody' plan, published in September 2021, recently set out a framework for reducing overprescribing to make patient care better and safer. Importantly, the report highlights the need to build upon important initiatives, such as social prescribing, to tackle the serious problem of overprescribing in health systems which has

dramatically grown over the last 25 years. We know that music has been effective in this area with music therapy reducing the need for anti-psychotic medication in 67% of people living with dementia. This has been further reinforced by a commitment from the DHSC Secretary of State for four million people to benefit from social prescribing by 2024, in a speech delivered in March 2022. This type of culture change around how we manage long term conditions is critical if we are to reduce the reliance on medicine.

We need to harness the power of music much more effectively to address some of these urgent and pressing societal needs. We will be living with the impacts of the pandemic for many years to come, but it is clear what needs to be done to help us balance these impacts to recover and rehabilitate well.

This moment presents us with a unique opportunity to do things differently with music. Through the process that has underpinned this report, it is evident that we can take some collective steps together and bring the worlds of music and health and care much closer together and in doing so improve quality of life for many more people across society.

Music is the soundtrack to our lives, with 74% of adults saying that music is important to them and their quality of life according to the UK Music This is Music report. As a nation we are slowly beginning to recognise that the value of music goes beyond its huge economic and commercial impact; however, we still have a long way to go in helping people to understand the therapeutic benefits of music to support health and wellbeing. Every day, more and more evidence emerges about the health benefits of music. Whether it is in improving wellbeing and quality of life, boosting mental health or supporting

dementia care, music has an incredible power to improve people's lives. Across the UK there are many fantastic initiatives and programmes providing vital services but there is so much more we could be doing if the right support, structures and integration were in place. With bold and visionary leadership, cross-sector collaborations and a joined-up approach, we can harness the extraordinary power of music and ensure that everyone in our country can have access to the huge benefits music can bring.

The Power of Music is that different response to those challenges we are facing. This report sets out a fundamental repositioning of music in our collective consciousness as a public health tool and a community asset, alongside a bold set of practical, actionable recommendations to help us value music for its full worth. We want music to be seen as a necessity and an essential part of our public health strategy, not a luxury for a few. We want to use music to help build communities, giving people greater access to musical opportunities. To achieve this, it will require a commitment from everyone.

Now, more than ever, we need to harness the power of music to improve our health and wellbeing as we strive to do things differently.

The music's calling.

Are you with us?

# Chapter Two: The Power of Music in Action

## Cost-effectiveness

Music therapy reduces agitation and the need for medication in 67% of people with dementia, significantly reducing the spend on anti-psychotic medication.<sup>1</sup>

Cost-effectiveness was powerfully demonstrated in one care setting in Scotland which reduced the use of anti-psychotic medication by up to 60% in some residents when the GP prescribed a personal playlist as the first intervention staff should try when managing the symptoms of dementia such as agitation and distress.<sup>2</sup>

As well as providing value for money, musical interventions can also create a social return on investment (ROI). For every £1 invested in the Silver Lining music and dementia project, the social return on investment was £1.93 – a 93% increase.<sup>3</sup>

## Psychological Conditions

In a randomised controlled trial, participants receiving music therapy, in addition to standard care, showed greater improvement in depression and anxiety symptoms and general functioning at their three-month follow-up than those only receiving standard care.<sup>4</sup>

Music can ease stress in both physiological and psychological outcomes. Research has shown that music can reduce stress for patients undergoing surgeries and colonoscopies, for children undergoing medical procedures, and for patients with coronary heart disease.<sup>5</sup>

## Neurodevelopment

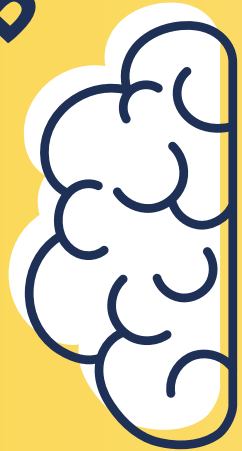
Musical patterns can help provide a means of self-regulation of thoughts and processes for those on the autism spectrum.<sup>6</sup> Studies have found children with autism also have elevated abilities in pitch processing, labeling of emotions in music, and musical preference when compared to typically developing peers at the same age and IQ level.<sup>7</sup>

Because music is processed in both hemispheres of the brain, it can stimulate cognitive functioning and may be used for remediation of some speech and language skill.<sup>8</sup>

Research from the University of British Columbia found music students perform better in school than non-musical peers. UBC education professor and the study's principal investigator, Peter Gouzouasis said: "The students who learned to play a musical instrument in elementary and continued playing in high school not only score significantly higher, but were about one academic year ahead of their non-music peers with regard to their English, mathematics and science skills, as measured by their exam grades, regardless of their socioeconomic background, ethnicity, prior learning in mathematics and English, and gender."<sup>9</sup>



The Benefi



# Benefits of Music



## Social Experiences & Challenges

It was estimated by the Big Chorus Census in 2017 that an incredible 2.14 million Britons are members of a choir. The survey found community singing is effective for bonding large groups, making it an ideal behaviour to improve our broader social networks.<sup>10</sup>

Researchers at the University of Oxford found that group singing not only helps forge social bonds, it also does so particularly quickly, acting as an excellent and cost-effective icebreaker.<sup>11</sup>

Research proves that when you listen to music you like, your brain releases dopamine, a “feel-good” neurotransmitter. In this study, levels of dopamine were found to be up to 9% higher when volunteers were listening to music they enjoyed.<sup>12</sup>



## Physical Impairments

Listening to music after surgery, and even during, may ease pain and the need for pain medication. It can also decrease blood pressure and steady the heart rate.<sup>13</sup>

Playing music is the brain’s equivalent of a full-body workout. Playing an instrument engages practically every area of the brain at once — especially the visual, auditory, and motor cortex.<sup>14</sup>

Playing a musical instrument can help children with cerebral palsy to improve hand movement and strengthen their sensorimotor skills.<sup>15</sup>



## Physical Conditions

Music therapy has been shown to have beneficial effects for the non-pharmacological treatment of motor and non-motor symptoms of Parkinson’s disease.<sup>16</sup> Alongside improved psychological wellbeing, the use of musical rhythm can improve gait, coordination, balance and postural control in the treatment and management of the condition. Research suggests that making music can alter gene expression linked with stress and immune function.<sup>17</sup>

Music is proposed to be beneficial for relaxation in people with cardiovascular disease through its simultaneous effects on psychological, neurological, immunological and endocrine processes, leading to reduced stress and pain.<sup>18</sup>

Evidence suggests that people who engage with the arts are more likely to lead healthier lives, including eating healthily and staying physically active, irrespective of their socioeconomic status and social capital.<sup>19</sup>

# The Power of Music in Action

## Survey Findings

### What did we know already?

Since March 2020 concerns have been raised over the impact the COVID-19 pandemic will have on the UK's mental and physical health, and general wellbeing. As we begin to return to some form of normality, we are unfortunately seeing the long-term effects in full force.

Recent research has shown our social lives, happiness levels and health have suffered considerably since the first COVID-19 lockdown. In a report released in October 2021, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) found that wellbeing and happiness levels of the UK "deteriorated across all indicators" between April 2020 and March 2021.<sup>20</sup> The most recent annual declines in personal wellbeing in the UK were the greatest since the ONS started measuring personal wellbeing in November 2010 for life satisfaction, anxiety, happiness, and feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile.

This problem isn't just impacting adults. In 2021, the NHS Mental Health and Young People Survey found rates of probable mental disorders in young people have increased since 2017; in six to 16-year-olds from one in nine to one in six, and in 17- to 19-year-olds from one in ten to one in six.<sup>21</sup>

Wherever you look, we are faced with challenges but we believe the power of music gives us an opportunity for positive change and a chance to build optimism.

The positive impact of using music to support and enhance mental and physical health throughout people's lives has long been documented in academic and social research. Long-term and complex conditions, such as dementia, continue to present significant challenges

to our health and social care systems due to the level of care required to support people to live well. Successive policy interventions have been seeking to address these challenges by taking a more holistic view of health and care, and call for the inclusion of more non-pharmacological interventions, such as music.

A significant number of academic reviews conclude that musical interventions have a positive effect on pain, mood, and anxious or depressive symptoms in both children and adults in settings.

This is further underscored by a 2022 review of 26 studies conducted across several countries that found music provides a clinically significant boost to mental health, improving wellbeing and quality of life. Music interventions were linked to meaningful improvements in wellbeing and the effects seen were similar whether participants sang, played or listened to music. This particular review suggests that the benefits of music to mental quality of life are close in effect to improvements in mental health due to exercise and weight loss.<sup>22</sup>

“ My wife has been suffering from the illness Alzheimer's for about 10 years. I cared for her for four years and I found it increasingly difficult to keep her mind occupied. I read about 'Singing for the Brain' run by the Alzheimer's Society and also 'Together in Sound' run by Anglia Ruskin University. Both my wife and I attended these sessions over a number of years. What I witnessed at these sessions was quite amazing really, people could be transformed by music, they came alive again. My wife, although she was a teacher before the onset of the illness, could not read a book. I tried everything to try to make the process of following words across and down a page, but it did not work. When we started going to the singing sessions, we were given song sheets, it was amazing she could follow the lyrics whilst singing with apparent ease - I watched her eyes light up as she sang the words on the page.”




**Greg, Retired**  
Survey Respondent

<sup>20</sup> ONS. (2021)

<sup>21</sup> NHS Digital. (2021)

<sup>22</sup> McCrary et al. (2022)



The findings from the latest randomised control trial into music and dementia as published in *The Lancet*, found that recreational group singing was beneficial for older care home residents with dementia and depressive symptoms. It led to clinically important improvements in depression, as well as neuropsychiatric symptoms and generic quality of life.<sup>23</sup> The research base underpinning these findings is beginning to be recognised at the highest levels, such as the Cambridge Institute for Music Therapy Research at Anglia Ruskin University receiving The Queen's Anniversary Prize for their research with people living with dementia and their families.

A report from the WHO synthesised global evidence on the role of arts in improving health and wellbeing. The subsequent results from over 3000 studies identified a major role for the arts in the prevention of ill health, promotion of health, and management and treatment of illness throughout people's lives.<sup>24</sup> This includes, both active (e.g. performing, interactive music making, singing) and passive (e.g. listening) acts of music. It also extends from new-born babies all the way to elderly and end of life care. Mood regulation, including expressing negative emotions, maintaining positive mood, immersion in heightened emotion, energising or relaxing, are repeatedly cited as one of the most important reasons for engaging with music. We see this brought to life on a daily basis through the work of organisations such as Nordoff Robbins, the UK's largest independent music therapy charity. Music is not only universally adored, but also a universal tool for improving mental and physical wellbeing at all stages in our lives.

Even more powerfully, we already know music can help us recover and rehabilitate from the pandemic.

Data from University College London<sup>25</sup> suggests that people who spent 30 minutes or more each day during the pandemic on arts activities such as listening to music have lower reported rates of depression and anxiety and greater life satisfaction. In a separate study, an online questionnaire was administered in 11 countries and asked participants to rate the relevance of wellbeing goals during the pandemic, and the effectiveness of different activities in obtaining these goals. Music was found to be the most effective activity for three out of five wellbeing goals: enjoyment, expressing and processing negative emotions, and self-connection.<sup>26</sup> Another study from Spain found participating in musical activities during the pandemic has been associated with reduced anxiety and increased subjective wellbeing.<sup>27</sup>

These findings are in addition to the myriad of ways we saw and heard music being used on a daily basis throughout the pandemic to help people cope better with the stressors of COVID-19. It also sits alongside what we have learnt from previous reports, consultations and the wider literature and evidence base in relation to this topic. That music has the power and potential to help deliver key health and wellbeing outcomes is beyond question. The mission now is to identify what needs to be done to harness that potential and ensure that everyone across the country can enjoy these incredible benefits. This is why we decided to launch the Power of Music.

## Launch of the Power of Music

In April 2021, UK Music and Music for Dementia initiated a roundtable to discuss the importance of music to support health and wellbeing. Attendees included Government Ministers and key stakeholders from music, health and care sectors. This meeting had a particular emphasis on what more we could do together with music as we recover and rehabilitate from the pandemic.

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<sup>23</sup> *The Lancet*. (2022)

<sup>24</sup> World Health Organisation. (2019)

<sup>25</sup> UCL. (2021)

<sup>26</sup> Granot et al. (2021)

<sup>27</sup> Cabedo-Mas et al. (2021)



Following this, we launched our own survey to identify what the power of music meant to the key organisations and members of the general public. Full details of the survey can be found in the methodology chapter. Following our thematic analysis six key themes were identified from the survey: collaboration and leadership; investment; value; skill building; education and awareness; and community and access. This chapter will take you through what we learnt about each theme.

## **Theme one: Collaboration and leadership**

Many respondents highlighted the importance of working together to achieve the best outcome rather than prioritising one body over another or focussing too much on one sector. Lots of responses mentioned the need to join the dots between different organisations and different activities going on already. People mentioned the importance of working with local community organisations, charities, schools, care homes and creative bodies including the Arts Council.

We heard that for government this means getting more engagement from ministers across different departments and encouraging a cross-government response. For the music sector this means involving all aspects of music, not just music therapists and music practitioners who are skilled in working in health and social care sectors, but encouraging high-profile musicians where possible to highlight the role of music in supporting health and wellbeing. Finally, for the health and social care sectors, who we were told often need support from other bodies to embed music into the care they provide, this means forming sustainable and supported partnerships with music delivery organisations.

We also heard about the importance of sharing good practice between different organisations and across sectors so people know what's being done and how they can replicate it themselves. Respondents suggested it would be helpful for someone to pull together everything that is happening in to one accessible place, potentially as an online resource.

Finally, respondents suggested it would be beneficial for someone, or a body of partners, to take on a leadership function to bring all this great work together as it was generally perceived that there is currently a lack of leadership across this area. Leadership wasn't perceived as something which needs one person alone to take on, but a collective group with a shared vision and goal to help take this work forward.

## **Theme two: Investment**

In some questions we specifically asked respondents to consider what funding would be most useful to them or their organisation. However, outside of these questions financial investment came up in a number of responses unprompted. This highlights how crucial investment is for some people and organisations.

Some of the most common suggestions included funding an umbrella body to take this on or oversee bringing these sectors together. This links to the theme of collaboration and leadership. Respondents also thought funding should be used to invest in training and equipment, including ensuring care settings have access to music and Wi-Fi. Alongside this, long-term funding for music therapy and therapeutic music interventions through health and social care budgets was highlighted as key. As so much funding is short term it can be hard to see the benefits when people are often living with long term or life-long conditions.

Respondents also suggested funding venues, grassroots charities and workshops so more people can drop in and see the impact of music themselves or financing further research studies, which can be used to justify introducing music into new health and social care settings.

Outside of financial investment, respondents highlighted the importance of considering the wider societal investment of using music to improve health and wellbeing across all ages and sections. This includes giving weight to existing programmes or providing easily accessible tools which health, social care settings and educational settings would be able to use. It also means investing time into building the profile of music as a non-pharmacological response to managing or living well with conditions.

### Theme three: Value

We heard that there is a need for us to change attitudes towards how we value music in society. Music is often valued as an economic driver, or a signifier of how much cultural activity is on offer. Within health and social care it is seen as nice to have in health and social care settings rather than a necessity. The same with education. And yet, music is something we all cherish but we do not feel it is something we can all engage with confidently beyond listening to it. It isn't yet valued as something that can bring tangible benefits to our everyday lives and that this needs to change if we are to harness its untapped potential. This links with the theme of education and awareness.

When asked about how respondents monitor or evaluate the value of the programmes they run or take part in, we had a varied set of responses. It ranged from large scale quantitative and qualitative data collection to no formal methods, just watching for smiles and enjoyment or using anecdotal feedback.

In our survey findings there was some divergence of opinion about whether it was always necessary to monitor or evaluate programmes, as sometimes it can take away from the joy of enjoying the moment. Others shared how they need to evaluate the programmes they run to receive funding. Some respondents told us more concrete research is needed to measure the value of music in these settings, as it would help justify the use of music in health and social care settings. It would also help raise awareness and provide practical tips on how to use music in these settings.

What was apparent through the survey responses is the need for the right kind of research. We heard that not all tools that are easily accessible are useful in all settings, even if they must be used for funding. There needs to be greater clarity around what is it about musical interventions we are trying to understand and why. That way, we can hopefully get a more practical and useful set of answers which allows us to really understand the value of music.

### Theme four: Skill building

When respondents were asked to rank what more the music sector and government should do to support education and training in music and health and social care contexts, developing mandatory training programmes

“ Music is a key tool for many people – including myself – in handling mental health issues such as depression and low self-esteem. Personally, music is my go-to remedy when I need a distraction from my worries or a means to express my emotions which I cannot express in words. Playing a musical instrument requires me to be totally in the moment which helps me to relax both physically and mentally - while playing or singing I am briefly removed from the aches and pains or normal life. Music's ability to touch emotions improves the emotional wellbeing of both listeners and performers... I realise that through participating in music groups I have become part of communities and created lifelong friendships. ”



**Jamie, Musician**  
Survey Respondent

for care professionals (e.g. carers, link workers, social workers) came first. Developing mandatory training programmes within the training of health professionals (e.g. GPs, allied health professional, nurses, healthcare assistants) came a very close second. This shows many respondents clearly see a role for formal training to improve the links between music, health and wellbeing to help enhance and enrich quality of care and health outcomes.

However, there is also a role for informal skill building, which includes the soft skills people can develop if they are able to access the right resources easily. In our survey, people shared their experiences of informal training or skill development by watching YouTube videos or attending workshops. These tools for skill building can be incredibly effective for home carers or people who want to effectively use music with friends or family members. Some of these respondents didn't see themselves as skilled individuals because they've not had formal training – but we certainly see them as skilled.

## Theme five: Education and awareness

Many respondents suggested that more needs to be done to highlight the benefits of music with the general public. A number of people expressed a desire for a public campaign to showcase the benefits of music for wellbeing so more people could appreciate its use in health and social care, for example a day of celebration or a cross-media (online, broadcast, print) campaign. Music was compared to sport, where there have been many high-profile campaigns in recent years.

Alongside this, many respondents saw education as another key route through which to raise awareness. People referred to the joy a child can feel when learning an instrument or singing in assemblies at school.

Respondents believed more needs to be done to link the great work already being done with music in health and social care settings with schools, education settings, and the Department for Education.

We also heard about the need to integrate health and wellbeing studies not only into primary and secondary school education, but all the way up to higher education settings, including undergraduate, post-graduate and diploma studies for those in health, care and music.

There are clear links here with theme one; collaboration and leadership. There are also links with theme four, skill building, as people need to know about the benefits of music in the first place to have a desire to build their skills and feel motivated to use music to support their health and wellbeing and those of others.

## Theme six: Community and access

The pandemic showed us you can maintain community and connection through music. In the height of the first lockdown people danced to music at a safe distance on the street with their neighbours and in Italy, people sang from their balconies to boost morale.

Our survey opened for responses in June 2021, which means our findings capture a unique point just before the full reopening of England, and partial reopening of Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland in July 2021. Several respondents acknowledged the importance of letting

“I have been told by adults with autism that music therapy was the one thing that really changed their lives as children. When speech wasn't forthcoming and life seemed muddled and confusing, music provided structure, a means of communicating and a way of relating to others which felt non-threatening. Not only did they gain skills in playing music but in dexterity, turn taking, sharing, listening and anticipating what may happen next...Music can give us the confidence to do things we never thought possible, and this newly discovered boldness can be generalised throughout a person's life.”



**Suzie, Music Therapist**  
Survey Respondent

choirs sing together again and highlighted this as an action they wanted taken forward through this piece of work. Whilst choirs are currently allowed to sing together again without the need for further intervention, the number of responses that referenced this shows how much music means to people as something that allows them to socialise and bond with others. This also shows that not everyone always wants a digital solution, as people use music as a tool and resource to socialise in person, with both strangers and friends.

Unfortunately, our survey also showed that not everyone, across lifespan or socioeconomic status, has access to music in this way. This could be for geographical reasons, as local activities aren't always available in rural areas. It could also be because of accessibility or if someone requires full-time healthcare. If you are a parent or full-time worker you might simply not have the time to attend events in person. These responses highlighted the importance of having digital solutions available too, as in-person offers will not necessarily help the hardest to reach in society. What was clear from the responses is that blended offers of digital and in-person services need to be provided to reach as many people as possible.

It is also worth highlighting we heard from more respondents who worked in social care than any other sector. These respondents reflected on care homes being at the heart of the COVID-19 pandemic yet often undervalued and overworked. The respondents who use music already in their

care homes shared their experiences of it being a tool to bring musicians - people who often would not visit care homes – into a new space, making care homes somewhere people want to be rather than have to be. They also shared stories of connecting generations of visitors through music. These respondents wrote about the potential for care homes to be a place of music, creativity and community, where people can make new connections, but only if they are given the resources to do so.

## Follow up workshops

Following the thematic analysis of the survey, these themes were presented to a group of key stakeholders during two sessions in September and November 2021. Invitees included important players from the music sector, health and social care sectors and those who represent the voices of both. We also invited civil servants and policymakers.

In our first session in September, we discussed the themes from the survey and identified skill building as the lead theme for discussion. We asked the group to consider how to upskill three key audiences: the general public, the music sector and the health and social care sector. During this meeting we found the conversation gradually touched on how to upscale existing programmes. Overall, we heard many key ideas and new suggestions, which directly fed into our ability to write the first draft of recommendations.

In our second session in November we presented a draft version of these recommendations. We shared the process of how we formulated these recommendations and offered people a chance to feed in additional ideas, suggestions or thoughts on the overall tone of the asks. The session was invaluable to the final set of recommendations presented in Chapter Five of this report.

“The opportunity to give back is a healer in itself. A lot of my fellow musicians have felt very displaced with a lot of work not available during the pandemic, leading to mental health issues. Many of us have had to rethink the way we make a living, a daunting prospect if it has always involved doing what we are passionate about. Therefore having the options or opportunities to use our skills to help others as a job is something which I believe many musicians will find infinitely rewarding, increasing feelings of self-worth, confidence and overall mental and financial wellbeing.”

**Charlie, Musician**  
Survey Respondent



## Conclusion: The question now is what do we do with this information?

As a result of our roundtable, survey, and follow up workshops, what became really apparent is the collective will, support, and appetite from across the sectors to take action. To do this we needed to do two things:

Firstly, we needed to articulate these findings in a report and identify the recommendations that needed to be taken forward. It also felt important to do justice to the people who responded to the survey, taking the time to tell us personal stories about how they use music in their lives, and offering solutions to the current barriers.

Secondly, it is clear we must act now. It is obvious we have a growing crisis on our hands, but it is also clear how music can help us. We need to take stock of what we have learnt through the pandemic by creating a blueprint for the future, to make sure those lessons aren't lost. What you will read in Chapter Five is our proposal for how to take action using what we have learnt so far.



# Chapter Three: Music on the Ground

## Play: Manchester Camerata



### **Manchester Camerata on using music to build community in areas with high levels of poverty and deprivation.**

Manchester Camerata orchestra is a registered charity, working and performing in Manchester and worldwide since 1972, and renowned for dynamic performances, innovative collaborations and our pioneering community programme. Our purpose is to 'make music that matters; make music for change'.

The orchestra pops up in all sorts of places and collaborates with a spectrum of artists attracting over 150,000 people every year to its concerts under the leadership of world-renowned conductor Gábor Takacs-Nagy. Our Manchester concert season (September–May) is complemented by residencies throughout the North West, which provide international quality music-making in areas with little or no live orchestral music.

Our community programme is at the heart of the orchestra's activity. By working in partnership with our long-term strategic partner, Orchestras Live, this has helped us to make more impact with this work. The programme began over 20 years ago with the aim of using music as a tool to improve people's lives, and our music-therapy-based work for people with dementia has been developed over the last 10 years through partnership and research with Professor John Keady at

the University of Manchester. New music is created by putting the participants at the centre of the creative process. Whether it is young people in schools or youth clubs, or people with dementia and their carers, all compositions and improvised pieces are created 'in the moment' by the participants, in conjunction with our world-class, professional musicians. These projects take place in schools, housing schemes, care homes and community settings across the North of England. Our work operates within cultural education and health and social care, and is especially focussed on areas of economic/social deprivation.

Our strategic priorities and overall aims for both our older and younger members of the community are centred around creative music-making and its benefits, with inbuilt continuing professional development for teachers, professional musicians and healthcare professionals alike, in order to improve health and wellbeing. We moved into The Monastery, Manchester (in Gorton) in November 2020, and are continuing our aim of long-term intergenerational activity to positively impact a community with high levels of poverty and deprivation but with great pride in the area in which they live.

# Sing: Farmers' Choir

## Karen Diamond, music therapist, on boosting the wellbeing of farmers in Northern Ireland.

Following the success of other singing for wellbeing projects in the Northern Health and Social Care Trust (NHSCT) the Farmers' Choir began as a six-week pilot. The NHSCT had been working

with the Ulster Farmers' Union exploring what strategies could be put in place for farmers and farming families to address the issues of social isolation and the poor mental health and emotional wellbeing of farmers which had been highlighted in 2019 by Malcolm Downey, Principal Inspector Health & Safety Executive Northern Ireland when he stated: "What we really need

now is action! UK farmers are renowned for the attention they give to their livestock, crops and machinery, but what we need to remind them is that looking after their own physical and mental wellbeing should always be the priority'.

*"Sometimes I came along and was in awful form but singing with others from a farming background was uplifting and relaxing at the same time... even though in the programme Derry Girls they claimed that "Protestants hate ABBA" you got us and the First Minister singing Super Trouper. A sight and sound I will never forget!"*

The UFU invited members from their Mid and West Antrim area to come along to a taster session in Autumn 2018. They publicised it through newsletters and sent text reminders each week. The Northern Health and Social Care Trust funded my input, provided a rehearsal space and refreshments each week.

The choir had to meet in the evening after milking! So, a rehearsal time of 8pm was set. We thought we might have eight people at most but 12 arrived at the first session and by week six we had 30 people aged between 40-80+.

The group were naturally concerned about singing in a group and in particular that a music therapist was the facilitator. It required some explanation that this wasn't therapy but singing for its health benefits. There was some initial reluctance around the use of breathing exercises and warmups but when I explained why I was using these techniques everyone joined in and it was

*"When you said we were going to sing harmonies I thought you were asking too much and we couldn't do it – but I was wrong. This pushed me in a good way and I loved it!"*

*"Who would believe a group of farmers could sound like this?!"*

really encouraging to see just how relaxed the farmers were as the sessions progressed.

Manchester Camerata



Farmers' Choir



MHA



Dementia Disco



# Dance: Dementia Disco



## **Dementia Disco on using music and dance to boost mood and give care home residents, families, and carers a “proper night out”.**

We run monthly discos, where our members choose the music they want to listen to and we encourage them to talk about their choices with us, other members, and their families and/or carers. In this way, the music becomes a way for them to access memories.

We also encourage our members to get up and dance, although they do not have to. This can provide carers with a short break or, more typically, the opportunity to spend some relaxed and fun time on the dancefloor, which some of them do not often get.

The discos are always incredibly positive, happy events, with some people describing them as the highlight of their month. The timing of the discos (5-7pm) is deliberate, as is the choice of venue – people have commented that they feel as if they have had a “proper night out”, which seems to be really positive for them. The music acts as a gateway to memories of positive experiences and memories of past events, which we then encourage our members to talk about and share.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, we also organised a coach trip to the Tower Ballroom in Blackpool, which was a wonderful opportunity for many of our members to get out and visit somewhere some of them had not been for many years. We had a fantastic time, dancing on the Strictly dancefloor.

The power of music is a vehicle which allows people to connect with themselves and others. It enables our members to interact and engage with others in positive ways, allowing us to access memories and emotions which are sometimes hard to express. Research shows that brain activity and memory are enhanced by listening to music. The direct, emotional connection music can make with people is equally important.

We have found it easy enough to harness community spirit and enterprise - if more people just asked and acted so much more could be done. It is not about being a good citizen, more about being an active citizen. For your own benefit, and for others.

## Care: MHA



### **MHA on putting music at the heart of the care it provides for its residents.**

As one of the largest employers of music therapists in dementia care, weekly individual and group music therapy sessions are provided to care home residents. But it is not just the music therapists making the music happen, care staff are trained and supported in delivering music sessions alongside the music therapists and other musicians.

Music therapy has been proven to ameliorate symptoms of dementia, such as anxiety, apathy, depression and agitation. Music therapy plays a significant role at MHA as music therapists are able to observe any changes to a resident's health and wellbeing and care use this information to inform care staff of changing needs, helping to enhance staff care planning and delivery.

MHA is passionate about seeing people for who they are beyond their diagnosis and in music therapy, music therapists are able to identify a resident's abilities. They use this knowledge to advise staff on tailoring daily activities to stimulate and exercise these remaining abilities and skills.

MHA is the first care provider to develop a music strategy for all its services. In the future, music therapists will have an advisory role to help staff embed playlists, singing and other musical activities in the everyday life of its service users across all of its services – truly embedding music in dementia care.

Barbara was choosing to spend every day in her room watching TV alone since her husband passed away last year. The activity coordinator hoped music therapy would encourage her to participate in something. Barbara had never played a piano before. However, in her one-on-one music therapy sessions, Barbara really enjoyed playing a Casio keyboard with lighted keys which automatically indicate the right keys to play. This was a big change for her and Barbara herself said how much she enjoyed the sessions. Since attending music therapy and using the Casio keyboard, she also began attending the open music group, which was unlike her. Her engagement in playing the keyboard, and the benefits of this on her mood and her cognitive abilities has significantly increased her quality of life.

To us at MHA, the power of music signifies music's potential to 'unlock' something inside us.

# Chapter Four: Recommendations

## Four-Step Framework to Harness the Power of Music

### Step One

Demonstrate leadership by appointing a Power of Music Commissioner, setting up a cross-government taskforce and establishing a cross-sector consortium.

### Step Two

Mobilise support for and engagement with the power of music through a national campaign and creation of an online resource centre.




### Step Four

Combine existing funding and seek new focused investment to make music more accessible for all.

### Step Three

Integrate music into our health, care and education to unlock its full potential to support our national health and wellbeing.



Our society is living through one of the most challenging periods it has experienced in living memory. We are faced with increasingly acute and complex issues that need collaborative and joined up solutions. While music is not a silver bullet for the issues we are facing personally or as a society, it can be used to help us recover from the pandemic in all aspects: health, social care, education, social justice, culture, community, economy and commerce.

With the right structures and support in place, our music sector, and its cross-sector partners, can help to lead a path through recovery that recognises that we can use music to do things differently to achieve better outcomes for all.

Using what we have learnt so far, UK Music and Music for Dementia have developed this set of recommendations to ensure a collaborative and collective approach is taken to harness the Power of Music. Crucially these recommendations aren't just for one group as all sectors – government, the health and social care sectors and the music sector – will have a part to play. This four-step framework outlines how we can position music into more of a key role for addressing some of the major societal issues we face today, as well as supporting rehabilitation and recovery from the pandemic.

## **Step one: Demonstrate leadership**

### **Recommendation one: Appoint a power of music Commissioner**

Our research has shown we need real leadership to bring this work together. A Power of Music Commissioner should be appointed to navigate, spearhead, join up and encourage action across the different sectors.

The Commissioner will act as a champion for music, health and wellbeing. Their focus will be on connecting existing priorities across policies and sectors as well as creating new priorities based on their own expertise. One

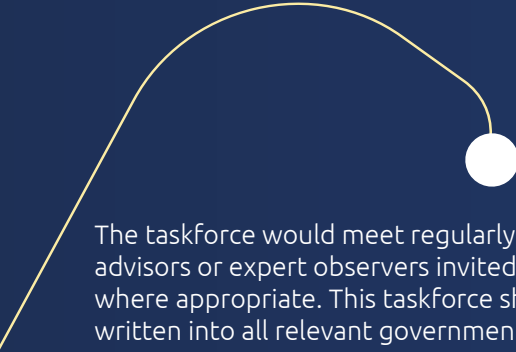
of the most important tasks for the Commissioner will be to help bring together a government taskforce and a Life with Music Consortium (for more information see recommendations 2 and 3). Specifically, they would chair the Consortium whilst being actively involved with the taskforce. They will also act as the link between the cross-government taskforce and the Consortium.

The Commissioner would advise, support delivery and help implement the recommendations set out in this report and as the programme develops, they would help think up new recommendations and ideas to take us in to the next phase of the Power of Music. They should also ensure equal representation across the devolved nations within the taskforce and Consortium. The Commissioner would also be responsible for ensuring diversity of representation within the consortium as well as through the scope of the programme of work.

### **Recommendation two: Establish a cross-government taskforce made up of Civil Servants from DCMS, DfE, DHSC and NHS reporting to Ministers**

A cross-government taskforce should be formed with representatives from Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Department for Education (DfE), Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), NHS England, and be chaired by a Minister, or co-chaired by multiple Ministers. The taskforce could bring together different areas of government to co-ordinate a cohesive strategy to better integrate music into health, social care, and wellbeing on a policy and legislative level, and respond to the recommendations made in this report.

Respecting the fact this taskforce would be Westminster based, it is recommended that similar bodies are established in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to feed into the overall objectives of this programme of work. These bodies could be led by organisations which already work in this area.



The taskforce would meet regularly, with relevant advisors or expert observers invited to join meetings where appropriate. This taskforce should ensure music is written into all relevant government strategies e.g. the national dementia strategy, learning disabilities, autism, mental health, child development – even Levelling Up - so that government policy reflects the aims of this report and the taskforce itself. This taskforce would encourage a unified working relationship between these three key departments’ and ensure the music and wellbeing agenda stays on the political radar. The taskforce should also be a mechanism for inter-departmental co-ordination across a range of government departments and should be actively looking for ways to engender cross-departmental action.

**Recommendation three: Establish a Life with Music Consortium, made up of representatives from the health and social care sectors and the music sector as a whole.**

The Commissioner would lead the creation of a Life with Music Consortium. Similarly to the cross-government taskforce, this group would also help take forward this set of recommendations and co-ordinate and join up the many players who can make music more central in our lives.

The Consortium would act as an independent body complementing the work of the taskforce. It would aim to operate at scale, bringing together the necessary stakeholders from across sectors (health, social care, music, community, third sector, commercial, philanthropy) to work together to deliver a vision that truly embeds music into our lives. It would work with partners from a range of sectors, including corporate, technology, broadcasting and funding to undertake a range of national activity such as leading campaigns, coordinating and disseminating funding and sharing learning and developing partnerships to create social

change through music. They could also commission and disseminate further research.

It would not need a physical presence but would be a group of passionate individuals representing the key organisations. A vital function of the consortium would be to work in alignment with the cross-government taskforce and contribute to the cross-government meetings when relevant.

A priority for the Consortium should be ensuring increased integration of music as a core offer of health and social care. It should work proactively with all relevant bodies to ensure that a commitment to music and wellbeing becomes integral to organisational policy and delivery.

## **Step two: Mobilise public support for and engagement with the Power of Music**

**Recommendation four: The Consortium, with the support of government, the health and social care sector and the music sector should lead a public campaign to highlight the social and health benefits of music.**

We need a public campaign to bring to life and celebrate the central role music can play in our lives and show just how much it matters to us all. The aim of this campaign should be to mobilise, upskill and inform the public of the health and wellbeing benefits of music. The campaign should be engaging, inclusive, inspiring, diverse and act as a celebration of the power of music.

This campaign programme should run over a period of three years and help to change the narrative around music – it is not just a nicety, it is a necessity in supporting our health and wellbeing. By the end of the three years everyone in the UK should know about the health and wellbeing benefits of music, in the same way most

people now know exercising can boost endorphins. We want the general public to know they can ask their doctor for more information about how they can use music to support their health and wellbeing, and we want health and care sector practitioners to know where they can go to learn more about using music in health settings and how to help make music a part of the care they provide.

The campaign would bring together the many strands of the music sector, music education, health and social care, cultural, broadcast, commercial partners, government, and the third sector but have the interests of the general public at its very core. It should also work to address how we follow-through on the increased awareness created and aim to ensure we deliver the benefits across society for all. The campaign's programme of work should be in partnership with broadcast, online, outdoor and print media. It will allow people to tell their musical stories and raise awareness of how people can use music to support themselves and their friends and family through music. The annual national campaign event should tie into a significant moment in the care sector's calendar such as National Day of Arts in Care Homes or World Music Day. In line with the government Levelling Up aims, a national campaign would help instil pride in place, people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community.

**Recommendation five: Creation of a dynamic, interactive online resource to bring together information, science, music, training that helps to integrate music into existing models of health and care.**

Digital technologies develop and create new opportunities to embed music into health and care, both for those living with conditions and those providing care. Over the past ten years there have been many digital innovations aimed at helping people to access music in new and meaningful ways, particularly for those living

with dementia. We saw an increase of activity in this area during the pandemic. However, nothing has yet been taken to scale to facilitate mass take-up or integration into health and social care systems.

This recommendation calls for a joint effort from the music industry, technology providers and cross-sector groups to work with end-users to create a dynamic, creative, one-stop resource for people wishing to use music in their care for themselves and / or that of others. There is already a live commitment from Universal Music UK to lead on the initial development of the resource and they are actively seeking to develop partnership with others to form a consortium of partners to foster the joint effort.

The initial focus for the resource will be on dementia, with the longer-term aim of adapting and developing the content for wider health and wellbeing. There is a wealth of current digital offers to draw upon (such as m4dradio.com, BBC Music Memories, Music for My Mind, Playlist for Life to name but a few), however, getting the design right for people living with dementia involves creating clear and simple user experiences, with content that is developed based on the latest evidence and research.

The resource would become the place where people go to access music that is right for them at their point of need; where GPs, link workers and other healthcare professionals can refer people as part of their social prescription; where family and professional carers can find advice, information, access training, and discover in-person activities happening near them; where music can be accessed easily and rightsholders protected. The resource would play a key role in supporting the delivery of social prescribing.

The resource has the potential to be a significant solution in helping to make music easily accessible at the point of need and will therefore require multiple investment sources to develop and sustain it as a leading resource for people living with dementia and their carers.

## Step three: Unlocking our musical potential

**Recommendation six: Offer the public greater integration between music and the medical and social care they receive through adaptations within the integrated care system, clinical commissioning groups and Care Quality Commission.**

There is a clear need for better integration between the health and social care sectors around the inclusion of music as part of health and social care pathways. Whilst the training in recommendation six is an excellent place to start, more needs to be done to ensure that everyone has equal access to a musical social prescription. This includes NHS Trusts and local authorities designing their commissioning plans and care pathways to include music, in a way which is culturally inclusive and reaches a diverse audience.

All relevant institutions, including the National Academy for Social Prescribing, should ensure that a

commitment to include a music offer becomes integral to organisational policy. This includes introducing the provision of music-based services where it isn't already available and means commissioners build music into the services they provide at regional and local level. A dedicated person could also be assigned within each integrated care system, clinical commissioning group to drive forward the inclusion and use of music in health and social care pathways. This will help to build local community sector alliances that incorporate creative organisations and freelancers. The online resource and national campaign recommended in Step Two would help to initially support link workers find the resources they need to make this happen.

To further ensure integration across the health and social care systems, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) should explicitly expect services and settings to include music as part of their care. Inspectors should be trained in assessing musical provision as part of health and social care services and to include observations



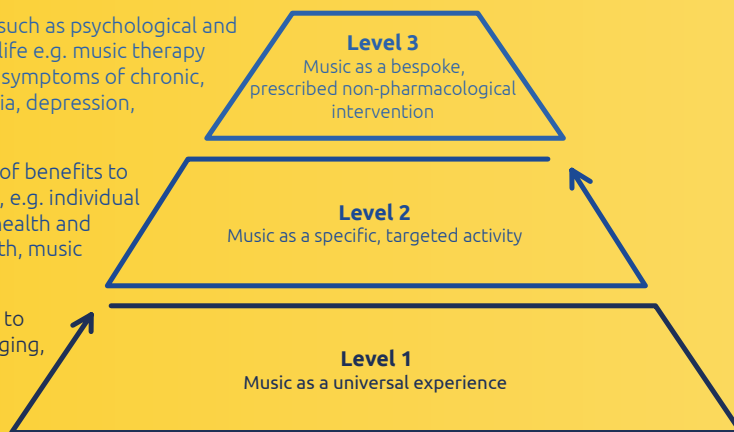
To address particular aspects of health and wellbeing such as psychological and emotional health and wellbeing to improve quality of life e.g. music therapy in health and care settings to alleviate and ameliorate symptoms of chronic, acute, long-term/ life-long conditions, such as dementia, depression, physical disability, learning disability.




People can participate in music and gain a wide range of benefits to support, maintain, improve their health and wellbeing, e.g. individual and group musical activities that are designed with a health and wellbeing aim – dementia choirs, singing for lung health, music for stroke rehabilitation.



All people can experience and enjoy music at any time to enhance and enrich their health and wellbeing e.g. singing, listening to personalised music, playing a musical instrument, experience live music in the community, and attending social music events.





in CQC inspection reports. To support this process, all health and social care settings inspected by the CQC should be trained in how to talk about the benefits of including music as part of the health and care provision they provide. This would help to increase healthy life expectancy and improve well-being in every area of the UK.

The following infographic shows a framework for delivering music to support health and wellbeing across three levels of interventions. This was originally designed for musical interventions for people living with dementia and based on the NHS Comprehensive Personalised Care Model.<sup>28</sup> This model has been adapted for a wider health audience.

**Recommendation seven: Establish, accredit and embed a training module for all health and social care practitioners, to support the role of music in health and social care.**

Music training should be a core part of the upskilling offer within health and social care sectors; within three years, we want to see every health and social care professional offered a module of training on the use of music in health and care. A 30-minute, focused, informative module could be hosted on the online resource centre and would provide health and social care practitioners with the tools to develop their skills. This upskilling should be available for all health and social care practitioners, including link workers, who alongside GPs are leading on delivering the roll out of equal access to a musical social prescription to help achieve the Universal Personalised Care Plan as part of the NHS Long Term Plan.

This training would mean that every health and social care practitioner would be supported to understand the benefits of music, have access to training in basic skills in how to use music as part of the care they provide

and feel empowered by their work setting to use those skills. This would also encourage employers to regard musical skills as a valuable asset held by their workforce, equipping practitioners to do the best job they can and providing people with the best possible health and social care.

A module at this scale would require government support to establish and accredit it by working alongside health and social care training bodies, NHS providers, care providers, the music sector, music therapy professionals and higher education providers. As has been seen already with the integration of NHS equality, diversity, and inclusion training, the impact of training programmes can be significant in changing approaches and cultures of working practices.

Whilst we know this recommendation is vital to the overall aims of this report we also recognise the immense pressures and demands the pandemic has imposed on the health and social care sector. We will therefore work with the health and social care sectors to find the best way to integrate and embed this service.

**Recommendation eight: Establish, accredit and embed a module for musical care training routes at undergraduate, postgraduate, diploma level and vocational routes.**

The government and music sector should work with higher education providers to establish, accredit, and embed modules on the use of music to support health and care; within five years we want all post-16 music courses to be enabled to include a module on using music in health and social care contexts, including music and wellbeing. This includes undergraduate, postgraduate and diploma level.

Today, a career in music means much more than purely being a performer, for many being a musician is a portfolio career with many interesting facets, which can

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<sup>28</sup> Music for Dementia. (2020)

include this sort of work. We have an incredible array of musical talent across a range of genres in this country and for many, performing full-time is not viable for a variety of reasons. At the same time, we are becoming more alive to the use of music in health and care settings, yet we do not have the trained musical care workforce to meet this growing need of non-medicalised care. A more readily available module on health, social care and wellbeing would provide musicians with the potential of a career in musical care and excite them to use music beyond performance.

For those following vocational routes, there should be an offer of a dedicated programme for musical care training as part of current musical training routes. This should sit alongside a training programme for those who have already trained or are looking to diversify their career. This would provide musicians with an exciting career option they could develop alongside their performance

skills. Many in music already run a portfolio career, and this could nicely complement the work many musicians are already doing. This would also ensure much greater diversity in our musical care workforce if all musicians, regardless of their training route, have access to an inclusive training module.

### Sing Up!

In response to the recommendations of the Music Manifesto published in 2007, the government invested a total of £44 million in a national singing programme to kickstart singing in schools again. Sing Up! was led by a consortium of partners, made up of Youth Music, Faber Music and the Sage Gateshead. Children's charity Youth Music was the lead partner, with Faber Music overseeing the national singing resource, including the Song Bank library, while advertising agency AMV, BBDO led a media and PR campaign highlighting the benefits of singing. The Sage Gateshead led the workforce development programme, which aimed to build the confidence and expertise of teachers and musicians so they could lead and support children's singing activities.

### Recommendation nine: All children of school age should have access to a rich musical education, which can act as the foundation for teaching children about the benefits of music for their health and wellbeing.

There is clear evidence which shows the inclusion of music in the school aged curriculum can improve academic achievements and social development. We would like to see an increase of music in the national curriculum so the number of primary and secondary school aged children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths can reach its full potential. Music is a vital part of education for all, and all children of school age should have equal access to a rich musical education.

Working with the National Plan for Music Education and across Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England, pupils from key stage 1 to 4 should also be taught about the benefits of music to support their health and wellbeing. This could be done through the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum whilst fitting in to the wider programme for integrating more music into school teaching. There is already great work being done in this area by the BRIT Trust. Founded in 1989, it was set up by record labels and the BPI to promote education and wellbeing through the transformative power of music to support people of all backgrounds into reaching their full potential.

Bringing music to school-aged children will benefit society as a whole and allow us to bring discussions on the role of music in health and care to the widest possible audience. It will help inspire a new generation of musical carers, practitioners and music therapists and let music flow into the home of every child. It will teach children to see music as more than just a hobby as they learn about the benefits of using it for self-care, through adolescence, adulthood and beyond.

## Step four: Combine existing funding and seek new investment to make music more accessible for all

**Recommendation ten: Combine existing funding from government, industry and philanthropy to upscale existing programmes and establish new opportunities, making music for health and wellbeing more accessible for all.**

Post-pandemic, public finances are under significant pressure in all areas. The challenge therefore is to make existing funding in the system work smarter, alongside investment partnerships from new partners to deliver national and local programme. These should involve government, private philanthropy and corporates from across sectors. From the evidence base, making a strategic decision now to invest in embedding music into the delivery of health and care will improve public health immediately and produce financial savings over time.

New financial investment could be used in a number of ways, for example, to establish national music programmes, including a National Singing Programme and a National Music-Making Programme. These would provide live, interactive musical experiences and ensure everyone has access to this type of musical opportunity to support their health and wellbeing. A multi-sector backed national music programme would provide millions of new people with access to the benefits of music and bring a revived sense of community to many areas in the UK.

Recognising national programmes would increase demand for skilled practitioners, greater funding could be allocated to training new music therapists who might not otherwise have access to a career in music therapy.

We need to make routes into training as a music therapist or therapeutic music practitioner more inclusive and removing the financial barriers would significantly increase the diversity of the profession. This would also support the government aim to significantly increase high-quality skills training across every area of the UK.

Alongside national programmes, there is a need for greater and more sustained funding at the grassroots level to ensure the long-term sustainability of local projects and programmes. This includes funding smaller scale charity initiatives and workshops, which with the right investment would be able to reach a greater number of people. Local opportunities are vital to communities as not everyone will want to, or be able to, access national programmes. Therefore, being able to access something locally and on a smaller scale will ensure personalised opportunities for everyone.

Finally, any multi-sector investment plans would do well to consider funding further research to help support the aims set out in this report.<sup>29</sup> This is also reflected in the Evidence Summary for Policy, which put forward a series of recommendations for how to invest in future research or academic collaboration to build the evidence base. Further research would ensure any changes to legislation or new programmes are rooted in evidence to ensure they are as effective as can be. Whilst there is great evidence cited throughout this report, there is always the need for more up to date - and more detailed - research to be conducted to encourage evidence based policy making and training.

<sup>29</sup> Fancourt et al. (2020)

# Chapter Five: Conclusion

Music is powerful.

We hope this report leaves you in no doubt about this. We also hope it leaves you in no doubt about its value as a public health tool and that we need to be using it more to improve, enhance and enrich our individual and collective health and wellbeing.

We have highlighted the need to position music at the centre of how we recover and rehabilitate from the pandemic across all strands of society – health, social care, education, culture, economy and commerce. It has explained why we need to use this opportunity to transform how people have access and opportunities to utilise music, and the cultural sector more broadly, to improve our health and wellbeing.

Our survey findings showed the need for further collaboration and leadership, investment, and skill building. It also showed the need for a greater value to be placed on music, through education and community access across different sectors, places, and people. Our survey enabled us to hear the very real way respondents use music in their everyday lives and the genuine joy people find not only in using music to alleviate their symptoms or stressors, but their readiness to share this with others.

This piece of work presents a significant opportunity for the UK that we must act upon now. As a country with an impressive musical sector, we have many of the tools in place already. Given the current pressures on our national health service and social care sector, we could deliver something extraordinary if we work together to harness the power of music.

Across this project we have been struck by how keen colleagues from across the music sector, health and social care sectors and government have been to engage with our discussions. We extend a huge thanks to everyone who attended our roundtables, workshops or spoke to us about this work. Your contribution and passion have been truly invaluable in making this report come to life.

But crucially this is not the end: it is the beginning.

We are only at the beginning of understanding music's full potential. We want this report and its recommendations to be part of the foundations for a long-term plan to harness the power of music. With the right structures and support in place, our music sector, and its cross-sector partners, can help to lead a path through recovery which recognises that we can use music to do things differently to achieve better outcomes for all. UK Music and Music for Dementia have started this work but now it is up to all of us to make it a reality.

The music's calling.

Are you with us now?



# Methodology

## About the Survey

The Power of Music survey ran from June to early July 2021. It was promoted on social media and sent to key stakeholders across both the music industry and health and social care sectors. It consisted of mainly qualitative questions and took respondents on average 15 minutes to complete.

The first question allowed people to identify whether they were responding on behalf of an organisation or as an individual. Of the 209 responses we heard from:

- 90 individuals
- 42 health professionals (including care home and NHS workers)
- 33 charity or community initiatives
- 32 music organisations
- 10 music and health initiatives
- 2 council or university bodies

In our survey, respondents highlighted several ways they use music to help with physical and mental health, or cognitive issues, as well as how it can be a general benefit to wellbeing and happiness. People shared heartwarming and personal stories, as well as what they do as an organisation. Some examples include:

- Supporting people with dementia living in care settings
- Helping adults with severe learning difficulties through improvement of concentration, developing reading skills and self-confidence, willingness and ability to concentrate, sense of community and belonging and self-expression
- Helping people manage depression, PTSD, and a range of other mental health conditions
- Bringing people together or helping people who feel isolated to be connected with others

- Improving physical health by aiding lung capacity, stamina and heart health
- Dancing to music improving mobility
- Providing children with a sense of being, place and activity to focus on, particularly potentially vulnerable children

People noted that music has a similar impact as exercise in releasing endorphins, but the effects are lesser known and appreciated in comparison to sport. Generally, the way music can improve quality of life and bring joy was mentioned by a significant number of participants.

Once the survey closed, we thematically analysed the results. This was followed by two workshops with cross-sector stakeholders to explore key themes and test the final set of recommendations

The quotes used in the survey findings chapter are from real individuals, but their names have been pseudonymised and personal details removed. Permission was sought for us to use these quotes.



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**For further reading, we recommend:**

A Choir in Every Care Home  
APPG on Creative Wellbeing Creative  
Good for you, good for us, good for  
everybody DHSC report  
Health: The Arts for Health and  
Wellbeing  
ILC-UK – Commission on Music and  
Dementia  
National Academy Social Prescribing  
National plan for Music Education  
UK Music, This is Music 2021  
What is the evidence on the role of the  
arts in improving health and well-  
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This report on music, health and wellbeing has been created by UK Music and Music for Dementia on behalf of their members and supporters to demonstrate the value of music to society across all aspects – social, health, care, commercial and economic.

UK Music is the collective voice of the UK's world-leading music industry. We represent all sectors of our industry – bringing them together to collaborate, campaign, and champion music. The members of UK Music are: AIM, BPI, FAC, The Ivors Academy, MMF, MPA, MPG, MU, PPL, *PRS for Music*. UK Music also has an informal association with LIVE (Live music Industry Venues & Entertainment).

Supported by The Utlely Foundation, Music for Dementia is the cross-sector campaign to make music an integral part of dementia care.

We already include more than 200 organisations from the NHS, care sector, third sector and music sector plus thousands of individual supporters, many with lived experience.

The Utlely Foundation is a private family charitable trust, established in 2014. The Foundation exists to advance social causes close to the heart of the trustees, and to act as a catalyst for greater funding and wider action for the causes it supports.

