

**International Best Practice in Music Performance
Education Models and Associated Learning
Outcomes for Wales**

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Introduction

“This research into Best Practice Music Education Models Internationally and their Application to Wales is needed to address a deficit situation in Wales. The consequent collateral damage being caused to Wales’ world class music education by a lack of strategic direction and funding are having a negative impact on Welsh young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, from which it could take more than a decade to recover. Within this context it would be beneficial to consider the urgent development of a National Music Education Performance Strategy for Wales”.

Richard J Hallam MBE, Chair Music Education Council 2013/2019

According to a 2011 article by Helena Braithwaite, the problems with funding instrumental tuition in schools goes back to 1996, when local government reorganisation resulted in the existent 8 Welsh counties being organised into 22 smaller unitary authorities.¹ Braithwaite continues to assert that “These smaller [authorities subsequently] found it difficult to sustain the previous level of music provision”.² With central budgets now being delegated to schools, Braithwaite’s article suggests that all extra curricula activity is potentially threatened from this point, as the new unitary authorities struggled with reduced funding. To counteract this problem, the then secretary of State for Wales Alun Michael introduced the *Music Development Fund* in 1999, with £8 million being distributed to local authorities’ music services, ring fenced until 2003. The fund was specifically aimed at financing extra-curricular music activities, including music therapy sessions for children with special educational needs.

¹ Of which according to a 2015 Task and Finish Group Report, 20 have a specific music service. Some authorities share music service provision, while those that have no music service use private providers (Welsh Government, 2015).

² Helena Braithwaite (2011), ‘Why we Need to Defend Music in the Land of Song’, *Click on Wales*, available at <http://www.iwa.wales/click/2011/02/why-we-need-to-defend-music-in-the-land-of-song/> [accessed 21/03/18].

Although the fund was initially extended until 2004-05 on a reduced budget of £1.9 million,³ the responsibility was now given to local authorities, as opposed to the music services, with ring fencing for music being withdrawn. According to Braithwaite, it was at this point that local authorities began charging for instrumental lessons in increased numbers, with “musical tuition in Wales [considered] depend[ent] on where you live and whether you can or cannot pay for lessons”,⁴ what has become widely known as ‘the post code lottery’.

Whilst acknowledging the significant challenges that Welsh Local Government has experienced over the last several years, with a 1.2billion reduction within the Welsh Block Grant since 2010 and a duty of law to balance budgets, it has been well documented, over this time frame in particular, that instrumental tuition in Wales is now in decline. For example, a 2011 report by the BBC highlighted that at least half a million pounds had been cut from school music lessons, resulting in a noticeable reduction in the number of pupils reaching orchestral standard. With instrumental provision seen to vary from county to county, Flintshire Council are reported as cutting £177,000 from their instrumental tuition budget and Carmarthenshire £120,000. Although Powys are described as being the only county that offer no council funded music lessons in 2011 (resulting in provision that is only available if parents are able and prepared to pay), Carmarthen and Pembrokeshire are then reported as “considering introducing charges in the near future”.⁵ Although details were not as readily available on the Pembrokeshire music service website, a 2014 report in the Western Telegraph revealed that costs of instrumental tuition were rising by £4 per hour, in addition to travel expenses to county level ensemble concerts no longer being free.⁶

³ See BBC News (2018), ‘Funding Cuts for Music Provision’, available at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/wales/3620211.stm> [accessed 21/03/18].

⁴ See Braithwaite, 2011.

⁵ Ciaran Jenkins (2011) School Music Lessons in Wales Cut by £500k Since Report’, *BBC News*, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-12846656> [accessed 21/03/18].

⁶ Western Telegraph (2014), ‘Pembrokeshire Music Lessons Costs to Rise, available at http://www.westerntelegraph.co.uk/news/11597127.Pembrokeshire_music_lessons_cost_to_rise/ [accessed 21/03/2018].

By 2013, these issues were now reported as impacting Newport council, with a BBC report fearing that funding cuts in Gwent music service could lead to instrumental music tuition becoming elitist due to its expense.⁷ This problem of elitism in music is substantiated by recent research from The Sutton Trust, who estimate that 19% of The Brit Award winners between 1977 to 2016 attended private school, three times the national average of 7%. Alarmingly, 75% of Classical based Brit Award winners are estimated to have attended private schools.⁸ When considering this high percentage, the report suggested that success in classical music “require[s] several years, even decades of training”, something that will not be realistically possible if costs are not affordable.

The impact of this lack of provision on the musical future of Wales has been highlighted over a number of years by the likes of Catrin Finch, The Super Furry Animals, and composers such as Karl Jenkins, who concisely depicted how drastically things have changed since his days at school

All instrumental teaching was free, peripatetic teaching, and then onto the West Glamorgan Youth Orchestra, National Youth Orchestra of Wales, which was the first national youth orchestra in the world.⁹

By 2018, in an article entitled *The Quiet Decline of Arts in British Schools*, *The Economist* uses Wrexham as the latest case study impacted by funding cuts, reporting how its music service budget has recently been reduced by 72%. The article also ironically reports on the enormous value of the British music industry (4.4bn), with acts such as Coldplay, Adele, David Bowie comprising three of the top five best-selling artists in 2016. Based on data from the Welsh Authorities’ Music Education Association, the report estimates that no more than 7

⁷ BBC News (2013), ‘Gwent Music Service: Elitism Fears Over Newport Plan’, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-east-wales-20897121> [accessed 21/03/18].

⁸ Philip Kirby (2016), ‘Leading People 2016: The Educational Backgrounds of the UK Professional Elite’, *Sutton Trust*, available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-south-east-wales-20897121> [accessed 21/03/18].

⁹ BBC News (2013), ‘Cuts Threaten Wales’ Musical Reputation – Karl Jenkins’, , available at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-21032634> [accessed 21/03/18].

of the 22 Welsh councils pay for a service that employs teacher musicians on a contract basis, with Powys highlighted as an example of a county who are now able to choose whether or not to provide instrumental tuition, “for which they charge parents”.¹⁰

Although Wrexham council is reported as setting aside £50,000 to assist families who can’t afford to pay. David Thomas, head of the Wrexham council’s music service fears “[m]any will give up” (Ibid). Within this context of austerity, the question is, how can Wales make its instrumental and performance-based music provision more sustainable?

This current research has to be positioned within the context of the 2015 *Task and Finish Group on Music Services in Wales*, which investigated alternative methods for service delivery, equitable provision and partnership delivery amongst other things. The report and its subsequent responses, picks up on how opportunities to study an instrument varies between local authorities, not only in terms of charging policies but also regarding access to instruments and tutors. It also highlights that although music services provide “the first opportunities for children and young people to engage with Wales’ pyramid structure for instrumental and vocal training”, the “fragmented and variable patterns that have evolved across the local authorities [...] are having a negative impact on the robustness of the pyramid”.¹¹ The report provides a useful introduction in terms of what music services currently do, mentioning that important factors such as geography, affordability, areas of deprivation, subsidy provided by schools and provision of instruments all impact pupil access to instrumental provision. In 2017, one of the aims of the Task and Finish group was realised, with each of the 22 local authority music services receiving £10,000 via the Welsh Local Government Association to assist with the purchase of musical instruments. Additionally, a

¹⁰ The Economist (2018), ‘Total Eclipse of the Arts: The Quiet Decline of Music in British Schools’, available at <https://www.economist.com/news/britain/21737444-barely-one-20-pupils-took-music-gcse-last-year-how-much-longer-will-world-dance> [accessed 21/03/18].

¹¹ Welsh Government (2015), ‘Report of the Task and Finish Group on Music Services in Wales’, p. 5, available at <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/publications/wagreviews/music-services-task-and-finish-group-report/?skip=1&lang=en> [accessed 21/03/18].

National Endowment Fund for Music was also announced in 2017, with £1m of seed funding given to the Arts Council of Wales. Aimed specifically at extra-curricular activities, the fund is aimed at encouraging further donations, with an aim to raise a further £1m per year in future. Despite these positive developments, at this present point and time and as the literature above has reiterated, local authority budgets are decreasing, resulting inevitably in more responsibility being placed on parents to finance instrumental lessons.

This brief piece of scoping research aims to build on the *Task and Finish Group on Music Services in Wales* report and its ‘one year on’ response,¹² to provide additional background on how Wales can ensure all children have access to a consistent ‘pan nation offer’ of instrumental tuition and group/ensemble experiences, in a range of styles and genres. The intention of the research is to provide important background information for the development of a *National Music Education Performance Strategy for Wales*,¹³ which would provide synergy between National Youth Arts, Welsh Arts Council (For example the *Creative Learning Through the Arts – An Action Plan For Wales 2015 – 2020* report and Donaldson (2015), providing for a statutory, core, access offer, on the basis of access, equality and affordability for all. It is proposed that this report is followed by a more comprehensive piece of research, that highlights wellbeing, social and curriculum benefit and consequent qualification and productivity benefit, of an enriched well-resourced music education curriculum with a regular instrumental performance tuition offer and wider progression pathway.¹⁴

In order to achieve these aims, a selection of stakeholders were identified with appropriate expertise from both within and outside of Wales and asked to comment broadly on the following questions.

¹² See <http://gov.wales/docs/dcells/publications/170406-music-services-one-year-on-report-en.pdf>

¹³ Henceforth called the ‘Strategy’.

¹⁴ For the purposes of this document, instrumental tuition also includes vocals.

- Can you give any examples of countries internationally that are exemplars of good practice when it comes to their extracurricular instrumental tuition provision? Can you give reasons for your choice – what can Wales learn?
- Do you have any thoughts on how these models could be applied in Wales?
- What factors should an accessible, equitable, peripatetic national core offer include for instrumental and group instrumental tuition (including vocals) in Wales?
- Do you have any observations on how the current system facilitates or prohibits young music pupils to progress from school-based activities to more national activities? How can these orchestral/ensemble/group pathways be improved in Wales and how do they work successfully in other countries?
- Do you have any advice or comments on how ensemble based, individual lessons and the mainstream curriculum can link together?
- Can you think of any specific examples of musicians/young people who have benefited from instrumental and ensemble peripatetic lessons?
- Any other observations?

Prior to focusing on the perspectives of stakeholder interviews, an interesting contextual starting point is a document published by the Association Européenne des Conservatoires in 2007.¹⁵ Although conducted over a decade ago and focused primarily toward higher education, the research, done in conjunction with the European Music School Union,¹⁶ acknowledges that ‘pre-university’ musical activities play an essential part in the future progression of students into HE and future careers. Therefore, having surveyed 22 Music Schools across Europe,¹⁷ the document highlighted the importance of Higher Education providers having a clear understanding of what their cohorts have studied previously. Although documented in 2007, the report asks a number of pertinent questions that are still relevant today: what is the average length of one-to-one instrumental/vocal/ensemble lessons?; do instrumental teachers require formal qualifications/training?; what ages do

¹⁵ Eleonora Tchernoff (2007) *Music Schools in Europe*, AEC Publications.

¹⁶ See <http://www.musicschoolunion.eu/>

¹⁷ ‘Music Schools’ are regarded as an overarching term, although the provision provides extra-curricular music training outside of the compulsory sector, providing important progression links to HE and employment.

children commence instrumental tuition?; what pre-school activities are available?; what are the broad aims of instrumental training (professional/amateur)?; does school age instrumental provision have formal links with Higher Education and industry?; are there any official measurements/monitoring of student progress?; and finally, are costs financed by the state, the student, or a mixture of both? The research also highlights the importance of a number of broader issues such as consistency of tuition fee costings; teacher contracts (local Green book conditions vs national Teacher contracts); instrument loan/purchase/provision; statements of national minimum expectations for provision; consistency of teacher training; potential national learning outcomes that have local flexibility and most importantly, national grants for students who can't afford lessons and associated activities. Whilst this research has a tendency to ask more questions than providing detailed answers, what is clear is that many of these questions require further exploration *within* Wales.¹⁸ Although no work as substantive as this has been conducted by the Association Européenne des Conservatoires since 2007, their web site does contain information, updated in 2017, on a wide number of European Music Schools.¹⁹ As part of this research, Timo Klemettinen, Managing Director of the European Music Schools Union was interviewed and asked to comment on current trends of instrumental tuition around Europe (See below).

From 2013, Scotland has implemented a National Instrumental Music Survey, which includes information such as tuition fee costs, concession rates, instrument hire and loans, numbers of pupils engaging with instrumental lessons, teacher standards and costs of services. This is mentioned at this point because it has the potential to be an interesting model for Wales. The yearly research is carried out by Scotland's Improvement Services, on behalf of Heads of Instrumental Services Scotland. As with Wales, the most recent survey confirms

¹⁸ The report does not mention Wales by name as it is subsumed within the generic United Kingdom.

¹⁹ See <https://www.aec-music.eu/services/national-overviews>

that Scotland can be seen to vary widely between individual authorities.²⁰ With authorities that charge for individual instrumental tuition, the average yearly rate is £212 per year, with prices increasing significantly in some regions over the last few years.²¹ Ensemble based tuition fluctuates widely, between £117 and £318 per annum. However, it is important to note that a number of authorities have found ways to provide instrumental tuition for free, namely Orkney, Midlothian, Edinburgh, Glasgow, South Ayrshire, East Lothian, West Dunbartonshire and West Lothian, all of who have never charged throughout the time frame that the surveys have taken place (from 2013). Renfrewshire authority are noted as making instrumental provision free from 2017. All charging authorities are seen to offer some form of concession for families who can't afford instrumental tuition, often determined by Free School Meals Entitlement. Instrumental provision charges also vary across Scotland, ranging from prices of instrument hire included in lesson cost, to offering instruments free for a set time (two terms to two years) before purchase, to offering instruments free subject to availability. The selection process in terms of supply, demand and pre-assessment also varies across authorities, with Eilean Siar noted as one of four areas that were able to offer all interested parties instrumental tuition (although some were charged for). In a country that has similar access issues to Wales, some authorities are noted as taking advantage of technology to implement 'e-lesson' instrumental provision, mainly via school video conference provision. Private sponsorship for instrumental provision includes organisations such as The Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust providing lessons, to Stagecoach Orkney getting pupils to and from rehearsals, to private parents' associations engaging in fundraising activities.

²⁰ See <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/documents/research/IMS-survey-report-2017.pdf>

²¹ The average time allocated for instrumental lessons is estimated to be 25 minutes per week, over at least 30 weeks. None of the prices charged are noted as covering the total costs of instrumental lessons, with subsidies from local authorities ranging from 98% to 42%.

The Scottish government have also produced a guidance document, that provides advice for music services, ranging from information on the wider cultural benefits of music, to providing generic aims for instrumental tuition, to advice on setting challenging goals for pupils, to recommendations on feedback to students and parents (including written and video based), to advice for heads of music service, and learner and style differentiation. In terms of the curriculum, the document focuses on the importance of highlighting the role of instrumental tuition in “the holistic development of the learner”, including other curriculum areas and more general “resilience and perseverance”.²²

Finally, regarding provision in North America, a 2017 issue of *School band and Orchestra Magazine*, Andrew J. Allen suggested that the ‘unique approach’ to instrumental tuition in the United States and Canada, is that it is seen to be “included in the curriculum of nearly every public school”. He continues

Almost every student who wishes can learn an instrument, oftentimes at little or no cost, besides the instrument itself. In addition, most of our instruction through grade school focuses on group learning through bands and orchestras.²³

What Allen could not understand was why “very few countries utilize it [this model]”.²⁴

When asked this question, Gareth Dylan Smith, Manager of Programme Effectives at Little Kids Rock and visiting research Professor at New York State University commented:

“What you have to understand is that music education [in North America] is very different to the UK. In order to become a music teacher, you have to do a four-year music degree where teachers learn how to teach brass, woodwind and choral methods”.

²² ‘Guidance for Instrumental Teaching in Scotland’ (2016), available at <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00500509.pdf> [accessed 24/03/18].

²³ Andrew J. Allen (2017), ‘A World of Difference: Instrumental Music Education in France’, available at <http://sbomagazine.com/commentary/5932-a-world-of-difference-instrumental-music-education-in-france.html> [accessed 23/03/2018]

²⁴ Ibid.

Smith confirmed that all of the extracurricular based instrumental tuition is focused on large ensembles, not individual, with the *class* teacher being expected to teach concert band, marching band orchestra or choir in middle school: “If you don’t engage with these bands, you don’t do music in school”. Smith’s employers, Little Kids Rock are one of a number of private companies offering alternative models to complement the mainstream system. A not for profit public school-based initiative founded in 2002, Little Kids Rock provide access to free instruments, music teacher training and curriculum resources. It is one of a number of popular music-based initiatives that have emerged in the United States over the last 20 years, although its funding model could theoretically be applied to any style of music.²⁵

A similar ‘inclusive’ philosophy for rock and pop is also apparent with The Travelling Guitar Foundation and The Rock and Roll Forever Foundation in the United States, with the former having an agenda of providing curriculum advice and free guitars, amplifiers and drum sets to schools “who are struggling to finance their music education programs”.²⁶ Interestingly, the Rock and Roll Forever Foundation’s ‘Teach Rock’ scheme aims not just to impact musical activities in American schools, but to use music as a means of making more mainstream subjects more relevant to pupils. As with the other American based schemes mentioned, Teach Rock is not government funded, but funded privately via donation and subscription.

Although this time not targeting public schools, a final example of a donation-funded initiative is The Girls Rock Camp Alliance,²⁷ a summer camp that aims to ensure that gender is not a prohibitory factor when making rock music. As opposed to critiquing the mainstream school curriculum, the emphasis, like its sub category Ladies Rock, is focused more towards

²⁵ Little Kids Rock now a presence in 47 of the 50 States in the United States, with over 2000 teachers and half a million students. They also implement a two-day training course teaching class music teachers how to teach ‘modern band’ music.

²⁶ See <https://www.travelingguitarfoundation.org>

²⁷ See <http://girlsrockcampalliance.org/>

using rock music instrumental tuition and performance as part of the social justice and empowerment agenda. Ladies Rock Milwaukie for example, is focused on empowering not only women, but also “transgender and gender non-conforming individuals of any identity [...] to foster independent thinking, building self-esteem, and bridging cultural and social divides in a supportive community of peers and mentors”.²⁸ With the aforementioned National Endowment Fund for Music recently announced in Wales, maybe this is a pertinent time to explore how pedagogical models such as this can be explored to complement core government funding?

The stakeholders below were chosen either for their detailed knowledge of the Welsh context, or their expertise and knowledge of UK and international offers.

Emma Coulthard: Head of Cardiff County and Vale of Glamorgan Music Service

Professor Lucy Green: Emeritus Professor of Music Education at University College London

Vanessa Barnes: Royal Ballet Symphonia

Eluned David Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

Steve Harker: Inclusion Manager Cornwell Music Leisure Trust and Chair of the Association of Independent Music Service

Timo Klemettinen: Managing Director of the European Music Schools Union

Emma Archer: Chair of CAGAC (Cymdeithas Addysg Cerdd Awdurdodau Cymru/Welsh Authorities' Music Education Association)

David Jackson: Chair, Youth Arts Wales and Artistic Director BBC Cymru Wales

Andy Warnock: Regional Officer of the Musicians Union Based in Cardiff

Robert Aitken CBE: Director Music in Hospitals & Care Cymru and Lord Lieutenant of Gwent

²⁸ See <http://www.girlsrockmke.org/ladies-rock/>

Dr Gareth Dylan Smith: Manager of Little Kids Rock based in the United States of America

Diane Hebb: Director of Engagement and Participation, Arts Council Wales

Stakeholder Interviews

Emma Coulthard

When commenting on the English *National Music Education Plan for Music* (The Henley Report),²⁹ Coulthard provided some initial advice on factors that impact the effectiveness of the proposed Strategy, highlighting the importance of ensuring the correct infrastructures are in place to make plans such as this work. Coulthard believed it was important to consider “What we want and how to get there, rather than necessarily considering “what we do with our existing organisations” Coulthard believed that discussions she has had with the industry suggested that not enough is being done to implement this plan, but “the thinking in the plan is really good and if put forward would be excellent [...], but at the moment it varies too much from authority to authority” She continued

“The problem was the plan was put together, but the old infrastructure did not have enough time to meet it. We [Wales] would have the opportunity with the proposed *National Music Education Performance Strategy for Wales*, to put in the correct structure [in place first, in order] to deliver what is supposed to be delivered”.

When asked what changes needed to take place, Coulthard proposed that a national music service would be a good idea, but “we need to decide what we want a music service for, what we want it to do and what’s realistic”. She advised that this includes examining the realistic viability of providing free lessons, not only in terms of finance, but also ensuring the children doing the lessons want to do them, as it may not be appropriate for every child. She continued:

²⁹ See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/music-education-in-england-a-review-by-darren-henley-for-the-department-for-education-and-the-department-for-culture-media-and-sport>

“This includes deciding which agency is best for delivering which bit. For example, if we decided that foundation stage children should have experiences of listening to a lot of live music, then maybe that could go to the portfolio of Arts Council Organisation or the Welsh College to go in and give performances”.

Coulthard also suggested that younger children in year 3 don't necessarily require expensive instruments, with instruments such as ukuleles and recorders having the potential to assist teachers to engage children to interface with ensemble-based performance, *prior* to undertaking individual instrumental tuition.

“Then if they want to take up an instrument at year 4, at least we will know they would have had some experience of listening to instruments and some experience of knowing if they will stick at it”.

Interestingly, Coulthard believed that care needed to be taken regarding making instrumental tuition entirely free, as it has the potential to encourage children to take up an instrument, but may not be taken seriously or indeed be valued. She therefore suggested that a small amount was paid by families who could afford it (say £50 per term), which would in turn help subsidise those who can't.

“It either needs to be universally free for everyone if we get funded properly, or a sliding scale where children [are means tested, based on factors such as] free school or poverty indexes”.

Regarding international countries who are exemplars of good practice, Coulthard suggested investigating selected authorities in England such as Hertfordshire. However, she highlighted Southern Ireland as a particularly interesting model. Entitled Music Generation Ireland, the initiative has 50% of the costs of instrumental music provision provided by the band U2, which is in turn match funded by the Irish government.³⁰ In addition to being free, this

³⁰ See <http://www.musicgeneration.ie/>

initiative is also multi genre, including potentially any style of music, avoiding what Coulthard described as 'genre hierarchy'. Indeed Coulthard verified that a third of her pupils in Cardiff were guitarists, but there was no progression route for them.

Lucy Green

When in conversation with Lucy Green, she mentioned nations such as Cyprus and Greece conducting extracurricular style conservatoire style ensemble sessions, similar to that done at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. However, Green conceded that the problems with these models are that they are also related to cost. An example of a more cost effective and pedagogically grounded model according to Green is the 'informal' method of learning, of which she is noted as publishing in texts such as *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education* (2001) and *Music Informal Learning and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy* (2008). However, as these models are more associated with popular music learning, further consideration would need to be given if they were to apply to more 'formal' musical styles.

Regarding instrument provision, Green considered it fruitless to provide instruments to schools if "nobody is going to maintain the instrument in good working order". However, she continued to assert that if musical maintenance was possible, then "giving instruments to children and showing them how to set about 'ear playing' in small groups with friends, is a fantastic way to open up the world of music to them". Indeed, Green felt it important to highlight that "popular music related music making does not happen by magic either", with "access to playing popular music also starting within the [facilitation of the] family, just as it is with classical music". Green considered the Scandinavian nations as being an interesting starting point to investigate music instrumental provision, although she believed much of the practice was more popular music based. When asked about the perceived 'division' between

classical and popular based styles, Green believed that “it is within the educational workforce, not in music itself”.

In addition to the funding issues, Green believed that “one of the reasons why kids are not taking up classical instruments is probably because it is taught in a very rigid way – it doesn’t appeal to them, the motivation of the child is absolutely essential”. She linked this to instrumental provision in North America, which she considered “very elitist, [and] based on the hierarchical model of the band, orchestra or choir led by a master teacher. There is no improvising no composition, no creativity”. Regarding specific classical music-based models, Green mentioned the *Music Fund* as an excellent example of an organisation who provides instruments to children in areas such as Africa, Central America and the Middle East.³¹ More closely linked in to potentials in Wales, alongside David Jackson (see below) who also recommended it, Green considered the *El Sistema* model to be of interest. Originally founded in 1975 by José Antonio Abreu Anselm to provide free classical music instruction for impoverished children in Venezuela and later adopting the motto ‘music for social change’, it has inspired a number of offshoots in North America, Portugal, Canada and the United Kingdom. With the UK based instances including Sistema Scotland,³² Sistema England, which has two projects entitled The Nucleo Project and In Harmony,³³ Green strongly suggested looking at these in the next stage of the research.

Vanessa Barnes

When asked about international good practice, Barnes’ first thought was China, which was regarded as having “hundreds of music schools”, although she was unsure if the funding was all private due to the affluence of some areas of the population. Regarding individual instrumental tuition, she had this to say

³¹ See <http://www.musicfund.eu/>

³² See <https://makeabignoise.org.uk/sistema-scotland/>

³³ See <http://www.sistemaengland.org.uk/the-nucleo-project/> and <http://www.sistemaengland.org.uk/in-harmony-lambeth/>

“A colleague of mine recently gave a private lesson over Skype [to a Chinese student] and he said he was charging around £240 per hour”, with the belief if you charge less “you can’t be any good”.

According to Barnes, this makes it difficult to compare ‘like for like’, although she was happy to forward some potential contacts who may be able to provide an insight into the full picture of instrumental teaching in China. In terms of best practices in Europe, Barnes commented: “I used to be in the European Community Youth Orchestra and Britain used to be a big presence along with Germany, which had the largest number of members”. Both Barnes and David (below) recommended that in order to ascertain exactly what Wales’ international partners do regarding extracurricular instrumental tuition, a useful starting point would be to interview members from both UK and International Orchestras.

In terms of good practice in the UK, Barnes highlighted the Wiltshire Youth Orchestra, the Hertfordshire Youth Orchestra and Berkshire Music Service as examples of good practice and standards, while others were regarded as having “nothing left of their music service what so ever”. She continued, “some of the Hubs seem to have worked properly and some don’t seem to exist at all”. “You almost get to the point where even if you are on an average income, it becomes incredibly difficult to do music”.

Barnes also paid homage to the importance of the general role of the Music Adviser when discussing her experiences as a young musician in Gwent Music Service, regarding the Gwent Music Adviser as active when she was learning, with part of their job being to spot talent, who could then be identified for further support. Comparing it to the situation today, she believed “these days it is just about consumer services. None of these people today are looking for talented pupils they can support, it is more about what you can purchase off them”. When asked what the ‘ideal’ offer would be for a Welsh instrumental peripatetic offer, she commented “Back to what it was in the ‘70s, because it was perfect”:

“You look at how much higher the standard was in the Gwent Youth Orchestra and the National Youth Orchestra of Wales. [...]. Every element of my studies was financed by Gwent”.

Despite the availability of bursaries being noted to access the National Orchestra of Great Britain for example, the expense of purchasing instruments was highlighted, with personal experience revealing the significant financial contribution families need to make in order to purchase suitable instruments for this level of activity. With 15k being regarded as a ‘minimum standard’ for a top-level violin for example, Barnes feared that purchasing instruments of this standard are becoming the enclave of the “rich elite”, making progression to the top orchestras problematic. Barnes also expressed concerns that membership of the top orchestras will become more elitist, due to the problems of instrument affordability and lack of availability of tuition.

Barnes also reiterated the importance of legacy building – where good teachers produce good teachers: “you have to have a tradition of good standards of teachers, highlighting that during her time, “somewhere like Gwent had a very high standard of teaching [...] but the legacy is being eroded because of [a lack of] funding.[...]. It’s is now just a free for all if schools bother to employ Gwent music service at all”.

Eluned David

David initially commenced by highlighting how important the availability of orchestral practice was during her time studying in Gwent, remembering Saturday morning events, “big old scratch bands” and also more specialist sessions on a Friday evening, which encouraged her to consider that “maybe the music profession was for [her]”. Although David had no direct knowledge of how music was delivered internationally, when commenting on the demographic of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, she roughly estimated that 50% came from the UK, with the rest made up from nations such as France, Germany and Poland.

She therefore suggested that interviewing members of orchestras such as this would be a useful starting point for finding out more about international practices. In terms of what a national offer in Wales could look like, David believed that free lessons were important at the start, as many children will not even be aware that they are talented in music, “but at a certain level, parents do have to pay [currently]”. Commenting on the current climate outlined in the introduction of this research, she commented, “I think it is getting worse and worse, so the more you can do to preserve it....”.

Steve Harker

When commenting on his experience in setting up the Cornwall Music Service Trust due to the closure of the local music service,³⁴ Harker commented on the value of speaking to the Musicians Union for advice, who have produced a number of fact sheets on not only Music Service Trusts, but also Music Cooperatives and Community Interest Companies. All of these models have been incorporated as potential alternatives to authority music services, with Denbighshire Music Cooperative being noted as an interesting example in North Wales.³⁵

Cornwall Music Service Trust was set up in 2015, with 80 people initially moving across from the county music service, expanding to 120 currently. As a result of the cross over, Harker did verify that the trust, which has employees, had to implement a common pay scale based on qualifications and experience, with some who were at the top end of the authority pay scale having to take pay cuts, while others received an increase.

When commenting on England’s *The National Plan for Music Education*, Harker believed that learning from the mistakes in this document would be a useful starting point for Wales, considering that despite there being many positives, there were also a number of issues, one of which is the ‘pyramid structure’. As outlined in the *Musical Futures Project*

³⁴ See <https://www.cornwallmusicserVICetrust.org/>

³⁵See <http://www.denbighshiremusic.com/>

developed by Lucy Green (Interviewed above),³⁶ Harker considered the pyramid to miss out on two important factors – informal learning practices (the means through which many young people learn music) and also the capturing of musical practices that fall outside of the pyramid – namely what is broadly described as rock and popular music.³⁷ When asked what a quality music service would ideally look like, he suggested balancing the quality and job satisfaction of the teachers with the associated costs. When putting together a new music service provider, Harker highlighted the importance of ensuring a clear philosophy is in place from the start. This could include sub sections such as an orchestral team, a rock and pop team and a mental health aspect for example. He also verified that transport costs needed to be an important part of the model if the overriding philosophy is ‘music for all’, as teachers “simply refuse to work in remote schools”. As opposed to implementing the usual model where staff claim retrospectively per mile, all staff in Cornwall Music Service Trust have travel paid into their salary direct, having agreed the mileage beforehand.

In terms of the use of technology to implement music teaching in more remote areas, Harker suggested investigating NYMAZ³⁸ and Songwriter Online,³⁹ as being interesting ‘inclusion’ models, both of who work in conjunction with schools. As with several of those interviewed, Hertfordshire Music Service was noted as an excellent example of good practice, being regarded as one of the first services to consider alternative pay and conditions for teachers. Harker also alluded to the ‘online orchestra’ currently being developed by Falmouth University, who are currently developing an app to afford “children and amateur

³⁶ See <https://www.musicalfutures.org/>

³⁷ In addition to the texts already mentioned by Lucy Green, also refer to the work of Ben Sandbrook (<http://www.bensandbrook.com/>). Also see <http://network.youthmusic.org.uk/resources/visualisations/ingredients-create-environment-musical-progression>

³⁸ See <https://www.nymaz.org.uk/>

³⁹ See <http://songwriteronline.co.uk/>

musicians who live in remote communities around the country the same opportunities to play in an orchestra as those who live in larger towns and cities”.⁴⁰

Timo Klemettinen

When asked what function of the European Music Schools Union (EMU) was, Klemettinen confirmed that it was “established because the people [in European music schools] wanted to come together and exchange ideas”. Focusing broadly on pedagogy and politics, EMU currently has 26 members and produces regular statistical data focusing on how member music schools compare to each other, ranging from charging families to state support. Currently, there are no members affiliated to the UK, and Klemettinen suggested that this was an opportunity for Wales to be involved in the European agenda for music school networks.⁴¹

When commenting upon the models of countries in Europe, Klemettinen confirmed that there was significant diversity between the practices across its members. He also noted how, as we have found in Wales, that political change can impact quality of music service.

“When I started 20 years ago, Sweden and the Netherlands were extremely proud of their system”. [...] [However], I was already then warning my colleagues and telling them please be careful. When the times are good in politics you are doing fine, but times change...”

As an indicative example, Klemettinen described the current situation in the Netherlands as “a disaster [...] it’s horrifying”. When discussing his own country, Finland, he outlined a three-part funding model that is working successfully, with finance of instrumental tuition deriving from the State, the municipalities and families. While the State provides 53% of all expenditure of music education,⁴² the split between families and municipalities is flexible,

⁴⁰ See <http://onlineorchestra.com/>

⁴¹ Although part of the reason for this absence may be that Music School models are very different to the ways in which school based instrumental tuition takes place in the UK.

⁴² These are ‘real’ costs, including not just tuition, but also building costs, electricity, etc.

depending on the specific region.⁴³ In addition to this, much work has taking place recently to ensure that talented motivated children can get access to bursaries, if their families can't afford to pay. After applying directly to the music school for support, Klemettinen suggested that "most of the time the child would get their tuition for free. [...]". He continued, "When we ask the question is music education available to all, we should be able to say yes". Although not without its problems, the current system in Finland has been working for over 50 years, with Klemettinen stating "I can tell you it has been working extremely well, we are super satisfied with this system". When asked about other successful instrumental music models he was aware of, he commented

"I know there are some Eastern European Countries where all expenditure is paid, but I would say that for the rest of Europe it is out of the question, they tend to have a mix of State and private funding, in addition to local funding, it depends where you are".

Klemettinen advised that the latest research from EMU should explored, which scrutinises how various music schools fund their provision amongst other things. Examining the research reveals that Poland and The Faroe Islands are the only member nations where government fund 100% of music tuition.⁴⁴

Although Klemettinen believed the majority of tuition took place after school in groups across Europe, he mentioned developments in Northern Austria and Denmark, where respective governments have decided to withdraw funding to schools that don't deliver during the school day. Despite being common practice in the UK, it was suggested that this has caused significant administrative problems for class teachers. In conclusion, it was also suggested that governments across Europe need to decide what their priorities are in terms of culture, with a major challenge being how specific societies position music so it is valued.

⁴³ Families in Helsinki for example pay more.

⁴⁴ To access the latest report, see <http://www.musicschoolunion.eu/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/EMU-Statistics-2015-08.09.2017.pdf>

Emma Archer

When asked what an ‘ideal’ instrumental teaching model would like, Archer responded by stating “like it was in 1996”, when teachers were on contracts, instrumental tuition was free of charge and music was “fully embedded in school life”. However, she believed that the current situation has moved so far from this model, that “any consistent funding for music lessons in schools and some sort of security for music services” would be a starting point: “at the moment it is at the other end of the spectrum [from what it used to be]”. Archer verified that the vast majority of staff in Gwent are now self-employed, with Cardiff having contracts, but variable hours. While some authorities have contracts, actual take home pay is quite low: “having a contract does not necessarily mean you are any better off than being self-employed”. Archer continued that staff conditions are not the only issue, but ensuring that we can offer affordable tuition to children. “It really is at the point now [...] where we have no alternative but to pass on the full cost of tuition to parents and only some of them can afford it”. Although Archer considered Wales to be in a better position than England ten years ago, she believed that “what has happened over the last five years is that we have totally caught up with England in terms of the decimation of local authority funding, without there being any central funding to take up the slack”.

Although Archer conceded that it could be argued that Music Service staff should never have been on teacher contracts in the first place, the predicament has plainly gone too far, with local authorities now in a far worse financial position because of austerity. When considering alternatives, Archer believed there were none,

“because passing on the whole cost will shrink the volume of tuition and, with the skill set of teachers making it unlikely [that staff] will be replaced within the local authority doing a different job”.

Regarding the issue of funding for instrumental provision no longer being given directly to music services, Archer considered only two routes were possible. 1) To have funding ring fenced within local authorities, “which they won’t do because [authorities] don’t believe in hypothecated funding, or 2) through the Arts Council, “but then you are possibly in a bidding war”.

“It definitely needs to be not sucked in to a RSG (Revenue Support Grant) that goes in to local authorities at the moment. As we [Music Services] are non-statutory, that is why they are making the decisions they are making”.

When commenting on developments such as the Donaldson Review (2015), despite the positive narrative surrounding its impact to date,⁴⁵ Archer was not confident that it will impact Music Services

“We kept on saying, that is not us, it is not music services, it is not even specifically music, it’s the arts. It’s arts in education and it is meant to be equipping teachers to be more creative. It’s got nothing to do with instrumental and vocal tuition what so ever”.

Archer continued to verify her belief that the Donaldson Review had actually done some significant damage, with what she described as ‘helicopter projects’ being introduced into the classroom, having the potential to have no *long term* sustainable legacy, something that the Music Service could have helped in delivering.

In her role as Chair of CAGAC (Cymdeithas Addysg Cerdd Awrduddodau Cymru/ Welsh Authorities' Music Education Association), Archer was keen to ascertain what impacts to music services had taken place in Scotland, who are a few years down the line from Wales with their own Donaldson Review. Archer reported anecdotally that colleagues in Scotland had experienced “no changes in the ways in which music services in Scotland were being

⁴⁵ See <http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2017/creativelearning/?lang=en>

delivered [...] in the pecking order of decimation, Scotland are behind Wales, who are behind England”.

David Jackson

Before getting into the details of how Wales needs to progress as a musical nation, Jackson was keen to point out his confusion as to why the reductions in funding have taken place, as “there is so much evidence that learning an instrument and singing provides life skills in so many ways”. Even if the child does not progress to professional standard

“Just the skills that you get from learning about music are of great benefit, for example being part of a team, how to lead a team, how to be organised, all of those things. The idea that young people, particularly in a music nation such as Wales is missing out on these opportunities is tragic if you ask me”.

When asked about what Wales’ instrumental service would ideally look like, Jackson considered that he would like to see a musical environment similar to the National Health Service, which is “free at the point of access for every young person in Wales”. “You go to school and you should automatically be offered the opportunity to play an instrument and sing. Everybody has a [potential] aptitude for music”.

He continued

“I went to a school in Glasgow and it [instrumental tuition] was either completely free, but if not, it was certainly within the reach of families such as mine, who did not have a lot of money. If I may say so I have had a successful career [...] and none of those doors would have been opened to me if I had not had that [provision]. What I fear for is for this generation of young people growing up in Wales, is that those doors are firmly locked shut. So, my ideal scenario is a very simple one, that music is available and encouraged for every young person in Wales”.

Jackson also considered that music provision at the point of access does not just benefit the child, but also the creative economy of the nation. Considering that any proposed music plan should address both the general population and future professionals, Jackson made a useful analogy

“We want to have members of the population who can win the Olympics, but we also want members of the population who can run up a hill and run to catch a bus. With music it’s the same”.

When asked if this ‘musical utopia’ was realistically possible, Jackson believed it to be a “legitimate use of money. We [the population] are prepared to pay for them [music tuition] if we can afford it, but people who can’t afford them should not be barred from them [instrumental lessons]”. He continued

“We need to take this as high as we possibly can. We need to take a long view here. If we think that the health and happiness of the nation is important, this is a key ingredient”.

When asked about international models, Jackson mentioned, like Green above, the UK versions of *El Sistema*, which he regarded as an excellent method of engaging young people in music from a young age. “It does not always have to be about expensive instruments and lessons”. Forwarding specific details (see footnote), he also regarded Norway as an interesting country to explore how young people can integrate with music from a young age.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ See <http://nbhap.com/sounds/norwegian-music/>

Andy Warnock

Warnock believed that there are certain issues with England's *National Plan for Music Education* that Wales can potentially learn from, aside from the positive impact that increased funding could have on the sector. Many of the problems are summarised in the *Musicians' Union's 2017 Education Report*, which Warnock suggested was referenced for further information.⁴⁷ Other issues include the variations in structure, working practices, and size of the Music Education Hubs, as well as the lack of a co-ordinated approach in some areas and the fact that instrumental tuition is still non-statutory.

“For instance, there are some places where peripatetic teachers are no longer employed by a local authority music service, but the local authority still runs the Hub, which can cause problems for the workforce as well as music provision”.

Warnock noted that the music services have already discussed plans for regional and national structures, similar to what already happens in Wales through the Regional Consortia for Education, focused on schools, which was a good idea.

When asked what he would like to see in a Welsh National Strategy for Music, Warnock suggested three important factors. Firstly foundations: ensuring equal provision and wide-ranging opportunities for all children and young people, so that they all have the chance to learn an instrument and access meaningful musical experiences. This would include things like early years music and whole class tuition, so that all children are introduced to music from a young age. Warnock considered the rural nature of Wales, and the issues around deprivation in some areas, as well as providing access for children with learning difficulties or disabilities, to be important issues in relation to equal access. Secondly, more advanced provision for pupils who want to pursue music further, which has traditionally been carried out through music services, performance/theory grades, and county and national ensembles,

⁴⁷ See <https://www.musiciansunion.org.uk/Files/Reports/Industry/MU-2017-Education-Report-8pp-A4>

as well as GCSE and A level music. All levels of provision should include traditional “classical” instruments and styles (such as orchestras, brass bands, wind bands, choirs etc.) as well as pop, rock, jazz, and musical traditions from other countries, to ensure that the performers, composers, bands, and artists of the future are supported across all genres. Warnock commented that some musicians felt there had previously been a gap in Wales outside the more traditional instruments and genres, and that non-classical music needed to be included at all levels of provision. Finally, provision to encourage and maintain an empowered, supported, and engaged workforce, with music teaching as a viable and attractive career, as without a committed, skilled, and creative workforce with good pay and conditions, the quality of music education would suffer. Warnock also considered it important to integrate a National Strategy with existing schemes and funding, such as programmes that facilitate trips to concerts, artists and musicians working in schools, or CPD for teachers.

Summing up the situation in Wales, Warnock noted that Wales has, broadly speaking, been slower to feel the effects of cuts than England, although the situation is now changing quickly, and many music services are now close to collapse due to the withdrawal of funding. He noted that non-statutory services are particularly vulnerable, which was why the MU has been required to support teachers in other ways, such as through their work with music teaching co-operatives and other alternative models. Warnock also suggested that options for increased funding (from Welsh Government and Local Authorities) should still be explored, and that another way of supporting music provision was for Estyn to focus on music education and instrumental tuition as an important part of their ratings for schools, which could tie in to issues around creativity raised by the Donaldson Review.

Robert Aitken CBE

In terms of examples of international good practice, although Aitken was not aware of any specific current international offers, he did mention the Saturday morning Junior Conservatoire at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama as an excellent exemplar within Wales. Although this is a funded model where parents pay, there are bursaries available made possible via fund raising activities. From memory, Aitken believed there to be around 50% of the children on scholarships during his tenure, some of which deliver all of the costs. Regarding his role as Lord Lieutenant of Gwent, Aitken believed the Music Service there to be one of the best in Wales, despite the fact that it is “losing money here, there and everywhere”. When speaking to the Friends of Gwent Music Services, who raise money to make up the shortfall, he considered them to be “nervous” about two things: 1) That if they are too effective at fund raising the council will cut funding, and 2) that they are playing into the hands of what he described as “the elitist argument”, that has become pervasive in the press. “Gwent music service provides the basics, but The Friends of Gwent Music Services provide them tickets to visit concerts in America [for example]”. Returning to the Saturday morning Junior Conservatoire at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, he continued “Don’t think that the kids who come to the Junior Conservatoire are all middle class. Some of them are [middle class], but we had [many children] “where the Junior Conservatoire found money [for those who could not afford it]”. Regarding the importance of safeguarding instrumental music provision in Wales, he commented

“Everybody knows how important music is and everybody knows there are only two types of music – good and bad. Anyone can produce bad music, but only specialised trained people can produce good music. If we don’t invest something in producing musicians who can deliver good music, it is just not going to exist in our lives. [...].

We are never going to get a good performance of the *Bach Double Violin Concerto* or

we are never going to get anyone who can compose ‘Stairway to Heaven’ or can play the start of Ten Years After ‘I’m Going Home’”.

When considering opportunities to access instrumental provision, he continued

“Every child should be given the opportunity and be introduced to the instruments of the orchestra and the rock band for that matter, and then be given the opportunity to develop if they have a particular talent. Then, if the children’s circumstances are such that they can’t afford lessons, there should be a facility that enables their lessons to be subsidised”.

Gareth Dylan Smith

As outlined earlier, Smith highlighted that in many respects, music tuition in North America is very different to the UK, with rock music provision tending to be focused on not for profit and for profit companies as already mentioned, with school tuition tending to focus on ensemble-based music in the orchestral tradition. Individual instrumental lessons, although available are outsourced privately. Smith, who only recently moved to America from the UK commented

“I am discovering more and more that the solution to everything in the United States is to outsource it to a private company [...] the government won’t pay for it”.

Smith estimates that as a result of the lack of relevance of the American school music curriculum, only around 20% of children take up music after middle school. Despite this being the general trend, Smith commented upon an initiative in Colorado, where governor John Hickenlooper has a target of ensuring that every K-12 (Primary and Secondary School age) child has access to musical instrument tuition. Entitled *Take Note Colorado* and recognising the importance that music plays in a well-rounded education, the initiative involves a range of partners, musicians, philanthropists,

music industry leaders and representatives from government.⁴⁸ Smith considers this initiative an interesting, though much larger parallel to the Hubs which we have in the UK.

Regarding the privately funded mechanism of his employers, Little Kids Rock, Smith commented

“We have a team of fundraising people. They are always filling in applications to philanthropy funders. In fact, my position is funded by Niagara Bottling Foundation for example. Moe’s Southwest Grill, a fast food restaurant, has also donated us several thousand dollars. Our [owner] is currently on a tour [of the US] aimed at encouraging organisations and individuals to give us money”.

When asked about other internal funding models he was aware of, Smith mentioned Finland’s Rockway as an interesting example of online provision, that has a national reach.⁴⁹ As a for profit organisation which has recently partnered with The Sibelius Academy and schools, the company focuses on high quality video tuition, which children can access either in school or at home.

Much of the remainder of the conversation with Smith focused on the balance of balancing popular music provision with that of the orchestral tradition, believing that the balance needs to be considered as part of a country’s music plan.

“It depends why you want to have music in schools”, [is it to] “populate orchestras”, [...] “develop elite classical performers” [...] or “enjoy American music as part of a rich life”.

⁴⁸ See <https://takenotecolorado.org/inside-take-note/about-us/> and <https://www.denverpost.com/2017/03/06/governor-hickenlooper-music-industry-educate-colorado-kids/>

⁴⁹ See <https://www.rockway.fi/>

He concluded by verifying that a compromise was possible: “let’s maintain a rich classical tradition and let’s reach more people”.

Diane Hebb

When asked what her ‘ideal’ music service would look like, Hebb recommended “a peripatetic music service available across Wales that is available to all”. She confirmed that as Director of Engagement and Participation at The Arts Council of Wales, that “[she] is only too aware that those services are not available for everybody”. Hebb continued: “It needs to be fairly available, there needs to be an equity about the provision”. Despite these perspectives, Hebb was very aware that this availability needs to be counterbalanced with cost: “It is extremely expensive and that is part of the issue”. However, despite this, she continued to assert that “[The Arts Council of Wales] absolutely support the idea of a wholesale peripatetic service and provision that is available and accessible to all young people”.

When asked about the impact of the Donaldson Review to date, Hebb believed that things have now moved on, with the National Mission for Education now taking precedent.⁵⁰

“The Donaldson Review recommendations have been taken on completely by Welsh Government, who have now moved forward considerably in terms of the new curricula. All six areas of learning will have equal weight, so there will be no excuse for schools squeezing out any of the arts. So, every single child, from stepping into school right through to sixteen, will be doing the expressive arts, so therefore will be doing music”.

Although Hebb believed that the new curriculum will offer increased opportunities for external agencies to enter schools, her concerns were related to what condition the external

⁵⁰ See <http://gov.wales/topics/educationandskills/allsectorpolicies/education-in-wales/?lang=en>

music agencies will be in by the time the new curriculum commences in 2021. “I think there is a concern that between now and 2021, expertise could be lost”.

When asked about potential international funding models that Wales could learn from, Hebb mentioned the Scandinavian countries as being interesting examples, although these tended to be after school and not funded fully by government. In terms of the content of the Scandinavian music schools, Hebb suggested that “it [the music styles] are broader than just the classical”, continuing “If we are talking music, we [Wales] need to talk about a whole range of music that young people are interested in”. Although verifying concern about where the future classical musicians are coming from, Hebb also focused on the importance of ensuring young people’s voices and choices are not taken away.

Conclusion

We are at an important juncture in the history and future of instrumental music tuition in Wales. Indeed, it can be considered an opportunity for Wales to lead the way in ensuring the nation's musical tradition is secured. It is an opportunity to show our international partners how much Wales values the importance of music, by ensuring a progressive instrumental tuition offer is part of the basic rights of all our young people, regardless of affordability or location. It is an opportunity to safeguard not only the nurturing of our future professional musicians and the cultural heritage of Wales, but also to provide access for all children to the widely acknowledged benefits of musical engagement. As this brief piece of research has highlighted, if something is not done to turn this current well publicised decline around, one of Wales' most famous maxims, 'The Land of Song', will unquestionably be under threat in the years to come, because it will simply not be true. A strategic well considered *National Music Education Performance Strategy for Wales*, would provide the opportunity to address some of the issues highlighted throughout this document.

Although research into 'international models' of extracurricular instrumental tuition is sparse, it is apparent that Wales can learn something from nations such as Poland, Norway, Finland, Southern Ireland, and Denmark (for popular music pedagogy), not to mention a number of *El Sistema* initiatives that are taking place both in the UK and various parts of the world. However, this challenging juncture in the history of instrumental music provision in Wales is also an opportunity to investigate and learn from the good practice that is taking place in specific regions of the UK, through examining music services such as Gwent, Hertfordshire and Berkshire, and alternative provision in places such as Denbighshire, Swindon and Cornwall, all of who were noted as examples worth further exploration in the stakeholder interviews. Although this research has not been able to investigate instrumental

tuition practices in nations such as China, both Vanessa Barnes and Eluned David suggested interviewing members of international orchestras to obtain insights. This could potentially be implemented in the next stage of the research.

However, despite having the potential to learn from our international partners, Richard Hallam MBE, Chair of the Music Education Council, had this to say when comparing UK educational practices to the international community.

“The [international] models in place are less comprehensive than those in the UK in terms of genuine equality of access for all! Music education, as part of school education, is not compulsory in all countries. In most countries young people who want to sing and learn instruments and participate in ensembles and choirs have to attend specialist music schools that operate out of school hours, usually on payment of a fee. [...]. For those who cannot afford the charges, scholarships are sometimes available. However, prior musical attainment is usually required in order to access any scholarship arrangements, which in turn requires families to value the experiences sufficiently to enable the child to have those prior experiences”.⁵¹

It is clear therefore that we need to look both inward and outwardly when developing the Strategy.

When considering the philosophical positioning of instrumental tuition in Wales, I would suggest that terminology may be part of the problem, with the word ‘extracurricular’ somewhat confirming that all instrumental provision is an *addition* to the mainstream curriculum. Although some of it may be (For example the Saturday morning Junior Music Conservatoire at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama), this needs to be underpinned and complemented by a core *statutory* service that is linked in to all schools in Wales. How this is achieved requires further consideration as part of the proposed Strategy,

⁵¹ Hallam, in email correspondence with Rhianon Passmore, 30/03/18.

but as the Musician Union's Andy Warnock suggested in the stakeholder interviews, in order to coordinate regional and national thinking, it seems prudent to synchronise this with the already existent Regional Consortia, who could have a music advisor in each of the four areas.

When reflecting on the stakeholder interviews, it is apparent that some considered instrumental based tuition should be totally free, while others believed a small charge was viable for those that could afford it. This charge was considered important not only as part of the sustainability package of instrumental provision, but also related to perceptions of 'value'. Putting to one side for the moment the precise details of how an accessible and affordable instrumental service is provided, as this would also be part of the Strategy, what was considered absolutely essential by all interviewees was that the opportunity to engage in individual and ensemble/tuition should be accessible for *all* young people in Wales, regardless of their geographic or financial position.

In addition to the points already raised, in order to take advantage of the current opportunity for Wales to make a strong statement on its position regarding the importance of instrumental based music provision, the following questions also require detailed consideration

- How would instrumental provision strategically work with stakeholders such as government, universities, private investors, National Youth Arts, funding bodies the Arts Council of Wales and the Creative Industries at large?
- How can the current pyramid structure be expanded to include 'informal learning' and progression routes of all musical genres?

- How can technologies such as Rockway,⁵² NYMAZ,⁵³ Songwriter Online⁵⁴ and Online Orchestra⁵⁵ be used to address issues related to the rural nature of Wales?
- How will instrumental teacher training, pay and conditions be considered?
- How would the new service complement the aims of reports such as *The National Education Plan for Wales 2017-2021*, Donaldson, the *Task and Finish Group on Music Services in Wales* and *Creative Learning Through the Arts – An Action Plan For Wales*?
- How will the Strategy coordinate synergy between instrumental teachers, music providers, government, National Youth Arts Wales and Arts Council for Wales?
- How would student achievement and progression be officially documented?
- Building on Welsh Governments’ ‘Musical Instrument Amnesty’, in conjunction with the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, how would the new service work to ensure instruments are available and regularly maintained if required?
- What would a series of national learning outcomes and minimum standards consist of and how would they be implemented locally?
- What are the opportunities to link Estyn Inspection with instrumental provision in Wales?
- How can the new service ensure young people can access elementary and intermediate level orchestras, in order to provide opportunities to move up the pyramid?

⁵² See <https://www.rockway.fi/>

⁵³ See <https://www.nymaz.org.uk/>

⁵⁴ See <http://songwriteronline.co.uk/>

⁵⁵ See <http://onlineorchestra.com/>

In conclusion, it is apparent that Wales needs capital investment similar to the Music Development Fund of 1999, which would provide a newly modelled music service with the necessary sustainable finance to make instrumental based musical activities accessible for all, replacing reduced access to music, accusations of elitism and the ‘post code lottery’ maxim, with a clear statement for the nation, more closely aligned to one of its more famous USPs – ‘The Land of Song’.

Before implementing any ‘national plan or strategy for music’, as suggested by Emma Coulthard and Steve Harker, it is important to ensure that a clear philosophy and infrastructure is in place first, by initially considering what should be included in the Strategy, before factoring in the most prudent methodology of getting there. Before either of these steps can be taken of course, it requires investment from government.

Coulthard, Warnock and Harker also believed that lessons can be learnt from the implementations of England’s *National Music Education Plan for Music*, which was considered to have many good recommendations, that existing structures struggled to implement. To ensure that similar mistakes do not occur in the employment of the Strategy, it is prudent to consider a transitory arrangement over a predetermined length of time, after which the new structures, which should be clearly mapped to specific roles, will be fully implemented.

In order to make the Strategy pedagogically sound and affordable, it was suggested that care needs to be taken with mainstream provision to ensure a range of group activities take place *prior* to individual provision, so musical skill bases are developed in addition to giving children an insight into the dedication that is required to reach more advanced musical standards. Indeed, as outlined by Warnock, we need to ensure instrumental tuition is accessible both financially and geographically, in addition to being targeted via a broad

stylistic base to both future professionals and those that will simply gain satisfaction from engaging in musical practice.

As this research moves forward, it seems prudent to develop our own version of Scotland's Guidance for Instrumental Teaching,⁵⁶ which would provide clear advice for the four music Hubs, if they were to be positioned within Regional Consortia, to disseminate to their teams. This would facilitate how factors such as the Aims, Learning Outcomes, assessment procedures, charging policies (if applicable) and use of technology are implemented throughout the nation. However, before progressing to a unified offer, it also makes sense to initially conduct a piece of research that compares and contrasts current practices in Wales, similar to the research implemented by Scotland's Improvement Service.⁵⁷

In closing, it is important to recognise the devastating impact of Local Government cuts in England to non-statutory services. The consequent response to large cut backs was the decimation of Music Support Services, as referenced by Richard Hallam at the start of this document. The money from Westminster treasury, the Welsh block grant, has also been cut year on year incrementally since 2010 and despite Welsh Government protection of Welsh Local Government budgets, financial provision for non-statutory services are being cut back across local government in Wales. The old funding models for Music Support Services no longer work and are no longer fit for purpose. It is therefore time for a new approach, a new strategy and a new model for Wales. There is obviously a need to act quickly before a legacy, which has built up over hundreds of years, is disseminated to the point where 'The Land of Song', will be but a distant memory.

⁵⁶ See <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00500509.pdf>

⁵⁷ See <http://www.improvementservice.org.uk/documents/research/IMS-survey-report-2017.pdf>

“Effective music education, which also provides value for money from public investment, results from three elements of music education working together coherently. Two of these elements are addressed by the Donaldson review and the Arts Council of Wales’ plans for the Music Endowment for Wales. What is currently missing is the third essential element contributed uniquely by music services. This consists of what might be considered as ‘music education performance’: regular instrumental and vocal tuition linked to local, area and regional ensembles and choirs through which performance skills and techniques are developed. Neither the school nor arts organisations can provide these. It is through the music service infrastructure and the specific expertise of their tutors and musicians that these needs can be met in a coherent, strategic, cost effective and achievable way for all young people”. Richard J Hallam MBE, Chair Music Education Council 2013/2019

“I am delighted to support the principal of strengthening and placing on a sound footing an equality of instrumental teaching and a parity of offer pan-Wales. It is right that we as a small nation - build on the current expertise and professionalism across existing Music Support Services and develop a world leading Music Education Performance Sector in Wales that is supported financially by government and valued by all its participants. It’s worth economically and culturally is of immeasurable importance to all but vital to tomorrow’s musicians, composers and singers - as international artists and as lovers of music - created in Wales - but for the world. The development of a holistic National Music Education Performance Strategy would no doubt help deliver this. The situation in Wales is serious and without this initiative

Music in Wales will be in real jeopardy. I look forward to the next movement - in policy and thinking - with interest and urgency as there is now no time to waste in the strategic support and funding of Music Support Services and the consequent Music Education future and culture of Wales". Owain Arwel Huws CBE