

**NATIONAL MUSIC COUNCIL
LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY MUSIC AWARDS
1999/2000**

Introduction

Submissions were received from 26 LEAs, including one joint submission. Given that this is the first time the process has been undertaken electronically, this was an encouraging response and augurs well for the future.

We make no apology for repeating our tribute to the people behind these submissions - the heads of music services, advisers (specialist and general), the teachers, the instrumentalists who provide training, the locally elected representatives who commit the funds and, of course, the pupils and students who are effectively guaranteeing a future for live music.

There is much evidence of the benefits to music services of the Department for Education and Employment's bigger investment in the Standards Fund and, in Scotland, the Scottish Executive Education Department's Higher Still and Excellence Fund. Altogether, there is a more positive spirit among music services, which must be good! We are delighted to be able to highlight so many examples of this upturn.

Aberdeen have been responsible for a number exciting initiatives which came into being too late to be taken into account for this year's awards. They have, however, been responsible for other initiatives that have done much to enrich the musical life of pupils in the area. Notable among these was a week-long visit by Tommy Smith, the international tenor and soprano sax star with members of the Scottish Jazz Orchestra. Workshops were held with pupils in several schools and they led an INSET day for the City's team of instrumental instructors.

Buckinghamshire, too, did much to enrich their programme of work with a substantial number of new initiatives, a very commendable range of INSET provision, a high level of involvement of professional musicians in schools and joint work with other LEAs and district councils in the County.

A somewhat elliptical entry from **Cambridgeshire** was distinguished by news of a promising new rock, pop and club music initiative which includes the development of NVQs for excluded pupils in DJing and training in rural promotions.

We were delighted to receive evidence that the successful joint working of the **Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion** LEAs has been maintained with the result that this part of the Principality is blessed with first rate provision; furthermore, the two LEAs have adopted action plans which will include expenditure of £600,000 in future years to improve the quality and quantity of centrally-held instruments.

Cornwall have clearly consolidated the resurgence in music which we recognised in 1998. We wonder if now might be the time to begin to draw on the County's rich cultural roots, about which we have read little; after all there is only one Cornwall!

East Renfrewshire, one of the smaller authorities to submit this year, highlighted a particularly imaginative staff development project for those involved in the delivery of the curriculum for the very early years: “Rumble in the Jungle” was a cross curricular initiative taking the form of a musical and including the assignment of a musician from the Royal Scottish National Orchestra to each nursery school. Early evaluation suggests this was a thoroughly successful INSET project.

The **East Riding of Yorkshire** Schools Music Service exploits to good effect its links with the Early Music and Folk Festivals within its area, and continued to develop its praiseworthy programme involving Opera North working in special schools with a range of pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties.

Essex’s Vocal and Choral Initiative, including the appointment of an amateur and direct input into schools, has been responsible for some interesting developments, including the study of Baroque and Renaissance works in secondary schools. The Music Service has also formed two new string orchestras and re-launched the Percussion Academy with £20,000 worth of new instruments; indeed there was a much needed expansion of the instrumental hire scheme.

We were heartened to receive a submission from **Newcastle upon Tyne**, the first for many years, and hope that with the help of a large injection of Standards Fund moneys the LEA will restore its support for music, for example to the high quality level we applauded in 1988.

Newham’s Music Trust was responsible for the organisation of an exciting research project. Sponsored by Tate and Lyle, it involved an investigation into the effects of a short music activity every day for pupils in seven schools in years one and two (the National Music Council’s website “MusicEd” www.musiced.org.uk will be featuring this project).

Given their astonishing run of success in the NMC’s Local Authority section of this awards scheme, we were not surprised to receive a high quality entry from **North Lanarkshire** *qua* education authority. Indeed, it identified a series of ambitious plans for all pupils with interest and commitment to become involved in school/area music groups and ultimately authority-wide groups.

The all-round quality of the **North Somerset** Music Service’s provision shown in their submission was such that we feel the time is ripe for a touch more adventure!

Southend-on-Sea’s Music Service has only existed since September 1999 and clearly has much work to do; but we were impressed by the remarkably diverse range of workshops conducted by professional musicians: they included African drumming, Cuban music, early music, folk, Japanese percussion, harp and tuba.

Stirling one of the smallest authorities participating this year, embarked on several praiseworthy youth and community education projects. Organisation of many of the courses

and workshops is based on the principle that young people should be allowed to engage in the arts and cultural activity in a way that is meaningful to them and their lifestyles.

Wandsworth increased by 100% the number of visiting music teachers supporting music. They also opened a second centre for young musicians and increased their level of support for the London-wide Centre for Young Musicians at Morley College. It seems to us that year on year this Authority's provision is improving both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Renfrewshire's Schools First Concert Band and Schools Percussion Ensemble won several awards for the quality of their performances.

Worcestershire, together with many other LEAs, benefited from the larger Standards Fund. They invested in a new Centre for Arts Education, which now provides a permanent 'home' for the instrumental music service and the arts education service. The year also saw a series of exciting new early years' music developments, expansion of support for new technology, publication of new materials to encourage the understanding and performance of world musics, fruitful collaborations with other LEAs and the introduction of programmes of music therapy in three special schools.

DIPLOMAS

With Worcestershire, **Birmingham** established a joint programme for music therapy assessments and will provide a central subsidy to schools where a large number of pupils are likely to benefit from such provision. Through the "Teachers and Artists Working Together" initiative (£26,000 per annum) professional artists, including musicians, work with schools. Arts organisations run arts education projects in and out of schools under an annual programme worth £250,000, which included, during the year in question, a successful music technology project involving eight special schools working with Punch records and culminating in a live performance by all the students and artists at the Drum Centre. A further two examples: first, the Wilson Stuart Special School, which worked with the Craft Space Touring Company, a black musician, a disabled black poet, a photographer and others to create "The Blue Blood Travel Agency", an ambitious and successful multi-media project which went on to win a national award. Secondly, Gallery 37, a youth arts project for unemployed young people, involved 140 young people between 16-24 in seven different arts projects, including the performing arts, sculpture and music. They worked with professional artists for four weeks, during which time they also participated in key skills and play training. They continue to be monitored and helped for up to a year after the end of their course and there is 87% progression into further education, training or employment. Full advantage was also taken of the potential for work with pupils presented by the existence of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group. We applaud the LEA's policy of providing a full range of instruments on free, long-term loan to pupils. And, finally, the Music Service and the University of Central England piloted an instrumental teaching route within the Secondary Music PGCE with the aim of improving the supply of suitably-trained and qualified instrumental teachers. This is proving to be a highly successful collaboration and in 1999/00 the numbers of trainees choosing the route has more than doubled.

Last year we highlighted **Brighton and Hove**'s plans to customise a building to house a new Centre for Contemporary Music. Following the investment of £25,000 for new equipment this is now operational and includes a music technology suite, studios for drums, guitars and keyboards. For the first time, keyboard and guitar tuition is now on offer to all secondary schools and has proved to be very popular. We were especially pleased to learn of an expansion of brass teaching to Year 5 and 6 pupils in primary schools. Over three terms, 60 per cent more pupils were learning to play brass instruments. In partnership with the Education Action Zone (EAZ), additional and new music-making opportunities were also provided. For example:

- free keyboard and guitar lessons are provided to all Year 4 pupils in the EAZ and instruments are loaned free of charge;
- pupils in years 10 and 11 taking GCSE music were given additional 30 minute individual instrumental lessons weekly.

Popular, rock and world musics and young people not currently participating in music making will be the focus of a new consortium involving also the East Sussex, Medway and Surrey LEA music services. An impressive INSET programme included workshops led by the London Sinfonietta and an introduction to the music of Duke Ellington within the context of the National Curriculum.

The **Highland** Council Education Service has the awesome logistical problem of providing a music service to an area 20% larger than the whole of Wales with only 7% of the population. Yet this education service provides a wide range of musical opportunities for its pupils and students. A major feature of the year was the establishment of a Centre of Excellence for Scottish traditional music which will recruit students from all over Scotland. Other highlights included:

- workshops and performances by an a cappella group from Zimbabwe and by groups drawn from the Scottish Chamber Orchestra
- performance and outreach work by the full Scottish Chamber Orchestra, for secondary schools (with taster sessions in primaries)

We also applaud, not least because it provides an excellent basis for the dissemination of live music, a comprehensive training and support programme to meet the needs of community radio groups and their volunteers throughout the Highlands and Islands. This is an inclusive programme covering people from across the generations. Scottish vocational qualifications in radio production are targeted at the unemployed or disadvantaged. As a result of this programme, many of the community radio groups have developed from part-time community initiatives into full-time broadcasting organisations, creating both employment opportunities and improved access to music. The Education Service also supported a full range of orchestras, ensembles, bands and groups across most genres during the year.

Oxfordshire County Music Service produced one of those submissions which has an embarrassment of riches. We were particularly attracted by one unusual and laudable feature - taking county-wide groups into rural towns and villages and raising money for charity - and we received details of several fine examples of that initiative. TAPS (Traditional Arts

Projects) worked with students from the Central Music School and the County Youth Orchestra first to introduce folk music and, secondly, to work with GCSE and A level students to compose their own Oxfordshire Folk Suite for orchestra based on Oxfordshire folk tunes. A four movement piece was subsequently recorded and taken on tour by the Youth Orchestra. A second project was also set up by TAPS involving improvisation and crossover/fusion resulting in a meeting of eastern and western instruments and musical styles. The Service maintained the publication of the thrice yearly Community Music Newsletter and, as a means of further encouraging community and school music across the genres, continued to support area music festivals, providing an increasing selection of performance opportunities. The LEA charged for group lessons, but funded a remissions policy exceeding £160,000 per annum and guaranteed free access to all weekly ensembles and orchestras. The Service remains sensitive to the needs of pupils and students with special needs and disabilities.

Southampton's year on year improvement since regaining its LEA status in 1997 was noted in our last report and evidence of that abounds in this submission. The cost of instrumental provision to schools was frozen at £25 per hour of tuition for three years. In 1999/00, the LEA increased the amount of money delegated to schools for music with the result that 50% of schools now provide free instrumental tuition and, unsurprisingly, provision has expanded. The LEA has a firm policy on integrated music services provision with the aim of establishing an ensemble for every learner and interested participant: the number of available ensembles increased from nine to 16 in the initial year and to 22 by 2000. Jazz, rock, pop and classical genres were covered, and participation in all ensembles was free. A "Singing Works" project was successfully in developing singing at all stages of school life. Professional recorder player (Piers Adams), tabla player (Manjit Singh), trumpeter (Guy Barker), singers (from the Welsh National Opera) and orchestral players (from the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra) contributed through workshops, master classes and performance, including joint performances. The Music Service and the Youth Service were working together closely, especially in the City's most deprived areas. Considerable effort has been devoted by the LEA, working jointly with the Portsmouth and Isle of Wight LEAs, to the preparation of the Solent Music Project. This investment of Standards Fund moneys holds out genuine promise of broadening access to music making and raising standards. A key element of the project is to give opportunities to participate in music to young people not currently engaged in musical activity, particularly those in disadvantaged areas and to boys.

THE MAJOR AWARD

There are undoubtedly inequities in the central funding of LEAs. This characteristic of the Revenue Support Grant system has proved to be insoluble. Inevitably, some LEAs "do better" than others. **Hertfordshire** are one such, it is alleged. There are many others. Yet over several years Hertfordshire have distinguished themselves by upholding their commitment to a high quality music service. This report cannot do justice to their achievements. The Music Service took the lead within the LEA for an authority-wide strategy for the arts in education. In collaboration with the then Eastern Arts Board, an Arts in Education officer was appointed; and subsequently a dance adviser, who is working jointly with the Music Service. A new investment in world musics has been made: additional sets of steel pans have been

purchased; a samba festival was held in St Albans; in Hitchin, jointly with the Asian Cultural Centre, pupils were introduced to the traditions and conventions of Asian music; the gamelan continued to be popular - indeed there are now two regular weekly groups, one adult and one which includes a high percentage of children educated otherwise than at school.

Further broadening of the music genres on offer, particularly to increase access and ensure greater inclusiveness, took the form of workshops on rock music, keyboards, guitar and drums.

In a collaboration with the youth service, district councils, the Royal Philharmonic and the Eastern Orchestral Board, an innovative project ("On the Edge") was delivered across the County: young people from different social backgrounds worked with club musicians and classical musicians in a creative project involving performances of their work and culminating in the premiere of a new piece performed by the entire RPO in concert at Hemel Hempstead. The project was professionally evaluated and disseminated in the County and nationally via identification as an example of best practice in Qualification and Curriculum Authority's *From Policy to Partnership*. An ongoing course in music technology was established in conjunction with the University of Hertfordshire, and this enabled the Authority's teachers to upgrade their ICT skills and receive post-graduate certificates in music technology. A part-time consultant for music technology was also appointed.

Hertfordshire is one of several LEAs to have established a music therapy service. This one is a pilot, which will run until August 2000 and is being evaluated externally.

The Service's strategy of encouraging the development of minority instruments was strengthened.

Additional support was provided for SEN pupils and, recognising that the LEA still had room for improvement in this regard, a range of new initiatives was launched to promote the involvement of pupils and students with disabilities in music making.

The submission revealed a considerable number of examples of joint working with several other LEAs and of the involvement of professional musicians in schools.

And finally, we note something which we would very much like to see replicated throughout the country, viz that one of the ways in which Hertfordshire continued to promote the importance of music as an integral part of the National Curriculum was to include music and the arts in the LEA's statutory Educational Development Plan.

Congratulations to all the Authorities and Music Services identified in this report, and especially to Hertfordshire!

IKW/4 March 2001