



**ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH ORCHESTRAS, CITY OF LONDON SINFONIA
& ORCHESTRAS LIVE LAUNCH BRAND NEW REPORT, *ORCHESTRAS IN HEALTHCARE***

**First comprehensive review reveals orchestras
contribute more than £1.6m to the public health sector**

**Almost two thirds of professional orchestras are
working in health, wellbeing and social care across the UK**

Monday 1 March 2021: *Orchestras in Healthcare*, a brand new report published today offers the first comprehensive picture of the creative and financial contribution made by professional orchestras to the health, wellbeing and social care sectors across the UK.

Conceived by Sarah Derbyshire (Chief Executive, Orchestras Live), Fiona Harvey (Education and Youth Ensembles Consultant, Association of British Orchestras) and Matthew Swann (Chief Executive, City of London Sinfonia) the report seeks to understand the scale and impact of the work orchestras delivered in a range of public health contexts between April 2019 and March 2020.

From interactive music workshops for people living with dementia on hospital wards in Edinburgh to a creative expression and social interaction project for adults recovering from drug and alcohol addiction in Bristol, live performances in specialist cancer facilities in Northern Ireland to composition workshops with young people from across London and the South East living with severe mental health and psychiatric conditions, the report highlights the wealth of participatory music-making happening in health, wellbeing and social care contexts up and down the UK.

Drawn from a survey of 54 ABO member orchestras, opera companies and choirs, the report reveals the geographical location and type of healthcare settings in which the work takes place; orchestras' motivation for their involvement in the healthcare sector and the role health and wellbeing delivery plays in their business models; as well as exploring the impact of Covid-19 and the role orchestras and musicians aspire to play in the UK's recovery from the pandemic.

Key findings:

- **Almost two thirds of professional orchestras surveyed (63%) deliver work in health, wellbeing and social care settings across the UK.** *Of the remaining 37%, most stated that they wish or have plans to do so in the future.*

50% are working in hospitals (31% in acute settings, 19% in chronic settings)

22% are working in mental health settings

31% are working in social care settings

- **This contribution is significant: representing a net gain of at least £1.6m to the public health sector of which 93% (£1.48m) was raised by orchestras themselves**
- **Chamber orchestras are at the forefront of developments in health and wellbeing activity and partnerships**

- **There is great pride in this work: 53% of orchestras identified health and wellbeing work as central to their business model in serving wider audiences and making a positive impact on society**
- **There is considerable geographical unevenness in provision:** particularly across the English regions. It is notable that Scotland and Greater Manchester – two areas where orchestras have formal links with a social prescribing programme – each operate devolved health authorities.
- **A robust infrastructure for social prescribing to better connect the culture and healthcare sectors is developing apace** - as noted by James Sanderson, Chief Executive of the National Academy of Social Prescribing: *“enabling people to connect to music...is recognised by the health and care system as being valuable to its future.”*
- **It meets an orchestral sector ambitious to play a greater role in a range of health, wellbeing and care contexts as the nation emerges from the Covid-19 pandemic.**

Featuring introductions from James Sanderson, Chief Executive of the National Academy of Social Prescribing, and Dr Darren Henley OBE, Chief Executive of Arts Council England, the report makes a number of recommendations around the need for further academic and clinical research to help orchestras better demonstrate their impact in public health contexts, with a view to implementing policy and professional practice that will allow musicians and orchestras to expand their work in health, wellbeing and social care settings.

James Sanderson, Chief Executive, National Academy of Social Prescribing: *“I welcome this excellent report, and the opportunity to raise awareness of the positive impact that orchestras working in health and care can make. I encourage our partners to embrace this as a catalyst to connect across the worlds of health and care and music, to help people to live better, healthier and happier lives.”*

Dr Darren Henley OBE, Chief Executive, Arts Council England: *“The research presents a timely opportunity to raise awareness of the impact that orchestras have achieved within the health and social care fields so far, by providing a significant evidence base to develop policy and practice, to build cross sector collaboration, to engage with developments such as social prescribing, and to encourage further investment.”*

Sarah Derbyshire MBE, Chief Executive, Orchestras Live: *“This report demonstrates for the first time the extent and ambition of orchestras and musicians working in health and social care. It’s vital that we use it as the launchpad for a collective endeavour to developing policy and practice within the orchestral profession, co-ordinating with developments in the health and social care sector and putting orchestras and their musicians firmly at the heart of social prescribing.”*

Matthew Swann, Chief Executive, City of London Sinfonia: *“The UK’s orchestral musicians are at the heart of all this activity, and at City of London Sinfonia we are developing their creative practice in these settings – being responsive, in-the-moment and communicating one-on-one – as recognised by our recent Royal Philharmonic Society ‘Impact’ Award for our work with young people with severe mental health and psychiatric conditions. These are the very qualities that we will increasingly need to engage with wider audiences as we emerge from the pandemic. We have an opportunity, together with our healthcare partners, to create a creative care workforce that will contribute to the case for all UK orchestras and their place in society.”*

Mark Pemberton, Director, Association of British Orchestras: *“Our members should take pride in the astonishing level of activity they are delivering in the health and social care sectors, through which they are reaching into a wide range of diverse communities. It once again illustrates that work in community settings,*

as well as on the concert platform and in music education, is intrinsic to what it means to be an orchestra today, as evidenced in previous reports published by the ABO.”

The report includes short case studies on orchestras working in a variety of public health contexts across the country. These include: London Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonia Viva, (working in hospitals – acute settings); Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Ulster Orchestra (working in hospitals – chronic settings); City of London Sinfonia, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra (mental health settings); Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, London Mozart Players, Orchestra of the Swan (social care settings); Bath Philharmonia, Royal Scottish National Orchestra (community settings); BBC National Orchestra of Wales (care homes); and Hallé Orchestra (Clinical Commissioning Groups, social prescribing).

The upcoming ABO Conference (10-12 March) will further explore the findings of the report in a session chaired by Sarah Derbyshire MBE and Matthew Swann. *A Healthier Nation* (11 March, 2pm) will bring together leading funders and healthcare professionals to discuss the implications of the social prescribing agenda and the role orchestras can play to restore the health and wellbeing of the nation. For further information: <https://abo.org.uk/what-we-do/connecting/abo-annual-conference/programme>

Read the report in full on the [ABO](#), [City of London Sinfonia](#) and [Orchestras Live](#) websites.

Notes to Editors'

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The Association of British Orchestras (ABO) represents the collective interests of professional orchestras, youth ensembles and the wider classical music industry throughout the UK.

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City of London Sinfonia (CLS) is the current recipient of the Royal Philharmonic Society's Impact Award for its Sound Young Minds programme, building self-esteem in young people living with severe mental health conditions through creative music-making. The Orchestra's innovative artistic programmes and modern performance style infuse both its concerts and participation work in wellbeing, healthcare and social care settings, engaging audiences and musicians as co-creators in shared, meaningful music experiences. Now in its 50th year, CLS is leading the way in musician development, health and wellbeing practice, and responsive performance.

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Orchestras Live believes that orchestras are for everyone and that live orchestral music has the power to inspire people for a lifetime. A national producer and music charity based in Leeds, we work with a broad range of artistic partners, including the country's leading professional orchestras, to ensure everyone can access world-class orchestral experiences. We work with a range of local partners including local authorities, music education hubs, community groups and welfare providers, across England and particularly in rural and coastal communities, which are traditionally culturally under-served. Our work spans six key areas: building networks to connect people and ideas, developing talent, improving health and wellbeing, inspiring children and young people, invigorating local communities and driving inclusion in the orchestral sector. Orchestras Live is an Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation.

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