



SUPPORTING &  
CHAMPIONING  
VOLUNTARY MUSIC

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# London Training & Development Guide No. 2

## Setting up a collaboration between music groups in London

### Why collaborate?

Firstly, because it's fun! It can seem like a daunting task to set up but the benefits far outweigh the necessary hurdles along the way, and there is plenty of support and encouragement available to help you.

#### **This Guide aims to:**

- encourage music groups to experiment, think more broadly and work together
- prove that collaborating does not have to be a hassle to organise
- show the many benefits and positive outcomes of collaborating
- give you tips to get started and point out the pitfalls to avoid

Collaborating with another music group is an excellent way of creating variety in your programming, as well as tackling repertoire you may not otherwise have a chance to play. It can make larger scale performances financially more viable where otherwise costs would have been prohibitive, and could potentially double the size of your audience and hence build up your mailing-list.

Through a collaboration you will also have the chance to compare ideas about organising, programming and marketing with another group. And of course you get to meet, sing, play and socialise with a new collection of like-minded people.

### Will it be expensive, difficult, etc.?

If carefully planned, it needn't necessarily cost your group any more than to organise one of your usual events. Although you may need a larger venue, you will be able to share the costs with the other group; likewise with wider distribution of publicity.

Initially there will need to be extensive planning to divide responsibilities, among them choosing repertoire, arranging rehearsal and concert dates and setting budgets, but by sharing resources, personnel and workload it is probably easier than you think. The single most important thing is to plan efficiently and well ahead.

Be very clear with all forms of communication – make sure the group with whom you are collaborating is thinking along the same lines, and that you understand each other's meaning and intentions.

## Practical Considerations

All the usual principles of organising a workshop or performance apply, and you will need to consider:

### **Motivation**

Where did the original idea for this come from and why do you want to do it? You need to be able to persuade enough people to subscribe to the idea in order for it to succeed.

### **Dates**

Take into account the availability of both groups, both in terms of commitment to the collaboration and allowing leeway for other projects already booked. Also bear in mind seasonal events during the year which may affect attendance of either players / singers or audience, such as school half-term breaks, Bank Holidays, the likelihood of particularly good or bad weather and high-profile sports matches.

### **Rehearsal schedule**

Allow enough time to learn the repertoire, both within your group and in conjunction with the other group. New music takes a while to learn, especially if it involves techniques or aspects you are not used to. These could be having to listen more (or less!) closely to another part, rehearsing or performing in a different formation to usual, adapting the sound you produce to suit the balance of combined forces and acoustics of the venue, or simply building up the stamina to last the duration of the chosen works.

### **Venue(s) for rehearsals and performance**

Remember you may need a larger venue than usual, or you could look into booking somewhere different to celebrate the new partnership. A venue well-known for giving concerts that also publishes its own concert diary could be worth considering. Bear access requirements in mind carefully when choosing your venue, and make your rehearsals and final event as accessible as possible to as many people as possible.

*Further Making Music advice available*

*London Training & Development Guide 1 – Equal Opportunities & Disability Resources for Music Groups in London*

*Information Sheet 45c - Disability Discrimination*

*Contact your local Training & Development Officer(s)*

### **Repertoire**

Since you have the opportunity to combine forces with another group, try to also make it a special occasion for your potential audience rather than yet another Handel Messiah or Verdi Requiem to join the multitude of amateur performances already planned. Check whether your chosen works are within copyright and whether Performing Rights payments will therefore need to be made.

*Further Making Music advice available:*

*Contact Central Office about the Repertoire Service*

*Information Sheet 3 – Performing Rights*

### **Scores / sheet music**

Make sure everyone is working from the same edition! Remember to also get a piano reduction or at least a second score if you will be using a rehearsal pianist at any stage.

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*Further Making Music advice available:  
Contact Central Office about the Music Exchange Scheme  
Information Sheet 5 – Hiring Music from Publishers  
Information Sheet 5b – Guidelines for Amateur Music Hire  
Information Sheet 8 – Music Exchange*

## **Marketing**

What would make people want to come to this event? The easiest way of pulling in an audience is via those participating – often word of mouth to family and friends backed up by flyers - but don't forget this is not the only way. Your printed material (including website presence) must reflect the fact that your event appeals widely rather than appears to be for an exclusive circle of 'people in the know'. What would someone with no prior knowledge of your two groups find attractive?

Explore new ways of publicising your event as well as employing your usual avenues. Try local organisations and publications with an interest in the arts, internet listings and e-mail circulation lists. Consult local music shops, the council, libraries, information centres, etc. to see if they could carry some information, and think of all sections of the community. Also consider a discount scheme for schools if the programme would be suitable and make personal contact with those in the vicinity.

*Further Making Music advice available:  
Information Sheet 35 – Ten Point Guide to Approaching the Local Press  
Contact your local Training & Development Officer(s)  
Check the national website to find out if any marketing events or drop-in surgeries are planned for your area in the near future*

## **Professional fees, if applicable**

This could include both conductors for respective separate rehearsals, and either one or both conductors on the day. Agree on rates for soloists or keyboard players required, considering both rehearsal time and the performance, and draw up a clear contract for each person.

## **Finances**

Where will the money come from? Are you likely to be able to raise enough from combined ticket sales to cover the total costs? You may be able to secure some outside funding towards the project, but more often than not will have to find the money in other ways. Commonly this is through members' subscriptions, ticket and programme sales and possibly refreshments in the interval.

*Further Making Music advice available:  
Information Sheet 40 – Raising Funds Locally  
Information Sheet 40b – Applying for Trust Funds  
Contact your local Training & Development Officer(s) for funding advice and help on putting an application together*

## **Fully itemised *realistic* budget**

Having considered all of the above, fix a realistic budget and stick to what your combined groups can afford and/or are prepared to pay. Don't be persuaded to attempt very risky plans that could bankrupt either group, which may involve adapting original plans.

### **Documentation & dividing responsibilities**

You should consider constructing a simple agreement for both groups to sign, so that it is clear to everyone just who is taking responsibility for what, such as who will arrange venue bookings, collation and printing of programmes, process payments, monitor ticket sales, etc. It is much better to split tasks or nominate a few people to deal with each specific component rather than attempting to share everything between everyone.

### **Detailed timetable**

Plan carefully and well ahead, and set realistic but firm deadlines for each element constituting the collaboration.

### **Box office management & enquiries**

Depending on the venue, this may be a case of staying in touch with an existing box office set-up. If this is not the case, decide whose contact details will be given for enquiries regarding tickets, access issues, transport, etc. and ensure that they will be reasonably available and capable of dealing with these. Be aware of good Equal Opportunities practice.

### **Presentation**

Presentation is extremely important and yet is often left until the last minute. What you normally wear for your group's individual concerts will most likely be fine. Bring it up early on to avoid unfortunate clashes such as an orchestra in pink and a choir in orange! The ideal result will combine the styles of the individual groups without drawing too much attention to either, at the same time as preserving each one's identity.

Make sure your programmes are clear, well presented and include all the relevant information such as names of performers, works, biographies of conductors / soloists, and programme notes of any of the pieces if you wish. Don't forget to acknowledge any support you have received from funding bodies or charities, including copies of their logos, mottos or mission statements as appropriate. The format of any printed material must be clear and easy to read.

*Further Making Music advice available:*

*Information Sheet 9 – Programme Note Bank*

*Information Sheet 48 – Clear Print Guidelines*

## **What are the short-term benefits to your group?**

- expanding the social circle of your members, giving them the chance to meet new people
- learning from aspects of your partner group's operation that could be useful models for your own group to try in the future
- input from a different conductor
- good opportunity for some simple market research
- the challenge of co-operating with another group
- experience in a new style of music-making

## **What are the long-term benefits to your group?**

- hopefully happier players and singers
- expanding your mailing-list, audience building
- developing a marketing strategy from research results

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- forming a good relationship with a new venue
- maybe increasing your potential, making your group more attractive to funders
- tackling technical issues raised during the collaboration
- improving the skills of your management committee to undertake larger scale projects

## What support is available?

- to London members: extensive advice from London Development Officers; London Making Music-based advertising
- Arts Development Officer(s) and Youth Workers (mainly for schools projects) depending on where you are based and/or where your event will happen
- small/local arts organisations depending on where you are based and/or where your event will happen
- advertising and events listings via various internet / e-mail arts networks

Many of these are relevant to the specific area and not helpful in every case! Do some research and take a look back at venue and area history when deciding where to base your project. Somewhere with a good track record for performances and a longstanding community support network for music or the arts would probably be a better bet than a relatively unknown venue in an area not popular for its musical talent. On the other hand, if you have the time and energy, this could be a big challenge and a potentially huge market.

## And for even more support and encouragement in the London area

Heather and Tom, your London Development Officers, are able to help with your queries and put you in contact with other members willing to share ideas on their own successful projects.

Contact: Tom Hammond and Heather Tomala  
 London & Development Officers, Making Music  
 2-4 Great Eastern Street, London EC2A 3NW  
 Tel: 0870 903 3780  
 E-mail: [rdolondon@makingmusic.org.uk](mailto:rdolondon@makingmusic.org.uk)

### CASE STUDY NO. 1

London Pro Arte Choir / Belmont School (Senior) Choir & string quartet

concert date: Friday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2004, 7:15pm  
 concert venue: Belmont School, The Ridgeway, London NW7 4ED  
 repertoire: a mixture of traditional and modern Christmas music, family carols  
 admission: free, with a collection in aid of Childline

### Regional Development Officer involvement

Publicising the event in London Harmony and on the Making Music London website

The **London Pro Arte Choir**, consisting of around 40 singers, performs much of the standard Western choral repertoire, including major oratorios. It has taken part regularly in the Mill Hill Music Festival and in 2004/5, in addition to collaborating with Belmont School in aid of Childline, gave free concerts in a local hospice and venues for senior citizens and sang

carols on Mill Hill Broadway, as well as continuing its more traditional concerts - around 5 per year - at St. Michael's Church, Mill Hill. The choir has grown steadily in the last few years.

**Belmont School**, for pupils aged 7-13, is the Junior School component of Mill Hill School's collection of three schools, together catering for boys and girls aged 3-18. All pupils are encouraged to take part in music and the arts, with the music department offering a variety of opportunities. There is a big band, orchestra, chamber orchestra and choir, as well as pupils forming pop/rock groups for termly concerts of modern music. The school also runs an annual composition prize and lays on choral, orchestral and chamber concerts.

### **Interview with Judy Vicary of London Pro Arte Choir**

*Why did you want to participate in a collaboration and how did you go about setting it up?*

We wanted to extend both our musical range and our audience, so we contacted Belmont High School to see if they would be interested in a joint concert with our choir. No formal contracts were signed but we made sure all communication such as letters and e-mails were extremely clear, spelling everything out to avoid any confusion.

*How did the rehearsal process and final performance work?*

We rehearsed separately from the school choir and then had one rehearsal together prior to the concert, which worked well. It was decided that each group's conductor would conduct their own choir, and ours would conduct the joint choir items. The performance itself was good, and we sang a newly composed carol with several different parts.

*What were the benefits, and difficulties, involved during your collaboration?*

We were very pleased to obtain sponsorship for a new carol as a result of the collaboration, which we were then able to perform to a different audience. However, our conductor's fee has been paid in a previous collaboration with the same school, whereas this time it was not, due to a change of head teacher.

*What was the general feeling about the collaboration, and is there anything you would do differently in future?*

We didn't undertake a formal evaluation but received most feedback by word of mouth. The outcome was *very* positive for both choirs – London Pro Arte Choir loved singing with the children, who were also impressed by our singing. The audience numbers were a bit disappointing, and we would try to be more active with our publicity in future.

*Other points of interest...*

The new carol mentioned was: '*I'll tell you a tale of the olden time*', composed by Paul Ayres to words by Gerald Moultrie. Scored for SATB choir, children's choir and piano, it lasts 5'20" and was commissioned by Waitrose plc for the London Pro Arte Choir and the choir of Belmont School, Mill Hill, for this 2004 Christmas concert in aid of Childline.

## CASE STUDY NO. 2

Chantage / Nonesuch Orchestra

concert date: Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May 2005, 7:30pm

concert venue: St. James's, Piccadilly, London W1J 9LL

repertoire: included Duruflé's Requiem

admission: £15 / £10, with 50p from each ticket sold donated to the NSPCC

### Regional Development Officer involvement

Contacting a shortlist of several London member orchestras on behalf of Chantage after being approached by the choir, and communicating responses between choir / orchestras until a good match was found; publicising the event in London Harmony and on the Making Music London website

**Chantage** is a stylish and energetic chamber choir of around 40 singers, mostly aged 18-30, performing all kinds of music. They give around 20 concerts a year including a wide range of repertoire and programming works traditionally performed by English chamber choirs alongside lesser known works sourced from foreign choral cultures. The choir also supports young composers and regularly premières new compositions and arrangements, many of which are written by its members. Chantage collaborates with other choirs of all types, particularly school and youth choirs, and has performed for a number of television and radio broadcasts. In 2002 they reached the adult final of the Sainsbury's Choir of the Year competition.

**Nonesuch Orchestra** is a small but versatile and dynamic string orchestra performing music from Purcell to the present day. Its players aged 18-80, many of whom are past or present music teachers, give around 4 formal lunchtime or evening concerts a year, as well as several daytime concerts in primary schools; in addition, some informal school workshops by small ensembles. The orchestra has twice played at Christmas in Crisis shelters in London and also to patients at the Putney Hospital for Neurodisability. It aims to take music into schools, giving children a unique chance to hear a live orchestra, and to give young soloists a platform and the opportunity to perform with an experienced group of players.

### Interview with Bethan Sheppard of Chantage

*Why did you want to participate in a collaboration?*

Chantage usually performs a cappella and we wanted to expand our experience by performing an accompanied choral work with an orchestra. We also wanted to perform a concert in a high-profile London venue and felt that having a substantial accompanied choral work in the repertoire would help in recruiting an audience for this.

*What was the first step you made to start the collaboration process?*

Initial contact was made through James Davey (musical director) who looked up orchestras who may be interested in collaborations on the Making Music database.

*Did you nominate someone to be responsible for liaising with the two groups involved?*

Me!

*Did you sign any formal agreements or contracts during your collaboration?*

Only a standard contract downloaded from the Making Music website. I sent it out to the orchestra a few days before and they brought it with them on the day. The contract confirmed the fee in writing.

*How did you organise rehearsals, consider location, times and duration? Did the two groups rehearse separately or together?*

Both groups rehearsed separately for the concert with one joint rehearsal on the afternoon of the concert.

*How did you feel about the rehearsal process?*

We felt that it would have been good to have had more rehearsals with the orchestra prior to the day of the concert but due to the fact we were hiring extra players and we would have had to pay them for rehearsals as well, this wasn't possible financially. However we did have a great rehearsal pianist!

*Overall, how did you feel about the performance?*

We were very pleased with the performance, and felt that we had achieved a great deal. Both Chantage and the orchestra said that we would like to collaborate again.

*How did audience numbers compare with performances you give that are not collaborations?*

The audience was bigger than our usual audience but I am not sure that this was down to the collaboration. The choir worked particularly hard at promoting the concert to family and friends and the fact that it was in a high-profile venue meant that we had some public "walk-up" on the evening.

*Which difficulties did you encounter during your collaboration?*

There were some issues around agreeing a fee for the orchestra in the beginning which took a while to resolve. Originally, we had envisaged that the orchestra would perform for free and in return we would perform at a reciprocal concert which they would organise. However, as discussions went on the orchestra asked us to meet the costs of paying their conductor, leader and two extra violinists. There were also some difficulties in agreeing the repertoire as we had originally wanted to perform Fauré's Requiem but the instrumentation was not suitable for the orchestra with whom we were collaborating.

*If you had a conductor, which group was this conductor associated with? How did you decide who would conduct?*

The concert was effectively a Chantage concert in which the Nonesuch Orchestra appeared and therefore it was our musical director who conducted the joint works. The orchestra had a solo piece in the concert which their musical director conducted.

*What was the overall feeling in your group about the collaboration? How do you think undergoing this process affected your group?*

We enjoyed the collaboration and felt that it was a big landmark in the choir's experience to have performed a big choral work in a high-profile venue. There was some feeling among choir members that we should have stuck to the premise that the collaboration would involve no money being paid to either party but the general feeling was that we were very lucky to have been able to perform with an orchestra for such a small cost. The cost of employing an entirely freelance ensemble would have made it financially impossible to perform the music that we did.

*What were the positive benefits of collaborating?*

It provided a great new experience for the choir at relatively little cost.

*Were there any things you would do differently if you collaborated again?*

Try and have more rehearsals with the orchestra prior to the day. Approve the piece that the orchestra are going to perform by themselves in advance - the orchestra told us that they would perform a piece which lasted 10-15 mins but it actually lasted half an hour which made the second half of our concert very long.

*Did you undertake an evaluation of the collaboration process?*

No.

*Were you aware of the Making Music choir collaboration agreement form and if so did you use it or find it useful?*

No.

*Are there any resources you feel would have helped in the collaboration process that you would have liked Making Music to provide, e.g. checklists, contracts, etc.?*

It would be good to have a contract which agreed both parts of the collaboration in advance. We have yet to agree the reciprocal part of the collaboration where we will perform in a concert that Nonesuch will organise.

*Any other comments?*

I think this is a really great scheme that enables organisations who might not otherwise find out about each other to get together and broaden their experiences.

### **Interview with Deborah Behrman of Nonesuch Orchestra**

*Why did you want to participate in a collaboration?*

We felt it would provide us with a concert platform and that it provided the orchestra with a chance to extend the repertoire. Chantage were organising venue, advertising, extra players for choral work, *etc.* so it was a relatively easy concert for us administratively.

*What was the first step you made to start the collaboration process?*

Chantage contacted the Nonesuch Orchestra (via chairman Deborah Behrman) to ask if we'd be interested.

*Did you nominate someone to be responsible for liaising with the two groups involved?*

Deborah Behrman (Nonesuch) liaised with Bethan Sheppard (Chantage).

*Did you sign any formal agreements or contracts during your collaboration?*

We signed a contract specifying a fee that Chantage would pay.

*How did you organise rehearsals, consider location, times and duration? Did the two groups rehearse separately or together?*

Groups rehearsed separately until the day of the concert when there was a joint afternoon rehearsal. Nonesuch's solo contribution was rehearsed in the course of our normal weekly rehearsals for schools and other concerts.

*How did you feel about the rehearsal process?*

It was a little rushed on the day but that was partly due to circumstances involving Nonesuch's conductor. We could have done with more time to rehearse our own item.

*Overall, how did you feel about the performance?*

I felt it went well and we enjoyed working with Chantage, who were most appreciative. On our part we were very impressed by Chantage!

*How did audience numbers compare with performances you give that are not collaborations?*

It's difficult to say as audience numbers vary enormously. From our own experience we always get very good audiences when we are part of a festival (e.g. Pinner or St Jude's) or a series (e.g. at St John Greenhill, Harrow), but we struggle to get as good an audience if we put on a concert out of the blue.

*Which difficulties did you encounter during your collaboration?*

Slight communication problems over extra players, but nothing major. Having agreed a fee which would cover the Nonesuch expenses, we were short of players who were available for the concert and so had to buy in extras ourselves for the day and hence were out of pocket. I should have anticipated that problem with a summer concert and budgeted accordingly.

*If you had a conductor, which group was this conductor associated with? How did you decide who would conduct?*

Both conductors took part, Chantage's with the choral and joint items and Nonesuch's with the string orchestra item.

*What was the overall feeling in your group about the collaboration? How do you think undergoing this process affected your group?*

Everyone enjoyed it and appreciated the chance to do something different, and the opportunity to play in a venue we could not afford on our own.

*What were the positive benefits of collaborating?*

Playing for an excellent choir, performing in a beautiful and prestigious venue, promoting the Nonesuch Orchestra to a new audience, and learning a work which was previously completely unknown to most of us (Durufle Requiem).

*Were there any things you would do differently if you collaborated again?*

Budget more carefully, and ensure we had adequate rehearsal time.

*Did you undertake an evaluation of the collaboration process?*

No.

*Were you aware of the Making Music choir collaboration agreement form and if so did you use it or find it useful?*

No – unaware.

*Are there any resources you feel would have helped in the collaboration process that you would have liked Making Music to provide, e.g. checklists, contracts, etc.?*

There weren't any resources we needed in this collaboration, but that could well have been because Chantage were so clued up. I should think sample contracts would be useful for most groups, and also a checklist of things which would need to be discussed and clarified – e.g. delegation of responsibility for rehearsal timetable, hiring of rehearsal and performance venues, provision of music, payment of fees, hiring of musicians if necessary, production of programme, publicity, staffing/refreshments on the night.

*Any other comments?*

No.

### **CASE STUDY NO. 3**

#### **Regent Brass / youth brass players from Camden Music Service**

workshop date: Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2005, 9:30am-12:30pm

workshop venue: Camden Girls' School, Sandall Road, London NW5

repertoire: excerpts from Star Wars compilation

admission: free but places were booked in advance through the Music Service

#### **Training & Development Officer involvement**

Putting the band in touch with contacts such as Camden Music Service and Westminster Arts Council after being approached to help them develop the idea; using the band's former Special Activities Fund 2003/4 project with Barnet Band (youth brass) as a model; supplying funding advice including possible sources to approach and written references based on past experience of their musical activities; review in London Harmony to give the band ammunition for undertaking similar future projects

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Having established themselves with youth brass services in the North-West area of London (Brent, Barnet, Willesden), the band wanted to widen their network to another part. It was decided that Camden and Westminster would be good boroughs to approach since they are still accessible geographically for the band and both have responded well to previous approaches from Making Music. Camden Music Service was a perfect match for the band, and getting such a structured youth service on side was far more successful than trying to find individual young people to participate. Although attempts were made to contact Westminster schools in a similar vein, this proved a rather unresponsive method since they didn't have such an efficient set-up for music provision, and was abandoned on this occasion.

**Regent Brass** are a 30-piece Brass Band based in Willesden, North-West London. Founded in 1985 to cater for young brass players in Brent that had left the youth set-up, Regent Brass have since risen to the top of the brass band scene. They have appeared at the National Finals on 7 occasions, in 1988 won the Third Section title of Champion Brass Band of Great Britain, and became London & Southern Counties Area Champions in 1994. In 2004 the band won the SCABA Championship Section at Folkestone and left with trophies both for the test piece and the hymn tune. Regent Brass are dedicated to promoting the brass band tradition and encouraging young players, and many members are also peripatetic teachers.

**Camden Music Service** covers musical provision for school-aged children across the borough. Responsible for organising instrumental lessons in two thirds of Camden's schools, it also provides all children with the opportunity to take part in vocal and/or instrumental ensembles at weekends and during holiday periods. CMS runs two Saturday centres to cater for children of all ages and to build on the music activities available within schools. A range of high quality and challenging musical opportunities are offered by experienced qualified tutors and pupils are encouraged to achieve their full potential, perform to parents, friends and in public, as well as being supported through preparation for external music exams.

### **Interview with Stuart Gadsden of Regent Brass**

*Why did you want to participate in a collaboration?*

One of the main reasons for holding the workshop was that brass banding does not have as strong a tradition in London as in other parts of the UK. Consequently, young musicians in London are not often exposed to the unique sound of a top-class brass band and do not fully appreciate this wonderful "amateur" pursuit. The one-day brass band workshop aimed to redress this situation.

Working with young musicians is vital to ensure an amateur brass band like Regent Brass survives long into the future. Consequently, this workshop was important for both the musical education of young musicians and the long-term future of amateur music-making in London.

*What was the first step you made to start the collaboration process?*

Initially, I contacted Heather Tomala from Making Music to identify suitable contacts in education music services in London boroughs. Having carried out a successful workshop previously with the music services of Brent, Barnet and Harrow, Regent Brass was keen to make links with other London boroughs. Camden and Westminster were identified as possible London boroughs to work with as they are relatively close to Brent (where Regent Brass is

based). I contacted all the people identified by Heather as possible collaborators and the workshop stemmed from this initial contact.

*Did you nominate someone to be responsible for liaising with the two groups involved?*

For Regent Brass, Stuart Gadsden was appointed as the lead person. For Camden Music Service, Deborah Rees was appointed as the lead person. Between them, Stuart and Deborah organised the workshop.

*Did you sign any formal agreements or contracts during your collaboration?*

No. It was all kept very informal. Deborah and Stuart communicated regularly to update each other on progress.

*How did you organise rehearsals, consider location, times and duration? Did the two groups rehearse separately or together?*

The workshop was a one-off event. The date, time and venue were chosen to coincide with the 'Camden Music Summer Sunday short courses'. In addition to our brass band workshop, there were recorder, violin and percussion workshops taking place. Linking our collaboration with these other workshops helped to reduce costs for the event, i.e. venue already booked and paid for, publicity for our workshop was included with publicity for all the workshops.

The two groups rehearsed together on the day. There was a massed band rehearsal to begin with allowing the young musicians to immediately play alongside experienced brass musicians. Three sectional rehearsals were then led by members of Regent Brass to work more closely with a smaller group of players. There was one final massed band rehearsal to build on the intense sectionals. The day culminated with a concert to parents and friends.

*How did you feel about the rehearsal process?*

The rehearsal process worked well. It was clear that some of the young musicians had little experience of playing as part of a brass band or other ensemble. During massed band rehearsals, the young musicians hopefully learned how to behave in such rehearsals simply by watching the members of Regent Brass, e.g. concentrating at all times, not talking, listening to the MD.

The sectional rehearsals allowed members of Regent Brass to give more personal tuition to a smaller group of players. These rehearsals allowed each young musician to learn from a professional musician who plays the same instrument as them.

*Overall, how did you feel about the performance?*

The performance was a great success. The young musicians and Regent Brass played a very challenging piece of music together. This was certainly a much harder piece of music than the young musicians had seen before (quotes from the young musicians at the start of the workshop were along the lines of "I'll never be able to play this", "this is too hard for me"). At the performance, all young musicians took part and all played extremely well. Many of the parents of the young musicians commented at the end of the concert how surprised they were at the difficulty of the music. Hopefully this has shown the young musicians what they can achieve in future by working hard.

*How did audience numbers compare with performances you give that are not collaborations?*

The concert was not widely publicised and so cannot be compared with other concerts given by Regent Brass. It was only advertised to parents and friends of the children taking part in the workshop. There were ten children taking part in the workshop and the audience numbered approximately 25. This was deemed to be successful.

*Which difficulties did you encounter during your collaboration?*

Obtaining funding for the workshop was difficult. Applications were made to the Clore Duffield Foundation and to the Camden Arts Cultural Small Grants Programme. Unfortunately, both applications were turned down. It had been hoped to submit more funding applications but there was insufficient time. Fortunately, the costs to Regent Brass were minimised as Camden Music Service absorbed the cost of the venue hire (usually the most substantial cost). We were able to use music and music stands purchased for a previous collaboration. Additionally, the Making Music Training and Development Grant will cover the costs incurred by Regent Brass – paying the fees of the MD and the sectional leaders. The rest of the workshop ran smoothly. No problems at all.

*If you had a conductor, which group was this conductor associated with? How did you decide who would conduct?*

The conductor was from Regent Brass. He was the professional musician employed to lead the workshop.

*What was the overall feeling in your group about the collaboration? How do you think undergoing this process affected your group?*

I think everyone in Regent Brass enjoyed the collaboration. There was some initial scepticism among a minority of the band about the first workshop the band held. Some people thought it was a waste of time, it wouldn't really benefit the band and that no-one in the band would enjoy it. The first workshop clearly demonstrated to all Regent Brass members how valuable these workshops are. Everyone was therefore keen to run a second workshop and is happy to get involved with future collaborations.

Members of Regent Brass have also seen the value of working together in small sectional rehearsals – something that the band does not often have time to do. A more concerted effort is being made by the band to schedule in more sectional rehearsals.

*What were the positive benefits of collaborating?*

Working with young musicians and introducing them to brass bands. All members of Regent Brass are obviously enthusiastic about the brass band movement and it was great to share this enthusiasm with young people. It was also good to work on a project that is completely different from the usual events that Regent Brass performs at. This helps to keep players motivated and also helps to develop their skills as musicians.

Hopefully this event will now become an annual collaboration which could have long-term benefits for both the band and Camden Music Service.

*Where there any things you would do differently if you collaborated again?*

No. The collaboration was successful and enjoyed by all.

*Did you undertake an evaluation of the collaboration process?*

No. Perhaps this is something we could do differently at the next collaboration. This could involve getting Regent Brass members, the young musicians, audience members and the music service to complete a short questionnaire about the workshop. The results of this could be used to help develop future workshops.

*Were you aware of the Making Music choir collaboration agreement from and if so did you use it or find it useful?*

Not aware of it.

*Are there any resources you feel would have helped in the collaboration process that you would have liked Making Music to provide: eg. checklists/contracts etc?*

No.

*Any other comments?*

The collaboration between Regent Brass and Camden Music Service was a great success. It builds on previous collaborations between Regent Brass and the music services of Barnet, Brent and Harrow. This first collaboration is continuing and Regent Brass and the Barnet Schools Brass Band are now putting on a joint Christmas concert. This may even become an annual event and show the long-term benefits of collaboration. I would encourage any group thinking of working with someone else to give it a go. You never know where it might take you!

### **Interview with Deborah Rees of Camden Music Service**

*Why did you want to participate in a collaboration?*

For us, the collaboration presented an opportunity for our pupils to see adult amateur musicians enjoying making music, and to understand that there are other options than either going into the profession, or giving up making music in adult life.

*What was the first step you made to start the collaboration process?*

We were contacted by Regent Brass, and asked if we would like to participate. We asked for more information about their organisation and aims for this project, and told them about the children we knew might participate, and the kinds of times and dates which would be most likely to work well for us.

*Did you nominate someone to be responsible for liaising with the two groups involved?*

Yes. It's vital to have a clear line of communication, and for messages to be returned promptly, to maintain the energy and focus while arrangements are being made.

*Did you sign any formal agreements or contracts during your collaboration?*

No, but we did put down in writing (wonderful e-mail) clearly what was going to be happening, and when, and who was to be involved.

*How did you organise rehearsals, consider location, times and duration? Did the two groups rehearse separately or together?*

We agreed a time when we could supply premises and supervision, and when we thought students would be available to attend. The project was a simple half-day, stand-alone event, so rehearsing was not a problem – they did all that together on the day.

*How did you feel about the rehearsal process?*

The repertoire was well-chosen, and it was great for our young players to have virtually individual attention from adult members of the section during the rehearsal.

*Overall, how did you feel about the performance?*

It was really moving to see the children performing alongside the adults, and to see the faces of especially the younger ones at being part of such a huge sound.

*How did audience numbers compare with performances you give that are not collaborations?*

Numbers were as we would expect – it was not a public performance, but a workshop sharing for parents and friends only. I believe some of the players and their families went on to a Regent Brass performance in the afternoon, though my colleagues and I could not attend as we were supervising other projects.

*Which difficulties did you encounter during your collaboration?*

None!

*If you had a conductor, which group was this conductor associated with? How did you decide who would conduct?*

Our group was recruited borough-wide, and so we had no conductor – the Regent Brass conductor worked very well with our pupils.

*What was the overall feeling in your group about the collaboration? How do you think undergoing this process affected your group?*

We were very pleased with the event. Simple and successful events like this all contribute to the vibrancy and vitality of music in the borough, and give us all a little boost.

*What were the positive benefits of collaborating?*

It brought new 'voices' to the children, meant that we didn't have to worry about repertoire or presentation, provided a new and different activity for children (and for parents to see!) and provided a positive model for young musicians.

*Where there any things you would do differently if you collaborated again?*

No, though I think we could have sustained a whole day, had our respective timetables permitted.

*Did you undertake an evaluation of the collaboration process?*

Internally, in that we talked to pupils about it, and amongst ourselves.

*Were you aware of the Making Music choir collaboration agreement form and if so did you use it or find it useful?*

N/A

*Are there any resources you feel would have helped in the collaboration process that you would have liked Making Music to provide: eg. checklists/contracts etc?*

I'm sure in a longer or more complex project a checklist of things to think about could have been useful.

*Any other comments?*

This was really good fun for us. Regent Brass were offering one simple thing which they could do really well, and circumstances happened to fall in such a way that the 'fit' between what they were offering, our pupils, and our facilities and other activities was very close. I think this 'fit', and that both organisations stay true to their core activity, is very important.

#### **CASE STUDY NO. 4**

Croydon Bach Choir

*unable to set up a collaboration here*

#### **Regional Development Officer involvement**

Contacting London orchestras in Croydon and neighbouring boroughs on behalf of Croydon Bach Choir after being approached by the choir; following up possible leads and in some cases speaking to musical directors; advertising for a match in London Harmony

Made up of around 40 singers aged 16-70, **Croydon Bach Choir** performs a variety of sacred and secular music from the C16th to C20th, and has also commissioned several new pieces. Each season they perform around 5 concerts in the Croydon area, for some of which professional soloists and orchestras are engaged. Following an experiment in 2004 the choir have initiated a series of workshops, open to all, with a performance in the early evening of the same day. They also hold open rehearsals a few times per year to attract new singers.

A couple of orchestras were interested in collaborating and contact details were exchanged but sadly nothing materialised. In more than one case it emerged that the orchestras didn't want to collaborate, rather to be paid or hired out by the Choir, and wanting to charge in excess of £2000 to do so! Possible reasons for the inability to find them a match could be:

- a saturated market, i.e. Croydon Bach Choir performing similar repertoire to several other choirs in the borough
- orchestras not wishing to perform choral repertoire, or to perform any more than they had already planned

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- Croydon Bach Choir repertoire not being unusual or adventurous enough
- orchestral concert programmes already planned and related arrangements made well ahead
- orchestras not prepared to take the financial risk
- orchestral committees not having the time to take on extra workload and responsibility

*We are grateful to all the case study groups for sharing their experiences with us, especially those named as contact points for being so willing to answer our questions and give us such useful feedback.*

This guide was produced by Bethany Cook and Heather Tomala for Making Music.

**This information can be made available in large print and other formats on request. Please telephone 0870 903 3780.**

We hope you find this Making Music document useful - it is intended to give a reasonable summary of the position at the time of writing. If you are aware of any changes to the situation described or have suggestions for further information to be included please contact the Membership Services Team at Making Music 0870 903 3780 or [info@makingmusic.org.uk](mailto:info@makingmusic.org.uk). Please note that no responsibility for loss occasioned to any person or group acting or refraining from action as a result of any of the contents of this information sheet can be accepted by any of the authors or by Making Music, the National Federation of Music Societies.

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