



**75 YEARS OF SUPPORTING  
AND CHAMPIONING  
VOLUNTARY MUSIC**

# Case Study

No. 41

## Yorkshire Bach Choir

One of Making Music's five areas of activity is working with and for young people. Through Making Music's Young People's Programme a substantial library of youth project case studies has been developed. These case studies are designed to highlight and share best practice from the experiences of Making Music member societies undertaking youth projects. Many of the case studies arise from Making Music's two national youth programmes *tuned in* (2001-2002) funded by Youth Music and The Carnegie UK Trust and RESOUND (2003-2005) funded by Youth Music, Scottish Arts Council, The Carnegie UK Trust and Headley Trust.

### 1. Project Description

#### Project Aims

The Choir's director expressed an interest in working with young people and asked for advice from the Local Youth Officer on how best to go about incorporating an activity within the choir's concert series. Looking at the concert series, the concert which was chosen was entitled 'Music and Politics' as it might have scope for investigating some of the repertoire composed during the English Civil War. This repertoire comprises a combination of 'art' music composed for religious services and other occasions, and a number of folk songs that comment, often sardonically, on the events of war. The Youth Office advised that the combination of these two types of music would make an interesting concert, and contained potential for the involvement of young people.

The music director was enthusiastic about the idea and work by William Lawes was chosen. This piece contains psalms that were intended for a whole congregation to sing, interspersed with solo verses for members of the choir. It was agreed that the young people would make an excellent contribution to the concert by singing the psalms, along with some of the more lively songs from the folk song repertoire.

#### Project Description

This project gave young people from the Performing Arts Centre choir in York an opportunity to perform alongside members of the Yorkshire Back Choir.

The Local Youth Officer identified a short programme of music that the young people could perform during the concert. This included two Lawes verse anthems, for which the young people would be joined by soloists from the choir, and other choir members, together with a number of songs that the young people would perform on their own. The director of the performing arts centre choir was approached, who was keen to get involved, and she agreed

to rehearse the songs with the young people.

On the day, the young people arrived early and ran through their music with the other performers involved. During the performance, the Local Youth Officer introduced the young choir and explained to the audience why the repertoire had been chosen. The young people performed a short programme in each half of the concert.

### **Legacy**

The project appeared to be very successful. The young people sang very well indeed, and many members of the audience commented on their accomplished performance.

The quality of the performance was excellent and members of Yorkshire Bach Choir were please with the results of the collaboration and keen to take part in a similar project again in the future.

### **Improvements**

The young people themselves found some of the sitting still and listening rather hard work. They did not know much about the music in the programme and it therefore did not mean much to them. This indicates how important it is to give young people some information about the music they are listening to. This applies equally to music that they are performing as well as music they listen to. The director of the youth choir commented that some of the young people were not very keen on the music they were performing on this occasion. The Local Youth Officer had performed this repertoire with other groups of young people have been enthusiastic about it in the past. She wondered if this could have been due to the fact that on the other occasion, the group had learned quite a lot about the music during the course of the project and the young people had understood the irony that lay behind the texts for some of the songs. The young people in this project might have enjoyed it more if they had known more about its meanings and origins.

## **2. Project Details**

### **General Details**

Nature of Youth Project	<b>Youth group performed with society</b>
Number of Young People involved	<b>40</b>
Age Range of Young People	<b>11 - 14</b>
Type of Young People involvement	<b>established junior choir</b>
Recruitment of Young People	<b>via Performing Arts Centre</b>
Level of LEA involvement	<b>None</b>
Project budget	<b>Under £500</b>
Sources of funding	
Video available	<b>False</b>
Audio available	<b>False</b>
Photographs available	<b>False</b>
Programme available	<b>True</b>
Publicity leaflets/posters	<b>False</b>

## Society Details

Name of society	<b>Yorkshire Bach Choir</b>
Type of Society	<b>Classical choral</b>
Size of Society	<b>45</b>
Age profile	<b>Mixture of adult and youth</b>
Under 19s in society	<b>3</b>
Under 19s from project	<b>0</b>
Repertoire	<b>Exclusively classical</b>
Typical concert budget	<b>£1000 - £5000</b>
Typical performance	<b>Short pieces and major works</b>
Number of performances	<b>Over 5</b>
Willing to be contacted	<b>True</b>
Contact name	<b>Dr Peter Seymour</b>
Contact phone	<b>01904 652799</b>
Contact address	<b>11 Bootham Terrace, York, YO30 7DH</b>
Contact email	<b>ps22@york.ac.uk</b>

2-4 Great Eastern Street, London EC2A 3NW  
T 020 7422 8280 F 020 7422 8299  
info@makingmusic.org.uk  
www.makingmusic.org.uk

### **This information sheet can be made available in large print and other formats on request. Please telephone 020 7422 8280.**

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 020 7422 8280 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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