



SUPPORTING AND
CHAMPIONING
LEISURE-TIME MUSIC

Writing to your parliamentarian

#BringBackMyChoir / #BringBackMyBand campaign

What are you asking for?

- That amateurs be allowed to do what the professionals are allowed to do within the guidance
- That the guidance be updated to reflect the research and evidence already gathered in Germany, Austria, France, Italy and Norway where activity is already safely back up and running
 - E.g. Freiburg University, latest update <https://www.mh-freiburg.de/en/university/covid-19-corona/risk-assessment>
 - E.g. Norway's Public Health guidance, successfully being used now since May: <https://www.musikk.no/nmr/om-oss/medlemsorganisasjoner/ressurser-for-medlemmer/veileder-smittevern-for-musikkovelsler>

What arguments might you use

There is no reason given why amateurs should be treated differently, so we have imagined some possible ones and rebutted them below.

- *Amateurs are less capable at assessing and managing risk*
 - **86% of groups are charities**, run by trustees, used to being responsible for the safety and well-being of group members
 - Amateur groups are for people from all walks of life, including medical staff, HSE inspectors or many others who bring their professional expertise to the management of the group
- *Amateurs are less responsible*
 - Groups exist to make music together in their leisure-time and to enjoy the social connection and multiple well-being benefits to individuals from participation; Why would they endanger their members' lives?
 - Two thirds of participants in adult groups are over the age of 50, and a sizeable proportion will be over 70 and in the categories considered most at risk of coronavirus by the NHS; groups are very well aware of this, so this is another factor which means:
 - If anything, **groups have a tendency to be over-cautious, not gung-ho.**
- *The amateur sector has no significant economic impact*
 - Leisure-time music groups spend an estimated £86.4m on engaging professional musicians EVERY YEAR
 - **The amateur sector is an essential part of a music professionals' portfolio career; without it, musicians will still be needing funding from the chancellor**

- Groups spend £6.4m annually with music publishers
- Other significant spending is on instruments, accessories (staging, uniforms, etc.), associated trades (e.g. travel/tour organisers, print and photography, marketing, websites etc.)
- Groups are essential to the survival of venues and spaces for hire: schools, community halls, churches, arts venues, which they use for rehearsals and/or performance.
 - **Venues and spaces currently not being allowed to welcome full audiences will need the amateurs back in order to survive... or they will continue to need funding from the chancellor**

The music sector is an ecology and taking away one part of it harms the rest of it. In music, the amateur and the professional are closely entwined and mutually supportive.

Example of a letter to an MP here:

<https://www.musicdurham.co.uk/news/letter-to-mary-foy>

What is really great about this letter is how specific it is about the situation in this MP's constituency, referencing venues, the university, the number of festivals and performances etc..

The more local information you can use, the better.

What statistics you might use

CHOIRS –

40,000 in the UK, 2.2m singers - https://europeanchoralassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/singingeurope_report.pdf

This includes school choirs and church choirs.

Amateur adult or youth choirs only – approx. 10,000

Average 57 members per choir = 570,000 singers

INSTRUMENTAL GROUPS – no research, but generally twice as many choirs as instrumental groups, so

5,000 adult or youth amateur groups = 285,000 participants
(Plus school bands and orchestras)

AMATEUR MUSIC SECTOR

Around 15,000 groups (choirs and instrumental groups) with around 855,000 participants.

Average group size is 57.

See more detailed stats below.

MONEY

98% of groups engage professional musicians. These are: conductors, accompanists, soloists, section leaders, instrumentalists, workshop leaders, teachers.

Leisure-time music sector spends £86.4m on professional musicians every year.

Spends £6.4m with music publishers

Commissions 2000 new pieces of music a year

Puts on 54,000 concerts a year

To audiences of 7.6m

Raises £7.6m for charities each year

Other significant spending includes regular and one off venue and space hire, musical instruments and accessories, staging, marketing and photography, IT, uniforms, etc..

Represents a total annual turnover of £192m

DEVOLVED NATIONS

Scotland/Wales/Northern Ireland

Guidance is due in the next one/two weeks.

Your ask: do not single out amateurs in your guidance, let them be treated in the same way as the professionals.

So you may wish to refer to the disappointing and unjustified distinction made in the guidance for England, with arguments as above and expressing the hope that your nation may act differently.

More detailed and specific stats for nations and whole of UK:

Scotland

| | Total | People |
|-------------------------------|-------|---------|
| Choirs (all) | 3,308 | 188,571 |
| Amateur adult or youth choirs | 827 | 47,143 |
| Instrumental groups | 414 | 23,571 |
| Amateur Music Sector | 1,241 | 70,714 |

Wales

| | Total | People |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Choirs (all) | 1,865 | 106,286 |
| Amateur adult or youth choirs | 466 | 26,571 |
| Instrumental groups | 233 | 13,286 |
| Amateur Music Sector | 699 | 39,857 |

Northern Ireland

| | Total | People |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Choirs (all) | 1,143 | 65,143 |
| Amateur adult or youth choirs | 286 | 16,286 |
| Instrumental groups | 143 | 8,143 |
| Amateur Music Sector | 429 | 24,429 |

England

| | Total | People |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Choirs (all) | 33,684 | 1,920,000 |
| Amateur adult or youth choirs | 8,421 | 480,000 |
| Instrumental groups | 4,211 | 240,000 |
| Amateur Music Sector | 12,632 | 720,000 |

Total UK:

| | Total | People |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Choirs (all) | 40,000 | 2,280,000 |
| Amateur adult or youth choirs | 10,000 | 570,000 |
| Instrumental groups | 5,000 | 285,000 |
| Amateur Music Sector | 15,000 | 855,000 |