

# In from the Cold: Reflections on mapping and developing non-formal music to address social need in London



## BRIEFING PAPER

In 2012, we set out to map public funding for non-formal (out of school) music provision and social need in London, an exercise made possible by Youth Music's Musical Inclusion grant awarded to Sound Connections from 2012-14, and extended until 2015.

The mapping led to the identification of so-called 'cold spot' areas where music provision was historically low or underfunded, and where social deprivation was high. The findings confirmed long-held perceptions about the extent to which central London boroughs are funded, and the correlation between persistently high deprivation and investment in music on such areas was noted. As expected, larger, more affluent outer boroughs had accessed less central funding for non-formal music projects which address the social agenda. However, several areas of extreme deprivation in outer London were identified that had gained less attention and attracted lower levels of funding over the last ten years. The report was shared with key strategic partners at City Hall, Arts Council and Youth Music, before being made public. The arrival of the report was timely, coinciding with the development of Music Education Hubs who were, at that time, carrying out their own needs analyses in each borough. The findings and resulting maps can be seen in the original report *Mapping non-formal music provision and social need in London* (2012).



Map 1: Areas of lower provision with social deprivation spotlighted in grey.

## What we did next

Channelling funding awarded through Musical Inclusion, Sound Connections worked with the Music Education Hubs in seven 'cold spots' to identify specific local needs within each area of deprivation, and developed pilot strategic projects which would address social need in specific localities within the cold spot. The projects included:

- Mobile DJing on housing estates in Edmonton (Enfield) and Tottenham (Haringey)
- Development of a bloco carnival band in South Norwood and New Addington (Croydon)
- Music-making with traveller communities in Southall (Ealing)
- Two early years programmes in Barking and North Hammersmith
- Upcoming youth consultation in Brent and a teenage parent/early years project in Redbridge.

Further funding was secured through Youth Music to develop an interconnected programme of work in Bromley, Hounslow and Redbridge.

Our long-running *Innovate* seed-funding programme also gave us the opportunity to invest further in new music provision, with weighting given to proposals which worked in 'cold spot' areas. This led to pilot projects in:

- Brent – working with young people with SEN leaving statutory provision
- Bromley – providing music activities for newly adopted children and their families
- Croydon – engaging children in challenging circumstances with classical music through multi-sensory experiments, and working with teenage mothers and their young children
- Enfield – working with the Turkish community



**Map 2: Areas covered by Sound Connections' Reaching Out, Innovate and Get Connect programmes**

Below is an updated map, highlighting the London boroughs that Sound Connections have worked in partnership with, either through funded projects or commissioned work.



**Partnership work across London 2012-15**

## Successes

Over the last two years, we have worked with over 500 young people to address a diverse range of needs. All projects have been evaluated and case studies are being shared on our website. Three specific outcomes that emerge across the programme of work are:

### 🕒 **Strategic benefits: embedding the work**

In the case of Enfield, the Reaching Out and Innovate projects allowed Sound Connections to develop stronger links with Enfield Music Service. This was complimented by additional work commissioned by Roundhouse in their role as Arts Council Associate Bridge Organisation, leading to a wide-ranging youth consultation and partnerships between the borough's music, youth and cultural service teams.

### 🕒 **Reaching those most in need**

Our project in Croydon enabled us to work with young people most in need in two of the most deprived areas of the borough. The in-depth knowledge and networks of Croydon Council's Youth Arts Manager, combined with the high quality and accessible activity designed by Kinetika Bloco, led to a successful project with clear outcomes for the young people involved, culminating in a performance at Croydon Heritage Festival in the town centre. Croydon Youth Arts and Kinetika Bloco are now working together to take these successes to the next phase with further support from Reaching Out funding from Sound Connections.

### 🕒 **Innovation in challenging settings**

As well as longer term strategic projects, we have been able to develop exciting and innovative new work through the series of pilot project. This allowed us to work with groups we may not have ordinarily reach (for example, Turkish young people in Enfield) and in ways we have not worked before, for example multi-sensory experiments in north Croydon.

## Challenges

As with all new work which seeks to overcome barriers and address need, we encountered a range of challenges in developing and delivering these programmes.

### 🕒 **Building bridges: partnership working takes time and dedication**

Music hubs were still in a formative stage, especially with regards to the identification and analysis of need and developing solutions to address this. This led to a longer period of consultation and development than envisaged. However, by 2013 a series of projects were getting off the ground. Particular partnership challenges were encountered in Croydon where changes in project timescales led to the music hub playing a secondary role in the project and indeed returning partnership funding to Sound Connections which we were able to reallocate to an intervention at a special needs school carnival day. Despite these issues,

a strong link with the youth arts team meant that we were able to direct activity to some of the most deprived areas of Croydon including New Addington on the far edges of the city. Overcoming multiple barriers, the young people's performance at Croydon Heritage Festival in the town centre was a testament to the success of the project. A strong and sustained relationship has been established between the provider Kinetika Bloco and the Youth Arts Team.

### **o Inconsistent impact: what works in one case, doesn't always work in others**

Whilst the mobile DJing project in Enfield led to high numbers being engaged across areas of high deprivation, the corresponding work in Haringey was seen to be less effective, engaging lower numbers and falling short of meeting its aim of strengthening, resourcing and linking up existing provision. We are now working in partnership with Roundhouse, the Associate Bridge and Haringey music hub to go back to basics and consult young people directly about their needs with a view to building more successful follow-up projects.

### **o Project design: sometimes you have to go back to the drawing board**

Sometimes we have to accept that new models do not always achieve the desired outcomes. A tailored project aiming to connect young people in Bromley, Hounslow and Redbridge did not succeed in bringing together diverse groups in the way we first envisioned. A range of strategic and logistical challenges meant we had to re-evaluate our aims and outcomes. An Apprentice Leader initiative proved very successful, and individual young people benefit from working with expert music leaders, but ultimately the more strategic outcomes will need further attention.

## **Reflections**

As with all our work we shall continue to reflect on the process and results and review how it can inform our future work and our role in supporting the wider music education sector.

Future aims:

### **o Remapping: where next?**

Since our original mapping exercise in 2012 there has been considerable investment from those funders we reviewed. A new map can show how the picture in London has changed and how the knowledge has informed funders' decision making. There are also other partners and funders that could be included to give a more holistic picture of music education investment in the region. If we can secure funding, Sound Connections hopes that we can undertake this process within the next 18 months. We shall continue to advocate that those shaping provision and policy utilise this intelligence to inform decisions about where support is best directed.

### **o Making the case: evaluating partnership programmes**

We know how important it is to demonstrate what can be done in areas of high deprivation - as in the case of Croydon Bloco and Innovate, doesn't have to be at the expense of quality and innovative experiences. Sound Connections will continue to share lessons learnt, both successes and elements that haven't worked. We shall continue to reflect with our partners and our expert networks to better understand how we can encourage creativity and innovation and how we can reach even more challenging settings.

**Working together: with youth consultation at its heart**

We plan to continue to build our relationship with Music Education Hubs across London. By engaging hubs through more consultation, with longer gestation periods and a commitment to lever additional funds from all sides we can work in partnership to meet these needs. We know that in some cases this approach provides a first-time opportunity for the hub to work with the youth service. Embedded across all this work is the commitment that young people themselves shape provision through local consultation and engagement.



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