



# MUSIC HUB INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

Sector Engagement:

March 2023

Summary of findings



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# WHAT THE CONSULTATION WAS ABOUT

We want the experience and knowledge of everyone from the music, education, youth, creative and cultural communities to help shape the Music Hub Investment Programme. That's why we are asking for feedback and ideas from stakeholders during a 'conversation and consultation phase'.

The [National Plan for Music Education](#) (NPME) stated that the government intends to fund fewer, more strategic Music Hubs which cover larger geographic areas and that this would be achieved via a Music Hub Investment Programme delivered by the Arts Council.

The Department for Education (DfE) shared its thinking on geographies for future Music Hubs through a [rationale and guiding principles](#) which were initially published in November 2022 and confirmed its intention for geographic areas to be prescribed (or agreed) in advance of the investment programme.

The rationale and guiding principles were updated in March 2023 to reflect [sector feedback](#) gathered during sector engagement activity delivered by the Arts Council between December 2022 and January 2023, and which tested methodologies for prescribing geographies through external focus groups and an open access survey. We received over 286 responses to our survey, and 139 people attended our focus groups in locations across England and online.

We shared the findings from this activity and some potential ways forward with the DfE. We then created proposals for new geographic areas for Music Hubs that reflect the aims of the NPME and the intended benefits of a new Music Hub structure.

To understand the implications of these proposed new geographic areas, the Arts Council launched a consultation survey that was open from Friday 10 to Friday 31 March 2023.



# WHAT WE DID

The consultation has been delivered through an online survey which was open to responses from the broad range of stakeholder groups that engage in the musical lives of children and young people.

The aims of the survey were to:

- Provide an opportunity for stakeholders to reflect and feedback on proposals so that Music Hub geographic areas are shaped by the local knowledge, experience, and context.
- Provide the evidence necessary for the Arts Council to identify potential ways forward and allow us to work closely with DfE to shape the final Hub geographies.
- Respond to feedback from stakeholders gathered during the sector engagement activity in January which called for further consultation with reference to specific geographic proposals.

Respondents were asked to keep in mind the ambitions of the National Plan for Music Education, and the DfE's rationale and guiding principles. They were then asked to consider whether each local proposal reflected how children and young people in a specific area live their lives, and how Music Hubs can support the best outcomes for them. They could also comment on their intention to apply to become a new Hub Lead Organisation and highlight any considerations that might support or influence that decision.

The survey mechanism was adopted because it allowed us to secure direct feedback from stakeholders about the proposed geographic areas, to act as a practical 'check-in', and to identify the most consistent themes and ideas. We read and mapped all of the comments and suggestions about proposed geographic areas provided by every respondent against the DfE's rationale and guiding principles. General themes, intelligence, and requests for further information or clarity about specific areas of the Investment Programme were also logged in order to support other aspects of Investment Programme design.

# WHO WE HEARD FROM

**985** respondents shared feedback and information through the survey.

This included **371** organisations including creative, arts and culture or heritage organisations; early years organisations; music education organisations; further education or higher education institutions; schools, multi-academy trusts (MATs) and other education providers; youth or community organisations; and a music instrument retailer.

A further **614** individuals responded, including musicians, tutors, teachers, sector consultants and music education professionals, parents and families, and young people themselves.

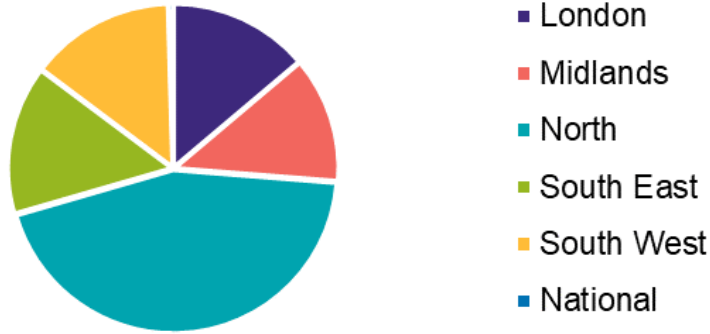
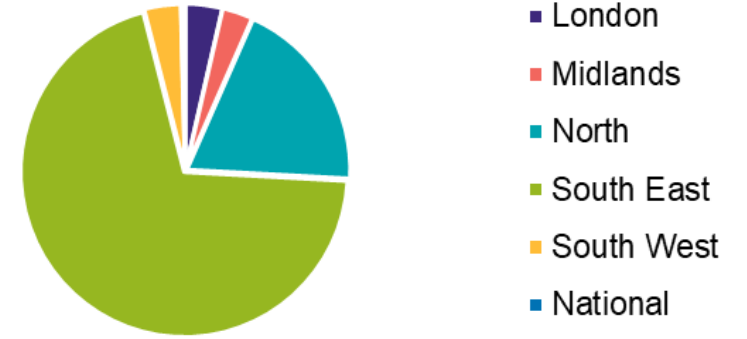
**769** respondents (or **79%**) commented solely on three of the proposed geographic areas: Medway and Kent; Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire; and Durham and Darlington. These responses were in opposition to Medway being placed in a Hub with Kent, Buckinghamshire being placed with Oxfordshire, and the division of Durham and Darlington. In each area, these responses used identical or very similar language, which suggests respondents were asked to respond to the survey in a particular way. This repetition does not invalidate the views expressed by these respondents, and this feedback was analysed in the same way as all other survey responses. However, these responses have been highlighted in order to contextualise the type and range of views articulated, especially where the responses have had a significant impact on the overall findings of the consultation.

Excepting these 'campaigns', there were **216** responses to the survey.

**42.7%** of all responses from organisations were from schools, MATs, and other education providers. Without data from the campaigns, music education organisations were the most common organisational respondent at **35.7%** of responses.

**58.2%** of all respondents identified that they were engaged with, but not directly associated with, an existing Music Education Hub. Without data from the campaigns, most respondents (**42.7%**) identified that they worked for an existing Music Education Hub Lead Organisation.

Overall, **70.5%** of respondents were from the South East, largely as a result of responses connected to the two campaigns around Kent and Medway, and Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. A higher number of respondents from the North (at **19.3%**) also correlates with the campaign around Durham and Darlington.



Without data from the campaigns, there is a more even spread across Areas, but with a higher response from the North at **44.4%**.

Respondents could comment on as many of the proposals as they felt appropriate, based on their knowledge and experience. Overwhelmingly, however, they commented on geographies in the area in which they are based.

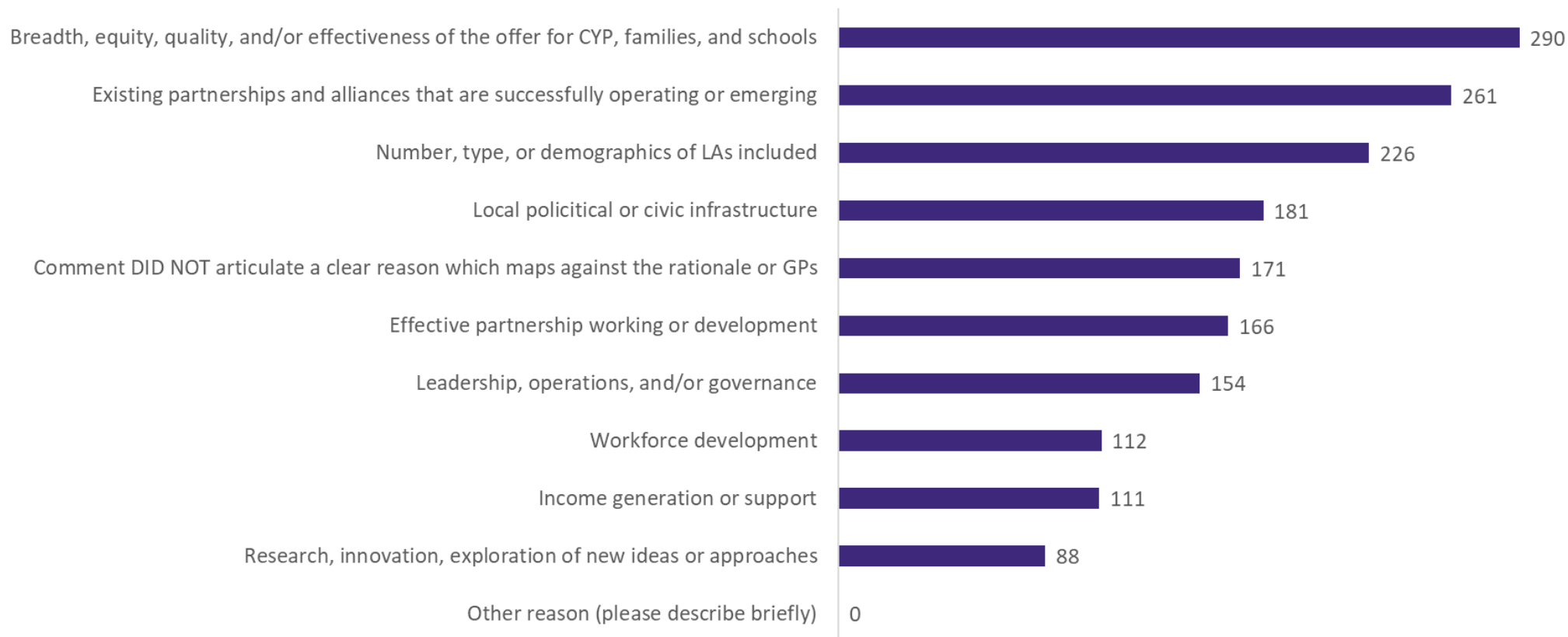
There was a notably limited response from organisations that identified as having a national remit or reach – only four organisations in total across all areas.

	Provided feedback on				
	London	Midlands	North	South East	South West
Based In London	93.5%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Based In Midlands	3.2%	89.7%	1.0%	8.3%	6.3%
Based In North	0.0%	10.3%	96.0%	2.8%	0.0%
Based In South East	3.2%	0.0%	1.0%	88.9%	0.0%
Based In South West	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%	0.0%	96.9%
Based In National	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%

# WHAT THEY SAID

We mapped the information and feedback offered as ‘comments’ by respondents against categories which reflect the requirements and priorities outlined in the DfE’s rationale and guiding principles. 90% of comments aligned with these categories. The breakdown of comments against categories is illustrated in this table:

Overall Responses by Rationale Category



Respondents were asked to indicate if each proposed geography appropriately reflected the updated rationale and guiding principles, and responded to the ways in which children and young people, families, communities, and schools access music education and creative and cultural experiences.

'Yes' was the most common response for 53% of the proposed geographic areas.

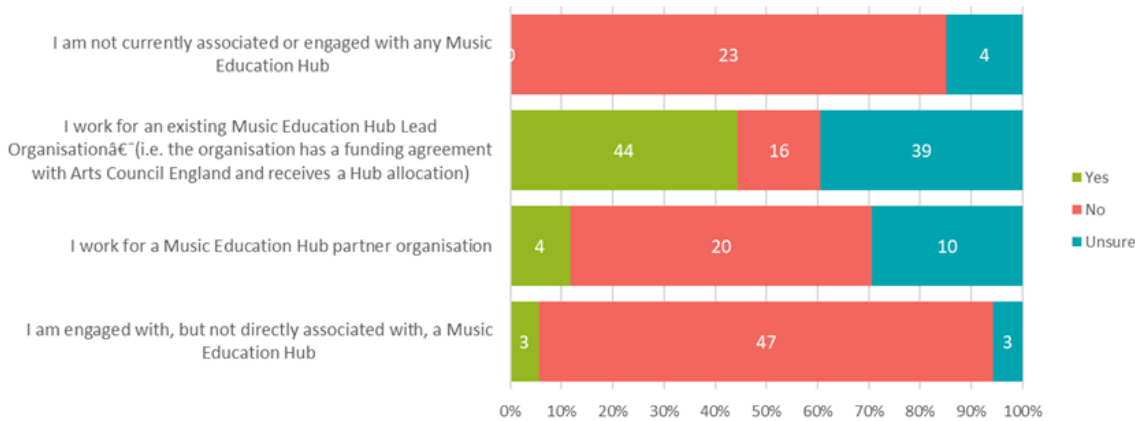
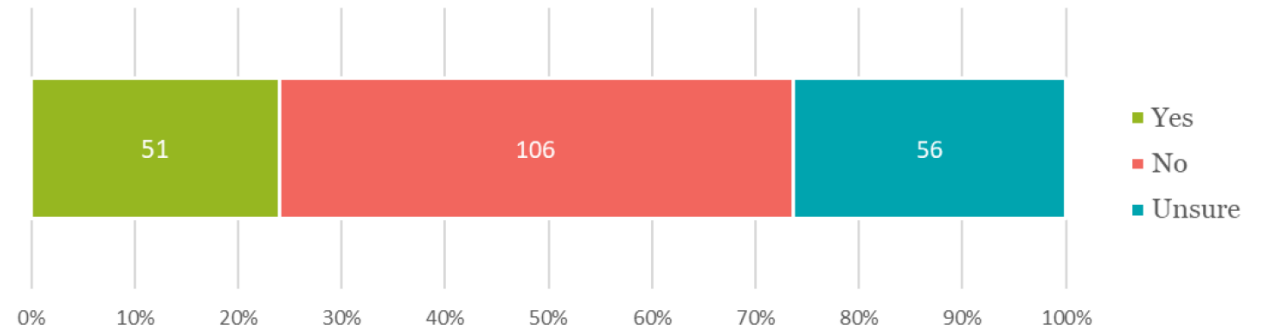
'No' was the most common response for 28% of the proposed geographic areas. Comments and feedback related to these areas tended to focus on three clear themes:

<i>Theme</i>	<i>Proposed Geography</i>	<i>Focus of comments and feedback</i>
Desire to remain as single Local Authority Hub Area	Kent & Medway Buckinghamshire & Oxfordshire	Potential impact on breadth, equity, quality, and/or effectiveness of the offer for children and young people, families, and schools; and on existing partnerships and alliances that are successfully operating or emerging.
Concern about re-distribution of existing geographic operating structure across more than one proposed geographic area	Greater Manchester Lancashire Cheshire & Warrington Greater Merseyside North East Tees Valley	Feedback supports retaining connection between areas because of potential impact on workforce, operational and management structures; existing ways of working; and on the ways in which children and young people, families, and schools are currently accessing provision.
Concern that proposed geography does not respond to a notable existing partnership or alliance that is successfully operating or emerging	London - East London – South East Herefordshire, Shropshire & Worcestershire	Impact on a significant existing or emerging alliance or partnership; effective partnership working or development; and on the breadth, equity, quality, and/or effectiveness of the offer for children and young people, families, and schools.

The most common response for the other 19% of proposed geographic areas was 'Unsure' or tied.



Respondents were asked about their intention to apply to become a new Hub Lead Organisation (HLO) through the Investment Programme. With ‘campaign’ responses removed (which include higher numbers of parents/families and young people who it is expected would not apply), 24% of respondents intend to apply to become an HLO, with a further 26% unsure.



When intent to apply is mapped against the respondent's current level of engagement with Music Education Hubs, existing Music Education Hub Lead Organisations are most likely to apply.

Respondents also provided us with useful information and intelligence about music education, the practicalities of the Investment Programme itself, and also on what might influence their decision to apply. This included insight into the clarification and support they need to make the best possible application. All information and suggestions about practical aspects of the Investment Programme has been read and analysed and will be considered in the final stages of design.



# WHAT WE DID NEXT

Arts Council England:

- Analysed and reflected carefully on feedback
- Discussed analysis with our Area teams
- Shared findings and some potential ways forward with DfE

DfE:

- Reflected carefully on what the sector shared and worked closely with Arts Council to shape the final Hub geographies, taking all the feedback into account

# FINAL HUB GEOGRAPHIES

The DfE and Arts Council are pleased to have received a high volume of interest and response from the broad range of sectors, services, and individuals that are part of the musical lives of children and young people. We are grateful to them for their time and for their thoughtful responses.

We considered all feedback within the context of DfE's rationale and guiding principles and the ways in which children and young people, families, communities, and schools access music education and creative and cultural experiences.

In response to the feedback, DfE and Arts Council will take the following actions:

- Existing geographic operating structures will not be distributed across multiple Hub areas. This affects the local authority areas of Blackburn, Durham, Darlington, Warrington, Halton and Wirral.
- Shropshire will be integrated into the Music Hub that includes Staffordshire, Stoke and Telford & Wrekin, rather than Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- Retain all other geographies that we consulted on.

The final Music Hub geographies can be found [here](#). We believe that the final Hub geographies will realise the NPME's intention to fund fewer, more strategic Music Hubs that cover larger geographic areas in a way that will deliver the best music education for children and young people.



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