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Dear CAPH representative,

Re. Up Bow Kernow! Teaching and learning initiative in West Cornwall

I'd like to introduce you to **Up Bow Kernow!** an exciting new music education project to be delivered in West Cornwall but with the potential to transform instrumental music teaching in rural areas nationally. I hope the proposals below will be of great interest to head teachers in our target area, roughly from Redruth to Helston and westwards.

Background As director of Cornwall Youth Orchestra and a small network of training orchestras across Cornwall, over the last 15 years I have enjoyed seeing a steady growth in the musical abilities and related skills of many young people and a big increase in the number of young Cornish musicians representing many different styles of music making at the highest levels nationally. But in the last few years I've been witnessing a marked drop-off in the number of young people taking up musical instruments and progressing to higher levels – a trend visible across the UK. It's impossible to say for sure what is causing this decline in interest in music-making, but factors might include school days that are generally more focused on core subjects than was the case a few years ago, the ongoing challenge of attracting in experienced and qualified instrumental teachers to work in what can be considered by outsiders to be an isolated community, a generation of parents who did not themselves experience the benefits of learning a musical instrument when they were at school, and the growth of the screen culture that now dominates many young people's lives.

Proposal **Up Bow Kernow!** is a three stage project with a long-term vision to improve the number and level of skilled instrumental teachers working in rural areas and inspire a new generation of young musicians to experience the benefits of group and ensemble music making.

Stage 1 2019-2020: foundation development for a 2-year apprenticeship scheme to train and retain string teachers in Cornwall, kick-starting a new generation of young string players in Penwith and launching with a special music parade on Mazey Day 2020.

Stage 2 2020-2022 implementation of a 2-year apprenticeship scheme: Four recent graduates from Royal Birmingham Conservatoire work under supervision from experienced musicians in local schools and community settings, delivering a string instrument programme that offers individual, group and large ensemble musical experiences, with quality and skill building at the core.

Stage 3 post apprenticeship: development of a masters level vocational qualification based on practical apprenticeship with local partner organisations nationally.

Participating schools MusicAbility is seeking local schools to be partners in this project – schools who will embrace the general principle that learning a musical instrument and playing together with others benefits young people’s rounded development, education, social skills and character. 16 days of instrumental teaching will be available to schools each week, 34 weeks a year during the 2 year Stage 2 phase, fully funded. Schools will need to create space in their timetables for students to learn music during the school day and offer a space where music can take place. After the two year pilot project it is hoped that the programme will turn into a rolling 2 year masters degree, with a fresh intake of trainee teachers continuing the work in the same schools or handing on to other teachers to continue delivery.

To set the project off with a burst of activity, there will be a purely music procession (the first ever) at Penzance’s Golowan festival on 27th June 2020, where schools in the region will be supported in developing a mixed-ability performance to highlight the power of music to inspire young people – a single piece of music performed by hundreds of young people and community music groups. We want many hundreds of people to be involved in creating this piece of music which we are jokingly calling ‘the longest piece of music in the world’ due to the length of the performers rather than the time it takes! (Golowan is asking that participating schools also agree to take part in whichever of the regular Mazey Day schools’ parades that they are allocated to.)

Next steps At this stage I’d like to hear feedback from head teachers to gauge the potential level of take up for both the 2 year **Up Bow Kernow!** project and the Mazey Day music parade. I’d be very happy to come along to a meeting of school heads to present this plan directly, or you may think it more appropriate to approach schools individually.

As you can imagine, this is a big project involving a large number of stakeholders and is dependent on funding. Step 1 is being funded by ABRSM (the exam board of the Royal Schools of Music) and Cornwall Music Education Hub and significant stakeholders include Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and Cornwall Music Service Trust.

Step 2 requires substantial funding and we are hoping this will be secured in early spring 2020 at which time the project will be confirmed.

I would value your advice on how to bring schools on board with this exciting initiative and I look forward to hearing from you.

With regards,



Tim Boulton