

ACTIVE MUSIC SERVICES

CLOSURE STATEMENT FOR PETITION COMMITTEE

The 2,224 signatories to this petition are calling on the Welsh Government to act swiftly in providing a National Plan with a ring fenced budget for all pupils across the whole of Wales that will continue to provide the entitlement to free music tuition as a core subject to the age of 14 and beyond in order to underpin the important heritage, access and financial support so that ALL pupils continue to have the equal opportunity of reaching the standard required to participate in the National Youth Orchestra and Choir and beyond.

A Senydd debate involving all AMs is required urgently to obtain a clear picture of the current unacceptable situation.

The National Youth Orchestra of Wales was set up in 1945 and was the first in the world. It has since then, along with the National Youth Choir, provided equal opportunities and a first-class training experience for Wales' young musicians. Today due to numerous factors there is a serious decline in young musicians reaching the level required to participate musically or financially in these organisations.

For the last five years stakeholders and specialists have been providing the Welsh Government with information regarding the lack of a National Plan for Music and sustainable funding. The outcome being that several music services are being reduced, closed, teachers made redundant or forced to be self employed. England, Scotland and Northern Ireland all have a plan or strategy with funding as Wales continues to rely on goodwill to sustain its heritage.

Last July, following the launch of HITTING THE RIGHT NOTE by the WG Cultural Committee the Secretary for Education Kirsty Williams announced that a Feasibility Study would be produced within six months. By February 2019 this had not materialised and a Co-operative Consultancy has only just been appointed to produce a report sometime in the future.

After much pressure on the Government to release funding put aside for music the decline has been temporarily stemmed with a limited short term budget but with further redundancies announced on 17.5.19 the future situation remains bleak and unresolved.

