

MUSICAL PROGRESSION IN ENFIELD

A report for Roundhouse produced by

WIRED4MUSIC

The music council for young Londoners hosted by Sound Connections

About the team



Roundhouse is a legendary cultural venue in Camden, offering year-round projects for 11-25 year olds interested in music, theatre, spoken word, circus, broadcast and new media. Young people are at the heart of everything we do. Roundhouse is also an Arts Council Associate Bridge Organisation, working to connect the cultural offer for young people in north London.



Sound Connections is a leading music organisation that empowers young people and those who work with them by developing innovative programmes, developing the workforce, and carrying out research and advocacy to create change through music.



Wired4Music is the music council for young Londoners hosted by Sound Connections. We have recently initiated the Wired4Music Manifesto, a groundbreaking campaign that celebrates everything that is great about music in London, and tackles the challenges that prevent some young people from fulfilling their musical dreams.

Partners

We worked closely with Enfield Music Service, Enfield Youth Support Service, Chase Community School and Palmers' Green School for Girls. Our thanks to all the young people and staff who took part.

INTRODUCTION

In November 2013, Roundhouse and Wired4Music came together to consult young people aged 16-25 across the London Borough of Enfield. We wanted to find out about young people's musical journeys, what opportunities they have to make music and what they want in the future.

AIMS

The aims of the project were:

- To amplify the voices of Enfield's young people in pan-London conversations about the future of music education, training and opportunities.
- To find out more about what Enfield young people currently know about the opportunities available; what opportunities they think are missing and to initiate a forum for active discussion between Enfield young people and industry professionals.

We designed a consultation to enable Enfield's young people to:

- meet experienced leaders from the creative industries
- discuss career pathways and opportunities to progress
- discover creative opportunities available in Enfield and across London
- feed their view into a London-wide conversation about the future of music for young people

FORMAT

The consultation project took place over four sessions. We met in three small groups, and then brought all three groups together for a final sharing event. Wired4Music staff members and young leaders co-facilitated the sessions, and each session featured a special guest from the music industry.

Initial group sessions

Session One: we met with six young representatives from Enfield Music Service and the Head of Enfield Music Service at the Dugdale Centre. We were joined by guest musician Stuart King, Associate Director of CHROMA, an acclaimed contemporary chamber group who also mentors and teaches music students at Trinity Laban, Royal Holloway University of London and Highgate School.

Session Two: we met with twelve young musicians from Enfield Youth Support Service and their workers at The Red Room in Ponders End Youth Centre. We were joined by Spider, a Roundhouse Trustee and Artist Tutor who has played with the likes of Prince and Lee Scratch Perry.

Session Three: we met with ten students from Chace Community School and Palmer's Green School for Girls, hosted by Chace's careers coordinator. We were joined by Tony Nwachukwu, musical entrepreneur, lecturer at South Bank University and a trustee of Sound Connections.

During the sessions, we explored each of the young participants' **musical journeys**. After hearing the stories of our inspiring guest musicians, we asked the young people to reflect on:

- where they started their own musical journeys
- the point when they decided that music was important to them
- where they are now, and
- where they hope to go in the future.

After exploring their journeys we asked the participants to reflect on **musical opportunities** that they had taken part in, that were missing and that they would like in the future. We talked about opportunities both in Enfield and beyond.

Final session: bringing it all together

All three groups converged at The Red Room at Ponders End Youth Centre for a final session. The aim of the session was to feed back the findings from the first three focus groups, giving participants the opportunity to hear the journeys and perspectives of other groups, leading to the creation of a **musical wish-list** for Enfield. During and after the session, the young people had opportunities to network with their peers and try out the musical facilities available at The Red Room.



FINDINGS: WHAT YOU SAID

We heard a diverse range of experiences and perspectives from the thirty young people who took part in the consultation. It was clear that the groups are very passionate about music-making and being creative. But the groups had also had very different experiences to each other, and even within a group, musical journeys varied widely.

WHAT DO YOU CELEBRATE?











Opportunities

Participants reported a diverse range of musical opportunities in Enfield:






-  Performing
-  Going to gigs
-  Socialising
-  Listening to music
-  Learning new things
-  Meeting tutors
-  Meeting music professionals
-  Doing qualifications (A Level, BTEC)
-  Accessing free/low cost opportunities
-  Visits abroad

Spaces

Young people reported a variety of musical activities and spaces in Enfield including:

-  Enfield Music Service Saturday Centre
-  Enfield Youth Wind Band
-  Enfield Youth Symphony Orchestra
-  Enfield Jazz Orchestra
-  The Red Room
-  Dugdale Arts Centre
-  Millfield Theatre
-  Unity Hub
-  Local churches and venues
-  Commercial recording studios

Participants also discussed opportunities and venues outside the borough including:

-  Events at Roundhouse
-  Event at Hackney Empire
-  The Big Busk
-  Performing at Waltham Abbey
-  Musical tour in Tuscany, Italy.

“The music world is so big and so small at the same time.”

People

Participants had a lot to say about the people that they make music with in Enfield. Each of the three groups cited specific individuals who influenced their musical journeys:

“Some music staff members go above and beyond”

“You can tell that they really care”

“They give 150% for all of us.”

This can extend beyond standard commitments. One participant cherishes a particular teacher who allows him to *“practice in the music room even when I’m not supposed to be there”* and another remembers a time her music tutor helped her with her maths homework.

Many participant responses pointed to a social environment that allows them to thrive:

*“The inclusive environment make us feel accepted
– like we’re part of a creative community.”*

“We may be different but we all have music in common.”

The young people also valued the times when they have been able to take the lead and make decisions themselves:

*“if we want to do something (our teacher) will do whatever they can to
make sure that we are able to do it.”*

“We wanted to paint the walls red... and now it’s called The Red Room.”

*“We need something like this...
a platform where people ask what young people want.”*

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

There is a wealth of opportunities in Enfield to make music and progress creatively. But there were some areas where participants saw challenges and opportunities for improvement. These included:

Networking and professional development

Young people want more opportunities to meet, network and collaborate. Whilst there are opportunities through Enfield music hub, Enfield Youth Support Service and schools, it was felt that there should be more chances to meet other groups of musical young people. Other life pressures were also seen as a challenge.

"Enfield can sometimes feel like a bubble, and it can feel like there are bubbles within the bubble."

"Time, stress and academic commitments are a challenge and drain time and energy."

"We want opportunities to collaborate – to perform for and with each other and to meet new people."

"We want peer mentor relationships... it's nice to be able to learn things from each other...we want training and work experience"

"We need professional links to the creative industries"

Communication

Young people felt that communication about musical opportunities could be clearer. During one session, a Chace School student responded to a Palmer's Green student about a summer festival the latter take part in each year: *"If you never came to this session, we might never have heard of it."*

"I think things are out there, but sometimes they're really hidden away"

"Sometimes you don't hear about opportunities until they've happened"

In another session, a participant of Enfield Music Service stated: *"I'd like to see music production courses and access to technology"*, whilst participants from Enfield Youth Support Service commented: *"It's all here (at The Red Room), and it's free for us to use!"* It was therefore felt that some opportunities were being missed and that communication could be improved across the borough.

Performances

Young people want more opportunities to perform in the borough and beyond. This includes access to high quality professional spaces such as Dugdale Arts Centre and Millfield Theatre, as well as central venues like Roundhouse. They also want to get involved with other artforms and behind the scenes roles including dance, media, events management and technical roles such as sound engineering.

"We want more opportunities to perform across Enfield and all of London."

"It's not just about music, we're into dance, journalism, events, sound engineering, video production..."

"Narrow age limits on performance opportunities can sometimes exclude us."



RECOMMENDATIONS: WHAT YOU WANT

The consultation sparked lots of creative ideas and ambitious solutions. During the final session these were shared and debated amongst the groups.

Thr three groups discussed potential next steps and outcomes they would like to see happening in the borough and beyond. These were then put to a vote to find the most popular suggestions. The results were:

- 🗳️ **An app** – it was felt that the development of an Enfield music app would help alert young people to a range of opportunities. 🗳️ 13
- 🗳️ **An ambassador network** – participants suggested a network of young ambassadors representing schools, music groups and youth centres. The ambassadors would share musical opportunities, organise events and gigs and help shape music activities. 🗳️ 8
- 🗳️ **Networking events with peers industry professionals** – more events that bring musicians together and opportunities to meet inspiring artists from the wider creative industries. 🗳️ 5
- 🗳️ **A web-based “portal” for opportunities** – participants described an online platform where organisations could share and post opportunities. 🗳️ 2
- 🗳️ **Signposting, flyer and publicity** – young people discussed the need for increased visibility of local events, and suggested more flyers and signposting. 🗳️ 0

SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

This consultation provided a unique opportunity for young musicians in Enfield to come together, share their experiences and start a conversation about the future of music in the borough.

The process provided a platform for young people to reflect on their personal journeys and the opportunities that have shaped their musical experiences. Whilst these varied greatly from person to person, it was clear that a culture of music runs deep in Enfield.

This was also an opportunity to have a say about music provision in the borough. Through participatory activities and discussions, young people were empowered to voice the issues that are most important to them to key decision-makers from Enfield Music Service, Enfield Youth Support Service, Sound Connections and Roundhouse. This led to a lively conversation about the musical landscape in Enfield, and the wider offer in London.

Since the consultation, young representatives from Enfield have joined the Wired4Music council and contributed to the London-wide Wired4Music Manifesto campaign. Roundhouse will use the young people's recommendations to shape new initiatives and bring new investment to the borough through its role as an Arts Council Associate Bridge Organisation. Enfield partners have met to discuss next steps about how to create more opportunities which give young people the chance to influence the services available to them in the borough.

We look forward to seeing young musicians come together more over the coming year to build a brighter musical future for all young people in the Enfield.

Find out more about Roundhouse:
www.roundhouse.org.uk

Find out more about Wired4Music and endorse the manifesto:
www.wired4music.co.uk



This consultation was developed and devised by Roundhouse, an Associate Bridge Organisation for Arts Council in London and Wired4Music, the music council for young Londoners hosted by Sound Connections. Please contact us to discuss your youth participation, consultation and progression needs:

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