



**\*\* 12 September 2011 – for immediate release \*\***

## **ABO URGES END TO MUSIC EDUCATION “UNCERTAINTY”**

### **PARTY CONFERENCES TO HEAR HOW CREATIVITY IS CRUCIAL TO ECONOMIC GROWTH**

The Association of British Orchestras (ABO) heads to Party Conferences this month with a clear message to politicians to end the “uncertainty” over music education funding, arguing that music, and creativity more widely, are essential to the creative economy and the future jobs of many thousands of young people across the UK.

The call will be made at the Liberal Democrat, Labour and Conservative Party Conferences, at events with speakers including **Darren Henley**, author of the Government-commissioned report, Music Education in England, **Ivan Lewis MP**, **Simon Hughes MP** and **John Smith** of the Musicians’ Union.

The Party Conferences come ahead of the publication of the National Plan for Music Education this autumn which will take forward Darren Henley’s report. £82.5 million has been allocated for music education in schools this financial year, but only runs to April 2012 leaving music services and colleges in the dark over funding beyond this date. The ABO will say that the National Plan for Music Education must provide a firm funding platform to put music at the heart of young people’s learning.

Current figures show:

- Local Authorities receive £82.5 million of annual funding from the Department for Education to ensure that music services are delivered across the schools in their area<sup>1</sup>
- In addition to the central government funding for Music Education, a further £22.3 million is contributed by Local Authorities<sup>2</sup>
- The total amount spent on Music Education programmes by Arts Council England funded organisations is £17.6 million<sup>3</sup>
- 472,805 under 18s were able to experience a live concert, or engaged in outreach or education activity<sup>4</sup>

The fringe event at the Liberal Democrat Party Conference will look at higher education and the music industry. The Conference is also due to debate a motion from Education Spokesperson, Baroness Walmsley, for an Education Credit for “additional support for the music education programme in schools”, targeted at children from poorer backgrounds.

At the Labour Party Conference, the ABO’s fringe event held at Tate Liverpool will focus on cultural education, employment and growth – looking at music education provision from primary school through to higher and further education.

And at the Conservative Party Conference in Manchester, the fringe event debate will be chaired by the Incorporated Society of Musicians’ Chief Executive Deborah Annetts, and will centre on questions including ‘will music form part of the new national curriculum?’, ‘what is the intrinsic value of music in today’s society?’ and ‘what is music education for?’.

Mark Pemberton, Director of the ABO, said today:

“The place of arts and creativity in our economy is increasingly important, and music education gives children and young people routes into employment and many of the skills they need to survive in the jobs market place.

“The present and previous government have recognised the importance of providing music education opportunities for all young people. We now want to see a solid foundation for the future which will enable the UK to plan for excellence and access in the years ahead.”

**E n d s**

---

<sup>1</sup> **Music Education in England** - A Review by Darren Henley for the Department for Education and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport

<sup>2</sup> **Ibid.**

<sup>3</sup> **Ibid.**

<sup>4</sup> **ABO Key Facts 2011**

## **Notes to editors:**

For more information, details of the Fringe events and interviews or quotes from the ABO, please contact: Melissa Milner [melissa@dhacomunications.co.uk](mailto:melissa@dhacomunications.co.uk) 020 7793 4035 / 07976 636 228

## **ABO Fringe Events at the 2011 Party Conferences**

### **LIB DEM PARTY CONFERENCE in association with CBSO/BCMG**

#### ***Britain's Got Talent? Higher Education and the music industry***

Monday 19 September, 1pm

CBSO Centre, Berkley Street, Birmingham B1 2LF

**Speakers:** Stephen Maddock, CBSO (chair); Simon Hughes MP, Advocate for Access to Higher Education; Darren Henley, Managing Director, Classic FM; Dan Howard, Birmingham City University; Ian Grosvenor, University of Birmingham; Louise Teboul, Common Purpose.

### **LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE in association with LARC**

#### ***Creative Futures: cultural education, employment and growth***

Sunday 25 September 2011, 6.15pm

Tate Liverpool

**Speakers:** Darren Henley, Classic FM (chair); Ivan Lewis MP; John Smith, General Secretary, Musicians Union; Michael Eakin, Liverpool Philharmonic; Sue Williams, Bluecoat

### **CONSERVATIVE PARTY CONFERENCE in association with the Hallé**

#### ***Musical Future: Music education and its role in the personal development of children and young people***

Monday 3 October, 6.30pm

Barbirolli Room, Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

**Speakers:** Deborah Annetts, Chief Executive of the Incorporated Society of Musicians (chair); John Summers, Chief Executive, the Hallé; Jonathan Evans, MP; Jane Hampson, Business and Development Manager - Enjoy and Achieve, Bolton Council; Darren Henley, Managing Director, Classic FM