

30 March 2011

In response to today's Arts Council funding decisions, Mark Pemberton, Director of the Association of British Orchestras, said:

“Today’s announcement that all orchestras, ballet and opera companies who were previously supported by Arts Council England will have their funding renewed is a welcome show of confidence in the sector. And with three additional chamber orchestras also securing funding, this is clear recognition of the excellence of the work orchestras do on the concert stage, in schools and in communities across the country. The Association of British Orchestras has consistently made the case for sustained public investment in orchestras, to allow them to innovate, and to be creative in attracting new audiences and new investment from other sources, and today’s announcement shows that this has been understood. Of course we recognise that the financial situation will remain extremely tough for many orchestras and other arts forms. It will therefore be crucial that orchestras continue to build partnerships with other art forms and institutions.

“At the same time, the ABO itself is disappointed that the reduction in resources available to Arts Council England along with the pressure to prioritise front line services has resulted in its own funding being cut and a significant reduction in the funding of Orchestras Live. The role of a strong infrastructure to support the front line cannot be overestimated, and the ABO has long been the centre for shared learning, advocacy and advice for the UK’s professional orchestras. This role will be even more vital as orchestras continue to seek alternative sources of income and forge new partnerships. We will be doing all we can to continue this work and will also be collaborating closely with the Musicians’ Union to help orchestras manage the transition.”

Ends.

For further comment, please contact Melissa Milner:
melissa@dhacommunications.co.uk 020 7793 4035 / 07976 636 228