

Date: Tuesday 5 October, 12.45-2pm (Lunch included)
Location: CBSO Centre, Berkley Street, Birmingham, B1 2LF

Cut too deep and you'll lose so much, orchestras warn ministers

- **Birmingham fringe event to show that big cuts in public funding will affect orchestras' artistic integrity alongside their vital contribution to communities and the economy**
- **New report reveals orchestras are raising significant income, but public investment is essential for high quality, accessible music to be sustained**

British orchestras will tell Minister for Culture Ed Vaizey MP that if cuts to public funding are made too deep and too quickly, they risk serious damage to the government's aim to engage people in culture and within their communities - and will jeopardise the capacity of orchestras to sustain themselves.

At a fringe event, to be held at CBSO Centre during the Conservative Party conference, orchestras will describe how the significant contribution they make to communities up and down the country and their ability to put on exceptional performances enjoyed by millions of people each year will both be at risk if public investment falls too far.

Minister Ed Vaizey MP will attend the event, which is jointly hosted by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and the Association of British Orchestras (ABO), in partnership with leading supporter of CBSO, Barclays Wealth.

The Minister will be shown how orchestras are generating significant revenues from donations, ticket sales and commercial activities. Nationally, for every pound of public investment, British orchestras leverage another two pounds, but for many orchestras this is only possible with the foundation of solid funding from Arts Councils and local authorities. And in Birmingham, cultural organisations contribute £271m to the region's economy each year, a return on investment of £29 for every £1 that Birmingham City Council spends on funding the arts.

Stephen Maddock, Chief Executive of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, who will be jointly hosting the event, said:

"Orchestras and other cultural organisations have a vital role to play in enhancing connections across different communities, broadening horizons, and improving the quality of life in local areas and city centres. We believe that in Birmingham the work done by CBSO, Symphony Hall, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, Birmingham Royal Ballet, the mac and the Birmingham Rep makes a huge contribution to what has become known as the Big Society.

"This has only been possible thanks to public subsidy and deep collaboration between the local authority and its cultural partners, and also through a sustained and entrepreneurial approach to generating income. While we would welcome measures that increase philanthropy, we need to be realistic that this can't be our only source of funding. The level of private investment in the arts in the Midlands is only £19m which is just 3% of the total for the UK. So we want to use this event to have an open and pragmatic conversation about how we could work with the government and our public funders to stimulate private investment in the regions."

Mark Pemberton, Director of the ABO, who will speak at the event said:

"No-one within the orchestra sector believes they have any divine right to funding, but what we are saying is too deep a cut in any of our income streams - and in particular in public funding - will impact on an orchestra's ability to earn additional revenue. If they don't sustain the quality of their output, then they won't be invited on international tours, or be offered lucrative recording deals. And they may find it much more difficult to attract private donors and local corporate supporters, particularly with the decline in the number of businesses that have their headquarters in regional cities. It's potentially a dangerous and damaging cycle."

The event will also see the launch of a new report on orchestral funding in the UK, which will be published by the Association of British Orchestras. **A Sound Investment: The mixed economy model of UK orchestras** shows that while British orchestras large and small are world leaders in performance, education work, and developing new talent, and are having a huge impact on communities up and down the country, their work relies on sustaining a delicately balanced funding model, a combination of public and private investment, alongside self-generated income.

The Report shows:

- How orchestras use the public investment they receive to lever in significantly more resources from other sectors.
- How orchestras work with private givers - individuals, charitable trusts and businesses - to innovate, reach out to new audiences and showcase world class musicians and performances.
- How orchestras are earning income for themselves from ticket sales, recordings, international touring and other commercial partnerships to ensure the widest possible audience gets the chance to experience music at its best.

Launching *A Sound Investment: The mixed economy model of UK orchestras*, Mark Pemberton, said:

"Our report shows that while private funding is vitally important - and orchestras have a strong track record in attracting it - it cannot be a replacement for public subsidy. The success of our orchestras relies on all three funding streams working together. And often it's the public subsidy that allows orchestras to plan ahead, develop partnerships and leverage funds from other sources."

A Sound Investment: The mixed economy model of UK orchestras highlights case studies of orchestras across the UK, showing how they respond to local need and strive to make the biggest contribution they can to the cultural, social and economic life of their locality and the wider nation.

-ENDS-

For further information and images please visit our website www.cbso.co.uk or contact: Ruth Green, Communications Manager on: 021 616 6511 or: rgreen@cbso.co.uk

Notes to the Editor

1. To attend the event or to speak to Stephen Maddock at CBSO, please contact the above.
2. For a copy of **A Sound Investment: The mixed economy model of UK orchestras** or to speak to Mark Pemberton please call Melissa Milner at DHA Communications on 020 7793 4035 or 07976 636 228