



Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust

Inspire • Nurture • Excel

Changing lives of children and young people, through music and the arts...

Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust (NMPAT), is a cultural asset that has been enabling music and artistic education opportunities for children and young people, within the county, for over fifty five years. NMPAT currently maintains 26 county ensembles - orchestras, brass, wind and jazz bands, choirs, chamber ensembles, world music groups and a Youth Theatre; 9 Saturday morning music and arts Centres, with an open access policy to enable any student to gain first experiences; NMPAT Contemporary enables students to join with others to form bands and perform; the Trust maintains educational contact with nearly every state school in the county and many private establishments, tertiary colleges and Early Years settings.

Last year, NMPAT enabled over 56,000 children, in Northamptonshire, to experience music making; nearly every primary school hosted a First Access project, with every child in a year group having opportunities to play a musical instrument, or have tuition. There are currently almost 900 participants in auditioned county music groups, travelling from across the county and rehearsing weekly at the Kettering Road Music and Arts Centre, and our senior music groups are highly regarded nationally and are among the most successful in the country.



*NMPAT County Youth Concert Band, Music for Youth Proms, Royal Albert Hall, November 2024*

NMPAT is the lead partner of the Music Hub for North Northamptonshire, West Northamptonshire and Rutland. As such, NMPAT continues to deliver the promises of the Government's National Plan for Music Education, "to enable all children and young people to learn to sing, play an instrument and create music together, and have the opportunity to progress their musical interests and talents, including professionally." (*The Power of Music to Change Lives: A National Plan for Music Education*,

HM Government, 2022) as well as contributing to Arts Council England's outcome for Creative People, that "everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life".

Having been established first as a Local Authority Music Service, originally known as Northampton Music School and now, since 2012, an independent charitable company, NMPAT celebrated fifty years of countywide music making, throughout 2019. With the change and division of local authority areas, to North Northamptonshire and West Northamptonshire, in 2021, NMPAT continues to provide services throughout the historic county of Northamptonshire. Northamptonshire Music Education Hub is now a Multi-Authority Hub, serving the two Northamptonshire unitary authorities and Rutland.

NMPAT's extensive programme enables many opportunities for young people and others to participate in regular workshop, rehearsal, tutoring and practice sessions. Over 1,000 people, each week, participate in music making on site at the central Kettering Road Music and Arts Centre – including many having individual lessons. The Young Actors Company and Youth Theatre meet here weekly to explore aspects of drama and theatre – and present several productions a year, as well as encouraging students to write their own material. There has been an Early Years programme here for over thirty years, relaunched, post COVID, in September 2021 as "Little Stars", with grant support from Youth Music, this programme provides opportunities for 0 to 7 year olds. Now, many members of our senior County Groups, began their NMPAT journey as a member of one of the baby classes! There is also a Community Choir, currently with members aged 18 to 80+.



*NMPAT's Kettering Road Music and Arts Centre*

NMPAT's Kettering Road Music and Arts Centre sits in the heart of Northampton and is central within Northamptonshire. This location, combined with good road links, enables NMPAT to ensure that its wealth of services reach all of the schools and children of the county equally and fairly. The site itself was formerly the John Clare Elementary School, but has been the home to the Music Service since the mid 1970s. Still known locally as the Northampton Music School, the Kettering Road Music and Arts Centre has a very special place in the hearts of many former students who remember it fondly as a place where they could share musical experiences and make friends with like-minded individuals. The original school was also attended by three famous musical alumni: composers Edmund Rubbra and William Alwyn and, during the war, Des O'Connor was a pupil as an evacuee.



*Guitarstravaganza, February 2025*

There are regularly over 200 people participating each week as part of the community groups who also use the Kettering Road building. The venue is the host to four weekly rehearsals – Northampton Symphony Orchestra, Northampton String Orchestra, Northampton Concert Band and Abington Wind Band - and as an examination centre for ABRSM, and Trinity (including Rock and Pop).

NMPAT's regional Music and Arts Centres, which meet on Saturday mornings, are located around the county in areas including Brackley, Daventry, Duston, Kettering, Oundle, Towcester and Wellingborough. These Centres are open access and everyone is welcome whether they have an existing musical skill or are looking to develop

new interests. Some Centres welcome adults to join in groups and ensembles, and some have specific classes for adult members. NMPAT's dedicated Y-Not Arts Centre for students with Special



Educational Needs is unique in Northampton and within the country - it provides a music and theatre experience for students normally excluded from this sort of extension activity. There are currently approximately 800 members of these local centres, throughout the county.

NMPAT has built a national reputation for the quality and consistency of its provision and alumni can be found in nearly every conservatoire and professional orchestra in the country.

In 2024, NMPAT enabled over 150 concerts and events, within the county and beyond – in venues including Derngate, Northampton; Birmingham’s Symphony Hall, the Royal Albert Hall, London; and innumerable invitations to provide music for community, civic and private functions. Many of the groups are regular visitors to the Music for Youth National Festival and award winners at the National Concert Band Festival. Northamptonshire has always had a proud reputation for the quality of its top youth music ensembles, which are widely recognised as amongst the best in the country. The County Youth Concert Band is recognised as the most consistently successful youth music group in the country, with over 50 top performance awards to its name.



*County Youth Orchestra, Spain tour, July 2024*

One or more of the senior County Ensembles tours abroad each year, usually to Europe, to represent the county in a series of concerts. In the summer of 2024, the members of the County Youth Orchestra and County Youth Choir represented Northamptonshire on a concert tour to the Aragon region of Spain, immersing both ensembles in a unique blend of music and culture. Plans are in place for summer 2025, for the County Youth Concert Band (CYCB) and County Youth Brass Band (CYBB) to undertake a concert tour to Germany in July. Based in Leipzig, concerts are proposed to take place in the Jurhaus in Bad Schmiedeberg, Johannische Kirche in Blankensee, Halbertstadt Cathedral and the Frauenkirche in Gimma.

In addition to the provision of instrumental lessons and ensemble opportunities, NMPAT supports music in schools through the retention of a live music programme, with four recital teams providing fully funded performances in schools. There is also support for curriculum colleagues, with consultancy and training for subject specialists and an annual Music Education conference, drawing national figures to the county.

NMPAT has an established Musical Inclusion programme, supported for over 10 years by project grant funding from Youth Music, which delivers with and for some of our hard to reach communities. This programme engages with children and young people facing challenging circumstances, including: looked-after children, children with additional needs, young carers, children at risk of exclusion, those attending pupil referral units, and refugees. Project working has included collaboration and delivery with Northamptonshire Carers, On Track Education, and local authority agencies (e.g. support for looked-after children). Much of this programme delivers with and



*Y-Not Arts, Jack (and Jill) and the beanstalk, December 2024*



*Octubafest, 2024*

for participants that would not otherwise have access to participatory music making or arts activity and these activities are targeted to benefit communities and individuals within the county that face social or economic problems, including families.

NMPAT's Reach the Stars is a fully grant funded programme delivering bespoke music education activity, with and for children and young people with additional needs, supporting special schools and Designated Special Provision units throughout Northamptonshire, launched in 2017. Reach the Stars works to

advance the equality of opportunity for young people to participate and engage through practical music making activities, by providing bespoke delivery and resources which are appropriate for individuals with additional needs, including those with SEND (special educational needs and / or disability) and PMLD (profound multiple learning disabilities).

More recently we have established Musical Stars, an out of school weekly programme also for children and young people with additional needs. Initial support was provided by the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation, Postcode Community Trust and the Masonic Charitable Foundation.

To support those in financial need NMPAT provides access to bursaries, to support the cost of individual lessons. These are awarded by audition and recommendation from teachers and administered by the Gordon Robinson Memorial Trust. There is also support, for those in need, with the cost of residential courses, tours and coach travel, also funded by the Gordon Robinson Memorial Trust. For membership subscriptions of County Ensembles and Saturday Centres there is a remission programme for students whose parents are in receipt of state benefits, and discretionary reductions and subsidies for families facing financial difficulties. In the last year NMPAT provided access to



*NYPE, March 2025*

support equivalent to over £40,000 for young people, via our fee remission programme, for those that would not otherwise access opportunities - now is a time that our young people need this support, more than ever.

As lead partner in the Northamptonshire and Rutland Music Hub, NMPAT works with a range of partners to deliver the promises of the Hub to the children and young people of the county. Local and national music education providers, commercial organisations, community music groups and the schools and colleges of the county combine to provide a rich music education environment. Partners include Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal and Derngate, Orchestras Live, Music for Youth, ABRSM and Trinity.

NMPAT's activities serve a broad range of people – participants and audiences, artists and musicians. Music and the arts – NMPAT's activities – have the power to transform the lives of the people participating in their delivery. The NMPAT core values are to inspire, nurture and excel; delivering music and artistic opportunities for children, young people and communities of Northamptonshire and Rutland, and the Trust contributes significantly to the overall experiences of living, working in and visiting the counties.





NMPAT is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The charitable objects of NMPAT are to:

- Advance education within the framework of the arts for the benefit of the public of Northamptonshire and elsewhere.
- Advance the arts and culture for the benefit of the public, particularly, but not exclusively, by promoting and facilitating access to and performances of music and other arts forms.
- Provide for the recreation of children, young people and adults for the benefit of the public by providing facilities and services to them in the interests of social welfare with the object of improving conditions of life.

NMPAT's financial resources are essentially drawn from four core sources: earned income in the form of sales for services to schools and sales to parents, combined, generally account for approaching 70% of annual turnover; National Music Grant from the Department for Education, distributed through Arts Council England provides 20% of turnover; grant income from trusts, foundations and similar is achieved for discrete project delivery; and income is achieved in the form of individual donations and related gift aid. Overall income, in the year ending August 2024 (including these grant sources) remained at £5.4m.

As an independent charity NMPAT receives no income from the local authority. In 2012, with the encouragement and support of Northamptonshire County Council, the functions and assets of the former local authority service were transferred to NMPAT. It was particularly hoped that the move to independent status will preserve the rich heritage of music making, of which the county has been so proud. The transfer of assets includes the Kettering Road site which is owned and maintained by NMPAT.

Music Education Hubs were also introduced in 2012. As the lead partner NMPAT currently benefits from grant support from the National Music Grant, distributed by Arts Council England, of over £1.1m in 2024 – 2025. Currently this relationship is confirmed to end August 2025.

Grant support is sought and achieved, enabling project delivery. Recent successes have included support secured from the Constance Travis Charitable Trust (£60,000 in 2025), Northamptonshire Community Foundation (£10,000), and the Frederick and Phyllis Cann Charitable Trust (£5,000). Such funds continue to be sought from trusts, foundations and other similar bodies for a wide range of project initiatives, including capital requirements (£50,000 secured from the SUEZ Community Trust, £10,000 from the Eric Stanton Northampton Trust). This funding for projects relates to the specific direct operating costs associated with related project delivery, and depends upon NMPAT committing core resources to underpin and enable project delivery.

NMPAT has always benefitted from corporate relationships with a number of local businesses. These relationships have the potential to provide both support in kind and some financial support for activities. NMPAT continues to seek to develop a range of sponsorship opportunities and to develop and grow this income strand over time. Practice diaries for all school based pupils have been supported by one of the hub's commercial partners, which also entitles students to a 10% discount off of music purchases made with the partner.

NMPAT retains a stock of some 10,000 musical instruments built up over a period of time, which support young people in their studies. This stock includes a considerable number of instruments that are provided free of charge for First Access programmes and for students beginning their studies, enabling individuals to take their first musical steps without the need to purchase an instrument.

There are also a small number of specialist and high value instruments – such as soprano cornets, contrabass clarinets and string basses – which can be provided for students in senior County Ensembles, providing access to appropriate instruments to support and enhance their skills development. Instruments range from whole class sets of beginner instruments to high quality bassoons, tubas and double basses as well as pianos, harps and four complete sets of orchestral percussion. However, this stock requires considerable annual expenditure to maintain instruments (c.£24,000 in 2023 - 2024). There is an ever increasing imperative to address the need for resources to enable continual maintenance and ongoing purchase of appropriate instruments for young people, allowing NMPAT to empower these young people in progressing their studies and fulfilling potential.

NMPAT is managed by voluntary trustees (who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the companies act). These trustees offer their existing skills, knowledge and expertise on a voluntary basis in support of NMPAT. The day to day operational activity is delegated to the Chief Executive and a team of senior staff. NMPAT employs a work force of over 200 employees: teachers, tutors, student helpers, clerical staff, site supervisors and cleaners. This team has enabled it to establish the organisation as one of the strongest and most highly regarded providers of music services in the country.

NMPAT is audited annually – the most recent Trustees' Report and Financial Statements to 31 August 2024 can be viewed via NMPAT's website, [www.nmpat.co.uk](http://www.nmpat.co.uk)

There is an agreed need for NMPAT to ensure its resilience and sustainability in an environment that is seeing increasing pressure on support for the arts from public funding. There is an ever more compelling need to build our ability to raise funds through private means. Generating an uplift in support in the form of private giving – individuals, trusts, foundations, corporate bodies and other private groups – is a priority, to ensure future financial resilience.



*County Youth Brass Band, Music for Youth Regional Festival, March 2025*