

# MUSIC TO OUR EARS

DUNDEE MUSIC STRATEGY  
2017 - 2020



ABERTAY UNIVERSITY AND THE STUDENT CENTRE

ALMOST BLUE

ASPIRE DUNDEE

ASSAI RECORDS

BORN TO BE WIDE

BREATHE UNDERWATER MANAGEMENT

CAIRD HALL DUNDEE

CANTIONES SACRAE

CHILDRENS CLASSIC CONCERTS

CREATIVE DUNDEE

DISCOVERY POINT

DOWNFELD MUSICAL SOCIETY

DUNDEE ACOUSTIC MUSIC CLUB

DUNDEE CHAMBER MUSIC

DUNDEE & ANGUS COLLEGE

DUNDEE CITY BOX OFFICE

DUNDEE GAELIC CHOIR

DUNDEE HERITAGE TRUST

DUNDEE KINGS THEATRE TRUST

DUNDEE OPERATIC SOCIETY

DUNDEE REP

DUNDEE SCHOOLS INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC SERVICE

DUNDEE SCHOOLS MUSIC THEATRE

DUNDEE STRATHSPEY AND REEL SOCIETY

# DUNDEE MUSIC STRATEGY 2017 - 2020

This is Dundee's first Music Strategy. It is a strategy for a city whose vision is of a place where creativity and cultural richness supports the engagement, ambition, achievement and wellbeing of its citizens. It is a strategy which has grown out of a need to address issues within the music sector in our city and has a collective desire to do better for the people who live, work or visit the city and enjoy live music.

The strategy was led by Leisure & Culture Dundee and was prepared by Dundee's Place Partnership on behalf of the city. This is a shared strategy and it's only together that we can strengthen the sector and address the issues that music in Dundee is facing today.

**WE** are the musicians, venue owners, management companies, producers, record labels, promoters, community groups, technicians, teachers, tutors, record stores, cultural organisations and public sector organisations which believe in the power of music to improve lives.

**WE** are committed to playing our part in delivering this strategy's aim to make our entire city a better place to hear, perform and learn music.

# OVERVIEW

Dundee has always had a strong music scene and even with the challenges live music currently faces, Dundee's scene is still well regarded. Dundee's musicians are respected and their music is much enjoyed within the city, across Scotland and around the world.

Today, the music scene in Dundee is described as supportive and nurturing, often punching above its weight. There is still a wealth of live music in the city but in recent years the scene is reported to have been neglected, to have lost out on opportunities, and be suffering from a lack of smaller scale music venues in which musicians can experiment and develop. As such it has begun to fragment.

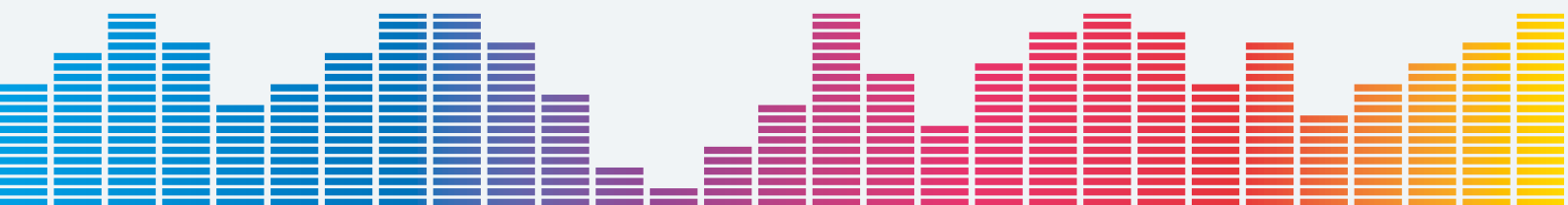
Dundee is a city which puts culture at its heart. Dundee's Cultural Strategy 2015 - 2025 sets out a shared purpose for the city. This is of a city which believes in the transformative power of culture to release and reveal the innate creativity of individuals and communities. Dundee's vision is of a city whose creativity and cultural richness supports the engagement, ambition, achievement and wellbeing of its citizens. The strategy outlines a commitment to ensure that Dundee is known as an international city of design and creativity, which leads cultural-driven regeneration with

creative sectors that are strong, collaborative and able to deliver the vision. Dundee's aim is to ensure that culture and creativity are contributors to, and key aspects of, Dundee's affluence and aspirations, and that as many people as possible can take advantage of an equality of opportunity to access cultural experiences.

Music is perhaps the most universal of all art forms – it is easily and extensively enjoyed and has always reflected the cultural diversity of our communities.

The city's cultural strategy and accompanying action plan focus on the city's cultural assets, it highlights music as one of the city's most powerful means of representing itself nationally and internationally as a culturally dynamic city as well as a very accessible means of promoting the cultural identity and values of Dundee. It identifies music as a conduit for many individuals to experience and participate in culture.

This document can be read alongside: Dundee's Cultural Strategy 2015 - 2025, section 2, Connected. Cultural Sector Blueprint 2017 - 2019; Dundee's Tourism Strategy 2016 - 2020 and the developing major events plan.



Dundee is a city  
that has strong  
musical roots and  
is always looking  
to the future.

# BACKGROUND

The last time a city-wide exercise was carried out for music was for the Dundee Music Audit in 2007. That audit highlighted a number of strengths particularly in live music festivals. Many of the issues which were highlighted during the 2016 consultation were raised 10 years ago for the Dundee Music Audit and remain as enduring challenges.

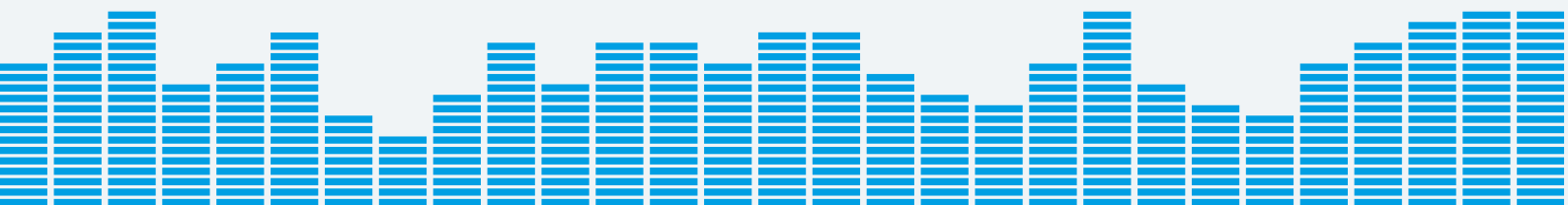
The Dundee Music Audit 2007 makes note of the profile generated by Radio 1's Big Weekend and encouraged the growth of that profile and energy to develop a large scale music festival in the city.

Strong music festivals of various scales were highlighted in the document as a key strength of the city. Yet those mentioned including Dundee Guitar Festival, Kill Your Timid Notion, Fest 'n' Furious and Dundee Blues Bonanza no longer take place.

In 2007 the need for investment in infrastructure and facilities was particularly focused around small to mid-sized venues, yet the ongoing demise of these venues across the city is lamented in the 2016 consultation, and the demand from musicians and audiences for investment grows. Other issues which also remain key concerns to the sector include:

- To raise the profile of different genres
- To create a music hub
- To develop the marketing and promotion of the Dundee music scene

The fact that recommendations from the Dundee Music Audit were not successfully addressed in the last 10 years should be noted and respected but must not be dwelled upon or used as a reason to presume that the commitments in this strategy will not be successful. Dundee is a different city 10 years on and has strengthened its position nationally and internationally as a city which puts culture at the heart of its regeneration.



The link between music, tourism and the economy is proven and the UK Music 2016 Measuring Music Report reports that the overall music tourism spend connected to concerts, gigs, recitals and music festivals in Scotland is £300m.

Dundee currently hosts several successful music festivals which are delivered locally including , Westfest, Almost Blue, Dundee Dance Event and Book Yer Ane Fest. These are in the most part genre specific and attract a proportion of their audiences from outwith the city. In 2016 these festivals reported visitors attending from across Scotland, the UK and as far afield as New Zealand and Canada.

Dundee enjoys a range of venues catering for small, mid and larger scale music events. These venues include a mixture of traditional theatre spaces, pubs and clubs, community spaces and dedicated live music venues. There is variety in the way in which these are operated and in their programming hosting a variety of musical styles and genres from professional musicians and amateur groups alike.

UK Music Chief Executive Jo Dipple notes that it is essential to have **'musicians to play in these venues and the composers and songwriters to make the music they play... young people need access to music lessons. They need to have music in schools.'**

To ensure the growth of a strong music scene in Dundee we must ensure that the pathways between schools or education programmes and playing in public is nurtured, supported and resourced to ensure that there are opportunities locally for our young people to become the best musicians they can be.

Dundee's Tourism Strategy makes specific mention of two key target markets for visitors to Dundee - The Curious Traveller and the Food Loving Culturalist. With ambitious plans to increase visitor numbers to Dundee in the coming years, it is essential to ensure that the live music scene in the city appeals to the target audience and complements the city's tourism offering. A strong live music scene, specifically located in and around the city centre can support the growth of tourism in Dundee. It can also thrive because of it. By ensuring that live music in Dundee is authentic yet accessible both sectors have much to gain.

There are a number of opportunities for young people to participate in music making and Dundee's commitment to music shines through in its excellent youth music provision. Across the city young people can access music through a combination of school-based and extra-curricular activity with free instrumental tuition, primary age music programme ASPIRE, intense holiday education programme Soundbase and the YMI programme at Gardyne Theatre. The city is also welcoming the addition of a Sistema programme in 2017.

National agencies and companies such as the National Youth Choir of Scotland, RSNO, Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Scottish Ensemble, all have a presence in the city and deliver or support educational programmes.

Dundee has exceptionally strong support for leisure-time musicians and music groups. Local organisations and companies such as Tayside Young Fiddlers, Dundee Symphony Orchestra, Dundee Choral Society, Dundee Chamber Music, Dundee Schools Music Theatre, RSNO Workplace Choir, and many more provide opportunities for professional and amateur musicians to play and perform across the city.



# 2016 CONSULTATION



In 2015/16 a group of interested individuals representing venues, promoters, musicians, the Performing Rights Society, Leisure & Culture Dundee, festivals and primary, secondary and tertiary education, met to progress the development of a Dundee Music Strategy. With the appointment of the Place Partnership team, officer support was allocated and it was agreed to undertake a period of consultation.

A survey (available on paper and online) was live for 12 weeks in early 2016. The response to the survey and level of engagement was a clear indicator of the significant level of interest in the future of music in the city. A total of 629 surveys were completed and submitted. There were also two events, one at The McManus Art Gallery & Museum in association with Wide Days which was attended by 52 people and one with a focus on classical, folk and instrumental music at The Caird Hall attended by 34 people. Both events were audio recorded.

Throughout the consultation process a wealth of information around the music scene in Dundee was willingly shared and offered by amateur and professional musicians, teachers, venues, promoters, community groups and audiences.

This sector engagement must be utilised and cared for to ensure the success of any initiatives proposed.

It is clear that there is a real passion for music in Dundee and that those involved in the industry care deeply about something which bodes well for the success of this strategy.





## CONSULTATION RESULTS

The survey asked respondents to initially identify if they make or are involved in the making of music. 71% of those completing the survey said they make or were involved in the making of music.

**‘I love music! And there’s so much happening on our doorsteps – I try to get out to music as much as I’m able.’**  
Survey participant.

People were quick to identify themselves as someone who likes to support local, live music. People have told us that they go to live music in Dundee because they want to support friends, family and extended networks.

The local music scene is described as vibrant and diverse. There is a real sense that Dundee has a welcoming scene which is supportive, inclusive and is determined to ensure that there are opportunities for people to play music.

The sense of support within the sector comes across in the survey results and comments. However, when pushed, less than 10% of the attendees at the Sound Of Dundee event had been to a live music event that wasn’t their own in the previous fortnight.

**‘There’s nothing like watching a good band performing a live set.’**  
Survey participant.

## AUDIENCES

**‘Better acts, in better venues, with a better selection of music’** Survey participant.

The survey asked respondents how often they attended live music in Dundee and in Scotland. Unsurprisingly, people were more likely to attend live music within the city on a more regular basis than outwith the city, but the reasons for attending music elsewhere in Scotland focused around better programming.

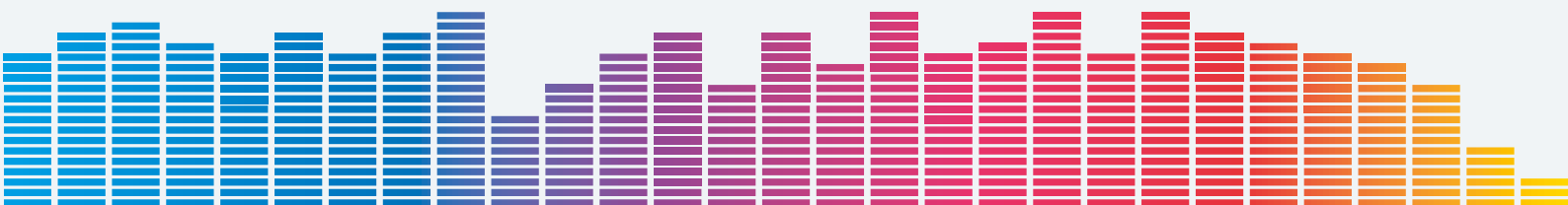
Audiences describe live music in Dundee as difficult to access information about, with comments particularly focused on poor marketing and the need to visit many different websites to find the information they are looking for.

There is a feeling amongst audiences that there is not much variety in music in the city, however musicians note that variety is one of the strengths of the local sector. This would appear to indicate that there is an issue around communicating what’s on and in reaching new audiences.

There is a real need to develop and grow audiences. Both musicians and venues are in need of support to promote their offering and reach new audiences.

Audiences say that they attend music within Dundee because it is convenient, they live locally and it is easy to access. The music itself is of good quality and people like to support local bands and musicians.

When looking at reasons for attending music performances outwith Dundee the focus is around the opportunity to see bands and musicians that don’t visit the city and to attend those performances and festivals, which are of a one-off nature. Survey respondents also note that other cities have venues which present a better atmosphere and facilities, therefore a higher overall standard of experience.



## VENUES

Throughout the consultation in the survey and during the events, venues were given a particularly hard time from both musicians and audiences.

The perception of Dundee is one which lacks for venues, yet Dundee is still well served by a variety of spaces with a focus on programming live music including: The Caird Hall, Gardyne Theatre, Dundee Rep, Fat Sams, Beat Generator, the basement at Conroy's, Clarks, Duke's Corner and The Reading Rooms, along with a large number of pubs, cultural venues and museums, churches, schools and community spaces which regularly host music.

The issue around venues is one which requires further insight and through the two events and conversations during this process it was clear that the desire was not always about a new building. When the criticism of venues are unpicked there are several themes which surface:

- The need to improve accessibility for both performers and audiences.
- The desire to have places to present music that are not driven by alcohol sales.
- The variable commitment by venue owners to treat musicians fairly when it comes to rates of pay and conditions.
- The need to focus on customer experience and creating a good atmosphere where live music is the primary focus.
- A need for venues to work together across the city when promoting music.

When discussing venues, different genres presented different needs. In general classical musicians felt that the venues they used were of a high quality with good equipment and staff but that they needed more support in marketing and promotions to get larger audiences and a younger demographic.

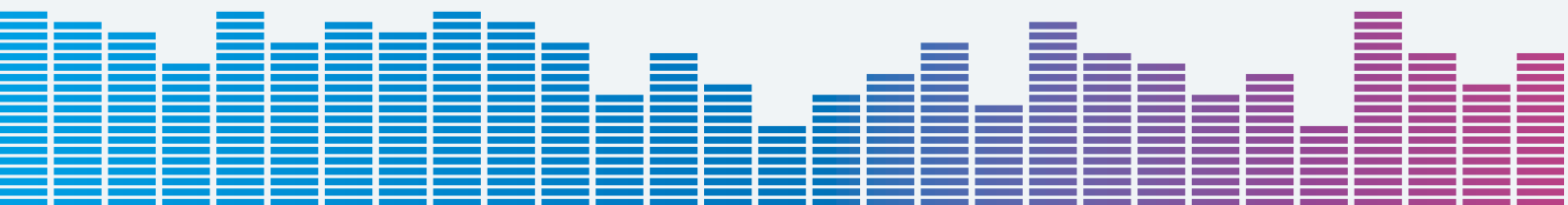
## MUSICIANS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

By identifying the respondents in the survey as people who made music or not we were able to gather more insight into the work of professional musicians in the city. 13% of total respondents identified themselves as making music professionally (this statistic excludes those who identified themselves as full time teachers). Of those, 61% said that their only income was from making music with the remaining 39% stating that they supplemented their income with other part time or full time work (this could include part time teaching).

Comments in this section also show evidence that there is a strong local network of musicians but that more needs to be done to help their professional development and to join up the work already being done in the city around professional development for the sector.

There is also significant concern surrounding the development of young musicians and ensuring that there are opportunities and pathways for young people who have had strong educational experiences surrounding music, to continue to develop their practice when they are no longer in full time education or indeed when they decide to take their involvement in music to the next level.

Continued educational experiences outwith the school environment, where young people are introduced and integrated with professional musicians in a safe environment, have an essential role to play in the sustainability of the music sector in the city. Facilitating the opportunities for young people to perform in venues in the city to gain experiences and demystify the sector needs to be a priority for venue providers if Dundee expects to see talented young people emerging in this sector.



## FUTURE PROPOSALS IN THE CITY

The consultation process also included a series of conversations with organisations and individuals to explore developments or initiatives that are currently taking place or proposed with regard to music.

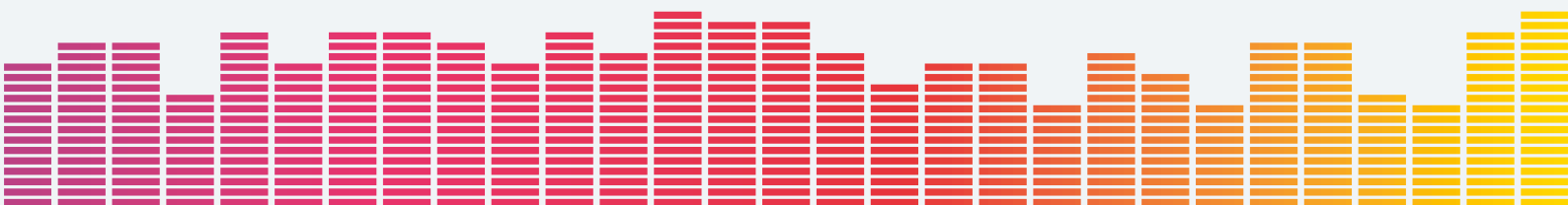
There are several proposals in regard to music festivals and large scale outdoor concerts. Dundee City Council has given permission for the staging of Carnival Fifty Six, a major music festival to be held over the weekend of August 12th and 13th 2017 in Camperdown Park. The event which has a daily capacity of 15,000 will include a main stage, big top tent and VIP area. The festival is committed to providing local bands with the opportunity to perform as part of the weekends line up.

The city's new green space, Slessor Gardens hosted its first open air concert on May 20th 2017. Two other large concerts will take place over the summer period, testing the city's ability to host events of this scale and increasing the appetite for music events of the scale in the city. Both of these developments will see large scale outdoor music festival events return to the city, 10 years on from Radio 1's Big Weekend.

**'The opportunity to showcase local talent is key.'** Survey participant.

Local charity, Optimistic Sound has been working to bring the Sistema music programme to the city. Expected to be operating in the city by August 2017, the programme will work with children in Claypotts Castle and St Pius Primary Schools.

There are several developments surrounding the creation of new spaces which will be suitable for live music. High School of Dundee is currently completing plans for a Centre of Performing and Visual Arts in the old Post Office building. It is proposed that the building will house specialist facilities for education in the performing arts, including music with a 310 seat auditorium and other performance spaces. V&A Dundee will have a variety of opportunities within their programme and building for live music. The proposed quarterly Museum Lates programme will present opportunities for both local and national musicians to perform in Dundee while supporting the development of audiences for live music.



# COMMITMENTS

The Dundee Music Strategy makes three commitments which will be taken forward in 2017 – 2020

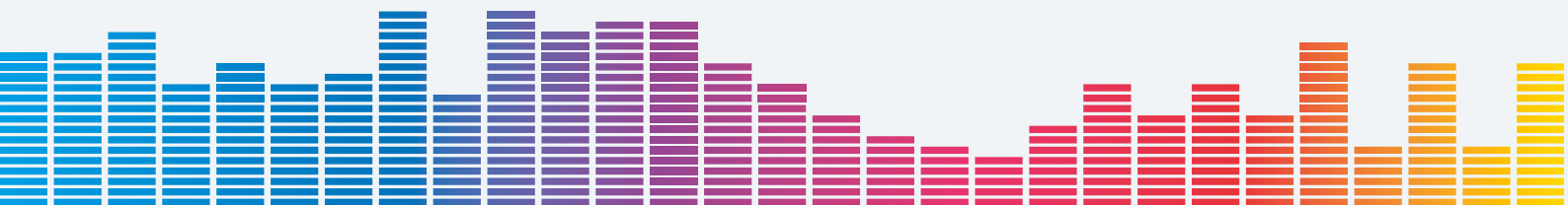
- A. GROWING OPPORTUNITIES:** We are committed to making the music sector in Dundee strong, sustainable and ambitious for its musicians and its venues.
- B. DEVELOPING AUDIENCES:** We are committed to growing the number of people attending live music in Dundee as we build Dundee's reputation as a place to experience live music.
- C. IMPROVING PROMOTION:** We are committed to making sure that audiences are able to quickly, easily and effectively access information about live music.

The strategy acknowledges the fact that there are many projects already taking place in the city. Delivering on the above commitments needs an approach which supports and augments existing activity in the city while growing and developing new complementary initiatives.

## DELIVERY OF THE STRATEGY

The first 12 months of the strategy's implementation will be coordinated by Dundee's Place Partnership team. Dedicated officer time and a modest budget will be available to kick start initiatives and to grow the sustainability of new and existing networks and collaborations.

The accompanying Action Plan outlines the specific projects and initiatives that will be taken forward to deliver the strategy's commitments. These actions are as a direct result of the consultation, and feedback from the sector. It is of course expected that the strategy will outlive the duration of the Place Partnership programme and therefore it will only be through committed cross-sector collaborations that the strategy will be successful.

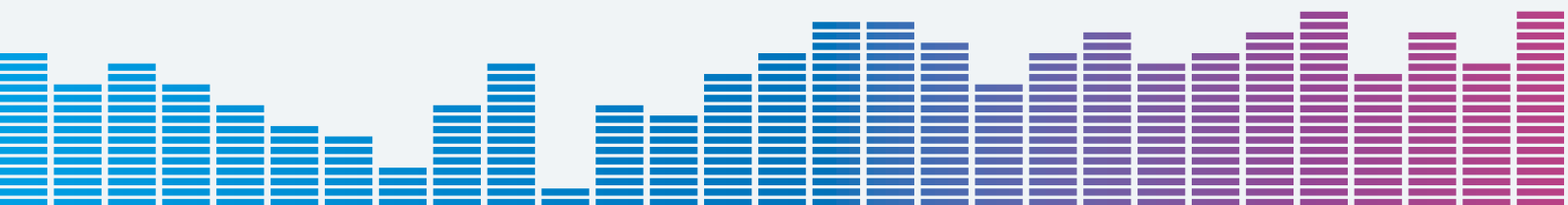


I love music.  
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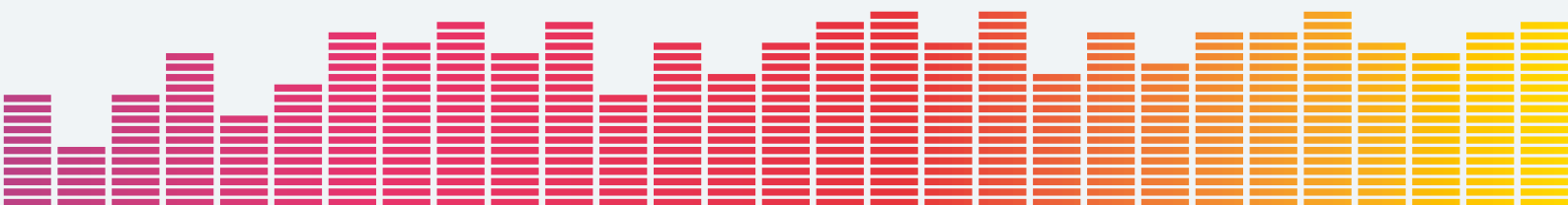
# ACTION PLAN

**A. GROWING OPPORTUNITIES:** We are committed to making the music sector in Dundee strong, sustainable and ambitious for its musicians and its venues.

COMMITMENTS	ACTIONS	LEAD PARTNER	SUPPORTING PARTNER
1. Providing professional musicians with the opportunities for learning and developing their practice.	1.1. Nurture a network within the city bringing together the people who work in the music industry.	Place Partnership	Born To Be Wide
	1.2. Run a programme of professional seminars, with a focus on topics such as PRS, insurance, marketing, contracts etc.	Place Partnership	Born To Be Wide
	1.3. Invest in the Dundee Music Award to provide more opportunities to support local artists including mentoring.	Leisure & Culture Dundee	Place Partnership
2. Providing amateur musicians with the opportunities for learning and developing their practice.	2.1. Develop and manage a venue database highlighting available facilities and services.	Place Partnership	Leisure & Culture Dundee

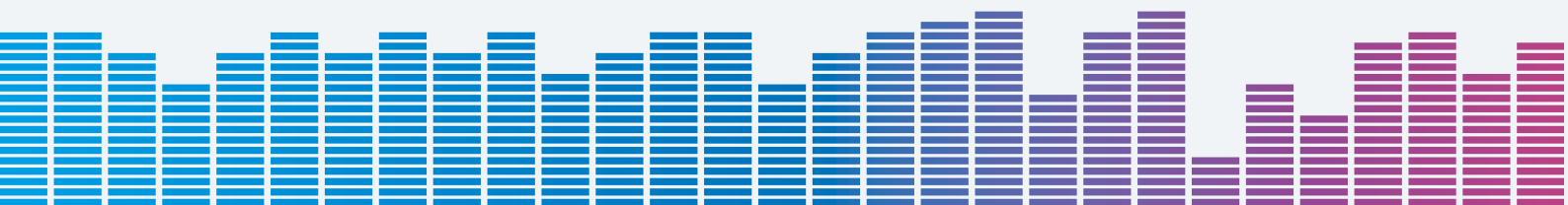


COMMITMENTS	ACTIONS	LEAD PARTNER	SUPPORTING PARTNER
<p><b>3.</b> Providing young people with the opportunities for learning and developing their practice.</p>	<p><b>3.1.</b> Invest in the Soundbase programme to double the number of young people able to access its service.</p>	<p>Leisure &amp; Culture Dundee Music Development</p>	<p>Place Partnership</p>
	<p><b>3.2.</b> Ensure that access to, and information about, discounted ticket schemes reach Dundee communities.</p>	<p>Dundee City Council</p>	<p>Place Partnership</p>
<p><b>4.</b> Increasing performance opportunities for all musicians</p>	<p><b>4.1.</b> Work within the city to encourage cultural venues whose primary focus is not music, to add music to their regular programming.</p>	<p>Cultural Agencies Network</p>	<p>Music Strategy Partners</p>
	<p><b>4.2.</b> Support large music festivals to programme musicians from Dundee.</p>	<p>Place Partnership</p>	<p>Dundee City Council</p>
	<p><b>4.3.</b> Develop and secure the funding resource for a showcase circuit.</p>	<p>Place Partnership</p>	<p>Music Strategy Partners</p>
	<p><b>4.4.</b> Embed the importance of music to the city centre economy in local business and raise the profile of busking in the city centre.</p>	<p>City Development</p>	<p>Place Partnership City Ambassadors</p>



**B. DEVELOPING AUDIENCES:** We are committed to growing the number of people attending live music in Dundee as we build Dundee’s reputation as a place to experience live music.

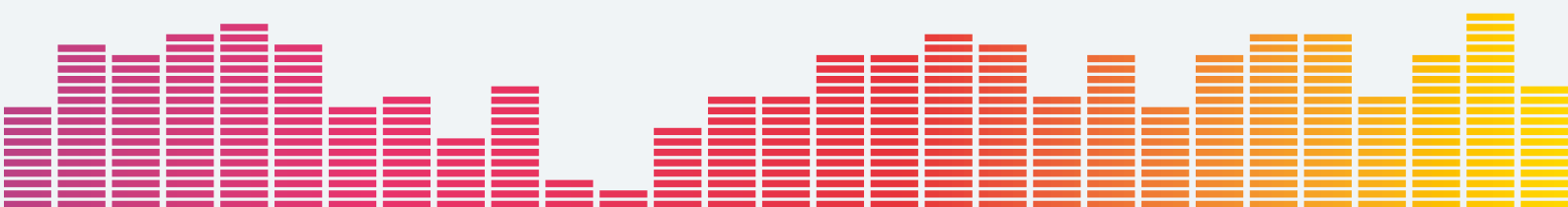
COMMITMENTS	ACTIONS	LEAD PARTNER	SUPPORTING PARTNER
1. Helping the city to fall in love with music again by working together to develop and to deliver initiatives focused on accessibility which support venues to provide excellent live music experiences.	1.1. Develop accessible all ages (temporary or permanent) venue spaces for music and arts performances.	Music Strategy Partners	Place Partnership
	1.2. Support music gigs in alcohol free venues.	Make That A Take Just Bee Productions	Place Partnership
	1.3. Develop and implement a code of conduct initiative for Dundee venues resulting in best practice venues.	Place Partnership	Music Strategy Partners
2. Increasing the number of touring bands visiting the city. There is a need to create a buzz in the city around live music. We must build momentum in the city by growing the number of mid-level bands visiting Dundee.	2.1. Actively promote the city to, and work directly with, music promoters who specialise in mid-level touring bands.	City Development	Music Promoters
	2.3. Develop and implement a city wide programme of incentives to attract touring bands from a variety of genres to the city.	City Development	Music Promoters





**C. IMPROVING PROMOTION:** We are committed to making sure that the public are able to quickly, easily and effectively access information about live music.

COMMITMENTS	ACTIONS	LEAD PARTNER	SUPPORTING PARTNER
1. Ensuring that audiences can easily find information about live music	1.1. Work together to improve the functionality of the city's online, 'What's On' listing.	Leisure & Culture Dundee	Dundee City Council
	1.2. Promote the use of, and cement the reputation of, the city's 'What's On' listing as the only and best place to go for information on what's happening in the city.	Leisure & Culture Dundee	Dundee City Council
2. Considering, developing and implementing a city wide marketing and promotional campaign to raise the profile of music in Dundee.	2.1. Grow the 'Sound of Dundee' brand and associated initiatives.	Place Partnership	Music Strategy Partners
	2.2. Develop partnerships with local and national media outlets to improve the variety of genres they profile.	Place Partnership	One City Many Discoveries



Music has the  
capacity to  
transform lives.

FRIENDS OF WIGTON

GARDYNE THEATRE AND STUDIOS

HIGH SCHOOL OF DUNDEE

HMS UNICORN

JUST BEE PRODUCTIONS

LEISURE & CULTURE DUNDEE

LYDIAN SINGERS

MAKE THAT A TAKE RECORDS

MOPR SCOTLAND

MUSIC DEVELOPMENT DUNDEE

OPTIMISTIC SOUND

RPS DISCOVERY

SCOTTISH ENSEMBLE

SHADY PINES RECORDS

TAYSIDE YOUNG FIDDLERS

THE FRIENDS OF THE CAIRD HALL ORGAN

THE MC MANUS: DUNDEE'S ART GALLERY & MUSEUM

U3A DUNDEE

UNIVERSITY OF DUNDEE

VERDANT WORKS

V&A MUSEUM OF DESIGN DUNDEE

WESTFEST

WHITEHALL THEATRE



**DUNDEE**  
PARTNERSHIP

