

Impact Report

1st April 2016 - 31st March 2017

**NEW
NOTE
ORCHESTRA**

New Note Projects uses music to help socially excluded people reconnect and rebuild their lives. Their projects are foremost for people who are in recovery from addiction but they also include people who are vulnerably housed and have other mental health issues. New Note Projects was set up by founder Molly Mathieson in April 2015. She launched their first project 'New Note Orchestra' in July 2015 which was the **first 'Recovery Orchestra'** in the world.



New Note Orchestra has three aims:

- ☀ To produce new and original music of high artistic value
- ☀ To help people maintain and sustain their recovery from drugs and alcohol addiction
- ☀ To reduce the stigmas around alcoholism and addiction in our communities

1: There were 44 people who came to New Note Orchestra rehearsals during 1st April - 31st March 2017. We held rehearsals for 51 weeks of the year, keeping in regular contact with our members.

"This time last year I was in pieces. New Note Orchestra is the cornerstone in my recovery. It's helped repair my relationship with my parents as I can talk about playing and performing in an orchestra". Dan - guitarist.

2: Through anonymous questionnaires and regular feedback we found the following:

- **78% of our members maintained their recovery in the community, whilst engaged with NNO.**
- Our members gained new skills which helped to build confidence and a sense of achievement
- They increased their mental capacity through concentration and critical listening skills.
- Creating new pieces of music helped to reduce anxiety and feelings of worthlessness.
- Coming together and being part of a group gave them support and reduced loneliness.
- The orchestra helped to reframe identities from being an addict/alcoholic into being a musician. This helped to reduce their shame and stigma and gave them hope and aspirations for the future.

3: The orchestra wrote five original pieces of music. This included a collaboration with The Cascade Choir, which is made up of people in the recovery community. Cascade Choir and NNO co-wrote a brand new score titled 'Soundscape To Brighton'. This project was in partnership with the University of Brighton and their Community University Partnership Programme (Cupp)

4: Audience Reach.
NNO reached over **2,500 people**



900 members of general the public through performances.



480 through our mailing list.

1100 through social media.

**We help
people in recovery
from addiction
rebuild their lives
through music.**

"The concert is a shining example of recovering people having the will, talent and strength to do beautiful, creative and constructive work." - Audience member December 2016

5: Audience experience

We asked our audience for anonymous feedback. 86% lived within five miles of the concert venue. 73% were first time NNO concert attendees. **97% said that as a result of attending the concert, they would now view people in recovery more positively.** 97% said they would recommend an NNO concert to a friend.

6: NNO formed lasting connections with well known local artists. It collaborated with bassist Herbie Flowers, jazz pianist Mark Edwards, singer Imogen Ryall, kora player Jali, concert pianist Helen Burford and theatre company Outside Edge. We hired Open Strings to do a workshop with singing as well.



Dan Blomfield (Trustee) Molly Mathieson (Founder) Patrick Harrex (Conductor) collecting the BBC Community Heroes Award.

7: NNO won two awards and received national and local press coverage.

- We won a BBC Community Heroes Award in the 'Music and Arts' category.
- We won a Nesta New Radicals award.
- We were featured in The Guardian
- We appeared in the Argus in a double page spread.
- We were interviewed and featured on BBC Sussex and Surrey a number of times.
- Caroline Lucas MP attended one of our rehearsals. She wrote a very supportive blog about us.

8: We took our members on a cultural field trip to Glyndbourne. This was the first time they had been to an opera house. They gained fresh insights into performing and learned about opera.

9: Community engagement.

We had **six professional musicians** who offered direct musical support to our musicians. During our concerts we had **14 volunteers**. We were **donated 32 cakes** to sell at our concerts

NEW NOTE STRUMMERS

10: In January - March 2017 founder Molly Mathieson piloted a brand new guitar group called New Note Strummers. The pilot was so successful that its now become a new weekly project. New Note Strummers is targeted at people who are in recovery but also for street homeless. We teach new guitar skills in a very supportive atmosphere. From feedback we have learned that it is helping people to cope with their recoveries, they are having lots of fun and learning new skills. They have developed confidence and coping strategies around their addictions and mental illnesses.

"There's a real energy about the group, and it was impressive to hear how far they've come in just a short space of time. They've already composed a number of works and held local performances - with many more concerts planned."

Everyone behind the orchestra, including the musicians themselves, has been drawn to it for their own personal reasons and experience. What is evident and unites them all, is their passion for the project. Music can be an incredibly powerful way to bring people together; and it feels as if something really quite special has been created at the New Note Orchestra."

Caroline Lucas MP for Brighton Pavilion