



21 JUNE

#MakeMusicDayUK

## Make Music Day UK appoints new Co-Directors

**Paul Gudgin and Rob Guest to lead the UK's largest DIY music festival into its next stage of development**

Make Music Day UK is delighted to announce the appointment of Paul Gudgin and Rob Guest as its new co-directors. The announcement follows another hugely successful Make Music Day held on 21 June 2021, which saw 31,122 performers of all types and genres bringing inspiring musical experiences to over 330,300 people and with a reach of 2 million via #MakeMusicDayUK. [Watch highlights video](#)

Make Music Day is the UK's largest single-day music event and the world's biggest celebration of music, taking place in 125 countries on 21 June annually. An inclusive DIY festival, it encourages musicians, producers, promoters and all music fans to organise in-person and online events for their communities.

This year marked the fifth nationally coordinated MMD event in the UK. Participation has grown exponentially, growing from just 180 performances in 2017 to 3,589 live and online performances in 2021. With Lead Project Manager Alison Porter stepping down after five successful years in the role, the new Co-Directors will now lead the festival into its exciting next stage of development.

**Paul Gudgin** has over 30 years' experience in the management of festivals and events including the Aldeburgh Festival, Bury St Edmunds Festival, City of London Festival, Durham International Brass Festival and eight years as Director of the world's largest arts festival, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Following his role at the Edinburgh Fringe, he established his own consultancy working on a wide range of festivals and events worldwide.

**Paul Gudgin, new Co-Director of Make Music Day UK, said:**

*"I am delighted to be taking up this role. Make Music Day is a fabulous event, connecting performers locally, nationally and globally around their shared love of music. The energy and commitment of the performers showcases all that is great about music in the UK and embodies the kind of spirit that will help revive our post-Covid musical life."*

**Rob Guest** has worked with creative organisations and partners throughout his career. Based in the North East, he has a background in music venues and events management that culminated in the £8m redevelopment of Middlesbrough Town Hall. He has also taken key roles with Durham's Brass Festival and Middlesbrough Music Live, and is currently Music Director of Sedgefield Lyric Singers and Sedgefield Lyrics Youth Choir.



**Rob Guest, new Co-Director of Make Music Day UK, said:**

*“After 18 months of lockdowns and social distancing, Make Music Day is perfectly placed to bring people together to share, enjoy and celebrate their passion for music across the whole country. The festival is such a great idea, and it’s really exciting to be getting involved as it continues to grow each year. Alison and her team have done an amazing job, and Paul and I are looking forward to taking the festival on and continuing to involve more and more performers, promoters and audiences in 2022 and beyond.”*

Until now, Make Music Day UK has been overseen by a steering group of individuals connected to leading arts organisations as well as a dedicated team of part-time, freelance professionals. It is currently in the process of transforming itself into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), with founding trustees Barbara Eifler (Making Music), Darren Ferguson (Beyond Skin), Katy Spicer (English Folk Dance and Song Society), Stephen Tiernery (Reel Youth Media), Steven Greenall (Warwick Music Group) and Victoria Bates (Durham Music Service).

**Barbara Eifler, Chair of Make Music Day UK, said:**

*“We are delighted at the growth of Make Music Day in the UK since 2017, thanks in no small part to the dedication and commitment of Lead Project Manager, Alison Porter. We are confident that 21 June will continue to grow and become a date for all diaries in the UK in the coming years under the leadership of our hugely experienced new co-directors. We are also excited at the prospect of Make Music Day UK becoming its own registered charity, recognising the public benefit the event can bring to individuals and communities throughout the UK.”*

Highlights from Make Music Day 2021 include Sing Together Wiltshire with 7,753 performers across 52 schools taking part, 30,000+ views for a version of ‘Stand By Me’ by ABRSM, a range of ‘Stand By Me’ cover version submissions for a competition won by Reel Youth Media, 56 producers signed up to the MixMash Studios project receiving 108 submitted samples, Window Serenades to care homes and other closed institutions, many Rock’n’Roll Misadventures in Libraries premieres, and much more. Find out more in the MMD UK [2021 summary report](#).

Alongside the support of partner organisations and their combined networks, MMD UK is proud to include as its ambassadors Nicola Benedetti CBE, Frank Turner, Elin Manahan Thomas, Apollo5, The King’s Singers, Iona Fyfe, Sam Sweeney, Emma McGann, Charlotte Hoather and Zoe Alexander of The Nick Alexander Memorial Trust.

**[ENDS]**

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Images of Make Music Day UK Co-Directors Paul Gudgin and Rob Guest can be downloaded [here](#)

More information about Make Music Day, including news, event listings and how to get involved, can be found at [makemusicday.co.uk](http://makemusicday.co.uk)

Follow @MakeMusicDayUK on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), [Instagram](#)

More posts from partners and participants can be found by using the hashtag **#MakeMusicDayUK**



Photographs of past events: [makemusicday.co.uk/galleries](http://makemusicday.co.uk/galleries)

Press enquiries: [press@makemusicday.co.uk](mailto:press@makemusicday.co.uk) | [makemusicday.co.uk/press](http://makemusicday.co.uk/press)

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## Notes to Editors

### Make Music Day background:

Make Music Day is a global celebration of music that takes place in 125 countries on 21 June every year. The concept originates from France's Fête de la Musique, started in 1982, and now involves two thirds of the population of France. The event traditionally involves performers, venues, event organisers, volunteers and supporters, with performances in a full range of musical styles and in a variety of spaces, including libraries, hospitals, schools, town squares, train stations, parks, shopping centres, pubs, cafes, traditional gig venues and across online platforms.

The event first came to the UK in 2012, and 2017 marked the first UK-wide, coordinated celebration with support and funding from national organisations, resulting in 147 performances. In 2021, a total of 3,589 live and online performances took place across the UK, involving 31,122 performers who brought inspiring musical experiences to 330,336 people and with a reach of 2 million via #MakeMusicDayUK.

### Make Music Day partners and supporters:

Make Music Day UK is currently supported by an alliance of over fifty organisations, headed by [Making Music](#) with support from [Arts Council England](#), [Creative Scotland](#), [Hal Leonard Europe](#), the [NAMM Foundation](#), [Music for All](#) and [ABRSM](#). Make Music Day UK is part of the international [Make Music Alliance](#). The project is currently overseen by a steering group of individuals connected to the following organisations – ABRSM, English Folk Dance and Song Society, Hal Leonard Europe, ISM, International Association of Music Libraries, Libraries Connected, Making Music, Musicians' Union, Music for All, NAMM Foundation and UK Music – and a dedicated team of part-time, freelance professionals.

Make Music Day UK is currently in the process of transforming itself into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) using the Association model format. The founding trustees are: Barbara Eifler (Making Music), Darren Ferguson (Beyond Skin), Katy Spicer (English Folk Dance and Song Society), Stephen Tiernery (Reel Youth Media), Steven Greenall (Warwick Music Group), Victoria Bates (Durham Music Service).

### Paul Gudgin biography:

Paul has 30 years' experience in the management of festivals and events including the Aldeburgh Festival, Bury St Edmunds Festival, City of London Festival, Durham International Brass Festival and the world's largest arts festival, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

After receiving a degree in music from the University of Surrey, Paul's first festival role was for the world-renowned classical music event, the Aldeburgh Festival. He subsequently became Director of the Bury St Edmunds Festival before heading to Edinburgh to manage one of the main music venues, the Queen's Hall.



Paul was subsequently appointed Director of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and over the next eight years saw the event double in scale reaching a record 1.6 million ticket sales in his final year. Paul's contribution to Edinburgh's cultural life was recognised when he became the first recipient of the Arts and Business Scotland Award for Leadership and he was awarded an Honorary Degree by the University of Edinburgh. Paul then established his own consultancy working on a wide range of festival projects internationally as well as taking up a position as Visiting Professor of Festival and Event Management at Leeds Metropolitan University.

Alongside his festival and event management roles Paul has maintained a busy musical life as a musical director of choirs, musical theatre companies and big bands.

### **Rob Guest biography:**

Rob has worked with creative organisations and partners throughout his career. He has a background in music venues and events management, culminating in the £8m redevelopment of Middlesbrough Town Hall. Based in the North East, Rob has also taken key roles with Durham's Brass Festival and Middlesbrough Music Live, and is currently Music Director of Sedgefield Lyric Singers and Sedgefield Lyrics Youth Choir.

Over the last couple of years, Rob has worked with creative organisations such as The Singing Elf and Create North. Understanding that running a small, creative organisation requires a huge range of skills, lots of time and passion, and Rob uses his skills as a collaborative leader, fundraiser, project manager and business development specialist to unlock the potential of creative organisations, allowing them to thrive and focus energy on their mission, skills and passions.

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