

HULL THEATRES



Brief: To review the Classical: Orchestral, Chamber, Choral, Opera, Organ and Brass music ecology of Hull, from where the music is performed to delivery partners, and audience reach. Also to review the City Hall as a classical venue, its strengths and areas of attention, and its role within the classical music ecology.

For the purposes of this brief, when we refer to classical music, we are including orchestral, chamber, organ, opera, choral, brass bands and organ music.

This is not a review of the education provision of classical music including youth choirs and orchestras and instrument tuition.

Introduction

Kingston Upon Hull is unashamedly ambitious. We are a forward thinking, maritime city, looking outward to the world, connecting people and businesses with opportunities to achieve prosperity.

This work builds on Hull's strengths and successes and underpins the new [Culture and Heritage Strategy](#) vision to be a leading progressive city for community-led culture and heritage. One of the four strands of the strategy delivery plan is to be 'community-led' and this activity is a major element in how we achieve this. The activity also delivers on ambition six of the city's ten year [Community Plan](#), 'Our Culture, Our Heritage, Our City'.

As part of this we recognise culture in its broadest sense has an active role in contributing to the city's economic, social and health and wellbeing agendas.

We also recognise the creativity is a key place-based strength of the city, from the people to the multitude of small scale and larger scale venues, community centres, libraries and other assets in the heart of communities. Linking with educational opportunities that build cultural and creative skills; with theatres, a city hall, museum, and gallery offer alongside the in school and extra curricula activity and lifelong learning. The creativity within communities is an intangible cultural and heritage asset and is part of our cultural DNA, integral to the city's future.

Hull also has an ambition to become an UNESCO Creative City for Music and is working to develop a music board and will work on the delivery of the 5 year [music plan](#) for the city.

Background:

Hull has a long tradition of music making, dating back to the 12th century. The following is a short summary of Hull's music journey.

The choir of Holy Trinity Church has existed from at least 1320, including choir boys who would sing a very large repertoire of decorated chants. This role provided an education for the boys. Consequently, Hull Minster Choir has a 700-year history, more than a century older than King's College Cambridge!

The first mention of two minstrels being employed by the Corporation for the purpose of entertainment on civic occasions was in 1394 – 95. The prime venue for Classical music performance being the City Hall. The hall, which was designed as a cultural hub with a performance hall and gallery space. It was built between 1903 and 1909. The City Hall organ was installed in time for an opening concert by the composer Edwin Lemare, on 30 March 1911.

In 1823, the Hull Choral Society formed, replacing Hull Oratorio Society, George Skelton becoming the main musical director from 1826, using Holy Trinity for its early performances. In 1834 Hull's new Assembly Rooms opened and featured various musical acts over its almost 100-year history, including the Hull Philharmonic Orchestra, Hull School of Music Operatic Recital and Needler's Musical Society's Musical Carnival.

In 1861 the Hull Police Band formed (now called the Humberside Police Band), and in 1881 the Hull Philharmonic Society was formed when a group of seventeen like-minded men met at the George Hotel in Hull, to form a society for 'the private and Public Performance of Orchestral Music at Hull', the Hull Philharmonic Society is one of the oldest surviving music societies in Hull.

In 1929, the Hull Choral Union founded as a result of the amalgamation of the Hull Harmonic Society and Hull Vocal Society.

In 1961, the Hull Youth Orchestra and Youth Choir were formed.

Scope of works:

Hull City Council is seeking a music consultant to undertake a piece of work with two strands review the current delivery of classical, choral, and brass music in the city.

We are looking to understand:

An Ecology Review:

- Who delivers the work
- What venues do they use – for performance and rehearsals and what issues do they perceive from these spaces
- What is the audience capacity and reach of the live classical performance offer. We are interested in the latent audience demand, where that is and how we reach it, to indicate the potential for future growth. What does good look like?

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- This is not an assessment of music education or instrument / vocal tuition; however, we are interested to know which classical organisations are embedding themselves further into the community/ education and is this positive re audiences/ engagement, or are there groups who simply perform?
- We also want to understand how Hull performs against its peers and near neighbours in relation to classical music performance

City Hall Review:

- To review the current City Hall classical programme, audiences and capacity – identifying gaps and programme synergies for potential growth of content and audience
- To compare the programme of the City Hall with similar venues to understand how the City Hall performs for content and audience demand / expectation
- To analyse the audience base, to support audience development and marketing approaches
- To understand the effectiveness of the City Hall in delivery of Classical music
- To identify new market areas, efficiencies and potential growth areas for the City Hall in relation to classical and their wider programme.

This work will be used to support the Music Plan for the city and support the visioning of music venues and offer in the city, and to scope out potential future partnerships.

Consultants will be provided with contacts and detailed information from partners and stakeholders.

Fee:

The fee for this work is £10k, and we expect the final report to be completed by September 2025.

To tender for the work, please submit your CV (with demonstrable track record and evidence of similar work) and EOI (no more than 1500 words) with your methodology and budget, please also link to no more than three previous reports you have completed.

Please send to music@hullcc.gov.uk by noon Monday 26th May.



Working in partnership