



# Youth Folk Opportunities around England 2019



Directory collated and produced by the English Folk Dance and Song Society.

This directory is produced as part of the English Folk Dance and Song Society's National Youth Folk Ensemble programme, which aims to promote, develop and link youth folk music activities across England.

There are lots of ways to get involved in folk music through a wide range of organisations in England. Here we share a selection of regional and national opportunities for young people who play or are interested in exploring folk and traditional music. These include folk bands, summer schools, competitions, courses, bursaries, and creative learning projects.

If you would like to add to this directory in the future, or if you're interested in finding out more about youth folk music, please contact [ensemble@efdss.org](mailto:ensemble@efdss.org)

You can download a PDF of this directory from [efdss.org/youth-folk-opportunities](http://efdss.org/youth-folk-opportunities)

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The English Folk Dance and Song Society has compiled these listings in good faith. However it cannot guarantee the accuracy of any information listed here, or the quality and safety of the activities. Please contact individual organisations for information about their programmes and safeguarding policies.

EFDSS is the national folk arts development organisation for England. We are here to champion the English traditional arts - music, song, dance, storytelling, customs and traditions - as part of the rich and diverse cultural landscape of the UK.

Cover photo of National Youth Folk Ensemble by Camilla Greenwell.



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ENGLAND**

## National Youth Folk Ensemble



Bringing together talented 14-18 year old musicians from across England to create new arrangements of folk music, participate in residential courses, and get expert guidance from some of the biggest names in folk. Performances this year include Sidmouth Folk Festival and Cecil Sharp House. Bursaries are available.

[efdss.org/youthfolk](http://efdss.org/youthfolk)

## Youth Folk Sampler Days



Creative folk music workshops in May half-term with Sam Partridge, Miranda Rutter and Rob Harbron. You will collaborate with other young musicians from your region and have the option of auditioning for the National Youth Folk Ensemble. All instruments welcome. For 14-18 year olds. Free but booking required.

[efdss.org/youthfolk](http://efdss.org/youthfolk)

## Folkworks Summer Schools

Durham, residential and non residential places available  
**Youth**

Folkworks Youth Summer School is an inspirational and legendary week of folk music tuition for those aged 14-20. Youth Summer School is a perfect way to get involved in folk music, whether you have played lots already or are totally new to it. It's a fun week full of tuition, repertoire building, songs, tunes and dancing. Bursaries are available.

### Junior

Folkworks Junior Summer School is an inspirational Summer School for young folk musicians, singers and dancers aged 9-13. This school is open to any young musician, including singers and dancers, who can play at a basic level on their instruments. Bursaries are available.

[sagegateshead.com/folkworks](http://sagegateshead.com/folkworks)

## Young Halsway



Folk Residential Opportunities for young people at Halsway Manor, National Centre for Folk Arts. Intensive but fun residential courses for young singers and musicians to discover and enjoy folk! Led by young professional folk artists with dedicated pastoral support.

Junior: Ages 8-12. A fun introduction to folk traditions.

Intro: Ages 12-16. No prior folk experience necessary.

Intermediate: For ages 13 - 18 with some experience of folk, leading to performances at Sidmouth Folk Week.

Advanced: Ages 16 - 25. For competent musicians and singers.

[halswaymanor.org.uk/projects/younghalsway](http://halswaymanor.org.uk/projects/younghalsway)

## Get Your Folk On! Summer School



Creative folk music and dance courses for 9-19 year olds at Cecil Sharp House.

Play music by ear; explore harmonies, riffs, chord sequences and folk techniques; create arrangements in small and big bands; sing and explore the history and culture of folk songs; try new instruments or dance forms and gain performance skills with final sharing events.

Courses are friendly, flexible and responsive to all young people's needs and abilities. Led by a team of skilled and engaging folk educators - no previous folk experience is required and no two courses are the same!

[cecilsharp-house.org/csh-learning/holiday-courses-cecil-sharp-house](http://cecilsharp-house.org/csh-learning/holiday-courses-cecil-sharp-house)

## Get Your Folk On! Plus



Explore and create folk music and song together in an inclusive, multi-sensory environment. For disabled young people aged 12-24 years old, their siblings and friends.

[cecilsharp-house.org/csh-learning/holiday-courses-cecil-sharp-house](http://cecilsharp-house.org/csh-learning/holiday-courses-cecil-sharp-house)

## NYFTE — The National Youth Folklore Troupe of England



NYFTE ('nifty') is a dance, music and song performance group for 10-18 year olds, with residential training (February and April) working towards high quality performances at concerts/festivals throughout the year. Members gain experience of the full range of English folk traditions alongside long-lasting friendships, and a wealth of performance and leadership skills.

[nyfte.org.uk](http://nyfte.org.uk)

## Burwell Bash



The Burwell Bash takes place in East Anglia at the end of July. Everyone is treated as a musician whether they've played for two years or ten, amateur or professional, classically trained or not. All ages are taught together. Teenagers are welcome. Fun is as important as the music. English, Irish, Scottish, Breton, American and world music are covered by world class tutors.

[BurwellBash.info](http://BurwellBash.info)

## Shooting Roots



Image: Phil Sofer

Join Shooting Roots for workshops in the folk arts! Shooting Roots runs band, song, theatre, craft, and dance workshops for 12-17 year-olds at folk festivals throughout the summer - this year you can catch us at Warwick and Sidmouth. We are open to all abilities, so simply bring yourselves and plenty of enthusiasm!

[shootingroots.org](http://shootingroots.org)

## Alan Surtees Trust



The Alan Surtees Trust is a grant giving organisation that supports performers whose work is rooted in, or influenced by, traditional music and arts.

It awards funding annually of up to £1,000 per applicant to UK based musicians, singers or dancers aged 16-30.

[alansurteestrust.org.uk](http://alansurteestrust.org.uk)

## New Roots



An event for young musicians under the age of 25. People selected to play at the final on April 7 will get feedback from the judges on their playing and win performance opportunities at folk clubs, festivals and other events. The closing date for entries is 31 January 2019.

[new-roots.org.uk](http://new-roots.org.uk)

## Young Performer's Showcase



The Young Performer's Showcase (up to 25 yrs of age) takes place on The Garden Stage, in Blackmore Gardens on a daily basis during Sidmouth Folk Festival. Performers apply and places are awarded to ensure that a balanced programme of music, song, dance etc. is presented throughout the week.

Applications and details from [bev.langton@talk21.com](mailto:bev.langton@talk21.com)

## BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Award



The Young Folk Award is an exciting, friendly experience, open to people aged 16-21 from around the UK. English traditional musicians who have done this in the past include Greg Russell & Ciaran Algar, Jim Moray, Jackie Oates, Bella Hardy, Cohen Braithwaite-Kilcoyne, and many more.

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=u235C1wNMry](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u235C1wNMry)

## BA (Hons) Folk degrees at Leeds College of Music



Develop your skills as a professional musician with our global approach to folk and traditional music, whatever your instrument.

An immersive experience with one-to-one specialist, ensemble and contextual studies tuition from our award winning faculty, including Jim Moray, Nancy Kerr, Pete Flood (Bellowhead) and Archie Churchill-Moss (Moore, Moss, Rutter).

[lcm.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate-study-18plus/undergraduate-courses/ba-hons-music-folk](http://lcm.ac.uk/courses/undergraduate-study-18plus/undergraduate-courses/ba-hons-music-folk)

# East

## Cambridge Folk Festival: The Hub Band



The Hub is a music-making area for young people, comprised of a series of workshops and sessions throughout Cambridge Folk Festival. Aimed at 14-18 year olds who can apply to win a place prior to the Festival or sign up on site. The project culminates in a performance in the Club Tent on Sunday.

[cambridgelivetrust.co.uk/folk-festival](http://cambridgelivetrust.co.uk/folk-festival)

# London

## London Youth Folk Ensemble



Image: Roswitha Chesher

A group of committed young musicians from London and the South with a passion for playing and performing folk music. Meeting regularly at Cecil Sharp House, LYFE works with professional folk musicians to create and perform folk music from Britain and beyond. LYFE is run by the English Folk Dance and Song Society and directed by folk musicians Emily Askew and Ruairi Glasheen.

[cecilsharpshouse.org/lyfe](http://cecilsharpshouse.org/lyfe)

## Folk Unlimited



Creative, inclusive, multi-sensory band sessions for disabled young people led by folk artists Emmie Ward and Joe Danks. You do not need any experience of playing an instrument or folk music to take part in Folk Unlimited. Love music? We want you to join us!

[cecilsharpshouse.org/folkunlimited](http://cecilsharpshouse.org/folkunlimited)

## Folkestra



Auditioned, 13-19 year olds, based in Sage Gateshead  
Directed by the incredible folk musician Ian Stephenson (Kan, Baltic Crossing), Folkestra have a national reputation as a unique and vibrant group of young folk musicians. They perform nationally and internationally and in 2017/18 toured the North East with Alastair Anderson's Northlands, performed with the Northumbrian Ranters and Magnetic North and recorded an album. Bursaries are available.  
[sagegateshead.com/folkestra](http://sagegateshead.com/folkestra)

## Folkworks Saturdays



No audition required, recommended minimum playing standard is Grade 4, 10-16 year olds, based in Sage Gateshead.  
Led by musicians from Sage Gateshead's successful and popular Folkworks Programme, Folkworks Saturdays is a fun and light-hearted youth folk ensemble for young people with experience and those wanting experience of folk and traditional music. Singers and instrumentalists are welcome.  
[sagegateshead.com/folkworks-saturdays](http://sagegateshead.com/folkworks-saturdays)

## Music at the Heart of Teesdale (M@HoT)



M@HoT aims to revive the folk music, song and dance traditions working mainly with young people aged 8-18. Our youth folk band, Cream Tees, meets weekly for 'Jamming' sessions after school in term time and performs regularly both locally and regionally, and nationally at folk festivals in the summer. We also run a successful schools Longsword Dance programmes in Teesdale.  
[musicattheheartofteesdale.com](http://musicattheheartofteesdale.com)

## Tyneside Fiddle Alliance



Tyneside Fiddle Alliance is a community group of fiddlers who play traditional music from North East England and beyond. We are mainly adults, but all ages are welcome (responsible adult required for U17s). We meet on 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 6.30-8.30 pm in St Mary's Heritage Centre, Gateshead. Adults £6, drop-in.  
[tynesidefiddlealliance.org.uk](http://tynesidefiddlealliance.org.uk)

## That's all Folk!



A fun and welcoming group of young folk musicians from Rochdale who enjoy exploring a range of folk styles. That's all Folk is aimed at musicians aged 11-18 who can already play to a reasonable standard. Little Folk is for our younger musicians, aged up to 11 years. We rehearse every Thursday evening (term time) at Rochdale Town Hall.

Contact: [cliff.woodworth@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:cliff.woodworth@rochdale.gov.uk)

## Oakenhoof



Oakenhoof is a voluntary folk arts organisation based in Littleborough. We are an all-age, open folk arts group with an emphasis on youth. Our activities include folk dance, music and song, mostly from the North of England. Join us Tuesday evenings at the Con Club in Littleborough.

[cloggin.co.uk](http://cloggin.co.uk)

# South East

## FolkActive Youth Ensemble

A group for young people aimed at intermediate (grade 3+) string players. Tunes are learned by ear and then used to explore the stylistic details in playing folk music as well as spontaneous use of harmony and variation, in both small and large groups.

Sessions are once a month on a Sunday in Southampton.

Contact: [youth@folkactive.org.uk](mailto:youth@folkactive.org.uk)

[folkactive.org.uk/activities/youth-ensemble](http://folkactive.org.uk/activities/youth-ensemble)

## Hampshire Youth Folk Ensemble



The Hampshire Youth Folk Ensemble, part of the Hampshire Music Service ensemble provision, is a group of young musicians from across Hampshire who come together for regular rehearsals, led by Joyce Ingledew. All string and guitar players of grade/stage 3+, up to the age of 18 are welcome.

[hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/hampshireremusic/ensembles/countyensembles](http://hants.gov.uk/educationandlearning/hampshireremusic/ensembles/countyensembles)

## Bath Youth Folk Band



Bath Youth Folk Band, directed by fiddler Rachel Cross, is a multi-talented group of musicians, who perform and arrange new and traditional folk music. The band (approx grade 5-8) performs at festivals and gigs throughout the year. Our junior section caters for students (grade 1- 4) who want to develop their skills. Both groups meet on the second Saturday of the month.

Contact [rachel@bathfolkfestival.org](mailto:rachel@bathfolkfestival.org)

## Reel Dorset

Dorset's first youth folk group that teaches this fun and energetic genre to young musicians in Dorset. Reel Dorset formed in 2014 and is led by folk musician Richard 'Titch' Roberts, band leader of Black Sheep.

[dorsetforyou.gov.uk/reel-dorset](http://dorsetforyou.gov.uk/reel-dorset)

## CYMT Folk Group



Image: Craig Stone Photography

Starting in April 2019 the CYMT Folk Group is for 12-18 year old instrumentalists who want to have fun playing folk music together. Centre for Young Musicians Taunton (CYMT) is a fantastic Saturday music school in the South West offering great opportunities to its students, with top quality music tutors with dedication and drive.

[cymtaunton.org.uk](http://cymtaunton.org.uk)

## Rodborough Folk Orchestra



RoffO is a community orchestra which includes players of all ages and abilities who are inspired by our rich traditional musical heritage. The style is 'chamber music meets folk' with parts arranged for tune, harmony, continuo, alto, bass, Eb and Bb instruments.

[roffo.co.uk](http://roffo.co.uk)

## North Devon Roots Music



North Devon Roots Music is a programme of music workshops for children and young people in North Devon. We use folk music as our starting point and work in an inclusive way in the sessions. North Devon Roots Music is run by Wren Music leader and fiddle-player Becki Driscoll with support from a team of music volunteers. For more info please contact Becki Driscoll on 01837 53754 or email [becki@wrenmusic.co.uk](mailto:becki@wrenmusic.co.uk)

The groups meet on Tuesdays at Sticklepath Methodist Church, 17 Rhododendron Ave, Barnstaple EX31 2DJ

### Family Roots: 5-11 year olds, 3.45pm-4.45pm

Parents, grandparents and carers welcome too. Under 8s must be accompanied by an adult.

Family Roots is a brand new group for children and their families to explore music- making together with singing, movement and instruments. You don't need any musical experience to join the group, just enthusiasm! There will be musical instruments provided in all the sessions but please feel free to bring your own if you have one.

### North Devon Roots Band: 8-18 year olds, 5pm-6.30pm

North Devon Roots Band is a mixed instrumental and vocal group for children and young people. We use folk music from around the world as our starting point but are always open to your own musical ideas and suggestions. You don't need to have your own instrument to join the group but some musical experience is useful.

### Roots Acoustic: 13-18 year olds, 7-9pm every two weeks

Roots Acoustic is an instrumental group for young musicians who are interested in developing their creative music skills and learning more about folk music. You will need to know your way around your own acoustic instrument to join this group but it is not essential to read music as much of the learning is done by ear. Roots Acoustic meets every other week so please check the term dates in advance.

[wrenmusic.co.uk](http://wrenmusic.co.uk)

## Shropshire Youth Folk Ensemble



The Shropshire Youth Folk Ensemble provides musicians (10-18 years) the opportunity to play and perform folk music. We meet approx. 4 times a term on Saturday afternoons at the Shropshire Music Service Centre, Bayston Hill. All instruments welcome and currently the ensemble features fiddles, double bass, flute, guitars and djembe.

[shropshireyouthfolkensemble.wordpress.com](http://shropshireyouthfolkensemble.wordpress.com)

## Wildfire Folk



Wildfire is Lichfield's Youth Folk Ensemble - a lively and energetic ensemble for 10-25 year olds playing an eclectic mix of instruments. We rehearse weekly in preparation for a variety of events and have played on stages at festivals such as Warwick, Chester, Folk on the Coast and The Acoustic Festival of Great Britain.

[wildfirefolk.co.uk](http://wildfirefolk.co.uk)

# Yorkshire & The Humber

## Arts Live Folk Band

A community band that plays traditional and contemporary folk and acoustic music. Sessions on term-time Wednesdays from 6:30-8:00pm at Garforth Academy, LS25 1LJ. We welcome vocalists and any musicians who play suitable instruments, aged 11+ (including adults), of guide ability grade 3+ or equivalent experience to come for a free taster session!

[arts-live.co.uk](http://arts-live.co.uk)

## Roots Alive



Rehearsals take place on Fridays during term time, 5-6.30pm in the Ballroom (ground floor), Pudsey Civic Hall, Dawson's Corner, Pudsey LS28 5TA.

Roots Alive play traditional British and Irish music on a range of instruments - strings, woodwind, hand percussion, accordions and concertinas. Most members are fluent on their instruments and have a willingness and ability to play by ear or memory.

Contact: 0113 378 2850 / [educ.artforms@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:educ.artforms@leeds.gov.uk)

## Wetherby Music Centre Folk Group

Saturdays during term time at Wetherby High School, LS22 6JS. Open to any age, instrument or ability. We welcome new students at any time. Come and try a class free and without commitment for the first two sessions.

Contact: 07545 603951 / [wetherby.music.centre@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:wetherby.music.centre@leeds.gov.uk)

## Folk Factory



Come and join our Folk Big Band. Any instrument. Any standard. Limited spaces available, no audition required!

This after school club explores folk music, tunes and songs in a fun and friendly way. Throughout the year guest workshop leaders will join us and children will have the opportunity to learn from a variety of exciting experts. The Folk Factory Juniors is for 7-11 year olds, and Folk Factory Youth is for 11-18 year olds.

[soundpost.org.uk/events/folk-factory-dungworth-youth-group-dungworth-village-hall](http://soundpost.org.uk/events/folk-factory-dungworth-youth-group-dungworth-village-hall)

## Yorkshire Young Folk Day

Open to young people between 11 and 18 in Yorkshire. Any level of experience in folk music is fine. Enjoy workshops in singing, playing for dancing and arranging. Learn music from England, Wales and Scotland.

Contact Ruth Wild: [ruth.wild@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:ruth.wild@leeds.gov.uk)

## TradMad



Term-time Tuesdays, 6.30pm-7.20pm at The Bandroom, 2 Prospect Square, Skelmanthorpe, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD8 9AA

TradMad is a folk big band run by English fiddle player and singer Bryony Griffith. Open to all instrumentalists and singers aged 10-18, the repertoire is mostly traditional English tunes and songs. Material is taught by ear and with dots and the band is encouraged to come up with their own unique and exciting arrangements. The group also perform as TradMad Rapper and are members of The Morris Federation. Performance opportunities include Shepley Spring Festival.

Contact: [bryonygriffith@gmail.com](mailto:bryonygriffith@gmail.com)

[bryonygriffith.com](http://bryonygriffith.com)

## Calder Valley Youth Folk Music Project



Calder Youth Folk is a new project launched in 2019 aimed at aspiring young folk musicians from the local area aged 10-18. We meet weekly in Hebden Bridge on Monday evenings in term-time and are aiming initially, as a band, to be able to perform at local gigs, ceilidhs and festivals as soon as we are confident and competent enough!

[CalderYouthFolk@outlook.com](mailto:CalderYouthFolk@outlook.com)