

Message to the Sing Up network  
From Howard Goodall, National Singing Ambassador  
May 2010



My dear friends

Well, we knew that unusual times would follow a general election, and here we are with a coalition government, as yet unsure of what this will mean for music education and for Sing Up beyond March 2011. But I'm writing to give you some hope and confidence in our position, and in the business models currently being developed by the Sing Up Consortium to maintain our legacy.

Sing Up's *State of the Union* document laid out initial plans for expanding Sing Up's remit in the future to support secondary and early years, as well as continuing to grow our primary programme. Delivered through a mixed-economy business model which can suit changing economic circumstances, this is the high-value offer we're creating to put to potential funders, and I'm confident in its appeal.

It's a bold move to be thinking of expansion in these times, and I commend the determination of the Consortium partners and staff - who have already proved themselves in the successes of Sing Up to date - in leading the way with new and ambitious models for the future. We know that music and singing is recognised, not only by schools, but by all political parties, as an important part of the education of children and young people, and they know that Sing Up is succeeding. However, government and local authority control over schools is likely to lessen in the future, so we also have to configure services which can work for a more autonomous school system.

I'm aware that, with less than a year to go, it's easy to get twitchy, and to think of, for example, recommending that teachers download all the Song Bank songs, in case they disappear! Such actions would threaten our legacy, and in fact we need to do the opposite - to act with a confidence which reflects our ambitions. We very much hope and intend that the Song Bank will continue, along with the rest of the programme. You might find it helpful to use the messaging below, which will be featured in the FAQs section on the Sing Up website, to help with any awkward conversations about the future.

Of course the Sing Up Consortium can make no guarantees yet, about the Song Bank, about its training and funded programmes, or about jobs. And it may be some time before we can for sure. In the meantime, there is absolutely no question that our greatest hope for a future for Sing Up is the achievement of its current aims, and you'll know, from the Phase 4 priorities set for the programme, that top of the list are the joint ambitions of:-

- a) Getting all 100% of primary schools registered with Sing Up
- b) Embedding singing so that all primary schools can become singing schools

The more successful we are in achieving these aims, the greater our position, not only to appeal to government, but also to have placed Sing Up as an indispensable part of education delivery that schools would be mad to consider losing. And I have immense confidence that we will do just that. It is a matter of great pride to me that wherever I now go Sing Up's reputation goes before me, with increasing admiration and support from so many people, and that has little to do with me and everything to do with your commitment and expertise. 18 countries have now expressed an interest in copying our model in some form or another, so we can be justifiably proud of the unprecedented scale and ambition of this programme.

With sincere best wishes for an exciting year!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Howard", written in a cursive style.

From the Sing Up website FAQs:-

**Help! Is Sing Up going to finish in March 2011?**

The government funding which supports Sing Up was always scheduled to run from 2007 up to March 2011, but that doesn't mean we're planning to finish. With a new government in place, and public sector spending cuts imminent, it is very difficult to predict the future for the funding of music education. However, we recognise that Sing Up has become invaluable for schools, and are building a strong future for the programme, which includes the continuation of its resources and support, so that the proven benefits of singing within education can continue.

In the meantime, please continue to use Sing Up as normal.

But you can help secure our future too! Our best chance of ensuring a future for Sing Up is to have ALL primary schools on board, and signed up to Sing Up. We're approaching 90% engagement from primary schools, but if 100% are on board, that's difficult to ignore! So if you feel strongly that Sing Up, and government funding for music education, should continue, please make sure that all the schools you know are registered and using Sing Up.