

# What next?



## Vision: A Healthy Singing Leader Community

At the Comfort Of Voices gathering, and in surveys before and after the event, song leaders told us that their vision for the future is to have support for the individual and the collective community of song leaders across Scotland. From the feedback received, eight elements were identified as necessary to support a healthy community.

Investment in the current and emerging singing leader workforce in Scotland is at the heart of the plan. The support needed is holistic, with its core being the individual singing leader, then the singing leader community, and then how that network interacts with and advocates for itself in the wider world.

Our model proposes to build on existing expertise, peer support, and the pooling of resources to facilitate new training and signposting to pre-existing training opportunities; opportunities to see others at work to build our own practice through sharing experiences and mentoring; and connectivity with others working at similar levels or working in related disciplines.

Pedagogical practice will be supported by signposting to pre-existing resources and creating new resources based on demand including song libraries; leadership materials; strategies for supporting freelancers; the operations of singing groups; and more.

Existing research will be shared and new studies commissioned that demonstrate the collective impact of our sector, without the individual leader needing to be an expert in, or have the time to, conduct their own evaluation.

The sector has called for moments to gather, reflect, share, and be inspired. Through training programmes, conferences, online networking and meet-ups, resources development, mentoring, and opportunities to visit others' work, singing leaders will have access to a variety of routes they can connect to as a network.



Every part of the plan contributes to a sector that is continually learning, which builds and expands its skillset, providing opportunity for growth and the future sustainability of our practice.

The table on the next page outlines the logic behind the strategies for support which we hope will contribute towards creating a healthy singing leader community in Scotland.

<b>Supporting the individual</b>	Mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and career progression through a wider network and mentoring programme</li> <li>Sustained mentoring with a respected peer may increase confidence and skills, and enable the individual to celebrate their achievements</li> <li>Uncover / realise hidden value or increase value with improvement or adjustment</li> </ul>
	Pedagogical Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training in pedagogy, operations and specialist approaches, supported by resources</li> </ul>
	Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger connections bringing work opportunities; diversification of income routes</li> <li>Opportunities to expand practice will raise personal awareness of an individuals' value</li> <li>A chance to be noticed</li> </ul>
	Gatherings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable gatherings, conferences &amp; events in Scotland</li> <li>Sharing of best practice and experiences</li> <li>Peer to peer encouragement, celebration, recognition, and endorsement</li> <li>Regular opportunities to meet other singing leaders</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting the collective</b>	Song & leadership resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support knowledge and practice</li> <li>Specialist song and leadership resources to reduce individuals' research and workload</li> <li>Accessible and affordable resources</li> </ul>
	Specialist training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Upskilling and investing in individuals' careers</li> </ul>
	Operational resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eg. financial resilience, marketing, resources created / sourced as requested</li> </ul>
	Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A safe, non-competitive, supportive network of leaders</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting the network</b>	Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration within and outwith the sector raises awareness for advocacy</li> <li>Having access to known and trusted deps for when you can't lead your choir</li> </ul>
	Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research and collaboration to ensure fair working conditions and pay</li> <li>Widening knowledge through collaboration and research</li> <li>Shining a light on individual and collaborative success</li> <li>Demonstrating the wider impact of our work</li> <li>Guidance into boundaries and expectation setting for song leaders and those working at grassroots with communities through research, advocacy, legal teams, and signposting to pre-existing models</li> </ul>
	Conferences & events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunity for formal recognition in the sector and beyond; sharing of best practice</li> </ul>
	Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The work of the sector supported with tangible evidence of impact</li> <li>Knowledge that their work is being advocated for</li> <li>Learning about impact, evaluation and the bigger picture</li> </ul>

A Connected National Body Of Singing Leaders



A Healthy Singing Leader Community

## Training & Mentoring Pathway

A major part of the strategy is a training and mentoring pathway to engage and support individuals right from the start of their career through to the most experienced leaders, whilst also giving people the opportunity to share and contribute for the benefit of the wider sector.

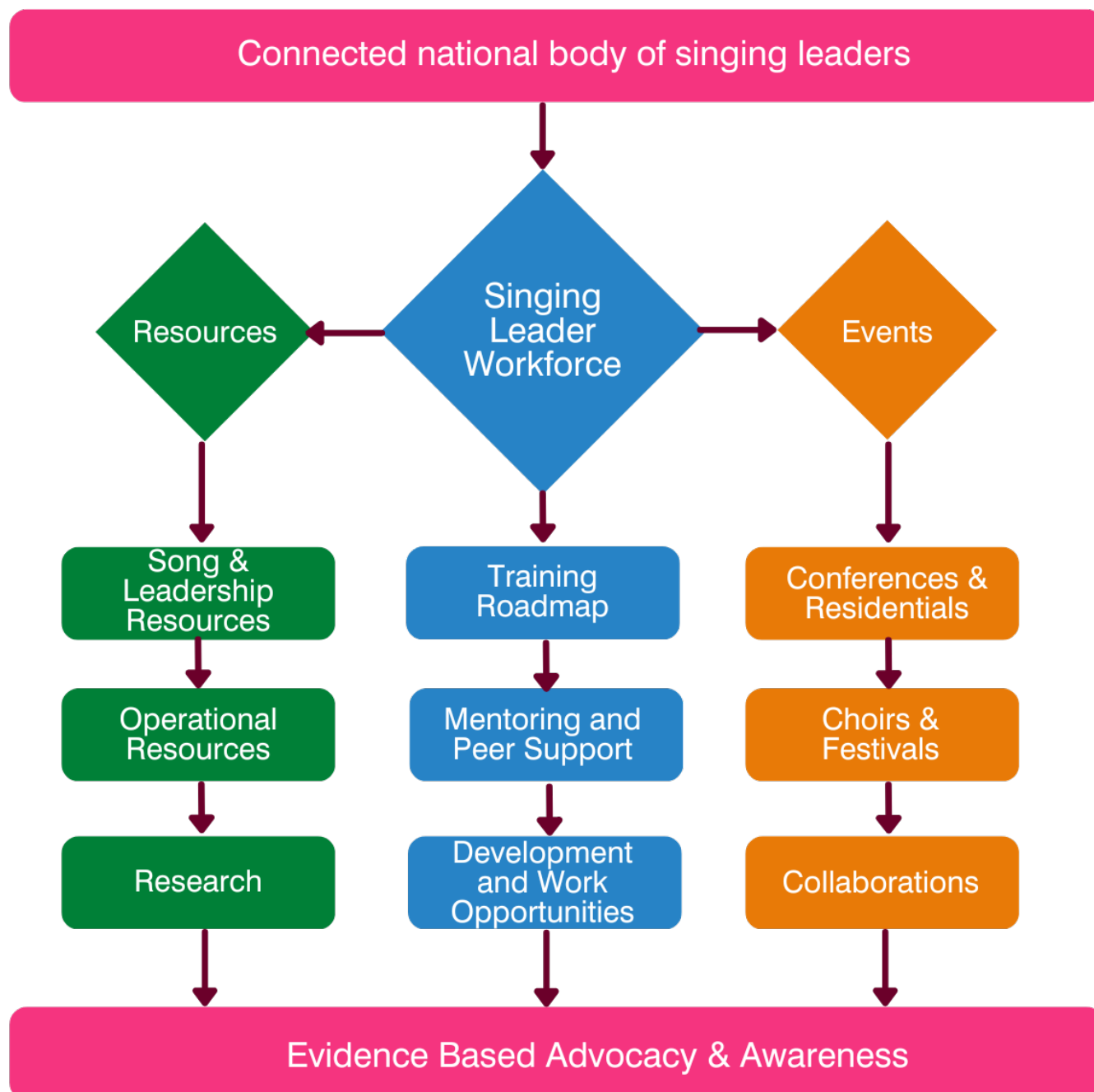
Pre-emerging	Emerging	Mid-career	Experienced
[Online network] Opportunities to connect with and learn from others' work	[Online network] Opportunities to connect with and learn from others' work	[Online network] Opportunities to connect with and learn from others' work	[Online network] Opportunities to connect with and learn from others' work
[Training programme] Range of training opportunities including online meet-ups	[Training programme] Range of training opportunities including online meet-ups	[Training programme] Range of training opportunities including online meet-ups	[Training programme] Range of training opportunities including online meet-ups
[As part of conferences] Taster sessions across disciplines and specialist areas	[Immersive Skills Academy] Opportunities for hands-on experience and training	[Choir exchanges] Observation visits to other mid-career and also experienced leaders' sessions Exchanges with other mid-career leaders	[Mentoring programme] Peer to peer mentoring Curation of training and mentoring at other levels
[Immersive Skills Academy] Opportunities for hands-on experience and training	[Choir exchanges] Observation visits to other emerging and also mid-career leaders' sessions Exchanges with other emerging leaders	[Mentoring programme] Peer mentoring within the group and with experienced leaders	[Resources] Creation of resources and publications, sharing knowledge
[Choir exchanges] Observation visits to other leaders' sessions	[Mentoring programme] Peer mentoring within the group and with mid-career and experienced leaders	[Resources] Creation of resources to share with the sector, sharing knowledge	[Fellowship programme] Advanced training / secondment including bringing in global practitioners
<p><b>Priorities</b></p> <p>Clear progression + Acknowledgement of diversity in practice            Reflective practice + Connectivity and support            Experience focused + Needs-based            Financially supported opportunities for individuals</p>			

## Concept Model

This example demonstrates how a national support plan might be constructed at the top level, and is based on the feedback received around Comfort Of Voices.

Investment in the current and emerging singing leader workforce is at the heart of the concept. The blue strand represents the pedagogical practice of the individual and the sector. The model proposes to build on the expertise of those working in the sector, facilitate peer support, and connect leaders working at similar levels. It signposts to pre-existing opportunities and resources and facilitates new training opportunities which directly reflect the needs of the sector.

To be sector-led, it relies on the individuals within the network to contribute ideas, requests for training topics, and to give feedback to guide its future direction.



Plans developed by the Love Singing steering group  
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