1 Problems arising from changing demographics

1.1 Arts participation in the USA

A recent survey in arts participation for the arts in America by the National Endowment for the Arts (Arts Participation 2008. Highlights from a National Survey. http://arts.endow.gov/news/-news09/SPPA-highlights.htm) produced some alarming findings: Since 1982, young adult (18 – 24) attendance rates have declined significantly for jazz, classical music, opera, ballet and non-musical plays.

Percentage of adults Ages 18 – 24 attending Arts Events in 1982 and 2008 in the USA

	1982	2008	Rate of change
Jazz	17.5%	7.3%	-58%
Classical music	11.0%	6.9%	-37%
Opera	2.0%	1.2%	-40%
Musicals	16.6%	14.5%	-13%
Non-musical plays	10.7%	8.2%	-23%
Ballet	3.9%	2.5%	-36%
Art museums	22.7%	22.9%	+1%

Table 1. Source: National Endowment for the Arts

From 2002 to 2008, 45 – 54 year olds who are historically a large component of arts audiences, showed a sharp decline (31%) in attendance for jazz, a 33% fall in audiences for classical music and 40% for opera.

Percentage of adults Ages 45 - 54 attending Arts Events in 1982 and 2008 in the USA

	1982	2008	Rate of change
Jazz	13.9%	9.8%	-30%
Classical music	15.2%	10.2%	-33%
Opera	4.0%	2.4%	-40%
Musicals	19.3%	17.4%	-10%
Non-musical plays	15.2%	8.7%	-43%
Ballet	5.1%	3.2%	-37%
Art museums	32.9%	23.2%	-29%

Table 2. Source: National Endowment for the Arts

The crucial question is, will this problem be replicated in the UK along the lines that events in the USA are eventually mirrored in the UK (for example sub-prime mortgages) – or is jazz holding its' own in the UK?

1.2 Arts participation in the UK

Set out below are tables 3 to 4 that analyse the attendance of jazz events in 1986 to 2008/9. It is important to note that in the 2004/2005 survey the questions asked have changed to enquire in a broader way 'whether you attend any of the art forms these days'. This could account for the 15% increase from 6.4% in 2002/03 to 7.34% in 2004/05 in Table 4.

Percentage of adults who attend each type of music event in Great Britain 1986 – 2008/9

Music	1986 %	1995/96 %	2005/06 %	2006/07 %	2007/08 %	2008/09 %	Rate of change	
							1986 – 2005/06 %	2005-2008 %
Jazz	7	6.2	9.4	-	11.55	11.57	34+	65+
Opera	4	6.4	8.4	-	-	-	110+	-
Classical	10	12.1	15.9	-	-	-	59+	-

Table 3 Source: BMRB Target Group Index 1986/2009
Note: the question asked in 2004/2005 was changed to enquire in a less precise way 'whether you attend any of these art forms these days'

Percentage of adults who attend each type of jazz event by age in Great Britain

	Total %	15-24 %	25-34 %	35-44 %	45-64 %	65+ %
1986	7	13	8	6	5.53	2
1995/96	6.2	7.8	7.4	6.2	6.83	2.7
2002/03	6.4	5	6.4	6.6	7.7	5.3
2004/05	7.34	7.37	6.66	6.05	8.9	6.64
2005/06	9.4	8.91	8.4	8.22	11.10	9.32
2007/08	11.55	12.06	13.57	10.55	12.91	8.35
2008/09	11.57	12.43	13.63	10.18	12.66	8.82
Rate of change 1986 – 2008/09	65+	(4.38)	70+	70+	129+	341+

Table 4 Source: BMRB Target Group Index 1986/2009

In Table 4 there is an increase of 65% in audience figures, from 7% in 1986 to 11.57% in 2008/09. However in the age range 15-24 there is an overall decrease of 4.38% attendance from 13% in 1986 to 12.43% in 2008/09.The age ranges 25-34 and 35-44 both show increases of 70% in audience figures, with 129% increases in the 45-64 age range and a 341% increase in the 65+ attenders, from 2% to 8.82%.

The figures in Table 4 all highlight the fact that the UK has an 'ageing' population in the increasing number of people reaching old age and the increase in the average age of the population. Karen Dunnell from the Office for National Statistics in "Ageing and Mortality" in the UK, National Statisticians' Annual Article on the Population (Winter 2008), noted that *"Over the last 25 years the number of people aged 65 and over in the UK has increased by 16%, from 8.5 million to 9.8 million. The number of children under 16 has declined by nearly 800,000 over the same period, from 12.23 million to 11.5 million. In 1982 the population aged 65 and over accounted for 15% of the population; by 2007 the figure had reached 16%. There are far more old people in the population than ever before. In addition the older population is ageing."*

2 Panic or Planning

2.1 Panic

When you look at the distribution of jazz attenders by age and compare this to the distribution of the UK population at large, a different picture emerges.

Age distribution of the population in Great Britain compared to the age distribution of people attending jazz events 1986 – 2008/09

Age	**0-14 %**	**15-24 %**	**25-34 %**	**35-44 %**	**45-64 %**	**65+ %**	**Total %**
Age distribution of population of GB 1986	19	16	14	14	22	15	100
Age distribution of people who attend jazz 1986	-	**38**	**20**	**14**	**23**	**5**	100
Age distribution of population of GB 2002/03	19	12	14	15	24	16	100
Age distribution of people who attend jazz 2002	-	**7**	**13**	**20**	**42**	**18**	100
Age distribution of population of GB 2005	18	13	13	15	25	16	100
Age distribution of people who attend jazz 2005/06	-	**15**	**14**	**16**	**35**	**20**	100
Age distribution of population of GB 2007	18	13	13	15	25	16	100
Age distribution of people who attend jazz 2008/09	-	**17**	**18**	**16**	**34**	**15**	100

Table 5 Source: BMRB Target Group Index 1986/2009 and National Statistics Office mid Year Population for the UK

Table 6 examines the percentage of all adults who attend jazz events and attendance by age in 1986 as compared with 2008/09. Attendances in the 15-24 age group of 13% in1986 compared to12.43% in 2008/09 showed a decrease of 4.38%. However please note the caveat in 1.2 above with regard to the change in the phrasing of the question to “whether you attend any of the art forms these days”.

Percentage of all adults in Great Britain who attend jazz events and attendance by age in 1986 compared with 2008//09

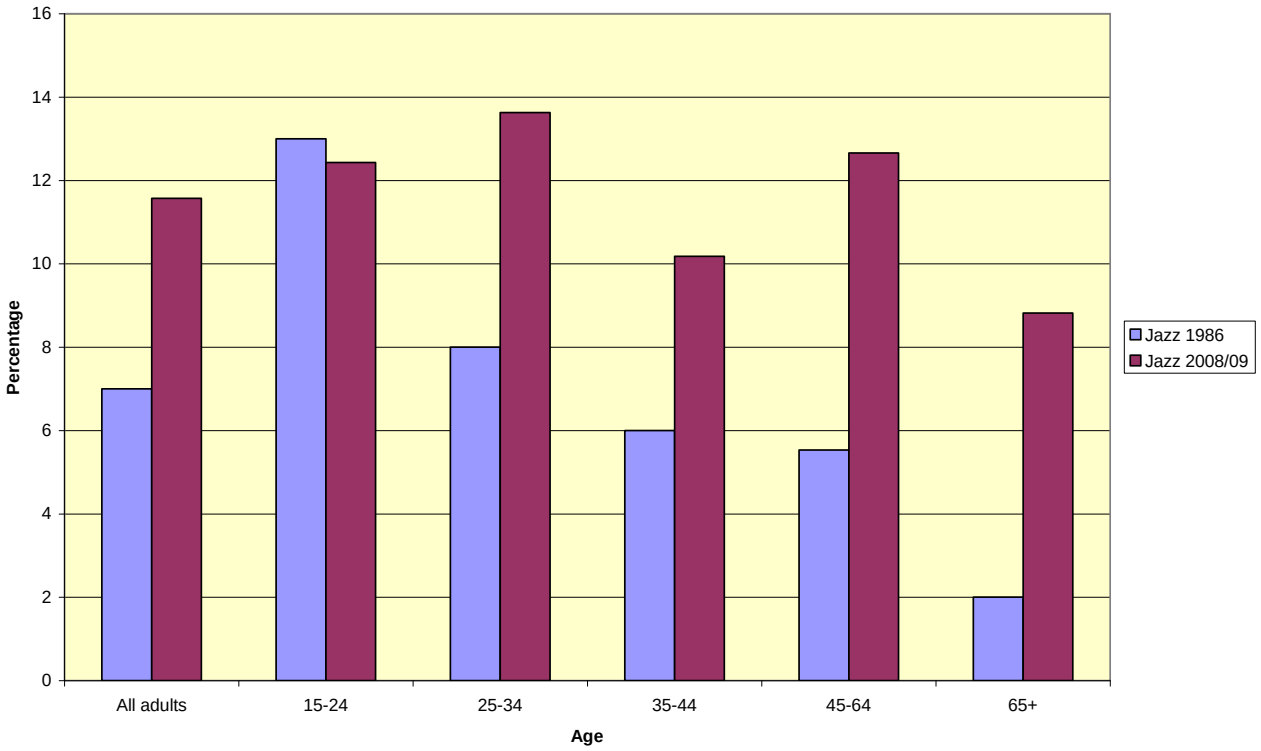

Table 6 Source: BMRB Target Group Index 1986/2009 and National Statistics Office mid Year Population for the UK

Population and jazz distribution by age in 1986 in Great Britain

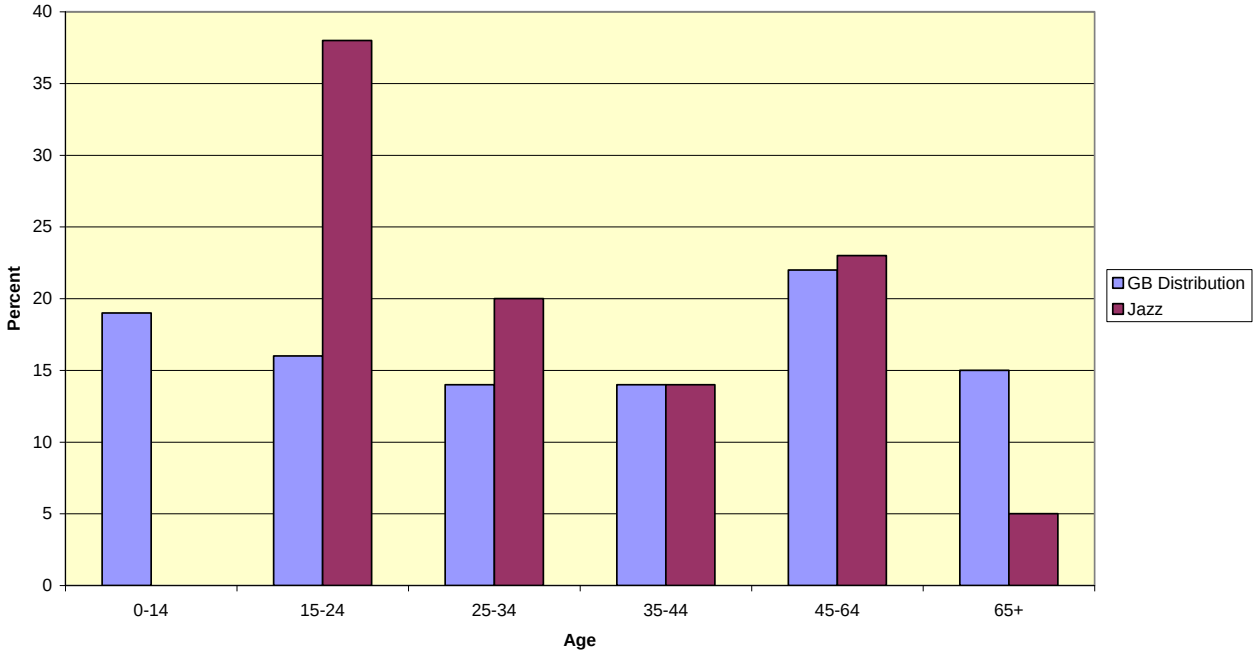

Table 7 Source: BMRB Target Group Index 1986/2009 and National Statistics Office mid Year Population for the UK

Population and jazz distribution by age in 2008/09 in Great Britain

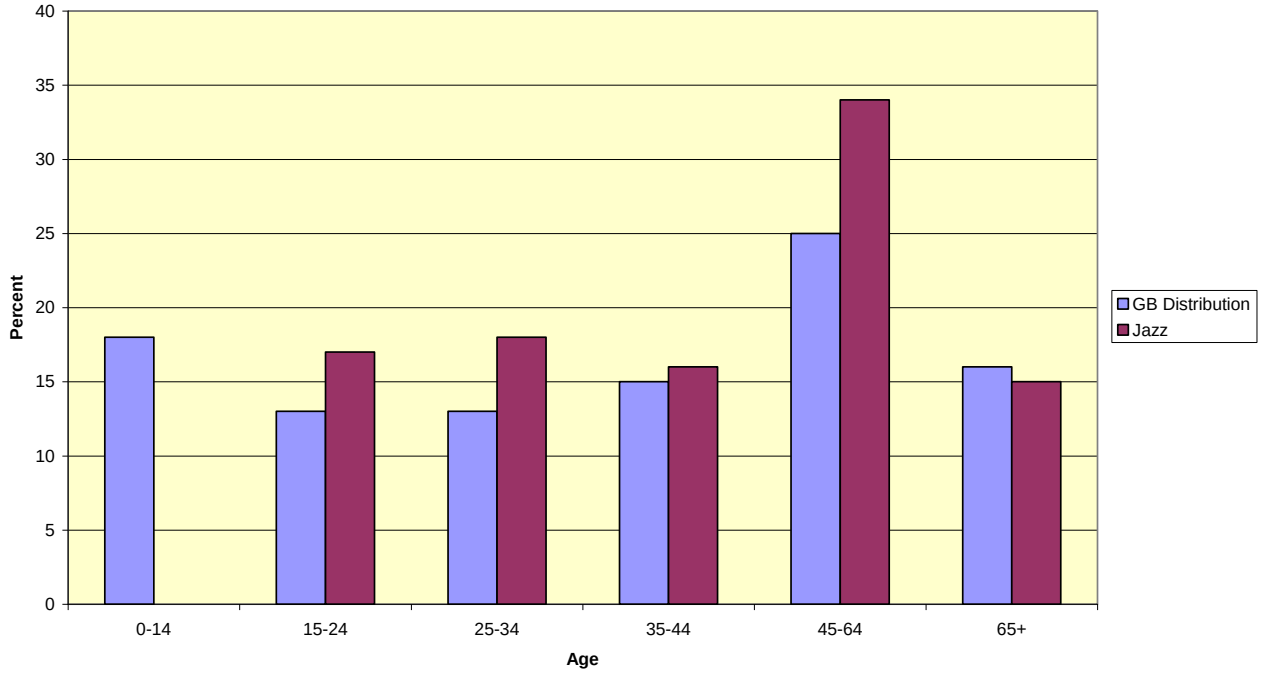

Table 8 Source: BMRB Target Group Index 1986/2009 and National Statistics Office mid Year Population for the UK

Table 6, 7 and 8 highlight the change in the distribution by age of the audience for jazz when compared to the distribution by age of the population in Great Britain.

In 1986, 38% of the audience for jazz was aged between 15-24 years as compared to the general population of 15-24 years of 16%. The general population of 65+ was 15% and the audience for jazz aged 65+ was 5%.

By 2008/09 this had changed dramatically. 17% of the audience for jazz are aged 15-24 whereas the audience for jazz in people aged 65+ has risen to 15%. The crucial question is how can jazz rebuild its audience aged 15-24?

When times get tough, the marketing of jazz is awash with arguments for dumping the name jazz, marketplace versus subsidy; that jazz should be part of a contemporary music lexicon along with folk, world musics and contemporary classical music; the egregious and fatally flawed economics of scale arguments of erasing diversity in favour of *"a strong corporate identity … a suite of discreet brands. An entity that would provide a strong operational platform and the benefits of economy of scale for support services … such an organisation would benefit from entrepreneurial leadership, a clear mission and market position."* (Boulding 2005)

Simon Frith argues for a blurring of boundaries:

"The key to jazz success is not getting records into the shops but listeners into the venues. And the issue here is not how to get the mainstream jazz audience to attend avant-garde gigs but how to get the audience for avant-garde rock and dance and contemporary music to attend avant-garde jazz shows too. Jamie Cullum fans are unlikely to enjoy a Polar Bear gig (their jazz interests are quite different); Bloc Party fans might. The way forward, in other words, is to blur the boundaries between jazz and other kinds of music rather than to try to mark them out more clearly. This is happening already in some venues and festivals (such as the Arches in Glasgow and Scotland's Tryptic Festival), on some labels (such as Babel) and for some musicians (such as Acoustic Ladyland, Soweto Kinch and Spring Heeled Jack). (Frith 2007)

Stuart Nicholson argues for subsidy as a bulwark against the homogenization of the market place for jazz:

"We are, then, at a key moment in jazz history. The music is being reshaped and reimagined beyond the borders of the United States through the process of glocalisation and transculturation with increasing authority by voices asserting their own cultural identity on the music. Non-American musicians want to connect with their own surroundings and want to give the music life and vitality that is relevant to their own socio-musical situation, so they are broadening the expressive base of the music in ways over which American jazz has no control. Key to these developments in Europe is that they are not a response to commercial logic. Sheltered by subsidy from the homogenizing effect of this marketplace, the music has been able to grow and develop in ways musicians want, rather than conforming to the expectations of the marketplace or shaped by the conventions of previous practice". (Nicholson 2005)

On the other hand, Eric Hobsbawm in Uncommon People takes a different angle:

"Is jazz becoming terminally fossilized? It is not impossible. If this should be the fate of jazz, it will not be much consolation that Clint Eastwood has buried Bird in a celluloid mausoleum and that every hairdresser and cosmetics store plays tapes of Billie Holiday. However, jazz has shown extraordinary powers of survival and self renewal inside a society not designed for it and which it does not deserve. It is too early to think that its potential is exhausted. Besides what is wrong with just listening and letting the future take care of itself". (Hobsbawm 1998)

Many people wrestle with the word jazz; Peter Ind says *"they like the word but hate the music".* However, if jazz is that bad why do cosmetic companies, car dealers and car manufacturers fall over themselves to exploit the word jazz? A rhetorical question and best answered by the simple fact that there is a market out there with definable characteristics and with people who may only like one genre of jazz or a number of genres; or the 'early adopter' who attends the innovative variety. Jazz is a broad church and when there is an altercation in the choir stall or the vestry, someone is busily adding an extension to the chancel.

Hobsbawm is right to let the music take care of itself but we should use every tool available to market jazz from the classroom to old and new media.

2.2 Planning

The answer to the question 'how can you rebuild the audience aged 15-24 is inextricably bound up with access to hearing jazz. When you go to see a film you buy the ticket first "but music is different – and radio proves that whether it is a pop tune, a heavily political punk album or an experimental avant garde suite the key is very simple: people have to hear it – repeatedly if possible – and for free. After a while if you're lucky people get to know and like the music. Sooner or later they are going to have to own it". (Dubber 2007)

Exposure has always been – for jazz – a defining component that affects the eventual buying decision. For example, *thejazz*, the UK's first 24 hours-a-day digital national radio station launched at Easter 2007, had 334,000 listeners in the RAJAR survey period ending in June 2007.By the period ending 16th September 2007 the listenership had increased to 338,000 or an increase of 16%. In addition to the 338k 15+ listeners to *thejazz*, there were 53,000 children under the age of 15 listening in each week. *Thejazz* came off the air in March 2008 due to a proposed takeover bid.

Radio Joint Audience Research for BBC jazz content for the 4th quarter period ending 18th December 2005 showed that Gilles Peterson's World Life programme on Radio 1 attracted 52.1% listeners between the ages of 15 and 24; whereas the average percentage of listeners to jazz programmes on Radios 2 and 3 were 4.96% and 1.54% of 15-24 year old listeners. Gilles Peterson's World Life programme may be a case for Simon Frith's blurring of boundaries – or the low level of listeners aged 15-24 for jazz programmes on Radio 2 and 3 may provide a powerful argument for Stuart Nicholson's arguments for the use of subsidy,

However, to rebuild attendance at jazz events by the 15-24 year age group, the use of radio and new media is crucial and our tactics need to be researched, developed and refined in a way that will enable promoters and musicians to gain access to the ears of children and 15+ listeners.

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