

# Songs of London Life

Using folk arts in inclusive settings



Written by Emmie Ward



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## English Folk Dance and Song Society

The English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) is the national development organisation for folk music, dance and related arts, based at Cecil Sharp House, a dedicated folk arts centre and music venue, in Camden, North London. Cecil Sharp House is also home to EFDSS' Vaughan Williams Memorial Library (VWML), England's national folk music and dance archive, which provides free online access to thousands of searchable folk manuscripts and other materials. EFDSS creates and delivers creative learning projects for children, young people, adults and families at Cecil Sharp House, across London and around the country; often in partnership with other organisations. Learning programmes draw on the diverse and vibrant traditional folk arts of Britain and beyond, focusing on song, music, dance and related art forms such as storytelling, drama, and arts and crafts. [www.efdss/education](http://www.efdss/education)

### Inclusive Folk

This resource is part of EFDSS' Inclusive Folk project (2020-2022) which aims at improving access to folk arts for young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The project comprises fortnightly Folk Unlimited music making sessions at Cecil Sharp House, outreach sessions at colleges and settings for young people with special educational needs and disabilities, the creation of free learning resources for the EFDSS Resource Bank, and training opportunities for music educators.

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Cover photo by Brian Slater, students participating in ceilidh dance during Folk Unlimited workshop

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# Contents

<b>About this resource</b>	Page 4
<b>Hopping down in Kent</b>	Page 5
<i>Sheet music</i>	Page 7
<i>Lyrics</i>	Page 8
<b>What will we do when we have no money</b>	Page 9
<i>Sheet music</i>	Page 11
<i>Lyrics</i>	Page 12
<b>Up to the rigs of London Town</b>	Page 13
<i>Sheet music</i>	Page 16
<i>Lyrics</i>	Page 17
<b>Additional material</b>	Page 18
<b>Contributors</b>	Page 19

## About this resource

This resource is based on repertoire exploring the musical traditions of London and has been developed for working with young people with special educational needs and disabilities by EFDSS' Inclusive Folk leaders.

Londoners have always had a passion for singing and music. From pubs and taverns to concert stages, and from street corners to markets, songs and singing was part of everyday city life. This resource contains three songs which reflect different aspects of London life, with themes that still have relevance to young people living in big cities today.

*Hopping down in Kent* tells the story of Londoners leaving the city for a working holiday in the countryside. Contemporary themes could be travel, holidays, or seasonal work.

*What will we do when we have no money* is about people who hawked (sold) on the streets to earn their living. Contemporary themes could be resourcefulness, resilience and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

*Up to the rigs of London Town* is a popular folk song adapted to include London locations and allow for student participation. Contemporary themes could be familiar sights and places.

Each song has an outline of the suggested ways you can work with it along with sheet music notation. There are recordings of all the songs to accompany this resource, which can be listened to as inspiration or to sing along to as backing tracks.

All the songs have elements that make them easier to learn, such as repeated lines and choruses. There is a change of pace, mood and dynamics between the songs. Students have a variety of ways in which they can participate which will help build their musical skills whilst also providing an opening for learning more about our shared cultural heritage.

For further inspiration for your classes and workshops, take a look in the "Additional material" section at the end of this resource.

## Hopping down in Kent

‘Hopping’, harvesting hops for brewing beer, was an important seasonal job for working class and Gypsy and Traveller communities in and around London. For poor communities in London, hop picking in Kent was often the only holiday they could have and, potentially, they would even earn a little extra money. It wasn’t much of a rest but the hop pickers had quite a lot of fun seeing old friends and singing songs round the campfire in the evenings after work. This particular song about going ‘hopping’ was on the repertoire of Traveller singer Louie Fuller, and we have adapted it for working with young people with special educational needs and disabilities. Louie was born in Woolwich, London, in 1914 and her songs have been recorded and included on several albums. *Hopping down in Kent* was one of her favourite songs.

The imagery and stories within the verses of the hop pickers hard at work are fun to explore in a variety of ways and the song has an easy chorus reminiscent of *Old Macdonald had a farm!*

Try these activities to work with the song in your group:

- Show the students photos of families hop picking in Kent. It’s easy to find some great photos online.
- Take inspiration from theatre and act out each verse using tableaux, mime or gesture. For example, sweeping out the tent, cooking porridge or making tea in a pot, picking the hops or washing clothes and hanging them on the line. When our sessions were delivered online, we made a video showing the tutors acting out the scenes.
- Use Makaton or British Sign Language to pick out key words in the verses if you already know some sign language. You may even have students who sign and can teach words to the group.
- Show the students a pot, a broom and some plants to represent the hops. You may be able to buy some hops to use as a sensory resource or pick some - they grow as a climber in many peoples’



gardens. Hops are very tactile and interesting to explore. Students can even smell some beer if this is appropriate.

- Make a soundscape. This could be rural sounds of birds singing, gentle rain etc. and then the hoppers calling out “wake up you lazy lot”! Making soundscapes which then blend into the song are a fun way to get the group involved in arranging a song.
- Change the lyrics to fit your theme or group. For example, we adapted the lyrics to fit with our journey back to London and as a way of naming each of our students in the song. For example,

“And after I’ve picked all the hops

Growing all around

I saw...” *Katie*”


On her way to London town...”



EFDSS tutors acting out scenes from *Hopping down in Kent* (Photos: Emmie Ward and Alice Barnard)

# Hopping down in Kent

[Roud 1715](#)



G D

Now when I went a - hopp - ing (a) - hopp - ing down in Kent. I

G D

saw old moth - er Reill - y a - sweep - ing out her tent. With me

G D G

tee - aye - o, tee - aye - o, tee - aye - ee - aye - o.

## Hopping down in Kent

Now when I went a-hopping, hopping down in Kent

I saw old mother Reilly a-sweeping out her tent

*With me tee-aye-o, tee-aye-o, tee-aye-ee-aye-o*

Now every Monday morning just at six o'clock

You'll hear the old hoppers call get up and boil your pot

*With me tee-aye-o, tee-aye-o, tee-aye-ee-aye-o*

Now Sunday is our washing day, don't we wash it clean

We boil it in our hopping pots and hang it on the green

*With me tee-aye-o, tee-aye-o, tee-aye-ee-aye-o*

Now hopping is all over, all the money's spent

And don't I wish I never went a-hopping down in Kent

*With me tee-aye-o, tee-aye-o, tee-aye-ee-aye-o*



## What will we do when we have no money

This song was recorded by the great singer Mary Delaney in the 1970s. Mary was an Irish Traveller who lived for some time in a caravan underneath the Hammersmith flyover in London. Her songs have been published on several records and re-recorded by many folk artists. This particular song is about the life of a traveller having to 'hawk' (sell) in the streets to make a living and being resilient and resourceful.

This song works very well by layering up several instruments, playing one note or chord and creating an underlying 'drone' to sing over.

Sound-makers and sounds that work well for this could be:

- BIGmacks – a communication device with a big colourful button which is easy to press. Sounds can be sampled on them beforehand or during the session and are replayed when pressing the button
- Individual chimes
- Music making and recording apps for tablets or smart phones, such as GarageBand or BandLab
- Playing key notes on a piano keyboard
- Guitars or other stringed instruments with an open tuning to the same chord
- Humming a long note to create a drone

This song has the repeating line "All true lovers what will we do then?" This is a good line to focus on for everyone to learn together, especially if you have someone who can sing the other lines.

In the arrangement for the recording that accompanies this resource we also sing the lyrics as a call and response. This approach helps students learn and remember the words through repetition.

Key words for phrases from the song such as "no money" can be acted out by showing an empty hand or pockets or using Makaton or BSL signs.

In the past, many Travellers used to 'hawk' or sell on the streets, often using street calls to advertise their wares. To get a sense of how this could have sounded, ask your students to make up their own street cry, for example, "juicy apples!" or "mobile phones!". As part of our arrangement of Mary

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Delaney's song, our students enjoyed creating a soundscape where they built up these street cries one at a time until it was a riot of sound!

This song offers an opportunity to learn more about Traveller culture with students, some of whom may come from this background themselves! Students could look at photos, read stories and listen to music from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

# What will we do when we have no money

[Roud 16879](#)

C



What will we do when we have no mo - ney\_\_

C G



All true lov - ers what will we do then? Onl - y

C



hawk through the town for a hung - er - ly crown. And we'll

C G C



yod - el it ov - er ag - a - in\_\_

## What will we do when we have no money

What will we do when we have no money?

*All true lovers what will we do then?*

Only hawk through the town for a hungry crown.

*And we'll yodel it over again.*

What will we do if we marry a tinker\*?

*All true lovers what will we do then?*

Only mend a tin can and walk on with me man,

*And we'll yodel it over again.*

What will we do if we have a young daughter?

*All true lovers what will we do then?*

Only throw her on our back and walk on for the craic,

*And we'll yodel it over again.*

What will we do when we have no money?

*All true lovers what will we do then?*

Only hawk through the town for a hungry crown,

*And we'll yodel it over again.*

*\*Note that 'tinker' can be used as derogatory term. Although it is in the original lyrics used by Mary Delaney, it might be more appropriate to replace 'tinker' with the less charged 'tinner'.*

## Up to the rigs of London Town



Folk Unlimited students doing the moves for *Up to the rigs of London Town* (Photo: Brian Slater)

*Up to the rigs of London Town* is a popular folk song from the repertoire of the Somerset singer and farmworker Charlie Wills. We have adapted the song to better suit inclusive music making. In its original form it is a song about a seemingly innocent country fellow who turns the tables on the tricksters in the 'Big City' and takes place in the area of Cheapside, once a den of iniquity and now the financial centre of London! It has a very lively chorus which students really enjoy learning.

To adapt the chorus and make it easier to learn, you can sing each line as a repeating call and response and add gestures to make it more of a dance.

Chorus line	Gesture
"And I was up to the rigs"	Point up
"Down to the jigs"	Point down
"Up to the rigs of London Town"	Point up and then do the BSL sign for London - make small circles next to your ear with an extended index finger – you can find videos of BSL signs online.



This song lends itself well to making changes in the lyrics. For the verses, you can include places your students are familiar with, such as the area they live in or where they go to school. You can use picture cards or objects of reference for familiar landmarks and invited students to share things they had seen in London, such as Big Ben or the Thames. Depending on the abilities in your group, some students could also accompany the song with percussion and sound makers and others focus on learning the words and movements.



*Left:* A Big Ben money box can be used as an “object of reference” for a London theme. Fill it with bells and it will double up as a sound maker! (Photo: Emmie Ward)

*Right:* Using a purple sari to represent the River Thames in *Up to the rigs of London Town*. (Photo: Brian Slater)

This song makes a good basis for a sensory story. It can be about a journey through London and you could choose different sensory objects to represent the sights and sounds of London. This approach works well for young people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD). An example of a sensory story to link with the verses could be,

- River Thames - water spray on back of hand (tactile)
- Big Ben - clock ‘boing’ sound (auditory)
- Piccadilly Circus - LED lights (visual)



- Covent Garden - lavender (smell)
- China Town - drop of soy sauce, fresh ginger or other Chinese spice, if allowed and safe (taste)

You could let your group create a soundscape based on the sounds of London. This could be old London with hawkers and horses and carts or modern-day London with the sounds of motorbikes and police sirens!

We have adapted the original verse to make it less 'wordy' and easier to follow for everyone. In our arrangement of the song, we have also left gaps in the verse and chorus for students to repeat each line in call and response. This will help students to learn the words and encourage participation.

The first verse and chorus with call and response will look like this:

In London City I made my way  
(In London City I made my way)  
In Camden Town I did stray  
(In Camden Town I did stray)

*And I was up to the rigs*  
*(Up to the rigs!)*  
*Down to the jigs*  
*(Down to the rigs!)*  
*Up to the rigs of London Town*

# Up to the rigs of London Town

[Roud 868](#)



D G A D  
 In Lon-don Ci-ty I made my wa - y In Cam-den To - own

G A D  
 I did stra - y And I was up to the rigs.

G A  
 down to the jigs. Up to the rigs of Lon - don To - own

D G  
 And I was up to the rigs. down to the jigs.

A  
 Up to the rigs of Lon - don To - own

## Up to the rigs of London Town

In London City I made my way

In Camden Town I did stray

*And I was up to the rigs*

*Down to the jigs*

*Up to the rigs of London Town*

In London City I made my way

It was by Big Ben I did stray

*Chorus*

In London City I made my way

In Westminster I did stray

*Chorus*

In London City I made my way

It was by the Thames I did stray

*Chorus (twice)*

## Additional material

We hope you enjoy using the songs in this resource. There are plenty more useful materials in the EFDSS Resource Bank.

EFDSS' resource *Songs of May*, also created by the Inclusive Folk team has more strategies for working with students with special educational needs and disabilities.

<https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/a-z/55-resources/learning-resources/9884-songs-of-may>

For more information on using Makaton in folk songs the EFDSS resource *Songs of Rural Life* includes songs accompanied with Makaton signs.

<https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/a-z/55-resources/learning-resources/4894-songs-of-rural-life>

For more resources and information about sensory stories and working with young people with Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities (PMLD), we recommend visiting Joanna Grace's website *The Sensory Projects*. <http://www.thesensoryprojects.co.uk>

For more folk songs about London, have a look in the EFDSS resource *Singing Histories – London*.

<https://www.efdss.org/learning/resources/resources/53-singing-histories-london/2983-singing-histories-london>

Field recordings with the original singers of the songs included in this pack can be accessed via the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library's online digital archive if you click on the Roud number link in the sheet music of each song. The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library is England's national folk music and dance archive and holds original and digitised manuscripts, recordings and other archival material relating to folk arts. [www.vwml.org](http://www.vwml.org)

Two of the three songs included in this resource came from the repertoires of Traveller singers. Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities have played a very important role in keeping folk songs alive into the modern day. To learn more about GRT communities in London and the UK today, you can visit the websites of the local charity London Gypsies and Travellers, <http://www.londongypsiesandtravellers.org.uk/> and the national charities The Traveller Movement, <https://travellermovement.org.uk/> and Friends, Families and Travellers, <https://www.gypsy-traveller.org/>

## Contributors

Emmie Ward is the lead tutor for EFDSS' Inclusive Folk project. She holds a PGCert in music and special needs using Sounds of Intent with the University of Roehampton. She works as a freelance music and folk arts practitioner and teaches a range of classes for people with learning disabilities. She specialises in using a multi-sensory approach to storytelling and music. In addition to her freelance work, Emmie has worked as a teacher for many years and in a variety of settings including Day Centres, Further Education colleges and schools. She is the writer of this resource.

Nicholas Goode is a regular tutor for EFDSS' Inclusive Folk project. He has been a professional musician for over twenty years. He holds a PGCE in SEN/Music from the University of Roehampton, London, and has taught and led workshops across all ages, from early years to adults, and worked with students with a wide range of complex needs. In addition to his work as a musician and educator, Nick works extensively in theatre as a composer/arranger and actor.

Joe Danks is a tutor for EFDSS' Inclusive Folk project. He is a percussionist, guitarist, singer and composer from Nottingham and member of the band Ranagri. He has worked extensively in inclusive music making and has been the director of Pulse Arts CIC, a company that takes person centred music practice into hospitals and hospices in London and East Anglia.

Alice Barnard was our Inclusive Folk trainee music leader in 2020. She is a singer / songwriter and guitarist who likes to draw inspiration from all walks of life and different music genres. In addition to her solo career, Alice has been working as a facilitator and resident musician at a community for young adults with learning disabilities.



**At the English Folk Dance and Song Society, we champion the folk arts at the heart of England's rich and diverse cultural landscape.**

Our award-winning Resource Bank contains over 100 resources – incorporating hundreds of audio files, videos and supporting documents, all free to download. They offer endless practical ways to use folk song, music, dance, drama and more in all sorts of community settings, as well as in formal education.

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