

B&NES Council Arts Development Team Annual Report 2015/16

July 2016



1. About the Arts Development team.

The Arts Development team is a commissioning service: Bath & North East Somerset Council is a funder and commissioner of arts organisations and activities, not a direct provider.

1.1. Position within Council Structure.

The Arts Development team is within the Economy and Culture group, part of the Community Regeneration Division of the Council's Place Directorate.

1.2. Policy context.

The work of the Arts Development team is guided by the Economic Strategy Review 2014–2030, the Cultural & Creative Strategy 2015–2020, and the Economy & Culture Service Plan 2015/16.

1.3. Purpose.

Having a varied arts and cultural offer contributes to the quality of life in Bath and North East Somerset, for both residents and visitors, and enhances the economy and profile of the area.

The Council wants the arts offer in the district to contribute to achieving the aims of the Cultural & Creative Strategy 2015-2020 by:

- including a range of high quality arts events and activities that offer a balance between popular, accessible and more challenging work
- being relevant to a broad cross-section of residents, especially those living in the Council's target communities
- being available and accessible to all residents of the district, including those with physical access needs, mental health needs and/or learning disabilities
- contributing to achieving the aims of the B&NES Economic Strategy by supporting and developing education and training opportunities, and through graduate retention

The purpose of the Arts Development team is to ensure that:

- the Council's budget for the arts delivers tangible benefits to all residents
- the arts services & activities supported by the Council are appropriate and relevant to all residents
- the local arts offer contributes significantly to the Council's ambition of making Bath and North East Somerset an even better place to live, work and visit

1.4. Staffing.

The Arts Development team has 2.4 full-time equivalent staff:

- Senior Arts Development Officer/Manager 1.0
- Arts Development Officer 1.0
- Arts Information Officer 0.2
- Admin Assistant (shared with World Heritage Site Manager) 0.2

1.5. Budget 2015/16

Overheads	£
Staff	101,162
Office costs	2,596
Re-charges	1,620
Sub-total	105,378
Grants and Contract fees	
Contracts	171,000
One-year Arts Project Grants	85,800
Arts Micro-grants	10,000
Town Council/Market Towns allocation	15,000
Sub-total	281,800
In-kind support to arts organisations	
This includes Bath Festivals' office rental costs and discounted room hire charges for several festivals & events, including Bath Festivals.	57,230
Sub-total	57,230
Cross-Council strategic projects	
Public art	13,100
World War 1 Centenary	24,500
Bath Festivals Box Office: Payment four of a five-year contribution towards the cost of purchasing new ticketing software	12,000
Sub-total	49,600
Other development and projects	
Market research – 'Voicebox' survey	3,000
Sector CPD support provided by John Hector, Business Advisor	1,500
Sub-total	4,500
TOTAL	498,508

1.6. Distribution of spending on grants and contract fees across the district

Total of all grants and contract fees 2015/16	£281,800
Percentage of activity that benefits residents of Bath (40.5%)	£114,129
Percentage of activity that benefits residents of North East Somerset (59.9%)	£167,671

This is a significant increase in benefit to the North East Somerset area of the district. During 2014-15, benefit was distributed as follows: Bath 57%; North East Somerset 43%

2. Funding policy

The Council's criteria for funding the arts support the aims and ambitions of Cultural & Creative Strategy *Priority Theme 5, Audiences and engagement* (p8).

These are:

- Addressing the participation gap within specific communities in B&NES by focussing on the following:
 - increasing participation by residents of the Council's target communities: Radstock, Midsomer Norton, Peasedown St John, Keynsham, Twerton, Whiteway, London Road/Snowhill, and Foxhill
 - increasing participation by residents from demographic groups that are under-represented in the district's audience profile, many of whom live in the Council's target communities
 - increasing wellbeing and enabling people with physical access needs, mental health needs and/or learning disabilities to access and participate more fully in arts events and activities
- Promoting engagement in volunteering.
- Using arts activity to promote health and wellbeing.
- Gathering audience data and insights to measure and deepen audience experience, and increase participation.
- Promoting arts activities in B&NES to the West of England, national, and international audiences, where appropriate.

The Arts Development team regards children and young people as an intrinsic and integral part of the demographic groups and target communities it is seeking to engage.

2.1. Main functions of the service

The main functions of the service are:

- Increasing opportunities for access to arts activity
- Making the arts & cultural sector more resilient
- Managing contracts and grants
- Performance monitoring of the arts sector, including analysis of audience data
- Development projects
- Advice & guidance to customers
- Enhancement of the public realm
- Cross-Council strategic projects

A more detailed summary of work undertaken during 2015/16 against each of the main service functions is provided below.

2.2. Increasing opportunities for access to arts activity

The Arts Development team works closely with the voluntary arts sector in the area to increase residents' participation and engagement in the arts. This work is underpinned by demographic information gathered from Bath Box Office, the

Council's 'Voicebox' residents' survey, as well as voluntary reporting of audience data by funded/contracted arts organisations.

Analysis of audience data is provided under contract with The Audience Agency.

2.3. Making the arts & cultural sector more resilient

The Arts Development team is committed to developing capacity, skills and resilience within the voluntary arts sector, for organisations of all sizes/scales, whether or not they are in receipt of Council funding. In 2015/16, this was achieved through a programme of training and other forms of business support.

Additionally, a sector training programme, 'Thrive Bath', was delivered under contract with Mackerel Sky Ltd. Further support services were delivered by a partnership comprised of Creative Bath, The Guild Co-working Hub, and the Cultural Forum for the Bath Area, funded under a contract with the Economy & Culture Group.

2.3.1. Cultural & Creative Strategic Advisory Board

In response to an action point in the Cultural & Creative Strategy, the Council established a Cultural & Creative Strategic Advisory Board.

The purpose of the Board is to enable strategic working between the different bodies investing in culture in B&NES.

Membership of the Board is as follows:

- Councillor Patrick Anketell-Jones (Chair), Council Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Bath & North East Somerset Council
- Ben Woods, Bath & North East Somerset Council – Group Manager, Economy & Culture
- Ruth Kapadia, Arts Council England – B&NES Relationship Manager
- Mehjabeen Patrick, Creative England – Chief Operating Officer
- Nerys Watts, Heritage Lottery Fund – Head of HLF South West
- Lyndsey Swift, Visit England – Head of Partnerships
- Paul Appleby, West of England Local Enterprise Partnership – Creative Sector

A representative appointed by the local cultural and creative sector will attend Board meetings by invitation. At the time of publication of this report, the sector has not yet appointed a representative.

The B&NES Arts Development team provides administrative support to the Board.

The Board held its inaugural meeting on Monday 19 October 2015.

2.4. Managing contracts and grants

The work of the Arts Development team in managing contracts and grants has the following elements:

- Managing the awarding of contracts
- Monitoring arts services delivered under contract

- Managing the awarding of grants
- Monitoring arts work supported by grants

The work carried out during 2015/16 is set out in more detail below.

2.4.1. Managing the awarding of contracts

The ten current contracts for arts services were awarded by the Council in the financial year 2013/14 via a process agreed and overseen by the Council's procurement and audit sections. No further contracts were awarded during 2015/16.

Full details of the Council's current contracted arts provision can be viewed at: <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/sport-leisure-and-parks/arts-development/arts-organisations-funded-bath-and-north-east-some#commission>

2.4.2. Monitoring arts services delivered under contract

The Arts Development team carries out rigorous quarterly monitoring of work delivered under each of the ten contracts, as follows:

- assessment by written report at the end of quarter 1 (April-June)
- assessment by written report and formal, minuted, monitoring meeting at the end of quarter 2 (July-September)
- assessment by written report at the end of quarter 3 (October-December)
- assessment by written report and formal, minuted, monitoring meeting at the end of quarter 4 (January-March)
- satisfactory end-of-year reporting and submission of all required performance indicator data

Additionally, Officers attend a cross-section of activities to monitor the quality of services provided under contract. Officers may also attend to observe Board or Committee meetings.

2.4.3. Managing the awarding of grants

In each financial year, the Arts Development team manages the awarding of grants to support work that will take place during the following financial year.

During 2015 the Arts Development team received 23 applications for funding to its One-year Arts Project Funding scheme and 14 applications to its Arts Micro-grant scheme. Subsequently, 18 One-year Arts Project Grants and 8 Arts Micro-grants were awarded for activity in 2015/16.

All grant applications are assessed via a rigorous process that conforms to the Council's Standing Orders for Finance. Following assessment, Officers make recommendations for funding to senior managers. Final funding decisions are made by senior managers and overseen by the relevant Council Cabinet Member.

2.4.4. Monitoring arts work supported by grants

Throughout each financial year the Arts Development team monitors arts organisations and projects that were awarded grants during the financial year. 26 projects were successfully delivered during 2015/16 with the support of Council investment. Monitoring consisted of:

- visits to events and activities
- end of project reporting
- gathering and assessing performance indicator data

2.4.5 Establishing the Cultural & Creative Challenge Fund for Arts Projects 2016/17

During 2015/16 the Council responded to the ambitions of the Cultural & Creative Strategy by establishing the Cultural & Creative Challenge Fund for Arts Projects. The purpose of this new funding scheme is to replace small grants and consolidate the Council's investment in the arts into fewer, higher value grants that support larger, more strategic arts and cultural activities.

The first of two rounds of application to the Cultural & Creative Challenge Fund for Arts Projects opened on 1 February 2016 with a deadline of 31 March 2016. Funded projects will take place during 2016/17 and be reported at the end of that year.

2.5. Performance monitoring of the arts sector

The Arts Development team takes an evidenced-based, data-driven approach to business planning and policy making. Funded organisations are required to report annually on nine local performance indicators for the arts.

These are:

1. Total attendances – total annual attendance is reported to senior management
2. Council subsidy per attendance
3. Council investment as % of total annual turnover
4. Leverage
5. Post code data of attendees
6. Customer satisfaction collected and reported using the Council's preferred method.
7. Total number of volunteers
8. Total volunteer hours
9. Qualitative assessment and feedback - Officers attended 86 events for monitoring purposes during 2015/16

The information provided is collated into an annual data set. This is used to identify patterns and trends in attendance and participation. This information is shared with the sector and reported to senior managers and Councillors.

The Arts Development team also obtains detailed analysis of the audience demographics for all funded arts activity. This is provided under contract by The Audience Agency using the following methods:

- Analysis of Box office data
- Analysis of postcode data provided by funded organisations
- MOSAIC analysis of audience data

This total data set is further cross-referenced against other data about wider trends in arts participation obtained from:

- the Council's 'Voicebox' survey of B&NES residents
- Department for Culture Media and Sport's national 'Taking Part' survey.

The Audience Agency will complete its analysis of all recently collected data in autumn 2016. We will share the results of this analysis as soon as it is available.

2.6. Development projects

The Arts Development team identifies and responds to gaps in current arts provision and works in partnership with relevant organisations to address them. Some projects receive external funding, e.g. from Arts Council England, Awards for All, etc. Other projects are delivered in partnership to support the development of arts provision by town councils within the district. During 2015/16 these included:

- Keynsham Arts Joint Committee
- Midsomer Norton Community Trust Arts Programme
- Bath Cultural & Creative Partnership CiC
- Bath Dance – also funded by Arts Council England
- Theatre Bath
- B&NES Music Hub – also funded by Arts Council England

2.7. Advice and guidance to customers

The Arts Development team provides advice, information, guidance and support to voluntary arts organisations, individual arts practitioners, and members of the public.

Support is provided via email, telephone and in person. The Arts Development team also published a monthly online arts bulletin and maintains 12 web pages providing advice and support on topics including fundraising, safeguarding and a directory of provision for children and young people.

During 2015/16 the Arts Development team contracted business advisor, John Hector, to provide a total of 16 hours bespoke support to local arts organisations.

2.8. Enhancement of the public realm

The Arts Development team engages with public art projects, usually those with additional external funding, and manages specific arts development projects.

2.8.1. Keynsham - New Clocktower

The Clocktower was installed in September 2015 in the public space outside the new civic centre development in Keynsham town centre. Designed by artist Sebastien Boyesen, the sides of the Clocktower have a collage of images relating to local history. In 2016, the Arts Development team will publish a book about the Clocktower, telling the story behind each image on the Clocktower panels.

2.8.2 Keynsham - Timeline panels

The Timeline is a series of nine panels which will be fixed to the front of the planters either side of Bath Hill Steps, telling the story of the history of Keynsham from earliest times to the present day. Artist David Mackie worked with all seven schools in Keynsham in 2014 to create the designs. Keynsham Town Council is now fund-raising to complete the project during 2016/17.

2.9. Cross-Council strategic projects

The Arts Development team leads on strategic cultural projects: currently, the World War 1 Centenary commemorations.

The World War 1 Centenary commemorations run from 2014 to 2018 and the Arts Development team leads on the Council's events and projects marking the centenary locally. In 2015/16 the following events and projects were organised to commemorate the Centenary:

- WW1 Exhibition at the Museum in Radstock in summer 2015 (a touring version of the exhibition held in Bath in 2014).
- The Council formally named Firs Field in Combe Down as a 'Centenary Field'. A plaque will be installed in 2016/17.
- Display of knitted poppies in the Guildhall, Bath, and small displays in other main Council buildings in November 2015.
- Commemorative plaque in Paulton to honour Sergeant Oliver Brooks who was awarded the Victoria Cross on 8 October 1915. Sgt Brooks is the only soldier from what is now the B&NES area awarded the VC. A moving commemorative event was organised by Paulton Parish Council, 100 years to the day on 8 October 2015.
- Poetry 1915 – organised with Bath Poetry Café, the second of five annual events featuring poetry of the centenary year
- Screening of the film 'Till the Boys Come Home' in March 2016 at the Little Theatre Cinema in Bath, with Q&A session with the director and producer.
- Survey of war memorials in Bath and North East Somerset, to assess condition and any requiring repairs. It is hoped to apply for external funding to undertake work to those requiring significant repair.

Additionally, the Arts Development Admin Assistant managed the B&NES World War 1 Centenary website, including a new feature 'My Family Story' where Councillors and members of staff have contributed accounts of relatives who served in WW1.

The website can be viewed at <http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/services/tourism-and-heritage/local-history/world-war-one-centenary>

3. Actions for 2015/16 onwards

- Continue to respond to the challenge of the Council's Strategic Review (2015) and the financial target of achieving at least a £40 million saving over four years, 2015-2019. The Strategic Review programme for Arts Development requires decreased expenditure on grants, and a more strategic approach to allocating the remaining budget. The Arts Development team have started to respond to the Strategic Review by creating the Cultural & Creative Challenge Fund for Arts Projects; in 2016/17 the budget for grants has been reduced by £57,000.
- Continue to address inequalities in the scope and reach of the subsidised arts offer in the district evidenced by ongoing audience data analysis. The Arts Development team is committed to improving the balance of activity so that there is a better spread across the whole district. It remains the case that residents of North East Somerset and the less advantaged neighbourhoods of Bath have fewer opportunities for engagement and participation in cultural activity.
- Work with funded organisations to standardise and improve collection and assessment of customer satisfaction data. It is an ambition of the B&NES Cultural & Creative Strategy that better and more comprehensive data about the performance of the sector is available and that this data is used to devise future policy.
- To continue to work in partnership with the sector to deliver the ambitions of the B&NES Cultural & Creative Strategy, adopted May 2015.