

Community Arts Strategy July 2011



Community Arts Strategy

Introduction

This Strategy has been revised by Community Arts Officer, Brett Klement, to lay out the future for the Guernsey Arts Commission's investment in Community Arts. This strategy will set out:

- Context of Community Arts and the GAC Mandate
- Role of Community Arts Officer
- Community Arts provision from September 2009 – June 2010
- Aims for the Guernsey Arts Commission's Community Arts Programme
- Action Plans
- How these aims will be achieved
- Aspirations for Community Arts in Guernsey

Why is a Community Arts Strategy needed?

- Demonstrate the value and outcomes of the GAC Community Arts Programme so far
- Identification of continued need for a Community Arts Programme
- Mechanism for delivery of a sustainable programme

It is entrusted to the Board of the Guernsey Arts Commission that the GAC Community Arts Programme becomes more established. It is therefore important that this strategy is viewed as a working document, enabling it to respond and adapt where necessary.

Definitions and Context

What do we mean by Community Arts?

Community Arts involve active group participation in the creative process, regardless of ability, that seeks regenerative transformation for both the community as a whole and the individual alike. It is developed primarily to provide opportunities for people who through economic or social circumstance have little access or means to participate in or gain the value of the arts in their lives.

The key ideas of Community Arts are:

- **Access** – all people should have access to the arts. It is not a closed door. Everyone should be given the opportunity to express their ideas and be heard.
- **Participation** – everyone should be able to join in the creative process regardless of age, experience, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, disability, economical situation, or geographical location.
- **Ownership** – the result of collective creativity belongs to everyone. Our ideas, our performance, our community.
- **Process over product** – the process of creating the work is, at the very least, of equal importance to the final product.

These key ideas closely link with the GAC priorities of Accessibility and Audience Engagement.

In terms of disciplines, Community Arts can embrace all areas which would normally fall under the heading of 'Arts': music, drama, dance, writing, visual arts, craft, puppetry, photography, film, digital arts, graphic, design.

The benefits of participation in the arts include:

- Personal development
 - increased confidence
 - self esteem
 - Acquisition of new skills
 - Social skills
 - Friendships
- Community development
 - team building skills
 - working together towards a common goal
 - creating a forum for discussion
 - public works

How do we define Participation?

The term *participation* when referring to Community Arts can be defined in two ways:

Active: the individual takes part as an artist in the creative process itself.

Passive: the individual is an audience member (whether it's a live event, show or installation).

Community Arts in Guernsey

In 2007 the 'Developing the Arts in Guernsey' Survey found that 92.9% of those surveyed would like to see increased opportunities for involvement in the arts.

At the time of the original form of this document; aside from the provisions put in place by the GAC there were two groups offering a weekly provision and one charity running an annual project, all in the area of drama and performing arts. Furthermore, there was a schools' programme run by the Education Department which offered a range of one off workshops and performances utilising companies from the UK. There were very few official incidences of local workshop leaders being engaged for this work and community access was not a priority.

In response to this and to address it, at the earliest stages of the formation of the GAC it was decided to look for funding in order to develop a provision in this area. In 2008 the GAC was successful in being granted a three year bursary from the Lloyds TSB Foundation. The total grant was £80,000 with £30,000 in 2009, £30,000 in 2010 and £20,000 in 2011.

The new **Community Arts Officer** post clearly and closely responded to the GAC Mandate and Priorities of June 2008:

“To provide a strong, identifiable voice of the arts in the community, raising public awareness and promoting the value, relevance and importance of the arts in the community”.

Since its inception, the GAC has both valued and emphasised the importance of engagement and participation in the arts and in 2009 set the following priorities:

Accessibility

- Engage a wider audience
- Broaden opportunities
- Increase involvement

Audience Engagement

- Increase understanding of the arts
- Provide a wider context
- Enhance learning opportunities

Art in Public Places

- Provide framework to deliver public art projects
- Reclaim public spaces as venues for the arts
- Put in place a program of initiatives in the public realm

Communication

- Develop website and online presence
- Prioritize marketing in its widest form
- Enhance the public profile of the Guernsey Arts Commission

Research

- Gather statistics
- Maximize feedback opportunities
- Commission specific arts' reports

The role of Community Arts Officer

Background

As mentioned earlier the role of Community Arts Officer (CAO) was included in the initial formation of the Guernsey Arts Commission and was seen as a priority role to ensure that the benefits of the Commission would reach all sectors of the community, to create opportunities for wider participation, inclusion and access to the arts.

Currently, and until April 2012, the role is funded privately through sponsorship from the Lloyds TSB Foundation. The Community Arts working budget is funded by the GAC.

Responsibilities

- To develop, update and deliver the GAC's Community Arts Strategy
- To be responsible for the development, co-ordination, delivery, implementation of a sustainable community arts programme.
- To grow the volunteer sector for community arts and to source community arts' workshop leaders.
- To be in charge of the ArtsMobile
- To maintain Community Arts' KPI's
- To engage and consult with partners in order to deliver activities to the GAC target groups and increase arts participation levels by the disengaged and disaffected.
- To advise and work with the Sub-Committees on community projects.
- To deliver wide reaching and inclusive community focused initiatives.

- To be the GAC's Child Protection Officer.

Community Access

The post will run alongside, and be a part of, the work delivered by the Head of Arts Development's team. Under the guidance of this team, the post-holder will work in partnership with a range of government departments and agencies, including Youth Services, the Probation Service, Health agencies, the Prison, College of Further Education, the Drug and Alcohol Strategy Group, States' Departments and others.

Current Community Arts Provision – September 2009 to May 2011

What has been achieved so far?

More than 1500 people have engaged with the GAC Community Arts Programme which has featured the following activities:

- Free or low cost workshops for children in a variety of arts skills (e.g. Half Term Workshops)
- Family Arts Events (e.g. Lihou Winter Arts Festival and Art on the Beach)
- Tailored schools' workshops (e.g. The Link Centre Programme)
- Offering training and advice to other organisations on setting up and delivering arts programmes (e.g. Youth Leaders' Conference 2010)
- Specific workshop programmes for 'disadvantaged' groups (e.g. Teen Mums' group at Swissville)
- Made a commitment to the Les Genats Estate not only Tuesday nights with the Arts Mobile but with special projects and community wide inter-agency approach

Funding

To date we have attracted £29,630 in funding to support individual projects and the purchase of the ArtsMobile, a community outreach vehicle which was acquired in May 2010. We have also raised £80,000 from the Lloyds TSB Foundation for support of the fulltime role of the GAC's Community Arts Officer, over a three year period (this will finish in April 2012).

Range of activity

Activities have been offered in the following arts areas:

- Drama
- Dance
- Puppetry
- Craft
- Visual Arts
- Writing
- Poetry
- Film-making
- Photography
- Costume design
- Story-telling
- Music

the greenhouse

The GAC's in-house project space, generally used for exhibitions, has hosted two Community Arts shows featuring work made by participants in Community events.

There have also been a number of events linked to the various exhibitions which aim to develop skills and understanding of the works on show. This has included seminars and workshops enabling participants to engage in and develop some of the skills and techniques used to create the works exhibited.

Sub-Committee delivery of Community Arts initiatives

Delivery at Sub-Committee level has been valuable in providing more specialised workshops and events. More specific projects for the GAC's developing work at Les Genats, in the Prison etc need to be developed, taking advantage of the skills contained within the GAC's 50+ volunteers

Leaders and assistants

A growing list of workshops leaders who have worked professionally in their field of expertise is currently being updated.

Media

The GAC Community Arts Programme has also attracted a significant amount of local media coverage, with one event receiving 24 individual pieces, raising the profile of the GAC, Community Arts and encouraging more participation in the Programme.

Aspirations for the Community Arts Officer

- Secure long-term funding for the Community Arts Officer
- Continue weekly commitment to the Les Genats Estate and extend programme to other Estates in the island
- Develop the ongoing programme for the Guernsey Prison
- Expand cohort of workshop leaders to deliver an Island wide Community Arts Programme
- Extend multi-agency partnerships to build an art content in to their delivery
- To appoint a Community Arts Commissioner
- To utilise and maintain ArtsMobile

ARTS DEVELOPMENT TEAM / GUERNSEY ARTS COMMISSION – structure at 27th April 2011

