

**Cheltenham Borough Council**

**Access & excellence:  
an arts development strategy for Cheltenham**

**2004/5 to 2006/7**

**Draft 6**

**10 March 2004**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This plan represents Cheltenham Borough Council's commitment to arts development and follows on from the appointment of the council's first Arts Development Officer (ADO) in November 2002. This post is based at the Art Gallery & Museum and within the Health and Wellbeing Division (Social and Community Services Group) which, as well as arts development, has responsibility for services addressing issues such as social exclusion and community development. The Division also covers the health and youth agendas.
- 1.2 Although a permanent appointment to the post of ADO was made in November 2002, the post-holder had a year's sabbatical arranged. A temporary ADO was therefore appointed for a period of nine months. The remit for this temporary post was to research and produce an arts development strategy and to set up two pilot projects over the summer of 2003 working with young people and families in Cheltenham to provide broader opportunities for participation in the arts.
- 1.3 The plan has a life span of three years. The Arts Development Officer will review the plan on an annual basis to reflect the effectiveness of actions, as well as any changes in policy, legislation, budget or any other factors.

## **2. Methodology**

- 2.1 Research to inform this strategy has been primarily through one-on-one interviews with individuals and organisations, supplemented with telephone interviews where a meeting has not been possible. Desk research has been extensive.
- 2.2 In addition to the research undertaken by the Arts Development Officer, consultants were commissioned in June 2003 to investigate and report on options for the allocation of the capital receipt to be received from the sale of the building and site of the Axiom Arts Centre. The Arts Development Officer worked closely with the consultants on further consultation exercises. The resulting report and recommendations went to cabinet for consideration on 11 November 2003.
- 2.3 A full list of people and organisations consulted are contained in Appendix B1 and B2.
- 2.4 The views of the residents of Cheltenham were gathered through the inclusion of questions relating to the arts (and in particular an arts centre for Cheltenham) in the Council's Viewpoint questionnaire sent out over the summer.
- 2.5 The views of young people were gathered via two questionnaires:
  - The MAD Young People's Council distributed questionnaires to schools in via the Council's representatives
  - A questionnaire sent to all participants of MASSIVE. This was ostensibly to gather participants' reactions to MASSIVE 2003 but also included more general questions about arts and entertainment for young people in Cheltenham.
- 2.6 Pilot projects in the form of five arts workshops for children and family groups took place in partnership with the Whaddon Lynworth & Priors Neighbourhood Project during August 2003. A further three workshops took place at the Whaddon Project Centre over the October half-term.

### **3. A definition of the arts**

- 3.1 The following definition of the arts was endorsed by the Education, Science and Arts Committee of the House of Commons in 1982 and adopted by the Council of Regional Arts Associations in 1988).

*'The arts includes, but is not limited to, music (instrumental and vocal), dance and drama, folk art, creative writing, architecture and allied fields, painting, sculpture, photography, graphic and craft arts, industrial design, costume and fashion design, motion pictures, television and radio, tape and sound recording, the arts related to the presentation, performance, execution and exhibition of such major art forms, and the study and application of the arts to the human environment.'*

- 3.2 In its manifesto for 2003 to 2006, 'Ambitions for the Arts', Arts Council England stated that it will "adopt a more modern definition of the arts, one that is open to current trends in emerging (and often challenging) arts practice, in arts and technology, and in breaking down the boundaries between art forms, and between the arts and other disciplines."

- 3.3 For the purposes of this strategy we will define the arts as above in 3.1 and 3.2.

- 3.4 Arts development can be defined as a process which stimulates confidence, creates opportunities for participation and encourages effective partnerships in order to extend opportunities for participation within a strategic framework.

### **4. Why are the arts important?**

*'We are dealing in the arts with something powerful, inspirational and capable of effecting deep and positive change in people and in places... The arts indeed have the power to transform individuals, communities, places.'*

*Peter Hewitt, Arts Council England*

The arts have the power to contribute positively to a wide range of social agendas: education, economic regeneration, health education and promotion, crime reduction and community development. The arts are flexible offering individuals and communities opportunities as both participants and audiences.

However useful the arts may be to social agendas, the arts should first and foremost be recognised and supported for their intrinsic value and benefits.

#### **4.1 The social impact of the arts**

Participation in arts activity can support both personal and community development. The arts can deliver:

- personal development and increased self-confidence
- social inclusion
- multi-cultural awareness
- new skills leading to further training and increased opportunities for employment
- a contribution to social cohesion
- community empowerment and self-determination
- a contribution to local image and identity
- a means of consultation with traditionally hard-to-reach groups

#### **4.2 The economic impact of the arts**

The economic importance of the arts and creative industries, and the growth of this sector, is increasingly recognised by local authorities and central government, with the arts seen as a means of stimulating regeneration, as a significant force in the tourism sector and as an important economic generator. The latest Creative Industries Mapping Document showed that the sector grew by an average of 9% between 1997 and 2001, with employment growing at a rate of 5% per annum compared to 1.5% for the whole economy.

In 1998-2002 figures show a 40% increase in turnover in the cultural sector in the south west. And a 2003 report from the Film Council identifies that post production companies (sound, graphics, music and effects) generate nearly £1.4bn for the UK economy.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport defines the creative industries as:

*'Those industries that have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property.'*

This definition includes:

- Advertising
- Architecture
- Art and antiques market
- Crafts
- Design
- Designer Fashion
- Film and video
- Interactive leisure software
- Music
- Performing arts
- Publishing
- Software and computer services
- Television and Radio

Culture South West and the SWRDA, in partnership with South West Screen and Arts Council England South West, have jointly commissioned a study to map the creative industries in the region and reveal their real economic worth.

Research methodologies for local and regional-level audits of cultural and creative industries are currently being developed as part of the Regional Cultural Data Framework supported by Regional Cultural Consortiums and the Department for Culture Media and Sport. Detailed audits will enable local authorities to collect comparable quantitative data on the collective turnover of local arts and cultural/creative organisations, numbers employed and spend with local suppliers, etc.

In Cheltenham, a recent report<sup>1</sup> identified that the four major arts festivals operated by Cheltenham Arts Festivals (Jazz, Literature, Music and Science) contribute a figure of approximately £3m to the local economy. A 2004 study by the University of Sheffield reports that the economic impact of the Everyman Theatre is over £9m.

#### **4.3 The arts and planning**

The arts have an integral role to play in enhancing and promoting community ownership of public spaces: town centres, parks, residential and business areas. The arts should therefore play a significant role in contributing to planning and environmental policies.

The majority of local authorities have planning policies which involve an arts element: a commissioned public art work, 'percent for art', or planning gain used to improve community assets and facilities for arts development, performance and exhibition.

The arts also contribute to the quality of the local environment through strategies for engaging and consulting with local people, and through community projects relating to Agenda 21.

#### **4.4 The arts and crime & disorder**

The arts have a role in reducing the fear of crime, promoting neighbourhood security and also in the rehabilitation of offenders

Arts practitioners are able to:

- address key social problems that affect young people at risk of offending
- motivate people
- allow participants to explore personal issues through arts-based activities
- give people a sense of pride and achievement in demonstrating newly acquired skills
- Demonstrate and advocate positive social behavior

Nationally arts initiatives have addressed the problem of youth crime, for example, by running diversionary summer activities during school holidays. The Merseyside Metropolitan Borough

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<sup>1</sup> Good Times, The Economic Impact of Cheltenham's Festivals, Comedia December 2002

of Knowsley, through a strategy driven by the Knowsley Cultural Partnership, has seen crime levels drop by 20% in the past two years.

The quality of environment has a role to play in influencing anti-social behavior, and the arts can contribute through public art and the planning process.

#### **4.5 Arts in health**

The term 'arts in health' can be broadly categorised as, "creative projects that aim to improve individual/community health and healthcare delivery using arts based approaches, and that seek to enhance the healthcare environment through provision of artworks or performances." Local Authorities and Health Authorities are increasingly recognising that community arts in health projects impact the lives of residents and communities in a variety of ways, for example through health promotion, health education and social inclusion. Projects can tackle serious health issues, for example, heart disease; teenage pregnancy and drug use.

Arts in health projects are able to deliver many benefits, including:

- Visually enhancing healthcare environments
- Improving the emotional and spiritual state of mental health service users
- Promoting positive health messages
- Developing creativity in the workplace
- Identifying healthcare needs
- Improving self-esteem and personal development
- Improving sensory awareness, mental capacity and physical dexterity
- Helping people to communicate effectively with each other
- Improving staff and patient relationships and morale
- Supporting carers and dependants
- Working with the disabled (i.e. National Star College Ullenwood)

## 5. The strategic framework

This strategy reflects the priorities of national and regional agencies with responsibility for the arts, as well as local concerns and issues.

### 5.1 Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)

The DCMS sets the government's strategic policy for the arts. This policy is carried out in partnership with Arts Council England, other government departments such as the Department for Education and Skills, and with regional bodies such as local authorities. The DCMS is working with the Secretary of State's four overriding priorities to improve the quality of life through the arts:

- Children and Young People
- Communities
- The Economy
- Delivery

### 5.2 Arts Council England South West (ACE SW)

Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts in England, distributing public money from Government, through the DCMS, and the National Lottery.

ACE has identified four national priorities based on the following statements:

- The arts are central to local economies in design, manufacturing, retail and leisure services.
- The arts make a difference to how we feel, and the quality of our lives and participation can improve physical health as well as mental well-being.
- The arts help people to express their different cultures and ideas, and enable them to communicate these to others. Whether through a public sculpture or by getting together to take part, the arts can build a sense of place and safer, more tolerant, vibrant communities.
- The arts offer young people unique opportunities to explore and learn, helping them become engaged members of the community.

Arts Council England's priorities are therefore:

- The creative economy
- Healthy communities
- Vital neighbourhoods
- Engaging young people

### 5.3 Gloucestershire County Council

Responsibility for the arts and culture has recently been relocated within the lifelong learning team of the council's Education Directorate. Services are delivered by an Arts Development Officer and the Director of GLOSS, the county's Arts Education Agency.

Gloucestershire's statement policy on the arts was agreed in March 2000:

*"Gloucestershire County Council seeks to make Gloucestershire a better, more prosperous place, in which people have pride and want to live, work, learn and enjoy their leisure. To bring about this vision, the Council aims to improve learning, leisure and cultural opportunities for everyone.*

*The council will work with others to improve access to arts and cultural activities, recognising the contribution they make to learning, equal opportunities, social inclusion, economic regeneration and tourism.*

*The Council will seek to strengthen the arts within its own services, and to work in partnership with strategic county arts organisations to address community need throughout Gloucestershire."*



Key aims are:

- To seek the maximum benefit for the arts from Council resources and services
- To seek a fair geographic and demographic spread of arts opportunities throughout the county
- To seek a fair level of provision for each of the art forms and areas of arts activity
- To seek co-operation with the whole range of arts providers, including other local authorities, the voluntary sector, and the individual artist

2003/4 budgets were £235,770 arts development and c.£52,000 arts education. Funding policy prioritises organisations of strategic countywide significance; access initiatives; and pump-priming new arts developments.

Shared strategic priorities for the county are:

- The delivery of the arts elements of county and district cultural strategies
- The Locality Plan for Theatre in Gloucestershire 2003-6
- Public art
- Youth arts development
- Media development including moving image (film & video), community media and digital arts
- Visual arts & sculpture
- Cultural diversity
- Creative partnerships (with the Forest of Dean)
- Cultural tourism

The county's cultural strategy framework for Gloucestershire, 'Forest & Vale & High Blue Hill', was revised in October 2002. It is hoped that this document will be accepted by the Environment, Heritage & Culture partnership of the Gloucestershire Community Strategy as the cultural component of the Community Strategy, and the County Cultural Forum as its Executive. This is still to be formally confirmed, when the Community Strategy is agreed.

## 6. Local context – how does this strategy relate to corporate priorities?

### 6.1 'Never a Dull Moment' – Cheltenham's Cultural Strategy 2002 to 2006

Cheltenham's Cultural Strategy was prepared in response to central government's guidance for all local authorities to prepare cultural strategies by the end of 2002.

The main goal of the strategy is "to offer everyone in Cheltenham access to the best possible cultural opportunities, enhancing the town's reputation and environment, providing a better quality of life for all."

The strategy identified the following priorities in terms of current cultural provision:

- a lack of cultural facilities for younger people
- old and out-of-date venues and facilities which find it difficult to meet the rising expectation of customers
- a need for increased access for disabled people to the borough's cultural facilities.
- recognition of the need to invest in the cultural sector to remain competitive with other tourist destinations.

Specific actions are:

to add cultural vitality to the town centre by:

- extending opportunities for public art
- promoting programmes of street entertainment
- concluding a decision on the future of the former Axiom Centre
- securing the core fabric of the Playhouse Theatre by 2005

to contribute to a thriving economy by:

- improving Cheltenham's role as an event town
- developing the year-round programme of festivals and events
- undertaking improvements to the core venues for events and festivals

to promote the town as a quality tourist centre for the region by:

- improving the appeal of the town's visitor attractions
- securing an extension to the art gallery and museum by 2006
- establishing the vitality of a new museum linked to GCHQ

living life to the full by:

- seeking opportunities to bring new cultural experiences to Cheltenham
- widening opportunities to access new artistic experiences

### 6.2 'Our Future Our Choice' – The Community Plan

Launched on 9 October 2003, the Community Plan's vision for Cheltenham in the year 2020 is for it to be, "a vibrant, safe and sustainable town where residents, workers and visitors enjoy the benefits of economic, social and environmental well-being."

Five main priorities have been identified to be tackled over the next five years:

- To reduce crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, in our communities
- To improve the supply and standard of affordable housing
- To reduce inequalities in our communities and develop a sense of community
- To protect and improve the environment of Cheltenham and make it a beautiful and sustainable town
- To improve sustainable travel and transport options

The group with the responsibility of delivering the vision set out in this plan is the Cheltenham Strategic Partnership, made up of representatives from ten thematic partnerships including the Cultural Partnership, set up in 2003.

The Cultural Partnership has identified that the arts have a potential role in delivering three of the five priorities (crime and disorder; reducing inequalities; and protecting and improving the environment) and are seeking to work with the other partnerships to promote the role of culture.

### 6.3 Business Plan

The five priorities of the Community Plan form the basis of the Business Plan. Two further priorities were also agreed, one of which is to reflect the importance of cultural activities which support the economic and social well-being of the town.

Whilst recognising the importance of all seven priorities, three were identified as the most important for the council to focus on and deliver in 2004/5.

1=	To increase the provision of affordable housing, particularly in the social rented sector, and work towards a balance housing market
1=	To reduce crime and disorder and the fear of crime in our communities
3	To protect and improve the environment of Cheltenham and ensure the organisation becomes more sustainable

Although culture was not identified as a priority for 2004/5, it is viewed as an integral part of the council's medium term action plan for 2005/6 to 2006/7. Members have identified the following priority and actions as part of the business planning process:

We will enhance the town's reputation as a national and international cultural centre, promote a healthy and sustainable economy and provide opportunities to broaden and enrich sport, play and cultural experiences.

- to provide a vigorous and successful programme of cultural and entertainment activities that will continue to attract international acclaim, but also reflect the culture and diversity of the town and be accessible by all
- to progress proposals for new arts and cultural facilities in the town
- to look to improve the art gallery & museum and library facilities for the town in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council

The arts will also have an important role to play in delivering the corporate priority "we will redress the imbalances in our communities...." which includes the following actions:

- We will empower our communities, community groups and the voluntary sector through a range of activities including outreach and arts, sports and play activities and through our grant giving functions, member representation and through general support and advice.
- We will work to develop a sense of community, where there is a sense of belonging for all communities and a reduction in inequalities and improve access to the town's facilities for groups such as young people, older people, people from black and minority ethnic communities and disabled people.

### 6.4 Civic Pride

The council's Civic Pride initiative is identifying sites in the town centre and working 'to enhance their appearance, visibility, ownership and links to the community'. One of the first initiatives to get underway is the refurbishment of St Mary's Churchyard, an important medieval site which links the town centre to the site of the Art Gallery & Museum and County Library. An artist is to be appointed to research and make artworks with local community groups. The arts will also have a role to play in the design and choice of fixed items such as seating and even litter bins. A longer term initiative is the creation of a cultural quarter around the site of the present Art Gallery & Museum.

### 6.5 Draft night time economy strategy 2003-2006

The night time economy strategy has a vision of 'a safe and attractive town centre that has a diverse night time economy accessible to all'. A priority is to encourage alternative venues for 14-18 year olds to dissuade under-age drinking. This is an issue that this strategy will address.

### 6.6 Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy

This strategy aims "to enable a thriving, prosperous and sustainable local economy, that provides high quality and accessible goods and services, supports enjoyable, fairly paid jobs and retains a high quality of life, both for visitors and local residents."

The strategy recognises one of Cheltenham's strengths as its vibrant social and cultural atmosphere and associated tourist infrastructure (art, music, culture, restaurants and bars) and one of its weaknesses as having few real tourist sites. A greater exploitation of the arts and museum are recognised as opportunities.

The strategy also supports the promotion and development of more public art features to enhance the town centre.

#### **6.7 Other**

Other strategies containing priorities which may be addressed through the arts include the Crime Reduction Strategy 2002-2005, the Community Development Strategy, the Electronic Service Delivery Strategy, Environmental Management Strategy, and the Local Plan.

## **7. The arts in Cheltenham**

Cheltenham has a well deserved reputation as a cultural centre. The town is home to Gloucestershire's only fully professional theatre, has a programme of internationally recognised arts festivals and a designated art gallery & museum containing a collection recognised as being of national significance. The town also boasts a thriving community of independent artists.

It is the intention of this strategy to build upon Cheltenham's reputation for quality and excellence whilst increasing access to these and other arts activities.

### **7.1 Professional arts activity**

Professional arts activity in Cheltenham is focused around the Town Hall, the Art Gallery & Museum, the Everyman Theatre and, to a lesser extent, the Pittville Pump Room. The Cheltenham Group of Artists represents professional visual arts, whilst a number of professional artists, in many disciplines, reside in the area.

#### **7.1.1 Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum**

The Art Gallery & Museum's mission statement is *"to preserve and develop Cheltenham's unique collections for the future and to make them accessible to an increasingly broad public in a way that communicates, educates and inspires."*<sup>2</sup>

The current Art Gallery & Museum occupies a series of building in Clarence Street with the majority of the galleries on the top floor of the Grade II listed building. Additional gallery space is provided at the first and ground floor mezzanine levels of a 1989 extension, which also provides the museum with its main entrance from Clarence Street.

The Art Gallery & Museum houses an Arts & Crafts collection recognised as being of national importance and has been successful in attracting Designated Challenge Funding. It runs a changing exhibition programme in two galleries with exhibitions ranging across subject areas but with visual art and craft dominating the range. These comprise a mixture of own-produced and touring exhibitions, including some of significant local artists. The programme is supported by activities for all ages, including talks, workshops and demonstrations. The Art Gallery & Museum has around 60,000 visitors, and a significant number of virtual visitors accessing information and collections on its websites. Whilst approximately two-thirds of collections are in storage, researchers may have access to them by appointment with the appropriate curator.

The Art Gallery & Museum has been seeking further expansion over the last ten years. However, large scale development plans failed to achieve planning permission in 2002. In 2003 further attempts were made to address the most pressing problems of the lack of accessible storage space and the need for a larger gallery:

- an art gallery & museum working group was set up to explore areas in which realistic progress could be made resulting in a report to cabinet in November 2003
- a further report to cabinet from the arts centre working group considered the enlargement of exhibition space and potentially some artists studios as a good use of receipt from the sale of the Axiom.
- partnership funding from the Designation Challenge Fund will also be sought in order to increase storage.
- In addition, a joint county-borough working party is investigating space rationalisation with the neighbouring Library building.

#### **7.1.2 The Everyman Theatre**

The Everyman is Gloucestershire's largest producing theatre and a key cultural organisation in the region. Its mission statement is The Everyman is for Everyone – connecting people with creativity and exceeding expectations. Seating 682 the theatre delivers a high quality programme of drama, dance, musical theatre, opera and ballet, comedy and children's productions at the 'middle scale'. Since its 1995 change in programming policy from a traditional producing repertory theatre to a mixed programme producing and presenting house, average audience attendance has increased from 35% to 77% with 180,000 attendances and 376 performances in 2002/3. On average people visit the theatre twice a year. 34% of the total audience (31,000 people) are Cheltenham residents.

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<sup>2</sup> AG&M Service Plan 2003-4

The Everyman's second auditorium, The Other Space, is a 55 seat studio theatre and home to work of a more contemporary nature than that on the main stage.

It is estimated that there are a further 50,000 'other' users of the Everyman – through Café Everyman, The County Bar (including the new Smart Space Internet café and a small visual arts exhibition gallery), Matcham's restaurant, and the many business meetings, lunch clubs, markets and other uses of the building, making it a community resource for the town.

The Everyman has an extensive life long learning programme, under the banner of ReachOut, working with 35,000 people across the county each year on wide variety of community and education projects; the Everyman is recognised as a centre of excellence within the South West for the quality and integrity of this programme. The Everyman's strategic objectives include working with local professional actors and arts practitioners, employing around 150 people per year, delivering a locally developed programme. The Everyman also operates as a county theatre resource creating partnerships with educational, community and training agencies as well as local theatre practitioners as a producing partner, centre for new theatre writing and professional training and is a key partner in the County's Theatre Development Plan.

The theatre was built in 1891 and was designed by Frank Matcham, the great Victorian theatre architect – the Everyman is unique in being the oldest surviving example of his work still in theatrical use and as such is of national historic and architectural significance, with one of the finest interiors in Cheltenham and is listed Grade II. Future plans include the restoration of the auditorium, to retain and improve a landmark public building for Cheltenham, creating opportunities for both historic interpretation and tourism. The Everyman also plans, in order to develop its work and role, to create a new studio theatre, arts cinema and gallery space.

### **7.1.3 Cheltenham Arts Festivals Ltd**

Cheltenham has a unique portfolio of cultural Festivals – Folk, Jazz, Science, Music, Fringe and Literature – that are recognized as being of outstanding quality and which sell over 120,000 tickets each year. The four larger Festivals are promoted by Cheltenham Arts Festivals (CAF), a separate organization which is run from within the Festivals and Entertainments Division of CBC.

Festivals are at the heart of Cheltenham's cultural image. Innovative programmes and an international profile have made the Literature Festival the largest in Europe, whilst the Music Festival generates more national BBC broadcasts than almost any other Festival in the UK.

Media and broadcast exposure for the Festivals is very high, annually generating over 1,000 cuttings and comprising some 6,000 column/cm, while it is further estimated that positive messages about Cheltenham are being heard by individual radio listeners over 20 million times a year through the Festival broadcasts alone.

The Festivals make use of a wide range of the town's venues for recitals, concerts, readings and talks including the Town Hall, Pittville Pump Room and Everyman Theatre. Events are also held in less traditional venues: from bars and cafes to historic Cotswold churches.

CBC has supported the development of the town's Festival programmes and is one of the principal providers of the organisational capacity required to deliver it. In Autumn 2002, CBC commissioned an Economic Impact Study which concluded that against a cost to CBC of some £300,000 (the sum of CBC's direct grant of approximately £28,000 (tbc) plus the value of its in-kind support), the input into the local economy across the four larger Festivals is estimated to be around £3 million, plus at least £260,000-worth of broadcast/media exposure – this representing a better-than-10-fold return.

### **7.1.4 The Town Hall and Pittville Pump Room**

Currently celebrating its centenary, the elegant Edwardian **Town Hall** is the home of Cheltenham's impressive programme of major festivals, entertainment, exhibitions and functions.

The Town Hall was built in 1902-03, in order to provide a venue for the many balls and concerts that made up the town's social calendar at the turn of the century.

The Grade II listed venue is situated just off The Promenade in the very heart of the town. Its centre-piece is the Main Hall, distinguished by its Corinthian-style columns and coved ceiling, which has featured in a number of television programmes including *The Antiques Roadshow* and the BBC-TV production of *Vanity Fair*.

The Main Hall can seat up to 1000 people for a concert or 450 guests for a dinner-dance. A number of smaller rooms offer flexibility for seminar groups, smaller-scale performances, hospitality or exhibitions. All downstairs facilities are fully accessible for persons with disabilities.

The Town Hall is managed by CBC as a public entertainments venue for cultural, commercial and community uses. It is the main venue for the annual programme of Festivals which currently embrace Folk, Jazz, Science, Music, Fringe and Literature. Each year the Town Hall also hosts the Cheltenham Competitive Festival, the Gloucestershire Schools Dance Festival and the Youth Makes Music.

The Town Hall is used by a wide variety of local societies for their concerts and other events, though concerns have been raised by potential users regarding the cost of hiring this facility and ongoing commitment in the light of organisational structure. Specific strands of programming promoted directly by CBC include the Cheltenham Symphony Series, Lunchtime Concerts and a varied programme of folk, jazz, blues, roots music and comedy events.

Approximately one half of the activity at the Town Hall is arts-related.

The Festivals and Entertainments Division, based at the Town Hall, also promotes events in other venues and around the town, including Picnic in the Park, the Christmas Lights Switch-on, Bands in the Park and a host of free outdoor events in the parks, gardens and streets, as part of the Music Festival Fringe.

The **Pittville Pump Room** (PPR) is the other venue managed and used by the Festivals and Entertainments Division for cultural, commercial and community events. It too is a Grade I\* listed property but located on the outskirts of the town centre, set in parkland. It is one of the finest chamber music concert halls in the country and features a main hall seating 400, plus three rooms on the upper floor each seating around 50 people conference-style. PPR has been awarded capital funding this year to install a lift over the next twelve months or so and the building will then be much more accessible for disabled people.

Approximately one fifth of activity at the PPR is arts related. It is one of the main venues for the Cheltenham International Festival of Music and has hosted exhibitions including some elements of the University of Gloucestershire's end of year art show. The building is also used extensively for commercial activities, notably wedding ceremonies, receptions and banqueting.

In order to keep the buildings operating at today's standards it is estimated that an investment of around £3m is required over the next 10 years. CBC is currently looking at public-private partnership options to address this much needed development and investment. It is hoped that an options appraisal will be complete by August 2004. Parallel to this, CBC and CAF are also investigating the possibility of establishing an external trust to manage the provision of festivals and entertainment in order to facilitate additional external financing for these two key venues.

#### **7.1.5 The Holst Birthplace Museum**

The Holst Birthplace Museum is based in the Regency terrace house where Gustav Holst was born in 1874. The house is included in Simon Jenkins' 1000 Best Houses and is presented as a Victorian dwelling and used for delivering elements of the history curriculum to school parties.

It was run by CBC as part of the Art Gallery & Museum Service until 1998 with the aid of the Holst Birthplace Trust who owned the building. Since 1989, it has been managed by an independent trust although the collections are owned by the Council and provided as part of a service level agreement with the art gallery and museum.

The Trust manages the Museum on a daily basis ensuring it is open to visitors. It promotes Holst's work and music and programmes a range of activities and events.

The museum is currently in receipt of a £10K grant from the council and this is reviewed on an annual basis. The Museum struggles to survive and is constantly looking for more secure and longer-term funding.

## **7.2 Non-professional arts activity**

Cheltenham has a thriving amateur performing arts scene, largely focused around the Playhouse Theatre although there are many other rehearsal rooms and performance spaces in the town used by this sector for both rehearsal and performance.

There are very large numbers of amateur visual artists in Cheltenham, represented by such societies as the Cheltenham Art Club and the Cotswold Art Club. Only one of these societies has premises and the lack of studio and exhibiting space is a long standing problem. A bi-annual Artists Open Houses event takes place in the summer months.

Cheltenham Camera Club is one of the oldest in England (Established 1865) and continues to thrive in the digital age.

Musical and literary societies of all kinds also thrive in the town.

Cheltenham Arts Council estimates that member groups represent nearly 3000 individuals actively engaged in the arts and this figure does not include those who support such activity as audiences, nor individuals who work alone.

### **7.2.1 The Playhouse Theatre**

The Playhouse was built as a mineral salt factory, was converted at the end of the C19 into a spa bath and converted once more in 1945 into a theatre. The auditorium is designed in a horseshoe configuration with 226 seats on the ground floor and shallow balconies on two levels. These balconies are no longer safe for seating but accommodate the lighting and sound desks. The principal front of house space runs the length of the auditorium and comprises a series of club rooms, small rehearsal and performance spaces, meeting rooms and a bar.

After a period when the Borough Council ran the Playhouse directly, the council divested its operation in 1957 to the Playhouse charity. Although the building is still owned by the council, the Playhouse Cheltenham and Theatre Arts Club has a 25 year lease with the running of the Playhouse undertaken entirely by volunteers<sup>3</sup>. The council makes an annual grant of £5,000. The lease is at peppercorn but appears in the council's budget at its full asset value of £65,000 per annum.

The Playhouse season operates from September to May with mainly weekly runs by amateur drama and musical societies. There are approximately 8-10 completely dark weeks and there is little daytime use of the building. Income is generated from weekly rentals by societies, by the theatre box office and the bars.

An organisation called Calmer Music use the Playhouse as a venue for music concerts. The club room has been converted into a small performance area for these evenings and one concert has taken place in the main auditorium.

Four years ago the Playhouse commissioned a feasibility study into the complete refurbishment of the building. It was aimed at £1.5m lottery funds but would have required the Playhouse to raise partnership funding of £500,000. The charity felt that this was impossible and set the scheme aside. In September 2003 the Playhouse produced a document, 'Changes for the Better 2003 – continued planned improvement to Playhouse Theatre Cheltenham (PTC) facilities and equipment' which sets out the needs of public, backstage and social areas as well as supporting facilities.

### **7.2.2 Cheltenham Arts Council (CAC)**

Cheltenham Arts Council (CAC) is a registered charity existing to foster and promote the arts among the inhabitants of Cheltenham and the surrounding area. CAC works through the many local voluntary societies in the town and covers many branches of the arts including music (both orchestral and choral), opera, drama, visual arts and literature. The CAC is

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<sup>3</sup> With the exception of part time paid posts in the box office and a paid cleaning contract



managed by an Executive Committee made up of representatives of all the main branches of the arts and up to three Borough Councillors and a representative of the arts from CBC, normally the Arts Development Officer.

CAC receives an annual subsidy from the borough council (£5,800) which enables it to operate a grant scheme under which any affiliated society may apply for financial assistance. It also administers the Trafford Memorial Fund, a bequest which exists primarily for grants to locally based young people engaged in the arts. In addition, the council acts to ensure that the interests of the grass-roots arts in Cheltenham are properly represented in any new development taking place in the town.

### **7.3 The arts and education**

Further education: The Pittville Campus of University of Gloucestershire regularly holds exhibitions of students' and fellows' work, hosts the Cheltenham Group of Artists Open Exhibition and has shared major exhibitions with Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum and other providers in the county. It recently hosted an exhibition of work produced during Art Shape's activities in Cheltenham. The Jerwood Open Drawing Competition is the largest and most significant of its kind in the UK. This event is no longer organised from Cheltenham and therefore does not open here, but remains part of the tour schedule.

Both the fine art course and the gallery space at the University of Gloucestershire are currently under review.

Gloucestershire College of Arts and Technology (GLOSCAT) has facilities for visual and performing arts. All courses, apart from ceramics, take place in Gloucester.

Schools: There are 69 schools in the public sector in the Cheltenham area covering infant to secondary and including special schools. At present, use of school facilities by the community for rehearsal, performance, dance and exhibitions, etc, is uneven although those facilities currently used, largely by amateur societies and organisations, are generally considered to be of a high standard.

Costs can be prohibitive and there is rarely any opportunity or space to store equipment such as instruments, props etc. As part of the Virtual Arts Centre Officer's role, an audit will be conducted to establish number and type of spaces, charges and level of availability. There may also be an opportunity to negotiate manageable charges.

Schools with arts facilities include:

- Bournside  
A Foundation School which won new status as a Specialist Visual Arts College in the Autumn of 2002. This brings enhanced funding guaranteed for 4 years with 40% of the funds to be spent on community use. The school presents major public exhibitions showing work by children, students, adults and professionals, the most recent of which in November 2003 was 'Painting with Light', an exhibition of digital video and photography. The school has a digital arts suite with 20+ computers and a full film editing suite. Spaces and facilities are regularly hired including the sports hall which has a sprung floor, the drama studio and music rooms.
- Balcarras School  
3 art studios and a new music block although there is little scope for further use due to regular bookings from GLOSCAT.
- Pate's Grammar School  
Separate music and performing arts block and a main hall with 400 capacity which is used for 2-4 concerts a year by voluntary groups. The school also has a two year old art and music block, but this is not used by outside agencies.
- Cleeve School  
New arts centre with some community use.

It is likely that there will be considerable expansion of schools' facilities in the near future. By 2006 three independent schools will have, or plan to have, purpose built performing arts facilities:

- The Bacon Theatre at Dean Close School is available for, and used by, amateur societies including most regularly the Cheltenham Film Society. Its large stage area and auditorium (compared with The Playhouse) and greater availability and lower rental (than The Everyman) continue to make it particularly valuable to larger musical theatre companies. In addition to school and community use, the Theatre Office promotes about 8 professional artists or companies each year and such events are open to the public. The ability of the Theatre Office to finance promotions depends materially on the income derived from community hires: so there is a direct and continuing incentive to maintain community use at as high a level as compatible with the school's own needs. 2004 sees the first ever open air theatre festival in the school's impressive Tuckwell Amphitheatre.
- Cheltenham College's 'Big Classical' has a capacity of 600 and is currently a square box with a raised stage and some tiered seating. Big Classical is scheduled for development as a new theatre complex and a £3m appeal is underway.
- Cheltenham Ladies College is hoping to develop a performing arts centre. Research is to be carried out into the feasibility of a 350 seater auditorium on College land in the centre of town. The emphasis would be on drama provision, with some music. Public use may be possible for four months of the year. The college's premises are already used by both the Literature and Music festivals as well as certain other groups.

There are also potential partnerships to be made with primary schools. For example, Gloucestershire Dance currently use a space at Whaddon Primary School.

#### **7.4 Education, outreach and community arts initiatives**

Cheltenham's arts organisations have very strong education, outreach and community programmes.

##### **7.4.1 Cheltenham Arts Festivals Limited (CAF)** has an education and outreach programme committed to providing education programmes as an integral part of the arts festivals. The aim is to enhance the community's participation in and enjoyment and knowledge of music, literature and other related art forms, and to increase awareness of an involvement in the Festivals. The Education policy of 1997 concentrated on working with young people. However, this policy statement was updated in March 2000 to include adults "where relevant" (e.g. in reminiscence work, amateur music-making, etc). It was also decided to pursue an all-year-round education policy, bringing schools and the wider community in to arts events in Cheltenham both during and outside the Festivals.

In 2004 the education and outreach team will be working with the management of Pittville Pump Room to devise a programme of usage for a gamelan, a set of traditional instruments from Java in Indonesia. These have the potential to be used by schools and other groups in a rolling programme of workshops. In terms of audiences the gamelan offers opportunities to attract target groups beyond existing audiences, such as young people, students, families, the ethnic communities of Cheltenham, those with limited incomes and in areas of social deprivation, and the disabled.

##### **7.4.2 The Everyman** is the major provider of educational theatre projects in the County, with programmes targeting from pre-school to those in higher education. This work is both curriculum and life-skills based and impacts on the participants but also on their parents and carers, their teachers and the wider community. The Everyman arts development programmes also operate in the wider community, across all social classes and ages, with a broad range of theatre arts projects and performances. The Everyman's role is also to support and nurture the future of theatre performance and practice working with the community of Gloucestershire theatre writers and practitioners. This programme, under the banner of ReachOut, involves 35,000 people a year and is developed in partnership with other arts organisations and service providers, supporting mutual strategic objectives; the Everyman is recognised as a centre of excellence within the South West for the quality and integrity of this programme, which includes:

Education projects: Story Coat and Juggling With Numbers, literacy and numeracy support programme for to primary schools; Festivals Project in partnership with Cheltenham Art Gallery and Museum on Diwali, Easter and Chinese New Year; Literacy programme for pre-school children; SATS, GCSE and A level workshops; Teenage Pregnancy PSHE Project in partnership with Primary Care Trusts; ACET Partnership Project on cultural diversity and widening participation; National Star College for brain injured and disabled young people GNVQ Performing Arts project; Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust Partnership "Don't Waste Wildlife; Gloucester Education Action Zone workshop access programme and community play; Work Experience programme and Gap Year placement at the Everyman Theatre; Individual workshops for Schools as requested – workshops on set texts, drama, mask work, storytelling, circus skills, devising and improvisation, felt making dance, craft work and theatre practitioners and techniques; Pantomime theatre access programme; Actors Lab - Partnership with Equity of Continuous Professional Development programme for professional actors; Practitioners Lab Continuous Professional Development programme for Gloucestershire theatre arts practitioners; Teacher Inset training in partnership with GLOSS; Adult Learners Week adult education programme; Acting OCN (Open College Network) for non-professionals; Voice course with a professional voice teacher; Safe Child and Vulnerable Adult Policy support training.

Community projects: work with the Gloucestershire Association for Refugees and Asylum Seekers in partnership with Youth and Community Services; Visual Arts project in Day Centres in partnership with Health Services; Residential Home/Day Centre reading residencies; work with vulnerable adults at Whaddon Day Centre; a residency at Battledown Children's Ward at Cheltenham General Hospital; Gloucestershire Library partnership with workshops, storytelling and performances; a tour of Village Halls, in partnerships with Air in G; Tricks of The Trade workshops on theatre arts and skills for non-professionals; Theatre Tasters and Tours;

Touch tours with audio described supported performances; the Imagination Project with five special-needs schools; Looked After Children workshops in partnership with Social Services YPLAN; Hesters Way – Family Space fun day.

New writing: financial and technical support for new plays through to production performed in The Other Space; workshops on plays by new writers with professional director and actors; script reading and writers feedback; Everyman Writers Group of 30 local writers; Creative Writers Course; New Writing Festival; New writing workshop programme in schools on "Writing for the Theatre".

Everyman Youth Theatre: 160 children (with a waiting list) - programme of workshops, training in theatre arts, devising and rehearsing productions for The Other Space, the Main Auditorium and elsewhere for five groups, aged: 7-10 (2 groups), 10-13, 14-16 and 16-19; Satellite Youth Theatre projects based outside of Cheltenham in partnership with GCC Education/University of the First Age; EveryTots Drama and dance workshops for children aged 2- 5; EveryKid Saturday morning workshops for children aged 4 – 7; holiday programme of Summer, Easter and Half term performance projects with drama and music practitioners; adult holiday workshop and performance projects; Summer School Feeder projects.

**7.4.3 Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum** has a strong education and outreach programme, and recognises the need for museums to reach out beyond their buildings directly into the community. The AG&M's Education and Outreach officers work with pre-school playgroups, schools, colleges, societies and community groups, day care centres and residential homes, providing doorstep access to the Service. The officers organise a regular programme of art and craft activities for children during school holidays and offer a block of 4 art workshops on Saturdays 3 or 4 times a year. In addition they take part in the *Massive* programme running art and craft sessions for 11 – 16 age groups. There is also a regular programme of talks, workshops and demonstrations aimed at adults and cross-generational groups.

In 2002/3 a total of 3,943 schoolchildren and teachers, and 218 individuals from non-schools groups, visited the AG&M. Outreach activity reached a total of 2,026 people, mainly children. Core sessions offered for schools include units on literacy and cultural diversity, including Diwali and Chinese New Year. For the last two years an Arts Festival for schools based around the Art Gallery and Museums collections has been offered in July, using artists, musicians, poets and actors to deliver sessions. The staff work with a range of schools including special needs schools and pupil referral units. One project organised in 2003 with

practising artists and St George's Centre, a pupil referral unit, won a special encouragement award from the Clore Artworks programme.

**7.4.4 The Holst Birthplace Museum** offers an education programme for schools. This is provided jointly by the education and outreach service of the Art Gallery & Museum and the Holst Museum's curator and includes sessions looking at life in Victorian Britain and 'Sounds Amazing' based on music and musical instruments. Funding of the museum remains precarious and it relies heavily on the support of volunteers.

## **8. Arts development – the first year**

Below is a brief summary of arts development activity that has taken place since May 2003:

### **8.1 Working groups and forums:**

#### **8.1.1 Cultural Partnership**

This partnership was set up in May 2003 to represent the arts and culture on the Strategic Local Partnership. The group has broad representation including two representatives from the MAD Youth Council.

The aim of the partnership is:

- to ensure that the arts and culture are positioned at the strategic centre of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and that the Community Plan reflects the central role of culture to the wellbeing of the town; and
- to monitor progress of the aspirations of the cultural strategy

#### **8.1.2 St Mary's Churchyard Initiative**

This initiative, one of the first to move forward under the banner of Civic Pride, aims to improve the environment in the churchyard whilst at the same time making it a safer place. Despite the site's historical significance and its central location in the town, it is relatively unknown. Plans include essential repairs and maintenance work to footpaths and to the Dragon and Onion lighting columns as well as the installation of floodlighting. The arts are an important part of the plans for the site with interpretation panels to be designed including leaflets and audio-visual material; 8 new seats; and the creation of up to seven mosaics.

#### **8.1.3 Arts centre working group**

A cross party working group established to investigate and report on the options for the allocation of the capital receipt from the sale of the Axiom arts centre and site. The resulting recommendations were passed by Cabinet on 11 November 2003. A budget request to take the recommendations forward was agreed by the council on Friday 20 February 2004.

#### **8.1.4 Art Gallery & Museum working group**

A working group established by Cabinet to explore ways forward for the Art Gallery & Museum met on a number of occasions during 2003, and its report was also accepted by Cabinet on 11 November. A joint Art Gallery & Museum/Library Working Group, established as part of the Group's deliberations, is continuing to meet to investigate possible areas of co-operation between the two occupants of the Clarence Street premises. Plans for alterations or extensions to the premises are also being considered, in the light of the financial potential offered by the MLA Challenge Fund for Designated Collections and the allocation of part of the capital receipt from the sale of the Axiom arts centre building to the Art Gallery & Museum

## **8.2 Projects**

### **8.2.1 Air in G (Gloucestershire's rural and community touring network)**

Support for two workshops in schools and a performance in at Whaddon primary school by Circus Berzerkus in November 2003  
Target: Whaddon / young people and families

Air in G is a rural and community touring agency focused on establishing audiences for, and participation in, theatre, dance and music – in essence, to support live events on people's doorsteps. The organisation supports quality live arts events in community venues, both rural and urban. The initiative takes away the risk for local promoters by offering a guarantee against loss for each event booked from a menu of arts events including music, theatre, dance, puppetry and circus skills. Air in G also provides information on the content of shows and technical requirements. The scheme negotiates artists' fees and contracts; helps with marketing, and convenes regular forums to encourage and empower promoters. The organisation has achieved regularly funded organisation (RFO) status with ACESW and is a development priority for the county. Air in G is developing local authority partnerships with the aim of establishing the scheme as a permanent service to local communities.

### **8.2.2 Gloucestershire Dance**

Support towards:

- (i) touring package and workshops at youth centres with a new boys dance group
- (ii) support of new Cheltenham junior youth dance company currently working out of Whaddon Primary school
- (iii) Development of dance performance in 3 schools currently attending the annual dance festival
- (iv) Development of dance performances in 2 schools currently NOT taking part in the annual dance festival

Target: Increase in dance participation and activity / young people / Whaddon & Hester's Way

Gloucestershire Dance is part of the regional network of dance agencies and works with partners to promote a wide range of dance activity. The organisation has a reputation for an outstanding contribution to dance-in-education.

The organisations key aims are to:

- initiate, develop and sustain a vibrant dance ecology for the people of Gloucestershire in partnership with the South West Dance Agencies Consortium
- target socially excluded groups within both rural and urban settings
- create opportunities for disabled and non-disabled people to take part in dance activities
- improve people's sense of well-being and inclusion through participation in dance
- identify and nurture artists who have the ability to inspire and entertain dance audiences
- build the capacity of dance artists, teachers and carers through training programmes
- use dance in educational work, especially schools and community organisations
- provide advice and information concerning all aspects of dance opportunities and events in the South West
- raise the public profile of dance activity

### **8.2.3 Art Shape**

Art Shape has received funding from this year's arts development budget for the delivery of arts workshops at the Hester's Way Neighbourhood Project during 2003/4 with the aim of:

- (i) meeting the need in arts learning and providing a series of 6 arts workshops, or a term's course, for local people
- (ii) developing the ideas for exhibiting artwork in the Hesters Way Neighbourhood Project building where local work can be shown
- (iii) to train a local group in exhibition skills and to support them to run an exhibition programme at the Project

Target: Hesters Way / socially excluded adults / lack of exhibition space

Art Shape works with individuals, communities and organisations to combat exclusion from the arts, with a particular focus on adults facing disabling barriers. As well as delivering arts opportunities, the organisation also drives social change by informing policy, identifying gaps in arts provision and stimulating the development of new possibilities in the arts. Art Shape is funded by Gloucestershire County and by the districts. The organisation runs several programmes in Cheltenham, including a Pre-Access Printmaking Course at the University of Gloucestershire, and arts sessions at the Equals I. A recent project involved working with groups and individuals to prepare banners and decorations for the prestigious national disability arts festival and conference, 'Above and Beyond', held at Cheltenham Town Hall in September 2003.

### **8.2.4 Cheltenham Connections Concerts**

Contribution towards subsidised concerts for the disabled and their carers held at Cheltenham Town Hall four times a year.

Target: Disabled people / accessibility

### **8.2.5 Cheltenham General Hospital / Arts in Trust**

Provision of 10 x frames and a sign for 'The Starlight Gallery' (a new gallery for students of the National Star College, Ullenwood to display their work at the hospital)

Target: Disabled people / young people / visual arts & exhibition space / arts in health

### **8.2.6 Summer holiday and half term arts workshops in partnership with Whaddon, Lynworth & Priors Neighbourhood Project**

Target: Whaddon / young people / partnership working

**8.2.7 Support for an application from Whaddon Youth & Community Centre to Youth Music**  
Whaddon Youth & Community Centre has a sound recording studio and small rehearsal room for bands. The aim of this project is to accredit young people in the use of the equipment, to facilitate music projects and safeguard the sustainability of the resource. The project will provide training to young people enabling them to express themselves musically, thereby developing new skills and building self-esteem.

Target: Whaddon / young people / attracting external funding

**8.2.8 Arts in health project with Arts in Trust**

Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust has an arts programme, 'Arts in Trust' which aims 'to develop innovative uses of the arts to support the Trust in meeting its core objectives and to promote access to, participation in and an understanding of the arts'.

We have agreed funding with Arts in Trust for 'Music on Call', a project which will integrate music and performance activities into the working life of the Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust, entertaining and soothing patients, boosting staff morale, cheering the hospital environment and building links with local communities.

The placing of the majority of arts activity and arts development within the Health and Wellbeing Division of the Social & Community Directorate makes it ideally placed to take a lead on the development of innovative 'arts in health' projects.

Target: Arts and health agenda within new Health & Wellbeing Division; all age ranges and socio-economic groups

**8.2.9 Arts and Football project**

Yellow House, a company for young people and the arts, has been commissioned to run a theatre project around the idea of football with young people in the Whaddon area.

Target: Young people, Whaddon, links between sport and the arts.

## 9. Key gaps identified and priorities for arts development

### 9.1 The Arts Centre Working Group

In December 2002, Cabinet made the decision to sell the Axiom Arts Centre building and site after repeated attempts by various groups to devise a workable business plan for the centre had failed to provide a realistic level of revenue/partnership funding. Furthermore it was agreed by council on 24<sup>th</sup> March that the capital receipts from the sale would be ring-fenced to support the provision of a complementary “arts centre” or that in the event such a centre was not feasible, the matter be referred back to council for consideration. To this end, a cross-party working group was established to investigate and report on options for the allocation of this capital receipt. Membership included representatives of Cheltenham Arts Council, Cheltenham Arts Steering Group, Summerfield Trust, Everyman Theatre and the County Council, Councillors Seacome and Hay (who chaired the group) and the Arts Development Officer.

The Arts Centre Working Group commissioned consultants to carry out an audit and gap analysis of current arts provision in Cheltenham, and to recommend ways of meeting the needs identified.

The table below lists the eight needs identified in terms of arts provision and facilities in Cheltenham as well as identifying how the four recommendations above (8.1.1) would address these gaps. For example, whilst the virtual arts centre has the potential to address six of the eight gaps identified, the recommendation relating to the Art Gallery & Museum addresses two and the Playhouse, two. It is possible that Centaur, the new development at the racecourse, will provide facilities to enable the programming of large scale lyric theatre and symphonic music.

Gap identified	AG&M	Playhouse	Virtual Arts Centre	Everyman
An arts cinema			x	x
Dance			x	
Exhibition space	x	x	x	x
Large scale (flat floor) rehearsal space for music groups			x	
Studio space for artists	x		x	
Meeting rooms		x	x	x
Large scale lyric theatre	Centaur			
Large scale symphonic music	Centaur			

Following extensive consultation, the consultants concluded that there was no identifiable need for a stand-alone arts centre and, in any event, the necessary conditions were not currently in place. The consultants therefore recommended an exciting combination of elements, including the creation of a “virtual arts centre”.

The working group recommended to the cabinet that the capital receipt from the sale of the Axiom should be invested as follows:-

- To invest 70% of the receipt into a new scheme at the Art Gallery & Museum to provide exhibition/gallery space, and potentially some artist’s studios, primarily to meet the needs of local artists and groups but also to enable the programming of the larger national touring exhibitions for which Cheltenham currently has no suitable venue. It is envisaged that this scheme will work within the timescales contained in the cabinet paper produced by the Art Gallery & Museum working group.



- To invest the balance of the receipt as matching partnership funding in the development of the Playhouse to improve rehearsal and performance spaces, meeting rooms and areas suitable for small scale exhibitions, and encourage its use by the broader voluntary arts constituency. Any grant would be conditional upon an agreement between the Playhouse and the council that this money would be used to further the strategic objectives of the arts centre working group.
- To seek a budget bid for annual revenue funding, equivalent to the interest earned on the capital receipt, until the capital is required for the above developments, to fund costs associated with a 'virtual arts centre'.
- In addition, to encourage and support the further development of the Everyman Theatre to provide a new studio theatre, arts cinema and gallery space.

The report went to Cabinet on 11 November 2003 and to full Council on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2003 and was passed by both committees. The recommendations made are integral to this arts development strategy.

## 9.2 Research with young people

According to the 2001 census, the borough has a higher than average percentage of 15 to 24 year olds. A large amount of research with this age group has therefore been conducted. MAD Young People's Council has shown a keen interest in the arts this year and as well as being active in research towards this strategy, they have submitted a video to the inaugural Gloucestershire Video Festival and have two representatives on the Cultural Partnership. Young people have also been encouraged to represent their peers on key arts and cultural forums.

The council's programme of summer activities, Massive, saw more than 600 young people from age 11 to 16 register and take part in over 70 different activities and events over the summer. Questionnaires were sent out to participants after the event asking them for their opinions, in particular about arts activities and facilities. Key findings were as follows:

- young people said that they would like more opportunities to take part in arts activities such as arts & crafts, drama, music & music technology, dance, pottery, singing, brass/string instrument tuition, animation, film & video, photography, circus skills, dance, sculpture and creative writing.
- although MASSIVE offers events to 11-16 year olds, the current programme appeals more to 11-14 year olds than 15 and 16 year olds
- 11-13 year olds feel that there **is** enough to do in Cheltenham (79%)
- The 14-16 age groups largely feel there **is not** (57%)
- 27% would like places to 'hang-out' such as a youth club, cyber café, coffee house
- 27% would like activities in the centre of town, preferably under one roof
- 20% want early evening events and a nightclub for teenagers
- 17% want more choice of activities
- 90% would like to take part in activities at other times of the year, i.e. not just in the summer

The impression given by research with young people is that whilst this age group have a huge interest in a wide variety of arts and media subjects there is little arts activity with which they can engage; and when it is offered it is hugely over-subscribed.

There are few opportunities for young people to see bands (pop/rock) in the town and also few spaces in which it is possible for local bands to rehearse and perform.

It is important to engage potential arts practitioners and audiences at as young an age as possible. They should be made to feel welcome at arts facilities and have events and activities programmed and aimed specifically at their age group. Cheltenham's arts organisations and venues already have an excellent reputation for education and outreach activity with young people and this is a strength that should be built upon further.

### 9.3 Other key issues

- **Areas of comparative deprivation**  
Areas that have already been identified by the Council as needing special attention include Hesters Way; Whaddon, Lynworth and Priors; and the Lower High Street area of St Paul's. Nearly 16,000 people live in over 6,000 households in these areas – over one in seven of the town's population. Central to this strategy is the fact that despite its prosperous and cultural image, there are areas of significant deprivation where the residents make little use of the arts and cultural facilities on offer in the centre of the town. Interestingly, the most representation for both registration and attendance at Massive came from St. Paul's, closely followed by Battledown, Benhall & Reddings, Hesters Way, Springbank and St. Marks.
- **A public art strategy for Cheltenham**  
Although a public art panel has been in existence since 1991 the council has yet to adopt a public art strategy. Currently being written, a policy and strategy document is due to go before cabinet in May 2004.
- **The need for investment in the arts infrastructure**  
It has been recognised for some time that there is a need for significant investment in the arts infrastructure, some of which has been identified in recommendations from the arts centre working group and other which will be researched by a working group to address the ongoing investment required in the Town Hall and Pittville Pump Rooms.
- **The needs of the growing elderly population**  
The borough has a higher than average percentage of 75 to 84 year olds and the percentage of people aged 85 and over is set to rise by 10% over the next ten years. Research should be done into the needs of Cheltenham's elderly population and how arts projects may address their needs.

## 10. Priorities for arts development 2004/5 to 2006/7

Given the findings of the research as well as the national, regional and local priorities for the arts, the overriding priority for arts development in Cheltenham is:

- to build upon Cheltenham's reputation as a centre of excellence for the arts and culture to enhance the quality of life for residents of, and visitors to, Cheltenham through the development of opportunities, resources, facilities and services which enable people to take part in, and to experience high quality arts, regardless of age, race, disability, gender, sexual orientation or ability to pay.

Specifically:

- to address issues surrounding the borough's arts infrastructure
- to lead on the 'virtual arts centre' initiative, a project aimed at addressing key gaps in arts provision, facilities and programming
- to promote access to, and use of, the arts in tackling social exclusion, health issues and crime & disorder
- to target arts projects at young people, including the promotion of arts in education
- to promote the use and role of the arts in developing the borough's economy and in contributing to economic and social regeneration
- to employ the arts in raising awareness of environmental issues, in enhancing our environment and in promoting sustainability
- to develop and support partnerships, which promote creative practice, attract investment to the arts, support joint working and which make the most effective use of resources for the arts
- to advocate for the positioning of the arts at the strategic centre of the council, particularly in light of there being a separation between the arts providers within the council at directorate level (i.e. Arts Development and the Art Gallery and Museum in the Social and Community Group; Festivals and Entertainments and associated arts venues in the Economy and Business Improvement Group; Public Art and Planning in the Environment Group). There is also no champion for the arts at senior management level.

## ACTION PLAN

### Timescale

Year one	2004/5
Year two	2005/6
Year three	2006/7

<b>To address issues surrounding the borough's arts infrastructure</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Potential partners</b>
A unified strategy for arts and cultural facilities	Research and develop a unified strategy for the town's arts and cultural facilities	Years 1-3	ADO
The Art Gallery & Museum	Develop scheme for creating a larger temporary exhibition space at Art Gallery & Museum on lines proposed in cabinet paper of 11 November 2003	Years 1-3	Arts centre working group External consultants – feasibility study? Art Gallery & Museum
Everyman Theatre	Support the theatre's expansion plans to include the provision of a new studio theatre, arts cinema and gallery space.	Year 3	ACESW Everyman
The Playhouse	Support the recommendations contained in ACWG cabinet paper of 11 November 2003	Year 1-3	Arts Centre Working Group External consultants Playhouse
Town Hall & Pittville Pump Room	Assess public private partnership options for investment	Year 1	Town Hall Governance Working Group

<b>Virtual Arts Centre</b>			
	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Potential partners</b>
VAC	Lead on VAC initiative to develop audiences and participants in the arts and to bring alternative venues into use	Year 1	ADO

<b>To promote access to, and use of, the arts in tackling target areas of social exclusion, health issues, crime &amp; disorder</b>			
<b>Agenda</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Potential partners</b>
Social exclusion	Increase awareness of, and access to, arts activity, both in terms of participation and as audience  Work with the Education teams to extend opportunities to work with and at venues within areas defined as needing priority action	Years 1 to 3	HWNP WLPNP Lower High Street Regeneration Area CAF Education Youth Music CAG&M Everyman
The elderly	Identify numbers and socio-demographic make-up of elderly population Audit of arts activity currently aimed at this age group Research into examples of good practice Pilot projects	Years 1 to 3	ADO U3A Age Concern? Community groups CAG&M
Arts in Health	Work with 'Arts in Trust' to deliver a programme of music and performance-based projects at Cheltenham General Hospital	Years 1 - 3	Arts in Trust (Willis Newson)/ Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Trust
Crime & disorder	Consider projects with young offenders	Years 1 to 3	Cultural Partnership / Crime & Disorder Partnership

<b>To target arts projects at young people including support to arts in education initiatives</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Potential partners</b>
Lifelong learning	Support and work with Lifelong Learning Officer ensuring an arts focus	Years 1 to 3	Lifelong Learning Officer
Young people & families	Ensure ongoing consultation  Improved communication & information about arts events, opportunities and funding (i.e. through website)  Consider projects aimed at young people (film & video, digital arts, music, radio, DJ master-class)	Years 1 to 3	MAD Youth Council MASSIVE Youth & Community Service Youth Music Whaddon Youth & Community Centre Oasis Youth Centre Hester's Way Gloucestershire Video Festival Media Education Hub Private sector Surestart

<b>To promote the use and role of the arts in developing the Borough's economy and in contributing to economic and social regeneration</b>			
<b>Item</b>		<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Potential partners</b>
Creative industries	Undertake research to establish baseline data for the creative industries in terms of economic output and growth potential  Assess annually	Year 1  Year 2 and 3	ADO Glos Arts Advisory Group Arts Council England South West CBC Economic Dvlpmt
Arts and regeneration (including tourism)	Advocate the value of the arts and creative industries to economic development and regeneration  Inclusion in relevant council strategies  Examples of good practice	Years 1-3	ADO Public art panel CBC Economic Dvlpmt Tourism Officer

<b>To employ the arts in raising awareness of environmental issues, in enhancing our environment and in promoting sustainability</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Partners</b>
Open spaces	Strategy for the borough's parks and open spaces, to develop opportunities for greater community use, arts events etc.	Years 1 to 3	ADO/ CBC Parks Dept
Public art	Research and prepare a public art policy and strategy including a review of the Public Art Panel	Year 1	Public Art Panel Public Art South West ADO
Project work	Develop projects with a view to raising awareness of environmental issues and promoting sustainability	Years 1 to 3	Cultural Partnership/ Built Environment Partnership CBC Parks Dept St Mary's Churchyard

<b>To develop and support partnerships, which promote creative practice, attract investment to the arts, support joint working and which make the most effective use of resources for the arts.</b>			
<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Partners</b>
Partnership working with Gloucestershire County Council and Districts	Support county arts agencies to increase provision of arts and cultural opportunities  Work with the county on shared strategic priorities	Years 1 to 3	Gloucestershire Dance Air in G Theatre locality plan Gloucestershire County Council Districts / County Arts Liaison Group
Arts Council England South West	Partnership working with ACESW	Years 1 and 2	ACESW Glos CC / districts
Funding	Increase the amount of funding for the arts coming into the borough from external agencies, both to organisations and individuals	Years 1 to 3	ACESW Youth Music European funding Glos County Council

<b>To position the arts at the strategic centre of the council and of Local Strategic Partnerships</b>			
Political leadership	Support the portfolio holder to enable their effective contribution – supply monthly report	Years 1 to 3	ADO
Corporate arrangements	Advocate the value of the arts as a tool for meeting corporate priorities and objectives to the chief executive, senior management team and throughout the council and to identify and act upon new opportunities as they arise	Years 1 to 3	ADO Cultural partnership
External engagement	Build alliances, partnerships, etc, with external non-arts agencies such as education, health, criminal justice, economic development partnerships and the RDA	Years 1 to 3	Cultural partnership Other local strategic partnerships RDA

<b>Arts Development – General</b>			
Web presence for arts development arts@cheltenham	Develop an Arts Development page for the CBC Website. To disseminate information (a notice-board) relating to arts activities, education and outreach activities, funding opportunities, etc.	Year 1	ADO Electronic service delivery strategy
Arts development funding	Develop criteria and forms for arts development funding	Year 1	ADO
Partnership funding	Develop criteria and forms for partnership funding	Year 1	ADO
Dialogue	Encourage greater <u>informal</u> dialogue between existing arts providers and venues in the town	Years 1 to 3	Festivals Team CAG&M Everyman Holst Museum



## **Appendix A**

### **Vision for a virtual arts centre**

Aims to:

- **construct a network of like-minded artists and promoters** to bring **contemporary** programmes of work to these spaces
- **build audiences** for this increased activity.
- **research potential arts facilities** in the town (both *dedicated* arts venues as well as *non-arts* spaces (e.g. vacant buildings/shops, the town's parks & gardens, etc) that could be used, even on a temporary basis, for arts activity. Utilise new spaces as they come on-stream. This would also include greater collaboration with the schools sector (to increase knowledge and use of the often very high quality arts facilities)
- **promote the existence of these facilities** to encourage promoters and artists to work in Cheltenham.

#### **A suggested structure for the virtual arts centre is as follows:**

- Up to 12 individuals would act either as trustees or steering group members (depending on whether the VAC was formally constituted)
- This body would develop a business and marketing plan, to be delivered by a lead officer (see 5.8) working with a small number of specialist Programme Co-ordinators

#### **The virtual arts centre has the potential to address six of the eight gaps identified:**

- An arts cinema (show films at venues across the town)
- Dance (research and promote spaces for both rehearsal and performance)
- Exhibition space (ditto)
- Studio space for artists
- Meeting spaces
- Potential to find a flat floor space for music groups

The VAC could also address an identified gap in activities for young people.

The vision of a virtual arts centre is to build arts activity, promotion and participation to a level where the need for a stand-alone arts centre is proven and feasible.

## **Appendix B1**

### **List of individuals and organisations consulted by Arts Development Officer**

#### **Cheltenham Borough Council**

Chris Huckle  
Sonia Philips  
Rowena Hay  
Mary Greensted and Helen Brown, CAG&M  
Stefan Wathan  
Antonia Coles, Co-ordinator of MASSIVE  
Kim Gibbon, Co-ordinator of MAD Young People's Council  
Alan Beard  
Jeremy Tyndall  
Ken Jennings, Assistant Director, Economic Development & Tourism  
Wendy Jackson, Economic Development Manager, CBC  
Grahame Lewis, Assistant Director, Built Environment  
Geoff Sloman, Community Development Manager  
Faye Little, Education & Outreach Officer, CAG&M  
Rose Caudle-Wood, Education & Outreach, Cheltenham Arts Festivals Ltd  
Richard Gibson, Policy  
Paul Jones  
Adam Pushkin, Literature Festival Officer, Cheltenham Arts Festivals Ltd  
Adam Reynolds, Parks Development Manager  
John Crowther, Assistant Director, Green Environment  
Mike Ibbitson, Manager, Town Hall

Celia Dirk, Young Arts Centre  
Rebecca Tomkins, National Star College  
Martin Williams, Calmer

#### **Artists**

Adam White  
Sarah Bawden  
Lindsey Smith  
Viv Ayres

#### **Forums**

Arts Centre Working Group  
Cultural Partnership  
Gloucestershire Media Education Initiative

#### **Hester's Way**

Shelley Hudjec, Community Development Worker, Surestart, Hester's Way Neighbourhood Project  
Bernice Thompson, HWNP  
Chris Gibson, Oasis Youth Centre

#### **Whaddon**

Rob Capewell, Whaddon Youth & Community Centre  
Chris Sadler, Detached Youth Worker, Whaddon & North Cheltenham  
Colin Pritchard, Playwork Co-ordinator, Whaddon Lynworth & Priors Neighbourhood Project  
Sarah Kurlander, Training Co-ordinator, WLPNP

Philip Bernays, Chief Executive, Everyman Theatre  
Sue Colverd, Everyman Theatre

Zoe Channing, GLOSS, Arts in Education Agency  
Ed O'Driscoll, Air in G  
Jacky Poole, Gloucestershire Dance  
Camilla Hale and Margaret Sloan, Art Shape

Lorna Trupec, Arts Co-ordinator, Art in Trust, Gloucestershire NHS Trust  
Jane Willis and Joanna Espiner, Arts in Trust

Jane Bywater, freelance artist and public art consultant

Helen Owen, Arts Development Officer, Gloucestershire County Council  
Rachael Stanway, Arts Development Officer, Cotswold District Council  
Rosalind Cookson, Arts Development Officer, Forest of Dean

James Clarke and Rick Goldsmith, Catchermedia

Jake Lever and Rob Watts, Bournside School  
John Forster, University of Gloucestershire  
Kirsty Carter, Youth Music

Public Art South West

Nell ?, Gifford's Circus  
Peter Stone, Cheltenham Connexions concerts

Steve Quick, Locality Theatre Officer, Gloucestershire Theatre Locality Plan

## **Appendix B2**

### **Cheltenham Arts Centre Feasibility Study**

#### **Individuals and organisations consulted during Arts Centre Working Group feasibility study**

##### **Members of Arts Centre Working Group**

Cllr Rowena Hay	Chair
Cllr Diggory Seacome	
Richard Wakeford	Summerfield Trust
Philip Bernays	Everyman Theatre
Terry Moore-Scott	Cheltenham Arts Council
Sarah Bowden	Cheltenham Arts Steering Group
Helen Owen	County Arts Officer, Gloucestershire CC
Clare Reddington	Organiser, Cheltenham Science Festival
Chris Huckle	Group Director, Social & Community Services
Sarah Fletcher	Arts Development Officer

##### **Funders**

Chris Humphrey	Arts Council England, South West
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##### **Sites / Buildings**

Tim Byng	Head of Property and Asset Management
Steven Blake	Museum & Art Gallery Working Party
Terry Pawson	Architect, Museum & Art Gallery Development

##### **Cheltenham Arts Festivals**

Jeremy Tyndall	Head of Festivals and Entertainment
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##### **Cheltenham Arts Council**

Sue Bennett	Chair of Theatre & Arts Association, Playhouse Theatre plus members of the Playhouse committee and staff
Ann Cox	Cotswold Savoyards
Bill Bell	Bel Canto opera group
Hazel Kitchin	Chair, Cheltenham Art Club
Chris Lammiman	Chair, Cheltenham Competitive Festival and member CAC Exec
Celia Durk	Young Arts Centre
Paul Foster	Cheltenham Bach Choir, Vice-Chair of CAC Exec
Andrew Chapman	Cheltenham Symphony Orchestra
Kate Brooks	Secretary, Cheltenham Recorded Music Society
Derek Briggs	Cheltenham Jazz
John Yarnley	Formerly Pate's Grammar School Choir & Orchestra and former member CAC Exec
Gerry Dominey	Secretary, Cheltenham Silver Band
Christine Chambers	Chair, CAC
Mary Southerton	Charlton Kings Local History Society
John Henry	Chair, Cheltenham Civic Society
Douglas Ogle	Civic Society

##### **Community**

Sue Colverd	Artistic Director, Everyman Theatre
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##### **Ethnic Communities**

Immanuel Njue	Cheltenham Minority Ethnic Forum <i>contact attempted</i>
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**Other**

Mary Greensted	Cheltenham Art Gallery & Museum
Helen Brown	“ “ “ “ “ “
Margaret Sloan	Art Shape
UCAS	Virginia Isaac <i>contact attempted</i>
David Bill	Director, Cheltenham Film Studios
James Perkins	Owner, St James' Church, Suffolk Square
Caroline Davis	former manager, Axiom
Kim Gibbon	MAD
Martin Williams	Calmer Music and Cheltenham Arts Management
Jane Bartholomew	Singer, dance manager, Cheltenham Arts Management
Eric Goodchild	Architect, writer, Cheltenham Arts Management
Anita Jeffery	Consultant and manager, Cheltenham Arts Management

**County arts agencies**

Jackie Poole	Gloucestershire Dance
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**Comparators / Regional Competitors**

Andy Woods	Centre Director, Guildhall Arts Centre, Gloucester
Gordon Scott	Prema, Dursley
Robert Hamlin	Roses Theatre, Tewkesbury
Dan Scrivener	Director, Brewery Arts, Cirencester <i>contact attempted</i>

**Education**

Zoe Channing	GLOSS <i>contact attempted</i>
Jake Lever	Community Arts Coordinator, Bournside School
Andrew McClelland	Assistant Head, Balcarras School
Stephen Lock	Estates Manager, Pate's Grammar School (& Richard Pate Schl)
Mrs Revell	Business Manager, Pittville School <i>contact attempted</i>
Peter Walsh	Finance Director, St Benedict's Catholic School <i>contact attempted</i>
Gordon Busbridge	Director of Music, Cheltenham College
Vanessa Hemming	Assistant to Bursar, Cheltenham College
Colin Shergold	Estates Director, Cheltenham Ladies' College
David Thompson	Theatre office, Dean Close School
Clara Bulteel	Theatre office, Dean Close School
Martin Ablatt	St Edward's School (Junior & Senior)
Gregory Smith	Principal, GLOSCAT
Dave Keskeys	Head of School of Art, Media & Design, Univ. Gloucestershire

## **Appendix C**

### **Cultural forums, partnerships and organisations referred to in the strategy**

#### **Air in G**

Air in G is a rural and community touring agency focused on establishing audiences for, and participation in, theatre, dance and music - in essence, to support live events on people's doorsteps. The organisation supports quality live arts events in community venues, both rural and urban. Each year a menu of arts events is offered to promoters including music, theatre, dance, puppetry and circus skills.

The initiative takes away the risk for promoters by offering a guarantee against loss for each event booked. Air in G also provides information on the content of shows and technical requirements. The scheme negotiates artists' fees and contracts; helps with marketing, and convenes regular forums to encourage and empower promoters.

The organisation has achieved RFO status with ACESW and is a development priority for the county. Air in G is developing local authority partnerships with the aim of establishing the scheme as a permanent service to local communities.

#### **Art Shape**

Art Shape believes in the power of the arts to change lives and improve health and wellbeing. Art Shape works with individuals, communities and organisations to combat exclusion from the arts, with a particular focus on adults facing disabling barriers. As well as delivering arts opportunities, the organisation also drives social change by informing policy, identifying gaps in arts provision and stimulating the development of new possibilities in the arts.

Art Shape run several programmes in Cheltenham, including a Pre-Access Printmaking Course at the University of Gloucestershire, and arts sessions at the Equals cafe. A recent project involved working with groups and individuals to prepare banners and decorations for the prestigious national disability arts festival and conference, 'Above and Beyond', held at Cheltenham Town Hall in September 2003.

Art Shape received funding for the delivery of arts workshops at the Hester's Way Neighbourhood Project during 2003/4 with the aim of:

- (i) meeting the need in arts learning and providing a series of 6 arts workshops, or a term's course, for local people
- (ii) developing the ideas for exhibiting artwork in the building where local work can be shown
- (iii) training a local group in exhibition skills and to support them to run an exhibition programme at the Project

#### **Culture South West**

CSW began life in 1999 when the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) established eight Regional Cultural Consortia (RCCs) to "bring together people who can help make the most of culture and creativity in each part of England." The regional cultural strategy - 'In Search of Chunky Dunsters' - was published in 2001 and provided a blueprint for action over the next two years.

CSW's mission statement is to 'provide strong strategic leadership to people interested in the region's cultural development and work with partners to celebrate, champion and increase cultural opportunities across the South West'.

Each RCC receives the same amount of funding from the DCMS and it is the job of the board to decide how it should be spent in their region. CSW have a small core team based in the Exeter offices of the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA).

CSW supported the development of Local Cultural Strategies in 2002 and is now encouraging the development of Local Strategic Partnerships with the aim of delivering community strategies and Neighbourhood Renewal. CSW has entered into partnership arrangements with three of the region's local authorities (Plymouth, North Somerset and Dorset). The resultant case studies will feature in a conference focusing on culture and community strategies in early 2004.

#### **GLOSS**

GLOSS is Gloucestershire's arts in education agency working in key partnerships with local authorities in Gloucestershire. GLOSS was set up in September 1999 following a period of consultation into arts in education in Gloucestershire and is funded by Gloucestershire LEA and South West Arts. The

organisation aims to provide advice, support and information to anyone working with the arts in an education setting.

GLOSS NEWS, a free termly newsletter is distributed free of charge to schools, youth clubs, arts organisations and artists throughout Gloucestershire. It contains news, views, case studies, contacts and opportunities making it a valuable resource for anyone interested in the arts in education.

GLOSSARY - a directory of arts in education providers in Gloucestershire and information sheets on working with artists and developing projects

GLOSS also encourages the county's schools to work towards Artsmark award.

### **Gloucestershire Arts Advisory Group**

This group comprises the County Arts Officer and Arts Officers from the six districts. The group meets 3 times each year to discuss issues such as partnership agreements with ACE, cross district and countywide initiatives, and also operates as an information exchange. A representative from ACESW is invited to attend where appropriate.

### **Gloucestershire Dance**

Gloucestershire Dance is part of the regional network of dance agencies and works with partners to promote a wide range of dance activity. The organisation has a reputation for an outstanding contribution to dance-in-education.

The key aims of Gloucestershire Dance are to:

- initiate, develop and sustain a vibrant dance ecology for the people of Gloucestershire in partnership with the South West Dance Agencies Consortium
- target socially excluded groups within both rural and urban settings
- create opportunities for disabled and non-disabled people to take part in dance activities
- improve people's sense of well-being and inclusion through participation in dance
- identify and nurture artists who have the ability to inspire and entertain dance audiences
- build the capacity of dance artists, teachers and carers through training programmes
- use dance in educational work, especially schools and community organisations
- provide advice and information concerning all aspects of dance opportunities and events in the South West
- raise the public profile of dance activity

### **Locality Plan for Theatre in Gloucestershire 2003-2006**

This initiative is the first of its kind in the country. A Theatre Development Co-ordinator has been appointed this year under a three year contract to deliver the objectives of the Locality Plan for Theatre as follows:

- Increase investment in theatre activity within the County by the creation and maintenance of partnerships with a range of social, educational and economic agencies and commercial companies
- Make sure that theatre is socially inclusive and gives all the people of Gloucestershire the opportunity to engage with it, whether as audience or participant
- Set up an effective infrastructure whereby new ideas can be given the opportunity to become practical projects
- Encourage theatre to be more attractive and relevant to a contemporary audience by collaborating with artists from non theatre backgrounds, particularly visual arts and new technologies
- Encourage all practitioners to work together to achieve high quality art for everyone.

The priorities for development are:

- Participation and performance for and by young people
- Participation and performance for and by socially excluded communities in urban areas
- Participation and performance for and by ethnic communities
- Innovative performance to develop the art form including new writing from local (regional) writers and collaborations with other art forms

A Gloucestershire Theatre Production Office has been set up during 2003 staffed by a Theatre Development Worker and Production Assistant. The Everyman Theatre is one of 7 partners to the work of the Production Office along with the Roses Theatre, the Forest Theatre, the Sundial Theatre, Stroud Performing Space, GLOSS and Air in G.

The role of the district councils is mainly one of brokerage and creating partnerships with a view to develop creative ideas, audiences and participants and, therefore, residents.

The Locality Plan has a budget implication for CBC in that £3,000 has been budgeted over 2003/4 to 2005/6 – a cost of £1,000/year to come from the partnership fund (L23500-3804).

### **Public Art Panel**

The Public Art Panel was set up in 1991 to encourage private developers to consider Public Art as part of their proposals. The Panel does not have a budget but Cheltenham Borough Council has funded some Public Art Commissions, the first of which was the Friendship Circle by sculptor Neville Gabie in Sandford Twinning Gardens (1993). Some Public Art in Cheltenham has been commissioned by other bodies such as the Mosaics Trail developed by the Public Art Group of Cheltenham Arts Council. At the moment the panel is reactive, looking at the potential Public Art content of development schemes. Current members of the Panel are Cllr Rowena Hay (chair); Lesley Greene; Cllr Diana Hale (Planning Committee); Jenny Ogle (Cheltenham Arts Council); Diana Hatton (Public Art South West); George Breeze (community representative); Grahame Lewis, Assistant Director Built Environment, CBC; and Mary Greensted, Arts & Visitor Services Manager, CBC. There is currently a vacancy for a representative from the University of Gloucestershire. The Panel meets on an 'ad hoc' basis usually quarterly.



## Appendix D

### Arts Council England South West (ACE SW) Priorities and actions

Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts in England, distributing public money from Government, through the DCMS, and the National Lottery.

ACE has identified four national priorities based on the following statements:

- The arts are central to local economies in design, manufacturing, retail and leisure services.
- The arts make a difference to how we feel, and the quality of our lives and participation can improve physical health as well as mental well-being.
- The arts help people to express their different cultures and ideas, and enable them to communicate these to others. Whether through a public sculpture or by getting together to take part, the arts can build a sense of place and safer, more tolerant, vibrant communities.
- The arts offer young people unique opportunities to explore and learn, helping them become engaged members of the community.

ACE's aims are therefore:

#### The creative economy

- to develop targeted local facilities and services, such as 'incubation units' and managed workspace, new ways of providing finance, business support, career-long professional development and networks, appropriate to the needs of creative people and small businesses
- to create new approaches to regeneration that ensure long-term retention of individual artists and creative industries within the heart of successful communities
- to appreciate better the economic role of the arts within councils and other regional partners

#### Healthy communities

- to adopt new approaches to embedding the arts within health policy and planning at national and regional levels
- to integrate arts and health into local strategic partnerships, and in agreements between Arts Council England and local authorities
- to improve training opportunities and support for artists and arts organisations working in the health sector

#### Vital neighbourhoods

- to have a consistent approach to involving experienced artists in community regeneration from first stages through to completion, recognising the unique contribution they can make
- to strengthen the role of arts organisations within local government modernisation, particularly within policy, strategy and planning processes
- to work to improve partnership with other agencies involved in community and neighbourhood renewal, from Sure Start schemes to services for the elderly

#### Engaging young people

- to extend opportunities for the arts to contribute to the richness and creativity of the curriculum and school life more generally
- to position the arts at the centre of new youth services shaped by and with young people themselves
- to develop initiatives to improve the role of the arts in early years services

The relationship between the Arts Council and local authorities has, in the past, been based on a subscription system. The new approach is one of contributions based upon partnership agreements. A one year 'transitional agreement' was completed and signed off in September 2003 and a 'contribution' of £2,266 paid by CBC. A second phase will see the preparation of the 'formal' agreements from 2004/5 that set out more strategic and sustainable partnership agreements. These partnership agreements should contain a fairly small number of key strategic activities that are both achievable and sustainable. Areas of activity that have the potential to be regional or sub-regional will be encouraged in order to obtain maximum value and reduce duplication.

In March 2003, ACE published, 'Local Government and the Arts – a vision for partnership' with the stated aim of working towards ensuring that the arts are embedded in local government across the board and at the heart of local authority thinking.

The national funding settlement to the Arts Council England in 2003 is worth £55 million of funding for the arts over the next three years, more than double previous levels and rising to £20m in 2005/6. £36.5 million will go over three years to the organisations in the South West that receive regular funding from the Arts Council (RFO's). A further £13.5 million is allocated to a new and flexible grants programme supporting individual artists and organisations.