

Arts for Warwickshire People

Warwickshire County Council Arts Policy Statement

It is the aim of Warwickshire County Council that:

the life of every resident is enhanced by the richness and diversity of the arts and culture and their capacity to transform communities, ensuring the best opportunities for all, including the most vulnerable, across geographic, physical, financial, social and cultural boundaries.

**Arts for Warwickshire People ...
enriching lives, enhancing communities, including everyone**

Warwickshire County Council recognises the strategic role it plays in ensuring access to high quality opportunities in and through the arts for all its residents. It is committed to developing with partners the necessary infrastructure to sustain the benefits of its rich arts and cultural heritage and its reputation for excellence.

Warwickshire County Council offers:

Advice and Support

1. Providing expert advice and targeted support in the development of networks, partnerships and initiatives involving individuals and organisations in the arts and culture, local communities and services, including health, social care, learning, environment and economy.
2. Working closely with arts organisations, other local authorities and broader partnerships across the region and sub region in response to joint opportunities and issues.
3. Advising on and advocating for positive developments to the physical infrastructure and environment, including arts buildings, play spaces, public art and Building Schools for the Future.

Advocacy and Celebration

4. Ensuring that Warwickshire's diverse communities have an informed voice in shaping arts activity that will meet their distinct needs and aspirations.
5. Ensuring that arts professionals and organisations maximise the quality, reach and impact of their work in relation to local needs and aspirations.
6. Raising awareness and celebrating the significant contribution of the arts and culture to Warwickshire's reputation as an attractive place to live, work and visit.
7. Cultivating and sharing examples of excellence in aspects such as arts and learning and arts and health.

Investment and Sustainability

8. Attracting innovative, exciting and high quality arts and cultural opportunities from local, national and international sources.
9. Encouraging best value for money in arts activities and events, and attracting investment from external sources.
10. Working to ensure the sustainability of and ongoing improvement in the contribution of the arts and culture to the Warwickshire economy and quality of life.

Warwickshire County Council Arts Services

The achievement of the aims in *Arts for Warwickshire People* depends on the coordinated working of the distinct arts teams within Warwickshire County Council, simultaneously maintaining their separate areas of expertise and their versatility in working across divisions and directorates. This versatility is further enhanced by including individuals and groups with an arts and cultural role within other services.



The planning structure shows the areas covered by the distinct WCC arts teams. These distinct areas of arts expertise combine to make the most of the specialist and local knowledge held within each individual area, facilitating the sharing of resources and joint working where appropriate. This way of working means that *Arts for Warwickshire People* can be delivered with a wide range of local knowledge and expertise, whilst continuing to offer excellent value for money.

Joint Planning

Arts for Warwickshire People responds to Warwickshire County Council's corporate vision, priorities and targets, offering an important vehicle for achieving that vision. It informs Warwickshire County Council's Children and Young People's Plan as well as the strategic plans of Adult Health and Community Services, Environment and Economy and the other Directorates.

Annual priorities and actions arising from *Arts for Warwickshire People* are set in a single plan for the joint working of the arts teams. The joint plan shows how the ten objectives in *Arts for Warwickshire People* translate into the actions of the distinct arts teams. These actions derive from the individual service plans of the distinct arts teams.

This document is the product of extensive research and consultation. It takes account of the priorities of major funding organisations and will therefore maximise opportunities to secure external funding.

Examples of Warwickshire County Council Arts Activities

The Arts for Adults and Community

Integrated Dance Projects, Stratford & North Warwickshire

Initiated & managed by County Arts Service

Project Partners: WCC-AHCS, Dancescape, Arts Council England

As part of the Dance4Health project (an action learning project to assess the impact of community dance on physical health, psychological wellbeing and aspects of social inclusion) opportunities were created to develop two 'integrated' dance groups of disabled and non-disabled adults.

Based in community venues, the groups include a range of participants including staff, service users and non-disabled, independent participants from the local community. They range in age from 25 to 60 plus years and had a range of physical and learning abilities.

The groups continue to meet during term time and a funding bid is being developed for Olympiad funding 'People Dancing' to support the sustainability of the groups from January 2010.

As the groups grow, participants are supported to develop their skills and confidence in other ways, for example the Stratford group is now co-led by Stephanie Holt, who, as a rare physically disabled dance graduate in the UK, was chosen as the group's mentee. Her confidence, leadership skills and particularly her understanding of the project management aspect of teaching the community have developed significantly thanks to this opportunity.

Participant: "...it just involves everyone, and everyone has their unique way of moving and everyone dances to their own full potential therefore everyone in the group is satisfied and nobody is trying to be patronising or anything like that, everyone is working together and helping each other to be better."

Warwickshire Artsweek

Initiated by County Arts Service, moving towards sustainable management by independent artist group

Project Partners: Warwickshire based artists, District & Boroughs, National Open Studios Network, WCC E&E, project sponsors (e.g. Chiltern Railways, Compton Verney)

Warwickshire Artsweek, a bi-annual visual arts and crafts event comprising open studios, exhibitions, workshops and education activities across Warwickshire, was initiated in 2000 and managed by the County Arts Service. Since its inception Artsweek has grown and developed ...

2002	2004	2006
84 artists	134 artists	202 artists
62 venues	119 venues	171 venues
9180 visitor attendances	23,861 visitor attendances	51,800 visitor attendances
£42,800 estimated sales overall	£67,291 estimated sales overall	£194,558 estimated sales overall

In research carried out for Artsweek in 2004 it was estimated that the event generates £350,000 for the county's economy as a whole through additional discretionary spend on top of sales of artwork at the event itself.

The County Arts Service has moved away from direct project management of the event and is now working towards making Artsweek sustainable. Work started in 2007 by supporting a small group of volunteer artists to take over the management of the event. This group successfully managed Artsweek 2008 and are now in a strengthened position to move forward.

Chatroom

Arts in Warwickshire Education: *Arts Leading Learning*

An Arts in Warwickshire Education production of a play about cyber-bullying, performed in schools across the county by drama students from Trinity Catholic School.

In this 'low cost / high impact' project important and timely messages about internet safety were communicated to a four figure audience of pupils and adults in nine Warwickshire secondary schools, across the five Warwickshire areas.

Following a conversation with the head of drama at Trinity Catholic School, Arts in Warwickshire Education arranged for a private viewing of Chatroom by senior members of Warwickshire's children's services, representing safeguarding, ICT development and others including Warwickshire members of the Youth Parliament. Their response prompted AWE to organise a tour of the production. It also led to some important cross-service planning. The children's services anti-bullying co-ordinator worked closely with the performers to produce materials to accompany the performance and support any subsequent activities in schools.

Working in true partnership with the Local Authority, the willingness and capacity of Warwickshire secondary schools to manage the event in their own communities was exemplary. The production was a resounding success, entertaining pupils and adults alike whilst simultaneously presenting its message with a clarity and conviction hard to replicate by other means. In addition the student actors had an unforgettable 'work experience', the head of drama gained valuable professional knowledge and the reputation of Trinity Catholic School was further enhanced.

Teacher's comment on the performance at King Edward VI School, Stratford Upon Avon:
"This was an excellent opportunity for our students to appreciate the power of live performance. The production was superbly acted. It was thoroughly relevant to our students who were rapt throughout!"

Pupil's comment: *"there should be more things like this in schools to get a message across."*

A year for Change – developing a more creative workforce

Initiated & managed by Youth and Community Service, part of Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS)

Project Partners: Warwickshire Youth Arts Network

Through the arts in youth work audit it became apparent that, as youth work is targeted at areas of most need, it work often takes place in communities and settings where children and families find it hard to access the arts. Therefore ensuring our staff are confident and able to make a cultural offer in these circumstances is essential.

As a result, 100 youth workers from Warwickshire Youth and Community Service and the voluntary youth sector came together with 14 local arts providers at the CHESSE Centre in Camphill, for the first day of a creative and cultural year of exploration in how the arts and cultural activity can contribute to achieving the 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters and Aiming High. The aim of the programme was to develop the understanding of frontline staff of the current government agendas, such as “find your talent” (the cultural offer), and to enable them value the role they have to play in ensuring young people can access excellent cultural opportunities and achieve their full potential.

During the event youth workers were challenged to step outside of their comfort zones and explore the arts through hands on workshops and inspirational talks, as well as witness first hand some of the excellent arts practice that Warwickshire’s young people are already engaged in through IYSS delivery. By the end of the day, youth workers left feeling inspired and ready to ensure that their delivery plans enable young people to access cultural opportunities as part of everyday face to face delivery.

The day was a real success, with all rating the conference as an excellent learning experience. As a result there has been a significant rise in the quantity and quality of arts programmes being sign posted to and/or delivered in youth work settings.

Delegates said: “the make some noise workshop was inspirational and let us realise how we can use music to deliver the 5 outcomes.”

“It gave you a kick start to think outside the box made you realise what you can achieve and what potential there is around you.”

“I enjoyed that you were plucked out of your comfort zone to participate and gained knowledge about yourself and skills that you had forgotten that you had.”

Rob Townsend, Deputy County Youth Officer said: “it has shown staff how you can integrate the arts into day to day youth work programmes, but more importantly has demonstrated that we cannot afford the arts to be a bolt on to youth work practice, the arts are integral to our work.”

BOYS CAN dance

Project Partners: WCC, Being Frank Youth, Youth Opportunities Fund WDC

Beingfrank Youth Dance Company working in partnership with Warwickshire Youth and Community service to deliver a series of boys dance workshops in youth centres, clubs and schools across Warwickshire. Initiated & managed by Youth and Community Service, part of Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS)

Bringing boys to dance is never an easy task, so we were pleasantly surprised to see that the BOYS CAN Dance tour received a phenomenal amount of support and interest from young people, with many young men saying they would like to see and do more. Supported by youth workers, PE teachers, arts development and a professional dance company, the programme worked on many levels; ensuring access to quality delivery and encouragement to healthier and safer lifestyles for new comers, as well career progression for young performers and development opportunities for professional providers.

Through a programme of peer led performances in community settings and the delivery of workshops, young men were able to see live professional dance for the first time and develop their interest through taking part in dance workshops, which were inspired by the performances they had witnessed. Some also visited local arts centres and showed their own performances at community events.

The programme had a significant impact in terms of developing new audiences and providing access to cultural opportunities for those who would not normally take part. Through supporting the young dancers via the touring opportunity we were able to support their career development, and enable them to contribute to the cultural life of their local communities. For those whom taking part in dance activity was a new experience we witnessed the significant impact the arts can have in engaging hard to reach young men, changing their behaviour to encompass healthier and safer lifestyles.

Youth workers identified numerous benefits arising from the work, the most significant of these being in behaviour, health, risk management and anti oppressive practice...

Matt Mancini (youth worker) at The Crox Bedworth said this project has changed the centre: "... BOYS CAN dance has been great for us. It's much more than the impact of the dance activity, because as a result we have been able to deliver informal education [in sexual health, drugs awareness, smoking cessation, anti racism etc] to hard to reach young men because of their involvement in the dance programme. We should be offering more of this ... our young people need long term programmes of engaging creative activity to really effect change in their lives."

Participants said: "This is the best thing we have done all year – when can they come back?"