

Participation in the Arts



Maindee Festival (image: Rhys Webber)

Inquiry by the National Assembly for Wales Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee:

Participation in the Arts

Written submission from the Arts Council of Wales

March 2012

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1. Introduction

Participation in the arts

This submission focuses on the subject of this Inquiry: Participation in the Arts.

Participation is different to attendance at arts events. There is, of course, some degree of 'participation' as an audience member. After all, the best art always draws in its audience and invokes an emotional response of some kind. However, we have spent time researching these issues and reviewing the relevant literature, and our view is informed by accepted practice in this field.

Research published by the Arts Council of Wales in March 2008¹ suggested the following distinction:

"...attendance is defined as a relatively passive consumption of activities designed and delivered by arts organisations. It is primarily an 'audience' based activity and is likened to 'consumption' of a product. There is likely to be a commercial component involved in the form of a charge for attendance.

In contrast, participation is seen as involving the creation of an outcome by the participant in a first hand experience of a form of arts practice. Generally, the individual will have been involved in an act of creativity, often guided by a practitioner artist or performer, but requiring creative input by the participant.

Arts participation refers to people taking an active role; doing, making and creating."

Routes to participation

There are many ways that people participate in the arts:

- as an amateur or volunteer – joining or setting up a local group, or enjoying some form of self-taught activity
- by taking part in a professionally-led community arts project or initiative
- by taking part in an educational, outreach or adult education programme run by an arts organisation, school or higher education institution

And people take part in the arts for many reasons:

- for enjoyment
- as an interest or hobby
- for social reasons
- to develop a new skill
- to support a family member
- appreciation of a particular type or form of arts activity

¹ *Arts and Public Engagement*: Prof Dave Adamson, Penny Byrne, Dr Neil Caldwell, Anne England and Prof Hamish Fyfe (Arts Council of Wales, 2008)

The value of taking part in the arts

Research that the Arts Council commissioned from the University of Glamorgan² in 2007 described the benefits that participation in the arts can offer:

- **improved self confidence:** participants reported the confidence gained from their achievements within projects, visits to festivals and events, travelling outside their community, overcoming problems, team working, triumphing over personal difficulties and having their contribution valued
- **higher self esteem:** participants developed a sense of pride in their contribution to the project, felt that their parents and siblings valued them more and developed a strong sense of ownership of their outputs from the project
- **improved aspirations:** participants outlined ambitions to continue professionally in their chosen area of arts practice, to attend FE and HE courses, and to secure employment

The research also pointed to the ways that the social impact of culture and the arts was evident:

- **personal development:** increasing individuals' or communities' confidence and sense of self-worth; providing a sense of empowerment; creating a sense of control over one's own life and self-determination; improving self-image and creating increased understanding of diversity
- **social cohesion:** increased friendship, increased contact with other cultures, enlarged social network, sense of 'belonging' to a particular group/club/network/community
- **the community:** for example, volunteering, helping organise local events, working in partnership with other organisations for the community, people feeling more positive about where they live, feeling safer where they live, pride in their own culture or ethnicity
- **health and well-being:** improved physical and/or mental health, stress reduction, pain reduction, reduction in morbidity, increased physical and mental activity, positive response to therapies, sense of well-being and positive outlook, improved quality of life

² *Hand in Hand:* University of Glamorgan (Arts Council of Wales, 2007)

Barriers to participation

Our research over many years has revealed a consistent range of issues that create barriers to participation:

- **attitudinal and perceptual barriers** – this is the single most significant disincentive to participation. A lack of interest, or the perception that something is of little cultural relevance, can encourage the feeling that “the arts are not for me”
- **access to venues and facilities** – the existence of a well located venue, accessible by public transport, has a significant impact on levels of participation
- **transport** – poor public transport is a significant factor affecting the frequency of participation, especially in the evenings
- **community safety** – concerns about personal safety, especially after dark, can raise barriers to attendance at even very local events
- **cost** – this can be an issue but, surprisingly, is often not the decisive factor. Much more important is the perceived attractiveness of the activity

Funding for participatory arts activity

A number of organisations fund participatory arts activities. These include:

- the **Arts Council of Wales** (through grant-in-aid, the National Lottery and funds secured from European sources)
- the **Welsh Government** (through its funding to Communities First partnerships, schools, specific projects such as CanSing and Film Club, Major Events Unit funding to projects that have a participatory element)
- the **22 local authorities in Wales**, who support extensive programmes of arts participation through the arts development services they provide, the venues that they fund and manage, and the events that they promote
- **universities and colleges**, many of whom promote community programmes and adult education
- **business sponsors**, including **Arts & Business Cymru** and the private sector organisations who are their members
- the **UK Legacy Trust**, who are investing in the **Cultural Olympiad**
- **trusts and foundations**, such as The Prince’s Trust and the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, both of which have been long-standing supporters of the arts in Wales)

- other **public and charitable organisations**, such as **NHS trusts, Barnardos, Age Concern, Fairbridge** and **The Salvation Army**

There are also a range of independent and commercial providers of participatory arts activities, especially for young people. Examples include the many individual music teachers, independent dance schools and more established commercial companies operating in Wales such as Bigfoot Arts Education and Stagecoach Theatre Schools.

Arts Council funded activity

The Arts Council of Wales funds a wide range of activity:

- **regular programmes of activity** – from national companies to locally based community arts organisations, the Arts Council's revenue funded organisations are providing regular opportunities for people of all ages to participate in the arts

For example...

- last year, Wales Millennium Centre provide opportunities for 16,000 people to take part in Learning and Participation projects, and more than 12,500 school children were engaged in arts activity, including performances and workshops
- Valley and Vale Community Arts came into being during the miners' strikes in South Wales in the early 1980s. At that time the organisation was offering Community Arts as a way of helping people in the Garw Valley document their lives at a time of hardship and great change. Now, the organisation provides regular weekly activity through tailor-made community arts workshops, training programmes and projects across all its art form areas including dance, drama, film, animation, photography and the visual arts
- last year, Aberystwyth Arts Centre saw around 86,000 people involved in its annual Community Arts participation programme. This included youth outreach initiatives, Communities First projects, schools access programmes, accredited examinations, storytelling groups, dance classes, discussion groups, targeted social outreach, and pre-school sessions for mothers and babies

- **developing the talents of young people** – we encourage young people to develop their creative skills by becoming actively involved in participatory arts activities

For example...

- National Youth Arts Wales delivers performing arts opportunities for young people from across Wales through the National Youth Theatre, National Youth Dance, National Youth Brass Band, National Youth Choir, National Youth Jazz; National Youth Orchestra and National Youth Woodwind Orchestra Wales

- Merthyr Rock provided a opportunities for young valleys musicians to take part alongside more established bands in this high profile new festival promoted in Cyfartha Park
 - Criw Celf is an Arts Council/local authority partnership operating across North Wales to provide an arts club for children who have shown a special talent or interest in the visual arts. Young people are matched with professional artists to develop and extend their creative skills
- **‘delegated’ funding arrangements** – in some cases, the Arts Council delegates to specialist organisations the distribution of funding and the organisation of specific projects

For example...

- Tŷ Cerdd has a membership of more than 400 community based voluntary and amateur music-performing societies throughout Wales, representing over 22,000 performers. With funds provided by the Arts Council, Tŷ Cerdd supports these organisations with through grants and artistic advice
 - Literature Wales organises the highly successful Young People’s Writing Squads across Wales. Young people get the opportunity to develop their creative writing with eminent writers such as Francesca Kay, Robert Minhinnick, Jenny Sullivan, Mererid Hopwood, Iwan Llwyd, Andrew Motion, Ceri Wyn Jones and Benjamin Zephaniah
- **participation through arts and health projects** – there is a well-established understanding that an active engagement in creative pursuits has significant health benefits

For example...

- several NHS Trusts have established Arts in Health Strategies. In North West Wales the programme includes an artist in residence working with older people in a hospital setting, the commissioning of public art and a music and art therapy service within the Trust’s Mental Health and Learning Disabilities Directorate
- led by Denbighshire Community Arts Service and Ruthin Craft Centre (with support from the Alzheimer’s Society), *Lost in art too* is a project aimed at people aged 50+ with dementia, along with their family members and carers. The project aims to address issues which can affect older people with dementia, including social isolation, confidence, communication and quality of life and wellbeing. The service will be evaluated by the Dementia Services Development Centre, Bangor University

- **encouraging participation by older people** – we want people of all ages to enjoy and take part in the arts. There is a growing ‘market’ of older people who are keen to participate in the arts

For example...

- Gwanwyn is a month-long national festival held across Wales in May each year celebrating creativity in older age. Gwanwyn celebrates older age as a time of opportunity for renewal growth and creativity. The Festival offers opportunities for greater participation by older people in the arts, whether visual arts, drama, storytelling, music, literature, photography, dance or film
- the Arts Council supported a series of workshops in North East Wales to engage elderly and/or memory impaired adults in learning through the arts. The project was delivered with Gorwel Newydd Extra Care Housing Facility in West Rhyl, and around 175 elderly people took part in creative activities between April and September 2011

- **providing opportunities for disabled people to participate in the arts** – we support a large number of projects where disabled people take part in arts activities, often as creative individuals themselves

For example...

- Theatr Ffynnon’s most recent production, *Pieces of Hate*, took as its subject the prejudice, hostility and violence experienced by disabled people. Over 60 adults with learning and physical disabilities created the work through their participation in a year-long series of workshops in Risca, Raglan and Chepstow
- disabled young people have benefitted from funding through *Power of the Flame*, a Cultural Olympiad project managed and administered by the Arts Council. As one of the Power of the flame partners, Disability Arts Cymru runs *Whose Flame is it Anyway?* a series of arts projects for young disabled people across Wales. Through this project over 300 young disabled people have participated in the arts in Wales. Many of these young people are new to Disability Arts Cymru
- Touch Trust offers distinctive creative movement programmes for individuals with learning disabilities, those affected by autistic spectrum disorder, complex needs, behaviour which challenges, and other vulnerable groups in the community. A guiding principle of the company’s work is the integration of the disabled and non-disabled communities within the Touch Trust’s prestigious and state of the art facilities.

- **providing opportunities for black and minority ethnic communities to participate in the arts** – we support a large number of projects that are designed to encourage more opportunities for diverse communities to take part in the arts. Our work in this field was recognised by the award, in 2011, of Diverse Cymru’s Public Sector Organisation of the Year

For example...

- Chapter in Cardiff has an extensive programme of activity that includes a partnership with Riverside Arts and Media; providing the women-only, daytime BME Women’s Film Club; the International Black Welsh Film Festival; delivering film workshops to primary schools in ethnically mixed areas of south Cardiff; hosting after-school classes for Somali and Nigerian communities

- **transforming life chances** – participating in the arts can be a powerful way of developing life skills and gaining greater personal confidence

For example...

- the Arts Council’s involvement in *Reach the Heights* programme (targeted at the most disadvantaged areas of Wales) will see over 10,000 of the hardest to reach youngsters encouraged, through their participation in arts projects, back into employment, education or training
- Splash Arts Cymru is an Arts Council initiative to help young people identified within the youth justice system who find a more productive place in society through their participation in the arts. Nearly 2,500 young people have taken part in projects over the past 3 years

- **participation through the arts and regeneration** – we increase access to the arts by creating new and better arts spaces giving people greater access to the arts

For example...

- The Arts Council’s Arts Lottery Capital programme has transformed the cultural landscape in Wales and provided the country with a high quality network of venues for the 21st century. Major projects have included Aberystwyth Arts Centre, Arad Goch, Chapter, Craft in the Bay, Galeri Caernarfon, Grand Theatre Swansea, Kyffin Williams Gallery on Anglesey, Lyric Carmarthen, Oriel Mostyn in Llandudno, Oriel Davies in Newtown, Riverfront in Newport, Ruthin Craft Centre, Sherman Theatre, Stwit Arts Centre, Theatr Brycheiniog, Torch Milford Haven, Theatr Mwldan in Cardigan, Venue Cymru, Ty Newydd Writers Centre, Valleys Kids and Wales Millennium Centre

- **major events, festivals and celebrations** – high profile public events often provide very effective ways of creating new opportunities for people to participate in the arts

For example:

- more than 1,000 local residents participated in National Theatre Wales’s extraordinary Port Talbot *Passion*, a 72 hour production seen by an audience of tens of thousands
- *Power of the Flame* is a £2.85 million programme, managed by the Arts Council, that is designed to use the London 2012 Games and the Cultural Olympiad as a catalyst to inspire young people to achieve their very best in their chosen field. So far nearly 50,000 young people have taken part in projects
- last year, Pontardawe’s Recreation Group was the venue for No fit State Circus’s *Parklife*, a six day programme of outdoor workshops delivered in collaboration with local creative and sports groups and members of the public. Activities included gymnastics, gymnastic pole dancing, ball sports, fight groups, large scale dance groups, stunt skipping, free running, stunt cycling, beat boxers, marching bands, painters and poets

- **partnerships with the private sector** – our support can often act as the incentive that encourages business to invest in arts participation

For example:

- our support of Arts and Business Cymru’s CultureStep and Arts for Kids programmes levers in nearly £6 of private sector support for every £1 of funding, extending the impact of these projects and acting as an incentive

- **partnerships with other public sector bodies** – we work with a wide range of other public organisations encouraging them to find new ways of offering opportunities for the users of their facilities and services to participate in the arts

For example:

- we are advising Cadw on the development of an arts programme for its sites. Cadw is piloting a three year programme of events, animation and participation to extend Cadw’s public engagement

- **building capacity** – we provide funding to projects that help organisations to increase the impact or improve the quality of their participatory arts activities.

For example:

- the Arts Council's *Night Out* service helps local community and voluntary groups to get involved in the promoting arts events. Each year there are nearly 600 events in local communities across Wales, around 130 of which take place in Communities First areas
- Voluntary Arts Wales estimates that there are around 4,000 amateur arts and crafts groups across Wales involving some 650,000 people. Most of these groups do not receive public funding and are self-sufficient. However, the Arts Council is working with Voluntary Arts Wales on the *Running Your Group* project designed to help groups to enhance and develop their activities
- enhanced Arts Council funding has enabled Disability Arts Cymru to employ development workers in West Wales and North Wales, where before they had only had a minimal presence. The organisation has also increased the amount of development work in South Wales. The result is that Disability Arts Cymru is reaching more disabled people and developing stronger networks and working relationships with other arts organisations
- the Arts Council is supporting Black Voluntary Sector Network Wales to develop artists as project leaders and arts role models for young people from BME backgrounds
- our support for Audiences Wales' *The Knowledge* project is helping venues across Wales to compile better intelligence on who is attending their venues. This encourages more efficient and targeted audience development initiatives
- the Arts Council's Evaluation Toolkit is being increasingly used by community arts organisations in Wales as a way of evaluating the impact of their activities and raising the quality of their work

2. Participation in the arts across Wales: the data

Establishing an accurate picture of participatory activity

It is notoriously difficult to compile comprehensive data on participation in the arts, given the number of different public and private sector bodies funding this activity. And it is important to remember that a significant amount of participatory activity happens with no public subsidy at all.

In our view the most reliably consistent data is contained in the Arts Council's Arts in Wales Survey (a major review commissioned every five years) and two annual surveys – the Omnibus and Children's Omnibus Surveys.

The Arts in Wales Survey 2012

Every five years the Arts Council commissions a major, independently researched survey of arts attendance and participation in Wales. The most recent survey was completed in 2010.

The Arts in Wales 2010 Survey showed that participation in the arts had increased significantly over the previous five years with people taking part in record numbers. And access to the arts has broadened irrespective of their social background or where they live³:

- 39% of Welsh adults participate in at least one arts activity, once a year or more often (an increase of 19 percentage points from 2005).
- there is some regional variation in the overall arts participation levels: 43% of adults in Mid & West Wales participated in the arts events once a year or more, followed by North Wales (39%) and South Wales (36%).
- arts participation continues to correlate with social grade: 46% of adults in the ABC1 group participate in arts activities at least once a year compared to 33% of C2DEs. However, since 2005 arts participation amongst DE respondents has more than doubled (from 14% to 31%)
- younger adults are more likely than older adults to participate in arts activities (48% of 16-24 year olds compared with 36% of those aged 65 plus)
- in 2010, females (42%) are more likely than males (35%) to participate in the arts
- members of black and minority ethnic groups have slightly higher levels of participation (43%) compared to white respondents (39%) and are more likely to take part in dance, visual arts and crafts and music.
- Welsh speakers are more likely than non-Welsh speakers to participate directly in the arts (45% compared to 36%)

³ *The Arts in Wales: Arts Council of Wales 2005 and 2010*

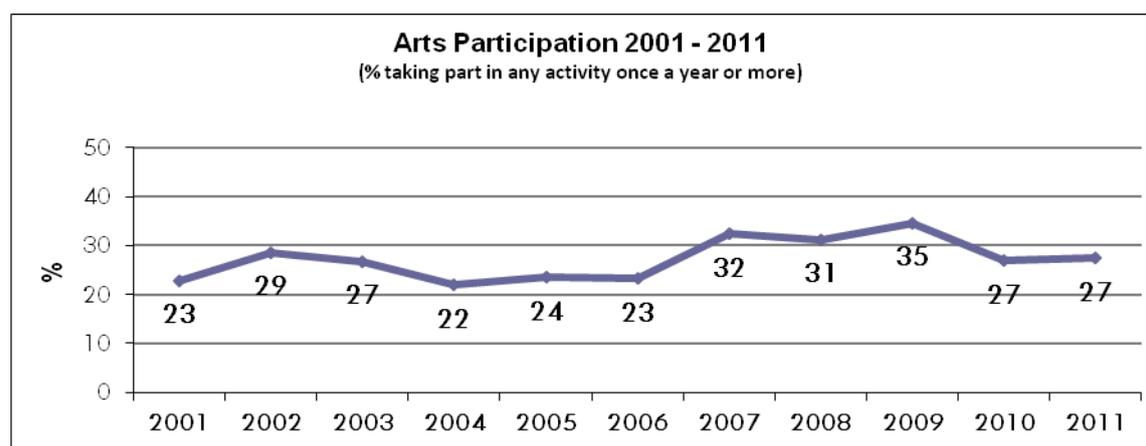
- educational qualification is more closely related to levels of overall arts attendance and participation than any other demographic

The 2011 Omnibus Survey

The Arts Council of Wales has conducted an annual attendance and participation research survey every year since 1993. The Survey collects data on attendance to arts events and participation in artistic activities. This information is collected through a series of questions asked on the Beaufort Research Ltd Wales Omnibus survey each year.⁴

The key findings on participation in the arts are as follows:

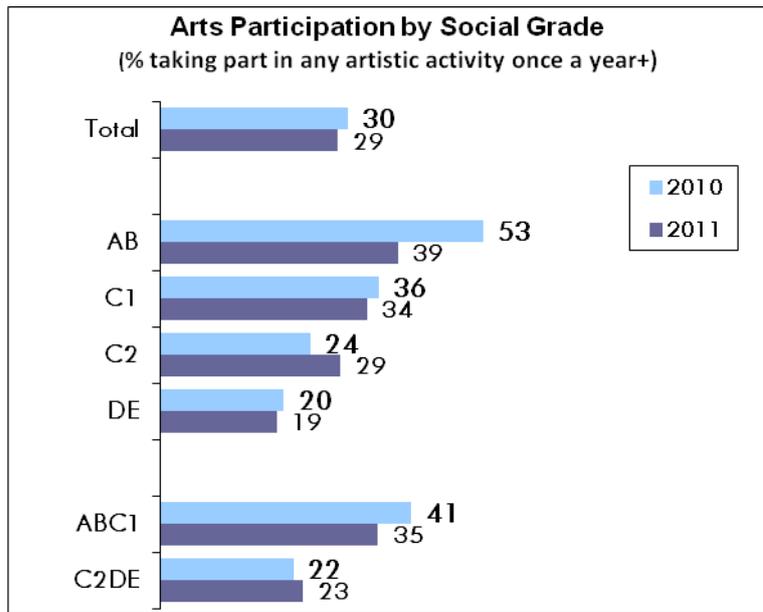
- 27% of Welsh adults participate in artistic activities once a year or more. This matches the figure recorded in 2010 and halts fall which had been recorded between the two previous years



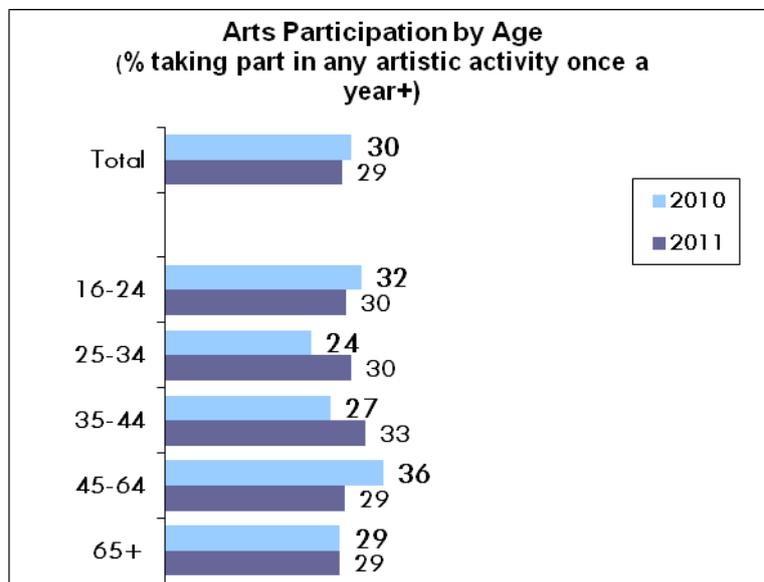
- for the last three years an additional artistic activity (digital arts) was added to the survey and when this is included in the analysis, overall participation levels rise to 29% - again very similar to 2010 (30%). Regional and demographic trends discussed below are on the basis of the seven artistic activities⁵ covered since 2009
- social grade continues to be a key determinant of participation in the arts. ABs remain the most likely social grade grouping to take part in an artistic activity at least once a year or more often (39%). Likelihood of participation falls as we move through the social grade spectrum to 19% among DEs. However, the gap between the higher and lower social classes in terms of overall participation is now less extreme than it was in 2010, with 20 percentage points now separating ABs from DEs compared with 33 in the previous year

⁴ The Omnibus Survey, Arts Council of Wales, 2011

⁵ The seven artistic activities are music; drama; dance; film and video making or photography; visual arts and crafts; creative writing; digital arts

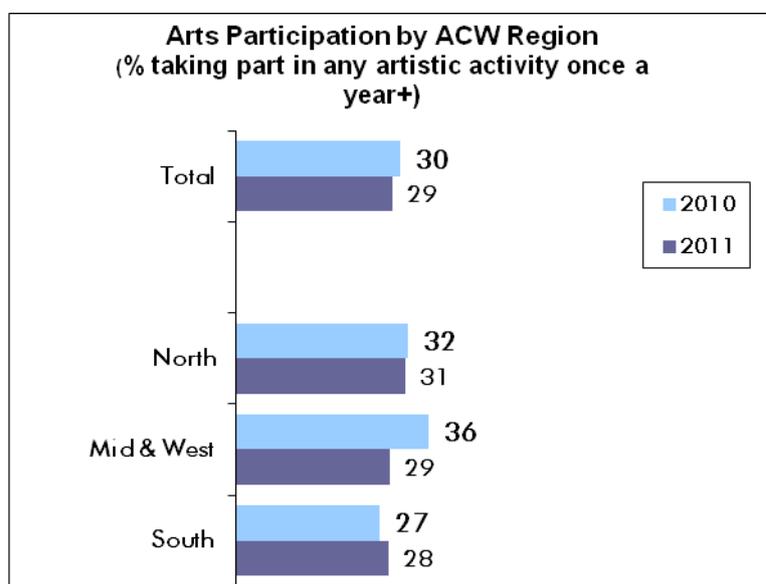


- participation by age does not vary to the same degree as social grade. Indeed, the most recent survey records a very consistent participation rate across all age groups. 25 to 34s and 35-44s saw increases of six percentage points whereas 45-64s saw a fall of seven percentage points relative to 2010 meaning that for all age groups, at least yearly participation in the arts was between 29-33%

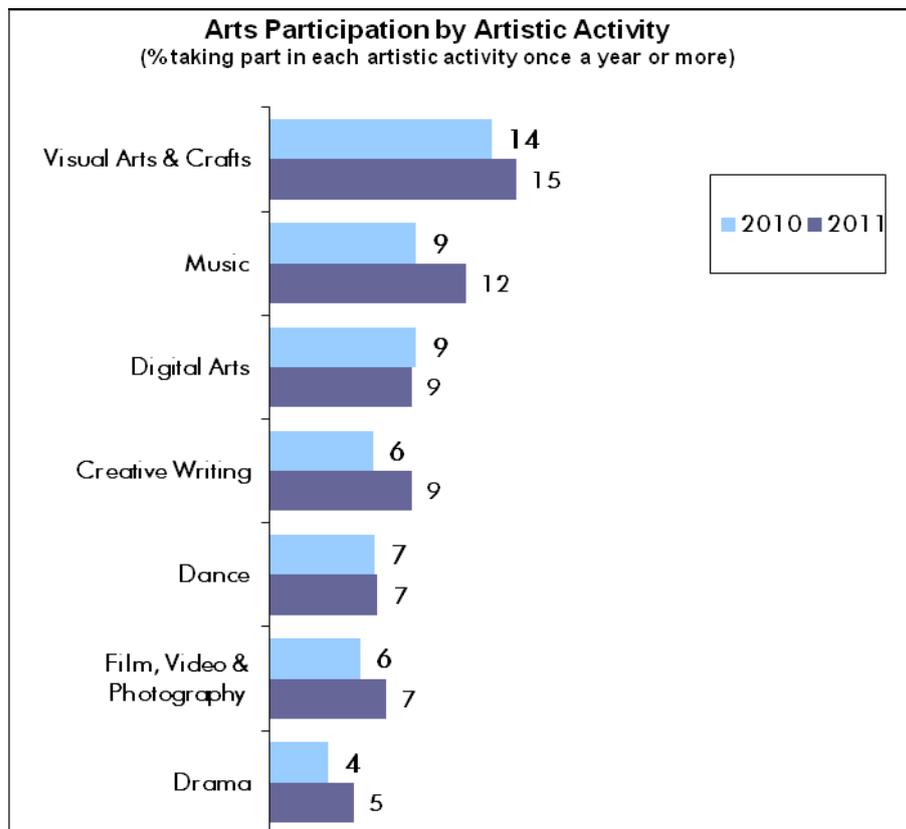


- women (31%) continue to be more likely than men (27%) to participate in artistic activities once a year or more often. The gender gap in terms of participation has remained consistent over the past few years at around four to five percentage points

- yearly participation rates by Arts Council of Wales region were more similar than in previous years ranging from 28% (South) to 31% (North). Overall participation in the Mid and West region sits in between these two levels at 29%, following a decline of seven percentage points from 2010



- Welsh speakers continue to be more likely than non-Welsh speakers to take part in the arts (37% compared with 26%). The gap between the two groups has widened a little (11 percentage points from 8) following a decline in participation among non-Welsh speakers in 2011 (down three percentage points)
- in terms of individual arts forms, Visual Arts & Craft remains the most popular with 15% of the population taking place at least yearly. This was followed by Music which records a three percentage point uplift from 2010 with participation now standing at 12%. Indeed all art forms record either a small increase in participation in 2011 or at least achieve parity with the previous year. This is encouraging given the sharp falls that were found in most activities between 2009 and 2010



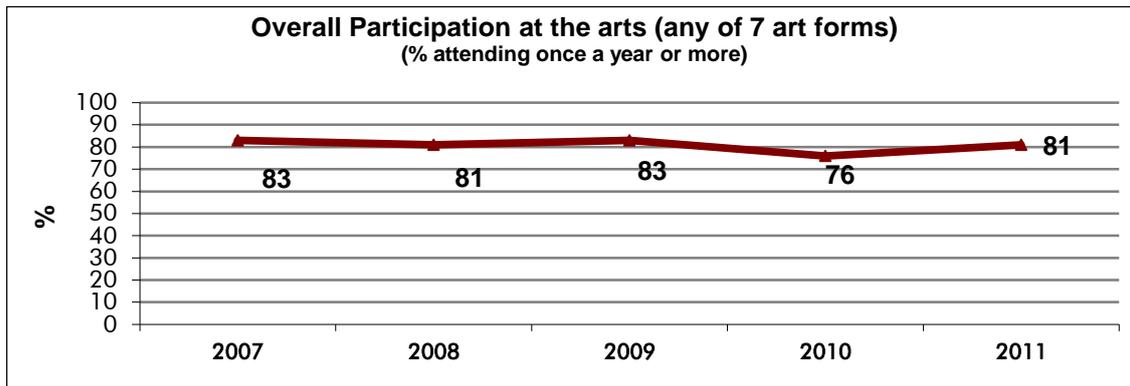
The 2011 Children's Omnibus Survey

The Arts Council of Wales has conducted an annual attendance and participation research survey among children and young people every year since 2007. The Survey collects data on attendance to arts events and participation in artistic activities and this information is collected via a series of questions asked on the Beaufort Research Children's Omnibus survey each year.⁶

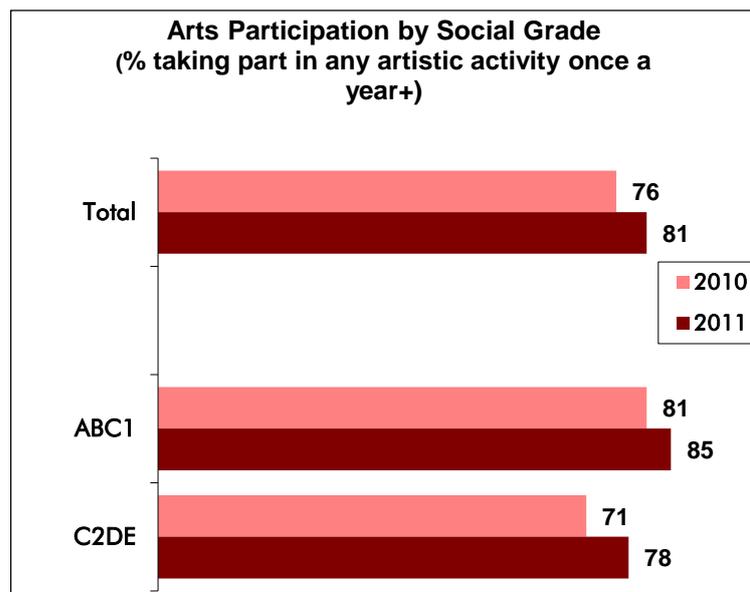
The key findings on participation in the arts are as follows:

- the latest survey finds that four fifths (81%) of 7 to 18 year olds in Wales take part in at least one of the seven artistic activities once a year or more often. This was an increase of five percentage points compared with 2010 (76%) and marks a return to more typical levels following the decline in the previous year.

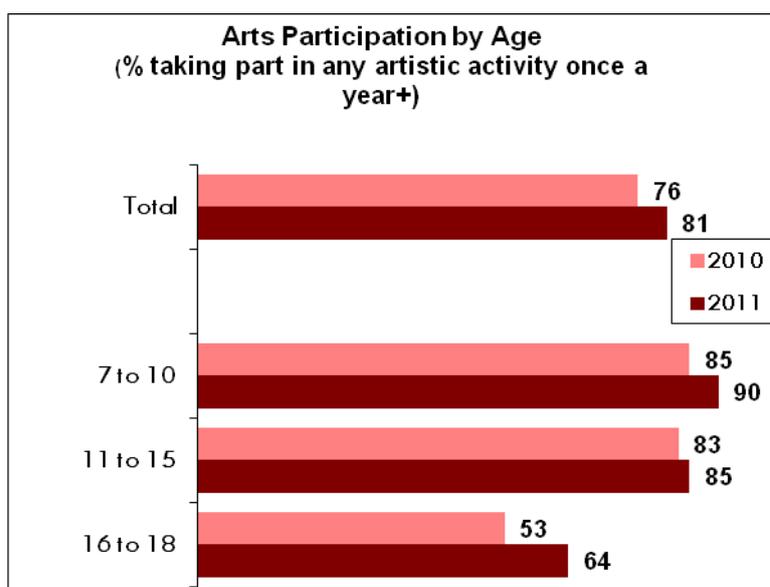
⁶ The Children's Omnibus, Arts Council of Wales, 2011



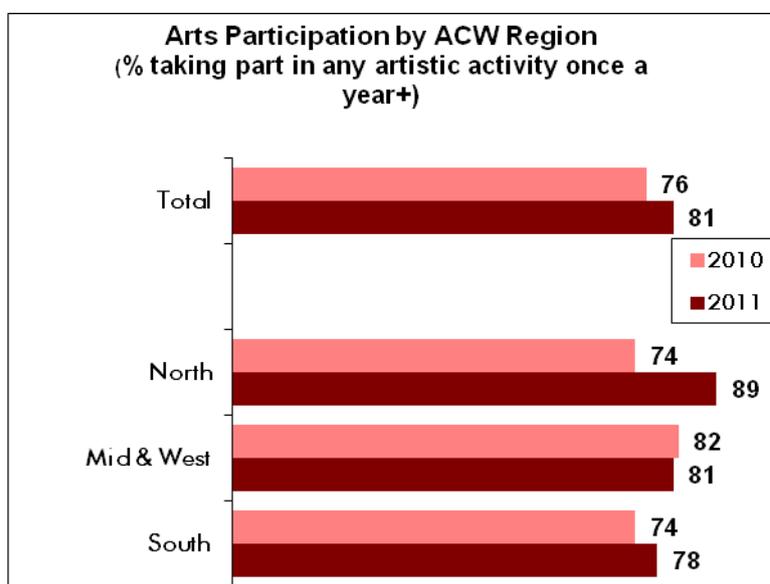
- children and young people from ABC1 households remain more likely to have participated in the arts than their C2DE counterparts. Both groups record increases in participation since 2010, but the difference was greater among C2DEs meaning that the gap between the two groups has narrowed to seven percentage points.



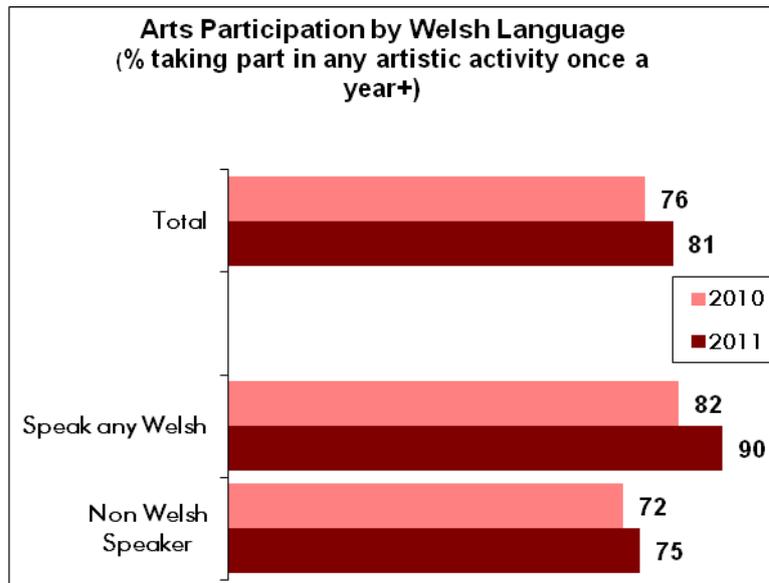
- whilst participation levels do not vary greatly up until the age 15, those in older age group record significantly lower participation levels. In 2011, around two-thirds (64%) of 16 to 18 year olds had participated in at least one of the seven art forms once a year or more often. This compared to 90% and 85% respectively among 7 to 10 and 11 to 15 year olds.



- an increase of 15 percentage points among those living in North Wales meant that yearly participation was now highest in this region (89%). This mirrors increases in attendance recorded in this region in the latest survey. Changes in other regions were less marked but a four percentage point increase in the South and one percentage point decrease in Mid & West Wales meant that participation in these two regions was now more similar (78% and 81% respectively).

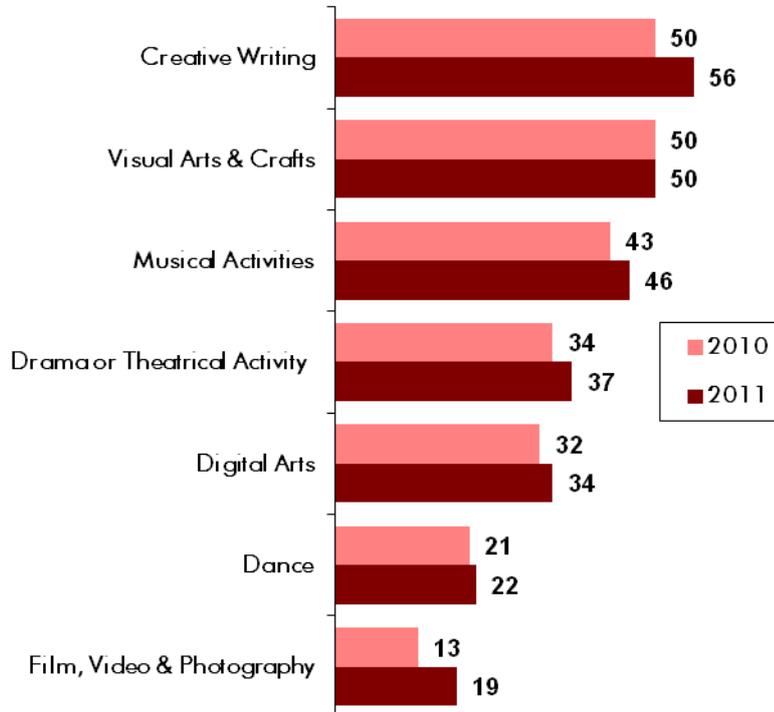


- both Welsh speakers and non-Welsh speakers have recorded increases in participation levels in the last year. However, growth has been greatest among Welsh speakers widening the gap in participation between the two groups to 15 percentage points.



- Creative Writing and Visual Arts & Crafts were the most popular participatory art forms among young people with 56% and 50% respectively taking part at least once a year. This was closely followed by Musical activities (46%).
- encouragingly, participation in all art forms remains consistent with or improves upon 2010 figures. This is reflected in the overall participation level. It would appear that Creative Writing and Film or Video Making or Photography are having the largest influence on this overall increase as both of these art forms have increased by six percentage points since 2010.
- it is also worth noting that whilst the above figures measure at least yearly participation in each art form, participation is a much more frequent activity than just once a year for most of those taking part. For example 34% out of the 46% who take part in Musical activities at least yearly, are actually taking part on at least a weekly basis

Arts Participation by Artistic Activity
(% taking part in each artistic activity once a year or more)



3. Promoting a positive approach to Equalities

The context

We know from our research and survey work that the range of people enjoying and taking part in the arts is becoming more diverse. But we know too that access to the arts is still hugely unequal for all kinds of social, economic, geographical and financial reasons.

For much of the past year we have been developing, and consulting upon, our Strategic Equality Plan. Its basis is the Equality Act 2010. The Equality Act 2010 recognises that people may not be treated equally because they have certain 'protected characteristics'; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including ethnic or national origin, colour or nationality), religion or belief (or lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. We recognise that people with certain protected characteristics are amongst those who currently do not have equal access to the arts in Wales.

We will publish our Strategic Equality Plan in April. The Plan is simple and straightforward. It will tell people what we are trying to do, and how we are going to do it.

Our plan of action

Used imaginatively, we believe that the new Equality legislation could provide a powerful impetus to open up new opportunities for a wider range of people to enjoy and take part in the arts. However, we believe that the arts sector will need help in interpreting its requirements.

Our Equality Plan commits us to a number of practical actions which we hope will increase participation in the arts. These include:

- using our development funds to increase the range of artistic practice that we fund, including support for artists from a diversity of backgrounds
- working with our portfolio of Revenue Funded Organisations and the other organisations that we fund to help them advance equality of opportunity (this includes training to help them understand the Equality Act and how to apply this to their work)
- continuing the Equality Impact Assessments on all policy and practice and improving how we do this (including making sure we fully consider all protected characteristics)
- making sure that the importance we place on equal opportunities is recognised in our Funding Schemes

- gathering best practice examples from the organisations that we fund and sharing them publicly (including in the Equalities section of our website and in our Annual Equality Report)
- sharing information about arts activity, developments and opportunities more widely, improving the accessibility of the information we provide
- developing and publishing arts specific Equality and Diversity Best Practice Guidance, covering each of the protected characteristics as well as general issues
- extending the equalities data we currently collect, and starting to collect data on all protected characteristics with effect from 2012/13 in relation to our staff and how our funding is distributed. We will analyse the data collected and use it to inform our work. We will also report on progress in our Annual Equality Report

4. Concluding comments

Trends in patterns of arts participation

- The Arts in Wales Surveys and the two Omnibus Surveys show that general levels of arts participation have increased over the past 5 years. There has been a slight reduction over the 5 years in participation amongst children, although the past year has seen an increase
- social grade continues to be a key determinant of participation in the arts. ABs remain the most likely social grade grouping to take part in an artistic activity. However, the difference between the higher and lower social classes is closing
- young people participate in the arts more frequently than adults
- the highest levels of children’s participation in the arts is between the ages of 7 and 15
- the most popular forms of participatory activity among children are creative writing, visual arts and crafts, and music
- women are more likely to take part in the arts than men
- Welsh speakers are more likely to take part in the arts than non-Welsh speakers
- members of black and minority ethnic groups have slightly higher levels of participation compared to white respondents to our surveys
- levels of participation are highest in North Wales, with participation in Mid and West Wales and South Wales broadly similar

The relationship between public funding and levels of participation

It is difficult to establish a statistically robust and empirical link between public funding and participation. However, it is worth noting that the significant increases in levels of participation between 2006 and 2009 coincided with additional money allocated to the Arts Council of Wales by the Welsh Assembly Government.

In 2005/06 the Welsh Assembly Government provided an additional £500,000 of funding for community arts. (A further £375,000 was provided over the following two years to support further community arts and dance activity.)

If additional investment increases levels of participation, then it would be logical to imagine that if funding reduces there is a risk that levels of participation will also decline. Over the coming three year funding period, government funding to the Arts Council of Wales will reduce by 4%.

The Arts Council's Investment Review

The Arts Council's Investment Review – undertaken in 2010 – anticipated the funding pressures. We were seeing growing pressures on our portfolio of revenue funded organisations, and we were being told that this was starting to impact negatively on the volume, and quality, of the activities that they were able to provide.

The 'do nothing' option – presiding over a downward spiral of decline – was no option at all. With funding to organisations at 'standstill' over a 3 year period, the real terms reduction in the value of funding across our revenue portfolio of was around £1.75m. This was not sustainable.

There were clear signs that ambition and enterprise were in danger of being choked. Newly refurbished buildings didn't have the revenue to capitalise on the potential of their new facilities; reductions in local authority funding were becoming more common-place; arts programmes were being reduced or curtailed; and international partnerships were under threat as our organisations are unable to collaborate with their better-funded counterparts outside Wales.

We needed to take a serious look at how we were supporting our 'portfolio' of revenue funded organisations. Our aim was to reach the end of this process with a portfolio of key organisations who were artistically vibrant, financially durable. Key to this was the ability – even during a time of cuts – was providing a level of investment that would mean that it was more likely that organisations could thrive, not merely survive.

The new funding arrangements only came into effect in the current financial year. It is therefore too early for the impact of the changes to be assessed, and it will probably take three years for the effects to fully work through. We are also acutely conscious that we are in a period of unprecedented financial uncertainty, with the economic recession and cuts in public funding (especially across local government) likely to place additional pressures on an already stretched arts sector. There is a real danger, therefore, that we might see levels of participation remaining static at current levels or even reducing.

Alternative sources of funding

Between them, the Welsh Government, Arts Council and local authorities across Wales are likely to remain the principal funders of participatory arts activity.

The Arts Council has been careful not to duplicate activity that is being supported elsewhere, especially if it is being supported by the Welsh Government. The Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science Department (BETS) supports a Creative Industries team whose role is to increase economic activity and inward investment. BETS also has a funding partnership with the Housing, Regeneration and Heritage Department to fund Arts and Business Cymru, an organisation which builds links between the two worlds of arts and commerce.

Philanthropy and private sector sponsorship make a significant contribution, providing some £18.1m of support to the arts during 2010/11. This was, however, a decrease of 3% on the previous year.⁷

Trusts and foundations are also reducing the level of their grants, preferring to protect their investment capital at the current time.

The Arts Council and Local Government in Wales

The Partnership between the Arts Council of Wales and local government provides the foundation for the people of Wales to enjoy and take part in the arts. Between us, we have the potential to touch most parts of the country.

During the tenure of the current Welsh Government we can expect to see increased demands for collaboration and joint working across local authorities and other public bodies. These are increasingly being organised around defined localities or regions that extend beyond the traditional planning 'unit' of the individual local authority. The *Compact for Change/Simpson Review* is just the most current – and pressing – manifestation of an approach to modernisation that will be extended across more aspects of public sector delivery.

The Arts Council of Wales is committed to playing a positive role in helping to support any joint working or collaboration that strengthens and extends the arts in Wales. A move towards a "single conversation" between the Arts Council and local councils, spanning the full range of our cultural interests, could lead to a more efficient use of resources and better outcomes in terms of levels of participation.

⁷ Arts and Business Cymru Press Release – 28 February 2012

Taking action

We are concerned that cuts in public funding at national and local level, combined with the effects of the current recession, could have a serious impact on levels of participation in the arts.

We are therefore taking a number of positive steps, and we would seek the Committee's endorsement of these actions:

1. We are increasing investment in revenue funded organisations. We have included funding increases to our specialist community arts organisations across Wales, and to Disability Arts Cymru.
2. We are working in a more focused way with umbrella organisations to enhance the impact of those activities that we feel are especially relevant to the participatory agenda. This includes:
 - funding Audiences Wales to roll out *The Knowledge* project to help arts organisations across Wales to develop better business intelligence on who is – and isn't – attending their events
 - funding Voluntary Arts Wales to promote the *Running Your Group* initiative in Wales, helping voluntary organisations extend the reach and success of their activities
 - increasing our revenue funding to Disability Arts Cymru, enabling them to work with more disabled people across Wales
 - funding the Black Voluntary Sector Network Wales to continue their training and advisory services for black and minority ethnic artists and communities
3. We are working in partnership with Arts and Business Cymru to provide practical assistance to revenue funded organisations to help them generate additional earned income.
4. We are developing information, guidance and training for arts organisations, helping them to understand the requirements of new Equalities legislation.
5. We will be implementing the action plan for our strategy for the arts and young people, *Young Creators*. As part of the action plan we will be piloting new initiatives, as part of our Child Poverty strategy, designed to encourage discounted and free access schemes for low income families.
6. We are conducting an access survey with our revenue funded galleries and presenting venues. This is due to be completed during April. We will use this research to identify key issues that we need to address in terms of barriers to the arts.

7. We are discussing with the Welsh Local Government Association and the Chief Officers of Recreation and Leisure the feasibility of entering into six partnership agreements across the six 'regions' proposed by the Welsh Government.

In each region, such an agreement would 'codify', with clearly defined outcomes, our joint commitment to issues such as:

- establishing shared arts development goals (to include cultural, social, and economic objectives)
- identifying key development priorities/projects (for example, around participation, arts and young people, the creative industries, training and skills, arts marketing etc)
- shared monitoring and evaluation of funded activity
- research and data gathering
- advocacy and profile-raising

Appendix 1

Case study: Power of the Flame

Led by Arts Council of Wales, Power of the Flame is a distinctive and unique contribution from Wales to the Cultural Olympiad.

The Wales-wide project is funded by Legacy Trust UK (an independent charity dedicated to creating a cultural and sporting legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games across the UK). Power of the Flame embraces Wales's unique heritage sites, the history of our sportsmen and women, our disabled young artists, and our Eisteddfodic traditions. It also forges exciting links with South Africa.

Wales will have five major unique projects under the banner of Power of the Flame:

1. **Cauldrons and Furnaces** – Bringing history to life at 8 of Cadw's extraordinary heritage sites, inspiring our younger generation to re-interpret our ancient monuments. So far, 21,556 young people have taken part in this project
2. **Following the Flame** – A new history of the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the Welsh athletes since 1896 who have shared Wales' success; this is a major exhibition accompanied by a specially produced film and a written appreciation and history of our athletes. So far, 8,485 young people have taken part in this project
3. **Mzansi Cymru** – Bringing Wales and South Africa together in a major piece of musical theatre which is based upon two unique events of 1964 the filming of Zulu and the imprisonment of Nelson Mandela. So far, 3,724 young people have taken part in this project
4. **Whose flame is it anyway?** - Increasing the voice of disabled young people in Wales, including a performance by the BBC National Orchestra of Wales of a symphonic work specially composed by Lloyd Coleman, an 18 year old composer from Bridgend. So far, 1,523 young people have taken part in this project
5. **Kindling Talent** – will be developed with Urdd Gobaith Cymru, the largest youth organisation in Europe and in 2012 focuses on a brand new Urdd National Youth Theatre, the Message of Peace and Goodwill from the children of Wales to the world and the Urdd National Eisteddfod's arts and crafts exhibition which will be based upon Olympic themes. So far, 9,153 young people have taken part in this project

In all, around 55,000 people have taken part in *Power of the Flame* projects. This number is expected to double by December 2012.

Appendix 2

Case study: Reach the Heights

Reach the Heights is a Welsh Government initiative aimed at reducing the number of young people in Wales aged 11-19 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), or at risk of being so. It is anticipated that by the end of the project in December, over 10,000 young people will have been involved in the programme over three phases of activity. Of these, around 7% are disabled young people, and 3% from a BME background.

The objectives of the programme include:

- contracting organisations to deliver free participatory arts activities, workshops and projects
- helping to increase the confidence and motivation of young people taking part
- providing links to other organisations working with young people that can offer on-going support to the participants as they continue their journey back into education, training or employment
- providing young people who either have or are at risk of ‘dropping out’ with a secure starting point from which they can set out on a journey back into education, training or employment

Around 80% of participants have no qualifications on joining the programme.

Projects employed activities of special interest to young people such as graffiti and mural drawing, mask making, digital story-telling, film-making, pantomime, drumming, music writing and mixing, DJing, band nights, street dance and issue based theatre. One of the many strengths of the Reach the Heights programme is that young people are offered a mix of artforms and activities.

Independent evaluation of the programme has concluded that projects increased the confidence of young people and enabled them to find new skills through challenging activities that gave them a sense of achievement. Reach the Heights projects have left a valuable legacy in terms of new partnerships and sustained activity by partners and participants.

Appendix 3

Case study: Splash Arts

The aim of Splash Arts Cymru is to engage young people, already identified within the youth justice system, in arts activities. These are young people who do not have access to or feel unable to attend arts activities offered by mainstream providers. We are interested in how many new young people participate in the arts but more importantly the difference the arts experience makes to their lives. A further aim of the project is to link the youth inclusion teams with local arts providers and to encourage or support young people wishing to move from the targeted provision to mainstream.

Over the last 3 years we have awarded just over £206,000 to the Youth Offending Teams / Youth Inclusion Programmes and 2,432 young people at risk have engaged in arts activities during the school holiday period.

These are young people who previously had little or no access to arts activities. A wide variety of arts activities have taken place such as: Theatre, music, dance and art workshops, theatre visits, radio production, animation, cartoon projects, graffiti art, street dance, DJ-ing, willow weaving, wood sculpture, photography, theatre skills, stage craft, drumming workshops, film workshops, woodturning, lantern making, canvas making, jewellery making, breakdancing, fabric design, clock making / decorating, bench making, creative writing.

Over the years projects have taken place in Cardiff, Flintshire, Bridgend, Carmarthen, Ceredigion, Neath Port Talbot, Newport, Wrexham, Merthyr Tydfil, Pembrokeshire, Vale of Glamorgan, Powys, Blaenau Gwent, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Gwynedd and Ynys Mon.

The Splash Arts Cymru project is an excellent example of where partnership working between Arts Council of Wales, Youth Justice Board and Youth Offending Teams can, and does, deliver significant impact to the lives of young people.

For example:

- One young person has now joined a drama group at Theatr Clwyd. She has had major difficulties with mental health issues, confidence and self-esteem. She has continued to attend the sessions we have been holding during term time and has started to interact and share experiences, something we are told by her care workers and foster carers that she would not have considered doing before. She had not been allowed to attend a group unsupervised for fear she would abscond or come to harm, but because of her commitment and progress since her participation with the splash arts project she is able to attend the group and does so willingly and with choice (but with conditions)

- The opportunity to see and enjoy live theatre has inspired some of the young people to look at possibilities of studying the performing arts at both FE and HE levels in their future.
- 'A' is a 14 year old male gypsy – he is the youngest of three brothers – the older brothers are both heroin addicts who are now in prison. 'A' has been excluded from mainstream education and attended the (...) Centre. He took part in the arts alternative curriculum with the Centre project and became really interested in the wood side of the project. Being part of the traveller community means he is a big fan of boxing which he is very good at. Sometimes he gets angry and is a very challenging and young person. He has learning difficulties but his interest in woodwork has helped him to gain confidence and gain self esteem. He is considering doing an OCN in art which he can tailor towards woodwork for him. This will help him gain entry into the local college to train as a carpenter.

Appendix 4

Case study: Gwanwyn Festival for older people

May 2011 marked the fifth year of the Gwanwyn Festival of Arts and Creativity for Older People coordinated by Age Cymru. The festival aims to pursue its aim of promoting the benefits of health and wellbeing for older people through participation in artistic and creative activity by:

- promotion of local events throughout Wales to encourage engagement with and participation in the arts by older people
- high profile showcase events to stimulate public interest
- stimulation of creative activity by older people in diverse settings (eg: in a dementia assessment unit, care homes etc.)

Gwanwyn is a collaborative initiative between key national organisations lead by Age Cymru, the Arts Council of Wales and the Welsh Government; working closely with local arts groups, active retirement and community groups, public libraries, museums, schools and care centres.

During the 2011 festival period, 296 events or sessions took place and it is estimated that approximately 9500 people will have participated in, or attended Gwanwyn events organised by 82 community groups and organisations.

For example:

- work began on a partnership project with the dementia assessment unit at Royal Glamorgan Hospital, Llantrisant to bring together professional artists with nursing staff and patients at the unit to create artwork to improve the environment at the unit and to begin to explore the use of artistic activity as part of the dementia assessment process
- a new project involves the physical activity officer in the Healthy Ageing Team and Rubicon Dance to create a new dance toolkit for use by dance tutors and other professionals to encourage older members of the community to participate in dance activities
- a new product has been launched called *Every Picture Tells A Story* which is intended to be the first part of a three year project which will involve members of 'hidden' communities (eg: Residential Care, Mental Health, Prisons etc) in the collection of life stories to contribute to the publication of a book in 2013

Appendix 5

Case study: Hijinx Academy

Hijinx Theatre has been discussing the need for professional drama training for adults with learning disabilities for some time. Research has been going on for over a year. This has included Hijinx's Outreach Manager spending three months in Seville with Danza Mobile, seeing how they work, and how continuous training is crucial to making visually stunning, high quality productions.

In November 2011 Hijinx started delivering drama / performance workshops one day a week as part of Vision 21's *Creative Choices* programme. Student numbers are growing.

In January 2012 the company started the Hijinx Academy. This offers more focussed training for two days a week for students who show potential and want to develop further. *Creative Choices* will continue one day a week alongside this. Recruitment to the Academy is through *Odyssey*, Outreach projects, Unity projects, students from the autumn term of *Creative Choices* and general advertising/auditioning. The aim is to enrol 12 students in the Academy. Those moving up from *Creative Choices* will enable others to join that project, thereby extending opportunities to more people.

From the end of March to December 2012 Academy students will be offered short residencies with world class companies, with places also offered to drama students / professional actors on a fee paying basis. This will create an inspiring and inclusive environment for work of different genres to flourish. Hijinx's Artistic Director and Outreach Manager will be able to explore different ways of working which will influence their future development and practice. The residency component in the training has been awarded Arts Council support.

This is just the start of the training, which Hijinx anticipates continuing into 2013 and beyond. While Hijinx's initial impetus is to train actors for professional touring productions, the training will feed all of its work. It will train people for professional touring shows, in Forum theatre skills, for Outreach projects and raise the performance bar for *Odyssey* shows.

Appendix 6

About the Arts Council of Wales

Our organisation

Arts Council of Wales is an independent charity, established by Royal Charter in 1994. Its members are appointed by the Welsh Assembly Government's Minister for Heritage.

Our principal sponsor is the Welsh Assembly Government. We also distribute funding from the National Lottery and raise additional money where we can from a variety of public and private sector sources.

We are the country's funding and development organisation for the arts. Working together with the Welsh Assembly Government, we are able to show how the arts are helping to meet the Government's *One Wales* policy ambitions.

Our vision is of a creative Wales where the arts are central to the life of the nation.

Our priorities

- supporting the creation of the best in great art
- encouraging more people to enjoy and take part in the arts
- growing the arts economy
- making Arts Council of Wales an effective and efficient business

Our services

- **we support and develop high quality arts activity** – we invest public funding, provided by the taxpayer, and allocated to us by the Welsh Assembly Government. We use these funds to help the arts to thrive in Wales
- **we distribute Lottery funds** – through applications to our Lottery funding programmes we are able to invest in projects that develop new arts activity, supporting individuals and organisations
- **provide advice about the arts** – through our staff and our advisers we have the largest concentration of specialist arts expertise and knowledge in Wales
- **we share information** – we are the national centre of a network of information and intelligence about the arts in Wales. We also have strong international links in the UK and beyond
- **we raise the profile of the arts in Wales** – we are the national voice for the arts in Wales, making sure that people are aware of the quality, value and importance of the country's arts

- **we generate more money for the arts economy** – initiatives such as *Collectorplan* (our scheme to encourage more people to buy art) and our success in securing European funding brings more money into the arts economy in Wales
- **we influence planners and decision-makers** – the arts take place in many different settings. They can have a dramatic impact on the quality of people’s lives, and the places in which they live and work. The arts are also frequently at the heart of initiatives for economic and social regeneration. Our job is to ensure that the contribution that the arts can make is recognised, valued and celebrated
- **we develop international opportunities in the arts** – through our agency, Wales Arts International, we promote contemporary culture from Wales and encourage international exchange and collaboration between artists and arts organisations
- **we promote small-scale performances in local communities** – our Night Out scheme provides financial incentives to encourage the promotion of high quality arts activity in local community venues

Funding

There are six main ways that we fund the arts:

Revenue funding	We currently fund nearly 100 organisations nationally on an annual basis (from 2011/12 we expect to support 71). Our investment brings high quality work to audiences and participants across Wales. These funds are not open to application, and are agreed annually by our Council.
Strategic funds	We invest in time-limited projects and initiatives that help develop new arts opportunities. Often these will be funds given to us for a specific purpose, either by the Welsh Assembly Government or the European Union. Typically we will be working with a range of partners across the public and private sectors. These funds are not open to application.
Lottery Capital	We use Lottery funding to invest in the refurbishment or creation of arts buildings, facilities and equipment. We also support the commissioning and creation of public art. (Funds are fully allocated for the period to 2012 and are therefore not currently open to application.)

Film production and exhibition	We delegate Lottery funding in these areas to our colleagues in the Film Agency for Wales. For more information visit www.filmagencywales.com
Collectorplan	This interest-free loan scheme is designed to make it easy and affordable for people to buy contemporary works of art. For more information visit www.collectorplan.org.uk
'Open to application' Lottery funding	We use Lottery funds to support arts projects that benefit people across Wales, or that help artists and arts organisations. If you have an idea for something you want to do with the arts, you can apply either as an individual or organisation. For more information visit www.artswales.org.uk

We also 'delegate' funding to a number of organisations who offer grants on our behalf:

Literature Wales offers a range of funding programmes that support literature activity and writer development, including Writers' Bursaries, Writers on Tour, the Writing Squads throughout Wales, as well as managing the National Poet and the Book of the Year. For more information visit: www.literaturewales.org

Tŷ Cerdd offers a range of grants that support participatory music activity. For more information visit www.wmic.org