



Memorandum of Understanding

1 The Partners in this Memorandum of Understanding

Arts Council England (ACE) and the Canal & River Trust (CRT) agree to implement a shared approach to engaging with contemporary artists for the benefit of the waterways network, users and the artistic community.

2 Context

This memorandum provides the background to a new relationship between the partners. It arises from the strategic document **Contemporary Arts On The Waterways**, commissioned by the partners. It should be read in the context of their individual missions, policies and strategy documents, primarily **2020, A vision for the future of Britain's canals and rivers** and **Achieving great art for everyone**, ACE's ten-year strategic framework for the arts in England.

It is expected that this partnership will:

- Operate in accordance with the parameters of this memorandum;
- Be consistent with the organisations' values and with their strategic and corporate objectives;
- Enable a cultural engagement programme across the waterways network, beginning with agreed pilot projects. This is intended to establish and develop a mutually beneficial way of working for the partners that will enable them to nurture a productive long-term relationship;
- Maximise opportunities for audience development, particularly in areas of low arts engagement or limited arts infrastructure;
- Explore ambitious and innovative cultural solutions to support the partners' objectives (e.g. developing high quality arts opportunities for people and places with the least engagement, or tackling anti-social behaviour on the waterways);
- Undertake an advocacy and development programme; which should include (a) the creation of a specialist advisory group drawn from the arts world and (b) professional development provision for CRT staff where necessary.

It is recognised that the delivery of this vision will involve organisational development within CRT and close involvement and support from ACE.

3 The Contemporary Arts Initiative

The Contemporary Arts Initiative has the following objectives:

- developing and broadening the waterways' user base by offering high-quality audience and participatory opportunities, supported by appropriate interpretation and learning;
- engaging communities to feel greater ownership of the waterways and involving them in the development of appropriate arts activities;
- improving the waterways environment and its attractiveness;
- increase visits to the waterways and awareness of the CRT brand and cause;
- building 'ownership' for the approach across the whole of CRT;
- creating external partnerships to enable the programme, including with Arts Council funded National Portfolio Organisations, local authorities, and other national environment and heritage agencies that have an arts programme;
- finding resources to deliver the programme.

In the first instance, the initiative will be expressed through a pilot programme as outlined in **Contemporary Arts On The Waterways**. Following evaluation of that pilot it is intended that a full programme be rolled out in accordance with a strategic plan for a long term, sustainable programme of exhibitions, commissions, residencies and other arts interventions.

The key outcomes of the programme will include:

- new audiences for the waterways and for the arts through increasing engagement with existing users and the general public;
- a greater presence of high-quality arts activities on the waterways, through increased creative opportunities, commissions, events and residencies for artists;
- new and developed relationships both within and across the partners to this memorandum and with other agencies as appropriate (e.g. Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations, local authorities, museums, and other national environment and heritage agencies etc.);
- an infrastructure that supports initiatives in this area, including an emphasis on skills development, to ensure that projects can be delivered effectively and creatively; and a supportive structure of advice and guidance.

To achieve these objectives, and following evaluation of the pilot projects, the partners agree to:

- incorporate the principles of the programme into existing corporate strategies (e.g. enterprise and marketing);

- consider incorporating an artistic element in infrastructural projects (e.g. engineering works, property development, building refurbishments etc) over a certain size;
- implement residencies (e.g. with CRT engineers) to introduce artistic solutions and interpretations to existing programmes;
- work with artists to facilitate their access to available materials for projects (e.g. redundant lock gates, vessels etc.);
- make available unused or vacant waterside property for temporary artistic activity (including for studio spaces);
- ensure projects are managed in line with guidance notes for working with artists and the relevant legal, planning and safety considerations;
- work with appropriate advisory groups with professional skills;
- commit appropriate funds where possible and justified to leverage external investment (e.g. Arts Council Grants for the arts funds).

4 Advisory Support

In order to ensure the initiative has access to specialist expertise and advice at the appropriate level, an advisory group of c. 10 individuals will be selected to reflect a broad range of expertise, experience and networks across different aspects of contemporary arts. This group (or sub-sets of it) will act as a sounding board for CRT and for individual projects. It will also act as a support system for the teams or officers within CRT charged with delivering the programme.

5 Communications

The partners will agree a communications strategy that addresses both internal and external communications; this will ensure that all parties can speak clearly about the value of the programme and how it relates to their individual corporate strategies. The strategy will also co-ordinate external messages put out by the partners in this area.

6 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

As the programme develops there will be opportunities for appropriate CRT staff to undertake professional development in certain areas and for additional support in others. For example:

- peer mentoring, through which experiences and learning are shared and individuals can be enabled to develop appropriate skills;
- specific training initiatives (e.g. half-day courses on particular issues such as arts marketing, programme planning, leadership skills or exhibition and events exchanges);
- partnership relationships with local experts in individual regions (i.e. a gallery or other arts agency).

7 Evaluation

The evaluation of the programme will be undertaken primarily through self-evaluation, against a pre-determined set of criteria, adopting the following methodology:

- 1 agreement of the objectives of the programme, derived from this memorandum;
- 2 identification of any local objectives that pertain to individual projects or sites;
- 3 establishing a small number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) around each of the objectives;
- 4 creating a base-line (e.g. activity levels, visitor numbers, financial parameters, educational take-up, satisfaction surveys) for the KPIs; this process should be compatible with surveys already undertaken by CRT;
- 5 setting up light-touch tracking mechanisms for the programme (e.g. user surveys);
- 6 ensuring that all projects are adequately documented through a range of media;
- 7 engaging an evaluator for the programme from the outset.

The criteria will be derived from the Aims and Objectives, as set out in Section 5 of the report **Contemporary Arts On The Waterways** and will involve both 'hard' (i.e. numerical) and 'soft' (i.e. qualitative) measures.

8 Resourcing Strategy

CRT will adopt a three-strand financial strategy for the CAP:

- **allocating some funds or contribution-in-kind internally.** This could take the form of a 'percent-for-art' contribution or it could be created by the allocation of other internal resources (e.g. technical expertise, physical equipment, staff time etc.);
- **using such funds (cash and in-kind) as matching funding to attract additional investment from public and private sectors.** To this end, CRT will clearly articulate the monetised value of its in-kind contributions. These allocations will be recognised, alongside cash contributions, as constituting matching funds for Grants for the arts bids which will be the principal vehicle through which ACE will be able to support this initiative. CRT and ACE will discuss possible future applications for Arts Council funding, which must be clearly aligned to the goals and priorities outlined in Achieving Great Art for Everyone;
- **undertaking discussions with key private sector companies with a locus in the waterways network** (e.g. water utility companies and waterside developers) to explore their potential as partners for the programme on a regional and/or national basis.

9 Good Partners Agreement

- 9.1 ACE and CRT will inform the other organisations as early as possible about any initiatives or incidents that might impact on the programme or the partnership (or individual members thereof);

- 9.2 Both organisations will share information as appropriate about agreements with other parties;
- 9.3 Both organisations will observe confidentiality as required in relation to shared information which is not in the public domain;

10 Term of the Memorandum of Understanding

The Memorandum of Understanding shall take effect from the date of signature by both parties and continue, in the first instance, for four years. It will be reviewed by the Project Board after the first twelve months and again towards the end of the four-year period. It is not intended to – and shall not – create any legal obligation between the parties.

11 Action Plan

Following agreement to the Memorandum of Understanding, ACE and CRT will draw up an action plan in line with the shared Objectives outlined above and both organisations' strategic planning processes. This Plan, which will focus in the first instance on a series of pilot projects to be completed during 2012, will form an Appendix to the Memorandum of Understanding and should be considered to be an integral part of it.

This Memorandum of Understanding is made on

Date 14 December 2011

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and Canal & River Trust
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