

The New Audiences Programme 1998–2003

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1 Foreword by Tessa Jowell, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport

The Arts Council's New Audiences Programme has been a huge success. Although there had been programmes in previous years to increase audiences, this initiative was the first time that Government had provided significant funding over a long period, exclusively to attract new and different people to the richness of the arts in this country.

I have the great good fortune to be able to experience the arts regularly. I have seen, first hand, much of the incredible range of work that is being put on every day of the week across the country.

Not everyone is so fortunate, however. We are all aware of the traditional obstacles to having a direct experience of the arts: disability, domestic circumstances, or even simply the feasibility of getting to – and from – a theatre or concert hall safely and affordably. But sometimes there is an even greater obstacle – the sense that the arts are 'not for me'.

New Audiences has sought to tackle this, with a range of innovative schemes, all of which are described in this report.

I commend it to you.

Tessa Jowell
Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport

2 Foreword by Peter Hewitt, Chief Executive, Arts Council England

The New Audiences Programme provided a unique opportunity to look in depth at different ways of encouraging people to participate in the arts. Through the creativity and determination of the artists and arts organisations involved we now have a clearer understanding of the practical steps that can be taken in order to reach out to a broader audience.

Many of those involved with the programme also discovered new ways to release creativity – both for artists and audiences. One of the most compelling conclusions of the programme is that organisations that understand, trust and value their audiences are more likely to produce powerful art, and more likely to thrive.

New Audiences was about giving Arts Council England and arts organisations the opportunity to try out new things, to take risks, and to grow. It is hardly surprising then that not all of the 1,200 projects within the programme achieved what they originally set out to do. An important outcome has been to encourage those who took part to share their findings and the lessons learned. We have created an archive specifically for the arts sector with details of all projects and analysis. This is available at www.artscouncil.org.uk/newaudiences

Finding better ways of working and developing new relationships with audiences takes time. We are now building on the wealth of knowledge and experience that we have gained through New Audiences, to develop organisations and audiences for the 21st century.

Peter Hewitt
Chief Executive, Arts Council England

3 Acknowledgements

New Audiences has benefited from many people's support over the past five years and we would like to thank the following.

The Rt Hon Chris Smith MP for his vision.

Vivienne Moore, Rachel Baker, Karen Bell, Paulette Clunie, Kate Devey, Graham Devlin, Penny Hamilton, Robert Hutchison and Deborah Moreton all of whom worked on the New Audiences Programme in its early stages.

Advisors and consultants who have supported the programme include Naseem Khan, Annie Delin, Eric Orme, Steve Harris and Tina Neill, Mel Jennings, Michelle Taylor, Diana Walters, Tony Graves, Jenny Wilson, Gerri Moriarty and Helen Jermyn, Sarah Scott and Daniel Hadley.

Special thanks to Sarah Bedell who worked on the programme at Arts Council England and who, with Richard Whitehouse as Aspirational Arts, has provided support and guidance to the New Audiences team and to participating projects through evaluation support.

The report has drawn on the work of Catherine Rose whose Essential Audiences series in *ArtsProfessional* between 2003 and 2004 and 'Beyond the Page' website work has proved so useful. We would like to thank Liz Hill and Brian Whitehead at *ArtsProfessional* for their partnership and support, and Huw Champion at *MAiLOUT* magazine.

Officers across the Arts Council have worked to make the programme a success regionally and nationally including: members of the audience and market development team Alex Powers, Alison Mann, Alison Knight, and Nicky Allison for their work to support the programme; Viola von Harrach for communications work on the programme; and a particular thank you to Isobel Hawson and Nikki Crane.

Janet Hadley has provided copy editing for the regional summaries report and news stories on the New Audiences website. Adam Rambridge has provided website support.

4 Executive summary

Facts and figures

The purpose of the New Audiences Programme was to encourage as many people as possible to participate in and benefit from the arts in England. The programme ran between 1998 and 2003 with a total budget of £20 million.

The aims of the programme were to:

- tackle barriers which stop people engaging with the arts
- increase the range and number of people participating
- create opportunities for people to become involved in the arts in different spaces and places
- allow learning and sharing of experiences between organisations to improve audience development

New Audiences sought to build on success whilst promoting innovation in audience development practice. It placed great emphasis on evaluation, both through independently commissioned research and self-evaluations carried out by funded organisations. The programme was strongly committed to documenting and disseminating evidence, and a key legacy is its project archive on www.artscouncil.org.uk/newaudiences

Over five years, the programme had 14 funding strands, each aiming to address specific audience development issues. As priorities changed, strands were adapted or replaced. Some had a national focus, others responded to the priorities of individual regions. (See Appendix 1)

Funding criteria included: appropriateness for the target audience; potential impact on longer term audience development; and quality of arts activity. Many projects attracted 'live' audiences at venues or events. Others reached people in more indirect ways, such as through TV and radio programmes or online web casts.

New Audiences also invested in areas such as training, research and the creation of new audience development related posts.

A review of the programme has identified the following priority areas, which provide the structure for this report: general audiences, young people, diversity, disability, families, inclusion, rural and older people.

The following key facts and figures illustrate the reach of the programme. These are based on maximum values (see research findings, Appendix 2).

Audiences

- New Audiences attracted a total of 4,027,085 attendances for live arts events and activities
- Of the 4,027,085 attendances recorded, a total of 980,578 attendances were generated by festival activity
- Analysis of audience figures by projects' audience focus reveals that of the total attendances:
 - 44% were recorded for general audiences projects
 - 35% were recorded for young people projects
 - 14% were recorded for diversity projects
 - 2% were recorded for disability projects
 - 2% were recorded for social inclusion projects
 - 1% were recorded for family and for rural projects
 - 0.3% were recorded for older people projects
- A further 7.25 million 'itinerant' attendances were recorded by eight projects. These included projects such as Poems on the Underground and Poems in the Waiting Room (excluded from total figures)
- Broadcast figures were not possible to quantify: however, figures for individual projects were recorded eg Operatunity (average 1.7 million for each of the four broadcasts) and The Slot (1.4 million)

Awards

- New Audiences supported 1,157 awards between 1998 and 2003
- The largest funding strand was Regional Challenge – totalling £5,798,306. This constituted over 60% of the awards within the programme and 29% of total expenditure
- Analysis of awards by audience focus shows that the highest project spend went to those aiming at general audiences, making up around one third of total programme expenditure (33% or £6.4 million). Young people awards made up 24% of total spend (£4.7 million), whilst a fifth of the programme (20%) went to awards addressing diversity (£3.9 million). Nine per cent of the programme's expenditure went to disability projects (£1.8 million), 5% of awards went to family (£1.1 million) and social inclusion (£1.1 million), 4%

- to rural awards (£0.7 million) and 1% to awards targeting older people (£0.2 million)
- The New Audiences Programme also funded different types of award. 74% of awards (or 66% of expenditure) went to projects for 'live' audience events or activities. £876,785 (3%) went towards broadcasting and new media projects and £602,510 (2%) went to promotional projects such as arts days or weeks
 - Just over a fifth of the programme, £4,019,495, was invested in research or development projects which did not aim to generate audiences for events but may have employed posts/coordinators, or supported training or specific research projects eg Developing the Market for Contemporary Art, Impact of Folk Festivals

Key findings by audience focus

General audiences

£6,859,626 went to 298 projects relating to the audience focus of general audiences. The total number of audiences reached by these projects was 1,756,679, including 415,263 attending festivals. There was an emphasis on reaching non-attenders and on encouraging people to try out arts activities new to them.

The general audiences category included projects without a specific audience target, those that aimed to reach out to non-arts attenders, those encouraging people to try out aspects of the arts with which they were unfamiliar and those which were necessarily aiming for a broad audience, for example some new media and broadcasting projects.

Key themes in this section are:

- developing new national partnerships
- testing new marketing methods
- experimenting with where and when the arts can be experienced

New national partnerships were particularly important in relation to broadcasting and national arts campaigns. New Audiences helped the Arts Council to strengthen its profile as an effective public campaigner through its support for national promotional events such as Architecture Week and National Poetry Day.

New Audiences supported new models of arts broadcasting which proved popular and innovative, such as Operatunity on Channel 4 and My Dream Home with the *Saturday Mirror*. £857,477 was invested in partnerships with arts broadcasters and in broadcast related research.

New marketing approaches were tested. Concepts such as ‘ambassador marketing’ and ‘test drive’ campaigns were applied and developed through the programme with a resulting body of detailed knowledge from organisations to support wider audience development practice.

Recognising that the arts need to adapt to people’s lifestyles, organisations experimented with the time or place at which they showed their work. Information was gathered on issues such as the impact of late night opening and the potential to engage audiences in retail settings, seen most successfully in the At Home with Art partnership between Tate Gallery and Homebase stores.

Placing work where a ready made ‘new audience’ might be found, such as in NHS waiting rooms, or on public transport – the famous Poems on the Underground and beyond – produced encouraging results. Festivals took art out into the streets or to other familiar public places.

Many New Audiences research projects broke new ground, particularly *Not for the Likes of You* (Morton Smyth Ltd, Arts Council England, 2004), which identifies learning curves and models of good practice for organisations wishing to make fundamental changes to the way they work.

Findings

- The success of broadcast projects indicates new policy directions for the Arts Council
- ‘Ambassador’ or network marketing is effective, though time and resource intensive
- Test Drive the Arts marketing is effective in attracting people to new venues and artforms
- The basics of marketing have to be in place, including knowledge about existing and new target audiences; accurate mailing lists; effective communication methods; targeted advertising
- Projects in new places and at new times can draw in new audiences, particularly those not used to attending arts venues

- Collaborations with mainstream retailers have potential to create new markets for the work of contemporary artists

Young people

£5,733,298 went to 408 projects relating to the audience focus of young people. Of this, £300,000 went on one major research project, Sheffield Theatres' How Much? The total number of audiences reached by these projects was 1,341,416. Projects addressed underfives through to late 20s.

Key themes in this section are:

- addressing barriers to attendance and participation
- new marketing approaches
- encouraging participation

The New Audiences Programme has supported inventive practice to increase the attendance and participation rates of young audiences. It has helped arts organisations promote young people's ownership of arts venues, enabled young people to view the arts as a creative opportunity and supported arts organisations in developing an attitudinal shift in their policies and practices. The programme has also created opportunities for young people to access art in alternative places and spaces and developed a range of projects in school settings.

Arts organisations consulted with young people to learn more about their needs, interests and preferred channels of communication, and included them in project planning, implementation and delivery. They created relationships through 'ambassadors' or network marketing, for example in The Laing Art Gallery's Art Ambassadors project. They offered arts activities in places which young people use, including nightclubs and social spaces, as well as schools. They forged links with non-arts agencies to attract 'hard to reach' young people, including those at risk of offending, as in The Reading Agency's YouthBOOX and in London, the Arts Council's Creative Neighbourhoods programme.

Findings

- Barriers which deter young people include lack of transport, time or opportunity, price, availability of information, having no one to go with, negative peer pressure, and negative perceptions about arts activities, venues and 'typical' audiences

- Consultation and personal contact bring greater awareness of young people's perceptions, issues and needs, and lead to better project planning
- There is a lack of arts workers experienced in working with young people, particularly those who are socially excluded, and training is needed
- Organisations can appeal to young peoples' interests by adapting their programmes, delivering more interactive activity, or placing their projects in non-traditional venues with the right ambience and ethos
- Partnerships are important, particularly where partners have specialist knowledge that can help arts organisations to build relationships with young people. Positive influence by peers, friends, teachers and mentors is also an important factor in encouraging young people to attend
- Successful communication methods combine a familiar medium eg text messaging with language relevant to young people, though word of mouth is most successful

Diversity

£4,252,138 went to 209 projects relating to the audience focus of cultural diversity. The total number of audiences reached by these projects was 544,753. This includes Black, Asian, Chinese and other minority ethnic communities.

Key themes in this section are:

- supporting arts organisations to develop a holistic approach
- developing partnerships between mainstream arts organisations and community based Black and minority ethnic organisations
- developing Black and minority ethnic artists and organisations

The programme gathered feedback into the motivations, barriers and opportunities for developing interest from Black and minority ethnic communities and piloted new approaches to reaching out to new audiences within them. There was a range of research and development work, and 'ambassador' projects such as the three-year Networking Project with arts organisations in Birmingham. As ever, partnership projects were particularly successful, in this case between a mainstream arts organisation and a local Black community centre. The partnership, between the Hudawi Centre and Lawrence Batley Theatre, prospered due to senior management commitment on both sides.

A pioneering broadcast partnership was effected between Arts Council England, East Midlands and BBC East Midlands in the Roots project, now an England-wide

success in raising the profile of Asian, African, Caribbean and Chinese arts on BBC television, radio and online. The £535,000 The Diversity Programme in East England used the American 'incubator' or 'innovation centre' model to support Black and minority ethnic arts. Diversity projects also aimed to attract new audiences to Black and minority ethnic work, encouraging work to enter the 'mainstream' and reach broader audiences through touring and new distribution channels.

Findings

- Barriers include lack of relevant product, price, timing, access to promotional material, and lack of peer group representation across staff, artists and audiences
- Challenges faced by organisations included imbalance of experience and expertise in new partnerships, setting up equitable relationships, and a lack of engagement by the 'mainstream'
- Partnership working enables mainstream and community organisations to build capacity through the exchange of expertise and experience
- Successful partnerships require long-term commitment, firm leadership from senior management, time/resources, a willingness to challenge preconceptions, strategic planning, clarity about partners' aims, a skills audit/training, support from mentors, advisors or coordinators, and a dedicated project champion
- Venues need to review their programming, presentation, physical space, communications, staff training and customer care
- New Audiences has created a new body of skilled Black and minority ethnic workers able to act as catalysts for change within organisations
- It is crucial that the links between communities and organisations are able to be maintained beyond the employment of any one key individual
- There are ethical difficulties around monitoring the ethnicity of audiences, and an effective methodology is needed
- Support for Black and minority ethnic organisations was a significant achievement of New Audiences

Disability

£1,974,661 went to 111 projects relating to the audience focus of disability. The total number of audiences reached by these projects was 95,254. Projects addressed people with specific impairments, including people who are deaf or

hard of hearing, blind or partially sighted, wheelchair users or with limited mobility, and people with learning disabilities or mental health issues.

Key themes in this section are:

- addressing barriers to attendance and participation
- supporting arts organisations to change
- supporting disability arts and artists

The New Audiences Programme aimed to tackle some of the physical, attitudinal, sensory and intellectual barriers of disabled people in engaging with arts activities and events.

The programme supported research into barriers to attendance, such as the interactive research project for young people with learning difficulties Includedo by Mind the Gap. Many organisations reviewed their information and access policies and were supported in developing disability awareness training programmes, research and audits into disabled people's access needs and wants. Many looked at issues of physical access, transport, and marketing and networking approaches, such as the Q Arts Hands Up! project for deaf audiences. Other projects supported the development, production and presentation of new work by disabled and deaf artists, encouraging such work to be programmed by mainstream venues, such as the Arts Council's Innovate project in London.

Findings

- Organisations worked individually and within consortia to explore marketing, customer care, personnel management, programming and access issues
- Many organisations changed their marketing practices, introducing new promotional formats and developing partnerships with the community/voluntary sector to reach disabled groups
- Disabled people played a critical role in developing projects, as artists, consultants and ambassadors. They helped to expand networks, some becoming board members of mainstream organisations
- Disabled trainees worked alongside arts professionals to develop skills and access opportunities for employment and professional development
- However, there is still a lack of trained, specialist facilitators who can work with arts organisations to develop audiences with disabilities
- There is a need to support disabled artists and disability arts organisations for sustainable audience development

- There are ethical difficulties around monitoring disability amongst audiences, and an effective methodology is needed
- There is a greater understanding of motivations and barriers to participation due to new methods of gathering information and feedback from disabled audiences
- Arts organisations need guidance and training in becoming inclusive and new models of 'flexible' training were piloted through New Audiences

Families

£1,326,954 went to 40 projects relating to the audience focus of families. The total number of audiences reached by family projects was 55,822. The term 'family' embraced a range of ages and relationships, from very small children to elders and from single parent to extended families and carers.

Key themes in this section are:

- making venues family friendly
- reaching low income families
- consortia working to develop family audiences

New Audiences supported organisations in research and training to develop understanding of families' needs, improvements to venue policies and facilities for family audiences. Family friendly training was provided for arts venue staff such as The Barbican Centre's Barbican Beacon project and Oakengates Theatre and Lawley Sure Start project. It supported new forms and ways of presenting arts work to family audiences, and promotional campaigns, eg Classic FM's Classic Families project.

The programme also supported education and outreach work with family groups, involvement of families in venue programming and marketing, ticket pricing and transport schemes. Some projects involved consortia working by organisations, as in Arts Council's Oxford Family Friendly project in the South East.

Findings

- Current barriers include lack of understanding of family needs, limited resources and inadequate facilities, a lack of arts 'product' for the whole family, and inappropriate communication and marketing

- Barriers for low income families also include cost, transport, lack of childcare, lack of time and the perception that the arts are exclusive and elitist
- A family friendly approach must offer programming that will appeal to all within the family group, create a safe environment with appropriate facilities, offer a warm and genuine welcome, provide information for planning a visit, and represent value for money
- Additional financial resources are not necessarily required. Changes in customer care, for example, may require little investment but can make a huge difference
- There is a paucity of high quality family work and this has an impact on audience development
- Partnerships with non-arts agencies and through consortia working can result in shared networks, contacts, marketing data, resources, and knowledge of good practice, though they take time to develop
- Family friendliness helps arts organisations become inclusive and welcoming focal points within communities, enabling them to contribute to social objectives. It can generate additional income for the arts and stimulate the development of artistic programming

Inclusion

£1,488,050 went to 58 projects relating to the audience focus of social inclusion. The total number of audiences reached by these projects was 93,721. Target audiences included people who were homeless, in prisons and within the criminal justice system, in health settings, on low incomes, or living in areas of social and economic deprivation.

Key themes in this section are:

- measuring impact
- developing partnerships
- artists' professional development

New Audiences supported a substantial amount of research, from a major research and evaluation programme The Arts and Social Inclusion to action research projects by individual organisations. The Arts Council brokered partnerships between mainstream arts organisations and specialist organisations working in the field of social inclusion, such as the Royal Shakespeare Company and Cardboard Citizens, a professional theatre company working primarily with

homeless people. Other projects focused on refugees, asylum seekers and young homeless people. Some Arts Council regional offices allocated their Regional Challenge funding to social inclusion projects, from London's four-year programme Arts and Inclusion to Yorkshire's major focus on young excluded people.

Findings

- A clearer shared understanding is needed amongst artists, organisations and policy formers about the meaning of terms such as 'access' and 'social inclusion', as independent research identified confusion
- Few projects aimed explicitly to 'solve' problems of social exclusion and practitioners were understandably wary of making claims about cause and effect
- Partnerships with non-arts agencies such as Sure Start, Education Action Zones and the criminal justice system levered substantial match funding, but can be labour intensive for small organisations
- Mainstream arts organisations and organisations specialising in social exclusion can work successfully together, sharing resources and expertise
- Many organisations specialising in inclusion work are on short-term project funding, which runs contrary to a basic requirement of inclusion work: long-term development and sustainability
- Artists should be supported in developing work in the area of social inclusion, particularly through appropriate training. Projects need to build in opportunities for artists to develop their creative practice, as well as work towards social outcomes
- The major programme of national research resulted in publications including *The Art of Inclusion*. Qualitative process based evaluation was undertaken but the research was unable to prove the 'hard' impact of work. A more rigorous and persuasive evidence base is needed.

Rural

£953,159 went to 152 projects relating to the audience focus of rural audiences. The total number of audiences reached by these projects was 60,040.

During the period of the New Audiences Programme the national policy focus on rural regeneration intensified, partly in response to a growing sense of crisis in the countryside signalled by a recession in the agricultural economy, BSE, and the foot and mouth epidemic, a livestock disease which ravaged the countryside during 2001.

Key themes in this section are:

- regional programmes to support rural development
- rural networking projects
- responding to rural change

Some Arts Council regional offices used their Regional Challenge fund to focus on rural audiences, from North East's Tyranny of Distance and Regional Audience Development Initiative to West Midlands' Grass Roots programme which provided an 'entry point' to arts funding for rurally based groups. 'Network' or 'relationship' marketing approaches with rural communities were supported.

New Audiences supported the rural based arts development agency Littoral in two substantial programmes of work, Digital Arts and Rural Upland Communities in the Lancashire hill farming community, and Cultural Documents of the Foot and Mouth Crisis, which supported farming communities in documenting their experiences of the crisis, bringing rural issues to urban audiences.

Findings

- Barriers to audience development in rural areas include lack of information or data on audiences, lack of marketing skills within arts organisations or appropriate venues, and poor access to networks
- Rural based arts organisations are well placed, and should be supported, to develop a cultural response to issues affecting the communities in which they work
- Rural issues and contexts are an important stimulus for arts practitioners and the arts funding system should support artists in developing rural focused practices
- The 'tyranny of distance' can be overcome through outreach projects showing the work of urban based companies and practitioners in rural community settings
- Well planned and targeted outreach work can encourage better use of rural based arts facilities and expertise
- Specific funding is needed for work in rural areas, where the costs and organisational issues are very different than for urban based arts
- Grant schemes providing an entry point to arts funding for rurally based groups can be effective, though resource intensive

- Network marketing requires a key local contact to work with the outreach worker to provide an entry point into the target group. The outreach worker should have relative independence from competing stakeholders to remain responsive to group needs

Older people

£322,900 of New Audiences funding went to 20 projects relating to the audience focus of older people. The total number of audiences reached by these projects was 13,369.

Key themes in this section are:

- involving older people in arts planning and participation
- addressing barriers to arts engagement

Following on from previous audience development work for older people by Arts Council regional offices in South East and Yorkshire, New Audiences supported a range of projects targeting older people. Some addressed barriers to attendance, such as Art Shape Gloucestershire's Action Research into Older People and the Arts, which also actively involved older people as researchers.

Some projects targeted older people living in nursing homes and day care centres, such as Oxfordshire Touring Theatre Company's Brief Journey, which also drew inter-generational work into the mix. Activities were offered in local community settings, such as village halls. English Sinfonia's M4 project offered audiences, including older people, recitals by a string quartet in sheltered housing, a supermarket and a garden centre.

A number of initiatives addressed transport as a barrier to attendance. The Arts Express Networking Project aimed to attract new rural audiences to arts events by providing free transport and using an amateur to carry out outreach work with rural community groups. Some organisations targeted older people from Black and minority ethnic groups. Leicester Haymarket's project, New Audiences Development, targeted first generation Asian communities and attempted to overcome barriers of language or unfamiliarity with the venue. Outreach activity in religious and community settings provided taster events for groups not ready to come into the theatre.

Findings

- There are difficulties in defining, monitoring and gathering information from older people, who often do not wish to be labelled and targeted as such
- Barriers to participation include geographic location, lack or cost of transport, safety, price, access to information, and having no one to go with. For older people still in full-time work, time pressures were more likely to be a barrier
- Partnership working is effective, and the older the audience, the more important it is to work across sectors, for instance with nursing and residential homes
- Both arts venues and older people prefer to choose from a wide variety of good quality products and do not just want special programmes for 'older people'
- Timing of events and customer care are important factors for some older people. Daytime events and matinee performances are popular, as are events supported by education work or offering social opportunities
- Older people are more willing to engage with new arts activities and venues if some sifting and selection has been done by someone whom they trust
- Ambassadorial schemes, group promotions, membership clubs, outreach schemes and culturally specific programming are all effective approaches

Achievements and conclusions

New Audiences has made the Arts Council and those who participated in the programme think afresh about audience development. The programme has yielded many insights into how organisations work, provided many different models for arts and audience development, addressed key barriers for audiences and organisations, and raised issues for longer term development.

The structure of the programme, particularly between 2000–3, allowed Arts Council national and regional offices to take a strategic approach. Regional Challenge was particularly successful in fostering new relationships with community based and emergent organisations.

Organisations learnt more about audiences, shared models of good practice and ideas with other organisations, and changed their ways of working to become more inclusive. Physical, attitudinal, financial, personal and social barriers to attendance were identified and addressed. Organisations reviewed their practices and improved their image, attitudes, policies and services. The programme also

gave them the skills, knowledge and confidence to embark upon longer term audience development plans.

Audience development is a holistic process and organisations must examine their whole ethos and approach. 'Unconscious' barriers can be dismantled when organisations are genuinely committed to change. The message from *Not for the Likes of You* research is that organisations must model internally what they wish to achieve externally to be truly inclusive and attract broader audiences.

Partnerships were a real strength of the programme, particularly with non-arts sectors such as health, education and youth services. They were often crucial to success, attracting increased resources, new knowledge and expertise, information about audiences and mechanisms to reach them.

Many different approaches were tested to attract new audiences, from making the experience of attending less threatening, and developing outreach work tailored to specific groups, to changing the way in which work is presented.

The diversity of types of audience engagement – not just live attendance – was a particular strength of the programme. Projects created strong 'entry points' for new audiences, often giving people an unexpected arts experience in familiar public places. There were numerous attempts to present arts activity to fit in with 21st century lifestyles. The programme was particularly successful at increasing audiences from diverse, disabled and excluded communities.

New Audiences was about achieving a qualitative difference in the make-up of audiences. It recognised that changes of this nature take time. Audience development is about working towards a more equitable form of cultural participation, and this means connecting with wider social agendas such as diversity, inclusion and regeneration.

New Audiences has had an important impact on employment and training, and new consultants, researchers, project coordinators and facilitators have been brought into the arts, particularly from Black and minority ethnic communities. Organisations used New Audiences as a route in for new employees or board members, developing a more diverse organisational profile.

Projects were sometimes over-reliant on a lead individual, or failed to appreciate the level of additional work required, and they often needed longer for delivery than was allowed. There was a concern that the programme, being time-limited,

encouraged short-term thinking to long-term issues. The timescale of the programme posed challenges for the funding system and organisations.

Gaps in the audience development and skills base of the arts sector were apparent throughout the programme. Issues that need to be addressed include knowledge of good practice, access to training and advice, and support for organisations in effecting change.

Self-evaluation was encouraged and one of the achievements of the programme has been the documentation of experience, identifying what worked and what didn't and the reasons for this. This body of knowledge is a significant resource to prevent organisations reinventing the wheel. Though each project had its own dynamic, issues and context, good practice themes and issues have been identified by organisations and independent evaluators. Evaluations were of variable quality and it remains the case that organisations are often wary of evaluation as a process and sometimes see this process as 'additional'.

Increasing new attenders, readers, viewers, listeners, buyers and participants to one-off events or initiatives was not the sole purpose of the programme. Equally important is attracting them a second and third time and developing them as regular audiences for the arts.

The legacy of the programme resides in documentation, reports and research linked to a process of analysis, dissemination and publication. The most comprehensive resource is www.artscouncil.org.uk/newaudiences with a searchable database of all projects, which has been developed as an important learning resource for the sector. Reports and overview analysis commissioned by New Audiences will also be available in downloadable form from the site.

Ensuring a long-term legacy for the New Audiences Programme is now critical. Short-lived good practice must translate into successful ongoing activity.

5 Introduction

Background to the New Audiences Programme

The New Audiences Programme was a milestone in the history of arts funding in England. It was the first time that such a significant amount of money, £20 million, was made available over an extended period, five years, specifically to support audience development work. Its purpose was to encourage as many people as possible, from all backgrounds and every walk of life, to participate in and benefit from the arts.

Announcing the New Audiences Programme in March 1998, the Secretary of State at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Chris Smith said:

‘One of the real tests of a flourishing arts scene is the development of new and bigger audiences. I look forward to the time when enjoyment of live theatre, music and dance becomes part of everyone’s experience no matter where they live. I want it to become a regular habit, not just something that “other people” do.’

In March 1998, the DCMS gave the Arts Council an initial allocation of £5 million to support a one-year programme. This was extended in 1999 with a further allocation of £15 million for a three-year funding period (1999–2002), which meant that New Audiences had a total budget of £20 million. Whilst the majority of New Audiences funded projects were completed by 2002, the natural pace of development of some projects meant that activity continued into 2003–4 and therefore we refer throughout this report to a five-year programme of activity (1998–2003).

Aims and objectives

In line with its existing priorities, and reflecting the views of the Secretary of State, the Arts Council developed a number of aims and objectives for the New Audiences Programme. These sought to be genuinely inclusive and aspired to outcomes that were both qualitative and quantitative. The core aims and objectives, which remained consistent for the five-year programme, were:

- to tackle the barriers which stop people engaging with the arts
- to increase the range and number of people participating in the arts
- to create new opportunities for people to become involved in the arts in different spaces and places

- to allow learning and sharing of experiences between organisations to improve audience development practice

As the programme evolved, additional aims and objectives were developed. These are described in Appendix 1.

Taking risks, spreading good practice

From the outset, New Audiences sought to build on success whilst promoting innovation. Grants were awarded to enable some organisations to pursue tried and tested models of good practice, but the programme also encouraged those who were interested in taking risks and devising new and fresh approaches to audience development. The 'project pack' given to participating organisations in August 1999 noted that 'there is no such thing as failure: all new approaches are valid as a way of testing and identifying successful ways to attract new audiences'.

Learning and sharing

To capitalise upon lessons learnt through individual New Audiences projects, the programme placed great emphasis on evaluation. Some of this was through independently commissioned research. The majority, though, was in the form of self-evaluations carried out by funded organisations.

Whilst it was possible for specific research questions to be explored through individual New Audiences awards, each participating organisation was required to evaluate the quantitative and qualitative impact of its project and encouraged to take account of what it had learnt in future planning. The Arts Council publication *Partnerships for learning: a guide to evaluating arts education projects* (by Felicity Woolf, Arts Council England, 1999) was distributed to each organisation and recommended as a structure for evaluation.

The Arts Council advised New Audiences funded organisations that their experiences, good and bad, could be valuable and of interest to other arts organisations. They could be used to support the core programme objective of sharing learning about audience practice across the arts sector.

Independent research and evaluation was also commissioned by the Arts Council to analyse individual projects of particular interest and to scrutinise elements of the programme as a whole.

From the beginning, the New Audiences Programme had a strong commitment to documenting and disseminating evidence of what had been achieved. A key legacy is its unique project archive, most of which is now available on www.artscouncil.org.uk/newaudiences. The archive is a rich developmental resource from which the wider arts sector can continue to benefit. The content of this report is based upon the findings from individual self-evaluations and the independent research commissioned by the Arts Council.

An evolving programme

Over its five-year lifespan, the programme had 14 separate funding 'strands', each of which aimed to address a specific audience development issue.

As the programme developed and priorities changed, strands were adapted or replaced. Whilst the overarching aims of the programme remained consistent, this flexible approach to strand definition ensured that a great diversity of approach was possible across the programme as a whole.

The project strands were:

Arts Extend	education and outreach projects
Arts Ride	innovative ticket and transport schemes
Arts Connect	targeting rural and other marginalised communities
Arts Plus	touring work to new audiences
Disability	enabling disabled people to attend and participate in the arts
Diversity	developing partnerships between mainstream and diverse community based organisations
Music on Your Doorstep	classical music projects for young people
New Approaches to Presentation	adapting to lifestyles of specific audience groups – families, young people, 'elders' and people defined as 'time-poor'
New Contexts	new work in non-traditional arts spaces
New National	working with the media and other sectors

Partnerships

Regional Challenge	audience development programmes addressing regional priorities
Sample the Arts	new marketing and promotional ideas to reach new audiences
Social Inclusion	research and development projects focusing on communities often excluded from the arts
Test Drive the Arts	schemes to encourage first-time attenders

Fuller strand definitions and a description of how the programme evolved are given in Appendix 1.

The regional and the national

Some strands of the programme had a national focus, whilst others were responsive to the needs and priorities of individual regions. For example, the national office retained responsibility for project management of the New National Partnerships strand, which aimed to develop new ways of working with other key national players, such as the BBC. The Regional Challenge strand, which represented almost £6 million of the total budget, was devolved to the regional offices (see Appendix 1).

In 1998 when the New Audiences Programme began, Arts Council England was known as The Arts Council of England and comprised a national office and ten Regional Arts Boards. In April 2002, The Arts Council of England and the Regional Arts Boards were merged to form a single organisation now known as Arts Council England, with nine offices across the country. For simplicity, we have used the new Arts Council office names throughout this report. The New Audiences Programme as a whole was managed by the Arts Council's national office, working in collaboration with the Arts Council regional offices.

Project selection

The majority of projects funded by the New Audiences Programme were identified through a process of invited proposal. Officers across the funding system identified organisations known to have audience development ideas or potential and, where appropriate, encouraged them to apply for funding. However, the programme also supported some projects identified by open application. Some officers saw the Regional Challenge strand as a way of reaching new promoters

and organisations. For example, Arts Council England, West Midlands dedicated the majority of its Regional Challenge programme to two small grants schemes aimed to provide 'entry points' to the funding system: a youth arts fund to support youth led participatory work, and a grass roots fund addressing rural issues and promoters.

To be considered for New Audiences support, organisations needed to be committed to testing one of the priority audience development issues and have the track record and capacity to undertake their project. Projects were awarded funding on the basis of a number of criteria, including: the appropriateness of the project for its target audience; its potential impact on longer term audience development; and the quality of the arts activity.

What the New Audiences Programme funded

Whilst New Audiences funded a great deal of new arts activity for people to experience directly, this was not the exclusive purpose of the programme. A more important consideration was the impact that investment would have for audience development practice in the longer term.

Crucial to this was investment in areas such as training and research. Training allowed organisations to develop their skills base to ensure that they could retain and build upon their capacity for audience development. Research, whether around individual projects or the scheme in general, has produced an important evidence base and pointed to models of good practice. A large number of new audience development related posts were funded through the programme. Some were time limited, but others are now permanently integrated into organisational staffing structures.

New Audiences funding also enabled the development of other types of infrastructural support that will help to sustain audiences in the longer term. Websites, for example, will allow organisations to market themselves and their activities online on an ongoing basis.

The ways in which audiences were reached varied a great deal according to the nature of individual projects. Many projects were experienced by 'live' audiences at venues or events. Many others, however, reached people through more indirect means: through programmes broadcast on television or radio, for example, or through online web casts.

The priority areas for audience development work

Looking back at what was funded through the 14 separate strands that made up the five-year programme, the following emerge as the priority areas in which audience development work occurred:

General audiences, where work focused on reaching a broader audience and non-arts attenders

Disability, where work focused on reaching out to disabled audiences, or developing audiences for the work of disabled artists

Diversity, where work focused on reaching out to Black and minority ethnic audiences, or developed audiences for Black and minority ethnic arts activity

Inclusion, where projects were developed to attract groups of people excluded from participation in the arts

Rural, where projects were developed for audiences in rural locations, where access to the arts is often limited

Young people, where the audience ranged from early years to late 20s

Families, where the target audience was the family unit, including developing 'family friendliness' in venues

Older people, where projects were developed specifically for older people.

A statistical summary of each of the priority areas as a proportion of overall New Audiences activity is given in Appendix 2.

How to read this report

This report will consider each of these priority areas or 'audience focus' in more detail. In some cases, projects had more than one audience focus and therefore there is inevitably some overlap within sections.

The report cannot be and does not aim to be a comprehensive account of the whole programme. Its methodology is to provide a summary of the types of activity that occurred under each of these headings, along with examples, case studies and themes or findings suggesting lessons that might be learnt and models of good practice.

As a retrospective and reflective account, we have attempted to provide some context to the work supported through the programme, but this does not reflect all the policy or legacy work that Arts Council England is undertaking in relation to these policy or audience areas.

Information for this report was taken from participating organisations' final evaluation reports and overview evaluations commissioned through the programme. At the end of each section, we draw attention to some of the key resources created through the New Audiences Programme and any important documents that informed New Audiences planning. These include details of publications, articles, research reports, overview evaluations, seminars, conferences, cd-roms and toolkits.

All the projects and case studies referred to in the publication are or will be covered in greater depth on www.artscouncil.org.uk/newaudiences. Many projects have provided downloadable reports which provide more information. All New Audiences projects have website summaries with contact details for organisations.

6 General audiences

Context

Increasing the general audience, as well as developing specific priority target audiences, is a key objective of the Arts Council. The Arts Council Corporate Plan for 2004–6 shows a commitment ‘to increase the number of people who engage with the arts’. The New Audiences Programme provided a fertile testing ground for approaches and ideas that might help it to meet this commitment.

New Audiences overview

Nearly a third of New Audiences funding supported projects for a general audience. In keeping with the idea of ‘new’ audiences, there was often an emphasis on reaching out to non-arts attenders, or on encouraging people to try out aspects of the arts with which they were unfamiliar. Organisations wished to broaden or increase their audiences and many projects within this category were necessarily aiming for a ‘general’ audience, for example broadcasting projects.

New Audiences funded **298** projects in which the audience focus was general audiences, totalling **£6,859,626**.¹ The total number of audiences reached by these projects was 1,756,679.

The definition of audience includes ‘live’ audiences, who attend a venue to experience a particular event or take part in arts workshops or activities. It also includes a general audience who came across New Audiences funded activity in other ways: as buyers, readers, viewers, listeners or online users. This ‘secondary’ audience, which is more dispersed and has a different relationship to the art experience than the traditional ‘live’ audience, is more difficult to quantify and analyse. A good example of how a sizeable, but largely unquantifiable, secondary audience was reached through the New Audiences programme is seen in the range of high profile national campaigns, such as **Architecture Week** and **National Poetry Day**, and broadcast initiatives such as **Slot Art** and **Operatunity**. Although not represented in the audience statistics collected for the programme, it is clear that New Audiences activity had a significant impact on a large secondary audience and we do have some data in relation to broadcast and new media projects in individual project evaluations.

¹ Maximum value, see research findings in Appendix 2

General audiences projects

This section will provide an overview of the key themes and approaches emerging from the general audience projects. These themes and approaches, which sometimes overlap, can be summarised as: developing new national partnerships; testing new marketing methods; and experimenting with where and when the arts can be experienced.

1 *Developing new national partnerships*

Although more explicit in the final two years (when it was designated as a specific funding strand), there was a clear emphasis throughout the life of the programme on developing new national partnerships, particularly in relation to broadcasting initiatives, new media and national arts campaigns. This was important for helping the Arts Council to strengthen its profile as an effective public campaigner for the arts. It provided resources and a policy focus (audience development) that enabled new partnerships to be negotiated with key national players such as the BBC, Channel 4, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and the Wellcome Trust.

National campaigns and events

New Audiences supported and evaluated a range of national campaigns that aimed to raise general public awareness of arts events or issues. These tended to revolve around media outputs – television, radio and press coverage – for which it was impossible to determine accurate audience figures across the ‘general’ category. Notable projects included **Bedtime Reading Week**, **Getting the Habit / Gallery Week 1998**, **National Orchestra Week 1999 and 2000**, and **See it Live! / Barclays Theatre Week**.

One successful national campaign is **Architecture Week**, which received several New Audiences awards totalling £381,695 between 1998 and 2003. **Architecture Week** is a national partnership initiative involving Arts Council England, CABE and the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). It has grown dramatically over its five-year life, becoming recognised as a regular and valued feature of the national arts calendar. It aims to introduce contemporary architecture to new audiences, especially those who might not otherwise take part in discussions about the development of the built environment. It seeks to do so through a national programme of events ‘which is involving, informing and fun’. It also aims to provide a national focus for the promotion of good design.

In **Architecture Week** 2002, Arts Council England formed a partnership with the *Saturday Mirror* and retailer MFI, to run **My Dream Home**, a national competition to highlight the week, gather research from people in an imaginative way and engage a new audience to architecture. The evaluation notes that by placing the competition with the *Saturday Mirror* tabloid, the project ‘had the opportunity of reaching approximately 1.9 million people. This figure does not include “pass on” readership which can equate to approximately three people per issue’. The competition format with the lure of a £10,000 kitchen engaged 1,700 readers into answering a series of questions about architecture, and an independent research project collated the findings. The partnership was very successful, garnering two double page spreads within the *Saturday Mirror* for both 2002 and 2003 **Architecture Week**, gaining exposure for architecture without recourse to advertorial costs.

New Audiences funded major evaluations of **Architecture Week** in 2002 and 2003, which showed that the event is growing in scope and popularity. They revealed that the **Architecture Week** 2003 programme included 350 events, developed and hosted by organisations throughout the UK. This represents a 71% increase on the 204 events staged in 2002. Visits to the **Architecture Week** website also increased significantly, by around 120%. The evaluations found that the week is valued both by audiences and events organisers. It has become a key tool in the development of a more diverse audience for architecture and the built environment. Whilst the week creates a valuable focal point for the promotion of architecture, it also has its limitations. Some participants see the compression of events into a week as impractical. The **Architecture Week** approach also presents the challenge of how to sustain audiences for this artform for the rest of the year.

Case study

The Poetry Society, National Poetry Day

National Poetry Day (NPD) has been supported by a total of £118,975 from New Audiences between 1998 and 2003. Inaugurated by William Sieghart of the Forward Trust and managed by the Poetry Society and its partners since 1994, this event has become one of the highlights of the literature calendar, bringing together the media, schools, libraries and arts centres in a celebration of the nation’s poetic heritage. A national programme of events is promoted through broadcast media and the web.

New Audiences had funded elements of NPD since 1998, including funding poetry packs for schools across the country, but from 2001–2 a new approach was adopted of investing in research and development work to strengthen the day. In 2001 New Audiences commissioned the first **NPD research project**, which provided a snapshot of the activities – both live and broadcast – surrounding the day. It aimed to help create a baseline against which future activity could be measured, to understand the key elements that led to the success of the day, to identify key stakeholders' objectives and whether these were met, and to provide evidence to inform the planning of a larger impact study.

In 2002 New Audiences commissioned the second **NPD research and development project**, which aimed to continue and extend this research, assessing impact and growth. The work included:

- an audit of national activity by literature promoters to compare against recorded events in 2001
- development of national partnerships with 12 literature and reader development organisations and agencies, both in the short-term and potentially long-term, to help increase the sustainability of NPD
- development of an online NPD Promoters' Toolkit, downloadable from the Poetry Society website. Over 220 promoters across the country accessed this toolkit, which is now available as a permanent resource
- development of a cd-rom for schools, coordinated by the Poetry Society. Over 1,500 copies were sent out to schools, festivals and stakeholders
- marketing activity – this was facilitated through the use of a NPD poster customisable for individual events, which was requested by almost 400 schools, and a marketing push to promote this and other NPD resources and services offered by the Poetry Society

The New Audiences funded research found that, in 2002, NPD was continuing to expand and attract bigger audiences:

- There were 17,300 hits to the NPD image on the Poetry Society's website in 2001, and 40,600 in 2002
- There were 477 media articles and programmes, spanning national and regional TV and radio, national and regional press, trade press, news agencies, and online. The AVE (Advertising Equivalent Report) for this was £500,000 worth of coverage

- There were 318 events recorded by Colman Getty, and 22 events recorded from limited promoter feedback. The majority of NPD events go unrecorded, as there is no currently available system for tracking the many community events organised without the Poetry Society's knowledge
- Recorded libraries events alone increased by 100% from 2001, and recorded schools events increased 68% from 2001

The 2002 **NPD research and development** project report concluded that NPD is a valuable key date in the literary calendar, but that it needs to leave its 'Poetry lite' image behind and engage more seriously with the profession. It needs to adopt a more coordinated approach to national partnership working and a different style of media campaign. The report recommended: establishing a framework to link NPD to other key dates in the literary calendar; advocacy work with Arts Council regional Literature Officers and their literature clients; partnership work with publishers, booksellers, library agencies, reader development agencies and the education sector; a more poetry-focused (rather than story-focused) media campaign; restructuring the NPD Steering Group; redefining the relationship with the BBC; exploring the issues around the current funding status for NPD; and exploring the potential for involving other organisations and agencies in the delivery of NPD.

Arts Council England supported NPD with a further award of £44,500 in 2003 to the Poetry Society, allowing recommendations from the 2002 report to be taken forward.

New Audiences supported other successful national campaigns promoting poetry, often in public spaces including the hugely popular and now well established **Poems on the Underground** and the more recent **Poems for the Waiting Room**. The latter project, managed by Hyphen-21, took poster-based contemporary poems into the waiting rooms of hospitals and surgeries across the country and into other health and social care environments. Poems on the theme of waiting were commissioned from 50 poets and 1,211 poetry packs were sent out. Project partners included NHS Estates, the King's Fund, Association of London Government and the Baring Foundation. Evaluation showed that **Poems for the Waiting Room** had a positive effect on patients and staff and often became the stimulus for further therapeutic work, for example on reminiscence.

Some projects used broadcast media to generate additional audience participation and awareness. For example, New Audiences supported the BBC's **Big Arts Week**, which encouraged artists to offer their services free for a day to local schools. A television programme in association with this event reached a peak-time BBC1 audience of around four million viewers in 2001.

Arts and broadcasting

Prior to New Audiences, the Arts Council had worked successfully with a range of broadcasters. Notable long-term co-productions include **Animate** with Channel 4 and **Dance for the Camera** with the BBC, both of which involve commissioning artists to create new work for television.

The New Audiences Programme invested £857,477 in new partnerships with arts broadcasters to pilot new programme initiatives and in research analysing the relationship between broadcast programming and physical attendance and/or participation in the arts. It also allowed 'cross platform' initiatives to be explored to test whether audiences might be increased by, for example, linking websites and internet based events to programmes broadcast on television.

In 2000 New Audiences supported research into the impact of the BBC's **Millennium Music Live** campaign on new live audiences for a range of musical styles. The *BBC Music Live* festival included a wide range of music, from classical to pop, from Bhangra to hip-hop. It took place in a range of venues including concert halls, nightclubs, parks, village halls and stately homes across the UK during May 2000. At 20 regional *BBC Music Live* events, information was gathered about the audience, including their age, social background and how and why they had attended the event.² It showed that:

- 20% of those surveyed had never previously attended a live music concert of any kind
- approximately 40% were infrequent or very infrequent attenders at live music events
- 62% had never before attended an event featuring a similar kind of music
- about 50% of those interviewed said that the festival had encouraged them to attend events they otherwise would not have tried
- People gave a number of reasons for why they came: around 15% 'just happened to be passing'; a further 15% cited 'curiosity'

² See *BBC Music Live: Composite Research Findings* (McCann Matthews Millman, Arts Council England/BBC, September 2000)

- Around 50% said they would like to go to live music events more often, but lacked the time and/or money

Comparisons between the audiences found at BBC **Music Live** events and information gathered elsewhere about who attends opera, theatre, arts centres and concert halls, showed that BBC **Music Live** events attracted 'significantly higher proportions of first time and infrequent attenders'. This suggests that 'event television' can create a new live audience as well as a broadcast audience for the arts.

New Audiences also supported new models of arts broadcasting that proved to be both popular and innovative. The most successful example was the **Operatunity** series commissioned by Channel 4. This successful experiment combined 'high art' with reality television to encourage a new audience for opera. New Audiences funded outreach work to ensure that applications to take part in the series came from the widest possible range of people and were of a very high quality. The success of this approach showed that the Arts Council can meet its arts development aims through partnerships with broadcasters in other ways than simply by directly funding the costs of programme making.

Case study

Diverse Ltd, Operatunity

In 2001/02, Diverse Ltd was awarded £25,000 to develop **Operatunity**, a groundbreaking television series involving a partnership between Diverse, Channel 4 and English National Opera (ENO). It gave amateur singers, with little or no experience of opera, a chance to realise their potential.

Its aims were:

- to make opera more accessible to a wider public
- to challenge public perceptions of opera
- to identify, coach and support singers selected for their talent and potential, who had never been professionally involved with opera

New Audiences funded a major outreach campaign to attract the widest possible range of participants. Launched in October 2001, it included trails on Channel 4, radio advertising, national and regional press advertising, and publicity in papers

such as *Asian Times* and *The Stage*. To recruit across a wide range of backgrounds and musical experience, publicity was also sent out to more than 700 organisations including amateur choirs of all kinds (from gospel to male voice), music societies, music shops and libraries. As a result, 2,500 applications were received and 105 singers were invited to interview.

Operatunity was broadcast as a four-part series on Channel 4 in February/March 2003. It followed the participants over 15 months as they got the chance to meet and work with respected and experienced professionals at ENO. The series of four programmes attracted a total of 7,100,000 viewers. The audience for each programme ranged from 1.5 to 1.8 million. An additional documentary, *Operatunity: the winners' story*, was commissioned. This showed how, due to the success of the project, some of the singers had embarked upon a professional career.

The series seems to have had a significant impact on public perceptions of opera. A performance in March 2003 featuring the series winners attracted 75% first time attenders to ENO at the Coliseum. Hits on the ENO website doubled whilst the series was on the air, a volume of hits which was sustained when the series ended.

Operatunity was widely, and well, received by the press. Lynda Lee-Potter of *The Daily Mail* wrote:

'The programmes have entertained, uplifted and entranced. The magnificent singing has come from ordinary men and women, including a supermarket assistant and a pig farmer. It has been emotional, brilliant television. Too many reality programmes are based on the hope that people will behave badly. Operatunity is concerned only with stupendous talent.'

This kind of response was echoed by the broadsheet press. David Chater of *The Times* wrote:

'What makes the programme so memorable is the way in which it celebrates the passion of singing, not as a passport to celebrity but as an affirmation of life.'

Comments from a focus group of contestants invited to the first round of auditions showed that the project had helped to positively influence perceptions of the culture of opera. 'This project has broken down the stigma,' said one. 'The jury

spoke English and not an opera language,' said another. 'There were no farts in bow ties!' said a third.

These views support the post-project evaluation comments of Catherine Carey, Communications Controller at ENO:

'Overall, I think it was an incredible achievement that the series broke down conceptions of opera as an elitist, exclusive artform for new audiences, whilst maintaining a professional standard for those with more knowledge of the artform. I think it also proved that television does not necessarily need to "dumb down" classical or other performing arts'.

New Audiences also allowed the Arts Council to develop broadcast partnerships to explore the cutting edge of arts practice and new media technology. A notable example was **Slot Art**, a three-year collaboration with Channel 4. Its main objective was to provide a television platform for artists' work. In 2001, 16 artists were selected through open submission to make short, three-minute artists' films for television. In 2002, **Slot Art** shifted its emphasis to explore how television might help stimulate an audience for art on the internet. Four three-minute profiles of web artists were broadcast in April 2002 under the series title *Identinet*. These complemented and introduced new web-based works commissioned by the artists on the theme of identity. In 2003, the focus of **Slot Art** shifted once again. This time the work of young contemporary painters was promoted through a series of four three-minute artists' profiles.

New Audiences commissioned research found that **Slot Art** was exceeding its target audience of 300,000 by over 100%. The average viewing figure in 2001 was 648,000. In 2002 this rose to 783,000. Research into *Identinet* showed a significant crossover between the television and the internet audience. Almost half of external referrals to the *Identinet* website were from the Channel 4 website. 43% of all visitors to the website returned at least once.

Slot Art was broadcast on Channel 4 at 7.55pm in the three-minute gap following the Channel 4 news. This same slot in the schedule was also secured to profile a further New Audiences funded project, **Self Portrait**. A partnership between Channel 4 and Media 19, an arts venue based in Sunderland, **Slot Art** invited people across the UK to create their own self-image. 8,000 people were stimulated to take up the challenge. **Self Portrait** proved to be a very inclusive

project, working across gender, disability, age and race. It involved 'ordinary' members of the public as well as distinguished artists and celebrities. The project, which had a presence on television and on the web, ran over 12 months and culminated in 12 short films featuring 12 members of the public. The self portraits produced are touring UK galleries during 2003 and 2004, and feature on the Channel 4 web site. The project won a Royal Television Society award.

Arts and new media

At the experimental interface of digital and live art practice, the Arts Council collaborated with the BBC on **Shooting Live Artists** (SLA). This digital broadcasting project explored how live artists could reach new audiences through a combination of the internet and other forms of presentation. 12 artists' commissions, created using a variety of media and methods, were made between 2002 and 2003. The most lauded was the BAFTA-nominated and Ars Electronica award-winner *Can you see me now?* by Blast Theory. The most controversial was *Skin/Strip Online* by Claire Ward-Thornton, Ruth Catlow and Marc Garrett, which invited the public to contribute anonymous photos of their own bodies. Analysis of traffic on the website showed a huge peak in visits shortly after it had received coverage in the popular press. The website hit rate of around 3,000 per week rose dramatically, to over 17,000, after the publication of articles in *The Mail on Sunday* and *The Sun*, demonstrating the impact of high profile media in stimulating audience awareness.

An exhibition at the Site Gallery, Sheffield, brought the work commissioned for **SLA** together in one place, and this was well attended. Visitor figures of 3,102 exceeded the Gallery's average by more than 10%. The evaluation of **SLA** showed that from the perspective of a commissioned artist, the project was a welcome opportunity to develop an audience for live art. 'It brings both online and off-line audiences together and makes live events much more accessible. Hopefully, it creates new audiences through cross-pollination.' (artist, *Evaluation Report for Shooting Live Artists 2002/3*, Prevista Ltd, September 2003)

Targeting a defined audience for web-based work is often not feasible. The breadth of the audience is potentially huge, but it may also be tiny. This mirrors a salient feature of how the web is used: by a mass general audience and by small interest groups linking up over long distances. Many internet-based arts projects seek to tap into both kinds of audience by including actual alongside virtual, linking exhibitions and launches with interactive happenings.

A number of organisations seized the opportunity provided by New Audiences to work with digital artists, or to distribute the work of artists more widely through digital channels. The Focus Gallery in Southend commissioned artist Simon Biggs to develop an ambitious new work **The Library of Babel**, 'a site-specific work for a non-physical site'. Launched in July 2001, it employed the Dewey Decimal numbering system, the system used by libraries to catalogue books, as a metaphor. Along with a website www.babel.uk.net, a series of interactive installations were developed for libraries around Essex. The 'three-dimensional website' also functioned as a web browser, so that the user could enter the websites of libraries around the world, from the Louvre to an American high school. From July 2001, an average of 2,000 visits was made each month to the Babel website, indicating a sizeable potential audience for this type of art.

National cultural partnerships to support change

A national partnership between Arts Council England and the Wellcome Trust produced an arts and science collaboration. The Play Garden aimed to develop a better understanding of the challenges involved in programming art and science projects from an audience development perspective and represented a major partnership between arts and science sectors.

A series of nine art and science projects, located diversely in art galleries, alternative venues and science centres, were selected as case studies throughout 2002. Play Garden enabled the case studies' artists and programmers to explore how people perceived and experienced their work.

Over 150,000 people directly experienced at least one of the case studies at venues including: the Eden Project in Cornwall; Magna Science Discovery Centre in Rotherham; the Wapping Hydraulic Pumping Station in London; Northern Gallery for Contemporary Art in Sunderland; Cheltenham Festival of Science; the Centre for Contemporary Art in Glasgow; Gallery Oldham; and the Hippodrome Circus Space in Great Yarmouth.

Although there has been some research carried out in the field of art and science projects, Play Garden was the first research project in the UK to look at qualitative audience experience. Case study participants implemented and assessed audience development strategies appropriate to their own projects.

Play Garden identified that audience experience is dependent on a multitude of factors and that the participation of the audience (or interactivity) is often integral to art and science projects. Play Garden makes the following recommendations

for enhancing the quality of visitor experience for art and science projects against its key areas of concern: infrastructure; context; signage; interpretation; communication; invigilation; marketing; access and education; and evaluation.

Arts Council England is producing a DVD to promote the events and ideas supported through the project and this will be distributed to potential programmers. The Play Garden site is available via the new audiences website.

Evidence throughout the New Audiences Programme has demonstrated the need for arts organisations to make fundamental changes to their existing practices if they are to engage with a broader range of audiences. Through the New National Partnerships funding strand, New Audiences funded a major new research study **Not for the Likes of You** (NFTLOY), which aimed to show how cultural organisations can change their overall positioning and message.

The project was jointly commissioned in early 2003 by Arts Council England, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (formerly Resource), the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage. A preliminary audit of barriers to access and existing research, *Not for the Likes of You: A Resource for Practitioners*, was undertaken by the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries. This then led to a further piece of work (with Morton Smyth associates) focusing on what really makes the difference in audience development and helping to define what organisations most need to do if they want to attract a wider audience.

The report document, *Not for the Likes of You*, published in 2004, is the culmination of this work and offers a fascinating survey of good practice and step-by-step approach to becoming genuinely inclusive. Consultants worked with 32 organisations right across the cultural sector that wanted to make, or had already begun making, fundamental changes. They studied models of good practice and identified key success criteria for those in the early stages of the change process. An important milestone was a *Learning and Innovation Forum*, where 60 people from the participating organisations came together to discuss initial findings and share their experiences to help shape the final stages of the project.

The importance of leadership behaviour was particularly emphasised within the report, stressing that good leadership is the only really solid foundation on which sustainable success can be built. Key success factors underpinning effective change management included the existence of a clear vision, which has audience development as a focus; the creation of systems and structures that fit the organisation's maturity and culture; and the nurturing and development of skills

and attitudes of staff. Risk and mistakes are managed in a positive way, standards are set high for everyone in the organisation, and there are strong internal support structures.

The management philosophy permeates all aspects of the organisation's strategy, and those organisations that had successfully repositioned themselves to attract a broader audience were seen as exciting to engage with by all stakeholders, from staff and funders to audiences themselves. Far from suffering as a consequence of taking access seriously, the product was seen as vibrant and relevant in helping to connect with people in a meaningful new way.

The benefits of this research study can be evidenced by the resounding praise received by the project's participants:

'NFTLOY has been a unique opportunity to learn from other arts organisations creative ways of really engaging and widening audiences for the arts. It has given us the chance to reflect on what we are doing well and where we want to go next with the support of experienced professionals who share our passion for access. I'd recommend it!' (Kate Brindley, Wolverhampton Arts and Museums)

'The NFTLOY project and the recent Learning Forum has been deeply inspiring for Tamasha. It's helping us pinpoint areas for development, where to be bold, and how to approach change step-by-step with a steady determination.' (Joe Moran, Tamasha Theatre Company)

2 *Testing new marketing methods*

New Audiences funding strands such as Sample the Arts and Test Drive the Arts were designed to test specific marketing concepts and methodologies (see Appendix 1). A significant number of projects sought to attract people to 'live' events in arts venues, or – in contrast to the broadcast and online projects which brought the arts into people's private spaces – to experience art work in public contexts. They did so through a combination of outreach, community development and marketing work.

In developing new marketing methods, some were able effectively to apply tools developed initially for a commercial context, such as the use of websites, email and electronic media, in an arts context. Others developed concepts such as 'test driving' or 'ambassador marketing' to attract and maintain relationships with new audiences.

Test Drive marketing

Test Drive is a marketing approach based on the idea of a ‘taster’; a free or discounted ‘sample’. It encourages people to experience an aspect of the arts for the first time, leading, it is hoped, to a lasting interest. New Audiences supported a range of initiatives across the Test Drive strand of the programme. This investment provided arts organisations with an opportunity to undertake Test Drive programmes in a strategic and planned manner. Some were more successful than others. The most ambitious was **Test Drive: North West**.

Case study

Arts About Manchester, Test Drive: North West

In 1998/9 the arts marketing agency Arts About Manchester was awarded £115,000 to coordinate the **Test Drive: North West** programme. The project was led by Arts About Manchester’s Research Director, Andrew McIntyre, who had created the Test Drive concept and previously implemented it with individual member venues in the region. For this large-scale initiative, 40 venues across the North West participated in the project, which produced the following key outcomes:

- 54,000 people were contacted with offers to attend arts events
- 20,056 potential attenders were persuaded to try an unfamiliar art form
- 88% (17,650) of those who attended said that they had enjoyed the experience
- 76% (15,240) recommended the experience to friends, relatives or colleagues
- 71% (14,240) said it had made them more likely to attend in the future
- 32% (6,420) in total had re-attended since their Test Drive experience

The North West experience demonstrated that Test Drive can be a persuasive marketing method. It established a number of benchmarks for the overall New Audiences Test Drive scheme. It found that:

- Test Drive is effective in attracting people who may have a latent interest in the arts
- targeting complex and/or cautious segments of the potential audience base is high maintenance and high risk
- Test Drive works best with longer timescales

- to be sustainable, venues need to integrate Test Drive within their overall marketing activity

The key benefits to participating organisations were:

- the scheme significantly reduced individuals' perceived risks to attending events
- it helped audiences onto the first rung of a ladder of attendance
- it persuaded audiences to re-attend
- it captured potential attenders' personal data on a comprehensive database
- it profiled audience demographics and attendance histories

Test Drive: North West demonstrated that the Test Drive method could be effective in influencing new audiences who had not visited venues or particular artforms before. Findings from the project indicated a number of barriers to attendance experienced by potential audiences, from knowledge and awareness of the arts activity to cost, venue and location.

Test Drive: North West aimed to build a relationship between a new attender and a venue, and although the approach did not work for every artform, target audience or venue, the project did reveal that 32% (6,420) of attenders subsequently re-attended as a result of their experience, within 12 months of their first experience. Whilst this wasn't a new tool, the Test Drive approach produced a positive outcome for audience development and business reasons.

The project has produced a wealth of experience and insight into the running of Test Drive campaigns, much of which has already been put into use in informal advice given to agencies and organisations throughout the UK. Whilst the methodology has been developed and refined since this initiative was piloted in 1998, it is a model that demonstrates potential for further development.

'New Audiences proved that Test Drive can work in venues large and small and across many artforms. The Test Drive idea was a simple one. It found curious audiences who weren't going to book and sat them in seats we weren't going to sell. That experience made most want to come back. The key issue is that the box office spend of the retained new audiences exceeded the investment made. This is crucial because it makes Test Drive one of the only audience development techniques that can break even within the same financial year. This means that it can be afforded within a venue's own revenue budget. Everyone should be doing it.' (Andrew McIntyre)

Ambassador marketing

Arts ambassador approaches (sometimes called network marketing) seek to attract new attenders to the arts by developing a more personal relationship with target groups or individuals to encourage their interest. A community networker, who understands the views and aspirations of a particular community, is employed or encouraged to spread the word about the positive value of arts and cultural events to that community. A number of New Audience funded projects used this type of relationship marketing approach, both for audience development and promotional purposes. The experience of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra contributed useful knowledge about the challenges inherent in running such schemes.

Case study

City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Cultural Ambassadors

In 1998/9 New Audiences awarded the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) £7,000 to coordinate **Cultural Ambassadors**, a scheme to increase the number and range of people attending its concerts. It worked with volunteers recruited from its lists of members, subscribers and long-term attenders. CBSO defined its ambassadors as 'well-briefed voluntary supporters willing to evangelise about the Orchestra and its work who have a sufficiently diverse social network to encourage parties of their friends and/or fellow club members to attend concerts'.

How the scheme worked:

- 2,000 people on the CBSO mailing list were targeted and 20 were recruited as ambassadors
- they brought groups of personal friends, neighbours, work colleagues, church groups and societies to 10 CBSO concerts
- benefits of the scheme, for both the ambassadors and their guests, included a 25% discount on parties of 10 or more new attenders; a free ticket for the group organiser; free programme; interval reception with members of the orchestra; and the personal attention of a member of staff throughout the evening

- 28 groups came in total. The project reached its target of 500 attenders, of which 440 were new. 60 were lapsed and current attenders

The CBSO scheme succeeded in attracting attenders who are similar to its existing audience. It did not significantly address issues such as cultural diversity or young attenders. As a result of feedback from the ambassadors, a young person's price has been introduced to encourage this age group.

Other recommendations included sending information on future concerts to ambassadors at least four months in advance so they have time to advertise the events and provide a better service in-house for attending groups. An initial introductory event for the ambassadors was found to be useful in establishing a good relationship between them and the orchestra. One area that requires improvement is access to good transport links at affordable prices. The orchestra is currently experimenting with combined travel and ticket deals for outlying areas.

Joint marketing initiatives

The scale of funding available through the New Audiences programme enabled a number of consortia marketing projects to be set up. In the West Midlands, for example, the M6 project enabled 10 visual arts venues to put on 'taster' events for new audiences in under-represented areas.

Case study

M6 Group, Hotspots

In 1999/2000 the M6 Group was awarded £20,000 to coordinate **Hotspots**. Established in 1996, the M6 Group is a consortium of 10 visual arts venues in the West Midlands. Guided by research carried out in 1998, each venue identified target 'hotspots' where under-represented audiences were not being reached by current marketing activities. The group developed a campaign of 'taster' events to attract new audiences from these areas. The majority of venues tested the effectiveness of direct mail by sending special invitations to targeted mailing lists. Others tested a personal approach by telephone to attract organised groups in particular geographical areas.

Outcomes

- across the West Midlands region 325 people attended seven different taster events involving eight galleries
- the invitation to dedicated events proved very successful – of the 233 invitations returned 135 respondents (58%) said they would be attending that gallery for the first time
- 35% of attenders had not visited a visual arts event in the previous 12 months
- the exhibitions were enjoyed by the majority of attenders with 72% rating it 'very enjoyable'
- the response to the experience was overwhelmingly positive. 92% of all respondents said that they would be much more likely to attend the gallery again
- over 90% declared themselves more likely to attend a similar event at the same or another gallery in the future

There was a relatively high cost in attracting new attenders in terms of print production, refreshments and transport costs. However, when available, the provision of free transport proved a major incentive to attendance.

Feedback on the personalised approach was overwhelmingly positive; it engendered a sense of being valued and wanted. Many visitors appreciated the fact that they also had a chance to meet directors and curators. The timing of invitations proved important. If they were received too early, then whilst initial take-up might appear good, this did not translate into actual attendance. If they were too late, potential visitors had already made other commitments. Although the targeting of specialist groups by two venues was successful, it took much longer to recruit people than anticipated as information had to go through committees.

The M6 venues felt that they benefited from the project's collaborative approach in terms of sharing experiences and joint problem solving.

Online arts marketing

Many New Audience projects with a marketing focus explored how new media-based communication can be used by or adapted to the arts.

Developed by the regional arts marketing agency Audiences Yorkshire, **The Reading Room** was a successful online marketing project that aimed to attract readers to live literature events. It was developed following research into the way other organisations used their websites for promotional purposes. Working in partnership with local reading groups and with small bookshops, a website was developed which attracted 42,175 hits between May and August 2000.

Audiences Yorkshire gathered information about reading habits and literature attendance through the project. From a sample of 400 questionnaires gathered by the project, 92 were completed by online respondents, of which 18% attended literature events more than once a month. Furthermore, 50% of internet respondents bought 11 or more fiction books per year. The internet is not a frequently used source for finding out about literature events. However, there is great potential for this as 82% of all questionnaire respondents said that they had access to the internet.

Kate Wafer of Audiences Yorkshire identifies **The Reading Room** as a seminal project for the agency:

‘It let us explore the options for online activity and information and it has led to www.digYorkshire.com, an online magazine of listings, editorial and reviews. It has been very successful in terms of building user numbers, a database and a community of people interested in the arts.’ (Kate Wafer, ‘Audiences Online’, in *Arts Professional*, Cambridge, January 2004)

3 *Experimenting with when and where the arts can be experienced*

Recognising that, to develop a new audience, the arts might need to adapt to emerging social trends and fit in better with people’s lifestyles, a number of projects for the general audience either situated art in different kinds of spaces or experimented with where and how the public might experience them. Many of these were funded through the New Contexts and New Approaches to Presentation funding strands.

Festivals

Festivals formed an important part of the New Audiences Programme, with over a million people being reached through festival activity (see Appendix 1). They provided opportunities for people from all ages and backgrounds to share and experience an array of different artforms and styles. New Audiences invested in

the following types of festival initiatives: research and evaluation; new programming; new presentation formats; and promoter development.

The Association of Festival Organisers (AFO) used their New Audiences grant of £40,000 to commission groundbreaking research into **folk festivals** and their impact on audiences, local economies and tourism. The report, *A report into the impact of folk festivals on cultural tourism* by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre (MHM) in 2003 and later updated as *The impact of folk festivals* (Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, Association of Festival Organisers, March 2004), revealed that they are big business, attracting tourists with money to spend; that they develop new audiences; that they are family friendly, accessible and welcoming; and that they develop people and communities.

- Over 350 folk festivals across the UK generate £77 million of annual spending with over 90% of folk festival attenders being tourists
- 76% of attenders are repeat visitors with a huge 70% of those attending most years and 44% attending every year
- Of the 24% trying a festival for the first time, three quarters will return
- It also showed that folk festivals, often seen as a 'minority interest', in fact attract 350,000 attendances from 106,000 people annually, with increasing numbers of families and young people

Beyond folk festivals these new interests result in significant levels of attendance at other arts events generally. The AFO report found that 38% of people attend music from other countries or cultures when not at festivals, 37% attend classical music events, 27% attend jazz events, 24% attend dance music events and 14% attend R&B events.

'The research carried out by MHM demonstrates the sheer volume of folk festival attendance, the diversity of our audiences and their dedication to the genre and the festival circuit ... our festivals celebrate this success story by creating unique and long-lasting experiences for our audiences.' (Steve Heap, Association of Festival Organisers)

Other festivals have distributed the arts in new ways. Brighton Festival's **Poetry in Motion** project used city buses as display spaces for poems written by local primary school children, to great acclaim from residents. The **Bath Literature Festival** offered a means of drawing audiences into new areas through the realms of new technology. A dedicated website provided a virtual festival space hosting collaborative online writing and discussions, a virtual writer in residence and

facilities for audience feedback, as well as information and images from non-web based events. It proved to be an effective and entertaining way of breaking down emotional and attitudinal barriers to digital technology.

One of the major successes of the programme has been in its investment in new formats that have grown and developed. Inspired by format of the Uitmarkt ('going out market') Festival in Amsterdam, Audiences Central initiated **Artsfest** in 1998. New Audiences investment in **ArtFest's** early years was critical to its development and, now in its sixth year, it has become a major annual event.

Case studies

Audiences Central, ArtsFest 98 and 99

In 1998/9 Audiences Central (formerly Birmingham Arts Marketing) was awarded £120,000 to support a new cultural experiment, **ArtsFest**. In 1999/2000 a further award was made of £30,000. **ArtsFest** was a collaboration between Audiences Central, Birmingham City Council and over 250 arts organisations. The aim of Artsfest was to increase 'future arts attendances with particular emphasis on encouraging people with little or no previous arts going experience to try out what the arts have to offer in the region'. **ArtsFest** produced the UK's biggest ever weekend festival of free arts events, fusing the taster session with the festival format to attract new audiences. Its success has been significant, growing in size and scale each year. It illustrates that taking art into new spaces and places can draw in new attenders.

The event was also intended as a research gathering opportunity to identify audience behaviour and needs. Market research was undertaken for both **ArtsFest** events, and findings documented in evaluations.

Artsfest 98 comprised 230 events involving over 1,000 artists. It took place over three days on three outdoor stages, 11 indoor venues and tents in the middle of Birmingham City Centre, with an additional satellite site at the **mac**. There was also an 'information market', a craft market, participatory workshops, film and video programmes and 'street' performance.

- Over 75,000 people attended **Artsfest 98**
- A significant number of people who attended **ArtsFest 98** were either new to the arts or very infrequent attenders – almost one third (33%) had been once (14%) or not at all (19%) to any event in the last two years
- Dance was the most successful in attracting new attenders. Classical music had the highest proportion of attenders at the festival who had not attended classical music in the last two years
- The average number of artforms which people tried whilst at **Artsfest** was over three

To assess whether **ArtsFest 98** had had an impact on subsequent booking patterns for arts events in Birmingham, teleresearch was carried out to establish whether **ArtsFest** attenders had booked to see an arts event since the festival. Feedback showed that 42% of attenders had gone on to attend other arts events, and they said that **Artsfest** had influenced their choice. Of new and lapsed attenders at **ArtsFest**, 44% said that **Artsfest** had prompted them to visit an arts event again.

ArtsFest 99 built on the success of the first year and attracted an audience of over 110,000, reaching many people with no previous arts going experience. In addition, **Artsfest 99** was included in BBC coverage of *Last Night of the Proms*, reaching millions of viewers.

- 54.2% of all research respondents said they experienced new arts events they wouldn't normally attend or participate in and 92.4% said they found the concept of **Artsfest** a great attraction
- 67.5% of people who attended **Artsfest 99** tried new art events seven or more times since
- £3.7 million was spent by attendees, boosting the local economy

Due to the phenomenal success of the first two years, **Artsfest** was able to continue and recent figures are impressive: testimony to the need to explore and back new formats for arts presentation.

- 120,000 people attended **ArtsFest 2002** of whom 11% were non-arts attenders and 15% very infrequent arts attenders
- 77% said it had increased the chance of their attending events they normally wouldn't attend

- follow-up research six months later found that 20.5% had attended an arts event as a result of **ArtsFest**
- the event was effective in attracting young people and Black and minority ethnic communities of the West Midlands (17% of attenders were from Black and minority ethnic communities)

Taking art out to new audiences

An approach that enabled the public to experience art in unexpected, often everyday, surroundings was favoured by many. Placing work in situations where a ready made 'new audience' might be found – be it an NHS waiting room, a shopping centre, or on public transport – produced some encouraging results. Projects used such non-conventional locations as a way of introducing art to a new general audience. Location was as important a factor as the work itself.

London Music's project **Live Music in Atria** introduced music into corporate buildings where enormous spaces remain under-used. Using the atria of London office buildings as a cultural space benefited workers, their families, local schools and the wider community. Projects attracted estimated audiences of 4,200 at offices including KPMG, Clifford Chance and Morgan Stanley. After the pilot at KPMG an internal email survey of 767 respondents showed that 723 were in favour of continuing live music. Since the project's launch in March 1999, additional organisations from the public as well as the private sectors have joined the scheme. They include: British Airways, Cartier, Coutts, the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Canary Wharf.

New Audiences also supported individual artists to develop outreach projects. Performance artist Annabel Other was funded to tour her **Bristol Art Library**, a specially created portable lending library the size of a suitcase, to seaside locations. The tour, which included performances and events, generated nearly 650 new library members. Five hotels took part, producing 580 new members. 67 joined at Eastbourne Grand. At Cromer pier the library attracted an estimated 150 visitors. Annabel Other says of this project:

'Membership of Bristol Art Library is free, and once you have joined and received your manila reader's ticket you may visit the library and peruse its volumes anywhere in the world. The library now has over 3,500 members/readers, a gift shop and Friends of the Bristol Art Library (FOTBAL).

Being portable, the library can travel to almost any location in the world ... Although the library often appears at galleries, museums and art centres, it is equally at home in venues such as the kitchen table in private houses, hotel lobbies and the waiting area of a hairdresser's.'

Adapting to new lifestyles

In the final two years of the New Audiences programme, there was a focus on projects which sought to respond to the insights of the Henley Centre report, *Towards 2010: new times, new challenges for the arts* (The Henley Centre for Forecasting, Arts Council, 2000) which illustrates how the arts might be affected by current and emerging social trends. The New Approaches to Presentation strand wanted 'to test initiatives which respond to the changing "marketplace" and which recognise the competing demands on time and help us to understand better how we can promote the arts as a leisure choice'. In an era in which many people consider themselves 'time poor', some projects looked at how the arts might compete successfully for people's valuable leisure time. Other projects explored whether, by adapting to people's lifestyle tastes and preferences, it might be possible to develop new audiences and expand the market for artists' work.

New Audiences supported projects which have generated important new information on issues such as the impact of late night opening and the potential of the arts to engage audiences in retail settings. These projects could influence how arts organisations approach issues of presentation and customer care in the longer term.

Love Art Later, for example, involved nine London art galleries working together to raise awareness of their current exhibitions through a series of late night openings. A joint publicity campaign promoted extended evening opening times and sponsored bar nights at each gallery. This was enhanced by a sponsored media campaign in partnership with *Time Out*. New Audiences funded major research into the impact of this campaign.

190,000 leaflets were printed. 66,000 were distributed around bars, restaurants, cafes and clubs in London. This achieved an 89% pick-up rate. The remaining print was inserted into *Time Out* and distributed by the participating galleries.

The bar nights, which were the central focus of the campaign, attracted large audiences across the galleries. The bar at the National Portrait Gallery had a record attendance of nearly 800, double the normal evening opening level. The Dulwich Picture Gallery, which had no history of late night openings and therefore

no regular audience, attracted nearly 200 visitors. Other partner galleries also reported higher than average visitor numbers for their evening opening.

Audience research found that:

- 67% of attenders said that the convenient timing appealed to them and 35% stated that this was the most important factor
- over 25% of the evening opening attenders were first time visitors to that particular gallery
- 56% thought that evening openings would encourage them to try new galleries
- the largest age group surveyed was 25–34 years olds, 32%. This represents a considerably higher proportion than current daytime visitors of this age group, 20%

The Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust sought in its **Time Out** project to mirror the success of the London galleries in attracting a younger adult audience to late night openings.

Case study

Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust, Time Out

In 2001/2 Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust (SGMT) was awarded £20,000 to deliver **Time Out**, a project devised to promote the major public visual arts venues in Sheffield – the Millennium Galleries and the Graves and Mappin Art Galleries – as places for ‘time poor’ young professionals to visit. The premise of the project was that more could be done to cultivate the city’s 20–34 year old audience. It set out to encourage first time and repeat attenders to the galleries through: extending opening hours; market research to identify barriers to attendance; partnerships with local businesses, leading to the cultivation of advocates (Time Lords); and introduction events linked to exhibitions.

The project evaluation found that:

- 1,330 visitors attended **Time Out** events across the venues
- new attenders averaged 41% (534)
- this target market and particularly first time attenders enjoy a social and more informal occasion

- 82% of respondents expressed an interest in events mixing visual art with music, film or performance
- 62% of visitors surveyed said that they heard about an event through word of mouth or a friend. This form of recommendation appeared to be more important to first time attenders
- 75% were interested in extended gallery opening hours, favouring a late night in midweek
- free events were more popular and attracted a higher proportion of first time visitors. Overall, however, it appeared that time is a bigger barrier than price
- time pressures experienced by the target group made a personal invitation and recommendation a relevant and appropriate approach

The Time Lords (advocates) represented an important focus for the project as they were real people from the target market, and although interested in the arts they were independent of the galleries. However, many of them were found not to be in the best position within their organisation to act as information points. In retrospect, it would have been more effective to recruit with the support of the human resources department.

Art and retailing: developing general audiences as buyers

Responding to The Henley Centre report challenge to make the arts fit better with people's lifestyle preferences, some New Audiences projects and evaluation looked at how audiences could be attracted to the arts as purchasers of art works. They showed that projects of this type can have a significant impact on the economy for the arts, as well as on its audience base.

The New Audiences programme commissioned major research aimed at developing the market for sales and commissions of contemporary art. Very little research had previously existed to inform planning in this area. Three major issues informed the brief for the work:

- how to increase the sales of innovative, contemporary art and private commissions through various distribution points
- how to encourage artists to become more entrepreneurial in their engagement with the marketplace
- how to expand the audience for contemporary work through the purchase and commissioning of work

The research programme undertaken by Morris Hargreaves McIntyre involved speaking to over 6,700 people including over 400 artists, 80 suppliers and 1,800 existing and potential buyers, presenting a quantification, analysis and explanation of how the art market works. The research report, *Tastebuds*, and advocacy publication examining the art market, *Market Matters*, by Louisa Buck, will be launched in September 2004. A report on the market for fine crafts will also be available in 2004 and will follow a similar structure to *Tastebuds*, analysing makers, suppliers and potential and current buyers.

New Audiences also supported advocacy work for **Open Studios** where audiences can meet artists and buy their work at the place of production. The programme funded a conference, publication, and methods for making available new research. There were 32 **Open Studios** events across England in 2001. 3,000 artists attracted 250,000 visitors and made over £1.5 million in sales.

'The scale, scope and location of these events mean that they are well placed to do many things. They can reach new audiences, create a market for art and act as a formal or informal education centre. They can also offer a focus for the training and development of local arts businesses, help to regenerate and re-brand neighbourhoods and stimulate cultural tourism.' (Paul Glinkowski, *Open Studios: a gem worth polishing*, Arts Council England, 2003)

A groundbreaking project in 1999–2000 explored whether new audiences could be encouraged to take an interest in contemporary visual art through the chance to purchase, from Homebase, objects designed by artists for home use and display.

Case study

Colin Painter, At Home with Art

In 1999/2000 artist and curator Colin Painter was awarded £65,980 to coordinate **At Home With Art**. This project involved commissioning nine leading artists to make objects to be mass produced and sold to the general public through Homebase stores. These included a lamp (Anish Kapoor), garden trowel (Tony Cragg), peg (Antony Gormley), shower curtain (Permindar Kaur) and ceramic plate (Richard Wentworth). A national touring exhibition, a collaboration between the Tate Gallery, Sainsbury's Homebase, Wimbledon School of Art and National

Touring Exhibitions, launched at the Tate Gallery in 2000, displaying the objects and explaining the process behind the project at galleries throughout the UK.

The aims of the project were:

- to reconsider the home environment as a context for contemporary visual art
- to explore the possibility of contemporary art reaching a wider public through work being made specifically for the home
- to make available to a mass market objects made by contemporary artists

The project was deliberately non-specific about its audience: it wanted to appeal to 'all those people who do not usually have a close relationship with contemporary art objects and, in particular, do not live with them in their homes'. (Colin Painter)

Different levels of audience awareness of the project were created through various means:

- 150 Homebase stores stocked the **At Home With Art** items over a period of about 18 months – items were also available to order from the other 148 stores
- Sales volumes were higher than expected – total sales by volume were 19,068 items
- an exhibition at the Tate Gallery subsequently toured to 10 regional venues
- a 50-minute BBC2 documentary *Home Is Where the Art Is*
- extensive media coverage, including a feature on Channel 4's *Big Breakfast*, items on five radio shows and 85 press articles, including *Elle Decoration*
- a publication by Colin Painter, *Contemporary Art and the Home*, was launched at Tate Britain in November 2002

'I just go in every day and look at it and there's a little chink of light in my brain.'
(purchaser, fork and trowel, from *At Home with Art: Research with the Public*, Susie Fisher Group, Arts Council England, 2002)

Indisputably, **At Home with Art** discovered a new audience, and had popular appeal. Most importantly, given that this was a commercial initiative, as it gained in profile, so the amount of work sold increased. The findings from the report by the Susie Fisher Group state that the project, 'engaged a new audience ... a group as yet unfamiliar with contemporary art'. Furthermore, in meeting its objectives the report says that 'a very wide public saw and engaged with these objects by

contemporary artists. Their interest and sense of challenge was heightened by the hands-on experience and option to buy which is characteristic of retail stores'. Moreover, the report makes clear that the project reached a 'genuinely new audience' who had not previously been introduced to contemporary art.

- It is estimated that around 37,000 **At Home With Art** objects were sold. Many people made multiple purchases, and some did so for investment
- Of those taking part in a survey of Homebase shoppers the overwhelming majority was in favour of **At Home With Art**
- The market for **At Home With Art** as a whole grew by 50% during the main sales period
- 93% of those asked said they would consider buying an **At Home With Art** item

The project successfully engaged a new audience within Homebase. It revealed significant scope for art in the retail environment and suggested that in-store display combined with the opportunity to purchase is effective in opening up the shopping public to new ideas, whether or not they purchase works.

Findings

New Audiences has had a major impact on the way the arts sector is able to think about and address the general audience. The programme succeeded in reaching a broad spectrum of people, many of whom were not regular arts attenders. It supported initiatives to increase the loyalty of existing audiences and the frequency of their engagement. A large number of people also experienced the arts through projects featured in the press, on broadcast media or on the internet.

New Audiences provided an opportunity for arts organisations to learn how to become more inclusive, with real insights gained into the changes they need to make. Inclusive organisations are modelling 'inside' what it is they are hoping to achieve on the 'outside'. For many, what may have started as a simple stand-alone project has resulted in a lasting impact on the organisation and the way it engages with audiences. Key findings in each category were as follows.

Developing new national partnerships

Many people were encouraged to attend arts events as a result of successful national promotional events or campaigns involving new national partnerships, such as Architecture Week, National Poetry Day, National Orchestras Week and Bedtime Reading Week. More research should be undertaken into the impact of arts days and weeks.

Forming partnerships with commerce and other non-arts sectors benefited arts organisations through the delivery of additional resources, new distribution channels, access to new skills and new ways of working.

Broadcast partnerships and projects were a particular success of the programme, which supported the creation of new formats and models of arts broadcast projects. It also allowed the Arts Council to consolidate existing partnerships and develop new relationships with channels. Broadcasters are interested in developing audience 'reach' and the arts sector is interested in tapping into broadcast audiences, making interesting crossovers a possibility eg developing audiences for particular artforms or areas of the arts, such as culturally diverse arts and disability arts. The programme demonstrated that there was potential to work in a far more strategic way with broadcasters, indicating new policy directions for the Arts Council.

A key challenge is to convert viewing and listening to 'live' attendance at events, looking to develop links between awareness raising, 'event television' and ongoing venue programming. Venues need to have the capacity to respond to and work in partnership with broadcasters, and forward planning would improve joint working arrangements. Research will support this work, as it enhances the Arts Council's understanding of the relationship of arts broadcasting to live audiences. It suggests new opportunities to link 'live' arts experiences to broadcast programming in more creative ways, to grow both the arts sector and new arts audiences.

Testing new marketing methods

Projects that focused on the development or exploration of new approaches to marketing the arts, particularly to a 'time poor' audience, were a significant component of the general audience category. There were significant areas of good practice where New Audiences funding enabled organisations to test cutting edge promotional ideas and take the risk of applying new marketing methods to audience development projects eg opportunities to experiment with new and emerging technology such as SMS Text messaging.

Projects that focused on tried and tested methods of communication with new audiences demonstrated that the basics of marketing and project management have to be in place, and used properly, for success. This includes research and knowledge about existing audiences and new communities; development of accurate mailing lists; utilising effective communication through print and mail; specifically targeted advertising and listings.

The financial risk for organisations in testing out new marketing approaches was reduced by New Audiences funding, which enabled them to assess what the real resource requirement was for such approaches, and whether it was sustainable on an individual organisational basis.

An example of this includes the arts ambassador approach, which produced a wealth of good practice into running such initiatives. Personal contacts of all kinds were extremely successful when engaging with audiences of all types. However, such relationship marketing activities proved time-intensive and required ongoing support and investment for sustainability, which many organisations were unable to address during the lifetime of the project.

Test Drive the Arts also provided valuable models of good practice and was particularly effective in influencing those potential audiences who may have a latent interest in the arts. However, it was less effective in penetrating the markets of infrequent or 'hard to reach' attenders, who may be more successfully targeted by organisations' outreach work and use of ambassadors.

There were variable levels of marketing practice identified across the programme. The extent to which this had an impact upon organisational development and the long-term viability of the project was dependent upon the organisations' infrastructure, resources and skills base. Some made additional investment in marketing staffing, including the involvement of third parties such as marketing and audience development agencies or freelance consultants. Their collective knowledge and expertise made significant contributions to organisational development. Marketing agencies also played a useful role in acting as a catalyst to get organisations started and in brokering and managing projects.

Experimenting with where and when the arts can be experienced

Though siting projects outside a dedicated performance or exhibition space can be challenging, New Audiences demonstrated that it can be a successful entry point

for drawing in new audiences, particularly those who may be unaccustomed to attending arts venues.

Projects attempting to respond to changing lifestyles illustrate real potential in using evening openings as a way of encouraging new and more frequent attenders and a requirement for more flexibility in meeting audience needs.

At Home With Art demonstrated that there is significant potential to develop a new market for the work of contemporary artists through collaborations with mainstream retailers.

New Audiences research into the market for contemporary arts and crafts will be published later in 2004. This examines the potential for market development looking at artists, galleries and buyers (current and potential).

Resources

General audiences

Test Drive has often been the subject of conferences, seminars, articles and presentations across the country and these documents provide a framework and a set of helpful guidelines with regard to the methodology and approaches involved in undertaking a campaign.

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New Audiences overview evaluations

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Cultural Intelligence has produced a two-volume overview of New Audiences projects within the New Approaches to Presentation Strand, which aimed to respond to The Henley Centre report.

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Rose, Catherine, 'Essential Audiences - Marketing for Development', in *ArtsProfessional*, Issue 62, 17 November 2003

Rose, Catherine, 'Essential Audiences - Partnerships with Broadcast Media', in *ArtsProfessional*, Issue 51, 2 June 2003

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Seminars and conferences

Developing Audiences for the Visual Art was a seminar given by Phillipa Yates and Emma Marlow at the Arts Marketing Association Conference *Made in Heaven?* in Birmingham, 2001. It presented case studies of major collaborative

audience development projects involving large groups of visual arts organisations. Two of the case studies featured were: M6 Group's New Audiences Hot Spots project featuring galleries in the West Midlands and the Love Art ... Later promotion involving nine London galleries.

Melanie Brooker and Jessica Silvester presented a seminar called *CBSO Ambassadors - Making the Most of Your Supporters' Enthusiasm* at the Arts Marketing Association Conference, *Tearing Down Barriers*, in Salford in July 2000. This seminar featured City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra's New Audiences *Cultural Ambassadors* project, carried out in 1998–9.

Professor Steven Heppell presented a seminar called *Building External Partnerships* at the Arts Marketing Association Conference, *Made in Heaven?* in Birmingham, 2001. It featured Audiences Central's New Audiences project *Artsfest* as a case study.

More information about the Arts Marketing Association Conferences can be found from www.a-m-a.co.uk
Phone: 01223 578078

Opening Doors was a national conference for Open Studios organisers, organised by Arts Council England. It took place at Persistence Works studios in Sheffield on 15 July 2003.

Paul Kaynes (Audiences Central, formerly Birmingham Arts Marketing) and Shirley Kirk, (South West Arts Marketing) presented New Audiences case studies: *ArtsFest* and *Txtm8* at international conference events across New Zealand in 2003. Details can be accessed through www.artsauckland.org.nz

The symposium *Always in translation? Conversations in art and science* was held on 26-27 September 2003, at the Darwin Centre, Natural History Museum, London and at the Royal College of Art in London. The symposium was funded through the New Audience Programme, in collaboration with the Natural History Museum, Royal College of Art and Wellcome Trust.

7 Young People

Context

Nearly 14.5% of the total UK population is represented by 14–25 year olds, and that proportion, according to The Henley Centre³, is set to increase significantly by 2010.

Ambitions into Action 2003–6 contains the Arts Council's vision for supporting arts and creativity, and young people are highlighted within this manifesto as a focus for current and future activity. 'Young people are among the most enthusiastic participants in the arts, and we believe they have a fundamental right of access to high quality arts. We have devised initiatives to encourage young people to get involved, whether as artists, audiences or through careers in the creative industries.' (Arts Council England, 2003) This includes the national **Artsmark** scheme that recognises schools commitment to arts provision for pupils and **Creative Partnerships**, a nationally coordinated programme developing creative learning and teaching through building relationships between the arts and schools.

The focus on young people in the New Audiences Programme was framed and supported by research into the attitudes, motivations and preferences of young people. One of these was a key publication commissioned by the Gulbenkian Foundation and the Arts Council. *Crossing the Line* was published in 1999, and directly informed one of the New Audiences funding strands, *New Approaches to Presentation*. The report examined the problems and opportunities involved in broadening young people's access to both high and popular culture and explored ways of encouraging young people to engage with cultural venues. Findings included:

- Attendance at cultural venues declines as children become teenagers and the mid-teens in particular are associated with low levels of audience involvement
- Attendance at arts events is correlated with socio-economic factors
- Although the physical barriers to attendance of cost, travel and lack of time are significant, psychological barriers are paramount and are best summarised as a general feeling amongst some young people that the arts are irrelevant to them and culturally exclusive

³ *Towards 2010: new times, new challenges for the arts*, The Henley Centre for Forecasting, Arts Council England 2000

New Audiences overview

New Audiences funded **408** projects relating to the audience focus of young people, totalling **£5,733,298**.⁴ The total number of audiences reached by these projects was **1,341,416**.

'Young people' as an audience category was large, containing projects focusing on early years, through to schools work and young people in their late 20s. Types of projects supported included; schools based workshops, new marketing approaches including ambassador programmes, ticketing, transport and promotional schemes, reader development projects, new technologies, involving young people in commissioning new arts work; and presenting arts in new ways and in non-traditional venues.

Four funding strands particularly focused on young audiences:

- Music on Your Doorstep offered young people the opportunity to engage with classical music by working with orchestras, composers and choreographers on education work and community outreach
- Arts Extend developed education and outreach projects with young people exploring ways to encourage families, friends and teachers to participate in the arts both in and out of school settings
- New Contexts presented work in non-traditional locations to offer young people the chance to experience the arts in their own familiar environments
- New Approaches to Presentation tested some of *Crossing the Line's* assumptions focusing on initiatives for young people that were not part of statutory school activity

Young people projects

This section will provide an overview of the key themes and approaches emerging from the young people projects. These themes and approaches, which sometimes overlap, can be summarised as: addressing barriers to attending the arts; new marketing approaches; and encouraging participation.

⁴ Maximum value, see research findings in Appendix 2

1 Addressing barriers to attending the arts

Addressing young people's attendance at and participation in the arts involves identification and examination of the barriers they may face. Physical barriers experienced by young people can include transport, price, lack of time, lack of opportunity and availability of information. Psychological barriers can include peer pressure, perceptions about arts activities, venues and the audiences for arts venues.

Testing physical barriers

Lack of transport can be a barrier to arts attendance, particularly in rural areas. The **Young People's Transport Scheme** by Midlands Arts Marketing (MAM) was one of a number of projects testing lack of transport as a barrier. The project targeted 16–19 year olds from schools and workplaces in rural and urban Northamptonshire. The findings proved revealing. When rural attenders were offered free transport and discounted tickets, 16 people took up the offer. By contrast, when they were offered a programme geared to their stated preferences, but without free transport, 80 people took up the offer. This indicated that transport was not as significant a barrier as had been assumed, a finding backed up by feedback from the focus groups – 30% of the rural group had their own cars. In total, 233 young people attended performances at three venues: Derngate Theatre, The Royal Theatre and Roadmender.

Many projects tested price as a barrier to attendance. In London, the Royal National Theatre found that price was an issue in their project **NT100**, which became the project **NT Playmates**. A group of 16–24 year olds was invited to several performances, as well as a range of other events and activities, free of charge, over a period of a year. In total, 214 people became members of **Playmates**. Although actual attendance at events dropped over the course of the **Playmates** project – 72 people came to the first performance, 34 to the second – by the end of the project, 35% of the group remained committed attenders.

Sheffield Theatres' led on a unique and large-scale research project **How Much?** This was a time limited project that generated 32,000 ticket sales, 29% of which were to first time attenders.

Case study

Sheffield Theatres, How Much?

In 1998/9 New Audiences awarded £300,000 to Sheffield Theatres to coordinate **How Much?** This project tested the impact of programming, price and promotion on young people's theatre attendance. Aiming to develop audiences in the 16–24 age range, the project constructed a robust programme of research into the attitudes and behaviour of young attenders and non-attenders. After the pilot phase had created an audience of 12,000 young people, the theatre went on to explore how to build a sustainable pricing policy, develop a strand of artistic programming that was accessible for young audiences and test different methods of promotion. The research was undertaken in partnership with Sheffield Hallam University and based on 1,000 young attenders, 554 non-attenders, 15 'gatekeepers', plus 32,000 box office records.

Outcomes

Programming

- There was no evidence of 'dumbing down' being of importance for this audience. Performances with well known TV faces were popular. However, young people would have been prepared to pay more to see productions such as *Angels in America*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Netherlands Dance Theatre2* and *Astor Tango*, amongst others. The productions that were most attractive to them were modern drama, comic drama and stand-up comedy
- The artistic development scheme D2K and the subsequent commissioning and staging of *23:59* for young people proved a valuable opportunity for engaging young people. *23:59* was nominated for the prestigious Susan Smith Blackburn award 2000

Pricing

- 32,000 tickets were sold to young people during the project, 29% of them to first time attenders
- Whilst pre-project attendances by young people comprised 7% of the core audience, this rose to an average 49% for **How Much?** Productions

- About 29% of the young attenders were first time theatre goers and 93% of them reported feeling 'encouraged to return to Sheffield Theatres'
- Research carried out by Sheffield Theatres showed that over half of all young people spend over £45 each week on a 'night out'. A few spend more than £100 but a significant number spend less than £20, thus the price of tickets at £3.50 was generally acceptable, although theatre expenditure is subject to more scrutiny than other leisure pursuits
- The research showed that price, for attenders and non-attenders, was not an absolute constraint, but did weigh as a factor when potential attenders were unsure, as many were, what they would get at the theatre for their money. Perceptions of theatre prices were that they were too costly, though this perception diminished over the course of the 15-month project. Two-thirds of attenders said they would be willing to pay between £3 and £10 for a seat

Promotion

- Word of mouth was by far the most effective form of promotion, cited by 37% of attenders
- The second highest source of information cited after word of mouth was the specific **How Much?** brochure (16%)
- As a source of information the use of **How Much?** print increased with frequency of visits: 10% for first time attenders and 26% for those who had seen over seven shows at Sheffield Theatres in the last 12 months
- Sheffield Theatres' standard brochure in comparison was a less effective print tool. 9% of first time attenders picked up a standard theatre season brochure which dropped to 6% for those who had attended more than seven shows
- Flyers were effective with 13% of young people, but other media used were less effective with only 6% or less
- The website attracted almost 7,000 hits in the project's pilot phase, rising to more than 17,000 hits in the following phase of the project

These findings reveal that both physical and psychological barriers can deter young people's attendance at cultural venues, and that strategies for overcoming such barriers need to be particular to the venue and the target audience. Special promotional print was most effective for those young people who had already visited the theatre. The success of offering a low price suggests that this is an effective way of encouraging new attenders to take a risk in attending an unfamiliar activity. However, this case study proves that discounted tickets are by

no means the whole answer and that other factors can be of equal or greater importance. Generally a one-off discounted or free ticket would not have delivered the same results as the more holistic and strategic approach undertaken.

There is quite clearly price sensitivity amongst young people, although cost is very much a secondary barrier, with awareness of the value and relevance of the arts proportionately outweighing the costs involved in attending.

Testing psychological barriers

There is the view that young people find certain art forms, as well as specific arts events, irrelevant to their own culture and interests. Psychological barriers associated with this include peer pressure, expectations that activities will be dull, observations that arts venues are intimidating and that typical audiences are not like themselves.

Crossing the Line provided a range of suggestions for engaging young people in the arts. These included: changes to the arts 'product' and venues in response to young people's needs and culture; and maintaining existing arts product but attempting to make it more accessible and understandable to a younger audience.⁵ Projects tested these suggestions and tackled barriers including young people's unfamiliarity with arts venues and young people's often unfavourable perceptions of arts venues and artforms. Many organisations aimed to make existing work in their venues more familiar and relevant to young people through improving customer care and developing greater interactivity eg pre-show talks, education support materials and interpretation guides and talks by artists.

Several New Audiences funded projects found that the use of non-traditional spaces for presenting arts work to young people helped to break down perceptions of the arts as elitist and irrelevant, and demonstrated that there is further scope for presenting work in new places and spaces.

Taking arts experiences to venues already attended by young people was a strategy employed by a number of organisations through the New Contexts strand of the programme. These projects brought dance, music, visual arts and multimedia arts to non-traditional venues to remove the unease young people felt

⁵ *Crossing the Line: Extending Young People's Access to Cultural Venues* (edited by John Harland and Kay Kinder, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Arts Council England, NFER, 1999)

about attending events in arts venues, and to test how much difference this would make.

Independent research was conducted on a sample of 18 New Contexts events to measure the impact of events and gather information about young people's perceptions of the arts.

- 4,403 people took part in the research project. 1,002 completed a survey and the qualitative part of the research involved in-depth interviews with a sample of 20 attenders
- 25% of respondents were from minority ethnic communities, demonstrating that the projects sampled had succeeded in reaching young audiences from these communities
- Although only 12% of respondents stated that they would 'feel out of place in a theatre or art gallery', Asian and Black respondents were almost twice as likely as white respondents to agree with that statement
- 77% of attenders were aware the New Contexts event would be taking place, 38% of which had not been to the venue before

Club culture has its own conventions, but it can be a powerful forum for taster performances as well as a creative crucible in its own right. Club-based programmes included Asian Music Circuit's **Sitarfunk**, which incorporated DJs presenting new British Asian dance music and Indian classical musicians, and live band *Earthtribe*, to new young audiences in five club-type venues across the UK. Dorset Dance Forum's **Subculture – a Journey Underground** was presented as a dance performance with film/video and digital art installations and attracted more than 6,000 young people to the seven venues.

Northern Stage based at the Newcastle Playhouse is the largest professional theatre company in the northern region. It produces, tours, presents theatre and involves the community in participatory theatre work. The company worked with performing arts students at Sunderland University in 1998–9 to create a performance piece for the Palace nightclub. Leaflets were distributed at the club, which included vouchers redeemable against Northern Stage performances of **A Clockwork Orange** at the Sunderland Empire. The nightclub promotion was an integral component of wide-ranging audience development activity that involved 'hit squads' distributing targeted print that included price incentives to individuals on campus, in the street and in bars and nightclubs.

- 2,500 nightclub attenders experienced the specially devised performance piece at the Palace nightclub
- The production of *A Clockwork Orange* at the Empire was attended by 1,682 new audiences (45 of which used vouchers from the nightclub promotion)
- Responses to targeted offers showed that more than 80% of seats occupied at the Empire performances were new attenders and 56% of the audience was estimated to be under the age of 25
- To date 10% of all the new attenders have rebooked, mainly for comedy and live music

Fierce Earth's **Club Art 2000** project promoted arts activities in clubs, attended by over 1,000 people. Extensive independent research from focus groups and telephone research identified the following:

- More than eight out of 10 clubbers rated the initial arts event in the club as good or excellent, and more than nine out of 10 said they would like to see more such events
- People were asked about their attitudes to contemporary arts and although 70% said they did not know much about it, there was a positive reaction to the idea of new things, entertaining things and the need for more guidance and information about new arts events. Nearly 45% agreed that they tended to stick to what they liked and an almost equal proportion disagreed
- Those who had attended arts events in the previous month – more than nine out of 10 – mentioned art exhibitions – with free entry, pop music events and street festivals. More than 97% said they bought music on a regular basis and went clubbing at least once a month
- Word of mouth was their main source of information, followed by the press. Almost eight out of 10 had access to email and most of those used it regularly. There was also a fairly high use of the internet

The project showed that there was potential for having a regular arts events slot in clubs over a longer period, enabling people to feel more comfortable with the arts. However, it was also clear that clubbers would want this to be free and could not be added on to the club entry price. Promoters expressed a keen interest in offering further events in clubs. Respondents wanted more information about arts events and the findings suggest that this audience could be tempted – through more attractive pricing structures, use of less traditional venues and a concentration on 'viral' marketing techniques to spread the word.

Some venue based projects commissioned research into young people's needs and changed the presentation of the work accordingly. For example, Manchester's contemporary gallery Cornerhouse, through its £38,700 **Taste** project, actively changed some of the spaces within its building and changed the way it hangs its shows. Together with establishing a public resource area with a computer terminal and educational resources, Cornerhouse has also, in collaboration with BBC Manchester, installed a large digital TV screen in the front of the Triangle shopping centre building. The screen broadcasts four slots per day, one of which reflects the current Cornerhouse exhibition programme. The other three slots are filled by films made by artists or community groups across the North West region.

DJ'ing in Arts Galleries led by Generator, a popular music development agency in the north east, promoted a series of DJ led activities in visual arts galleries. The project aimed to demystify the gallery space for young audiences familiar with dance culture, and to encourage attendance at visual arts galleries. Partners in the project were the Hatton Gallery, Newcastle, Northern Gallery for Contemporary Arts, Sunderland and BALTIC. Generator developed the idea of developing club style events with exhibitions in arts galleries. They involved artists, Widescreen, and commissioned them to make a 20-minute silent film designed to fit into a clubbing environment. Generator ran DJ workshops before every exhibition. DJs devised and recorded a mixed soundtrack that could be played live to the film. Film and surrounding visuals were contained within the gallery space for week-long residencies culminating in three events which were marketed through club style promotional literature and in association with Galaxy Radio. 700 attenders came to three events of whom 217 were 'new' audiences.

Many projects tested promotional or 'sampling' incentives to promote greater awareness of venues' work. For example, **First Bites** was a programme of performance-led 'sampling' events at the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester which aimed to attract new audiences, particularly young people to explore live performance at the venue with a range of projects; *Bite Size Studio*, *Blue* and *Big Bite*.

Bite Size Studio was conceived as a 'three-dimensional brochure'. It assembled extracts from six visiting companies and one Royal Exchange Theatre production and performed them all, in one hour, to uncommitted previous attenders. A similar sample event, *Blue*, was aimed at the youth audience with little or no experience of theatre, combining the extracts with DJ sets to create a 'club' event in the Studio.

Big Bite was aimed at infrequent attenders as well as families. It was a free, one-day event that included a demonstration of the rehearsal process, with contributions from the director, designer, sound designer, actors and stage management teams. There were also talks, behind the scenes tours and interactive workshops in drama, make-up, sound and lighting. Printed background information was also available. More than 800 people attended the free one-day event of drama workshops, demonstrations and behind the scenes tours.

The events created interest and engagement with live theatre and how it is put together and helped to mitigate the risk factor even for non-attenders. New work and performance of an experimental nature was also clearly of interest to a cross-section of the audience. Following the evaluation of *Bite Size Studio*, the theatre is setting up a young people's group to attend performances throughout the year and give feedback on their experiences and viewpoints.

The 24 Hour MAD Show (Music and Arts Development Show) managed by Poole Lighthouse Centre aimed to entice audiences to become involved with the venue through becoming creating an artistic work. The project was created by a team of arts centre staff, professionals and participants recruited from the Poole and Bournemouth areas. The team created, produced, marketed and performed a stage play of the Wizard of Oz in just 24 hours, from start to finish. 150 volunteer performers took part, half of whom were under 18. 465 people attended the final performance, almost all of whom were new to the arts centre. The event was so successful that it stimulated other developmental initiatives for young people and was repeated the following year, attracting over 250 people.

Some projects used imaginative methods to demystify or open up specific art forms. Yorkshire Art Circus developed a project **Introducing the Graphomaniacs** with £50,000 from New Audiences, aimed at changing the image of performance poetry and literature in Leeds to attract young people in particular. The creation of a multimedia website, specially devised cross-artform events and a local newspaper *Route* helped promote literary events to new local young audiences. Seven issues of *Route* were produced, each in a run of 6,000 copies distributed in Leeds and copies were mailed to a database of 470 people.

Over a period of six months, new events were supported involving literature/music collaborations held in the jazz club *Wardrobe*. Performers ranged from well known artists such as John Hegley and Dana Bryant to emerging new talent. A regular DJ and resident live band supported them. A project website showcased local people's creative work, promoted events and gathered feedback from young

people which was then used to support the marketing campaign. Between February and November 2000, 1,838 people attended 12 *Route* live events in local venues. The club's regular attenders, the appeal of the headline acts and the band and DJ attracted a lively audience, receptive to the emerging artists' performance poetry as well as the rest of the programme. The groundbreaking multimedia website had 300 visits per day.

Research from New Audiences noted barriers around the arts product itself. A major consideration for some young people when deciding to attend an event was whether they considered the programme innovative and the subject matter relevant and appealing to their own lives. As Cultural Intelligence note:

'Young people are not rejecting the arts, rather they are choosing the arts they like eg popular dance, popular music and popular film and the arts venues in which they feel comfortable eg cinemas, dance clubs, music clubs, pubs and the street.'
(*Overview Evaluation of Gateway 4: New Approaches to Presentation Volume 1*, Arts Council, 2003)

2 New Marketing approaches

Improving access to information and developing the use of appropriate communication channels is an important area for organisations to address if they are to improve their effectiveness in reaching young audiences in the future. The programme tested the appeal of different marketing approaches, documenting new ways to create awareness and draw young people into new cultural activities.

New technologies

A number of projects were successful in using email and mobile texting to develop young people's interest and involvement in the arts. South West Arts Marketing ran **Txtm8** in the Plymouth area for seven months to test whether arts organisations could use mobile phone text messages and the instant 'special offer' to attract young audiences to arts venues. **Txtm8** not only offered information on arts and leisure events throughout the city, it also featured special promotions and 'queue jumping' incentives including free tickets to Plymouth's top arts and dance venues, exclusive discounts for tickets to top bands and a range of 'freebies', drinks. 'Text back' requests achieved between 10-16% response rate – higher than the average response to direct mail – and an exceptionally high number of those responding were men (51%). Responders were automatically registered in a prize competition. The project report noted that 'If the product is right, SMS messaging can turn intenders into attenders'.

Outcomes included:

- over 800 people registered for the service – more than double the project's target
- take up of ticket offers ranged from 0.5% to 16%
- 100% of users said they wanted the service to continue
- it helped venues dispose of some unsold seats
- venues extended their databases among the target age group
- there were practical lessons learned about timing of messages and effective language

'The most exciting outcome of this project was the successful collaboration between representatives of the youth leisure sector and traditional arts organisations ... creating an awareness of the arts in this age group.' (Ruth Staple, South West Arts Marketing)

Projects such as Junction/CDC's **Artmail** and Stratford East's texting campaign for **Da Boyz** performance used communication channels which had appeal and familiarity for young people, particularly when combined with appropriate terminology and language.

Independent evaluation of projects within the New Approaches to Presentation strand noted: 'The evidence suggests that although young people may accept and positively value new media, this does not automatically translate directly into increased attendance at arts events marketed and promoted through them. Evidence from the texting service confirms that new audiences for arts were generated for all of the participating arts venues. However, further testing is required to assess whether this is a cost effective and sustainable method. Certainly, the project evaluation suggests that for texting to be an effective tool for arts venues, their product and marketing mix has to be right first and any use of technology needs to sit within a more detailed, informed and segmented communications strategy.' (*Overview Evaluation of Gateway 4: New Approaches to Presentation Volume 1*, Arts Council, 2003)

Peer marketing and ambassador projects

Young people are often more influenced by their peers as to whether to attend, than by price, programming or promotion. Word of mouth is usually the most significant source of information for young people, more so than other traditional and conventional marketing methods.

The concept of marketing through word of mouth, sometimes referred to as 'network marketing', through the use of arts advocates and ambassadors has taken various forms throughout the New Audiences Programme. Examples range from recruitment of group volunteers at the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra to the many examples of teenage peer marketing. The notion of peer acceptance and the value of peer led activities not only provided the mechanism with which to persuade first time attenders, but also created opportunities for socialising, which were both valuable in combating young people's preconceptions about the arts.

Though proving very successful as a method of involving young people in the arts, ambassador programmes can be particularly labour intensive, as ambassadors need to nurture and build close relationships with target groups over time, which can mean a significant investment of organisational resources. Venues therefore need to develop coherent and strategic approaches to building new young audiences, as no two ambassador approaches will be the same.

The opportunity to address this peer marketing challenge was taken up by the Laing Gallery. Their project offered a bespoke introduction to the venue, using a team of organisation based ambassadors to attract groups of young 'hard to reach' non-attenders.

Case study

Tyne and Wear Museums, The Laing Art Gallery, Art Ambassadors

In 1998/9 New Audiences awarded The Laing Art Gallery £13,200 to coordinate the **Arts Ambassadors** project. The gallery's central aim was to make contact proactively with young people aged 16–25 who were non-users, and to introduce them to the gallery experience through tailor-made visits and activities. This included groups of young people who did not normally have access to the Laing's facilities as a result of disability, disadvantage or cultural inhibition.

The main aims of the project were to test perceptions for non-attendance and to break down barriers between young people and the visual arts. This was undertaken by ambassadors going out to visit young people and creating networks through discussion and informal consultation with young people and youth workers. Each visit was tailor-made for each group and designed to challenge perceptions about the visual arts, and to identify and address the key barriers.

The ambassadors met with 30 youth workers and organised two youth worker training sessions. They visited 28 youth groups at their bases and hosted 46 visits to the gallery, a 75% take up rate. There were also regular weekend drop-in activities and two evenings of contemporary culture, *Later ... at the Laing*.

The project tested various methods of communication and established methodologies for feedback and evaluation. Leaflets, posters and regular press coverage were the main promotional tools, though other marketing methods tested included direct mail, telephone and email. Personal contact was found to be the most effective means of communication and a valuable mechanism for ensuring that young people felt at ease in the gallery. Evaluation material was collected through a variety of creative channels, including customised postcards (although this had the lowest response rate), video booth footage, material generated by youth work seminars, and participatory arts workshops which took the place of regular focus group discussions.

Outcomes

Part of the rationale for undertaking the project was for outcomes to inform ways in which the gallery could tailor its work for young people, specifically in relation to programming, outreach and customer care. During the course of the project the gallery received suggestions from youth workers and young people regarding activities that ranged from ideas for themed exhibitions to improvements in front of house working practices. They also gained an understanding of how most youth groups operate, the dynamics and timescales involved and kinds of activities that work well with young people.

The Laing discovered that young people wanted activities to provide them with an interactive experience of the visual arts, but that activities needed to be user led and materials tailored for young people. The project produced some up to date research into the local target audience, and a video resource was created by young people for use with other youth groups. A total of 1,500 young people were involved in the project and the gallery developed a comprehensive database of information on 273 groups. A third of the young people taking part in the project were first time attenders.

The **Art Ambassadors** project gave the Laing Gallery and Tyne and Wear Museums an insight into the difficulties of establishing meaningful relationships with marginalised groups:

'We learnt a lot from it, we always thought young people would be a difficult audience to reach and the project proved this. The response rate was still fairly low even with additional funding and three dedicated staff although those that took part really enjoyed it. We weren't able to carry on late nights afterwards. Contacts with youth groups that we worked with have been difficult to maintain. We have got relationships with other groups now but not the same ones. It's a transient area – people move around a lot.' (Laing Art Gallery, from *What Happened Next?* Cultural Intelligence Ltd, Arts Council England, 2003)

3 Encouraging participation

Young people are regarded by many as one of the most difficult groups to attract and engage in the arts. Stimulating interest through their involvement in participatory activities can be an effective first step.

Organisations created 'entry points' for young people by involving them in the design and development of projects, and participation in workshops, education and outreach activities.

Young people and inclusion

Strong partnerships between the formal education sector and youth services characterised much of the inclusion work focusing on young people. Much Regional Challenge activity such as Arts Council England, Yorkshire's **Arts and Young People** and Arts Council England, London's **Creative Neighbourhoods** supported partnership working between youth services and the arts to engage young people in areas of social and economic deprivation.

Case study

Arts Council England, London, Creative Neighbourhoods

Arts Council England, London allocated £240,000 Regional Challenge funding to **Creative Neighbourhoods**, a programme supporting six partnerships of local authorities, statutory agencies, voluntary organisations and arts groups in the London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Brent, Greenwich, Lambeth, Merton and Southwark.

Creative Neighbourhoods offered an inspiring range of arts projects for young people not usually involved in arts activities. All six projects were aimed at young people at risk of offending (9–25 year olds), many of them living in deprived neighbourhoods. The make up of the groups was culturally diverse, with predominantly Black, white and Asian young people involved. The projects aimed to build an equal relationship between artists and young people, and give young people the chance to create new art works that were meaningful to them and their communities.

Outcomes

- 892 young people took part in the whole **Creative Neighbourhoods** programme, with 66% being involved throughout the course of the project and 59% taking part in the final events
- 9,054 people attended the celebratory public events, where they could enjoy the hidden talents of their young people and see their communities presented in a positive light
- Of these, it was estimated that 2,210 (24%) were new to the arts
- 226 new artworks were created for performance, exhibition, publication, and distribution on the internet or broadcast
- 19 people who took part in the two training programmes aimed at older young people in Brent and Lambeth went on to further education
- An additional 27 people across the whole **Creative Neighbourhoods** programme were considering entering further education

The evaluation report shows how the projects helped to address issues of racism and gave marginalised groups of young people a voice, helping some to stay away from crime and others to come to terms with being victims of crime.

Although projects were well resourced, a large number of staff was needed to deal with young people's challenging behaviour. The projects required other workers as well as the artists to support the work, and recruitment was a major effort. Even projects building on earlier work put a great deal of time and effort into raising the profile of the project locally and making sure that young people knew what was available. The most effective recruitment methods for hard to reach young people was found to be word of mouth through friends and trusted adults.

The **Creative Neighbourhoods** programme gave new spaces for participants, artists and partners to learn about difference. It also supported some young people to identify careers in the arts. For example, Jay, a 19-year-old participant

in the **Creative Neighbourhoods** programme, described himself in one of his poems: 'No hoppers, you thought I was a no hoper/well this no hoper is jumping out of the hopeless box.' Jay had wanted to be an actor and joined the project in Lambeth to learn more about photography, costume, painting, and music – skills that were thought to be relevant to his chosen profession. The project provided an important transitional period to Jay, allowing him to develop self belief, gain creative skills from artists and benefit from the professional support networks he would need. After taking part in the project, Jay secured a place at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts.

Another project involving cross-sector working to reach socially excluded young people, this time focusing on books and reading, was The Reading Agency's **YouthBOOX**, involving libraries and youth services. The project is still continuing five years later through non-Arts Council funding streams.

Case study

The Reading Agency, YouthBOOX

In 1999/2000 New Audiences awarded £50,000 to **YouthBOOX**, a project aiming to create new partnerships between libraries and youth services to reach socially excluded young people. The project was managed by The Reading Agency (formerly Well Worth Reading), a UK wide development agency that supports and develops innovative approaches to work with young people, particularly those who are marginalised. **YouthBOOX** built on a small-scale experimental project, **Boox for Us**, run by the two organisations in the previous year.

YouthBOOX aimed to encourage socially excluded young people between 13–18 years old to try reading and to overcome their preconceived ideas that it was boring or 'uncool'. The first step was to find out what draws young people into reading and to test the potential of youth worker and library partnerships to involve young people in reading activities. This approach combined library staff's reader development skills and materials with youth workers' experiences of reaching and communicating with socially excluded young people.

Eight projects were set up across the country, running 11 schemes based in youth centres. The projects, each of which was given £1,000 to buy books, invited

visiting artists and bought materials, and met weekly in youth work settings including mobile vans. Many ways of interesting young people were used, for instance: taking them to a bookshop to buy books for the project; reading 'problem pages' in magazines; developing a **YouthBOOX** trolley; writing a comic strip story; providing non-fiction (eg biking) magazines; a trip to a local newspaper office; using the internet; inviting visiting artists; singing karaoke and writing rap songs; and producing a video on reading.

Outcomes

Eleven groups of young people met weekly for an average of 1.5 hours a week for ten weeks. In total 127 young people were involved, about 20 in the 13–14 year old age group and the rest in the 15–18 age group. The project has produced an excellent report with many inspiring individual case studies, resources and training for both sectors, and has developed further through funding from other sources.

In terms of the two sectors working together it was found that the best results were achieved when reasonable time was given to building up partnerships, sharing ideas and training, and developing a mutual understanding of reader development. The youth service model of power sharing with young people must be trusted and implemented.

Staff needed to like young people and be committed to working with them as well as being committed to the value of reading. This included being tolerant of young people's language and noise. Staff needed knowledge of young adult fiction and other reading material – preferably first hand. They also needed to be committed to teamwork and be willing to learn from each other and from practice.

The needs and interests of the young people should be emphasised and staff should use opportunities that arise spontaneously as well those that are planned. Having books linked to the young people's own interests and chosen specifically for them to take home helped them to feel valued as well as develop an interest in reading.

Young people also benefited from being involved in buying, managing and displaying books. These books could then become part of the youth centre furniture to encourage casual use.

YouthBOOX helped one of the library authorities involved win first prize in *Libraries Change Lives*, a national award for excellence in library services.

Further development

YouthBOOX has evolved and expanded with funding from DCMS Wolfson Libraries Reader Development Fund and Arts Council England, Yorkshire in 2000/1 and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation in 2002/3 (for **YouthBOOX: Moving On**), and has so far worked with 20 authorities. A new additional focus is on basic skills providers, given that many socially excluded young people have specific literacy issues and needs. A national conference in July 2004 will explore how the sectors can move this type of work into the mainstream.

Working with schools

New Audiences supported many projects working with and through schools to reach young people. These ranged from ticketing schemes and marketing initiatives to the creative use of science, digital arts and new technologies. Hundreds of projects used their own education and Theatre in Education departments to enhance school arts provision and encourage school groups to attend and take part in performances and exhibitions.

Projects across the programme involved schools in differing ways. Colchester Arts Centre used schools as contact points and venues for some events as part of their **Not Another Trip – My Own Choice** project, encouraging 12–16 year olds to attend the arts independently. **Seven Up** was a project developed by Marketing the Arts in Oxford (MAX), investigating the use of a variety of artforms in two primary schools with low arts attendance. The project examined how the arts can be used to teach national curriculum topics not usually associated with the arts including religion, geography, history and science. Artforms such as drama, dance, museum visits, sculpture and drumming were used in two-week residencies which culminated in performances by the children.

A number of projects receiving funding from the New Audiences Programme explored science and new technologies to create new art by young people. **Sinfonia 21** ran the **MaST – Music & Science & Technology** project from its base at London University's Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine. The **MaST** fair invited students from local schools to come to Imperial College for a day of activities during National Science Week. Activities included experiments involving computer analysis of sound wave forms, writing and performing music using digital sampling, sonic manipulation, and virtual reality interaction with sounds and images. **MaST** also began work in schools with a

number of small scale projects which linked music and science for children 8–15 years old. **MaST** created an interactive website and enabled schools which had attended the fair to continue their work. The site also offered an educational resource for teachers across the country who do not have access to 'live' musicians and scientists. Around 300 children attended the **MaST** fair. Sinfonia 21 has further extended the concept to incorporate an inset day for teachers and a day of demonstrations and lectures at the Science Museum and at Imperial College.

The **London Festival Orchestra's** project **Galileo** focused on the creation of a new work by composer Edwin Roxburgh, inspired by the voyage of the space probe Galileo to the planet Jupiter. The project worked with school students, involving them in music making using new technology and training in a range of high quality equipment. The students' works were included in Lift Off, three multimedia events devised in partnership with the London Planetarium. The education programme involved 160 school students in the workshops and the audience at the Planetarium events was around 500, 400 of whom were from schools.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra (formerly Bournemouth Orchestras) project **Symphony for Cornwall** commissioned composer Andy Hugill to create an electro-acoustic symphony with contributions from Cornwall school students drawn from 14 schools. The composer designed a website providing participants with information and a range of facilities such as a page for downloading and developing soundfiles. Over an eight-month period, the artist led workshops with school students and teachers on the use of music technology, the internet and how it could be used to create soundfiles. Each school was asked to create a 15-second soundfile. The soundfiles sent in by the schools were central to the creation of the piece.

The project also included a new technologies training day in Bournemouth for players from the Bournemouth Sinfonietta, after which players were encouraged to create their own soundfiles and to contribute them to the composition.

A similar training day was held for music teachers in all of Cornwall's secondary schools. Both training days were led by the composer. Finally, two 'work in progress' sessions were held for the players during the composition stage, giving the musicians a sense of involvement with the creative process. *Symphony for Cornwall* was premiered in Truro during the orchestra's annual tour of Cornwall,

preceded by a pre-performance talk by Andy Hugill. All the schools that had taken part in the project were invited, with eight schools attending the concert.

Symphony for Cornwall proved an effective way of integrating new technology, music making and education, and of inspiring a new audience in the creation and performance of a new work in a genuine 'event'. The composer's skills as an educator and musician contributed greatly to the success of the mixture. It was also valuable to be able to build on the foundations laid by Orchestral Development Cornwall, which raised awareness throughout the county and helped to create strong partnerships between the project and the education authority.

Another project using new media, in this case film, to promote literacy, books and reading was **Animated English**, a research project by King's College, London and the British Film Institute. The project was based on previous research showing that using media can unlock motivation within children and create the necessary conditions for engagement with literacy. **Animated English** was carried out at Hounslow Manor, a co-education, multi-ethnic comprehensive school in west London. Each mixed ability group of children created an animated film version of episodes from a comic horror novel. They began by reducing a section of the novel to a short narrative poem then, after being introduced to some basic concepts of film making, created a storyboard for their poem, produced the necessary backgrounds, characters and props, and filmed their story episode. The finished films were transferred to i-macs where, using the editing package *i-movie*, the pupils were able to edit their material, cutting it, adding sound effects and voice-overs, and employing cross fades.

Animated English found that students' compositional skills with regard to structuring a narrative in film were far ahead of their written compositional skills, and that they were quicker to come to an overall understanding of a complete story when they engaged with it through more than one medium. This is especially true if moving image media is used. Mediating literature through structured teaching of the moving image therefore creates a cultural bridge that can foster new practice. Reluctant or emergent readers may become more positive about books when enabled to talk about and conceptualise one medium in terms of another. **Animated English** also addressed the definition of literacy itself, and asks why the conceptual and compositional skills that can be developed through intelligent use of the new media should not be regarded in themselves as an inherent part of literacy rather than playing a merely subordinate role.

Findings

The overview evaluation report by Cultural Intelligence found that attendance at a 'special event' does not necessarily turn young people into ready attenders for the venue's mainstream programme. Young people may feel less intimidated by the venue in the future but this does not automatically translate into future attendance.

Venues need to sustain and manage the initial 'special welcome' and create the right ambience and ethos for young people. They need to engage with artists and artforms to which young people are already attracted, and deliver more activity and interaction. They also need to create a dialogue between 'high' arts and 'popular' culture.

Price was found to be a pertinent issue to young people, particularly when attracting first time attenders and for low income audiences. However, it was not the main barrier, and young people were more influenced by their peers, friends, teachers and mentors as to whether to attend than by price, programming or promotional activities.

Ambassador schemes, peer marketing projects and those that involve meaningful consultation with young people about programme content and artform, are successful approaches, though expensive. Word of mouth is the most powerful communication vehicle, and successful communication channels that combine a familiar medium with appropriate language relevant to young people eg texting and email are also viable approaches.

The relocation of arts activities to non-traditional venues can be a successful approach, but this sometimes requires permanent physical changes to some venues, which are not practicable or affordable.

Partnerships are very important to the success of projects, particularly cross-sector partnerships, as they bring in specialist knowledge and expertise. The work of schools, the youth service, regional and national agencies and the facilitating role provided by arts workers, teachers and youth leaders is invaluable in helping arts organisations to build relationships with young people.

Arts organisations can also work through their own education and outreach departments to enhance existing school art provision. However, recruitment of arts workers with relevant experience of working with young people can be a problem, and training – for youth workers, education workers, community workers,

artists and arts staff – is a requirement for long term quality support with excluded youth in particular. The more excluded or disadvantaged the group, the greater the need for long-term quality support.

The involvement of young people through consultation enables arts organisations to build close contacts and develop relationships with, for example friends, relatives and teachers. This heightens organisations' awareness of young people's perceptions, issues and needs, supporting sustainable development.

A significant majority of young people want to interact and participate in events, and a model approach is to extend this to involving young people in informing, designing and interpreting aspects of a programme eg through young people's forums. Organisations that neglected to consult young people in their project planning stage were usually among the least successful projects.

Further case study research requires longitudinal studies on the impact on young people of initiatives that promote wider youth access to cultural activities.

Cultural Intelligence has drawn up a list of recommendations to arts organisations for engaging young people as audiences in the arts, taken from New Audiences projects:

- change the venue to provide wider socialising functions eg as a meeting place
- make changes to front of house, including promotional information, environmental and management aspects of the venue eg staff with a positive attitude towards young people
- adapt content - shortening performances, more activity/interaction, themes and content appealing to young people
- introduce works performed or created by young people
- relocate events to familiar (non-arts) venues
- increase opportunities to attend
- introduce cultural mentors
- engage with the ideas, aspirations, experiences and opinions of the sometimes wide cultural mix of the young, especially in programming
- develop a consistent bridge between schools and arts venues
- use new technology to attract, maintain and develop young audiences
- introduce special schemes and initiatives eg pay as you please, free tickets

Resources

General

John Harland and Kay Kinder (eds), *Crossing the Line: Extending Young People's Access to Cultural Venues*, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Arts Council England, NFER, 1999. This publication is available in a PDF format from the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. Email: info@gulbenkian.org.uk

Overview evaluations

An overview evaluation examining 11 young people's projects in detail was undertaken by Cultural Intelligence across the New Approaches to Presentation strand:

New Audiences Programme 2000–2002 Overview Evaluation of Gateway 4: New Approaches to Presentation Volume 1, Cultural Intelligence, Arts Council England, 2003

New Audiences Programme 2000–2002 Overview Evaluation of Gateway 4: New Approaches to Presentation Volume 2 – Case Studies, Cultural Intelligence, Arts Council England, 2003

Bedell, Sarah, *The Arts and Young People*, Arts Council England, Yorkshire, 2001

Jermyn, Helen (ed), *Placing Art in New Contexts: summary of a report to the Arts Council of England, ACE Research Report No 19*, BMRB, 2000

A research report focusing on the first 18 projects funded under the New Contexts strand of the New Audiences Programme reveals the reactions of young attendees towards the arts and measures the impacts on the new audiences reached.

Lowson, Olivia, *Report on Music on Your Doorstep*, Arts Council England, 1999

Orme, Eric, and Neill, Tina, *What Happened Next? A brief study of the legacy of New Audience Programme Projects relating to Young People and Families with particular regard to organisational change and the development of good practice*, Cultural Intelligence, Arts Council England, 2003

New Audiences publications

Galvin, Angela, *How Much?* Sheffield Theatres Trust, 2000
Available from Sheffield Theatres Trust
Phone: 0114 249 5999
Price £10

Keys to imagination: ICT in art education, Creating Spaces, Arts Council England, 2003
An outcome of the New Audiences funded project Open/ed

New Audiences evaluations

YouthBOOX: project report, Well Worth Reading National Youth Agency, 2000

NOTE: A series of publications, *The Reading Kit 1, 2 and 3* disseminate the experience of **YouthBOOX** and provide support and guidance for managers, coordinators and project staff in both libraries and youth services. Other resources include txt reading promotion, for young people aged 13–16 with a reading age between 6–12, BOOX resources for young people aged 13–16, including interactive website www.boox.org.uk and a series of training courses for librarians and youth workers. For further information see www.readingagency.org.uk

Articles

Rose, Catherine, 'Essential Audiences – Developing Young Audiences', in *ArtsProfessional*, Issue 56, 25 August 2003

Seminars and conferences

A seminar on the 'Birmingham Smartcard', was part of the Arts Marketing Association conference *Healthy Wealthy and Wise* held in Cardiff in July 1999. The New Audiences Programme funded Audiences Central to address the problem of retaining young people's attendance of the arts when they leave school. The scheme was highly successful and cards were distributed to all young people at the end of Year 11. Venues that supplied tickets through the scheme were reimbursed by the New Audiences fund.

Angela Galvin presented a seminar called *How Much? at Sheffield Theatres* at the Arts Marketing Association conference, *Tearing Down Barriers* held in Salford in July 2000

Targeting Youth was a seminar given by Anne Roberts, Rob MacPherson and Samantha Orrell at the Arts Marketing Association conference *Tearing Down the Barriers* held in Salford in July 2000. It featured the National Theatre's New Audiences project *NT100*.

Tearing Down Internal Barriers was a seminar given by Helene Toogood describing the New Audiences *Arts Ambassadors Project* at the Laing Art Gallery in Tyne and Wear that targeted 16–25-year-olds. The seminar was given as part of the Arts Marketing Association conference *Tearing Down the Barriers* held in Salford in July 2000.

The seminar *Using Monitoring and Evaluation to Improve Practice* by Mark Dobson and Tracy Cochrane was given at the Arts Marketing Association conference *Tearing Down the Barriers* held in Salford in July 2000. It featured the New Audiences project by Northern Stage titled *A Clockwork Orange*, that aimed to attract young people to performances at the Sunderland Empire Theatre through a nightclub performance and workshops.

More information about the Arts Marketing Association Conferences can be found from AMA:

www.a-m-a.co.uk

Phone: 01223 578078

New Audiences case studies Test Drive – Bradford Alhambra Young Asian People and New Contemporaries were presented at Audiences Yorkshire Conference *Reaching Young People* held in Leeds in 1999.

8 Diversity

Context

The results of the most recent Census provide evidence of the diversity of England's population. In 2001, Black and minority ethnic groups represented 9.1% of the total population in England. Asian or British Asian residents formed the largest group (4.6%), followed by 'Black or British Black' (2.3%) 'mixed' (1.3%) and 'Chinese' (0.9%).

Arts Council England has diversity as one of its core ambitions. 'We want to encourage an environment where the arts reflect the full range of diversity of contemporary society ... engaging with the whole of society for the arts – developing new audiences, wider programming and exciting cultural collaborations. We want to see more and better funded Black and minority ethnic arts organisations and artists.' (*Ambitions into Action*, Arts Council England, 2004)

A number of forward thinking culturally diverse programmes of work are key to the prospectus of change for Arts Council England and included in this is the New Audiences programme. Other notable initiatives include **decibel**, a £5 million programme completed in March 2004 with a number of legacy implications. The Race Equality Scheme, required by law, contains over 40 specific actions and covers all aspects of the Council's business. The Arts Capital Programme provided significant resources to a group of Black and minority ethnic led organisations. In the theatre sector a major development is the **Black Regional Initiative in Theatre** (BRIT) that aims for a more equitable Black and Asian theatre in this country.

New Audiences overview

The New Audiences Programme aimed to meet the needs of people who do not currently engage with the arts, particularly those from Black and minority ethnic communities. The programme gathered feedback into the motivations, barriers and opportunities for developing interest from Black and minority ethnic communities and piloted new approaches to reaching out to new audiences within them. Research and development projects supported the sector in identifying the needs of potential and current Black and minority ethnic audiences. Diversity projects also aimed to attract new audiences to Black and minority ethnic work, encouraging work to enter the 'mainstream' and reach broader audiences through touring and new distribution channels.

The total number of projects related to the audience focus of diversity across the programme was **209**, totalling **£4,252,138**.⁶ The audience focus could mean developing Black and minority ethnic audiences or audiences for Black and minority ethnic work. The total number of audiences reached by these projects was **544,753**.

The Arts Council research reports *Arts - what's in a word? Ethnic minorities and the arts* (by Helen Jermyn and Philly Desai, Arts Council England, 2000), which investigated issues around ethnicity and attitudes to the arts, and *Audit of research into audiences for Black and Asian work* (by Mel Jennings, Arts Council England, 1998) informed New Audiences creating a specific Diversity funding strand in 2000. 22% of Projects funded by the New Audience Programme which addressed diversity as an audience focus came through the Diversity strand.

63% of diversity projects were funded by the Regional Challenge Programme with Arts Council regional offices supporting longer programmes of diversity work as an audience development priority. Arts Connect also funded many ambassador projects with 4% of the total spend on diversity and 5% of total diversity spend in Artsplus to support touring work. (See Appendix 1)

Many theatres and galleries do not feel that their audience is representative of the communities in which they operate and want to do something about this. The focus of the New Audiences Programme was to develop a greater understanding of how relationships can be built with Black and minority ethnic communities and how organisations can address barriers to engagement and become truly inclusive.

Diversity projects

This section will provide an overview of the key themes and approaches emerging from the diversity projects. These themes and approaches, which sometimes overlap, can be summarised as: supporting arts organisations in developing a holistic approach; developing partnerships between 'mainstream' arts organisations and community based organisations; and developing Black and minority ethnic artists and organisations.

⁶ Maximum value, see research findings in Appendix 2

A note on terminology

We recognise that external definitions do not always reflect how people identify themselves, or the fluid nature of 'identity' itself. For instance, at any one time a person's ethnicity, gender, class, religion, sexuality, lifestyle or domicile can rise to the fore⁷, and not everyone would wish to be 'targeted' according to only one aspect of their life.

The term 'mainstream' should be taken to indicate a venue or arts institution that is well established and has strong revenue funding. 'Community based' can be seen to cover many types of organisation. The term is not meant to be reductive, nor implying a hierarchy between mainstream and community.

1 *Supporting arts organisations in developing a holistic approach*

The New Audiences Programme funded many projects that supported arts organisations in developing a more holistic and sustainable approach to diversity. These fell into several categories, many of which overlapped: research and development; developing Black and minority ethnic audiences; ambassador programmes; developing audiences for Black and minority ethnic work; and organisational development.

Organisations that are most successful in developing diverse audiences are involved in a process of continual engagement with their communities and reviewing of their working practices. This enhances the arts experience for audiences and the vitality and operation of the arts organisation. It also makes sound financial sense. One of the key messages from the programme is the importance of taking a holistic approach and understanding that audience development is an organisational process and not simply about marketing strategies. One successful campaign does not develop an audience but can be the start of a productive long-term relationship.

⁷ For a thought-provoking analysis of these issues, see 'Changing Pitch on Cultural Diversity' by Nadine Andrews in *Arts Professional*, Issue 75, May 2004

An overview of the issues and challenges facing the sector is given in a report by Jenny Wilson, summarising learning points from New Audiences projects. The report notes that there is still the tendency within the arts sector to simplistically and erroneously equate Black and Asian work with Black and Asian audiences:

‘To define this work in basic terms as for example, “Asian theatre” and target it simply to “Asian audiences” diminishes both the work and the audiences ... Just as artists are producing work that defies stereotypes, and refusing to be pigeonholed by their ethnic origin, likewise audiences don’t want to be defined in terms of their ethnicity ... However, it is clear that organisations seeking to develop Black and Asian audiences must look at the diversity of what they programme as part of their strategy. Most theatres for example are working against a long standing tradition and reputation for being a particular type of place and of appealing to a particular type of audience. The perceptual barriers to attendance can be enormous. A positive approach is needed. Organisations should send out messages that in fact they are welcoming and inclusive, that they are “for us” as a vital part of reaching any new audience.’ (by Jenny Wilson, *Cultural Diversity and Audience Development*, Arts Council England, 2003)

The report also notes a tendency of arts organisations to make:

‘... the mistake of lumping together a whole range of different communities and classifying them by their ethnicity as the target audience for a specific programme of work ... without considering these communities’ needs, ideas, aspirations, nor the differences within the communities in terms of age groups, socio-economic factors, religious identities, family groupings.’

Black and minority ethnic communities are not homogenous groups; they are extremely diverse. The communities can be targeted in a number of ways, some of which may be along demographic or geographic lines, language, religion, or even consumer behaviour. Organisations must get to know their communities if they are to develop effective communication and marketing strategies, and present not simply an image of inclusiveness but an approach that actively promotes it from an informed perspective.

Arts organisations need to examine the culture of their organisations. Operational decisions from catering provision to opening times send out particular messages to different communities – often these messages (usually inadvertently) will be

saying 'this isn't for you'. They need to adopt an inclusive approach to everything, from management to the hiring of staff, customer care policies and arts programming.

Developing Black and minority ethnic audiences and ambassador programmes

Research and consultation with Black and minority ethnic communities revealed the following key success factors for organisations, influencing attendance at arts events:

- familiarity with the company, artist or show within the community
- times and dates (avoiding religious festivals), ticket pricing, location of the venue and other practical issues
- overcoming perceptual barriers, a lack of familiarity with the venue and its conventions, a feeling of 'I won't fit in'
- the level of ownership created within the community and word of mouth promotion, including the use of 'ambassadors' and/or community networking

Arts About Manchester's Ambassador Unit developed the concept in the 90s of 'ambassadors' to develop Black and minority ethnic audiences. This involved arts venues hiring individuals from Black and minority ethnic communities to act as advisors, conduits, agents or advocates. Not all this activity promoted specific events or activities to result in immediate attendances at events. Much of the work was about longer term relationship building and information sharing. New Audiences supported a strong body of this type of work in different parts of the country.

Case study

Audiences Central, The Networking Project

Over a three-year period, New Audiences awarded £210,282 to Audiences Central (formerly Birmingham Arts Marketing) to support **The Networking Project**. Innovative and inspirational, **The Networking Project** aimed to develop Black and minority ethnic audiences for the arts and create sustainable relationships between arts organisations and Black and minority ethnic communities in Birmingham.

The Networking Project saw Black and minority ethnic arts ambassadors with links to specific communities working with nominated arts organisations to inform their marketing practices and increase audiences. Advisors or panel members were also recruited by the ambassadors on a voluntary basis to advise and lobby their respective arts organisations on a range of issues including marketing, programming, education and outreach work, front of house and employment practices. Specific strands of work included Birmingham Symphony Hall, Fierce! Earth and The Drum working with African Caribbean communities, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) and Ikon developing South Asian audiences, and Sampad working with Bangladeshi communities.

Initially nine venues were involved and in 2002 the project was extended to include three museums and galleries in Walsall, Wolverhampton and Birmingham.

Outcomes

- **The Networking Project** involved over 200 community volunteers in addition to their families and friends and generated Black and minority ethnic attendances at over 100 arts events
- Many Black and minority ethnic events were initiated through the programme, including the successful World Music Family Weekend at the Symphony Hall and Birmingham Rep's production of the Ramayana
- The project involved Black artists and audiences in informing mainstream programming for events such as Artsfest and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra concerts
- The unique ambassador and panel methodology has been discussed nationally at many debates and conferences including the Arts Marketing Association's 2001 conference and *Are we visible?* in Oldham in 2001
- Organisational development is one of the project's most important achievements, with the appointment of two panel members to Sampad's Board of Directors
- The project secured Regional Arts Lottery Programme funding of £30,000 for one year in 2003. It is designing an exit strategy devolving control from Audiences Central and encouraging individual organisations to support the activity internally, with additional support from Arts Council England, West Midlands

The Networking Project (re-branded as Gravity) came to an end in early 2004. However, the lessons learnt have informed the ongoing cultural diversity work of

the agency and been integral to the redevelopment plans for the newly expanded agency, extending to the appointment of a permanent staff team to build on successes.

‘Not only did it impact on the way we think about cultural diversity, it also changed the way we think about audience development across the board as the learning outcomes were so clear for us and the participating organisations.’ (Paul Kaynes, Chief Executive, Audiences Central)

Developing audiences for Black and minority ethnic work

Many projects in the programme aimed to attract audiences to Black and minority ethnic work.

Successful marketing campaigns for *The Ramayana* at Birmingham Repertory Theatre and the production of Dolly Dhingra’s *Unsuitable Girls*, which toured to venues across Yorkshire, selling out in Bradford, are among the many examples that demonstrate the interest in and demand for Black and minority ethnic work. The *Unsuitable Girls* production established that 48% attenders were white, dispelling the myth that South Asian arts are only for South Asian audiences.

A number of projects addressed families from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds. Some revealed significant development potential for activities the whole family could share. Research into Chinese audiences in Manchester undertaken by Arts About Manchester and Manchester Art Gallery suggested scope for family friendly arts activities on Sundays. The potential for developing South Asian family audiences was demonstrated by **Britain’s first Bollywood Drive-in** at Abbey Park, Leicester in 1999. 93% said the main reason for attending was the drive-in concept. A remarkable 86% of respondents came to the event with their family.

New Audiences also enabled culturally diverse work to find new audiences through festival formats. In 1999, **Bradford Festival** worked with two visiting Cuban musicians from La Timbala to enhance the musical elements of the Bradford Carnival. Between 1999 and 2000, New Audiences supported the community arts group Continental Drift with their **Firestarter** projects. They successfully showcased new bands through festivals including Glastonbury, Total

Eclipse in Plymouth, Blandford Festival in Dorset, Leeds Breeze and Reading. **Firestarter** promoted over 100 new acts, involving 700 young performers to over 300,000 people. Other projects provided programming support for minority ethnic groups to create new work.

The East Midlands region provided programming and marketing support for **Black History Month** in 1999. Events in Derby, Nottinghamshire, Leicester and Northampton included: Black Ink Day, Readers and Writers Festival, Festival of Words, exhibitions, workshops, and events.

Polyglot Theatre Company worked with the Eritrean theatre company Horn Reflections to stage **The Harvest Plays**, based on traditional fairy tales, to bring theatre to London's Eritrean Diaspora festival for the first time. The National Museum of Photography, Film and Television meanwhile used its **Bite the Mango** film festival as a showcase to celebrate a vibrant image of Asian and African cinema.

Projects such as **E:merge** in the West Midlands recruited African Caribbean and Asian artists and coordinators to influence programming for long term development of artistic work at Birmingham Repertory Theatre.

The Balti Bus project at Lawrence Batley Theatre aimed to develop audiences mainly from the South Asian population with a major campaign to support the performances of Tamasha Theatre's *Balti Kings*. The project was very successful, reaching a substantial new South Asian audience, but it was impossible to sustain the intensity of the associated ambassador activities around each performance. The theatre has since been developing more sustainable approaches to reaching Black and minority ethnic audiences, notably working in partnership with other organisations such as the community based Hudawi Centre to develop longer term links and knowledge. Since then, the posts of Black Arts Development Officer and Project Worker have been introduced. They form the Black arts team together with two volunteer support workers and the programme has continued to expand.

'We should be looking to take the total experience ... into other areas of the theatre's work – we need to keep redefining what culture means, and keep surprising our audiences!' (Ron McAllister, formerly of Lawrence Batley Theatre)

Organisations testify in evaluations to the importance of taking positive steps to engage with specific groups and continually working in a way that is welcoming and inclusive. Community consultation was used in many of these projects to aid

strategic planning and inform new programming and presentation. For example, Gallery Oldham used their £12,250 award to commission research into how young people aged 16–25 from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds would like to engage with the gallery. Key features included a need for greater interactivity and interpretation, a greater social and cultural relevance in programming work, and issues around publicity materials. The results of the research were incorporated into the exhibition programme when Gallery Oldham opened in February 2002.

A condition of the Diversity strand funding was that projects were led or involved Black and minority ethnic specialist advisors or agencies. Many people were given the chance to work in the arts for the first time, bringing an unprecedented influx of new skills into organisations. However, several projects were initially unable to proceed due to the failure to recruit a coordinator or facilitator. Independent evaluation noted that this highlighted a wider issue in relation to training and professional development, and a lack of Black and minority ethnic arts administrators.

The types of project coordination and development support through new human resources varied widely. Projects employed Black and minority ethnic advisors, facilitators and coordinators to undertake research, community liaison, brokerage between venues and local organisations, and longer term relationship building.

For example, Sampad used New Audiences funding to support a **South Asian Audience Development Bursary** to contribute 'to the encouragement and active participation of new audiences for South Asian Arts'. The bursary holder undertook significant research, networking and consultation with arts organisations wishing to promote South Asian work. She also worked with Sampad and Mac to review their audience development programmes, supported projects and developed partnerships.

New relationships were often forged through the work of a community based facilitator or project coordinator. **Leicester Haymarket's** approach to addressing this challenge resulted in a number of successes. They broadened both their main house and studio programmes to include more work that was artistically led by artists of Black and Asian origin. They produced more work that appealed to a wider diversity of audiences. They developed outreach programmes and links with amateur and professional arts groups to take part in a celebratory performance in

the foyer area of the theatre. They also took a new, proactive approach to engaging with specific communities, largely through a Diversity Development Advisor post (the post holder was the former coordinator of the Leicester Roots project in partnership with the BBC). This post played a pivotal role in the development of creative relationships between communities, the theatre and the BBC.

2 Partnerships between mainstream arts organisations and community based organisations

The New Audiences Programme aimed to address some of barriers that mainstream arts organisations have had in attracting Black and minority ethnic community organisations, groups and individuals. One of the main mechanisms for greater understanding was through partnership work, a specific objective of the Diversity strand (see Appendix 1).

The Diversity strand aimed to support community based organisations: a broad range encompassing Black and minority ethnic led organisations, culturally specific organisations with general activities, and organisations specialising in specific types of diversity or inclusion work. Community based practice was supported through direct financial support to organisations, or supporting partnerships between community based organisations and mainstream organisations. This involved some community organisations working in partnership with the subsidised sector for the first time.

Independent evaluation noted that as a result of prioritising this area of work, change has started to develop from within mainstream and community organisations through partnerships where the skills and specialist expertise of each can be shared.

Partnership projects

Partnerships were varied and some involved multiple arts and community partners, and/or partnerships between differing types of arts organisations at differing stages of development.

Arts Council England, North East supported **Three Way Theatre**, in which mainstream performing venues worked with smaller companies producing Black and minority ethnic work.

In London, **Runga Rung New Audiences** involved Emergency Exit Arts working with Croydon Asian Dance Forum and Affinity Arts (a multimedia organisation) to create a traditional work for performance at Croydon Clock Tower then a larger non-traditional piece. The Photographer's Gallery and the Black led Brixton Gallery 198 worked together on **Brixton Studio**, which saw an immediate growth in African Caribbean audiences.

Stratford East formed a very successful partnership with emerging new writing company Arawaak Moon, on the **Shoot 2 Win** project. An independent evaluation of the project provides a fascinating insight into the real challenges of such development work, locating issues for the sector:

'Difficulties often arose out of a mismatch of circumstances. Voluntary status in some cases (though by no means all) carried the likelihood of instability and staff changes ... a lesson to be drawn from many New Audiences projects was just how much support organisations needed, and how much should be anticipated in future.' (Naseem Khan, *New Audiences and Cultural Diversity*, Arts Council England, 2004)

A strong example of strategic partnership working was that of the Lawrence Batley Theatre working with the Hudawi, a local Black community centre on an ambitious project, **Creative Partnership**. This was seed funded by New Audiences and Black Regional Initiative in Theatre (BRIT), involving programming and marketing a diverse programme of Black professional work. This represented one of many examples of BRIT development anchoring New Audiences investment to produce change for organisations and audiences, and it is testimony to the pioneering work of BRIT that New Audiences was able to build upon work begun through the BRIT programme.

Case study

Lawrence Batley Theatre and Hudawi Centre, Creative Partnership

The Lawrence Batley Theatre (LBT) and Hudawi Centre **Creative Partnership**⁸ began as a six-month pilot project in October 1998, supported with a New Audiences grant of £20,000. The impetus came from a mutual desire by the

⁸ This is not linked in any way to Arts Council England's Creative Partnerships Programme

venues to engage more effectively with local African Caribbean communities and develop audiences. The project aimed to:

- provide high quality cultural experiences and a diverse programme of professional Black work at both venues
- break down barriers and negative perceptions of the arts and partner venues by the creation of a sense of ownership by the local African Caribbean community
- increase attendance to the Black programme from the African Caribbean community, and encourage crossover attendance and participation between both venues
- support the professional development of emergent Black artists to the point where they could develop and show their work

For the past five years, the **Creative Partnership** has been extremely successful in increasing the capacity of LBT and Hudawi to present a regular programme of high quality Black work, the majority of which is professional, offering different entry levels to engagement with arts. Challenges facing the project included:

- maintaining a consistently high quality programme
- pacing the Black events throughout the season
- striking a balance between accessibility and risk taking
- the high cost of sustaining a programme at Hudawi

Issues also arose around the effectiveness of information gathering throughout the project, including questions around how to improve box office data capture when many Black and minority ethnic audiences were last minute bookers, models to capture ethnicity, and ways to track or measure the impact of audience development activity.

Independent evaluation noted that programming professional events at Hudawi has been 'a cornerstone of the partnership' in taking audiences on 'a journey from community activity to mainstream arts attendance, and from a community venue to an arts venue'. The evaluation addressed important programming questions:

'Is Black content (however loosely defined) or representation important? Is it the degree to which the work is meaningful to African Caribbean people now, or how it relates to their cultural roots? Are there culturally defined tastes which influence their choice of events? ... To date, no research has been conducted into the motivational triggers behind African Caribbean attendance to the arts in general

and Black/African Caribbean work in particular. This leaves the programmers with the challenge of navigating the continuum between accessibility and risk, within a context of limited choice, variable quality and weak consumer knowledge.'

(Lisa Baxter, *Evaluation of Lawrence Batley Theatre/Hudawi Creative Partnership*, 2003)

A series of recommendations was made in relation to management of the partnership and consolidation of the project's outreach and marketing work. These included 'buddy' pairing schemes, community panels, district publicity assistants for print distribution and positive word of mouth, and a more tiered approach to networking.

The relationship has prospered due to the commitment of the two venue directors, and the initiative has been recognised with three years Single Regeneration Budget funding for education workshops with schools and community groups. They are also creating a shared database of theatre attenders. The partners are developing a new venue to be the first ever dedicated Black and minority ethnic theatre in the Yorkshire region. A detailed independent evaluation of the partnership is available on www.artscouncil.org.uk/newaudiences

George Matheson, the Centre Development Manager of the Hudawi Centre, has spoken about the impact of the New Audiences funding:

'I think that without (the funding) we probably wouldn't have been able to experiment the way we did. For us it's completely transformed the whole working relationship with Hudawi and the Lawrence Batley Theatre. As a result of those experiments we have developed a good and sustainable partnership.' (from 'Essential Audiences - Sustaining Diversity', *ArtsProfessional*, 20 November 2003)

Carnival partnerships

The Programme also supported carnival partnerships through an innovative pairing scheme. **Carnival on de Road** was a national programme of development work led by Arts Council England, which partnered regional carnival clubs with leading London based carnival organisations. New Audiences invested £125,895 in the creation and development of projects which explored the traditions of African Caribbean style carnival and the English town carnival, forging greater cultural understanding between participants and increasing the skills and audiences of regional carnival artists. Highlights of the programme included:

- Brighton and Hove Racial Equality Service and MOSAIC worked with Trinidad and Tobago Carnival Club to establish Caribbean style carnival arts activities in Brighton
- Bradford Festival programmed carnival costume design workshops and arranged for a group of young women from MAPA community centre to attend dance workshops with Cuban musicians La Timbala
- Leeds West Indian Carnival programmed community workshops exploring carnival costume design, construction and movement. Led by the Arthur Francis Troupe, the workshops provided young people from Chapel Town with skills in carnival arts and encouraged them to pass these skills on to future generations
- Under the guidance of Mahogany Arts, Barracudas Carnival Club ran workshops on large-scale carnival costume construction techniques
- Barracudas hosted several carnival costume making and music workshops to involve communities in their own local carnivals and increase local attendance and participation in northern carnivals
- Masquerade 2000 brought Caribbean style carnival to Norwich by hosting a series of practical workshops with Norwich Carnival Club
- Culture Mix worked with Mangrove Steel Band to establish Reading All Steel Percussion Orchestra (RASPO), a community steel band for Reading

New Audiences also funded an important conference in 2003 as part of a week of live carnival events, *On Route*, which profiled the best in UK carnival arts and discussed the **Carnival on de Road** programme. The three-day event provided a platform for established and emerging artists practising African Caribbean style carnival, Mela, Samba, Calypso, Steel pan, traditional English Carnival and associated genres of carnival arts.

Carnival on de Road was also an example of the arts funding system brokering partnerships in recognition of organisational development as a way to strengthen audience development.

Arts Council England, South East brokered partnerships between mainstream venues and community organisations in **Developing Audiences for Asian Arts**. The project supported new partnership development between mainstream arts venues, Asian community organisations and Asian promoters in Reading, Slough and High Wycombe to ensure sustainable development in an area with a sizeable Asian population. The main partners were Reading South Street, Slough Borough

Council and High Wycombe Museum. These organisations were working with approximately 15 community led, culturally specific arts organisations. Whilst Reading had experience in venue programming for Black and minority ethnic groups, and Slough had an established community arts training programme, High Wycombe had not undertaken outreach work like this before. Therefore all three were in the position of being able to learn from each other.

Mainstream arts venues in the area had a strong commitment to establish sustained links with local Asian communities but were unable to do so effectively due to a lack of resources and/or an established infrastructure.

In the research stage, the project mapped current Asian arts activity within mainstream venues and Asian community organisations; undertook research to support mainstream arts venues in identifying how they might better serve the needs of local Asian people; researched the barriers that prevent Asian people attending mainstream arts venues and put in place effective ways to remove them; and undertook an audit of Asian non-attenders through sampling and research using focus groups, questionnaires and individual interviews. The research also examined the arts needs of Asian community organisations. To ensure long-term development, the project provided action plans for both mainstream and community organisation partners. All three organisations were using New Audiences to experiment, pilot and improve, and using peer learning.

Arts Council England, East Midlands' Regional Challenge fund paved the way to widening the number of organisations funded through the Arts Council, some of which were receiving grants for the first time. £500,000 was channelled through a three-year programme with grants awarded to 47 organisations. A number of significant pieces of research were commissioned, including a study of Black disabled audiences, *Double Jeopardy*. Other grants enabled new promotional approaches from the pioneering and successful **Britain's first Bollywood Drive-In** in Leicester, to the **Black History Month** promotions and events between 1999 and 2002 across four East Midlands' counties.

One of the most successful projects, **Roots**, a partnership with BBC East Midlands, demonstrated how a strategic approach to working with broadcast media could bring greater coverage for Black and minority ethnic arts and develop the arts infrastructure of the region. The regional pilot grew into a national project and has now secured funding from BBC and the Arts Council to continue into 2005.

Case Studies

BBC East Midlands and Arts Council England, East Midlands, Roots

BBC English Regions and Arts Council England, Roots

The original **Roots** project, initiated by Arts Council England, East Midlands and developed with BBC East Midlands, was supported by £192,356 Regional Challenge funding from 1999 to 2001. This then became a national project in the late summer of 2001. The project involved four local **Roots** coordinators based at four local BBC radio stations in a partnership developing African, Asian and Caribbean audiences. They researched, produced and supported broadcast programmes and also events in arts and community venues in their areas.

Many new artists and promoters were supported and encouraged to apply for funding, support and training through **Roots**. Arts Council England, East Midlands noted a significant increase in Black and minority ethnic applications and Regional Arts Lottery Programme awards during the course of the project. Nine successful Black and minority ethnic arts organisations shared £460,000 across the **Roots** areas. Coordinators reached new groups and individuals, producing an impressive regional contacts database. Broadcast outputs were impressive. At BBC Northampton, a new African Caribbean programme was launched as a result of **Roots**. *Whose Culture?* a pan regional radio programme involving all the **Roots** coordinators, was shortlisted for a Race in the Media Award in 2000.

All four coordinators have gone on to arts and media careers as a result of the project. A new project in Leicester, **Roots: New Stage**, capitalised on the contacts generated by the project and supported further development for Leicester Haymarket.

The national **Roots** project began in September 2002 following joint partnership work between Arts Council England and BBC English Regions to roll out the pilot nationally. £360,000 of New Audiences funding, matched by the BBC, supported the nationwide project which aimed to substantially improve and increase Asian, African, Caribbean and Chinese cultural coverage in the broadcast media, in radio, on television and online. 11 **Roots** coordinator posts were jointly funded by the BBC and Arts Council England, based in Brighton, Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Leicester, Liverpool, London, Luton, Newcastle, Plymouth and Southampton.

Evaluation conducted in September 2003 indicated that in its first year, **Roots** achieved:

- 1,273 broadcast pieces across radio, television and online
- 81.5 hours of radio with 66% average of broadcasts between 6am and 7pm. Output on the radio, therefore, potentially reached around four million listeners per week
- 67 television features totalling 3.7 million viewers
- four pieces on BBC Network series *Inside Out* on BBC1 with an estimated reach of close to two million people
- contact made with 910 artists and arts organisations and 385 community organisations and individuals
- 440 Black and minority ethnic artists profiled
- an estimated 39,000 live attenders and participants to events directly supported by **Roots** 'test event' programming

3 *Developing Black and minority ethnic artists and organisations*

It is recognised that Black and minority ethnic practitioners are under-represented across the arts and particularly in mainstream arts organisations. Some diversity projects aimed to support the presentation of Black and minority ethnic art to audiences, and place art in new contexts through additional touring, broadcast and new media initiatives.

Examples of projects include a Black film festival, **Beats, Bytes and the Big Screen**, set up by Nubian Tales. It challenged would-be filmmakers to create a short film in a weekend and resulted in 30 new films in the first year, 100 in the second, and a production deal with the Film Council. **The Listening Post**, set up in music shops in the North West, introduced new Black writers to record buyers.

However, ownership and production of Black and minority ethnic work is a critical issue for the arts sector, in particular irregular or lack of Black and minority ethnic product. 'It is vital to note that the development of Black and Asian audiences and audiences for Black and Asian work cannot happen without sufficient levels and quality of Black and Asian product. Any real development in researching and marketing Black and Asian work has to address this.' (Mel Jennings, *Audit of Research into audiences for Black and Asian Work*, Arts Council England, 1998)

Arts Council England, London allocated a significant part of its Regional Challenge allocation to supporting and promoting the cultural activities of London's refugee communities and nurturing artists from these communities, bringing their work to a wider audience. This was in 1999, when it allocated £100,000 Regional Challenge funding to the **Refugees and the Arts Initiative**. This supported 11 refugee arts and cultural projects aiming to raise the profile of refugee artists, challenge stereotypes about refugees and provide opportunities for refugee communities to participate in the arts. As a result of the programme many showcase performances were held in mainstream venues, attracting large and diverse audiences.

The projects reached large numbers of asylum seekers and refugees, providing access to arts activities and opportunities to explore and celebrate aspects of culture and identity. Participants developed skills and confidence and in some cases broadened their educational and employment opportunities. The initiative provided 'official funding' for a small number of refugee community organisations for the first time, enabling these organisations to develop and promote arts and cultural activities within their communities. Some of these organisations have since been able to access funding from other mainstream sources to develop new work.

A variety of new and successful partnerships across a range of sectors (arts, statutory, private and voluntary) were formed to implement projects. New partnerships arose as project activities progressed and as a result of developing networks.

Independent evaluation of the programme notes: 'The initiative has empowered refugee artists, enabling them to practice and make visible their art, talents and skills, sometimes for the first time since their arrival in the UK. Refugee artists have developed a range of complementary skills through facilitating and organising arts and cultural activities for diverse participant groups. The involvement of refugee artists in the projects has increased their profile within their own communities, with arts organisations, with mainstream venues, with non-arts partner organisations and with wider audiences in London.' (Yvonne Field and Marietta Harrow, *Routes Across Diversity*, Arts Council England, 2001)

Senses of the City was a £75,000 programme that continued the work of the 1999 **Refugees and the Arts Initiative** in supporting the artistic output and

involvement of refugee communities. An independent evaluation of the programme has informed future planning.

A clear and positive outcome of **Senses of the City** has been the creation of the **Refugees and the Arts Initiative** as an independent organisation. Previously a steering group set up by Arts Council England, London to develop policy in 1999, it has now received funding (through Grants for the Arts) to create a part-time post over one year to develop the refugees and arts infrastructure. This is an important development for London and the new coordinator will be responsible for organising artists' exchange days, creating a directory of refugee artists and website, and providing support to individual artists.

Artists, organisations and audience development came together in a major project in the East region to develop new work and connections for Black and minority ethnic groups, **The Diversity Programme**.

Case study

Momentum Arts, Diversity Programme

Momentum Arts (formerly Eastern Touring Agency) was awarded £135,000 by New Audiences in 1998/9 for the **Local Promoters for Cultural Diversity** (LPCD) project. The project aimed to develop intercultural work and the regional infrastructure for Black and minority ethnic artists. The LPCD project was then extended in 2001 into the £400,000 **Diversity Programme**, which supported a team of five staff including an administrator until March 2003.

The project was based on the American 'incubator' or 'innovation centre' model, which when applied to Black and minority ethnic arts, could allow new and small scale organisations to flourish. (An incubator is defined as 'a property comprising small units which promotes an instructive and supportive environment to entrepreneurs at start up, during early stages of business life. It aims to maximise the foundation and survival of businesses with the potential of growth'.)⁹

The **Diversity Programme** focused on Black, Asian and Chinese artists and promoters, developing their capacity for making new work and building stronger

⁹ 'Creative Clusters - Jump starting arts start-ups' by John Wroe, in *Arts Professional* Issue 14, 19th November 2001

organisational structures. It has seldom had a public-facing aspect, although each of the organisations working with the **Diversity Programme** has continued to interface with the public in their usual way. A pilot period focused on three areas (Watford, Peterborough and Luton), and the expanded programme another three (Ipswich, Cambridge and Bedford).

The programme's aims were to:

- establish regular networking forums in all six centres for artists, promoters and arts officers
- develop artists' capacity via training seminars, conferences and workshops
- set up regional touring for local Black and minority ethnic groups and artists
- Profile local Black and minority ethnic work and disseminate useful information for artists via a twice-yearly newsletter, *The Source* (later *Pace*)

The **Diversity Programme's** great achievement has been to build a network of viable Black and minority ethnic organisations where once the sector was weak. 200 Black and minority ethnic organisations and individuals working in the sector are now on the programme's database. There is a changing pool of about 24 organisations regularly taking part in activity. The programme has been a development 'hub' supporting a growing network of contacts and organisations. Training was an important part of Momentum's work, and continues to be fundamental to achieving their aims.

Evaluation indicates that the programme has impacted positively on the professional development of many groups and artists:

- **Diaspora** recorded that 'Diaspora have been able to formally constitute themselves, gain funding through the help of LPCD and develop a project in partnership with another member of LPCD in Watford'
- **Sangam** felt that they had been 'given a profile which we could not have done ourselves'
- **Performance II** achieved 'the realisation of a major touring production, artistic development, raising profile and meeting new people in the arts'. The company also secured a £90,000 Regional Arts Lottery Programme award for organisational development
- **Osagyefo** extended their touring and educational work and secured a £23,000 Regional Arts Lottery Programme award, also for organisational development

- **Ho Law**, a visual artist, received training in fundraising and project management and subsequently curated his first touring exhibition *Neo Metamorphosis*

The **Diversity Programme** faced challenges. Early attempts by local Black and minority ethnic groups to negotiate their own bookings with mainstream venues, for instance, showed a lack of experience and an urgent need to acquire those skills. A sometimes negative attitude to the work by some mainstream venues was noted by the managers of the **Diversity Programme**.

The programme itself has faced times of instability, with local champions moving on and contacts needing to be remade all over again. Voluntary groups often work to different timescales than funding bodies. They are also frequently understaffed and overstretched, and rarely have all the skills to hand that evaluation and coordination exercises demand.

Findings

Key successes have been in the establishment of new relationships between mainstream arts organisations and: new audiences from specific groups and wider communities; artists and individual consultants; other organisations and agencies.

Aspirational Arts supported a sample of diversity projects over a year and identified characteristics of successful partnerships between community and arts organisations. They also documented some of the issues involved in new partnership working. Naseem Khan reviewed factors of success and limiting factors across 20 Black and minority ethnic projects in her paper, *New Audiences and Cultural Diversity* (Arts Council England, 2004), whilst The Cultural Management and Policy Group, De Montfort University examined projects funded through the Diversity strand of the programme, identifying a number of good practice models.

Success factors were:

- long-term organisational commitment with firm leadership from senior management

- the commitment of time and resources (financial and human) by the organisation and a willingness to challenge its own preconceptions
- integration of the project into overall strategic planning to ensure sustainability
- clarity in partnerships over the needs of both organisations, and initial ad hoc collaborative projects to develop a mutual shared view
- skills audit to determine the capacity of the organisations or groups and therefore development and training needs
- building in support from mentors, advisors or dedicated coordinators
- a dedicated and visionary project ‘champion’

Another key finding is the importance of working with other sectors, particularly the commercial sector. Successful partnerships included commercial radio, for instance Leicester Sound in **Britain’s Bollywood Drive In** and Sony, for instance in its sponsorship of research project **Belgrave Mela** in Leicester and **Hangama’s** tour of new work.

The valuable partnerships between Arts Council England programmes seen in the work between the Black Regional Initiative in Theatre (BRIT) and New Audiences was a particular strength and allowed for audience development practice in relation to theatres to be consolidated following BRIT pilot work eg Lawrence Batley Theatre/Hudawi Centre. This inter-funding programme partnership also produced a number of stimulating conferences and seminar opportunities allowing for discussion of artistic practice and audience development policy.

Mainstream change

In December 2003, Arts Council England published *Focus on cultural diversity: the arts in England: attendance, participation and attitudes* which suggested that the arts population is fairly representative of the population as a whole.

Conversely, organisation specific research tends to show under-representation for particular ethnic groups. This varies enormously but it is true that audiences for subsidised arts are generally not representative of the local or national population.

Qualitative evidence gathered by the New Audiences programme indicates key barriers that Black and minority ethnic communities can still encounter in accessing ‘mainstream’ arts activities. Those include paucity of relevant product, price, timing, visibility and availability of communication materials, and lack of peer group representation across staff, artists and audiences.

Whilst New Audiences funded projects clearly resisted equating Black and minority ethnic work simplistically with Black and minority ethnic audiences, there was some validation of the suggestions of Desai and Jermyn's research exploring attitudes to the arts among minority ethnic groups. The researchers concluded that many Black and minority ethnic communities were less likely to attend mainstream arts since they believed these did not relate to their experience, lives or artistic traditions. Cultural resonance and relevance is therefore a key factor in establishing interest from Black and minority ethnic communities and is more about equality of opportunity and cultural entitlement from arts organisations than a statement about Black and minority ethnic arts only appealing to Black and minority ethnic audiences.

New Audiences supported organisations to change in a number of ways and perhaps the greatest catalysts for change came through the number and range of new people who worked on diversity projects, as trainers, project managers, consultants or ambassadors.

Venues and promoters were encouraged to think longer term about programming and presentation, review their communication to Black and minority ethnic groups, and use the information gathered from projects to aid strategic planning. Many reported that New Audiences funding allowed them to take positive steps towards changing as an organisation and developing more inclusive practice. This meant examining staff training, programming, customer care, signage and the physical space of the venue.

Diversity projects concentrated on Black, Asian, Caribbean and Chinese communities. However, further work needs to be undertaken to support arts organisations' understanding of Chinese arts and audience development. Only four of 189 New Audiences projects aimed to examine interests of audiences of Chinese origin. Audience research was undertaken by Arts About Manchester, Manchester Art Gallery and Developing Audiences in the North, but the programme did not manage to engage significantly with Chinese communities.

Human resources and skills development

Throughout all the projects, the importance of human resources and bringing in appropriately skilled people was clear. A condition of some awards was that organisations would bring in Black and minority ethnic specialists and trainers, and to an unprecedented degree this has broadened the expertise available to them.

Many have since developed this work through subsequent work and/or by assimilating lessons and skills internally.

There was a recognition of the individual skills of project managers and coordinators in determining the outcome of projects. Indeed, concerns were expressed regarding the fact that over reliance on this may not support sustainability of relationships between organisations and key community leaders and groups. In these cases it is crucial that the links between communities and the organisations are maintained so that relationships can outlive the employment of any one individual.

Independent evaluators all commented on the paucity of sufficiently skilled Black and minority ethnic and specialist marketers. The arts ambassador networks and other initiatives (eg **Roots** coordinators, **decibel** funding ambassadors) have resulted in the unique development of a body of workers able to understand the access needs of Black and minority ethnic communities and the operational structures of the mainstream arts sector. This expertise is likely to be even more at a premium as venues come to recognise the need for specialist knowledge. At the same time, it offers a possible career for future Black and minority ethnic arts administrators.

Marketing agencies in New Audiences projects led on significant research and action research projects. They supported generic marketing of Black and minority ethnic work and audience research (Midlands Arts Marketing, AMH – formerly Arts Marketing Hampshire), created and maintained arts ambassador networks (Audiences Central – formerly Birmingham Arts Marketing), developed training and mentoring work (TEAM in Liverpool, Audiences Yorkshire), and brokered appropriate partnerships between arts and community organisations.

Cultural diversity is a long-term strategy. As such, independent evaluation noted the need for long term monitoring and evaluation. Naseem Khan noted that 'A longitudinal research project that tracked a sample of organisations over a five-year period would provide valuable data as well as material from which other organisations and venues could draw.' (*New Audiences and Cultural Diversity*, Arts Council England, 2004)

Monitoring

Many New Audiences project evaluations indicated real difficulty around the issue of monitoring the ethnic profile of audiences for funded activity. As Audiences Central noted in their evaluation of **The Networking Project**:

‘Measuring ethnic origin presents a number of methodological difficulties ... It is not yet possible to measure the ongoing impact of the project at every performance or exhibition because it would clearly be inappropriate to ask every ticket buyer an ethnicity question at the box office. Non-ticketed venues are faced with the ever-present challenge of how to monitor their visitors without the direct interface of ticket buying. (Our) monitoring techniques have mostly been through self completion questionnaire which brings with it its own difficulties. In some cases, face to face interviews have been carried out to help overcome some of the barriers to achieving a representative sample. Other more general monitoring approaches have included observation techniques and personal accounts.’
(Audiences Central – formerly Birmingham Arts Marketing, *Interim Report*, April–December 2000)

An appropriate methodology for monitoring audiences in terms of ethnicity needs urgent attention since without it organisations lack planning information and monitoring is impossible.

Building longer term

Independent evaluation of the Diversity strand (*New Audiences Programme Gateway One [Diversity]: Key findings from an independent evaluation*, De Montfort University, Leicester, 2003) identified a number of partnership models and revealed the following:

- 26 arts organisations worked with 104 partners on projects. 67 of those partnerships were totally new. 45 organisations were ‘Black led’ (the definition from De Montfort University [DMU] applying to those organisations having a majority of Black senior management and Black work)
- Seven of the lead organisations were Black organisations. Of the other 19, nine had at least one Black person playing a major coordinating or consultancy role, five of these were emerging organisations, and all of these described themselves as ‘community based organisations’

- From the sample of New Audiences projects, Black organisations were emergent organisations rather than firmly established ones. Support for these organisations was 'a significant achievement of New Audiences'
- 15 organisations aimed at creating partnerships with the mainstream and 11 aimed at developing community practice
- However, the proportion of funding awarded to mainstream as opposed to Black led organisations was significantly in favour of the mainstream. More work is still to be done

Except in a few cases, evaluation noted that projects displayed little evidence of long-term development. However, there was evidence of some emergent Black led organisations and smaller community organisations and promoters being supported with longer term impacts. A number of organisations, groups and individuals were brought into the funding system, such as **Bhangra Beat, T-Hop, Spacevision, Diaspora Arts** and **Spacevision**, 'changing their perception of themselves and enabling them to develop a programme of arts including public performances and training'. New Audiences also influenced and informed capital developments in three case studies in the Diversity strand: APNA, Woking Galleries and Slough Borough Council.

Challenges in partnership work included the imbalance of experience and expertise in new partnerships, setting up genuinely equitable relationships between arts organisations and community based promoters and artists, and a lack of engagement or resistance by the 'mainstream'. Developing organisations requires support and a strong challenge will be to sustain and support groups nurtured through the programme in the longer term.

Resources

General

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Change through Partnership seminar by Paul Kaynes and Sarah Ogle of Audiences Central (formerly Birmingham Arts Marketing), given at the Arts Marketing Association's conference *Tearing Down the Barriers* held in Salford in

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9 Disability

Context

There are around 8.7 million disabled people in Britain, over 14% of the population. In addition, many people who would not describe themselves as 'disabled' occasionally experience some of the barriers to cultural life faced by disabled people. By 2020 there will be more people over 50 years than under 50, the age at which the incidence of disability increases significantly. Many older people benefit from an accessible arts environment, even though they may choose not to describe themselves as disabled.

Arts Council England is committed to supporting disabled people's access and participation in the arts and recognises the barriers disabled people face, as audiences, participants, employers, employees and arts practitioners. This includes supporting arts organisations to change their practice and to exceed Disability Discrimination Act requirements¹⁰ and the development of audiences for disability arts work.

'We are doing more to champion disability equality in the arts and to challenge discrimination. We are increasing our funding to disabled artists and disability led organisations, and working with other organisations to help them integrate disability equality in their work.' (*Ambitions into Action*, Arts Council England, 2004)

As part of the Arts Council commitment to diversity, we are developing a disability strategy aimed at delivering our vision of promoting the arts at the very heart of national life, reflecting England's distinctive, rich and diverse cultural identity. The Arts Council's objective is to bring disability issues to the fore, to support the sector and ensure that disabled people participate fully in the cultural life of this country.

The access needs of disabled audiences may be considered under the following headings:

¹⁰ The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995 imposes duties and responsibilities on arts providers as employers and as service providers. By October 2004 premises also need to be accessible. Further information about the DDA can be obtained from the Disability Rights Commission www.drc-gb.org

Access to information in appropriate formats eg layout
Support services facilitating access eg audio description, sign language interpretation
Customer service at a high level of quality and adaptability eg confident, well-informed staff trained to understand the potential access requirements of disabled people and provide a tailored service as required
Innovative approaches to artistic product, delivery mechanisms and customer support eg integration of disabled people and auxiliary aids into mainstream artistic product.

New Audiences overview

The total number of projects related to the audience focus of disability across the programme was **111**, totalling **£1,974,661**.¹¹ The total number of audiences reached by these projects was **95,254**.

In the first two years of the New Audiences Programme 1998–2000, New Audiences invested in a number of projects that aimed to develop audiences for disability arts and address some of the barriers disabled people face in accessing the arts, identified in the Arts Council publication *Beyond Barriers* (1998).

Many of the Arts Council regional offices focused on supporting disability as a policy issue and used Regional Challenge funding to support this. A major contribution came through Arts Council England, North West with an investment of £227,726. This included an open application programme in 1999–2000 for arts projects addressing disabled people, documented in *The Arts and Disabled People* (Arts Council England, North West, 2001). A training programme was also supported for clients, resulting in an *Action for Access Guide* (Action for Access Steering Group, 2003) with associated seminars and a final evaluation report *I liked everything* (Arts Council England, North West, 2004). Arts Council England, London supported a £75,000 programming support scheme and showcase for disabled artists, **Innovate**, through its Regional Challenge programme.

In 2000, a specific Disability funding strand was created, focusing on stimulating organisations to change and address disabled people as consumers of the arts, and piloting new ways to improve access through action research into key barriers. (See Appendix 1)

¹¹ maximum value, see research findings in Appendix 2

The New Audiences Programme aimed to tackle some of the physical, attitudinal, sensory and intellectual barriers of disabled people in engaging with arts activities and events. There was a strong emphasis on developing new models of marketing and training to reach disabled people with specific impairments, involving:

- people who are deaf or hard of hearing
- people who are blind or partially sighted
- wheelchair users or people with limited mobility
- people with learning disabilities
- people with mental health issues

The programme supported a wide range of projects including:

- venue training and disability awareness programmes by specialist disability consultants and advisors
- research and audits into disabled people's access needs and wants
- action research projects to test models of outreach and networking to reach disabled people new to the arts
- projects providing information to disabled people about the arts in accessible formats and using new distribution methods
- projects addressing the access needs of disabled people as audiences and participants, and tackling the barriers to engagement
- projects that developed disability organisations' work in audience development
- projects led by disability arts companies to reach new disabled and non-disabled audiences
- projects which developed and promoted the work of disabled artists and disability arts organisations

Disability projects

This section will provide an overview of the key themes and approaches emerging from the disability projects. These themes and approaches, which sometimes overlap, can be summarised as: addressing barriers to attendance and encouraging participation; supporting arts organisations to change; and supporting disability arts and artists.

1 Addressing barriers to attendance and encouraging participation

'I thought I knew about disability politics but seeing this show has made me realise it all afresh. Brilliant!' (disabled audience member, in *New Audiences Programme Gateway Two [Disability] Key findings from an independent evaluation*, De Montfort University, 2003)

Addressing barriers

Many projects looked at issues of physical access, transport and marketing and networking approaches such as ambassador schemes, test drive campaigns and examining information in accessible formats. Communicating clearly with people with a variety of impairments is an area of continuing development in arts marketing. It requires knowledge of appropriate formats and styles, which not all arts organisations can lay claim to. Many listings and promotional materials were reviewed and re-designed based on customer feedback.

Many organisations used audience feedback and consultation with disabled people to support other access developments, leading to notable and innovative projects of national significance that offer inspiring models of good practice.

The Society of London Theatres expanded its *Guide to the West End* for disabled theatre goers, and was supported by New Audiences in involving disabled people as advisors and publicists for the guide. New Audiences funded the marketing campaign and supported a programme of assisted performances for deaf and visually impaired people, analysing audience's feedback. Key outcomes included:

- audio description was provided for 18 productions
- 261 theatregoers paid to see audio described performance as part of the project
- the project enabled the facilitators of audio described and audio introduced performances to create strong links with a large and diverse group of producers and theatres
- some venues now have greater awareness of the importance of access for visually impaired people both with regard to meeting the needs of the audience and addressing the implications of the DDA

Talking Images was a national partnership project between Arts Council England, the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB), The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA – formerly Resource) and English Heritage, led by

Vocaleyes. New Audiences invested £82,990 into the research programme, which aimed to develop access for visually impaired people to museums, galleries and heritage sites using audio description. The research surveyed 270 blind and visually impaired people, audited 33 audio guides, sent questionnaires to 55 venues and carried out three case studies in gallery settings with focus groups of visually impaired people.

Two publications resulted from the research: *Talking Images Guide* and *Talking Images Research* (RNIB and VocalEyes Publications, 2003). Research findings were launched at a national conference in May 2003, attended by 200 people representing arts organisations, local authorities and national government agencies. A dissemination strategy is planned to influence and inform other galleries, museums and heritage sites that were not directly involved in the project.

The importance of the internet in opening up access was dramatically illustrated by an example at Tate Modern which was presented at the *Talking Images* Conference in May 2003. The gallery normally receives around 100-150 requests each year for 'touch tours'. In the first six weeks of i-Map – its online resource that enable people to download tactile materials – there were more than 2,300 downloads of materials about the Matisse and Picasso exhibition, not to mention hits to the site www.tate.org.uk

The publicity gained through the profiling of the **Talking Images** publications has increased awareness and deepened understanding of the access needs of visually impaired people, and the project itself has developed audio description provision and practice.

The **Good Gallery Guide** began as a Yorkshire pilot, expanding to cover over 100 galleries across the country, giving information on physical access and special activities or events aimed at disabled artists and audiences. The guide is not an access audit but simply looks at the visitor's experience of the gallery – from the carpets to the coffee. The website www.goodgalleryguide.com has recently been redeveloped by The Art House.

Many organisations were able to try new approaches through New Audiences and test online usage. Full Circle's project **d@d@.org.uk** aimed to develop an accessible website for people with visual impairments and disabled people in general. It employed a website designer and asked people with disabilities for their comments on the development of the site. The project disproved the original assumptions made by the web and digital arts communities that in making a

website accessible to users with visual impairments it would be accessible to all people with disabilities whatever their impairment. It has also challenged the idea that it is possible to construct a virtual community domain that will be accessible to all people with disabilities whatever their impairment.

Artworks MK developed the **Catalyst** project, a residency by a disabled visual artist at the Artworks MK studio space in Great Linford. The project grew out of an awareness of how little craft work has been done amongst and by disabled people. The artist worked with local groups and disabled individuals accessing the centre and developed her own visual arts work, the project concluding with an exhibition of her work. The organisation has been committed to integrating lessons learnt from this single experience into the culture of the organisation and has been supported through this by a disabled consultant. Artworks MK note: 'The organisation has learned how to present an image of inclusivity through promotional material – the use of language, text, access needs, statements, images and by providing material in alternative formats. This is now adopted as standard practice and has filtered through to all other organisational policies. Inclusivity has also contributed to the formulation of studio policies.'

The **Hands Up!** project aimed to overcome barriers to attendance and participation identified by the deaf community in Derby, to test marketing innovations and develop new programming.

Case study

Q Arts, Hands Up!

In 2001 New Audiences awarded Q Arts £137,688 to develop the **Hands Up!** project. Derby has three times the national average of deaf people and this project was led by a disabled project team based at Q Arts, a participatory arts organisation based in Derby.

A British Sign Language (BSL) audience development worker was employed to form a network between Derby's deaf community and arts organisations including Derby Playhouse, Derby Dance Centre, Metro Cinema, Derby Museum, Surtal Asian Arts, Q Arts, Derby Literature Development and Viva Orchestra.

29 events were evaluated using self completion questionnaires and post-show interviews in sign language carried out by deaf people. 44 events attracted 384 attenders and, of these, seven events had no deaf attenders.

A great deal was learnt about deaf people's needs and motivations through the project and a significant body of research from deaf people about barriers to attendance and participation (not all deaf specific) was gathered, and is being used as a planning tool for local arts development.

Findings were that:

- 20% had not been in the participating arts venue before **Hands Up!**
- 42% found out about the event from generic project promotional materials, 39% from friends and 30% from others including deaf groups, societies, newsletters, teachers and the **Hands Up!** project coordinator
- 28% felt it beneficial to have a deaf worker arrange the events
- 55% would go to another event of the same type and 53% to another **Hands Up!** event
- Comments testified to the importance of meeting other deaf people at events

Venues in Derby were asked to programme work that was accessible to deaf audiences and were offered 75% of the cost of interpreters; some said they would not have got involved without this funding support.

Venues have continued to programme and support deaf work as a result of the project, as shown in the **Hands Up!** evaluation report by Annie Delin:

'As a result of the **Hands Up!** project we have already seen an increase in deaf people accessing our activity. **Hands Up!** has enabled us to make very positive steps into working with the deaf community in Derby. With the support of Ian Carpenter and the range of workers and participants along the way, it has already altered the way we work. We are currently planning how to sustain, maintain and develop the work further.' (arts organisation, from *The Hands up project: developing access for Deaf audiences to arts events and venues in the city of Derby*, by Annie Delin, Arts Council England, East Midlands and Derby City Council, 2003)

This project proved that any 'inclusive' project needs adequate time and money made available for staff time, mentoring etc, and for deaf projects a real

appreciation of language and cultural differences is required. Confidence needs to be built up, for both new audiences and venues.

Encouraging participation

'I didn't know people like me could (perform on stage). It's great! I want to do it!' (disabled audience member, in *New Audiences Programme Gateway Two [Disability] Key findings from an independent evaluation*, De Montfort University, 2003)

Projects focusing on disabled people as participants were noted for bringing people into close contact with the artform and with their own creative response to it, and enabling consultation and involvement on other levels. **Burnley Youth Theatre** increased the participation of young disabled people in their activities and set up a network of local individuals and agencies to work on effective targeting. 400 young people took part in drama workshops in nine venues, five of which were schools. **3D's Management Development** project enabled a performing arts company run by and for people with learning disabilities to be more directly influenced by the people it represents. It explored how management organisation, fundraising and other issues could be made more accessible to people with learning disabilities.

Another project led by Theatre Resource, an organisation specialising in arts in social care and disability related arts work, saw the development of **2x2x2**, piloting a new participatory model of 'taster' sessions in Essex and Herefordshire to develop new disabled audiences. The audience focus was on visually impaired people and people who accessed mental health services who had little or no involvement in the arts. 14 workshops were supported, attracting 130 participants. Theatre Resource developed a robust new participation framework, which can be used as a practical tool for arts organisations and arts workers in judging the success of a project.

Another project using participation to stimulate organisational change was Wiltshire Music Centre's **Moonraking**. This was developed by the organisation with a disability arts consultant and resulted in a participatory programme of activity at the centre involving adults with learning difficulties. These included workshops by disabled and non-disabled artists, pre-concert events for disabled audiences and a celebratory performance event, *The Ripple Effect*, which involved over 100 learning disabled people as leaders, performers, participants and

audience. There was also a training programme on disability culture, DDA, etiquette and inclusion, and the development of an action plan by staff and trustees. Key outcomes have included a professional disability arts event in the main stage concert series, a fully accessible website, activity integrated with the summer programme, installation of CCTV link between the auditorium and workshop room, and successful fundraising for longer term development.

2 Supporting arts organisations to change

‘The disability equality training was fantastic. It challenged me at a professional level and if I’m absolutely honest, at a personal level too. I didn’t realise I had things to face in my attitudes to disabled people but I did. I do. The training plus the performance have – sounds corny, I know – but they’ve changed the way I think about the world.’ (Marketing Officer, mainstream arts organisation, in *New Audiences Programme Gateway Two [Disability] Key findings from an independent evaluation*, De Montfort University, 2003)

Mainstream organisational change, often through training, was largely supported through the more developmental strands of the New Audiences Programme, notably Regional Challenge, with strong programmes of work in Yorkshire and North West, and also through the Disability strand.

Many organisations used funding to support disability awareness and equality training, and underwent cultural change as a result. Subjects covered within training included: management issues; board membership; programming (of mainstream work, disabled led work, and of disability programming within a mainstream context); employment of disabled people within audience development strategies; creative marketing approaches; pricing policies; customer care; and disability equality training for staff and freelancers.

From final project reports it is clear that consultation and research with disabled people is vital for developing awareness and initiating and continuing organisational change.

Training for venues

New and improved models of training were piloted through New Audiences, which could be transferred to other contexts and venues.

Disability Agency Equata’s **Impact** project provided three mainstream venues in the South West with disability consultancy to support them through a period of

access development and explore a way of building on Disability Equality Training (DET). The project took place in three arts settings, offering a variety of artforms at different scales – the Arnolfini in Bristol, the Barbican Theatre in Plymouth and Somerset Art Week. A set of benchmarks was established and each venue provided with a list tailored to their development needs, to measure and assess progress. These included one essential target – the development and formal adoption of a disability policy for each organisation – and a minimum target of four from a total of nine desirable options.

Three consultants spent eight days each researching and developing disability policies at the three venues. All three venues achieved their targets. The consultants agreed that DET alone does not move an organisation sufficiently forward.

Project managers felt that the provision of a consultant as a resource to organisations was extremely productive, and this ‘hands on’ model is a valuable and necessary supplement to basic DET training.

A strong example of an innovative use of ‘ambassadors’ in a venue training context came with disability agency NorDAF’s project **Action Disability Arts** in the North East. This disability awareness programme placed four disabled ambassadors in four selected venues with the aim of improving practice around disability issues. The venues were all within the North East region: Theatre Royal, Newcastle, The Northern Gallery of Contemporary Art, Northern Print Studio and North Shields and Tyne and Wear Museums. Outcomes of this project included:

- action plans were produced over the six subject areas, and further work is planned on these
- ambassadorial skills were developed
- NorDAF’s profile was raised among arts organisations in the region
- Theatre Royal, Newcastle has developed a new access brochure, and is aiming to appoint an Access Officer in 2003
- Tyne and Wear Museum now has compulsory DET training for all staff, is reviewing its marketing materials, and has formed a consultation group of disabled attenders
- the Northern Gallery of Contemporary Arts has improved signage and physical access, and started to put an emphasis on interpretation through gallery guides rather than written materials. Northern Print Studios is placing access issues at the centre of its considerations for relocation

- project managers felt that **Action Disability Arts** had changed deep-rooted attitudes to access and disability, enabling access issues to be thought about creatively and in a positive way
- changes in practice within host organisations were least visible in the areas of programming and employment, but it was felt that the timescale had been too short to draw any firm conclusions about this. In every other area, each host organisation had made definite progress

Case studies

Mind the Gap, **Includo I** and **Includo II**

Includo I was awarded £9,995 by New Audiences through Arts Council England, Yorkshire's Regional Challenge fund in 1999. This was followed by a further grant of £32,000 for **Includo II**, the second phase of the project. **Includo** was developed by Mind the Gap, in partnership with SFX theatre company and ADA Inc Consultancy, to encourage a better awareness by theatre venues in Yorkshire of the barriers encountered by audiences with learning disabilities. Through a programme of audits, training and feedback, venues were provided with information and advice to help them to identify and improve their interactions with learning disabled visitors.

Devised by Mind the Gap to bridge the divide between arts providers and younger audiences, **Includo I** was an interactive research project involving young people with learning disabilities aged 19–30, non-disabled young people aged 16–25, and venues and promoters in the Yorkshire region. Successful elements of **Includo I**, such as 'Go and See' undercover visits to venues and an interactive performance, *Never Again!* were built upon in **Includo II** and aimed to:

- test ways of increasing theatre venue knowledge and awareness of access issues through methods devised and led by a team of disabled and non-disabled people, including young people with learning difficulties
- have a direct and positive impact on the inclusion of people with learning difficulties by venues in the Yorkshire region

The project incorporated five key stages:

- a series of workshops with learning disabled students on the Making Waves Apprenticeship and non-disabled young people from

Bradford, to explore prevailing attitudes to the arts in general and theatre going in particular

- 'Go and See' in which the participants went 'under cover' to three West Yorkshire arts venues to judge the professional theatre's accessibility first hand. The data gathered through this process was used by the Making Waves students in the following stage
- the creation of a Forum Theatre play *Never Again!* which was presented in schools for disabled and non-disabled audiences. Eight performances of *Never Again!* reached 214 learning disabled participants
- a half-day seminar run by Mind the Gap for arts personnel working in programming, front of house and marketing from several regional venues, which shared the project's findings and offered them up for debate
- *Never Again!* an interactive cd-rom based training package aimed at venue staff, was produced and distributed to 50 Yorkshire venues

Outcomes

The purpose of **Includedo II** was to help theatre venues to improve the *quality* of the service they provide for people with learning disabilities; *quantity* of attenders was not the focus. However, *Never Again!* was performed at eight venues, reaching 214 learning disabled participants.

The return visits to the 10 Yorkshire based theatres showed that, in nearly all cases, practice had improved. Significantly, the highest level of improvement was observed in the four venues that had benefited from additional auditing and training.

The training events devised for the four venues were well received and have led to immediate and longer term measures to help improve access. Specific examples include: changes in pricing policy, including 'carers go free'; changes to brochure design; specific audience development initiatives; and integration into longer term policy planning. Initial feedback on the *Never Again!* cd-rom has been positive:

'Many have said how enjoyable and informative it is and that they have learned many new things from it. It's good to know it's making a difference.' (Tim Wheeler, Artistic Director, Mind the Gap, from 'Essential Audiences - Disability and New Audiences', by Catherine Rose, in *Arts Professional*, Issue 53, June 2003)

3 **Support for disability arts and artists**

The importance of building the capacity of the disability arts sector and disabled artists in order to develop audiences in the long term became very clear through the programme, although never expressed as a specific objective. Some examples follow of how disability arts and artists were supported through New Audiences. Many projects concentrated on how to develop and enhance accessibility to funds for deaf and disabled artists.

Programming

'In terms of developing disabled audiences, you need to develop work by disabled artists because they go hand in hand. It is a question of relevance. A lot of our research and development work has shown that there needs to be relevant projects and programming to create pathways for disabled or disadvantaged audiences to access work.' (Theatre Resource, from *An evaluation of the role and impact of the New Audiences Programme on participating organisations*, Arts Intelligence, Arts Council England, 2003)

Projects examined the impact of programming decisions and the range of work by disabled artists as a means of developing audiences. In some cases, projects suggested that disability arts product could indeed provide an entry point for disabled audiences, but that this in no way equated to providing disability arts work for disabled audiences. There was a need for mainstream work to be accessible to disabled audiences and the need to support a greater range of disability arts work for disabled and non-disabled audiences alike.

'Disability specific work can be used to attract a new audience, but first work needs to be done on identifying audiences for disability related product. The aim is not to solely generate "disabled audiences for disabled product", instead to develop non-disabled and disability audiences. Disabled audience members once established can be encouraged to become part of the mainstream arts audience.' (*Knocking on Doors*, Arts Council England, 2000)

New disability programming was tested as a motivation to attendance through the **Deafway Sign Language Arts Project** in Brighton. This supported a theatrical work in progress with four new deaf actors, in a region and at a venue new to deaf audiences, posing serious questions about the creation and performance of deaf work and deaf theatre aesthetics. 200 deaf people came to the performance and

a database was formed for future audience development in the region, which suggested an appetite for more. All participants, actors and audiences were evaluated as part of the work and a historical overview of national significance on deaf theatre was commissioned as an outcome of the project, *Deaf Theatre and Deafhood* (by Dr Paddy Ladd, Bristol University, 2003).

Disability arts touring

New Audiences supported a range of disability arts touring work, touring to middle scale and small scale venues across the country, and commissioned research, *Knocking on Doors* (Arts Council England, 2000) which explored the feasibility of establishing a touring circuit for disability arts. In response to the findings, the Arts Council published its action plan, *Opening Doors*, in 2002 and committed itself to improving the quality of disability arts work, increasing the capacity of disability arts organisations and developing venues through investment. Work is now underway to implement the recommendations and to feed into the Arts Council's developing disability strategy.

Disability arts company Heart 'n Soul were supported by New Audiences to extend their touring work, firstly to work with Nottingham Playhouse and West Yorkshire Playhouse, running workshops and a performance event for and by people with learning disabilities; then to transfer their **Beautiful Octopus Club** model to four venues across the country, including providing education and outreach work to prepare the ground in advance.

From Heart 'n Soul's perspective, they were able to develop their touring circuit, moving from small to middle scale venues, and there has been significant organisational development as a result. This will in turn ensure the availability of high quality music theatre for and by people with learning disabilities across more regions (North West, South East, Yorkshire and West Midlands).

'New Audiences alerted us to a number of organisational changes that needed to be made ... empowering learning disabled people to run their own performing arts clubs and also attempting to gain more mainstream audience for work. New Audiences led to all sorts of organisational change – funding was a huge catalyst in terms of focusing on and enhancing evaluation processes, communication strategies, roles within the organisation, and all components of the organisation working together.' (Heart 'n Soul, from *An evaluation of the role and impact of the New Audiences Programme on participating organisations*, Arts Intelligence, Arts Council England, 2003)

New work by companies employing disabled actors and dancers also benefited from the programme. As Garry Gibson, the director of Fittings Multi Media Arts, has pointed out, 'Much disability art tends to perform to the same circuit of small-scale venues and to relatively small but committed audiences'. Additionally, there is a limited number of truly accessible venues. The company collaborated with Graeae, one of Britain's best-known theatre companies of actors with physical and sensory impairments, to produce **The Last Freakshow**. It was designed to be 'exciting, interesting, far-reaching and current', and was drawn from their research into disability history and culture, prosthetics and the 'freak show'. The production toured to both conventional and non-traditional venues, including the Glastonbury Festival.

CandoCo, the London based professional integrated dance company, focused on young audiences with disabilities in their project **CandoCo in Leeds**. They worked in partnership with the Northern School of Contemporary Dance and the Riley Theatre, linking with integrated mainstream schools and schools with special units. Schools received promotional 'meet the artist' sessions and taster sessions involving the whole company. The project achieved an 88% capacity audience and involved 408 young people in workshops.

Raising the profile of disabled artists

Arts Council England also worked with Heart 'n Soul and Channel 4 to promote the company and raise the visibility of their work through a new website and a documentary about members of the Heart 'n Soul company, **Road Trip**, made by Keo films and shown in February 2004. The film attracted approximately 700,000 viewers and received many positive responses from viewers and the press – the Guardian called it 'a lovely brave film, that is not just about six close friends going on a journey together but one that says a lot about the attitudes towards the disabled in this country'. The website, which received £15,000 New Audiences funding, was widely praised and since the broadcast has received over 61,081 hits to the site, with 1,981 unique visitors and 3,879 visitor sessions. 89.7% went to the site via Channel 4's special **Road Trip** link on its website, proving the impact of the broadcast partnership. This site provides the first national mapping of disability arts events and activities across the country and will be integrated with Heart 'n Soul's main website www.heartnsoul.org.uk

Another project which explored the potential of new technology to directly access new audiences was an interesting research project, *Arts and disability interfaces: new technology, disabled artists and audiences* by Dave Everitt in 2001, available as a download from www.artscouncil.org.uk/newaudiences This resulted in a four-

part scoping study focusing on new or emerging technology and the methods being developed to interact with it, rather than on standard technology that has replaced older methods (as in animation and film, for instance). Issues of aesthetics, access, disability and other social or cultural factors are introduced only where they are pertinent to the aims of the study. As well as providing an absorbing account of current debates and developments in technology generally, it included:

- a comprehensive survey of existing and new technologies, both assistive and of general use, with examples of current use
- specific developments in new technologies relevant for disabled artists, arts practitioners and audiences
- recommendations for further research and activity

Case study

Arts Council England, London, Innovate

In 2002 Arts Council England, London ran a strategic development fund called **Innovate** from £70,000 New Audiences Regional Challenge funding to support the development, production and presentation of new work by disabled and deaf artists and to encourage such work to be programmed by mainstream venues.

In May 2003, *Programming Innovations* at Sadlers Wells showcased new work, by 11 artists funded through the scheme, to management and programming staff of London venues. The one-day event also gave venue staff a chance to meet the artists and share the experiences of managers and programmers active in the deaf and disability arts sector. Around 140 people attended. There was an exciting range of artforms, including film, literature, contemporary circus, theatre and visual art. Two panel discussions included disabled and deaf artists as well as staff from venues such as Sadlers Wells, Oval House, the Royal Festival Hall, Shape and the London Disability Arts Forum. Much of the discussion was about disabled and deaf artists creating and developing a new and unique aesthetic through their work, which has the potential to bring new audiences to venues. Practical advice and information was available for venues wanting to work with the sector.

The **Innovate** fund has helped SHAPE (a disability arts and access organisation) find out how arts organisations supported by Arts Council England, London are meeting the needs of disabled people and what is needed to help them comply

with the DDA. Another outcome of the project is a follow up piece of research (funded by Arts Council England, London) to be undertaken by Audiences London and the Disability Arts Consortium, London, looking at the relationship between programming work by deaf and disabled artists and audience development. This will involve disability arts companies and artists in London and selected mainstream arts venues.

The **Innovate** programme also highlighted the need to engage more with learning disabled artists and further investment has been made in the Learning Disability Arts Network for London to help achieve this.

An information pack showcasing the **Innovate** artists and their work is available as a download from www.artscouncil.org/newaudiences It is clearly a model that could be developed and transferred to other parts of the country to support deaf and disabled artists, and in the longer term audiences for disability work.

Findings

Independent research noted the critical role of disabled people in developing New Audiences projects and impacting on host organisations. Many disabled people worked as artists, consultants and ambassadors for the first time through the programme. In a research sample of 20 projects, 10 were disability led. Of the other 11, seven had at least one disabled person playing a major coordinating or consultancy role. Outcomes of projects included disabled people gaining networks both within disability and mainstream arts. Disabled people who had worked as ambassadors for arts organisations were invited onto boards of mainstream organisations or to undertake further work. Disabled trainees worked alongside arts professionals to develop their skills, and accessed new networks and opportunities for employment and professional development.

However, it is clear that there is a lack of trained, specialist facilitators who can work with arts organisations to develop audiences with disabilities. Several projects were late starting and in some cases unable to recruit disabled marketing specialists. This is compounded by a paucity of training opportunities for disabled people. This is part of a much larger problem around capacity within the arts sector to support disability audience development work and must be addressed.

There is also a clear need to support artistic product and disabled artists' professional development as an important mechanism for developing disabled audiences. This important issue emerged as a finding in many projects and is of critical importance in wider discussions around access and inclusion.

New methods of gaining feedback and evaluation from disabled people were piloted and documented through New Audiences eg accessible research, focus group, questionnaire work, video booths and diaries, leading to greater understanding of motivations and barriers for current and potential disabled audiences.

Arts organisations needed assistance, support, guidance and training around disability equality awareness, access needs and issues, and the implementation of policy at different levels. Many projects focused on preparatory research, training and development work. Others were audience facing: many organisations worked individually and within consortia to explore marketing, customer care, personnel management, programming and access issues. In terms of access, there are major issues for regularly funded organisations in relation to additional sensory access services such as captioning, signing and audio description in terms of organisational capacity and appropriateness. More work needs to be done on the business case behind accessibility, given the additional income generated through new or returning attenders making use of sensory access services.

The training models supported by New Audiences eg the hosts and ambassadors in NorDAF's project, Theatre Resource's work with partners in the Eastern region, or Equata's approach to delivering DET, suggest that a long lasting training package, tailored to individual organisational development, is more effective than the traditional one-day course. With this more substantial training, organisations were able to respond imaginatively to the DDA and develop inclusive practices across the entire programme and involving the whole organisation.

Independent evaluators Aspirational Arts noted the success of these people-based approaches in supporting organisational change and attitudinal shifts. 'The results from Equata (as one example) seem to suggest that the approach, together with long term follow-up activity or monitoring (as planned in Equata's case for December 2003), are effective in building organisations' confidence to tackle policies and practices that make them more accessible for people with disabilities, through working at an organisational level.' (*A report on supportive self-evaluation for New Audiences projects 2001- 2003*, Aspirational Arts, Arts Council England, 2003)

Many organisations reviewed their existing working and marketing practices and developed partnerships with the community and/or voluntary sector to reach disabled groups.

New partnerships were also generated by mainstream arts organisations, disabled individuals, disability organisations and development agencies. The Disability strand involved 21 organisations working with 175 partners, and 56 of these partnerships were completely new relationships. Projects rated the following factors as stimulating change in organisational practice:

- meeting disabled people for first time
- receiving training from disabled people about disability
- being challenged to put access into practice and examining policy

The programme did not manage to substantially address the issue of attracting mainstream audiences to disability work, although several disability arts companies raised important issues around how they market themselves. Examples of good practice include some touring work by disability companies and the national research programme *Knocking on Doors*, from which came the Arts Council action plan *Opening Doors*. Development of a new disability arts circuit is currently being taken forward but there are clear opportunities for development of artists and audiences.

New Audiences Guidance Notes indicated the programme also sought to contribute to the debate around monitoring disabled audiences. 'The ultimate aspiration is to move away from approaches which "count" disabled people, identify them by "badges" of impairment (wheelchairs, hearing aids etc) or tick boxes, and towards those which can evaluate improved participation by disabled people through qualitative, cultural and integrational indicators.' There was some evidence through the programme of finding alternative ways of measuring audience response, but it cannot be said to have provided an evaluation framework. The issue of monitoring and measuring impacts in relation to disabled audiences still remains to be addressed.

The evaluation suggests that several projects (**Innovate, Hands Up, Never Again! Includo, Action Disability Arts**) could be transferred or rolled out nationally. The feasibility of this should be considered. The Arts Council can also play a major role in disseminating good practice. The forthcoming Arts Council publication *A good practice guide: audience development and disabled audiences* will assist in this process.

Resources

General

Beyond Barriers, Arts Council England, 1998

Marketing and Audience Development for Disabled Audiences, Arts Council England, 2004

This will be a practical guide drawing on New Audiences case studies that will help arts practitioners to improve their marketing and develop ongoing relationships with audiences.

New Audiences research projects

Double Jeopardy, De Montfort University, 2003, is available from www.dmu.ac.uk in an interactive presentation format

Supported by New Audiences Regional Challenge, Arts Council England, East Midlands commissioned major new research examining barriers to culturally diverse disabled people participating and engaging with the arts. The report makes a number of recommendations around employment of Black disabled workers, staff training, consultation and joint agency work.

Everitt, Dave, *Arts and disability interfaces: new technology, disabled artists and audiences*, Arts Council England, 2001

Ladd, Dr Paddy, *Deaf Theatre and Deafhood*, Bristol University, 2003, from the Deafway Sign Language Arts Project

Opening Doors (Arts Council England, 2002)

Action plan to strengthen the touring practices of, and circuits for, disability related arts work. It also summarises the main findings of research *Knocking on Doors* carried out in 2000. Only available online.

Talking Images Guide and *Talking Images Research*, RNIB and VocalEyes Publications, 2003, both available from
RNIB Customer Services
Phone: 0845 702 3153
Email cservices@rnib.org.uk

New Audiences evaluations

A report on supportive self-evaluation for New Audiences projects 2001- 2003, Aspirational Arts, Arts Council England, 2003

An evaluation of the role and impact of the New Audiences Programme on participating organisations, Arts Intelligence, Arts Council England, 2003

Arts Council North West focused on disability through their Regional Challenge Programme. Two publications document good practice and lessons learned:

The Arts and Disabled People, Arts Council England, North West, 2001

I liked everything, Arts Council England, North West, 2004

Delin, Annie, *The Hands Up project: Developing access for Deaf audiences to arts events and venues in the city of Derby*, Arts Council England, East Midlands and Derby City Council, March 2003

Evaluation of Gateway One and Gateway Two of Arts Council England's New Audiences Programme, Final Report, Cultural Management and Policy Group, De Montfort University, Leicester, 2003

New Audiences Programme Gateway Two (Disability) Key findings from an independent evaluation, The Cultural Management and Policy Group, De Montfort University, Leicester, 2003

New Audiences toolkits and guides

A wide range of toolkits, seminars, research and resources have been produced through the New Audiences Programme to support organisations in widening access to disabled audiences.

Action for Access Guide, Arts Council England, 2004

The Guide provides practical information for arts organisations on how to make their venues, services and products more accessible to disabled people. It explains the Disability Discrimination Act, due to become law in October 2004, as well as topics such as programming, accessible print, building an accessible website, pricing and clear signs. NWDAF will support the implementation of the Guide and there is a range of seminar activity being offered.

Following a major regional training programme supported by New Audiences, Arts Council England, Yorkshire has produced two documents:

eQuality Resources for Arts, Disability and Access: The Directory, Arts Council England, Yorkshire and ADA inc, 2000

This covers areas such as legislation, employment practice and artform specific issues.

eQuality Disability Action Planning for Arts Organisations: The Handbook, Arts Council England, Yorkshire and ADA inc, 2000

This focuses on disability action planning, helping organisations to develop policies and practices tailored to their own stages of development.

Never Again! interactive cd-rom based training package by Mind the Gap, aimed at venue staff, was purchased by the Arts Council and distributed to regularly funded venues, festivals, agencies, rural touring schemes and disability arts organisations, and will also be sent to each of the Arts Council regional offices.

Accompanying the cd-rom is *Again and Again*, a printed guide to programming work by learning disability related companies. Designed to be distributed amongst relevant staff, the booklet has practical information for programming, press and PR, front of house, marketing, box office and technical departments. Available from:

Mind the Gap

Phone: 01274 544683

Email: Rachel@mind-the-gap.org.uk

£75 + VAT (or £56.25 each + VAT for order of 5 or more)

£55 + VAT for UK registered charities (or £37.50 each + VAT for orders of 5 or more)

Articles and resources

CreativePeople is a network of organisations providing information, advice and guidance to people working in the arts and those wishing to work in the arts and crafts sector. CreativePeople comprises 10 regional and artform partnerships.

Sue Williams is the CreativePeople disability coordinator whose role is to identify and support arts professionals and arts practitioners through specific audience development needs across England.

New Audiences has supported the CreativePeople Professional Development Network with a £65,000 development budget between 2000 and 2002, including funding for the *Double Exposure* seminar programme.

Rose, Catherine, 'Essential Audiences - Disability and New Audiences', in *ArtsProfessional*, Issue 53, 30 June 2003

The Good Gallery Guide is available online from www.goodgalleryguide.com. Initially started as a guide to help disabled people plan visits to art galleries, the Good Gallery Guide can be used by all visitors. Includes details of how to get to galleries, what facilities you will find there, and a personal review of the gallery. The guide is not an access audit but simply looks at the visitor's experience of the gallery – from the carpets to the coffee.

Williams, Sue, 'Taking responsibility for access?' in *Animated*, winter 2003

Seminars and conferences

Access = Audiences seminars, West Midlands Disability Arts Forum, DASH (Disability Arts in Shropshire) and Audiences Central (formerly Birmingham Arts Marketing), June 2003 and funded by Arts Council England, West Midlands.

Double Exposure: Exposing excellence in the continuing professional development of disabled people in the arts, held at The Resource Centre, London in February 2004 and Zion Arts Centre, Manchester in March 2004.

Two-day seminars in Manchester and London were devised to help organisations within the Creative People network, but also of interest to anyone involved in professional development, disability and the cultural industries. Subjects included developing models of mentoring and peer support, training opportunities and informal ways to share practice, harnessing new technology and overcoming geographical, financial and physical barriers.

Informing New Practice, held at Birmingham Hippodrome on 9 June 2003, seminar aimed at artistic directors, arts officers, promoters and programmers to discuss practice, marketing work to venues and reaching new audiences.

Outreach: Where we are, where we could be, held at the Lighthouse, Wolverhampton on 30 June 2003, aimed at education and outreach staff and

freelance artists to explore culturally diverse work and discuss creating accessible environments and workshops.

Programming Innovations, Arts Council England, London, held at Sadlers Wells Theatre, London in May 2003

A one-day event to promote the work of London-based disabled and deaf artists to venue management and programming staff of London venues. Innovate information pack available from www.artscouncil.org.uk/newaudiences

Providing Accessible Information and Marketing to Disabled Audiences, one-day seminar held at Belgrade Theatre, Coventry on 23 June 2003 for press and marketing staff focusing on accessible design for print and interactive web design.

Talking Images Conference, English Heritage, London, 20-21 May 2003

The two-day conference aimed to support greater accessibility to museums, galleries and heritage sites by visually impaired people and was based on findings from the Talking Images project led by Vocaleyes.

10 Families

Context

42% of the population live in recognisable family units of adults and children, over 30% of which contain the 11.7 million dependent children living in the UK today¹². The growing diversity of family life and issues such as family breakdown, the decline of traditional family structures, increased mobility and parents' lack of time for family commitments due to longer working hours, put pressure on the ability of families to engage in arts and leisure activities as a group.

Arts Council England adopts a broad and inclusive definition of the family, reflecting the range of formal and informal relationships that currently exist. It believes that family friendliness is an important aspiration for the arts. 'Family friendly' describes both an attitudinal and a practical approach. On the one hand it is about the development of a philosophy and ethos that is family focused and ingrained within the culture of an organisation; on the other, it is about putting the physical resources in place to make a family visit to an arts venue an enjoyable and stress free experience. Both are key components for encouraging family visits and ultimately making families feel welcome and respected.

The arts sector has significant information on family needs, behaviours and motivations. Learning from this can help it to achieve more in practice. Current barriers to success include: the lack of understanding at individual organisation level of family needs, issues and opportunities; problems in identifying and sustaining good practice; limited resources and inadequate facilities; a lack of quality product for the whole family and use of inappropriate communication channels and marketing materials.

The environment, people, marketing and promotion, participation and above all the art itself all have a part to play. Staff should be committed to, and their attitudes reflect, the ethos that families need to be treated with respect, warmth and courtesy. Arts activities should be all year round and have a diversity of appeal. Arts organisations should develop policies underpinned by ongoing dialogue with family groups based on structured exchanges of information, user panels and the monitoring and evaluation of all activities.

¹² Office of National Statistics www.statistics.gov.uk

In a Scottish research study, Sarah Argent uses the phrase 'child and family friendly' to describe venues 'in which children, young people and their families and carers feel comfortable and welcomed ... demonstrated in the physical space and its facilities, and in the attitude of staff ... a space in which work programmed and created for these groups can be seen to its best advantage without being compromised artistically'.¹³

Arts venues should be a natural gathering place for families wanting to spend time together. They can offer: a high quality product with an educational/child development theme; social interaction; and low cost experiences in safe, clean, reliable environments. Becoming family friendly can generate additional income for the arts and be a creative stimulus to the development of artistic programmes.

According to the marketing and audience development agency TEAM in Merseyside, Family Friendly is a way for event organisers to:

- engage with a difficult to reach audience segment
- achieve lifelong learning objectives
- develop community participation
- communicate cost effectively with families
- combat social exclusion

New Audiences commissioned a research audit by Pam Pfrommer, *Family friendliness – audit of recent research and recommendations for the development of family audience and the arts*, published in March 2002, which brought together existing information and good practice in the development of family audiences. Based on a national sample of arts organisations, funders, audience development agencies and local authorities, it highlighted some of the issues organisations face in reaching family audiences. Key considerations for organisations focusing on family audiences include:

- creating a holistic organisational approach
- increasing the number of arts events for families
- improving facilities for children and families
- undertaking consultation with families
- building partnerships with arts and non-arts agencies
- developing evaluation mechanisms and benchmarks

¹³ *Research Study into a Network of Centres for Arts for Children and Young People in Scotland*, Sarah Argent, The Task Force, July 2000

Family friendliness is part of the broader imperative for arts organisations to become inclusive and welcoming focal points within communities, enabling them to contribute to social as well as financial organisational objectives.

New Audiences overview

The total number of projects funded across the programme relating to the audience focus of families was **40**, totalling **£1,326,954**.¹⁴ The total number of audiences reached by these projects was **55,822**.

The term 'family' embraced a range of ages and relationships, from very small children to elders and from single parent to extended families and carers. Family projects were designed to appeal to these different combinations of people and groups. Between 1998 and 2003, the New Audiences Programme supported the following types of activity:

- improvements to venue policies and facilities for family audiences
- family friendly training for arts venue staff
- new forms and ways of presenting arts work to family audiences
- promotional campaigns to raise awareness of the arts amongst families
- new approaches to developing family audiences, including: outreach work with family groups; involvement of families in venue programming and marketing; ticket pricing and transport schemes

The New Audiences strand New Approaches to Presentation directly responded to the Henley Centre research report¹⁵, which illustrated what Britain might be like in 2010. Trends pertinent to families included:

- the traditional family set-up remains dominant and is the one to which most people aspire
- despite this, the typical household of married couple with children is on the decline – many couples are choosing not to have children and there is a rapid growth of single person households and lone parents
- some culturally diverse communities are at the forefront of change, whilst others are still experiencing more traditional family structures

¹⁴ maximum values, see research findings in Appendix 2

¹⁵ *Towards 2010: new times, new challenges for the arts*, The Henley Centre for Forecasting, Arts Council England, 2000

Desired outcomes from the New Approaches to Presentation strand included: increased knowledge and information on families' needs and wants; the creation of policies and strategies to improve engagement with families; and the development or improvement of arts programmes and facilities to meet identified needs.

Family projects

This section will provide an overview of the key themes and approaches emerging from the family projects. These themes and approaches, which sometimes overlap, can be summarised as: making venues family friendly; reaching low income families; and consortia working to develop family audiences.

1 *Making venues family friendly*

Organisations used New Audiences funding in a variety of ways to make their venues more family focused. Some brought in external consultants or agencies to provide training and advice, whilst others made improvements to programming, marketing and education activities.

The majority placed the emphasis on staff training to develop understanding of families' needs. Blackfriars Arts Centre, for example, employed an outreach marketer to develop new contacts in the community and train core staff to attract families to its music events. This post was vital to the success of the project and has been retained. The centre also consulted with families through family forums, and has developed mailing lists and a ticket pricing policy for family visits.

'The principle of family attendances is now firmly at the centre of Blackfriars activities, and even initially sceptical staff members have been won over by the new atmosphere.' (Blackfriars Arts Centre, from *What Happened Next*, Cultural Intelligence Ltd, 2003)

New Audiences also supported organisations in commissioning research into local family audiences' needs and wants. This informed their projects and in some cases helped them to integrate family friendly work into mainstream programme activity.

Many projects addressed barriers to engagement: attitudinal, physical, economic and social. They developed policies and principles that helped them to work with

and reach families, making a 'family friendly' culture more easily achievable. Many of these changes were not inherently difficult or expensive.

Some organisations reviewed the way that they presented their product to family audiences. Eastern Orchestral Board partnered The Academy of St Martin in the Fields (ASMF), Cliffs Pavilion and Harlow Playhouse to create a new programme of **Family Friendly Music Days**. They recognised that there were many concerts for children but few for the whole family. They introduced participatory elements including visual arts and dance as part of the experience, and encouraged the orchestra and conductor to interact with the audiences. 'Feedback from the players shows just how liberating, rewarding and exhilarating they found it to work in this way.' (Head of Concerts, ASMF) 600 adults and children attended, and 63% of the children indicated that the participation element was one of the primary attractions. 96% of the audience said they would attend a family concert again.

On the Buses aimed to attract family audiences for visual arts activities across five major arts galleries in West Yorkshire. Led by regional marketing agency Audiences Yorkshire, it worked with families of primary and middle school children. They were invited to the galleries through personalised letters, free transport was provided, and exhibitions linked the children's arts work to gallery exhibitions. The results were encouraging, with 65 adults and 112 children attending. Of the 40 families involved, only four had visited the gallery before as a family. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive with the majority of families saying they would visit the gallery again.

The **Barbican Beacon** project tested new ways of communicating with families in the Barbican Centre's neighbouring inner city boroughs. It aimed to embrace all types of family groups across the work of the organisation, integrating family work into the centre's core activity.

Case study

The Barbican Centre, Barbican Beacon

In 2000/1 New Audiences awarded The Barbican Centre £30,000 to coordinate **Barbican Beacon**, a project providing a taste of several aspects of Barbican arts activity. It offered children and their families high quality performance experiences and opportunities to get involved with the venue out of school hours. This included two festivals encouraging children and families, through their local schools, to take

part in activities together, including workshops, education events and performances across a number of art forms.

The broad aim of **Barbican Beacon** was to develop the family programme and build relationships with families across London. A further ambition was to encourage families at five partner schools in Tower Hamlets through their *Adopt the Barbican* programme. Initial research identified a number of cultural and economic barriers – as well as transport problems – to realising this ambition. Consequently activity was refocused on socially excluded families within walking distance of the venue.

The programme went back to grass roots to understand the changing needs of the family audience, and helped staff at the Barbican to visit other family friendly venues to make comparisons.

In the first stage, five research projects were undertaken involving:

- family focus groups with attenders and non-attenders
- focus group consultation to develop a family marketing strategy
- analysis of lifestyle and entertainment patterns of families
- demographic and socio-economic research into families based in the Barbican neighbourhood
- Family Days Out – a benchmarking exercise of family friendly venues

The second stage focused on developing the Barbican in family friendly practice, from front of house customer care to feedback and evaluation. Staff training integrated family issues across all departmental functions. It included: centre wide induction and training; briefing programmes for stewards and box office staff at family events; expansion of Education Assistants programme; a *Marketing to Families* seminar for all marketing and Barbican education staff; and *Copywriting for Families* training for Barbican education staff.

The third stage, based on the research findings, was the creation of a toolkit of materials to communicate with families. This included:

- an overall identity for family activities across all materials
- redesigning the Barbican's leaflet for children, Splodge Club, with stronger images, brighter colours and a clearer grid system
- *Family News*, a publication dedicated to the family programme

Key successes included:

- development of a database of 7,000 addresses
- demographic information on families
- creation of a strong visual identity within the overall Barbican brand
- improved communication due to dedicated print and materials
- a significant increase in attendance from families from diverse backgrounds
- a marked growth in repeat attenders
- 7,000 family tickets sold in 2001
- a 20% increase in attendance at Family Film Club
- the first ever sell-out family festival

Most significantly, the project created a cultural shift across the organisation, integrating a family orientated approach across centre activities. Family work is now firmly embedded in the Barbican's artistic mix, and received an internal budget uplift of £60,000 for 2002/3.

The original aim of trying to attract socially excluded families proved over-ambitious. However, The Barbican has begun to make links with the Corporation of London Youth Group, play centres in EC1, Neighbourhood Programme and Toffee Park Adventure Playground Festival. The Barbican aims to play a significant role in the cultural development and regeneration of the area and has made a commitment to address this issue through a five-year programme of events.

'The investment was spent looking at best ways to communicate with family audiences and this has formed the basis of a solid marketing campaign which is part of our core communication. If we are ever going to embed arts into social and leisure time, we need to ensure that people have access to it at a family level, then at a teenage level then at adult level – that progression is very important.' (Jillian Barker, Barbican Centre)

As well as venue based festivals such as those at The Barbican, New Audiences funded research demonstrated that other festival formats can be attractive to family audiences, as they are drawn to the whole festival 'experience'. The first national research into the impact of folk festivals, funded by New Audiences through an award to the Association of Festival Organisers in 2003, found among

other things that there is a real family atmosphere at folk festivals. 'People find festivals accessible and family friendly. They are holidays with music. Unlike other music festivals, there is a real family atmosphere.'

Findings show that:

- 38% of festival goers have children under five years old
- 32% regularly take their children to festivals
- 29% of parties attending a folk festival include at least one child and 20% can only attend festivals in the school holidays
- 64% of festivals have dedicated family activities
- 38% of festivals report a recent increase in the number of family attenders and/or activities

2 Reaching low income families

Reaching low income family groups was important to many projects. Barriers for socially excluded families include: lack of childcare; venues and activities that are not child friendly; transport; cost; lack of time; and unappealing programming. The perception of the arts as exclusive and elitist was also an important factor. Organisations aimed to develop relationships with families who felt the arts were 'not for them' by addressing intellectual barriers as much as social and economic ones.

Organisations in non-arts sectors working with socially excluded families recognised how cultural sector initiatives could support their own objectives. Cross-sector working enabled the sharing of resources and expertise, and helped arts organisations to consolidate their role within communities.

Sure Start was a strong partner in many projects. In **Family Friendly Oxford**, Pegasus Theatre focused on hard to reach families through the Rose Hill Sure Start Family Centre, and of those attending, 80% had never been to a theatre before. Excluded families from Ventnor, Isle of Wight participated in **Telling Tales**. Arts and non-arts agencies, including Early Years Unit, Healing Arts, Sure Start, Island Volunteers and the Market Towns initiative, worked together to attract family audiences to Telling Tales activities offered by Dot to Dot. The project far exceeded its target of 40 new family groups, with 75 families attending two or more workshops.

Case study

Oakengates Theatre, Oakengates Theatre and Lawley Sure Start

In 2001 New Audiences awarded £27,000 to **Oakengates Theatre and Lawley Sure Start**. The Arts and Entertainments division of Telford and Wrekin Council, which runs the Oakengates Theatre in Telford, established the partnership with Lawley Sure Start to work with parents with children under five years old. It concentrated on the theatre's immediate community, looking at why families living within the Lawley ward of Telford, an area of high social and economic deprivation, did not attend family focused performances in arts venues. It looked at ways of bridging the gap between local, familiar non-arts spaces where families did attend performances, and arts venues such as the Oakengates Theatre. The theatre's family friendly policy and programming was also reviewed.

The project had three core elements:

- an initial development period, during which a steering group with local parents was established
- programmes of arts activities during the summer and autumn school holidays
- two independent consultants who worked with participants and evaluated the project

An arts programme was set up in local community venues, linked to a programme of free visits to shows and workshops at Oakengates Theatre. The partnership with Sure Start enabled access to these venues and lent credibility to the project. It also helped to allay parents' concerns about cost and childcare and gave the project a firm foothold in the community. 25% of the parents interviewed said they would only attend similar events if they were organised by Sure Start.

The project is an important example of creative partnership building across sectors. It built on the strengths of both organisations and enabled families to experience high quality, child friendly arts events locally and conveniently. Alongside the commitment of both partners, a key factor in its success was the use of an experienced and local project manager with strong community arts skills. The theatre put in place mechanisms to sustain its relationship with the Sure Start families, such as continued parental involvement in future programming, targeted marketing and free membership to family schemes.

Outcomes

- 1,494 people participated, in the project, of which 866 were new attenders
- 73 Sure Start families participated in the project
- 570 people participated in workshop or participatory arts activity and 1,230 people visited Oakengates Theatre
- 59 adults and 107 children participated in the two-day workshops held during autumn half term

3 Consortia working to develop family audiences

Consortia projects provided good examples of the role of audience development and marketing agencies in building and sustaining project partnerships. These projects operated more effectively due to economies of scale. Agencies' knowledge of the marketplace, venues, artists and funders was invaluable. They provided information, services and project management support, all of which acted as a catalyst to encourage arts organisations to work together to achieve similar aims.

Theatre for Families involved a network of six arts organisations throughout Kent and Sussex. Facilitated by an external consultant together with Sussex Arts Marketing, this network developed the expertise and capacity to improve its work with families. The principal outcomes were:

- 1,358 family participants, of which 65 were new attenders
- the development of family consumer panels
- equipment purchases and training programmes for venues
- a regional print marketing campaign of 54,000 postcards
- a family friendly branded website with details of venues and events
- an imaginative press campaign which concluded with high profile 'family friendly venue awards'

The consortium also contributed to an easy-to-read guide on how to adopt a family friendly approach.

Family Friendly - London Pilot (FFLP) was a collaborative audience development project with 10 partners in south and south west London. It included

a *Getting Family Friendly* seminar that offered an overview of the theory and practice of family friendly work in the arts.

The London Arts Audience Development Forum was awarded £128,900 by New Audiences to explore whether the family friendly approach could advance organisations' aims around inclusion and community relations and yield long-term audience loyalty. The aims of the project were 'soft', the majority relating to individual learning and organisational culture.

The audience development agency Audiences London led the project, working with 10 organisations from south and south west London of varying scales, artforms and levels of family friendly experience. They included a youth circus, galleries, a live literature promoter and theatres. The **Family Friendly** programme was built around their collective needs and included seminars with a range of family oriented speakers from inside and outside the arts. Research was undertaken to canvas the perceptions and needs of families. Each organisation was supported to develop an action plan appropriate to their circumstances. An audit enabled organisations to develop their aims and highlight specific initiatives which would further their relationship with families. Bursaries of £3,500 enabled them to test these initiatives, which ranged from a membership scheme to the creation of a family room.

Collective publicity for the group's family activities was developed through a website www.fun4families.org visited by over 20,000 people. A user-friendly report with an honest appraisal of the project, discoveries made en route and an analysis of what works and what doesn't, was made available online and at two free *Getting Family Friendly* seminars for arts organisations in London. The original group has expanded to become a growing London-wide network. It aims to keep family friendliness on the agenda and ensure ongoing evaluation, ideas and skills sharing, and maintenance of the website for families.

Participating organisations said of the project: 'The project gave us the time to think laterally and creatively about programming family friendly events; a luxury for our organisation.' (Orleans House Gallery)

'Not having focused on work for families before, we were able to see how other people were doing things. This was very helpful, particularly in clarifying what the organisation was going to do.' (Apples & Snakes)

'It was great to be given knowledge of other people's research and to be able to

compare other people's practice. The concentration within the timeframe has resulted in an interesting and strong network ... An awareness of family friendly has been absorbed by BAC ... Within senior management it's had a huge impact ... Everyone is buying in a big way.' (Battersea Arts Centre)

Arts About Manchester's (AAM) **Family Friendly** collaborative campaigns have been running successfully in Greater Manchester for seven years. A successful application to the New Audiences programme enabled the agency to work in partnership with Lancashire Hills Country Tourism Consortium (LHC) to roll out **Family Friendly** in a new, rural environment. The tourism campaign allowed **Family Friendly** to extend its identity beyond AAM's membership to create partnerships within the wider cultural and leisure sectors. It placed a greater emphasis on festivals and outdoor activities than venue based activity. Sponsorship was levered from the commercial sector including pubs, supermarkets and transport providers. There were notable promotional successes: 75% of families surveyed recalled the families promotional material and the project generated a database of 2,000 families interested in family events and activities.

Collaborative working enabled participating organisations to share ideas and pool resources to achieve something that would not have been possible individually. The new rural context demonstrated how flexible **Family Friendly** can be and its potential to be successful in a variety of situations. The participating organisations are continuing to work together to sustain this successful initiative.

The AAM **Family Friendly** model led to additional generic marketing campaigns and has informed family friendly practice further afield. Strategic collaborative campaigns of this kind have resulted in 'family friendly' becoming an instantly recognisable brand. Consortium agencies such as AAM, Audiences London, Sussex Arts Marketing and MAX in Oxford have disseminated good practice nationally, spreading awareness within the sector.

Broadcast and press media were strong allies in promoting greater awareness of the arts among families. A partnership between the Arts Council and the National Family and Parenting Institute (NFPI) led to an arts campaign for Parents Week October 2002. An advocacy video and 30,000 promotional brochures were distributed nationally, including to the 1,100 groups on the Parents' Week database. Information and listings were provided on 422 family arts events taking place across England during that week.

'We were delighted to be able to encourage families and the practitioners working with them to use the arts facilities available in their area. The family groups we work with were delighted to have an imaginative theme to make their Parents Week projects attractive to as many families as possible ... we hope that the arts venues will continue to further the links they have with family groups, not only to bring parents and children to their venues, but also to plan their work with families in mind.' (NFPI)

Classic FM's Classic Families project worked through schools to contact families with an interest in classical music that had not previously attended a classical music concert. It introduced family groups to classical music through carefully selected concerts in regional venues across the UK and diminished some of the barriers associated with this art form. Half of the attenders had never previously attended a classical music concert.

A consortium approach was brokered by Arts Council South East, which brought together six Oxfordshire-based organisations in a project that dovetailed with the recommendations of its regional Theatre Review.

Case study

Arts Council England, South East, Oxford Family Friendly

In 2002 Arts Council England, South East allocated £107,000 to **Oxford Family Friendly** as part of the New Approaches to Presentation strand. The project continued until December 2003. Organisations involved included Oxford Playhouse, Oxfordshire Touring Theatre Company, Pegasus Youth Theatre and Modern Art Oxford. All were already committed to working with families but felt they could improve and develop joint approaches to family friendly work. The project was overseen by the regional audience development agency MAX and project managed by a consultant.

Oxford Family Friendly aimed to:

- develop a family friendly culture across partner organisations
- increase the volume and diversity of audiences for family events (particularly from hard to reach audiences)

- share benefits through collaboration and create a means of sustaining success

Projects included the *Young Consultants* scheme run by Play Train, a national training agency with Rose Hill and St Andrews after school clubs. Key staff members from four partner organisations were trained in how to run a young people's consultancy group. *The Toast and the Toaster* looked at families and intergenerational work and was promoted as part of the **Oxford Family Friendly** weekend. Working with the Sure Start Family Centre in Rose Hill, two project partners piloted a *Network Marketing Scheme* to attract hard to reach families from the Rose Hill community. The *Modern Art Trolley* was a new practical resource designed to illustrate the work of one partner venue and help families feel comfortable with the venue. Other initiatives included developing a *Community Network Who's Who* contact list; training in family focused customer care; and relationship building work through the John Radcliffe Hospital's employee development scheme.

Outcomes

- improved facilities in three venues
- greater awareness of customer care across departments in the larger organisations
- programming of three shows and one dance workshop for family audiences
- development of volunteers and valuable links with 'network marketers'
- provision of crèche facilities at performances
- strong links with non-arts agencies such as Play Train, Sure Start and Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals Trust

'I am bowled over by what it's meant to local people in terms of them going to the theatre but also of empowerment. It works because it is linked to people's passions and because it is about people linking with each other rather than anonymous services.' (Tan Lea, Director, Sure Start Networkers' Scheme, from *What Happened Next? Cultural Intelligence*, 2003)

Providers were divided between those who saw the initiative as a device to help them deliver some practical developments and those who saw it as an opportunity to look more closely at how their organisation approached the whole question of customer care and socially inclusive, intergenerational work. Some partners expressed frustration that a collaborative creative project failed to emerge from the initiative. Although some programme changes did occur and some work was

commissioned, paucity of product remained a key concern, particularly that which has diverse appeal and encourages ownership by children, parents and carers.

Following the project, the venues formed a formal partnership and applied to Grants for the Arts to continue to develop work for families and to sustain the infrastructure of the partnership. It successfully secured £30,000 over three years to allow joint working to support greater family friendliness and to reach out to those people who do not currently attend. This way of working has attracted interest and support from Oxford City Council and Oxford Inspires.

Findings

For organisations to adopt a family friendly approach they must first create a safe environment with facilities that cater for family groups. They must offer a warm and genuine welcome for families, provide accurate information for planning a visit, programme activities and events that will appeal to all ages within the family group, and represent value for money.

Additional financial resources are not necessarily required. Some of the most successful projects involved relatively minor changes that had a major impact. Changes in customer care, for instance, require comparatively little investment but can make a huge difference for families. Pricing can be developed to take into account family groups and what constitutes a 'family' ticket. Family forums, panels and advisory groups can help attract new attenders and develop longer term relationships with new audiences.

Family friendly training for venues helps to usher in new policies and facilities and leads to new or enhanced skills, particularly in areas relating to front of house and customer care, as well as legal aspects of child care and child protection. It also improves marketing skills; family audiences respond well to marketing aimed specifically at them, such as kite marks and logos. Some venues developed their own kite marks, raising issues for some venues of examining the feasibility of a national family friendly kite mark for the arts.

Venues were concerned about the lack of relevant, high quality affordable work aimed at family audiences, particularly work suitable for all ages and available outside holiday periods. A number of projects developed appropriate and relevant work for families without compromising artistic quality, often by developing

activities around the core product. Festivals proved especially popular with families looking for an accessible and family friendly arts experience.

Conversely, theatre companies that specialise in work with children and families noted a lack of professional respect accorded them by some arts venues and the wider sector. Support is required for both arts companies and artists wishing to develop appropriate product as well as market themselves effectively.

Partnerships, including with non-arts agencies, encourage new ways of working and are often key to the success of projects. They result in the sharing of networks, contacts, marketing data, resources and knowledge of good practice. However, they take time to develop and can be difficult to sustain following short-term funding. The Arts Council can play a role here, by brokering partnerships at national level with other sectors such as tourism and broadcasting. Independent arts workers and consultants also have a valuable role to play in building and continuing project partnerships.

Family friendliness may not, on its own, overcome the many complex barriers to some 'excluded' families attending a venue. However, a venue that has a considered family friendly approach is more likely to tackle such barriers with sensitivity and understanding.

There is a need for further research on family leisure choices, behaviour patterns and decision-making processes. There is also a need for training, dissemination of models of good practice and the development of clear and practical guidelines for arts organisations wishing to become family friendly. This could include toolkits incorporating successful examples from the New Audience Programme initiatives.

Resources

General

Rose, Catherine, *The Family Factor*, Arts Council England, East, 2002.

A practical guide to making arts venues more accessible to families, based on a training programme with arts organisations in East England.

Towards 2010: new times, new challenges for the arts, The Henley Centre for Forecasting, Arts Council England, 2000

New Audiences reports

New Audiences projects have created a range of family friendly resources for the sector, including good practice guide manuals focusing on family friendly issues:

Arts About Manchester's *Family Friendly* report contains a cd-rom of previous research and campaign outcomes and can be ordered from

Arts About Manchester

Phone: 0161 238 4500.

Email: jo@aam.org.uk

Price £12.50 plus £1 p&p

Also www.aam.org.uk contains the five key guiding principles that were developed during their family friendly project with member venues.

Theatre for Families Quick Guide for Venues, FutureDream Media, Arts Council England, 2003, available from

FutureDream Media

Phone: 01303 258 985

Orme, Eric and Neill, Tina, *What Happened Next? A brief study of the legacy of New Audience Programme Projects relating to Young People and Families with particular regard to organisational change and the development of good practice*, Cultural Intelligence Ltd, Arts Council England, 2003

Pfrommer, Pam, *Family Friendliness: An audit of recent research and recommendations for development*, Arts Council England, 2002

Articles and other publications

New Audiences worked with the NFPI on Parents Week 2000, and produced an advocacy document and video:

Rose, Catherine, *Arts for Families*, Arts Council England, 2000.

For Parents' Week 21-27 October 2002, New Audiences in partnership with NFPI, the coordinator of Parents Week, working together to encourage families to explore what is on offer in local galleries, theatres and arts centres.

Rose, Catherine and Gray, Iain, *Discovering the Arts: Family activities during Parents' Week 2002*, Arts Council England, 2002.

A promotional video providing a 'taste' of family friendly arts activity across England.

Rose, Catherine, 'Essential Audiences – New Lifestyles', in *ArtsProfessional*, Issue 49, 5 May 2003

Seminars, conferences and promotions

Arts Council England, North West organised a Family Friendly seminar at Wigan Pier, Lancashire, 21 May 2003

This was aimed at arts organisations in the North West who wished to adopt or extend a 'family friendly' approach.

Getting Family Friendly – Audiences London Seminar, Science Museum, London, 6 November 2003

This seminar promoted the findings of their Family Friendly London Pilot Project.

Presentation of New Audiences family case studies in Australia with downloadable *Audience Development Forum* report, Adelaide, 21 March 2003, available from Essential Audiences section (5 May 2003) of the New Audiences website www.artscouncil.org.uk/newaudiences

11 Social inclusion

Context

The term 'socially excluded' is used – by the Government and by the Arts Council – to describe individuals and communities who are disadvantaged by a combination of factors, for example by poverty and other social and economic factors. 'Social inclusion' describes attempts to provide pathways and opportunities for excluded people to reconnect to and participate in society.

The arts can support the creative and personal development of excluded individuals. At a community level they can bring people together, promoting neighbourhood renewal and cultural citizenship. Working in partnership with other sectors – such as the criminal justice system, health and education – the arts can make a valuable contribution to combating exclusion.

There is a difference between widening access to the arts generally and addressing social exclusion through the arts. Expanding access has always been an important part of the Arts Council's work; advocating the role that the arts can play in addressing social exclusion is, however, a new departure.

In 1999 the Department for Culture, Media and Sport published *Arts and Sport*, a report compiled by Policy Action Team 10 (PAT10) for the government's Social Exclusion Unit. This report looked at how arts and sports could help maximise the impact of government spending and policies in situations of economic and social deprivation. It concluded that: 'Arts and sport, cultural and recreational activity can contribute to neighbourhood renewal and make a real difference to health, crime, employment and education in deprived communities.'

In response to the PAT 10 report, the Arts Council established a task group to take forward work promoting social inclusion. This group recommended that New Audiences funding should support an arts and social inclusion research and development programme to inform future practice. A policy document, *Addressing Social Exclusion: A Framework for Action*, funded by New Audiences and published in 2000, established the parameters for the Arts Council's work in this area.

It identified the three core elements needed to deliver long-term and sustainable benefits for excluded communities as:

- *Valuing* and supporting organisations and individuals who work within a community setting, promoting inclusion and equality of opportunity
- *Building capacity* by supporting or creating infrastructures which can develop and sustain cultural opportunities for excluded groups
- *Working in partnership* advocating the value of the arts to other partners, and unlocking resources from non-arts sectors

The document also described five key initiatives that would lay the foundations for long-term change:

- *Raising the profile*: through a programme of research and data collection which would help the Arts Council to promote good practice and demonstrate the impact the arts can have on community development, neighbourhood renewal and regeneration
- *Addressing the role of regularly funded organisations*: to ensure that each funded organisation makes a firm commitment to extending the impact of its work in the communities that it serves. The proposed model for this would be for funded organisations to work with community partners already engaged in arts activity who would help to provide pathways into local communities
- *A social impact evaluation programme*: the PAT 10 report identified a lack of long-term evaluations of arts and social exclusion projects. A coherent evaluation programme for this type of work could help the Arts Council to advocate for it and lobby more effectively for resources to support it
- *Multi-agency working*: recognising that social exclusion is a broad agenda which the arts alone cannot tackle, partnerships must be formed with other agencies involved in community regeneration
- *Targeting resources*: to make sure that communities experiencing deprivation have better access to funding and other resources available through the Arts Council. This would involve promoting new and existing funding opportunities more effectively, and creating training and skills development opportunities for artists and communities wishing to undertake work in this area.

Each of the above initiatives was in some way piloted through projects funded by the New Audiences programme.

New Audiences overview

The total number of projects related to the audience focus of social inclusion across the Programme was **58**, totalling **£1,488,050**.¹⁶ The total number of audiences reached by these projects was **93,721**.

Audiences focused on included homeless people, people in prisons and within the criminal justice system, people in health settings, people on low incomes and those living in areas of social and economic deprivation.

New Audiences sought to promote and extend good practice in this area: directly, by funding projects, training and partnership working, but also through research which aimed to identify what constitutes good practice and how it can be measured.

Projects addressing social inclusion were funded across the programme. However, in 2000, New Audiences created a specific Social Inclusion strand. The 21 awards within that strand were predominantly research and development projects totalling £692,029 – 55% of total New Audiences funding. Aims of the Social Inclusion strand are given in Appendix 1. Work supported by this strand included:

- **The Arts and Social Inclusion Research Programme:** a major programme of national research evaluating 18 projects and organisations, nominated by regional arts councils, which could help to identify good practice in the area of social inclusion. The research resulted in a series of publications based on an analysis of socially inclusive projects, some of which had been funded by New Audiences, some by other sources
- **Developing practice:** action research projects across England. Fourteen projects were supported that allowed arts organisations already working in the field to develop and document their practice, to help promote wider understanding of this type of work
- **Arts and specialist agency partnerships:** four new partnerships brokered by the Arts Council between specialist arts agencies working in the field of social inclusion and mainstream arts organisations to enable skills sharing and the development of good practice

¹⁶ Maximum value, see research findings in Appendix 2

Much inclusion work came through the Regional Challenge funding strand. Arts Council England, Yorkshire supported a £100,000 programme focusing on young excluded people. Arts Council England, South West used Regional Challenge to match **pARTicipate**, a programme which enabled socially excluded young people to participate in arts activities and develop new skills. Arts Council England, London selected cultural diversity and inclusion as priority areas in its Regional Challenge. In the first year, 1998–9, its *Arts and Inclusion* scheme aimed to create relationships between the arts and ‘socially excluded’ communities. In the last two years of Regional Challenge, its *Creative Neighbourhoods* programme focused on partnerships between arts organisations, local authorities and community regeneration agencies.

Social Inclusion projects

This section provides an overview of key themes and approaches emerging from inclusion projects. They can be summarised as: measuring impact; developing partnerships; and artists’ professional development.

1 Measuring impact

How do the arts measure the impact of activity with socially excluded audiences and how could the measuring process be improved? These were key questions raised by **The Arts and Social Inclusion Research Programme**, a two-year programme of research which began in 2000. It aimed to:

- gather evidence to inform policy and advocacy
- develop and test appropriate evaluation methodologies
- develop measures of success
- evaluate models of initiating and delivering projects
- identify the characteristics of successful initiatives and to look, also, at approaches which do not work and the reasons for this

There were two discrete but related strands of work:

Self-evaluation: Arts consultant Gerri Moriarty worked with organisations nominated by Arts Council regional offices to help them evaluate their practice.

Independent evaluation: Researcher Helen Jermyn evaluated 18 organisations and projects nominated by Arts Council regional offices and a selection of action research case studies funded by New Audiences 2000–2002. Her findings are gathered in *The Art of Inclusion* published by the Arts Council England in 2004

Case study

The Art of Inclusion, commissioned by Arts Council England

The independent programme of evaluation explored the concept of social exclusion and how it is currently being used within the arts sector. It looked at arts practitioners' perceptions of how the arts relate to social exclusion and how they approach this in practice. The findings have been brought together in a publication that includes information on project work and an overview analysis drawing out key themes.

The independent evaluation aimed to test three different 'models' of practice:

- Model One: community led work, where the initiative for the arts project came from a local community or group
- Model Two: arts organisations that work with people from low income communities as a mainstay of their work
- Model Three: Arts Council funded organisations with little or no experience of working with communities in low income areas

Model Two projects, usually managed by participatory arts organisations experienced in social inclusion work, provided the main focus for the research. Arts organisations in Model Three also tended to emphasise participatory projects as the most appropriate type of work to engage with hard to reach communities. None of the projects selected could be described as Model One and this was identified as a gap to be addressed in future research.

Projects varied in terms of their aims and objectives, partnerships and delivery. A wide range of arts was represented including digital arts, textiles, painting, mural making, photography, writing, music making and drama. Participating groups ranged from older people living in sheltered accommodation to families with children under five. Settings ranged from prisons to theatres, from community centres to hostels for the homeless.

The research revealed a wide spectrum of practice and terminology. For example, some projects were developed to 'tackle' social exclusion issues (by addressing crime, health etc). Other projects aimed primarily to develop new audiences for the arts or to increase access to the arts by focusing on socially excluded groups.

Many practitioners were unhappy to categorise communities or participants as 'socially excluded.' One interviewee commented: 'People don't want to be labelled. They don't consider themselves to be in need of social inclusion. That's not how they view themselves at all. It's not appropriate to use that kind of language.'

Some projects targeted geographic areas that experienced high levels of deprivation as measured by funders (such as the Single Regeneration Budget). For example, City Arts worked in a community drop-in centre and with a mental health group based in Nottingham postcode district NG7. Artworks-mk and Milton Keynes Gallery focused on young people living on the Coffee Hall estate, many of whom had been banned from a youth club. The Mercury Theatre worked with young offenders and a writer in residence worked with a group of prisoners in HMP Channings Wood.

Relatively few projects explicitly set out to achieve what are sometimes referred to as 'hard' outcomes: for example, reduction in offending behaviour or improved health. Most projects aimed for outcomes such as building confidence and self-esteem, though few attempted to measure these in a consistent or rigorous way.

Projects that explicitly tackled government targets for social inclusion included **Fast Forward**, which aimed to engage young homeless people in outreach workshops and accredited training; **The Treatment**, in which young people created a play about health issues; and **Vita Nova**, a theatre group for recovering addicts which participated in an extensive drug education programme in collaboration with Dorset Police.

The research looked at qualitative information from 66 artists and staff working for arts organisations and provided information on the processes and challenges associated with this kind of work.

A number of artists and staff felt uncomfortable with generalised claims made about the ability of the arts to 'solve' social exclusion. In one criminal justice system project, for example, both the agency and artists involved steered away from drawing simplistic conclusions about reducing crime or stopping recidivism.

Realism about what art can achieve is conveyed in the following statement by an arts worker: 'A person who participates in a project will still have problems with housing, health, employment at the end of it – participating in an arts project is not magic that solves all.'

Project workers and artists clearly perceived a value in participatory projects that engaged with hard to reach communities. A project worker working within the criminal justice system commented: 'No one thing can stop a person offending but it gives them a real opportunity. It's about discipline, relationships, trust, building self-esteem. You're important and if you're not there, you let people down. It's probably the first time people have wanted them to be there. It turns some of their values on their heads.'

55 participants surveyed by independent research programme often pointed to successful 'soft' outcomes, such as the building of confidence and self-esteem. A participant in the M3 project said: 'I used to slouch lots. It got up my confidence. I think that was the main thing. It wasn't a full blown play, but at the end of the day it was a play at the Mercury Theatre and I thought wow.'

One participant in a project on the Isle of Ventnor commented: 'I am mixing with people who I would never have dreamt of meeting; doing things together with people you walk past in the street every single day but just nod at. We started to communicate with each other and I thought that was a big thing because there has never really been a community in Upper Ventnor like that. Everyone had something positive to do and to concentrate on, something positive rather than how much money you haven't got, or a bill coming in.'

The research considered indicators that might measure qualitative 'soft' outcomes, such as whether participants subsequently felt better about themselves or proud of what they had achieved. However, identifying meaningful indicators for all projects in a sector where practice is so diverse is problematic. The research suggested building up a pool of indicators for use in projects within other sectors such as health, education, employment or crime.

The research also examined partnership working, including arts organisations working in partnerships with non-arts agencies. It suggested that statutory and other agencies were better placed to tackle some of the problems associated with social exclusion than arts organisations working in isolation. Recognising this, some organisations teamed up with specialist services, such as the youth service so that projects could draw on the skills of youth workers as well as artists. Successful partnerships with non-arts agencies often relied on an individual or volunteer who supported the arts initiative and acted as a 'champion'. Partnerships that lacked an effective champion were more precarious.

The research examined issues of sustainability – of maintaining participants’ involvement in the arts, as well as of the continuation and development of the project itself. A barrier to sustainability was the reliance of many Model Two projects on short term funding (including New Audiences funding). Many participatory or specialist arts organisations expressed an interest in working in areas of exclusion in a more strategic way, but were hampered by an insecure core funding base. Some organisations struggled to manage workloads. Several noted a skills shortage: amongst artists and within the arts organisation itself.

The research identified characteristics of successful projects. They included:

- setting clear aims and objectives
- allowing sufficient lead-in and planning time, and time for research
- developing strong partnerships, shared goals and clarity in terms of roles and responsibilities
- planning exit strategies, including for the future welfare of participants

The research concluded that a rich body of data concerning practice had emerged from the programme sample, which can be used to inform future policy and advocacy initiatives.

2 *Developing partnerships*

One of the aims of New Audiences’ inclusion work was to promote partnerships in order to encourage skills sharing and make it more likely that inclusive practices could be embedded into ‘mainstream’ organisations’ work.

Arts Council regional offices worked in new ways with local authorities and brokered partnerships between arts and community organisations. Mainstream arts organisations formed alliances in the non-statutory, voluntary and community sectors, including specialist areas such as criminal justice system, youth services, health and housing. Partnerships were also established between mainstream arts organisations and arts organisations specialising in social inclusion work.

Partnerships with local authorities

Recognising that arts programmes can contribute to the delivery of local government’s other statutory services and help to improve quality of life, Arts Council England, South East worked with local authorities on the £325,005

scheme **Developing Cultural Programmes in Civic Venues**. This aimed to promote social inclusion in geographical areas that, traditionally, have benefited least from the arts funding system, especially coastal resort towns.

Nine venues ran 420 different events ranging from world music shows in bandstands, to experimental theatre, attracting over 34,000 attenders. Independent evaluation of the scheme noted a positive impact on both audiences and organisations. Organisations were supported in planning longer term audience development, and participatory work helped to establish a relationship between people and venues. The scheme has had a lasting impact on the quality of programming. Progress is apparent in the ambition of the partnership agreements subsequently negotiated by Arts Council England, South East with the local authorities.

The independent evaluation by Cathy Westbrook concluded that: 'Projects developed in partnership tend to become more firmly established in local communities than those that are not. Venues that fail to develop partnerships with other agencies (at least informally) are missing a number of useful opportunities. Partnership working not only increases the effectiveness of projects but also makes a clear connection between public funding and public benefit. The key to sustainability is the ongoing commitment of the local authority. Members across all parties need to see that arts programmes can contribute deeper and more meaningful benefits than entertainment alone.'

Partnerships with non-arts agencies

Arts Council England, London allocated much of its Regional Challenge funding, including its 1998–9 **Arts and Inclusion** programme, to a developmental four-year programme of work in partnership with local authorities (see Appendix 1). This work also supported partnerships between arts organisations and non-arts agencies working in areas of social exclusion. For example, one of the projects within **Instrumental** was a music project led by Raw Material, an organisation providing young people with access to professional resources and expertise in music and digital media production. Its partner was BEARS Youth Challenge, a voluntary youth scheme based on a north London estate. The project enabled young people from the estate to take part in multimedia arts and performance and culminated in a showcase event, *Da Rising*, at The Mean Fiddler in Harlesden. Raw Material has since developed two specialist cultural industries training centres in King's Cross, Camden and Brixton, Lambeth.

In Portsmouth, arts agency Dot to Dot managed **Telling Tales**, a six-month project in a socially isolated part of the seaside resort of Ventnor. With £62,000 New Audiences funding it aimed to demonstrate to a range of social service partners, 'the value of arts participation in improving the quality of people's lives'. It set out to involve around 20 families – focusing on single parent households – but succeeded in attracting over 75 families to a broad range of activities, including carnival costume making, samba, mosaics, singing, lantern making, music and batik. Some activities were aimed at the underfives, some at families with school age children. Health visitors were among those who helped the project to involve 'hard to reach' families.

Most participants had had no previous contact with arts activities. Very high levels of appreciation were recorded and evaluators rated the project a clear success. A community arts café has been set up and a little used community hall has been brought back to life. Several artists received business or community development training. Four artists trained with Sure Start in Ryde, learning to share their arts skills with young children. They subsequently gained employment as an artistic collective, Fingerprints.

One artist is quoted – in the special **Inclusion** issue of *MAiLOUT* – as saying: '**Telling Tales** has given me the opportunity and inspiration to take my artistic skills into the community, making an income whilst positively impacting on the creativity of local children.' (*MAiLOUT*, Feb/March, 2004)

Through its many links with non-arts agencies such as Sure Start, regeneration bodies and youth agencies, the project has succeeded in raising awareness of the community's needs and shown how it can be galvanised into action. Because of its strong and very visible impact on the community, plans are being explored to take the project further.

In Oxford, the project **Fastforward** brought together Fusion, Oxford's community arts agency, with homelessness agencies and education providers. It aimed to provide a city-wide arts education project for young homeless people aged 16–30. It wanted to use the arts as a tool to support young people's creative, social and learning skills, helping them to gain the confidence to take up formal learning opportunities. It did this by providing a pathway into formal learning via a programme of arts activities that gradually became more structured.

There were three project phases:

- Phase 1 consisted of outreach sessions delivered at a hostels, shelters and temporary accommodation
- Phase 2 offered structured sessions held at Fusion's base
- Phase 3 involved one to one support for participants who wished to build up their portfolios for accreditation by the Open College Network (OCN)

Fastforward created alternative pathways to training and education for vulnerable young adults. A total of 135 homeless people in Oxford participated in the project. 84 attended sessions regularly and 15 achieved OCN accreditation.

Tara Stewart of Fusion Arts said: 'The project's aim was not to teach art in the formal sense: it was to provide a social learning environment with a strong commitment to working alongside participants in their process of self-development.'

A **Fastforward** participant observed: 'I have been doing arts in my room and I came here to better my skills. I was choked that there were all these beautiful things to work with. I think I've found my own niche.' (*MAiLOUT*, Feb/March, 2004)

In the North East, the **Thorntree Glitter** project led by Middlesborough Council involved Cleveland Craft Centre, East Middlesbrough Education Action Zone, Sure Start and Thorntree Primary School working together in Thorntree – at that time one of the five most deprived wards in the country. The project proposal noted that: 'the biggest barrier to audience participation in the arts is making it relevant to people whose first priority is just to get the basic needs of life.'

Participants were recruited through project partners Sure Start and the local primary school. Middlesborough Council's Arts and Cultural Resource Development Officer worked with the Curator of Cleveland Craft Centre to enlist an artist. The artist was supported to curate work made by the community group and to respond to the experience with her own commission. An exhibition in November 2002 profiled work based on workshops in which children and adults worked together. They sampled different techniques and created designs which were etched by a specialist company and finished by the group using moulding, fashioning and forging techniques.

Partnerships between mainstream arts organisations and organisations specialising in social inclusion

Arts Council England brokered four partnerships between arts agencies with varying levels of expertise in working with socially excluded groups and sectors, to encourage the sharing of skills, knowledge, resources and experience.

Partnerships were formed between:

- Mercury Theatre Colchester and Momentum Arts
- Milton Keynes Gallery and the Arts Workshop Trust
- Birmingham Opera and the Optima Housing Trust
- Royal Shakespeare Company and the Cardboard Citizens, a professional theatre company which works primarily with homeless people

It was hoped that the mainstream arts organisations would benefit from the knowledge, experience and expertise of those specialising in areas of social inclusion, whilst the organisations specialising in social inclusion would benefit from the resources and artistic expertise of mainstream arts organisations. These partnerships were very effective, both in reaching socially excluded groups and in terms of organisational development.

Case study

The Royal Shakespeare Company and Cardboard Citizens, Pericles

New Audiences supported Cardboard Citizens and the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) to work together on a new production of Shakespeare's **Pericles**. The project received £51,000 from New Audiences and further support from the Paul Hamlyn and Foyle Foundations.

The first stage of the project – an hour-long **mini-Pericles** – included five actors, with an asylum seeker in the lead role. It was performed 14 times across London at community and refugee centres, and the audiences were a mixture of refugees and asylum seekers. **Pericles** was chosen because it is a play that explores themes of exile, loss and reunion. This outreach performance was a useful research vehicle for developing the main play. The audiences shared stories about journeys of endurance and hardship to reach the UK, some of which were then incorporated into the main production. Links with the **mini-Pericles**

audiences also resulted in a dance scene in the main production of **Pericles**, which included members of the original audiences as singers and dancers.

The final production featured a combination of RSC and Cardboard Citizens' actors. A performance in a disused warehouse in South East London attracted an audience of homeless and ex-homeless people, refugees and asylum-seekers as well as regular theatre attenders at RSC and Cardboard Citizens' productions.

Outcomes included:

- 420 people came to 13 performances of **mini-Pericles**
- 60 people took part in four dance outreach sessions
- 13 participants attended 16 rehearsals and performed a dance piece in the main production
- four of the Cardboard Citizens' actors who appeared in **Pericles** were homeless people or refugees
- 1,996 people attended 20 performances of the main **Pericles** production

RSC and Cardboard Citizens were able to exchange skills and knowledge, and the partnership resulted in a production that neither organisation would have been capable of alone.

Both organisations are committed to exploring ways of continuing the partnership. Jeremy Adams, RSC's project administrator said, 'Part of RSC's brief is to constantly reinvent Shakespeare's work, to make it fresh and engaging to contemporary audiences. This project was a great opportunity for both companies to draw on each other's particular areas of expertise to generate a new experience for as wide an audience as possible.'

Richard Oyarzabal, Executive Director of Cardboard Citizens, said: 'The challenges have been far outweighed by the benefits. We have benefited from the huge range of skills within the RSC, including production and technical support, casting and voice. In turn the RSC has gained an insight into the work of a company with invaluable expertise in the area of social inclusion.'

A partnership between the Mercury Theatre and Momentum Arts, an agency experienced at working within social inclusion and regeneration contexts, resulted in the **M3** project, which involved two four-week residencies, led by the Associate

Director of the Mercury Theatre in Colchester, for young people referred by North Essex Youth Offending Team. A conference, *Out of the Tick Box*, provided a focal point for this and other arts and social inclusion projects. *Out of the Tick Box* contributed to the arts and inclusion debate and highlighted the following key themes:

- the need to take account of individual learning styles
- artists can invigorate and facilitate wider social processes and objectives
- the dangers of 'parachuting into people's lives' without having adequate resources and/or partnerships to provide progression or support
- the need for effective partnership working to support and sustain opportunities

A recurrent issue for some arts organisations working with excluded communities has been how to convert participation in workshops and outreach programmes into attendance at the arts venue. In the North West, Arts About Manchester and Community Arts North West sought to address this issue through **Open House**.

Open House ran from August 2001 to November 2002. Six groups each attended three arts events. Each group nominated a gatekeeper to organise the trips and report on the experience. The project identified the following barriers:

- cultural relevance and the language used in publicity: for people with English as a second language, understanding the product can be the first barrier
- human interaction and front of house staff: to a group which is new to attending theatre this can be demoralising if not right
- personal confidence: new attenders need to overcome the feeling that venues 'aren't for them'. Knowledge of theatre etiquette is part of this

3 Artists' professional development

Artists working in areas of social inclusion require skills and experience over and above what is normally required for community based work. This has implications for training and professional development. Projects should make sure that artists are not overburdened by excessive demands and expectations. Artists value opportunities which allow them to develop their creativity and artistic practice, as well as working towards more socially directed outcomes.

Some organisations have formalised procedures and policies to support and protect artists (such as formalised codes of practice, rules concerning 'acceptable

behaviour' and guidelines around risk assessment procedures and child protection issues) but many do not. This is an area where good practice needs to be developed and shared more widely.

The quality of artistic practice emerging from work in contexts of social exclusion is also an issue. Artists and organisations need to be supported and encouraged to develop work that is of high artistic quality. However, what constitutes success and how quality is measured is a subject for debate.

Supporting artists' training

There has been a growth in demand for arts practitioners capable of working in social inclusion contexts, some of which involve working with vulnerable and volatile groups in community settings.

The Unit for the Arts and Offenders, Canterbury, recognised a shortage of artists with the skills and experience needed to work in challenging contexts within the criminal justice field. New Audiences supported the Unit to design and pilot two courses – *Working in the arts with vulnerable and volatile groups* and *Arts within the criminal justice system* – aimed at artists in the South East.

Outcomes included:

- 21 artists or youth workers with experience as professional artists completed course 1
- 13 of those completing course 1 progressed onto course 2
- Seven of the 13 people who completed course 2 took up placements arranged by the Unit in criminal justice establishments

A key recommendation of the project evaluation was the development of a modular accredited course that would include areas that could not be covered in an eight-day course. By September 2004, The Unit for the Arts and Offenders will provide three courses for artists working within the criminal justice system sector, which are accredited at HE Level 3 and 4 via Canterbury Christ Church University College (CCCUC). The accreditation model is one in which participants decide for themselves what level they want to aim for (and pay for). This structure allows participants to follow the accreditation route that is most appropriate for them.

'Overall, the project was extremely successful and very timely. It gave us an opportunity to try new ways of working. Without the New Audiences Programme, we would not have had the strength of the pilot, support or resources to make it

happen, so it was extremely important.’ (Angus McLewin, Unit for the Arts and Offenders)

Supporting artists’ creative development

New Audiences supported artists working in a variety of community and health settings. A notable example was Mandy Sutter’s one-year writing residency at the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (LTH) which had a positive impact on both patients and staff and showed the benefits of using arts in a therapeutic environment. It did, however, raise questions about the impact of such residencies on the artist.

The project was set up and managed by Tonic, the arts and environments programme for LTH, which provides arts projects within the Trust’s various hospitals, all of which are for ‘acute’ patients. The writing residency had four main objectives: access; demonstration of the benefits of literature in an acute healthcare setting; developing links with Leeds Library Service; and development of the writer’s creative practice. The artist worked with over 300 patients, usually on a one to one basis, encouraging them to talk and write about their lives and their worries. The artist also wrote poems for various parts of the hospitals, such as the garden and the lifts, and worked with the staff’s creative writing group.

Sutter helped young people with cancer work on a video project funded by BBC Children in Need. Tonic had commissioned Sea Media to produce a film with the Teenage Cancer Unit patients around the theme of ‘journey’. Sutter helped the young film makers to develop creative ideas and to script their films. The completed work, *Patients, Trolleys and a Bleeping Drip Stand*, was premiered at the Lounge cinema, Leeds in April 2003 and has been featured in a number of film festivals.

However, the project evaluation noted that: ‘success for patients and staff came at an unplanned cost to the writer, in terms of workload and the sacrifice of time and energy needed for personal professional practice.’ This illustrates one of the key issues for artists working in intensive residencies and points to the need for systematic support and more time and space for creative thinking.

Findings

Partnership work with the voluntary sector, community and non-arts agencies – including Sure Start, Education Action Zones, health care trust, youth services, criminal justice system and neighbourhood renewal – levered substantial match

funding from sources such as the European Social Fund, the Single Regeneration Budget and local government. Partnerships of this kind can also help to embed the arts in the work of regeneration agencies and the social services.

Projects often involved detailed consultation with communities. Good practice emerging from project reports confirmed the importance of such consultation, as well as the need for cross-sector partnerships to ensure work is relevant and sustainable.

There are mutual benefits to be gained from mainstream arts organisations working together with arts organisations specialising in social inclusion work to share resources and expertise, such as the sharing of skills, resources, networks and expertise.

Artists working in the area of social inclusion need to be better supported. There is insufficient professional development advice and training currently available. Artists need to be given the opportunity to develop their creative practice, as well as to produce more socially directed outcomes.

Research funded through the New Audiences Social Inclusion strand has produced a significant body of work for the arts sector to draw on. It has added to the data on the benefits of arts projects in areas of social and economic deprivation. However, as few projects aimed explicitly to tackle problems of social exclusion and practitioners were understandably wary of making claims about cause and effect, the research programme was unable to point to new evidence to prove the 'hard' impact of work. A more rigorous and persuasive evidence base needs to be established to attest to the value of the work and make the case for further investment.

The research noted widespread differences of interpretation and confusion about the meaning of 'access' and 'social inclusion'. There needs to be a clearer shared understanding amongst artists, organisations and policy formers about these terms. Gerri Moriarty noted 'a deep-seated nervousness from most organisations about a glib application of the term social exclusion. Organisations saw their work as developing a wide range of creative opportunities and choices for participants and audiences, not as acting as agents of social control.' (*Sharing our Practice*, Arts Council England, 2003)

The research raises many questions including:

- Are there ways of encouraging programmes rather than projects?
- Can the difficulty of funding continuity rather than innovation be addressed?
- Do different art forms offer different kinds of social benefits to participants?
- Would there be value for practitioners and 'clients' in developing an Arts Council good practice code, building on the research findings?

There were gaps in **The Arts and Social Inclusion** research project in relation to Model One – community led work. Capacity building within communities therefore needs to be addressed as an issue in any future research.

The participatory arts sector needs to be better supported in developing capacity and adequate resources for work that can be very demanding in terms of time and personnel. Cross-sector and other partnership working is very labour intensive for small organisations. One to one attention with individual participants is often crucial to a project's success, and the cost per participant of running such projects is high. Many of these organisations are outside the regularly funded organisation portfolio and are surviving through short-term project funding. This runs contrary to some of the basic objectives of social inclusion work, such as long-term audience development and sustainability.

The issue of 'what constitutes excellence?' and 'what does success look like?' in arts and social inclusion contexts remains to be debated. Discussions should involve mainstream regularly funded organisations as well as organisations and practitioners specialising in inclusion work.

Resources

Publications and reports

Three publications were produced from the Arts and Social Inclusion Research Programme. These included:

Jermyn, Helen, *Social Exclusion: A framework for action*, Arts Council England, 2000. This is currently being updated and revised, due Autumn 2004

Jermyn, Helen, *The Art of Inclusion*, Arts Council England, 2004

Moriarty, Gerri, *Sharing Practice: a guide to self-evaluation for artists, arts organisations and funders working in the context of social exclusion*, Arts Council England 2002

Based on the experiences of arts organisations, the guide describes self-evaluation as a way for organisations to reflect and learn. This led to the development of an evaluation guide that could be used by arts organisations undertaking social inclusion work.

Overview evaluations

Arts Council England, London selected cultural diversity and inclusion as priority areas in their Regional Challenge and funded four independent evaluations into this work:

Blaker, Candida, *Senses of the City*, Arts Council England, London, December 2002

Carpenter, Evelyn, *Out of the Hopeless Box: Creative Neighbourhoods, an evaluation*, Arts Council England, London, April 2003

Carpenter, Evelyn, *The Arts and Inclusion*, Arts Council England, London, November 1999

Field, Yvonne and Harrow, Marietta, *Routes Across Diversity*, Arts Council England, London, 2001

Westbrook, Cathy, *Developing Cultural Programmes in Civic Venues: A New Audiences Programme Funding Scheme*, Arts Council England, South East, November 2002

New Audiences evaluations

Bolland, Gail, *Tonic, Life changing experiences residency*, September 2003

Mudge-Wood, Pam, *The Unit for the Arts & Offenders: An Evaluation Report. Two Pilot Training Courses for Artists in the South East. Working in the arts with*

Vulnerable and Volative Groups in Open and Closed Community Settings. Arts in the Criminal Justice System, Unit for the Arts and Offenders, August 2002

The Unit for the Arts and Offenders: Summary of findings and recommendations for the development of arts-based approaches to crime prevention and reduction issues in the Medway Towns and North Kent area, Arts Council England, South East, March 2002

Articles and other publications

New Audiences and *MAiLOUT* joined in a unique partnership project that resulted in two editions of *MAiLOUT* dedicated solely to social inclusion and participatory work in the arts. The first special edition supported by New Audiences in June/July 2003 drew together a range of arts and social inclusion case studies, articles and observations by arts organisations and many other agencies working in this field.

The second edition in February/March 2004 continued to explore some of the findings from New Audiences Programme projects. Copies are available from **MAiLOUT**

Phone: 01246 207 070

Email: info@e-mailout.org

Potten, Anna (ed), *Telling tales*, Dot to Dot, 2003

A publication describing the success of Dot to Dot's project on the Isle of Wight in 2002 written by project managers and participants accompanied by images of their work.

Rose, Catherine, 'Essential Audiences – Audience participation', in *ArtsProfessional*, Issue 69, 8 March 2004

Rose, Catherine, 'Essential Audiences – Audiences Included', in *ArtsProfessional*, Issue 67, 9 February 2004

Rose, Catherine, 'Essential Audiences – Grassroots audiences', in *ArtsProfessional*, Issue 71, 5 April 2004

Conference reports

Out of the Tick Box, Partnerships, Practice and Progression – The Creative Application of Arts in Social Inclusion, was a conference organised by Momentum Arts and Arts Council England, held at the Mercury Theatre, Colchester in November 2002. Conference papers are available from Momentum Arts' website www.momentumarts.org.uk

12 Rural

Context

Arts Council England is committed to making the arts accessible for all people wherever they may live, from inner city or urban settings to villages and remote rural areas.

During the period of the New Audiences Programme the national policy focus on rural regeneration intensified, partly in response to a growing sense of crisis in the countryside signalled by a recession in the agricultural economy and, during 2001, by the foot and mouth epidemic. The response at government level was the 2002 *Curry Report* by the Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, commissioned by the Cabinet Office to advise how to develop a sustainable rural economy.

In 1999 the Arts Council included 'agricultural and rural regeneration' as one of the areas in which it was seeking to work. The New Audiences Programme helped the Arts Council to keep pace with developments in the countryside, particularly through its links with the rural based arts development agency Littoral.

In 2000, Arts Council England in partnership with Littoral established the Arts and Agricultural Change Forum, a multi-agency group including Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), National Farmers Union (NFU), Countryside Agency and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The forum met for the first time in May 2001 to consider how culture and the arts might form part of a cross-sector strategy for the regeneration of farming communities and the agricultural sector.

In 2003 Littoral prepared a New Rural Arts Strategy, a discussion paper for circulation to Arts Council England, DEFRA, the Countryside Agency, Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE), the NFU and the Rural Affairs Forum for England (RAFE). It outlines proposals for a coordinated arts and cultural sector response to the *Curry Report* and the government's new agenda for rural affairs. It includes recommendations for a wider engagement by the arts with rural economic regeneration and social inclusion initiatives.

The Arts Council is currently developing a rural arts strategy that will address issues of access for those living in rural areas, including strategies to support and encourage touring in rural areas. The strategy will aim to ensure equity of

provision for audiences and communities, and ways of contributing to wider government priority areas such as rural regeneration and social inclusion.

New Audiences overview

The New Audiences Programme enabled the Arts Council to support important development work with rural audiences. It also gave impetus to path finding projects which dealt with cultural issues affecting rural communities.

The total number of projects funded across the programme relating to the audience focus of rural was **152**, totalling **£953,159**.¹⁷ The total number of audiences reached by these projects was **60,040**.

At the inception of New Audiences in 1998, some Arts Council regional offices saw an opportunity to create a specific focus on stimulating arts activity in rural areas and on addressing the barriers to attendance faced by rural audiences. In the North East, the arrival of New Audiences encouraged the regional office to develop a strategic fund to address the 'tyranny of distance' that was perceived to be deterring people from engaging with the arts. In the West Midlands, a strategic approach to addressing rural priorities was also adopted from the beginning of New Audiences. In this instance, the emphasis was on providing an 'entry point' to arts funding for rurally based groups to stimulate grass roots arts activity in rural areas.

The five-year timescale of New Audiences and the scale of funding available were sufficient to allow ambitious marketing initiatives focused on rural audiences to be developed, tested and refined. Of particular interest was an approach based on 'network' or 'relationship' marketing, where a project worker was employed to work within the community, to get to know their needs and preferences – as well as the barriers that discouraged them – and then to develop and promote appropriate opportunities for attendance and participation in the arts.

As well as enabling the arts funding system to address generic, ongoing issues affecting arts attendance and participation in rural areas such as isolation and a relative lack of provision, New Audiences also helped rural based arts organisations to develop a cultural response to issues affecting their communities. In particular, the fund allowed the Arts Council – via an award to the North West based arts organisation Littoral – to support arts practitioners in working with

¹⁷ Maximum value, see research findings in Appendix 2

farming communities across England to document their experiences of foot and mouth, a livestock disease which ravaged the countryside during 2001.

Rural projects

This section will provide an overview of the key themes and approaches emerging from the rural projects. These themes and approaches, which sometimes overlap, can be summarised as: regional programmes to support rural development; rural networking projects; and responding to rural change.

1 Regional programmes to support rural development

Two Arts Council regional offices in particular, the North East and the West Midlands, saw the New Audiences Regional Challenge fund (see Appendix 1) as an opportunity to address rural arts development issues in a strategic way. In each case, a pilot project developed and tested during the first year of New Audiences, 1998–9, led to a subsequent three-year funding programme that aimed, in different ways, to improve access to the arts for rural communities. The first of these, from Arts Council England, North East, addressed barriers to attendance in order to encourage longer term development of audiences, community organisations and arts organisations.

Case study

Arts Council England, North East, Tyranny of Distance and the Regional Audience Development Initiative

The region covered by Arts Council England, North East is one of the largest and most diverse in England. It is home to major conurbations as well as areas of extreme rural isolation, both with significant populations facing social and economic deprivation. Over 70% of the region is rural, with poor public transport compounding the problems of a large number of isolated small towns and villages. An under-developed capital arts infrastructure, combined with poor communication links and other socio-economic factors, resulted in below average arts attendance in the region.

Arts Council England, North East had identified *distance*, be it physical, social or psychological, as a key barrier to developing audiences. The 'tyranny of distance' therefore became the focus of the region's Regional Challenge funding for the first year of the New Audiences Programme. Projects funded under this banner

formed a pilot for the region's subsequent **Regional Audience Development Initiative** (RADI), which was developed to support initiatives that addressed distance as a barrier to artistic activity.

In 1998/9 Regional Challenge North East supported 12 **Tyranny of Distance** projects. The scheme aimed to develop audiences among rural and urban communities that have been traditionally under-represented in the arts. Following an evaluation of this pilot scheme, which proved a success, the **RADI** was set up in 1999. This open application scheme ran for three years and awards between £1,000 and £10,000 were made to community and arts organisations. **RADI** focused on projects that helped organisations pinpoint barriers to attendance and encouraged their longer term development and capacity to work in partnership. The following are some examples of rural based **Tyranny of Distance** and **RADI** projects.

Developed by Jack Drum Arts, **The Bonny Moorhen** production was funded to tour for an additional week, attracting new audiences to theatre in rural County Durham, particularly young people and those living in areas of social deprivation with no existing provision for the performing arts. The play visited schools and a community venue, offering workshops with youth groups before performances. 380 people attended.

The **North Pennine Highlights** project enabled the Jiving Lindy Hoppers Dance Company to attract 17–25 year olds to village halls in isolated areas of the North Pennines area, both as participants and audience. **North Pennine Highlights** also developed a ticketing scheme for 8–16 year olds and their families in the North Pennines. During a week-long residency the project worked with the youth service to set up young promoters' groups, to allow young people to be part of programming decisions. 664 people attended the **North Pennine Highlights** programme and 12 workshops were attended by 303 young people.

The Northern Stage Company's **Ballroom of Romance** project aimed to address the lack of access to theatre for people in Northumberland's rural villages and to increase knowledge about transport options. A series of events in village halls took place, using performers from the Northern Stage Company to support 1950s style ballroom workshops, including dance tuition and 1950s music. This was an inter-generational project that introduced rural people directly to actors and staff from Northern Stage. £5 tickets were offered to Northern Stage's **Ballroom of Romance** production at the Newcastle Playhouse, which included transport for participants.

Isis Arts' **Big M** project toured a portable inflatable structure that housed digital video presentations and new media works to 20 sites in the North East region including various festivals. The project focused on families (children, parents, grandparents) and rural communities, as there are few places in the region where audiences can access this type of work or find out more about digital and new media work. The emphasis was on fun and accessibility in a non-threatening, free environment.

An evaluation of the overall **RADI** scheme, which included projects for urban as well as rural audiences, found it to have been a success. However, it identified a number of barriers to audience development that a future strategy for the North East region might address:

- a lack of information or data on audiences
- untested communications approaches
- low marketing skills base
- difficulties in accessing rural groups
- lack of appropriate venues
- poor access to networks
- the challenge of relating to community needs

The emphasis of the North East Regional Challenge projects was on outreach, where cultural activities and products developed by urban based professional arts companies were introduced to rural audiences in their own settings. By contrast, the West Midlands Regional Challenge approach put the emphasis firmly on supporting the development of rurally based projects 'close to the ground'. Community based organisations were encouraged to develop their own arts activities, in partnership with artists and arts organisations, to fit their local circumstances.

Case study

Arts Council England, West Midlands, Youth Arts and Grass Roots

As its response to New Audiences Regional Challenge, Arts Council England, West Midlands created two open access schemes that ran over a four-year period: the **Youth Arts** fund for projects with young people and the **Grass Roots** arts

fund, which aimed at developing audiences among rural communities. Both schemes encouraged arts activities in which people could take part, with professional artists working with community groups in local and non-arts settings.

The **Grass Roots** fund was piloted in 1998–9 and then continued with Regional Challenge funding until 2002. Its purpose was to facilitate and encourage local groups to develop participatory arts for people living in rural areas who otherwise would have little or no contact with professional arts activities. A key feature of **Grass Roots** was that it was an entry point to the arts funding system for community based organisations. To encourage initial take up, the 1998 **Grass Roots** pilot scheme was actively promoted through face to face presentations to county forums of arts officers and through road shows to members of the public, as well as via Arts Council England, West Midlands leaflets, bulletins and press releases. Grants of up to £2,000 were available to community and voluntary organisations for small scale participatory projects in rural areas. From 1998–2002 **Grass Roots** funded 106 projects totalling £146,324.

The **Grass Roots** arts fund prioritised work:

- in rural communities and settlements with a population under 10,000
- exploring issues of cultural diversity and rural racism
- addressing issues of rural poverty, access and inclusion
- focusing on community health and regeneration issues
- with young people (including children under 12 years) and elderly people
- with travellers
- addressing access and participation for people with disabilities

A huge variety of projects were funded. The following examples give an indication of the spread of locations, artforms and participating groups.

Radio Abberley in Worcestershire ran a one-day broadcast radio station based at Abberley Primary School and involving the wider community. The project received excellent coverage on both BBC and Central TV early evening news programmes.

Youth in Bromyard in Herefordshire ran a participatory public art project which involved young people from the Bromyard Youth Centre working with a sculptor to design and make a number of mosaic-covered concrete benches. The benches were installed in places frequented and chosen by the young people in Bromyard.

Grass Roots funding was an important catalyst in leveraging larger sums from the Town Council and Herefordshire Youth Service.

Landscape Radio in South Shropshire ran a programme of 40 professionally led workshops for young adults using digital video and audio.

The **Unicorn Arts** project in Oswestry involved local residents of all ages in making 30 panels covered in glass bead mosaic to transform the façade of the local community centre.

Djembe Drum Workshops based in Wyre Forest worked with 100 children using percussion, drama and storytelling, and recorded natural sounds to produce a cd-rom based around the natural elements of the Wyre Forest.

DASh, the Shropshire Disability Arts organisation, ran a project using a wide range of media to address issues relating to physical and intellectual access to contemporary arts practice for disabled visual artists in the county.

The Warwickshire based **Storm Theatre** project worked with a group of women from the Over 50s Friendship Group in Ansley Common, a former mining community, to devise and perform a play in four local venues.

An evaluation of the **Grass Roots** and **Youth Arts** funds found that:

- Nearly 75% of participants in funded projects were 'new audiences'
- The majority of grants enabled groups with existing ideas to make them happen rather than causing people to think of 'funding led' proposals
- Promoting and administering small scale open access funds like **Grass Roots**, which are aimed at inexperienced applicants outside the arts funding 'loop', places additional demands and work loads on administrators compared to funds aimed at established organisations and professional practitioners
- There was undoubtedly a demand from within the region for Arts Council England, West Midlands to continue small scale open access funding schemes like **Grass Roots**, and offer advice and support to people wanting to develop arts activities at a local level

Due to the success of the **Grass Roots** and **Youth Arts** funds, the schemes continued for another year, supported by Arts Council England, West Midlands core funds. 19 additional **Grass Roots** projects were funded, totalling £31,318.

Projects meeting the **Grass Roots** and **Youth Arts** criteria are now being supported through Grants for the Arts.

‘I think the **Grass Roots** grant is invaluable in enabling creative projects to get off the ground. These projects provide far more than the opportunity to work with artists (which is very good in itself). The projects also create community activities that are therapy for many. They are vital.’ (Jim Ridout, Unity Garden, Herefordshire)

‘It is very important that there is specific funding for work in rural areas, where the costs and organisational issues are very different to urban arts. These issues increase when working with disabled artists, particularly in access costs, especially transport.’ (Mike Layward, DASH, Shropshire)

2 Rural networking projects

Alongside its **Grass Roots** funding for small scale community based projects, West Midlands Regional Challenge also supported substantial action research projects that assessed the use of ‘ambassadors’ in rural areas. The projects were developed by marketing: arts (formerly Arts Marketing Warwickshire), a regional agency specialising in arts marketing and audience development.

Rural Research carried out by marketing: arts in 1995 showed that the most successful arts marketing in rural areas is by word of mouth. One strategy available to arts organisations is to tap into local networks by cultivating locally based ambassadors. This research led to a New Audiences project in 1998–9, **Arts Express**, in which an animateur worked at community level to create initiatives to overcome what was seen to be a key barrier to arts attendance – transport.

Marketing: arts conducted further research in 1999 to find out how arts venues marketed their work to rural communities. Few had the resources to reach out to them in any other form than leaflets and no had direct links into the communities. In 1999–2000 marketing: arts used this research to develop a New Audiences project **Right Up Your Street**, which employed an outreach worker to provide a ‘personal face’ to bridge the gap between arts organisations and local communities based in Stratford on Avon and Rugby.

Case study

Marketing: arts, Cre8

In 2001/2 marketing: arts was awarded £40,000 by New Audiences via West Midlands Regional Challenge to develop **Cre8**. **Cre8** aimed to adapt the **Right Up Your Street** model to attract an audience of young people in Ross on Wye, building on the lessons learned from the previous research and pilot projects in rural West Midlands.

The main mechanism for this was an outreach worker with some prior knowledge of Ross on Wye, who was employed for two years to get to know local young people and develop an arts programme appropriate to their needs. This involved developing a brand, **Cre8**, and marketing approaches to encourage young people to join in. The wide ranging programme subsequently devised, covering both traditional and non-traditional arts, attracted attenders from a mailing list of over 200 enthusiastic young people.

Cre8 aimed to:

- help young people in Ross on Wye gain access to and engage with arts activities
- collect information to feed back to arts providers to help them communicate more effectively with this group

The project had two distinct phases: research, the 'essential listening phase', followed by the development and delivery of a targeted arts programme.

Following discussions with various partners to the project – including local authority Cultural and Youth Services departments, arts providers and a local school – a young people's **Cre8** planning group was set up. This group, which met quarterly, helped to define an identity for the project and gave ideas for and feedback on the programme.

The arts programme was launched in autumn 2001 and continued until spring 2003. It offered a wide range of opportunities, from traditional theatre visits to less traditional activities such as graffiti art, circus skills workshops, break dancing and African drumming.

The project evaluation produced the following key insights:

- The project succeeded in developing an active mailing list of over 200 young people, who were encouraged to become card-holding members of **Cre8**. Events were generally well attended, showing that there was an appetite for arts activities in a rural area, Ross on Wye, from young people with limited opportunities to engage with the arts
- Key to the effectiveness of this approach is a sympathetic understanding of young people. The identification and involvement of a key local contact, to collaborate with the outreach worker and provide a credible entry point into young people's groups, was crucial
- Active involvement of young people in planning **Cre8** was important to its success: 'the **Cre8** name was chosen by young people and proved to be compelling. Being a **Cre8** member had "turf value" which encouraged membership recognition amongst the group.' User group involvement should, however, be kept to realistic levels so as not to slow things down
- Successful routes for communicating with young audiences were developed, such as a manned publicity table and notice board in a local school
- Relative independence from the various stakeholders – local authority, school, arts venues – enabled the outreach worker to remain responsive to the group and to 'cherry-pick' appropriate activities
- Working with young people is 'high maintenance'. Issues to be considered include: supervision at non-youth specialist venues; double booking of events (50% tend not to turn up); resistance to formal evaluation
- New approaches to evaluation appropriate to the user group were tested, with some success: 'Evaluation needs to be informal and sensitively handled, or it acts as a deterrent. **Cre8** made use of a trendy hand-held tape recorder and one young person was designated as a 'roving reporter' ... the results were not always fully coherent, but they did have spontaneity.'
- Aims and objectives for a project such as this should be kept clear and manageable and not be subject to the differing priorities of the various stakeholders. A clear 'exit strategy' should be developed in advance

Good relationships were formed with arts organisations (including Hereford Courtyard, Ross Festival, Rural Media Company, The Music Pool and Arts Alive) and community organisations (the Y-Zone creative learning centre) that will, it is hoped, help **Cre8** to develop beyond the New Audiences project. 'It is clear that from a position of zero involvement in Ross and its youth communities, the key arts organisations operating in the county are now seriously involved in audience, arts and community development activity.' (*Cre8 – Audience Development Project in Ross on Wye*, marketing: arts, July 2003)

Whereas most rural based New Audiences projects, including **Cre8**, were developed as a response to a lack of arts provision in rural areas, some used the programme as an opportunity to make better use of rural based arts facilities and expertise. A notable example from the Arts Council England, East was Wysing Arts' **Mobile Studios: Pathways of Activity**. Wysing Arts, a visual arts and crafts centre in rural Cambridgeshire based around artists' studios, a gallery, and workshop and education facilities, focused on retired people in the area who had skills with tools and machinery but lacked the chance to use them creatively. A mobile studio visited neighbouring villages, offering crafts workshops and encouraging participants to visit the Wysing Arts centre and make use of its facilities.

The key findings and outcomes of the project were:

- It is important that practitioners have skills and an interest in working with older people, as it is a demanding and specialised sector
- Many older people require a solid understanding of where they will be, whom they will be with and what they will be doing. This underlines the need to have a coherent focused plan of activity planned and publicised well in advance
- Develop a calendar of local events. Programmes of activity need to be organised well in advance, as many village organisations arrange events many months before they take place
- Have a number of simple participatory activities that can be 'portable' to local events
- This was a good opportunity for artists and social care workers, accompanying older people, to share and develop skills and forge potential partnerships
- A core group of individuals were encouraged to use Wysing Arts' open access studios as a result of the project

3 *Responding to rural change*

An important, if unplanned, outcome of the New Audiences Programme, was that it helped the Arts Council to keep pace with momentous changes and events that took place in the countryside during the period 1999–2002 which have had a profound impact at both local community and national policy level. A perceived ‘crisis in agriculture’, signalled by a collapse in the market for some farm products as well as by foot and mouth (and, before that, BSE) highlighted the need for urgent new policy thinking around future directions for rural development. Events in the countryside became an important stimulus for arts practitioners and, at the same time, rural communities were increasingly turning to cultural forms of expression to articulate their anxieties and communicate their point of view to urban based audiences and policy makers who were felt to be hostile or uncomprehending.

The New Audiences Programme was able, at various times and in various ways, to be responsive to this sense of rural flux and upheaval. As a consequence, it has created a legacy of project documentation full of insights and ideas that can inform the development of the Arts Council’s future policies for the arts as they affect rural England.

Case study

Littoral Arts, Digital Arts and Rural Upland Communities & Cultural Documents of the Foot and Mouth Crisis

Littoral Arts was awarded a total of £40,000 New Audiences funding to develop two projects. Initially, 1999 Littoral received funding to develop **Digital Arts and Rural Upland Communities**. This project aimed to introduce new audiences from the hill farming communities in Lancashire to digital art and web casting projects. It also aimed to build links with rural and farming agencies. The project was interrupted in the spring of 2001 by the foot and mouth crisis. Littoral perceived an urgent need to create a cultural response to this dreadful epidemic and sought further New Audiences support to enable artists to work within stricken communities across the country to produce **Cultural Documents of the Foot and Mouth Crisis**. It set up a series of artistic programmes, giving artists and farmers a way to express what had happened, and addressing the crisis in the relationship between the farming community and the urban population. Cultural documents of the crisis embraced a range of artforms, with artists, writers, poets, photographers and film makers working alongside farmers and other rural dwellers. Some made the crisis their focus, others explored the wider difficulties facing farming in Britain. A dedicated website also gave people the opportunity to contribute their own

personal responses to foot and mouth, through a project called **For the Record**. Submissions include diaries, poems, ideas for art works, music and personal statements.

In October 2001, Littoral organised a five-day conference at the village hall in Chipping, in Lancashire's Forest of Bowland. It was a major showcase of the foot and mouth documentation projects. Each day had a distinct theme, such as showcasing the artists' documentation, looking at food projects, or 'farming families and rural communities as a positive force for change'.

The conference was accompanied by Chipping FM, a rural community radio station installed in the village hall. This had been planned under the earlier digital art project and many local people took part. There were also exhibitions throughout the village. The social highlight was the Bowland Banquet, a community supper for 150 people, with locally produced food.

Feedback from participants in Littoral's **Grass Roots** conference included:

'The conference was for me extraordinarily moving and useful, for a long time I have wanted to do work based on agricultural issues, and this is just the kick I need.' (artist)

'An extraordinary achievement. Loved the contrast of the lady selling bras from a cowshed and the gentleman (sorry forgot his name) from UCLA talking about the dust bowl photographers collecting 50p for the slot meter. Moving, informative, fun etc.' (participant)

'I liked the mix of people ... these ideas of links between arts and farming are not yet appreciated ... that is another PLUS, breaking down traditional barriers, building new ways of working for common benefits.' (Anne Belgrave)

'Thank you for **Grass Roots**. The days I did come to Chipping were excellent, very valuable in multiple ways, listening, meeting people, learning different perceptions of what is moving through these lands and communities. The documentation work is particularly rich, and I hope the support you give to people helps lead on to some very creative interventions in the processes of change.' (Wallace Heim, artist)

The New Audiences project led to numerous other activities, including a three-month writing residency at the office of the Department for the Environment, Food

and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in Penrith and the exhibition, *Love Labour and Loss: 300 Years of British Livestock Farming*, in Carlisle and in Exeter. Littoral also organised a seminar in London, aimed at urban writers.

Informed by the experience of the New Audiences project and the partnerships that it helped to foster, Littoral has undertaken consultancy work for a number of Arts Council regional offices in the area of arts and agricultural change. In June 2003 it produced a discussion paper prepared for Arts Council England and other key policy making agencies, details of which are in the Context and Resources sections.

Findings

The New Audiences Programme supported projects that produced a range of findings and insights useful both to arts organisations seeking to develop projects with rural audiences, and to policy makers considering new strategies for the arts in rural areas. They can be summarised as follows.

Barriers to audience development in rural areas include: lack of information on audiences; poor access to networks leading to difficulties in accessing groups and identifying community needs; low marketing skills base; and lack of appropriate venues.

Rural communities are increasingly turning to cultural forms of expression to articulate their anxieties and communicate their point of view to urban based audiences and policy makers. The arts funding system should work to ensure that, where appropriate, artists are supported to play a role in this. Events in the countryside are also an important stimulus for artists. For arts practitioners wishing to work with older people living in rural areas, however, it is important that they have skills or training in this area as it is a demanding and specialised field.

Approaches based on network or relationship marketing, where a project worker is employed to work within a rural community, to get to know their needs and preferences – as well as the barriers that discourage them – can encourage attendance and participation in the arts. Key to the effectiveness of this is the identification and involvement of a key local contact, to collaborate with the outreach worker and provide a credible entry point into the community. This type of approach is, however, resource intensive.

Relative independence from the various stakeholders – local authority, school, arts venues – can enable a rural outreach worker to remain responsive to group needs and to ‘cherry-pick’ appropriate activities.

Rural based arts organisations are well placed, and should be supported by the arts funding system, to develop a cultural response to issues affecting the communities in which they work. Well planned and targeted outreach work can also encourage better use of rural based arts facilities and expertise, as well as enabling the work of urban based companies and practitioners to be profiled in rural community settings.

In planning rural based activities it is helpful to develop a calendar of local events. Programmes of activity need to be organised well in advance, as many village organisations arrange events several months ahead.

It is important that there is specific funding for work in rural areas, where the costs and organisational issues are very different to urban arts. These issues increase when working with disabled artists, particularly in access costs, especially transport.

We are experiencing a period of accelerating change in the English countryside. There is a need for urgent new policy thinking and discussions around future directions for rural development, including arts development. The Arts Council needs to be involved in these discussions.

A legacy of project documentation and evaluation – which can inform both the development of future arts projects and the Arts Council’s future policies for the arts as they affect rural England – has been accumulated by the New Audiences programme.

Resources

New Audiences evaluations

Cashman, Stephen and Pagan, Victoria, *Audience Development in the Northern Region: An evaluation of the Northern Arts Regional Audience Development Initiative*, Developing Audiences in the North, April 2002

Foster, Chris, *An Evaluation of West Midlands Arts' Grass Roots & Youth Arts Fund*, December 1999–February 2001, Arts Council England, West Midlands, October 2001

Young Promoters Scheme, Lancashire Rural Touring Network and Cheshire Rural Touring Network Report, Lancashire Rural Touring Network, 2000

This rural project also produced two guides:

The Workers Guide to Helping Young People Promote Arts Events, Lancashire Rural Touring Network, 2000

This guide is aimed at youth workers helping young people to promote rural events.

The Young Person's Guide to Promoting, Lancashire Rural Touring Network, 2000

This guide is aimed at young people promoting rural events.

Articles

Cre8 – Audience Development Project in Ross on Wye, marketing: arts, July 2003, (Note: marketing: arts is no longer in existence)

Rose, Catherine, 'Essential Audiences – Working Across the Sectors', in *ArtsProfessional*, Issue 58, 22 September 2003

This article discusses New Audiences investment in the work of major arts organisations committed to supporting rural arts and audience development.

Littoral (formerly Projects Environment)

Littoral is a non-profit making, arts trust that aims to develop new arts projects in response to issues about social, environmental, and cultural change. For more information see www.littoral.org.uk

Hadley, Janet, *A reflective account of a project carried out by Littoral Arts with funding from Arts Council England's New Audiences programme*, Arts Council England, 2003

An independent evaluation was commissioned by New Audiences into Littoral's New Audiences work: Cultural Documents of the Foot and Mouth Crisis 2000–1 and Digital Arts and the Rural Economy 1999–2000

New Audiences funded Littoral to create:

- *Grass Roots*, five-day conference held in Chipping, Lancashire in October 2001
- Creation of www.footandmouthdoc.com

Arts Council England's national and East Midlands offices provided Littoral with £5,000 to run a conference, *Rural Shift*, in collaboration with Arts Council England, East Midlands, in October 2002. It included an exhibition of New Audiences funded projects. The Conference Report is available from Littoral Arts

Tel: 01706 827 961

Email: littoral@btopenworld.com

Price £18.90 including p&p

The New Rural Arts Strategy is a proposed arts and cultural sector response to the Curry report, Littoral Arts Trust, June 2003

13 Older people

Context

The Henley Centre report¹⁸ cites the increasing ageing population and a 'third age' market as a key issue for the arts. Demographic trends and projections include:

- In 1995, almost 18.25% of the UK's population were over pensionable age
- The number of people over 55 retiring early is increasing with only 51% of men over 60 in full time work
- There will be three million more people aged 45–64 years by the year 2010

People aged 50 and over will form an increasing segment of the population and will be economically active, some with high levels of disposable income. However, the prospect of a pensions crisis and working until the age of 70 would have implications for disposable wealth and leisure time.

Many arts organisations report that the age profile of their attenders is concentrated in older sections of the population. There is an opportunity for the arts to expand its audience from within the market where it has traditionally been most successful. The arts sector needs to consider how provision may have to change to embrace the opportunities presented by this growing demographic.

New Audiences overview

The total number of projects funded across the programme relating to the audience focus of older people was **20**, totalling **£322,900**.¹⁹ The total number of audiences reached by these projects was **13,369**.

Older people were addressed across all New Audiences Programme funding strands, but particularly through New Approaches to Presentation.

It is important to note that current definitions of 'older' people are unsatisfactory for many. Those who are independent, active and in full-time employment may identify with other demographic indicators more strongly than age and other

¹⁸ *Towards 2010; new times, new challenges for the arts*, Henley Centre for Forecasting, Arts Council England 2000.

¹⁹ maximum value, see research findings in Appendix 2

people do not wish to be classified in this way at all, regardless of their personal circumstances. The Arts Council recognises, therefore, that the current terminology will not always be appropriate for all people in all situations.

Previous work concerning older people and the arts includes Arts Council England, South East's *Newold: 30,000 Years of Experience*, 1999, which looked at notions of art, notions of old and contained case studies of older people as artists. Arts Council England, Yorkshire, produced a regional directory in 2001, *The arts and older people in Yorkshire and the Humber*, providing examples of good practice, advice and contacts for organisations working or wanting to work with older people.

New Audiences supported a range of projects relating to older people. Some addressed barriers to attendance, whilst others sought to involve older people in areas of the arts where they are currently under-represented.

Organisations worked with groups unable to attend venues, such as older people in sheltered accommodation or day centres. Activities were offered in local community settings, such as village halls. English Sinfonia's **M4** project offered audiences, including older people, recitals by a string quartet in sheltered housing, a supermarket and a garden centre.

A number of initiatives addressed transport as a barrier to attendance. The **Arts Express Networking Project** aimed to attract new rural audiences to arts events by providing free transport and using an animateur to carry out outreach work with rural community groups. Some organisations focused on older people from culturally diverse groups. Leicester Haymarket's project, **New Audiences Development**, was aimed at first generation Asian communities and attempted to overcome barriers of language or unfamiliarity. Outreach activity in religious and community settings provided taster events for groups not ready to come into the theatre. Transport was then provided to Asian productions, enabling two groups of elders to attend arts venues for the first time.

Older people projects

This section will provide an overview of the key themes and approaches emerging from the older people projects. These themes and approaches, which sometimes overlap, can be summarised as: involving older people in arts planning and participation; and addressing barriers to arts engagement.

1 *Involving older people in planning and participation*

Many projects involved older people as active participants and as an essential part of the planning process.

The **Hackney Music Development** project run by the Hackney Music Development Trust (HMDT) had professional artists leading workshops for local elderly residents of an inner London estate. The project planning group, made up of people all living and/or working on the estate, acted collaboratively to implement, review and monitor activities. They were also involved in the promotion of events within the local community. Some of the professional artists leading the workshops lived on the estate. Residents participated at different levels, including learning new music skills or improving on existing talents.

Members of the project planning group were also participants in the music programme, attending workshops and taking part in public performances. There were three performances in a local tenants' hall attended by around 535 people, and 150 participants performed to an audience of over 300 friends, family members and passers-by in the shopping centre on the estate.

Silverscreen, a collaboration between Tyneside Cinema, Age Concern, University of the Third Age and Procter and Gamble's Retired Staff Association encouraged retired people to engage with cultural cinema. A membership club for older people attracted 1,000 members (the original target was 200). Members received regular mailings, discounts on films and invitations to film previews. The cinema scheduled films for **Silverscreen** members twice monthly, including classic re-runs and contemporary titles chosen to suit the group. Greater involvement by people aged over 50 in the venue's programming and film education activity led to changes in programming policy (eg timing) and increased audiences. Over a period of a year there were 1,760 attendances to **Silverscreen** films. The cinema has formed a steering group which meets every three months and includes representatives from the Theatre Royal, Age Concern, Procter and Gamble, Cullercoats Retired Men's Club and the Hindu Women's Association.

Some projects worked with older people in combination with other age groups in an attempt to bridge the age divide. Metropole Galleries, Folkstone is in an area with a significant older age demographic. The galleries identified older people as one of their key target audiences and used New Audiences funding to seek ways of engaging more creatively with them in their local community. The **Wavelength**

project worked in close partnership with teaching staff and students from South Kent College.

Participants were invited to develop a contemporary performance piece. This involved them in writing, experimenting with different ways of using the stage and taking part in the filming process. Younger people, including two dancers, contributed to the creative process and final performance. The project provided an intensive artistic and social experience for professional artistic staff, older and younger participants. Artistic skills, some new to participants, were learnt, as was the benefit of 'opening up' to new possibilities through the creative process. Artistic staff learnt new ways of working creatively with older people.

The project reached 21 participants and 339 attenders. It succeeded in involving older people in a contemporary creative process that tested both their preconceptions of performance and their creative skills. The collaboration between older and younger participants was challenging but successful.

Midlands Art Centre encouraged older visitors through a programme of events and activities designed to complement its exhibitions. **Developing New Audiences for the Visual Arts** was aimed in part at visitors in the over 50 age group. Weekly afternoon talks and workshops accompanied exhibitions. Activities ranged from making Tibetan prayer flags to contributing to a live Soundscape performance. The exhibition *Allotment* offered a workshop where older participants made ceramic objects for the garden. 20 over 50s took part in activities based around three exhibitions.

2 Addressing barriers to arts engagement

Research has identified that barriers to attendance for older people include transport, location, price and having no one to go with. Some New Audiences funded projects addressed these barriers.

Arts Shape, Gloucestershire, developed a research project that explored barriers to attendance and involved older people as volunteer members of the research team.

Case study

Art Shape Gloucestershire, Action Research into Older People and the Arts

In 2001/2 New Audiences awarded Art Shape Gloucestershire £18,000 to coordinate **Action Research into Older People and the Arts**. Art Shape is a member of the Gloucestershire Arts framework, a consortium of arts providers in the county, which offered many points of contact for this project. The starting point was a belief that there were barriers to older people becoming regular arts attenders, a belief informed by Art Shape's ten years' experience of devising and delivering arts projects for older people.

Art Shape felt that recruiting older people to inform and carry out the research project would provide a broader range and different quality of data than might be the case through the recruitment of professional researchers. Older people were engaged as volunteers to learn research skills, network with active arts groups and investigate the role of arts participation in the lives of older people. The research team was linked to an older people's group in Dublin for inspiration and support. They set up focus groups to tease out barriers to participation and devised pilot projects that encouraged older people to challenge their assumptions of what kind of art was for them. Although the project was steered by Art Shape, volunteer researchers were encouraged to 'own' the project and to shape the research.

Art Shape published two research documents, *Arts Promoters: Themes and Recommendations* and *Older People as Audiences: Themes and Recommendations*. The first captured the views of 18 arts providers about the importance of older audiences, and the second summarised the views of 101 older people about what might affect their attendance at arts events. The project also reported feedback from 150 older people who had attended a range of arts exhibitions and events, directly supported by members of the project research team.

Key findings included:

- older people do not want a specifically targeted programme but a good choice of programme
- access to information and promotional materials is important
- volunteer researchers should have plenty of available time and be given opportunities to visit arts events and organisations as part of the project

- if a volunteer researcher is resistant to particular artforms or venues, they need to share this with the group so they can decide whether to reassign particular tasks, or challenge preconceptions within a supportive framework
- transport was a significant barrier to arts attendance; the older the person was the more likely it was that transport would matter
- other demographics need to be considered, for instance, social class, income, ethnicity, age, health and rural/urban locations
- creating new audiences in elderly people's homes may need to address the negative 'gatekeeper' role of home managers

The last point reflects a major issue relating to institutionalised care of the elderly in the UK. Many 'resisters' to the arts appear to live in elderly people's homes. One researcher suggested that managers of some of elderly people's homes apply negative labelling and stereotyping to older people, considering residents too old for certain activities, a process the researcher termed 'oldering'. If correct, creating new audiences for the arts amongst this group will depend upon attitudinal changes to the institutionalised care of the elderly, which can only be achieved by partnership working to increase understanding between sectors.

The premise behind Equal Arts' **Getting There** project was that if older people had access to better transport they would attend arts activities. Equal Arts is a specialist agency working with older people and have been managing arts projects for older people since 1989. The gap in arts provision for this age group led to the organisation choosing to specialise, initially in residential care, but now with older people in general.

Getting There instigated research to identify the needs of older people in Gateshead, with older people themselves conducting the research. Partner venues and organisations in Gateshead included BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art and Shipley Art Gallery. The project aimed to develop practical solutions to transport issues for older people wishing to attend venues, and set up a subsidised taxi service for Gateshead residents over 60, to access arts activities and venues in Gateshead and Newcastle. Members also had opportunities to meet together once a month for an outing. They visited Shipley Art Gallery,

BALTIC and Newcastle Theatre Royal. The scheme has been in operation since August 2002, with over 53 members making 388 journeys in taxis to visit arts venues and activities.

The research identified the main issues as: safety, trust in the taxi firm, and a preference for group outings. It also provided a pool of potential members for the scheme. Although the project took a long time to develop, feedback has been extremely positive with many reporting that the scheme has enabled them to visit arts events that they haven't been able to visit for a long time. **Getting There** raised people's confidence about going out, being out in the dark, and going to unknown venues. 100% of those consulted said that the project's transport initiatives made them feel confident, comfortable and safe.

Midlands Arts Marketing's **Time Out** project attempted to address social barriers that some older people face in attending the arts. It aimed to increase live attendance at venues by the over 50s after research indicated that many people in that age group stopped visiting theatre performances due to illness or the death of the partner or friend with whom they used to attend. Buxton Opera House, Phoenix Arts, Leicester and Nottingham Playhouse offered older people a choice of theatre, dance, opera and films to attend. Around these events, talks by performers, backstage tours and refreshments offered social opportunities for attenders who may not have had a companion. **Time Out** facilitated relationships between the three participating venues, group organisers and individual members of active over 50s groups, including the University of the Third Age, Cruse, social clubs and retirement associations. 15 events took place over eight months and almost 350 people attended across the three venues. Events that combined performances with backstage tours, meeting casts and refreshments were valued highly and matinee performances were the most popular. Participants were attracted by an event that allowed them to meet like-minded people.

Oxfordshire Touring Theatre Company tours to a range of audiences in small to medium venues, mainly in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. The company used New Audiences funding to develop audiences in Berkshire and Oxfordshire and offer arts access to older people. Two projects were supported. The first staged dance and reminiscence workshops in day centres and sheltered accommodation. The second worked in collaboration with an educational charity to further develop performances to present to older people in their own environment.

Case study

Oxfordshire Touring Theatre Company, *Brief Journey*

In 1999/2000 New Audiences awarded Oxfordshire Touring Theatre Company (OTTC) £10,000 towards **Brief Journey**. This project, a collaboration between OTTC and educational charity Forest Forge, aimed to develop audiences amongst older people in the Southern region. It began with reminiscence sessions and a workshop bringing together school children and members of an over 60s club. These sessions helped to establish the structure for *Rehearsing Brief Encounter*, a performance taken to nursing homes and day centres in Hampshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire. Forest Forge's autumn tour of *Bedside Manners* was also offered to day centres and residential care homes. The play's central theme was nursing and health care in the 1930s.

The project aimed to develop new ways of engaging with older audiences and to overcome barriers to attendance through the provision of free transport to performances at local venues, and by taking work into day centres and nursing homes. Freelance consultants with experience of arts and disability were appointed to market the scheme to residential and day centres. One acted as a 'network marketer', developing local contacts and relationships with older people in the community.

Outcomes

- over 1,400 older people saw or took part in the project. There were 33 performances of *Rehearsing Brief Encounter* at local venues
- there were 17 performances of the play *Bedside Manners* in residence homes and day centres with an average audience of 25 people
- transport to selected venues was arranged through local taxi firms and community and volunteer transport schemes. The free transport offer was taken up by 73 people who lived between two and ten miles away
- links were developed with local groups including village hall promoters, local authority community development workers, housing officers and Social Services

The response to the participatory performance workshop was very positive. It was important that the performance had been taken to the audience, as there was a majority who were frail and unable to travel easily. The performance of *Bedside*

Manners was also well received with patients and nurses commenting on the authenticity of the content.

However, the evening performance presented difficulties for potential attenders as they were afraid of returning to an empty house at night and often took medication in the evening. It was also felt that the transport scheme needed a longer lead time for advertising, establishing local contacts and building trust between the providers and the users, particularly those who needed personal assistance.

The network marketer's activities, establishing contacts with potential bookers for the performances and users of the transport scheme, was time consuming but vital to the project's success.

Findings

'Older people' are not a homogenous group. Projects addressed a variety of older people – over 50s, over 60s, older disabled people, older people in residential care or in areas of social exclusion, and older people still active in the workplace full-time.

Many people would not choose to define themselves as part of an 'older audience' or welcome being included within an 'older people's project'. This is particularly so for those who are active, independent and in full-time employment, but it is also the case for some people regardless of their personal circumstances. This may lead to practical difficulties in relation to monitoring and gathering consistent information from this group.

Barriers that prevented some older people from attending arts events included geographic location, lack of transport to events, the cost of transport, price, access to information and having no one to go with. Case studies showed that issues such as timing of events and customer care are important for this age group. For older people still in full-time work, time pressures were more likely to be a barrier than economic or social pressures.

Several projects emphasised the importance of partnership working, both with groups and organisations specialising in provision for older people, and with the health care sector. The older the demographic, the more crucial it is to work with across sectors, particularly through nursing and residential homes, though there is

work to be done on developing mutual understanding so as to combat the negative 'gatekeeper' approach that some care home managers had adopted. Projects also found it useful to work with organisations such as University of the Third Age and retirement clubs.

Daytime events and matinee performances were the most popular for some older groups. Events that were supported by education work or interpretive activities were found to be more appealing. Both arts venues and older people prefer to choose from a wide variety of good quality products and do not just want special programmes for 'older people'.

Older people particularly valued the social opportunities created by venues around the main activity or performance. Pre-performance or after show talks, backstage tours, workshops, lunches and refreshments all helped develop their enjoyment as they facilitated discussion and enabled them to meet like-minded people.

Older people are not necessarily 'risk-averse'. Evidence across the programme indicates that independent older people may take a 'risk' with new activities and venues if it fits their schedules and if some 'sifting' and 'selection' has been done by someone locally whom they trust. Ambassadorial schemes, group promotions, membership clubs, outreach schemes and culturally specific programming all met with success.

Resources

General

Francis, Fi, *Newold: 30,000 Years of Experience*, Arts Council England, South East, 1999

Francis, Fi, *The arts and older people in Yorkshire and the Humber*, Arts Council England, Yorkshire, 2001

New Audiences overview evaluations

Overview of Gateway 4: New Approaches to Presentation, Volume 1, Cultural Intelligence, Arts Council England, 2003

Overview of Gateway 4: New Approaches to Presentation, Volume 2, Cultural Intelligence, Arts Council England, 2003

Volume 2 contains detailed case study information on four projects across the New Approaches to Presentation strand targeting older people.

New Audiences research

Arts Promoters, Themes and Recommendations, Older People as Audiences, Art Shape Gloucestershire, December 2002

Time Out, Developing the over 50s audience, Midlands Arts Marketing, March 2001

(Note: Midlands Arts Marketing is no longer in existence)

Articles

Rose, Catherine, 'Essential Audiences – New Audiences the legacy, Older audiences', in *ArtsProfessional*, Issue 75, 31 May 2004

14 General findings

This section gives a summary of the key facts and figures²⁰ of the New Audiences Programme, followed by an analysis of the main findings as follows: tackling barriers; partnerships; human resources; evaluation and evidence base; successes of the programme; weaknesses of the programme; dissemination of findings; and resources.

Audiences

- New Audiences attracted 4,027,085 million attendances for live arts events and activities
- Of the 4,027,085 attendances recorded, a total of 980,578 attendances were generated by festival activity
- The value of awards that generated four million attendances was £12.6 million. However, a further £1.97 million of audience awards, that could reasonably be expected to generate audiences, have not yet submitted audience data. Therefore, if we assume that those projects generated attendances in a similar manner, then we could have yielded a further 630,000 attendances, giving an estimated total attendance of 4.7 million
- Analysis of audience figures by projects' audience focus reveals that of the total attendances:
 - 44% were recorded for general audiences projects
 - 35% were recorded for young people projects
 - 14% were recorded for diversity projects
 - 2% were recorded for disability projects
 - 2% were recorded for social inclusion projects
 - 1% were recorded for family and for rural projects
 - 0.3% were recorded for older people projects
- A further 7.25 million 'itinerant' attendances were recorded by eight projects. These include projects such as Poems on the Underground and Poems in the Waiting Room (excluded from total figures)
- Broadcast figures were not possible to quantify: however, figures for individual projects were recorded eg Operatunity (average 1.7 million for each of the four broadcasts) and The Slot (1.4 million)

²⁰ For further details, see Appendix 2

- Just over 15,000 opportunities to attend and participate in activities were recorded. This figure is based on a sample of 450 projects with awards totalling £14.2 million. Activities include performances, exhibition days and any other activities
- Independent evaluation attempted to measure 'new audiences' for projects in 2000–2, defined as 'people who have not been involved with the arts for at least two years'
 - The Disability strand funded 20 projects in years three and four of the programme (total funding £713,213); 15 of these reported data on both activities and new participants. During 1,202 activities 15,670 people were reached, of whom 6,440 (or 41%) were 'new'
 - Of the 26 diversity projects funded in years three and four of the programme (total funding £1,037,548), 12 reported data on both activity levels and new participants. During 1,709 activities, 96,083 people were reached, of whom 43,117 (or 45%) were 'new'
 - Of the 34 New Approaches to Presentation projects funded in years three and four of the programme (total funding £1,090,927), 28 provided quantitative evidence. During 1,004 activities, 37,472 people were reached, of whom 9,396 (or 25%) were 'new'

Awards

- New Audiences supported 1,157 awards between 1998 and 2003
- Of the 1,157 projects awarded New Audiences funding, a total of 829 (72%) provided output data, which accounted for £18,735,850 or 94% of total funding for the programme. It is important to recognise that many of the 328 (28%) projects that did not provide data may have had additional audiences that have not been recorded in the analyses
- The largest funding strand was Regional Challenge – totalling £5,798,306. This constituted over 60% of the awards within the programme and 29% of total expenditure
- Analysis of awards by artform shows that 'multi-artform' projects were the highest, with £6,434,332 or one third of funding. Visual arts projects received £3.4 million and music projects £2.6 million
- Analysis of awards by audience focus shows that the highest project spend went to those aiming at general audiences, making up around one third of the total programme expenditure (33% or £6.4 million). Young people awards made up 24% of total spend (£4.7 million), whilst a fifth of the programme (20%) went to awards addressing diversity (£3.9 million). Nine per cent of the programme's expenditure went to disability projects (£1.8

million), 5% of awards went to family (£1.1 million) and social inclusion (£1.1 million), 4% to rural awards (£0.7 million) and 1% to awards focusing on older people (£0.2 million)

- New Audiences funded different types of award. 74% of awards (or 66% of spend) went to projects for audience events or activities. £876,785 (3%) went towards broadcasting and new media projects. £602,510 (2%) went to promotional projects such as arts days or weeks
- Just over a fifth of the programme, £4,019,495, was invested in research or development projects which did not aim to generate audiences for events but may have employed posts/coordinators, or supported training or specific research projects eg Developing the Market for Contemporary Art, Impact of Folk Festivals

Tackling barriers

The New Audiences Programme helped the Arts Council to gain a clearer sense of structural and sectoral issues for audience development. Information was gathered from potential and current audiences on the barriers they faced or perceived, including physical, attitudinal, financial, personal and social barriers.

Whilst the programme found that factors such as price and access to information do have an impact on frequency of attendance, it seemed that other factors, such as cultural relevance and appropriateness of programming, timing and place can have a much greater impact.

The importance of relevant programming was clear. Finding the right programming for a specific audience proved a creative challenge. Comments on the paucity of high quality work for families, for example, were widespread. The importance of involving target audiences in consultation, creation and presentation of work was also a key factor of success for many projects.

The message from *Not for the Likes of You* research is that organisations must model internally what they wish to achieve externally to be truly inclusive and attract broader audiences. For instance, organisations with family-friendly working practices for staff are likely to be more successful at reaching out to family audiences. The same may be true for other areas such as diversity and disability. The key message is that any audience development work must be rooted within a wider organisational commitment to access and inclusion. Audience development is a holistic process and organisations must examine their whole ethos and

approach. 'Unconscious' barriers can be dismantled when organisations are genuinely committed to change.

Increasing audiences was a key aim but numbers and box office returns were not the only indicators of success. Many projects may not have produced instant results in terms of tickets sold or immediate attendance. Fitness for purpose was often the most important consideration, particularly where vulnerable or excluded groups were involved.

Quantitative evaluation on its own can fail to take account of the fact that attracting large numbers for a one-off project or event does not always make for a successful campaign. They can even be counterproductive, particularly with vulnerable groups, where organisations can be seen to be 'parachuting in' to people's lives for a short period of time with no plans for sustainable development. As ever the emphasis should be on a holistic approach, developing the skills, confidence and audience knowledge to embark upon longer term strategic audience development plans. For these reasons, one priority for the arts sector is exploring methodologies for performance indicators based on qualitative rather than simply quantitative factors.

Partnerships

Partnerships were a real strength of the programme, particularly with non-arts sectors such as health, education and youth services. They were often crucial to success, attracting increased resources, new knowledge and expertise, information about audiences and mechanisms to reach them.

Partnerships were a key feature of the programme. They included:

- partnerships with non-arts agencies
- partnerships between arts organisations
- partnerships between mainstream arts organisations and community based organisations
- partnerships between Arts Council England and other cultural and non-arts sectors eg heritage, museums, broadcast and new media, tourism and science

Organisations found that developing work through partnerships or as part of a consortium provided invaluable support, from colleagues in the sector and from external experts.

Partnerships were particularly crucial where hard-to-reach audiences were involved and a partner could bring specialist knowledge of a target group. Sure Start, the Government-backed initiative to work with very young families, was a key partner in a number of projects. New ways of working have been taken on board as a result. However, effective partnerships, particularly across sectors, take considerable time to develop.

Human resources

Project coordinators and specialist advisors contributed to projects' success in providing additional time and expertise, supporting staff training, skills development and organisations' wider objectives. Organisations used New Audiences as a 'route in' for new employees or board members, developing a more diverse organisational profile. However, the New Audiences Programme also highlighted a lack of skilled professional advisors, specifically in relation to disability and diversity.

New models of training were piloted which were flexible and tailored to individual organisations needs. This was particularly seen in projects addressing diversity and disability, which tended to be more successful and had longer term impact.

Audience development and marketing agencies were critical to the success of many individual projects and the programme as a whole. Their collective knowledge and expertise made significant contributions to projects across the programme strands. Other arts and non-arts agencies, particularly those specialising in the area of disability and inclusion, also supported good practice.

Projects were sometimes over-reliant on a lead individual, or else failed to appreciate the level of additional work required, and they often needed longer for delivery than was allowed.

Gaps in the audience development and marketing skills base of the arts sector were apparent throughout the programme. Issues that need to be addressed include knowledge of existing research, good practice, access to training and advice, and support for organisations in effecting change.

The administration and delivery of the programme by the Arts Council revealed strengths in the skills base of Arts Council officers and an ability to lead in key areas and to add value to others. Funding officers had a developmental role and

were able to respond to good ideas, backing organisations with good track records to develop knowledge for sector. The programme also highlighted gaps in knowledge and expertise.

Evaluation and evidence base

Definitions of 'new audiences' proved problematic and varied across projects. For some 'new' meant new to an artform, a venue, or a company's work.

Arts organisations need guidance on how to understand their audiences. This is a particular issue for organisations developing Black and minority ethnic or disabled audiences.

There are methodological challenges in defining audiences according to 'audience focus' eg ethical and appropriate monitoring, self-definition in inclusion, diversity and older people's projects.

Many organisations had never before been asked to carry out the rigorous self-evaluation that the New Audiences programme demanded. There is now a substantial body of work that has been documented and retained as a resource for the future.

Successful evaluation requires:

- effective planning
- effective goal setting
- clear aims and objectives for the evaluation
- good project management
- communication with partners to ensure clarity of collecting evidence and reporting
- adequate resources (time, money and people)

However, the quality of evaluations varied widely. Although all organisations were provided with the *Partnerships for Learning* (by Felicity Woolf, Arts Council England, 1999) document as a guide to evaluation, many projects did not submit high quality evaluation. Independent evaluation noted this variability and a general weakness in this area. Reasons included organisations not understanding fully the benefits and importance of the evaluation process, and a lack of financial or human resources to dedicate to the process.

Evaluation was not only about assessing the successes or failures of a specific project. Other outcomes were that many organisations:

- gathered information which would become useful in future planning
- identified training and professional development needs (such as child protection, health and safety and customer care)
- thought about exit strategies and ways of continuing to develop their work
- identified and researched further sources of funding to continue their audience development work

The independent evaluation noted a sense of evaluation fatigue in organisations, which often perceived evaluation as an unwanted additional burden at the end of a demanding project.

Factors impeding successful evaluation were found to include:

- staff changes mid-project
- lack of time to organise monitoring data and to document and analyse outputs and outcomes
- a failure to acknowledge their own achievements due to over-familiarity
- uncertainty around what information was 'useful'
- evaluation methods that did not work for targeted project participants
- an over-reliance on observation and not structured audience feedback
- confusion between 'outputs' and 'outcomes'
- lack of plans and resources to conduct a long-term evaluation of impact on audiences

'Supportive evaluation', in which independent evaluators acted as 'critical friends' to organisations to help them document and learn from their experiences, was piloted to positive effect through the programme.

Successes of the programme

New Audiences funding allowed the arts sector to respond to gaps in infrastructure, commission research and actively initiate new partnerships or areas of work.

Evaluations, research and analyses have been commissioned to help arts workers reflect on their activities and identify good practice and exemplary models.

Crucial to the ethos (and the success) of the programme was the scope it gave organisations to take risks. These risks took many forms: pushing the boundaries of artistic practice; reaching out to new target groups; carrying out development work with audiences new to the organisation; expanding touring circuits; increasing the size or range of an event; testing new marketing tools or applying marketing ideas in new circumstances; reaching out to disabled, culturally diverse or socially disadvantaged groups.

- Despite criticism of the short-term nature of the funding, positive medium and long-term effects were achieved for many projects
- Partnerships were crucial to a large number of projects and many have been sustained since
- Many organisations made changes to their policies and strategy as a result of their New Audiences project
- Others saw the impact as being more developmental than transformational

Significant outcomes included:

- making a type of activity part of the core work of the organisation
- gaining greater understanding and awareness of a specific audience group and its needs
- changing the programming policy to include more work directed at specific target groups
- developing partnerships to support audience development

Not all projects fully achieved their objectives but many went through a valuable process of learning. New Audiences funding enabled participating organisations to gain in many ways, such as:

- enhancing their 'product' through creating and presenting new work, sometimes in new settings
- involving audiences in the commissioning, creation and presentation of new work
- exploring new artistic practices
- empowering and profiling under-represented artists, such as ethnically diverse and disabled artists (who, in turn, can help to attract other under-represented artists and audiences)
- finding new access routes for under-represented audiences, workers and artists
- gaining opportunities to present work elsewhere in the UK and abroad

- creating new partnerships and developing experience to feed into future work
- learning how to develop evaluation practice
- organisational development, learning new methods, skills, gaining new contacts

Successful projects tended to be based on the following: good project planning; realistic objectives; a strong research and knowledge base of target audiences; use of suitable communication channels; and the development of targeted advertising and marketing materials. Organisations who sought to involve target audiences and communities in the planning of activities were better placed to achieve success.

Weaknesses of the programme

The time-limited nature of New Audiences reinforced the perception that audience development can be an add-on to ongoing activity and is dependent on discrete project funds. The programme was set up very rapidly in 1998 and, especially in the first two years of the programme, the planning and delivery timetables imposed on arts organisations were often unrealistic. Successful projects required adequate time to plan, undertake groundwork and establish or optimise networks. Projects often needed longer for delivery than was allowed.

The programme supported projects over a maximum of two years. This timeframe did not allow for longitudinal research into the impact on audiences in the longer term.

There was a concern that the programme, being time-limited, encouraged short-term thinking to long-term issues. The timescale of the programme posed challenges for Arts Council England and organisations.

Many New Audiences projects relied on a key project manager. Project delivery was often seriously affected if the lead individual left suggesting, perhaps, that many projects were not firmly enough anchored within an organisation's work. On occasions, New Audiences projects proved a step too far. Cultural Intelligence found that some 'had failed to appreciate the level of additional work required to develop new markets.'

The restructure of the Arts Council and subsequent merger with the Regional Arts Boards in 2001 during the period of the New Audiences Programme presented some challenges and difficulties. Many people left the organisation or changed responsibilities and the 'hands on' work encouraged from officers was sometimes lost, with a negative impact on arts organisations.

An overemphasis on 'new' audiences has meant that some organisations neglected to invest in follow-up activity having reached out to first time attenders: the challenge now is to convert first time attendance into repeat and frequent attendance.

Common factors that hindered audience development success for organisations were:

- lack of appropriate project management skills
- lack of contingency budget or time to deal with unexpected crises, such as the loss of core staff
- lack of resources to continue and build on project successes
- lack of planning to ensure that relationships built with new audiences could be sustained
- lack of information captured on new attenders
- communication difficulties with project partners due to failure to define partnership roles and responsibilities early on in the project

Dissemination of findings

The concrete legacy of the programme resides in the careful documentation, reports and research that have been produced, linked to a process of analysis, dissemination and publication. This has been initiated at a number of levels: by individual organisations, within and across different arts constituencies, and by Arts Council England. The most comprehensive resource is the New Audiences website www.artscouncil.org.uk/newaudiences which continues to gain users. Since its launch, the number of hits on the website has risen from around 900 a month to over 8,000.

The website has been developed as an important archive and learning resource for the sector and is the first time that the Arts Council has made available such detail. It is a unique archive in which each funded project has its own web entry,

allowing peer organisations to learn about activities and experiences in the words of organisations themselves. Analysis and independent evaluation is also available on many aspects of the programme and types of audience development work.

New Audiences case studies and programme findings have been presented at conferences regionally, nationally and internationally, which have covered subjects such as: developing new audiences for culturally diverse theatre; marketing to disabled audiences; and carnival development for artists and audiences.

Publicly available research reports and evaluations of projects and programme strands have included: audits into family friendly arts policies; the impact of folk festivals on local economies; and the impact of opening times on gallery attendance. Partnerships with arts magazines *MAiOUT* and *Arts Professional* have raised the profile of the programme and attracted arts professionals to the website.

The lessons learned through individual projects have fed into good practice guides and toolkits to support arts organisations.

Ensuring a long-term legacy for the New Audiences Programme has been an issue that Arts Council England has responded to and still needs to safeguard within current funding and support mechanisms. There is an undeniable danger in the focus on audience development diminishing with the loss of a discrete programme such as New Audiences. However, the challenge is now to ensure that short-lived good practice translates into successful ongoing activity.

There were some notable successes in encouraging more artists and organisations, particularly from the voluntary and community based sectors, to secure funding to develop audiences eg the 'entry point' funding schemes within the New Audiences Programme, such as the Grass Roots scheme in the West Midlands. Grants for the Arts must be promoted as a way to ensure that organisations at whatever stage of development can continue to develop good work started through New Audiences.

Resources

A report on supportive self-evaluation for New Audiences projects 2001–2003, Aspirational Arts, Arts Council England, 2003

An evaluation of essential audiences and 'Beyond the Page' as processes for disseminating the lessons learned from the New Audiences Programme, Arts Intelligence, Arts Council England, November 2003

An evaluation of the role and impact of the New Audiences Programme on participating organisations, Arts Intelligence, Arts Council England, November 2003

Evaluation of Gateway One and Gateway Two of Arts Council England's New Audiences Programme Final Report, The Cultural Management and Policy Group, De Montfort University, Arts Council England, June 2003

Hadley, Daniel, *Arts Council England Regional Challenge Overview*, Arts Council England, December 2003

Jennings, Mel, *Arts Council England, London, New Audiences Programme Evaluation Report*, commissioned by Arts Council England, June 2003

Jermyn, Helen, Bedell, Sarah and Joy, Alan, *The New Audiences Programme: Report on the first year, 1998 –1999*, September 2000

New Audiences Programme 2000–2002 Overview Evaluation of Gateway 4: New Approaches to Presentation Volume 1, Cultural Intelligence, Arts Council England, 2003

New Audiences Programme 2000–2002 Overview Evaluation of Gateway 4: New Approaches to Presentation Volume 2 – Case Studies, Cultural Intelligence, Arts Council England, 2003

New Audiences Programme Gateway One (Diversity) and Gateway Two (Disability): Key findings from an independent evaluation by The Cultural Management and Policy Group De Montfort University, Leicester, Arts Council England, Autumn 2003

Rose, Catherine, *Success and its indicators in New Audiences projects*, Arts Council England, 2003

This short report examines 'success' in the following: audiences, organisational impacts, finance, marketing and communication, professional relationships, national policy and development, strategic positioning.

What Happened Next? A brief study of the legacy of New Audience Programme Projects relating to Young People and Families with particular regard to organisational change and the development of good practice, Cultural Intelligence, Arts Council England, December 2003

15 Conclusions

‘The New Audiences Programme was a great programme – a wonderful idea. It’s great that Arts Council England has a programme where organisations can be creative within a very wide brief. The scope was so wide people could be imaginative. That’s the greatest gift that a funding organisation can give you.’
(Brighton Festival)

New Audiences has helped Arts Council England to determine its current vision for audience and market development:

- to increase the proportion of the population who regularly engage with the arts
- to develop an audience which is more representative of society as a whole
- to improve depth and quality of experience for all audiences

Audience development is about working towards a more equitable form of cultural participation. New Audiences has made the Arts Council and many of those who participated in the programme think afresh about audience development. The programme has yielded many insights into how organisations work, provided many different models for arts and audience development, addressed key barriers for audiences and organisations, and raised issues for longer term sustainable development.

Many different approaches were tested to attract new audiences: from making the experience of attending ‘less threatening’, and developing outreach work tailored to specific groups, to changing the way in which work is presented.

The programme helped arts organisations to broaden the range of their audiences by extending their reach into communities of people who do not currently participate in arts activities. It encouraged organisations to work in new areas where little development had happened, often from a non-existent audience base. The programme was particularly successful at increasing audiences from diverse, disabled and excluded communities.

In the second half of the New Audiences Programme, 2000–2, there was a greater focus on more qualitative outcomes and on developing skills and knowledge to assist organisations in developing new audiences in the future. Many projects equipped organisations with the skills, confidence and audience knowledge to embark upon longer term strategic audience development plans.

Projects created ‘entry points’ for new audiences, often giving people an unexpected arts experience in public spaces already familiar to them. New opportunities were created for people to engage with arts in new spaces and places. Audiences were involved as co-creators and commissioners and were widely consulted in many projects.

There were extensions of touring schedules to communities who would not have been able to access such high quality work. New partnership work in broadcast programming and new media resulted in new audiences.

Investment in new bold ideas such as Birmingham ArtsFest in 1998 and YoothBOOX, helped reach people and support projects to encourage people who would not normally attend arts venues.

Measuring success and sharing practice

New Audiences placed great emphasis on sharing experiences and practice, encouraging arts organisations to see themselves as part of the wider arts ecology. Successes, expertise and information were exchanged through conferences, seminars and publications, as well as through partnership working.

The action research mandate of the programme gave organisations the ability to risk and innovate, to try something different and to learn from this and pass on that knowledge. The programme aimed to measure success and a variety of measures emerged through the programme.

Organisations learnt more about audiences, shared models of good practice and ideas with other organisations, and changed their ways of working to become more inclusive. Physical, attitudinal, financial, personal and social barriers to attendance were identified and addressed. Organisations reviewed their practices and improved their image, attitudes, policies and services.

Partnership working produced strong outcomes including: increased resources; new knowledge and expertise; new contacts and networks; and information about audiences and mechanisms to reach them.

New Audiences has had an important impact on employment and training, and new consultants, researchers, project coordinators and facilitators have been brought into the arts, particularly from Black and minority ethnic communities.

New Audiences helped to raise organisations' awareness that audience development is a holistic process requiring senior management commitment and a long-term strategy. In many cases, work piloted through New Audiences has influenced on core work and become fully integrated into the way an organisation works.

The diversity of types of audience engagement – not just 'live attendance' – was a particular strength of the programme.

National campaigns promoted greater profile for, awareness of and involvement in arts events and activities and helped to spread public awareness and knowledge of arts. Promotions with the media – such as the Roots project in collaboration with BBC English Regions – proved very effective in taking art to a wider audience.

New Audiences was about increasing the numbers of people participating in the arts but also achieving a qualitative difference in the make-up of audiences. It is recognised that changes of this nature take time.

The legacy of the programme resides in documentation, reports and research linked to a process of analysis, dissemination and publication. The most comprehensive resource is www.artscouncil.org.uk/newaudiences with a searchable database of all projects, which has been developed as an important learning resource for the sector.

Key questions now to be addressed include:

- How do we now sustain and develop the new audiences generated by the programme and continue to develop practices to which will lead to new audiences being attracted to the arts?
- How do we make sure that organisations are supported to continue to develop their staff and skills?

- How do we support organisations to improve evaluation, for their own and wider learning?
- How do we gather information that helps to demonstrate the impact of investment in audience-focused work, for research and advocacy purposes?

Increasing new attenders, readers, viewers, listeners, buyers and participants to one-off events or initiatives was not the sole purpose of the programme. Equally important is attracting them a second and third time and developing them as regular audiences for the arts.

Appendix 1: New Audiences Programme aims and strands

This appendix summarises how the aims of the New Audiences Programme and the individual funding strands within it changed and evolved over the four-year lifespan of the programme. It also summarises how individual regions approached the Regional Challenge strand of New Audiences.

New Audiences Programme 1998–2003

Aims

- to tackle the barriers which stop people engaging with the arts
- to increase the range and number of people participating in the arts
- to create new opportunities for people to become involved in the arts in different spaces and places
- to allow learning and sharing of experiences between organisations to improve audience development practice

New Audiences Programme year one: 1998–9

Aims

In addition to the four core aims and objectives of the overall New Audiences Programme (1998–2002), the first year of the programme identified the following additional priority aims and objectives:

- to offer opportunities to enjoy the arts in areas where provision is limited
- to tackle limited transport provision where it prevents people getting to arts venues
- to address some of the psychological barriers to the arts by changing the contexts in which arts could be presented
- to test new ways of promoting the arts to overcome social and psychological hurdles that deter people from the arts

Funding strands

The £5 million available in 1998–9 was allocated across the following seven funding 'strands':

Arts Ride

This strand sought to address two key barriers to attendance: lack of transport and price. Arts Ride encouraged the development of new ticket and transport schemes to address these barriers and allowed organisations to undertake complementary education, outreach and marketing work.

Arts Plus

This strand supported work to tour more widely. It offered touring companies access to a wider geographical spread of audiences and enabled them to undertake additional marketing, education and outreach work to attract first time attenders. Arts Plus targeted communities that would not otherwise have had the chance to see work of such scale or ambition in their locality.

Music on Your Doorstep

This was the only strand to concentrate on a single artform, classical music. It offered people, particularly young people in urban and rural areas, the opportunity to engage with classical music through arts education work and community based activities.

New Contexts

This strand allowed arts organisations to present work in non-traditional locations such as clubs and festivals, offering people the chance to try new experiences in their own familiar environments. It was a response to evidence that young people, in particular, can feel alienated and intimidated by traditional arts venues. New Contexts also supported arts partnerships with the commercial sector and new forms of artistic collaboration that aimed to encourage new audiences.

Regional Challenge

Each of the nine regional offices funded projects that reflected the diverse range of issues and challenges faced by local communities in their region. These projects might address issues such as cultural diversity, rural isolation, or the physical, social and psychological barriers that discourage access to the arts. Fuller details of the Regional Challenge strand are given later in this appendix.

Sample the Arts

This strand sought to apply the idea of 'sampling', a common strategy in the commercial sector, to the arts. New attenders were introduced to the arts through a series of promotional offers. Organisations and artists offered samples of live events. Audiences were encouraged through a 'try it and you might like it' approach.

Test Drive the Arts

The concept behind Test Drive is that organisations can use the spare capacity in venues to give potential attendees a ‘taste’ of their product in order to stimulate repeat attendances, thereby stimulating future income as well as audiences.

New Audiences Programme year two: 1999–2000

In February 1999 The Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) pledged an extra £15 million to enable the New Audiences Programme to run for three more years.

Aims and objectives

Though the core aims of the programme remained, the second year aimed also to:

- build on the success of previous audience development work and initiatives undertaken by arts organisations, whether through New Audiences funding or other developmental work
- target communities who had fewer opportunities to experience the arts, reaching those who were ‘traditionally excluded through geographic, physical, social or psychological barriers’
- encourage a lifelong arts experience, supporting projects which extended audience understanding of the arts in young people and in adults
- promote innovation in audience development practice and share models of good practice and new approaches across the arts sector
- support projects which addressed the audience’s quality or depth of experience. This was a response to the recognition that year one of the programme had ‘cast a wide net’, with a strong emphasis on the volume and range of new audiences reached

Funding strands

Year two of the programme retained many of the original funding strands, with some modifications and refinements.

Two strands from year one, Test Drive the Arts and Music on Your Doorstep, were replaced by Arts Connect and Arts Extend.

Due to the longer planning time made possible by the programme extension, the year one Regional Challenge strand became a three-year regional developmental fund.

Underpinning the second stage of the programme was a requirement to add value through the inclusion of strong education and outreach work and to attract audiences under-represented during the first year. There was more emphasis on 'the role of education in developing lifelong appreciation of and participation in the arts'. There was less emphasis on projects generating partnership funding as this had proved a stumbling block for some of the more of the more high-risk proposals.

Arts Extend

Music on your Doorstep had recognised the role of education and outreach work in developing opportunities for engagement and participation by young people. Arts Extend explored ways to develop this further to encourage families, friends and teachers to participate in the arts.

Arts Connect

This broadened the scope of Arts Ride to address the physical and practical barriers to attendance for rural and diverse communities.

Regional Challenge

A three-year Regional Challenge strand enabled support for longer term initiatives aimed at widening access and increasing attendance and participation in the arts. Fuller details of the Regional Challenge strand are given later in this appendix.

New Audiences Programme 2000–3

Following a review of the programme in 2000, it was agreed that the New Audiences Programme should be more clearly aligned to regional and national priorities. This resulted in a refinement of the aims and objectives of the programme to concentrate in greater depth on key policy areas: inclusion, disability and diversity.

Though the programme had four financial years (1998–2002), programme activity continued into 2002–3 and therefore we have referred to the programme throughout as a five-year programme.

Aims

In addition to the core programme aims and objectives, it was decided that:

- New Audiences would concentrate on identifying, developing or testing new and sustainable approaches to audience development
- research and evaluation would be integral to all areas of activity and, where appropriate, this research would be independent
- activity would be audience focused, helping the arts funding system and arts organisations to better understand potential markets and experiment with new ways of attracting audiences and participants

This approach fostered a rolling programme of activity designed to leave a legacy in terms of practice or knowledge about how to bring the arts to a wider audience. A common framework for project development, research and evaluation was agreed and developed into a set of guidance notes for each strand.

Note: In the planning stages of the programme, funding strands in 2000–2 were referred to as ‘Gateways’ with working titles: Gateway 1, Enabling Diversity, Gateway 2, Enabling Disability, Gateway 3, Enabling Inclusion, Gateway 4, New Approaches to Presentation, Gateway 5, New National Partnerships. Many of the independent research studies commissioned between 2000–2 use these terms.

For simplicity within this report, we have dispensed with the gateway terminology and refer to these as funding strands with their later, often revised titles.

Funding strands

Disability

This strand supported organisational change within mainstream arts organisations and addressed barriers to attendance and participation in the arts by disabled people. It aimed to:

- encourage mainstream arts organisations towards change by improving their attitudes to disabled audiences and their provision for them
- find out about and overcome barriers which prevent disabled people enjoying the arts
- encourage training of more specialist facilitators

Diversity

This strand supported the practice of community based Black and minority ethnic organisations and the development of partnerships between community based Black and minority ethnic organisations and mainstream arts organisations. Its focus was to attract new Asian, African, Caribbean and Chinese audiences to the arts. It aimed to:

- support community based Black and minority ethnic groups, not only to strengthen them as organisations but also to help them reach bigger and wider audiences
- develop links between community based arts groups and mainstream arts organisations
- encourage cultural diversity training in mainstream arts organisations

Social Inclusion

This strand sought to address barriers to attendance and participation through research and development projects focusing on communities often excluded from the arts. It aimed to:

- develop arts organisations' experience of working with socially excluded communities
- support and encourage training, so that arts organisations can learn to consult target communities
- develop ways of measuring success and gather evidence of effective practice and different approaches
- document the above and share it widely with arts organisations
- promote wider contact between arts organisations and the voluntary sector, community groups, etc

New Approaches to Presentation

Four audience groups were the focus of this strand: families, young people, older people and a grouping defined by the marketing profession as 'time-poor'. People are deemed 'time-poor' because of the trend towards working longer hours, or having leisure time restricted for other reasons, such as full-time education or being single parents.

The choice of these groups was prompted by *Towards 2010: new times, new challenges for the arts*, an in-depth look at future trends that will affect the arts, carried out in 2000 for the Arts Council by the Henley Centre for Forecasting.

Towards 2010 illustrates how these groups would become increasingly significant audiences for artists and arts programmers to think about.

This strand also allowed the conclusions of another recent Arts Council funded publication, *Crossing the Line: Extending Young People's Access to Cultural Venues* (edited by John Harland and Kay Kinder, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Arts Council England, NFER, 1999) to be tested.

New National Partnerships

Developing partnerships with organisations outside the arts makes it possible for the arts sector to gain access to new audiences, new outlets, new skills and new ways of working. This strand was devised to encourage the development of partnerships with organisations of national standing in non-arts sectors, such as the media, commerce, tourism, science and heritage.

It aimed to:

- work in partnership with the media, commerce and other non-arts sectors to bring new audiences to the arts
- quantify the relationship between media coverage and physical attendance and/or participation in the arts
- work out ways of monitoring the consumption of the media-based arts

Regional Challenge

In 1998, one-off grants of varying amounts were given to each Arts Council regional office. In 1999, £500,000 was allocated to each region to enable it to run a three-year Regional Challenge programme that would allow for longer term planning and development. This allowed regions to devise developmental programmes whereby findings from a project could be used as the basis for further development.

The regional offices were responsible for identifying and selecting organisations for programme funding. This enabled regional officers to develop proposals delivering regional priorities aligned to national priorities within an agreed common framework for project development, research and evaluation. The fund was managed by a regional officer with a remit for audience development in that region. Projects were initiated and developed in partnership with arts organisations and marketing agencies.

Regional Challenge was characterised by its responsiveness to the individual needs of each region's audience development infrastructure. Priority issues, informed by central guidelines, were similar across the country, although regions placed a different emphasis on each (see Summaries below). Common aims were addressed around issues of inclusion, diversity and disability, to which the Regional Challenge programme was a main contributor. As well as funding new arts activities, Regional Challenge supported the infrastructure that underpins new audiences work: for example, the research essential to create a sustainable base for new initiatives.

Summaries of individual Regional Challenge programmes

East

Arts Council England, East dedicated the majority of its resources to a diversity programme to help address Black and minority ethnic issues. Over four years, this £535,000 programme has supported artists and promoters to increase their profile, develop their organisational practice and, ultimately, to further their engagement with the arts mainstream. The intention was to develop the capacity of the Black and minority ethnic arts sector in the region, to enable it to build sustainable relationships with new audiences.

East Midlands

Arts Council England, East Midlands Regional Challenge also concentrated on Black and minority ethnic issues. It connected existing networks with the arts mainstream, and helped to develop new audiences for Black and minority ethnic work. The Roots partnership with the BBC, now a national programme, was developed in the East Midlands over four years. This, together with the Regional Challenge fund, stimulated a broad range of pioneering work with new audiences around Black and minority ethnic product. The East Midlands scheme solicited projects in most cases, but latterly complemented this with an open application model. Although Regional Challenge East Midlands prioritised Black and minority ethnic projects, it also supported important work developing disabled audiences.

London

Arts Council England, London approached Regional Challenge through a series of major programme strands, addressing issues of social exclusion, disability and regeneration. Two strands, Routes Across Diversity and Senses of the City,

aimed to support and promote the art and cultural activities of London's refugee communities. 27 projects took place under these strands over two years. Creative Neighbourhoods supported six large projects aiming to build sustainable local partnerships for the benefit of neighbourhood audiences. The projects took place in areas of deprivation with high levels of youth and race crime. The final strand of the Regional Challenge in London was Innovate, which supported the development, production and presentation of new work by disabled and deaf artists.

North East

Arts Council England, North East created a Regional Audience Development Initiative (RADI) with its New Audiences funding. This scheme made awards of between £1,000 and £10,000 to community and arts organisations. For two years RADI followed an open application model, aiming to create a culture of experimentation in which organisations addressed barriers to attendance. The final years of the scheme built on this learning period, and saw an increase in the direct allocation of funds through solicited bids in line with strategic priorities. Although the North East Regional Challenge focused particularly on the engagement of young people, it also tackled issues of disability and cultural diversity, and promoted audience development in the visual arts and literature.

North West

A key feature of Regional Challenge North West was work developing disabled audiences, pursued over the course of three years. The first year of Regional Challenge funding was dedicated entirely to this area, stimulating action research into how disabled people could increase their engagement with the arts. This work continues today. It has been complemented by a large body of work on Black and minority ethnic issues, and work with young people, reinforcing existing activity in these areas, which are identified as priority development areas for the North West. Funds were made available through an open application model. 55 projects were funded over a four-year period.

South East

The primary focus of Regional Challenge South East was to work with a network of municipal venues in the coastal towns of the region, and to build relationships with the relevant local authorities. Some of these venues had been in a cycle of decline and this initiative, Developing Cultural Programmes in Civic Venues, aimed

to break this spiral. By helping the venues enhance their arts programming, the scheme worked to develop their audience base. In most instances, there was a particular focus on targeting young people. Regional Challenge funding was distributed through a solicitation model, and other priority areas for the region were also addressed, including work with disabled audiences and research into best practice in the audience development field.

In the South of the region (now part of Arts Council England, South East), informed by its audience development strategy, Regional Challenge South channelled funds into the building of the regional audience development infrastructure. Research was undertaken into key target groups, culminating in the Arts Index South project, which aimed to give a baseline for future audience development work. This linked in with other national market intelligence initiatives. The Regional Challenge fund also enabled audience development professionals to be placed in organisations with the greatest need, to help tackle issues on the ground. Other projects within Regional Challenge in the South focused on recruiting new audiences to a range of arts activity, in particular to the visual arts.

South West

Regional Challenge South West supported a programme of work reaching new audiences through a variety of artforms including visual arts and crafts, literature, and the performing arts. Large scale projects of between £10,000 and £35,000 focused chiefly on young people and rural communities. In 2001 an award of £100,000 was made to the Eden project, to develop an arts programme at this important new visitor attraction.

West Midlands

Arts Council England, West Midlands created two open application funding strands: the Youth Arts and Grass Roots funds. These funds offered small organisations in the region the chance to engage in audience development, often for the first time. Organisations used awards of up to £2,000 to work with young people aged 12–24, and with new audiences in rural communities. In addition, Regional Challenge supported a wide range of networking and market intelligence projects in the region. These helped regional audience development agencies to implement contact networking within Birmingham's Black community and to target rural communities. They also helped to build a picture of the region's audiences through Arts Index, an intelligence-gathering exercise into audience behaviour.

Yorkshire

Regional Challenge Yorkshire was shaped by its new audience development strategy, which aimed to encourage broader engagement with the arts through testing and evaluating audience development practice. The Yorkshire region's priority areas for development work informed the focus of its Regional Challenge projects. Funded projects tested ways of working with new audiences in a variety of arenas: targeting young people and families, working on disability and Black and minority ethnic issues, and addressing social exclusion, particularly in high priority geographical areas. Funds were made available through an open application programme, which ran over four years.

