

CREATIVE FUTURES

Children & Young People's Arts Strategy

Developed by Powys County Council's Arts Development Service

2011 - 2016

DRAFT

IMAGINE picture **circus** **sing** **stir** make **game** **confident** **learn** laugh
inspire music **paint** song **skill** **dance** **craft** **think** **pride** **joy** **splash**
colour **form** **sound** **express** **feel** **explore** **design** **draw** **touch** **sing**
harmony **invent** **story** **brush** **shape** **look** **sculpt** **pop** **write** **CREATIVE**
FUTURES...

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Foreword

by County Councillor Gwyn Gwillim, Portfolio Holder for Recreation & Leisure Services and
County Councillor Lesley Davies, Portfolio Holder for Children & Young People's Services.

TO BE AGREED

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Background

Why does Powys need a Children and Young People's Arts Strategy?

The rights of children to enjoy and participate in the arts are enshrined in Article 31 of the UN Convention.

“Every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. Member governments shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.”

The Welsh Assembly Government bases its work for children and young people on the UN Convention and states, within its seven Core Aim's under Core aim 4, a requirement that 'all children and young people have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities.'

Powys County Council has a good track record for supporting arts provision for children and young people, which is focused through the development of its' own Children and Young People's Arts Strategy. However there is a need to better focus strategic support in a climate of economic pressure.

'Creative Futures' has been produced as a result of extensive consultation with over 500 children and young people in Powys and with over 400 arts providers throughout Powys and Wales.

The vision for the strategy has been formed in response to this consultation and under the guidance of the Children & Young People's Arts Strategy Steering Group.¹ The strategy has been informed by information and issues contained in a specially commissioned Discussion Paper² used as a tool for stakeholder consultation. The development work has been managed by the Arts Development Service in partnership with the Youth Service and sits within the strategic planning framework of the Children & Young People's Partnership.

¹ The Children & Young People's Arts Strategy Steering Group is made up of Powys County Council Officers and representatives from the Children & Young People's Partnership, Powys Arts Forum, Powys Arts Organisations, Powys Arts Forum, Arts Professionals and young people.

² The Discussion paper is available upon request or can be viewed at http://www.powys.gov.uk/uploads/media/CYPAS_Discussion_Paper_for_SH_consultation_080410_en.pdf

Four main themes for consideration emerged as a result of consultation with children and young people and with arts providers.

- **Communication**

There is a need to improve the sharing of information about opportunities and possibilities for involvement in the arts and to develop better communication between arts providers and young people.

- **Resources**

At a time when resources for supporting, developing and delivering arts provision are limited, there is a heightened need to make better and more efficient use of existing resources through working creatively in partnership.

- **Advocacy**

Understanding and promoting the valuable contribution which the arts makes to improving the quality of life for children and young people is crucial as is advocating the use of the arts in achieving a wide range of shared outcomes.

- **Skills & training**

There is a need for training to be provided for individuals and organisations working with and delivering services for children and young people in the use of the arts and a need for training arts practitioners and providers in working with children and young people. Additionally greater emphasis on the importance of children and young people themselves gaining skills through the arts and creative industries is essential.

Introduction

Powys County Council presents 'Creative Futures' the Children & Young People's Art Strategy to set out how the issues of better communication, better use of resources, better advocacy and skills development will be addressed in the delivery of arts activity for children and young people in Powys. The production of this strategy demonstrates an ongoing commitment to making inspiring arts and cultural experiences available for our children and young people.

We value the role of arts and culture in contributing to the quality of life and ensuring health and well being. The arts and creative industries³ provide significant and wide ranging opportunities for learning and developing skills at all levels from early years through to further education via career pathways. This strategy is primarily concerned with extra curricular arts activity and provision whilst recognising the important intersection between young people's arts experiences in school or educational settings and in recreational time.

The arts offer a way for young people to explore, express, learn, grow and achieve. The medium of the arts is accessible to all and engagement can take place at any level.

Powys County Council recognises that the creative arts provide both formal and non formal avenues for developing enthusiasm, purpose and talent in a wide variety of ways from active participation in early years through to skills development for employment in the creative industries.

This strategy aims to promote the effective inclusion of arts right across service delivery for children and young people to help in meeting a wide range of aims and objectives. We plan to inform and assist in using the arts both as a means to meet clear objectives and as a tool to contribute to wider aims ultimately leading to better overall outcomes for children and young people.

"When I'm dancing, I'm being the best bit of myself."

Amber, 16

³ The Arts and Creative Industries makes up the Arts Sector and consists of the private businesses, public bodies and voluntary organisations, companies and groups involved in supporting, developing and generating arts activity through production, performance, events, festivals and programmes outside of statutory or curricular provision.

Powys context (social, economic, political)

The arts sector in Powys

Powys has a strong tradition of vibrant grass roots arts activity initiated by the voluntary and community sector. This level of arts activity is augmented by the services offered by public performing venues, community arts organisations, festivals and the high number of skilled professional arts practitioners working in the county.

Powys County Council's own Arts Service provides community dance through Powys Dance and Theatre in Education, community touring and Youth Theatre through Theatr Powys as well as some project activity through the Arts Development Service. Powys County Council also delivers some arts provision through other service areas such as the Youth and Education Services. The majority of arts activity for children and young people however is provided by the independent sector, both private and voluntary. Much of this provision receives support from Powys County Council but is largely dependent on complex partnership funding arrangements and on volunteers. There is no singular model for delivering the arts, rather a range of diverse and unique set ups often dependent on the vision of an individual or core group of arts practitioner activists.

We aim to further develop partnership working with and between arts providers towards sustaining and developing the provision and range of arts activity for the county's children and young people.

The effects of the economy on the arts and the effects of the arts on the economy

Following the Arts Council of Wales Investment Review of revenue funded organisations and Powys County Councils own Arts Strategy review, it is clear that a specific strategy is needed to ensure fair provision of and access to arts activities for children and young people. The independent arts sector is a creative sector - responsive, adaptable and energetic, however when resources are scarce, the need for a better, more joined up and supportive approach to initiating and delivering arts provision is essential to make best use of available resources in ensuring quality and access.

The Creative Industries are the fastest growing sector in Wales and the growth of industries such as the performing and visual arts, film and new media continues to rise despite the existing national economic crisis. The arts have a direct and positive effect on the economy and are an integral component in regeneration through business, tourism and recreation as well as giving communities a sense of place and identity. The arts and creative industries are affected by the nations' economy but by being innovative, flexible and responsive, in fact contribute notably to leading us out of recession. The task in hand for the arts sector as a whole, is to explore ways to become more sustainable and less dependent on public funding, by responding to the needs of communities and identifying opportunities for both creative and economic growth and success.

The next generation - the future

This strategy sets out how we plan to support all children and young people to develop their creative potential through access to arts provision of high quality and to equip and enable a new generation of arts and creative industry professionals, artists, film makers, performers and designers to emerge. In times of reduced economic prosperity, investment in future growth – the next generation, is critical if the arts and creative industry sector is to meet its potential to be sustainable and to flourish, through providing viable futures for young people to evolve careers and thrive.

“I’ve been singing since I was little. I want to sing for all of my life.”

Jessica, 10

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What is children and young people's art and why do they need creativity in their lives?

Children and young people's art consists of the things they do to express themselves creatively or involvement in creative activities. It could be painting a picture, writing a poem, listening to a storyteller, performing music, designing a logo, dancing, recording a song, making a model or sculpture, making a film or acting in a play.

Learning creative skills can increase confidence, self esteem and self awareness. Being creative can inspire ambition and help achieve success. The creative process regularly involves co-operation and sharing experiences amongst peer groups and others in a non competitive environment where each contribution is unique and of equal relative value.

Children and young people find many ways to be creative – they *are* creative and the ways that they create alter as they and the world around them develops and changes.

Participating in arts activity can be active - through playing, making, creating, doing and performing or passive - as audiences, through reading, listening or watching.

Art involves exploring ideas, learning new skills, finding talents, expressing feelings, being enlightened and enjoying life to the full!

Creativity is a crucial component in the healthy, rounded development of any child or young person. Thinking creatively; participating in arts or cultural activity helps them to solve problems, deal with challenges and learn about themselves and their place in the world.

The arts provide a wide framework within which children and young people can develop interests and gain key skills which contribute to their personal and social development.

“I love drawing. I'm going to be a graphic designer when I'm a grown up.”

Ken, 11

The wider benefits

Mental health and well-being

Children and young people are able to express themselves creatively through being involved in arts activities where each individual's contribution is unique – they can articulate their feelings and describe themselves in a variety of ways. Being part of a group using a theme, medium or material as a creative vehicle, removes competition and the fear of 'not being good enough' allowing for imaginative and safe exploration around sensitive issues such as bullying. Opportunities for creative expression and self reflection are fundamental to enabling young people to develop psychologically, socially, intellectually and spiritually in preparation for the challenges of life.⁴

Family support and childcare

The arts are enjoyable and can help families step outside of and beyond the usual routine and to explore new activities together. Where children, young people, parents or carers are experiencing difficulties in their lives, an arts experience can deflect tensions and offer a break from troubles, often inspiring a fresh perspective from which to move forward. Being inspired, seeing things in a different way can help in learning to cope with or solve problems.

Modernising learning

The arts easily engage children and young people in learning by encouraging them to be inventive, expressive and creative. Learning through the arts requires the use of a wide variety of skills and can accommodate a wide range of abilities and individual learning styles by relying less on more formal skills. The language of new media and use of new technologies is easily accessible to and understood by young people and activities such as film, music production and sound recording, animation and dj-ing captivate even those who are often hard to engage. These and other art forms not only offer interesting and exciting ways to learn but all offer potential pathways to careers in a rapidly growing industry.

Active and healthy lives

Taking part in arts activities means being active – moving, dancing, singing, performing and making things all involve physical participation and often a great deal of energy. Performing in live events such as Eisteddfodau, youth theatre or young farmers shows requires not only energy and hard work in preparation but the confidence to present your talents in front of audiences. Active participation can happen at all levels of ability, with many arts forms capable of accommodating for all abilities.

⁴ Case study - Eat Carrots Be Safe From Elephants.

Promoting social inclusion

Rehearsing for a show, taking part in an arts workshop or singing in a choir all involve groups of individuals often with a range of capabilities, ages, backgrounds and interests. Being part of a group with a common aim or interest promotes understanding, tolerance and acceptance of others. Those with differences are readily accepted in new imaginative environments where the normal rules or prejudices do not apply. Getting involved in arts activity can be a constructive diversion away from negative behaviours amongst young people which can implicate harmfully on wider society contributing to the community cohesion agenda.⁵ Participating in music making workshops or getting involved in creating an artwork can allow young people to contribute in a constructive way, in turn changing the way they see themselves and the way others see them. The arts can present a vocabulary through which young people can explore differences and similarities in a non threatening and non confrontational manner.⁶

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⁵ Community cohesion agenda / definition - **community cohesion can be seen as a development of the concept of multiculturalism, in which the** emphasis on separateness and differences is counterbalanced by the creation of interaction and commonalities.

⁶ Case study - Powys Xtreme.

What do children and young people want?

We asked over five hundred children and young people across Powys what arts activities they currently take part in and what they would like more of - they told us that they are already very active in a wide variety of participatory arts both within and outside of school and they enjoy trying new things. They like being involved because they can learn new skills in an enjoyable way and they can socialise. They want more activities in their own community and more choice on offer. They especially want film and music making, sound recording and performing arts. They want to use professional venues and like meeting new artists and practitioners – they value quality.

We also asked them what stops them from taking part in activities. They told us that the main reasons were: - they could not get there or had no-one to take them, sometimes they did not know what was on or how to find out, often what they want to do is simply not available to them, their spare time is limited and many cannot afford to pay much if at all to join in.

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VISION

Inspire to aspire!

The chance to be creatively involved in the arts should be made available to all children and young people in Powys in a way that suits their needs, hopes and abilities; that inspires them to aspire and helps them to reach their full potential throughout their lives.

“Playing my music live and then hearing people clap really loud feels great – like they know and I know I’m really good at it.”

Aidan, 15

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Values

The vision of the strategy is based on the positive principles of **Partnership, Access, Quality and Sustainability**.

Partnership between arts providers and services working with and supporting children and young people.

Access to arts - information, advice and support for those participating in or delivering accessible arts services for children and young people.

Quality of arts provision for children and young people.

Sustainability of appropriate arts provision which plans to respond to and meet the developing needs of children and young people.

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Strategic Priorities

This strategy aims to:

- 1.** Ensure that all children & young people in Powys have equitable access to a wide range of high quality arts experiences and activities that reflect their interests.
- 2.** Encourage children and young people to participate in arts activities that are imaginative, challenging and inspiring.
- 3.** Enable children and young people to nurture creative talent and develop skills through the arts.
- 4.** Support arts providers to sustain, develop and improve effectiveness in the delivery of innovative arts provision for children and young people.
- 5.** Advocate the use of the arts in contributing to the quality of the lives of children and young people and as a valuable tool for achieving a wide variety of objectives towards their healthy development and well being.
- 6.** Celebrate the creativity, skills and artistic talent of children and young people in Powys.

Priority 1

ENSURE ACCESS

This strategy aims to:

Ensure that all children & young people in Powys have appropriate access to a wide range of high quality arts experiences and activities that reflect their interests.

Outcomes

- Children and young people are able to access information about what is on in their area in the way they want to receive it.
- Children and young people are able to access arts experiences and activities in their communities.
- Barriers to children and young people's participation in the arts reduced.
- A range of arts providers in Powys delivering a variety of accessible and high quality arts activities reflective of current arts practice and creative industry trends.

Example actions

- Set up an integrated system to collect, collate and publish information from arts providers about arts events and activities for children and young people via appropriate routes e.g. www.powys.gov.uk/fis
- Develop targeted methods for providing information effectively to children and young people about arts activities.
- Encourage arts providers to implement National Youth Participation Standards by including young person representatives on their management boards and planning committees.
- Produce and provide good practice guidelines and training for developing and delivering children and young people's arts activities, including safeguarding children.
- Work in partnership with providers to develop a programme to encourage and facilitate the attendance of children and young people at live performing arts events (e.g. 'Young at Art' pass – subsidised/free ticket scheme).
- Work with Welsh Language providers to develop and promote arts activities through the medium of Welsh.

Priority 2

ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION

This strategy aims to:

Encourage children and young people to participate in arts activities that are imaginative, challenging and inspiring.

Outcomes

- Children and young people of all abilities and from all backgrounds participating in a wide range of arts activities.
- Availability of imaginative, challenging and inspiring arts activities and events that attract children and young people.
- Children and young people confidently engaged in activities that reflect their interests and abilities.

Example actions

- Establish a Powys Arts Partnership (PAP) comprising of key arts venue, organisation and stakeholder representation to share good practice and develop an integrated Powys wide model for delivering imaginative, challenging and inspiring arts activities.
- Work with representatives from the existing Powys Youth Forum, School Council's and Eat Carrots Be Safe From Elephants to input into the planning, delivery and evaluation of arts activity for young people in Powys.
- Work in collaboration with providers via the PAP and with young people, to produce a Powys Arts Marketing Plan (PAMP), including a dedicated Children & Young Peoples section.
- Plan and undertake targeted marketing campaigns for new opportunities to participate in arts activities.

Priority 3

DEVELOP SKILLS

This strategy aims to:

Enable children and young people to nurture creative talent and develop skills through the arts.

Outcomes

- Availability of stimulating arts activities to inspire and sustain the engagement of children and young people.
- Appropriate range of opportunities available for children and young people to acquire skills through the arts.
- A range of options available for young people wishing to pursue their interest and develop their talents in the arts and creative industries through accredited acquisition of skills.
- More children and young people enjoying life through involvement in the arts.

Example actions

- Form practical, working links between the Arts Development Service, Youth Service, Schools Service and Coleg Powys to extend curricular and extra curricular formal and non formal training and accreditation programmes in the arts for young people.
- Provide training via the CYPP Integrated Training Programme to arts providers about including the development of skills in programmed arts activity, workshops and events.
- Develop a tool to measure skills based outcomes for children and young people participating in arts activities and track progress via sample pathway focused case studies.
- Undertake research to establish what gaps exist in skills development provision for children and young people to further develop particular art form skills in Powys.
- Work in partnership with the Schools Service to explore routes for developing the use of arts practitioners within schools.
- Develop and pilot 14 - 19 Learning Pathway options in the arts and creative industries.

Priority 4

SUPPORT PROVIDERS

This strategy aims to:

- Support arts providers to sustain, develop and improve effectiveness in the delivery of innovative arts provision for children and young people.

Outcomes

- Improved partnership working within and beyond the arts sector in maintaining and developing arts provision through sharing of skills, information and resources.
- Capacity of providers strengthened to work flexibly in meeting a wide range of developing market needs.
- More professional arts practitioners trained to provide opportunities for children and young people to be involved in the arts.
- A stronger, better connected arts infrastructure capable of collectively producing a vibrant mix of arts provision across Powys.

Example actions

- Establish a Powys Arts Partnership (PAP) comprising of key arts venues, organisations and stakeholder representation to provide professional peer support and promote the sharing of resources and information.
- Create a central database of contacts and resources available in support of the delivery of arts provision for children and young people.
- Produce and provide specialist information, advice, support and guidance to arts providers wishing to develop their work with children and young people via the Arts Development Service.
- Develop a mentoring support programme for providers.
- Provide support, information and training to youth workers and other service practitioners wishing to develop arts projects with children and young people.
- Provide support, information and training to artists wishing to work with children and young people, on all relevant issues including safe guarding.
- Identify clear targets for funded arts providers delivering services for children and young people.

Priority 5

ADVOCATE THE ARTS

This strategy aims to:

- Advocate the use of the arts in contributing to the quality of children and young people lives and as a valuable tool for achieving a wide variety of objectives towards their healthy development and well being.

Outcomes

- Widened use of the arts as a tool for achieving better outcomes for children and young people in all areas of their lives.
- Availability of case study material and good practice guides for those wishing to develop the use of the arts with children and young people.
- The profile of children and young people's achievements in the arts is enhanced through strategic promotion and marketing.

Example actions

- Collaborate with providers via the PAP and with the PYAF to produce a Powys Arts Marketing Plan (PAMP), including a young person led 'Young People in the Arts' promotional campaign.
- Promote events, exhibitions and presentations to demonstrate the benefit and outcomes of involvement in the arts for children and young people.
- Initiate and evaluate pioneering arts projects exploring innovative practice.
- Produce and publicise case studies of successful stories or pilot projects.
- Develop a tool to measure broad based outcomes for children and young people participating in arts activities.

Priority 6

CELEBRATE ACHIEVEMENT

This strategy aims to:

- Celebrate the creativity, skills and artistic talent of children and young people in Powys.

Outcomes

- Children and young people are recognised for their creative achievements through targeted promotional initiatives.
- Children and young people participate in arts activities confident in their own creative potential.
- Children and young people initiate and promote their own arts projects and events.

Example actions

- Provide support to young people, via the Powys Arts Partnership (PAP) and the Powys Youth Arts Forum (PYAF), to develop, design and lead a 'Young People in the Arts' promotional campaign within the Powys Arts Marketing Plan (PAMP).
- Coordinate showcase events and exhibitions demonstrating the process and products of a range of arts activities involving children and young people.
- Implement an 'arts buddy programme' of peer support for young people developing interest and talent in the arts.

How the Children & Young People's Arts Strategy will be delivered

The Children and Young People's Arts Strategy will be implemented alongside the Powys Arts Strategy. The delivery of both interconnected strategies will be via services and organisations across the public, private and voluntary sectors and will rely on robust partnership working. In order to progress the aims of this strategy it is important that it also has clear links to other key strategies and documents concerned with improving the lives of children and young people and as such adheres to principles contained within: -

Powys Change Plan 2010 - 14

Powys One Plan

Powys County Council's Children and Young People's Plan

Powys County Council's Arts Strategy

Powys County Council's Community Strategy

Powys County Council's Regeneration Strategy

'Changing Lives' - Arts Council of Wales Children & Young People's Arts Strategy

Welsh Assembly Government National Youth Service Strategy for Wales 2007

Welsh Assembly Government One Wales Agenda

How the aims of the strategy will achieve outcomes

The aims of the strategy will achieve outcomes through the implementation of the **Children and Young People's Arts Strategy Action Plan**.

Achieving these outcomes will contribute towards meeting the local and national strategic objectives of Powys County Council and the Welsh Assembly Government (**Aims & Outcomes Flow Diagram** Example - Appendix 1).

Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of Creative Futures and the delivery of the Action Plan will be monitored by the Children & Young People's Arts Strategy Steering Group. Staged evaluation will be undertaken by the Active & Healthy Lives thematic partnership through the Children and Young People's Partnership with input from children and young people supported by the Youth Service.

Conclusion

It is the intention of this strategy to support and inspire children and young people in Powys to explore and develop their own creative futures.

Acknowledgements

Thanks to all the individuals and organisations who contributed to the development of this strategy, including the many children and young people who helped us.

Contact details

If you wish to discuss the Children and Young People's Arts Strategy or require further information, please contact:-

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This document is available in large print, audio tape or Braille upon request.