WAVERLEY’S COMMUNITY ARTS STRATEGY

arts development officer

CHARLOTTE GARDINER

Unit 4

**Introduction to Waverley’s Arts Service: strategic partners & priorities and the work of Arts Partnership Surrey.**

**COMMUNITY ARTS IN WAVERLEY**

***“The arts matter because they embrace, express and define the soul of a civilization. A nation without the arts would be a nation that had stopped talking to itself, stopped dreaming and had lost interest in the past and lacked curiosity about the future”***

***John Tusa, a quotation from “Arts Matter - Reflecting on Culture”.***

1. **Name title**

Written by Charlotte Hall - Community Development Arts Officer at Waverley Borough Council

*For Referencing:*

*Gardiner, C, 2019, Waverley’s Community Arts Strategy, For Godalming College*

1. **Introduction to Waverley’s arts service**

As the title of my report suggests I would like to spend some time introducing you to Waverley’s arts service and why in these financially stricken times the local authority feels it is important to invest in the arts.

* I’ll also mention some of the ways we deliver the arts in partnership with others
* a little bit on our budgets and spending
* and some of the initiatives we are currently working on
* I’d then like to briefly talk about the role of Arts Partnership Surrey and finish with a short creative film that we commissioned last year which provides a flavour of the kind of activities we support.

**3. So why do we support the arts…SPENDING SURVEY**

Arts Development UK undertook a national survey to assess the level of local authority expenditure on the arts.

Perhaps unsurprisingly the survey revealed significant changes to local authority arts budgets across the country.

The headlines revealed

* A downward trend in most areas of local authority arts activity (in Waverley the cut has been 38%)
* A growing need for arts services to demonstrate their economic value
* And an increased focus on ‘improving the quality of life’ and using the arts to address social, health and wellbeing issues in local communities

The survey also showed that local authority arts services are under severe funding pressure nationally (our local milieu also reflects this)

* With 30% facing service reductions and 50% at a standstill
* 18% show a decline in staffing
* 40% are finding it difficult to maintain the levels of grant funding they provide to local arts organisations
* For every £1 a local authority spends on the arts a further £4 is levered in from grant aid and partnership working
* Perhaps most striking of the times is the severe reduction in partnership working with the Arts Council who are currently undergoing their own unprecedented funding challenges

The Arts in Waverley contribute to:

1. Economy
2. Health and Wellbeing(those who attend a cultural event in the previous 12 months were almost 60% more likely to report good health)
3. Society (secondary and sixth form students who engage in the arts are twice more likely to volunteer than those who don’t and are 20% more likely to vote!)
4. Education – participation in structured arts activities increases cognitive abilities

**4. The arts make a difference to…**

On a more optimistic note, in Waverley we recognise the difference the arts can make to individuals, communities and the environment we share and we work hard to ensure that these benefits are demonstrated in our approach to delivering the council’s wider objectives.

In fact according to a recent survey’ Waverley was recently voted the best place in the country to live and I’m fairly sure that alongside our beautiful countryside and fantastic leisure facilities the arts will have played a part in achieving this satisfaction rating.

* The Arts make an estimated 5.9 million value added contribution to the UK economy
* The Arts employ on average 110,600 people nationally
* For every £1 subsidy an additional £2.01 is generated in the wider economy

**5. Waverley’s Creative Milieu**

For those of you who are unfamiliar with the area, Waverley is in fact a very creative Borough, which is comprised of

* **Creative spaces** such as the University for the Creative Arts, the New Ashgate Gallery and Craft Study Centre
  + **Farnham Maltings**
  + **Cranleigh Arts Centre**
  + **Godalming Borough Hall**
* **Creative organisations** such as Farnham Maltings and StopGAP dance both of who are National Portfolio Organisations supported by the Arts Council, ClassAction Theatre at Godalming College
* **Creative people**, such as yourselves who are developing and sharing your artistic practice with our local communities via your work in College with ClassAction

**And I suppose my role is really about developing a set of productive relationships with these individuals and organisations, in a way that not only supports them in delivering their artistic ambitions but helps us to achieve ours as well.**

**6. There are 3 main ways in which we support and deliver the arts in Waverley**

* **Firstly through direct delivery** which is basically about developing projects and initiatives that meet the needs of our communities. This often involves talking to our colleagues in health, children’s services, in education and the voluntary sector.
* We provide **Community Partnership Grants** to arts centres and museums in the Borough and are starting to introduce Service Level Agreements for the shared work that we do
* And we **manage specific cultural assets** including museums and halls

**7. Budgets**

Last year, the arts service attracted over £70,000 from external sources to deliver a broad range of community outreach projects in the borough on top of the budget allocation from Waverley Borough Council.

Many of these projects, which create opportunities for local people to participate in the arts, are initiated by local arts organisations and artists who approach me for help in making them happen.

**8. An important part OF MY ROLE**

… is about supporting artists and arts organisations, to make work in the Borough. And this is often in practical ways such as helping with funding applications, finding venues or signposting them to potential partners and collaborators.

I also champion the arts continually at Waverley, advocating the important role they play to our local politicians, shaping cultural policy at a local level and picking up on any opportunities I can for the arts to play a role in delivering the agendas of other services, particularly where they have money.

**9. Lastly Current initiatives**

* **Public art scheme for the ‘Brightwells’ development**
* **New digital cinema facility for the Borough Hall**
* **Developing the Waverley Youth Arts Festival and the Farnham Maltings community outreach programme**
* **Celebrating the creativity of older people**

**10. APS**

Finally, I thought I would just spend a few minutes talking about Arts Partnership Surrey and the work boroughs, districts and the county are doing together to shape and deliver a cultural offer for surrey, which addresses social, economic, learning and health needs.

The partnership is a strategic alliance of 8 districts and boroughs and the county arts service. It formed in 2004 in response to the Arts Council becoming one national funding body for the arts in the UK.

It’s essentially a pot in which the authorities pool their resources and agree on a set of shared priorities and projects.

Our priorities include

* Health and well being
* Older people
* Families
* Disadvantaged communities

**11. By working together we aim to**

APS is driven by the principles of partnership working in order to extend our reach and effectiveness,

Its also about developing and sharing best practice in community arts and providing value for money by using our shared investment to lever in funding from alternative sources.

So because actions often speak louder than words I’m going to finish, if technology allows with a short film we commissioned last year.

WATCH THE VIDEO TO SEE MORE ABOUT OUR WORK:

http://vimeo.com/45691212