

BBWCVS ARTS AND CULTURE FORUM

Arts & Culture Forum

7th September 2005

Hilltop Infants School, Wickford



In Attendance:

Fiona Cheek (minutes)	BBWCVS
Penny Keys	Essex Libraries
Jane Muniyinyi	Essex Libraries
Celia Ebrahimi	Hilltop Infants
Stef Parry	Cherry Tree Primary
Sue Chapman	Basildon Stitching Club
Ann Coltman	Basildon Stitching Club/Basildon Philatelic Society
Peter Patterson	Basildon Arts Trust
Paul Nagle	Basildon District Arts Association
Denise Gannon (Chair)	BBWCVS

Apologies:

Vin Harrop	Commission for an Essex Gallery
Gina Stickings	Essex Youth Service
Barbara Bowhill	Essex Youth Service
Jennifer Gannon	Books & Booze Readers
Mike Harrington	START
Tony Guyon	Interlock!
Tim Balogun	Basildon District Council
Charlie Mead	Basildon Philatelic Society
Alan Morgan	Woodlands School
Mike Peart	Basildon Theatre Company
Tina Jeffree	3 rd Edge Theatre Company

Introductions

Introductions were made. Penny announced that she would be leaving the Libraries Service in mid September, and introduced Jane, who will be taking over her work. Denise also announced that she will be leaving her post as PPI Co-ordinator for BBWCVS at the beginning of October, however this will not affect her work for the Arts & Culture Forum as she will continue as Chair.

Minutes of the last meeting (26 July 05)

Sue Chapman and Ann Coltman to be added to the apologies list.

Update on the Towngate Theatre issues

As Vin was not able to make the meeting, Denise gave a verbal update: Vin met Cllr Malcolm Buckley recently, and was able to get some assurances on the future of the Towngate Theatre. The final decision about the future of the Towngate rests with the Council's Scrutiny Committee, as Malcolm Buckley had in fact indicated in his response to the Save London's Theatres Campaign (SLTC). Malcolm Buckley also suggested that Vin would be invited to give any evidence to the meeting. Vin hoped that there would not be a let up on pressure to secure the future of the Towngate, and the voice of the people of Basildon would be heard. Denise further reported that Essex County Council had responded to SLTC by pointing out that the Council supports a range of cultural initiatives including flagship projects such as the Firstsite Gallery in Colchester and local community arts events. They emphasised that Basildon Council has not made any decision to demolish the Towngate.

Denise circulated a copy of the draft letter as discussed at the meeting on 26 July, to be sent to key politicians and senior managers at Basildon District Council regarding the Forum's view on the Towngate Theatre (see appendix 1).

Action: Forum members were asked to look at the draft letter and comment by 16th September. Individual organisations may also write their own letters to Basildon District Council regarding the Towngate.

Funding Workshops

Paul wished to seek the views of the Forum with regards to funding workshops. Tim Balogun, Basildon District Council Arts Development Officer, can give specific arts funding advice and BBWCVS can give more generalist advice to the voluntary sector. It was agreed that it might be useful for a funding workshop to be held to help with looking for funding for the arts taster season. It could cover issues such as funding application skills. Celia suggested that schools would be interested. Celia spoke of a trust called Claud Duffield that looks to give grants for community use. Another option for funding is the Foundation for Sports and Arts.

Action: Fiona to approach the CVS regarding training opportunities for funding application skills workshops.

Arts & Culture Season

Paul distributed updated proposals (see appendix 2).

Comments and suggestions included the following:

It was agreed to change the needle arts & crafts to stamp club

Separating visual from performing arts is a good idea

Some of the one-off events could be held in the Towngate or the Town Square

Jim Furnival is the Town Centre Manager and he can be approached regarding permission to hold events in the town centre. He can be contacted through Basildon District Council.

Paul will draw up a more definitive budget regarding the taster sessions.

Forum members to look at and suggest facilitators for workshops. It was suggested that where possible, voluntary groups should be used.

Clarification is to be sought as to whether we need CRB checks for workers on the day. As the day is designed as a family fun day, and children would not be involved on their own, it was felt this would not be necessary.

Help will be required for tasks such as registering people for workshops, stewarding at events etc

Funding needs to be applied for ASAP through BDAA and also applications can be made through a children & young people stream (Children's Fund?). The Heritage Lottery Fund may also be approached.

Publicity needs to be on stream for early 2006

Some workshops should have full registration. Others could be 'dip in and out' sessions

The name for the arts taster season was decided on. The season will be called 'Kick up the Arts!'

Forum funding update

Paul has applied for a £500 grant and is awaiting a response. It may be possible to use Funderfinder for general funding advice.

The Forum now has a website. The address is artsandcultureforum.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk. A domain name will be established once funding is available.

Gloucester Park update

This item was deferred to the next meeting. Forum members need to come up with some suggestions for the proposed arts and community space in the development scheme.

AOB

Paul talked about Basildon Council's arts policy. He believes it was written in 1996 and does not think that it has been reviewed since 1999. Paul would like to bring this to the attention of the Council.

Paul also mentioned that the Council has an Arts Development Award, but little is known about it. Perhaps this is something that Paul could raise with the Council.

Information Sharing

The Forum was reminded of the Poetry Café at Costa Coffee on 9 September.

There is a local rock bands night at Woodlands School on 21st and 22nd September at 7pm. National Youth Week event, Young at 'Art exhibition is on at the Towngate Theatre on 2nd November

BAT Gallery is hosting an exhibition by Dr Kamal Al-labani, who is a Syrian doctor. The exhibition is sponsored by Amnesty International.

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is on Tuesday 4th October, 7.30, Timberlog Youth Centre. The November meeting will be on Wednesday 9th November, 7.30, Wickford C of E Infants School. The December meeting will be on Tuesday 13th December at 7.30pm. The Fold, Laidon Road, Billericay has been confirmed as the venue for this meeting.