

## Creative Places Executive Summary

1. Creative Places has created **opportunities for people to become actively involved in the arts** through socially engaged arts projects enabling individuals, groups and communities to contribute positively to their communities. (Appendices: CP Radstock final evaluation and CP Peasedown final evaluation, Clandown Renewal Project)
2. Creative Places has **worked with partners** to provide and develop arts provision for underrepresented groups in B&NES.
  - Partnerships have been consolidated and developed to support and develop a variety of social, health and educational agendas whilst addressing and responding to priorities identified in the Local Area Agreement in the target communities.
  - New Partnerships have begun with the newly formed local Children's Services and Radstock Museum.
  - Creative Places provides much needed links in community provision for partners in health and social services. Using a social model of engagement and model of recovery, socially engaged arts practice has enabled opportunities for people with health or mental health problems to have opportunities that are not normally offered in the wider community provision. Using the nesa model of supported inclusion participants in Creative Links, My Time My space, youth and older people have been able to attend and contribute to a community in non-threatening and inclusive environments.
3. Creative Places has **provided a strategic arts development and brokering role** tied to local networks and consortia wherever nesa works. This long term and strategic process of creative engagement has shown the transformative power of the arts that has resulted in the development of creative communities where residents have been more involved and have taken greater ownership and responsibility in decisions about their communities.
  - Further to existing partnerships, new partnerships have been developed with
    - local Children's Services and the My Time My Space project. A crèche and venue was provided by Children's services enabling support workers to break down professional barriers and work specifically with women on issues of inclusion, parenting and mental health.
    - GP surgeries had the opportunity to refer patients suffering from anxiety, depression, bereavement and social isolation into arts and health projects with support workers on site or community arts projects enabling social inclusion into the community.
    - local heritage museum in Radstock provided support and information to residents and widened opportunities for volunteering and local connections within the area.

- The Peasedown st John youth centre have attracted support from Radstock College to enable transferable skills of brick laying to contribute to the Creative Places community mosaic seating project, an additional commissioned public art work.
  - Creative Places has integrated health and social services provision such as G.P's, Rethink and the Community Options Team into a wider socially engaged community project providing valuable support and progression routes for individuals.
  - Evaluation of the earlier Creative Change 'Where I Live' consultation and transformation project completely changed the way Somer Housing Trust work, causing them to set up neighbourhood teams and integrate consultation and creative community development work into their housing development schemes. In Creative Places this has led to further involvement in the Clandown renewal process.
  - The project has attracted further funding to enable extended and specific engagement in target areas: Council Play Consultation in Clandown; Somer Housing Renewal Process; POP group Awards For All; Parish Council support.
  - **nesa** has promoted the inclusion of art/creative activities in community events such as
    - Peasedown St John Fun Day,
    - Clandown Fun Day,
    - Transition Peasedown St John a local group promoting environmental and sustainable community development
    - Wansdyke Play Association.
  - Creative Places has exemplified the positive contributions socially engaged arts practice makes to individuals and communities: community development and cohesion, skills development, creating a sense of pride, giving opportunities to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. (Appendices: PSJ Public art SWOT analysis and Clandown Renewal Project Arts Report)
4. **Quality professional arts** has **strengthened provision** in areas of B&NES;
- Artists involved in Creative Places have been supported in their engagement by experienced Artist/Development Workers. **nesa's unique offer to artists** includes supported progression through projects, mentoring, dedicated space on our website[in development], and a programme of **art|speak** events that focus on key issues for artists working in community settings
  - A **mentoring scheme** has given 4 new or inexperienced artists the opportunity to work alongside experienced artists for five weeks each, learning new skills and developing experience in working in community settings or socially engaged arts practice
  - **nesa** is also working with University of West of England (UWE) to design a flexible, modular Post-graduate Certificate in Socially Engaged Participatory Arts due to come online Autumn 2009.

- The project has assisted in **consolidating nesa's role** within the B&NES Cultural Partnership, championing cultural regeneration, artists support and development [creative industry], participation and venues, and lifelong learning.
- Creative engagement projects have **encouraged progression routes** for people with mental health problems, young people to re-engage with learning programmes and intergenerational links.
  - Participants from the Connections Day services for people with physical and learning difficulties, My Time My Space participants and Creative Links participants had opportunities to progress into wider community arts sessions after the confident engagement they had received in the more discrete and supported arts and health programmes.
  - Members of the POP group made links with older peoples groups providing intergenerational links that are requested in the village.
  - Partners value the strength of progression opportunities offered by the nesa model and support.
  - Peasedown St John Council would like to encourage further activity with newer residents in the village and older residents.
- Creative engagement has supported residents involvement in the development and design of new community facilities, amenities and services.(Clandown report and Tynning Play facilities)
- **Residents and groups have been encouraged and supported** to take greater responsibility for the development and delivery of projects, to think bigger and more strategically and to develop cultural activities that have greater cultural significance locally, regionally and nationally. (PSJ POP group)
- Involvement in small scale but high quality **commemorative public art works** have taken place in
  - Peasedown Pigeon Mosaic Project,
  - Once poster project which for a few days reflected back to residents their thoughts about living in the area.
  - Clandown artworks in Mosaic, creative making, photography, comments and artists in residence response.

Funding to enable nesa to contribute to a proposed UWE conference was not forthcoming but **nesa** remains committed to the dissemination of evaluation material and will continue to work with other cultural organisations [The Creative Community Development Network, Festivals Forum Bath, B&NES Cultural Partnership], to further develop the dialogue around socially-engaged participatory arts.

5. Local press and radio have attracted wide interest in the Creative Places project enabling dissemination of nesa's successes:
  - A Peasedown Pigeon Website has attracted interest regionally, nationally and internationally.

- Project partners have seen firsthand how creative partnership working has enabled the project to reach its targets and helped to meet their own providing models of good practice which might be applied elsewhere
  - There is scope to share the findings of Creative Places with a wider audience including residents and partners through an evening or day event to reflect back the totality of Creative Places.
6. During the Creative Places Project **nesa** worked closely with other organisations to develop further funding and partnerships that would support new funding initiatives. **nesa** also undertook training in Procurement and Commissioning processes and applied to a number of commissioning briefs to deliver creative community development initiatives. Success was limited but a process of analysis and research has identified some key parameters for future commissioning processes, primarily the development of consortia for joint bids which deliver wide packages of care and development.
7. Creative Places has strengthened and developed **nesa's** organisational structures and practices.
- A committed steering group structure and members reflected and fed into the development of Creative Places.
  - The project brought together and integrated **nesa's** programme areas of Arts and Health, Neighbourhood Arts and Children and Young People within the wider context of creative community development.
  - It enabled **nesa** to follow through consultation, engagement, involvement and motivation with specific outcomes that could be worked towards and attained in the project time and commitment from residents and partners.
  - Opportunities to develop further commitment to fundraising from partner organisations at the outset might enable development and further progression opportunities.
  - The project is developing partnerships with Bath University for a long term research programme that **nesa** is developing with a wide partnership in the sub-region that broadly, will address the social impact of the arts.
  - The project worked with a Freelance Marketing Officer to review current practices, research requirements and best practice. It implemented a Marketing and Communications Strategy to enhance the reach of **nesa's** marketing, promotional materials and activities with regard to being inclusive and reflecting diversity.

## **Project Proposal**

The Creative Places project is a creative community development project that worked in three disadvantaged rural communities in B&NES, Peasedown St John and initially in the Springfield Crest and surrounding areas of Norton Radstock, later focusing on an in depth renewal project in Clandown. The

project has consulted, engaged, involved and motivated the communities, promoting the development of a strong community spirit and pride in each community, encouraging residents to develop strategies to tackle anti-social behaviour, and start working together to make their community a better place to live. It has promoted health and well-being improvements and working towards improving their quality of life.

The project has built on partnerships that **nesa** has developed in the recent past working with other agencies in these communities, that tackle health promotion, creative education, skills development, community involvement in community development and facility improvement. It has supported the development of these partnerships and others to facilitate **nesa's** aim to integrate creative community development projects with local priorities and the delivery of projects that meet local agendas and contribute funding and other resources to the project.

### **What happened:**

1. 3 communities in B&NES began a process of creative community development, where residents have been more involved in decision making and taking a greater sense of pride in their communities: Peasedown St John public art pigeon project; Clandown Renewal project and Tynning Play Park development.
2. Two **art|speak** events: Artworks May 2008 and Arts and Health professional development Feb 2009
3. 9 Creative Community Showcases:
  - 5 showcase events in Tynning and Clandown: the Once poster display; Park Sculpture and Play launch – Summer 2009; Clandown Renewal Project launch and final event; community seating project Peasedown St John
  - Peasedown St John: launch of the Public Art Project
  - 4 showcase events for Flags made by locals: **art|works** Radstock festival, Clandown Fun Day, Bath International Music and Arts Festival and the launch of the National Cultural Olympiad.
4. Interventions/installations, public Art Works by the Artists in Residence:
  - Once resident artists created installations throughout their residency interacting with local people at places within their communities.
  - Peasedown St John Public Art project had a launch event outside the co-op combining the launch with 100 years of the Co-op in the village. A walk around the other public art sites enabled locals to see where all the pigeons were sited.
5. Two Creative Community Plans 2008/011 are in the process of development. **nesa** was invited to contribute to the Somer Valley

partnership, in recognition of our work, that will refresh the Brighter Futures Community Plan that parish plans will feed into.

6. A long term research programme into the Social impact of the arts is developing in partnership with cultural and academic organisations and communities in B&NES. [see Social Impact research Brief]
7. Four new/ inexperienced artists were mentored by experienced artists working on **nesa** projects, adhering to the **nesa** Mentoring Guidance Notes developed as part of the RAP + project. They gained skills and experience to develop their work in participatory arts. A round table event still remains to be held where mentors and mentees will come together to share their experiences. This event will inform the development of **nesa**'s offer to artists.
8. Improved partnership working within these communities. (Appendices: CP Radstock final evaluation, Clandown Renewal Arts Project and CP Peasedown final evaluation)
9. The aim to create and develop 2 social enterprises proved ambitious in the duration of the project. We recognise that there have been sparks of potential for creative enterprises. The POP group has gone on to apply for further funding with support from **nesa** in order to realise more creative arts projects. A seed has been sown for further development where members of the group have taken greater responsibility in determining the groups future, but support is requested. Clandown residents have expressed a desire to fundraise for community play equipment and want to support a community group. This is the early stages and will take commitment of responsibility in the future. The youth group have expressed some interest in developing cement sculptures and mosaic pigeons but there has not been commitment to follow through. In the long term these may be realised beyond the Creative Places project.
10. A Marketing Accessibility Review and Action Plan specifically addressed access issues and piloted a selection of the recommendations, including, bulk email software, SMS Text Messaging, project signage and **nesa**, branding of events. **nesa** will be reviewing our Marketing Strategy during 2009 and this review will feed into policy development.
11. There is greater awareness of the role that the arts can play in cultural regeneration and economic development amongst the steering group, partners in health, local council and education.

## **Benefits**

The Radstock Report, Clandown Renewal Report, Peasedown St John Report and Peasedown St John SWOT analysis highlight the detail and achievements by residents and communities; contribution and benefit to

partners and artists; new opportunities identified in the projects undertaken throughout Creative Places engagement.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **Legacy**

- Creative Places has developed and helped consolidate a multi-agency partnership approach for creative community development, modelling a combined approach to tackling health, social, educational and community agendas and inequalities. It has added value to initiatives from Somer CHT, Youth Service, PCT, G.P.'s, Play Rangers, Children's Services, Peasedown Parish Council. There are opportunities for nesa to further present the overall summative findings and breadth of the project to partners.
- Creative Places has raised awareness of **nesa's** work and its potential with existing partners. The project has also given **nesa** a higher profile locally, and regionally through press coverage, local launches and involvement in Bath International Arts Festival and in the National Cultural Olympiad launch, nationally and internationally through the **nesa** website and Peasedown Pigeon website.
- Creative Places has raised awareness of the value of socially engaged participatory arts amongst local agencies and its ability to work across a wide range of issues and agendas. It has helped underscore the value and transformative power of the arts especially when used in a process of change. Partners saw that people felt inspired, proud, and raised levels of confidence in learning new skills and contributing positively to their local area. Somer Housing Trust are forward thinking in using the arts within change in social situations and in this partnership have enabled residents to positively contribute and feel more in control of their situations through working with socially engaged arts practice
- Creative Places has influenced further developments to play facilities, to communal garden areas, Somer Housing Trusts Renewal Project and commitment by Peasedown Parish Council to support and be led by the arts.
- Creative Places process demonstrates **nesa's** ability to actively involve residents in contributing to improving the safety and visual appearance of their community areas developing a sense of pride and ownership. Promoting inclusion, facilitating participation and enhancing control on influencing decisions in a process of change are all factors that affect well being and contribute to a flourishing community. **nesa** could evidence these factors in the future using a Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment.
- The project has enabled many artists to further develop their socially engaged practice. It has given artists opportunities for working in communities and collaboration with other artists. **nesa** offers opportunities to review and reflect their process and projects through

**nesa** artist support workers, professional development opportunities at **art|speak** events and through the mentoring project .

- The project evaluations indicate potential for further project development in environment and heritage development and continued links with partners in health, social services, housing, local council, schools and community groups.

### **Learning Points**

- In diverse communities developing engagement and trust with individuals and communities can take time to develop. Creative Places has started and initiated a process of engagement with disparate communities in Clandown where further funding packages are needed to sustain and develop these initiatives.
- Providing good information and promotion of awareness about opportunities to participate in resident/community activities is enhanced when partners take a responsibility to disseminate information. Consider equal opportunities including hard to reach residents and those with access problems.
- Engagement with professionals in architecture and landscaping has informed environmental change beyond the cosmetic. This joined up approach to regeneration has informed the process of environmental renewal
- Community talks would enable the projects process and results to gain higher profile.
- Partners don't appreciate that beyond the scope of this project there is not sustained funding to continue all activity. Greater promotion of funding strategies required throughout the project to enable for partners an nesa to progress the request for further work with people with mental health problems: My Time My Space, Creative Links, youth and other problems not addressed in this project; Intergenerational projects; community cohesion; further heritage and environmental projects.
- This project has enabled people to contribute about aspects that are important to them and affect their well-being. Future projects could involve residents, communities and partners in a Mental Wellbeing Impact Assessment which would help determine some of the most important issues for residents within the context of a project. *“Well-being is more than just happiness. As well as feeling satisfied and happy, well-being means developing as a person, being fulfilled, and making a contribution to the community”*. The Mental Well-being Impact Assessment was developed using the 1997 Health Education Authority definition of mental health and well-being:

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## Documentation:

- CP Peasedown Final Evaluation
- PSJ SWOT analysis
- Pigeons Press Release
- CP Radstock Final Evaluation
- Clandown Renewal Project Arts Report
- Clandown Renewal Visiting Professionals Report
- Press Release Clandown
- Somer Housing update
- My Time.... My Space, the Creative Places Process
- **nesa's** Marketing Accessibility and Review: Marketing for Inclusion
- Mentoring Guidance Notes
- art|speak agendas and evaluation questionnaire
- Income and Expenditure , Independently Audited Accounts
- ACE Activity Report Form
- A selection of marketing material