

The value of the Arts Service and Art Central Gallery in relation to the cost to the Vale of Glamorgan

This paper sets out the value that the arts service provides against the costs that the Vale Council commits to resourcing it. It maps out what will be lost in wider benefits if support for the service is 'reduced or made cost neutral' to make a short term saving.

What the Current Arts Service Offers

- Accessible Gallery with varied programme
- Public Art
- Community arts activity
- Educational activity, including activity relating to the new National Curriculum
- An arts strategy that reflects the corporate strategy and the Council's objectives
- Advocacy and support for the arts, artists and the creative industries

What the Arts Officer provides:

- Programming and management of Art Central Gallery
- Marketing the arts and Art Central Gallery
- Works with Art Central Friends a voluntary organisation that supports the gallery
- Advise to external groups and individuals
- Advises and supports Council departments e.g. Planning for Art in the Public Realm projects
- Facilitator for connecting artists and arts organisations with community groups
- A point of contact for volunteer organisations, arts groups, individuals and professional organisations in the Vale
- Connection to region/nationwide projects and funding (Holocaust Memorial Day; International Women's Day; A2:Connect; Arts Connect; Creative Learning in the Arts; Criw Celf; Forte Music Project; music workshops in schools; Night Out Theatre and opportunities in communities, schools workshops, etc.)
- Hosting, managing and supporting events for adult learning, the council's events and initiatives, art central friends, schools and other groups.
- Creating a lifelong learning pathway connecting the lives of citizens in the Vale working with groups such as the 'Fifty Plus Forum' Dementia and mental health organisations, Gwanwyn Festival amongst others.
- Delivers arts projects and workshops in schools

Art Central Gallery

The gallery is the largest of its size in the local and wider area and provides an essential platform for artists at all stages of their careers. Its programme offers the community access to a wealth of ideas and topics, opening routes to lifelong learning, self-development and cultural engagement. For young people in the Vale, it creates an insight into the visual arts as a viable career. There are opportunities to meet professional artists and hear talks about projects and careers. The creative industries are one of the key economic growth areas in Wales, it is important to show pathways into creative careers for those who might have the potential to develop in these areas. The gallery has supported small independent industries,



artists, groups and organisations. The gallery has always generated an income through sales and commissions. It operates the Arts Council of Wales Collectorplan scheme, which enables a wider opportunity for the purchase of art and craft's on a pay monthly basis, without risk to the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

The Arts Development Officer manages the gallery with support from Art Central Friends a volunteer organisation with over 180 registered members. The Friends provide financial support for an annual series of artist talks. They support the gallery openings (open to the public) with refreshments and volunteer help. The Friends give many volunteer hours to the gallery, in supporting invigilation, marketing and assistance with the installation and removal of exhibitions.

The gallery programming reflects and celebrates the diversity of the community. It has shown showing almost 170 exhibitions, in its fourteen-year life. The programme is a balance of independent artists, groups and organisations that are from the professional, community educational and creative industries. The gallery programme also includes historic exhibitions Adult Learning award evenings, talks and other events. The gallery programme marks annual national and international events for the Council such as Holocaust Memorial Day and International Women's Day. This year's programme will mark LGBT History Month and an exhibition for people with Dementia and other mental health issues.

The gallery attracts regular visitors from both the local and wider community, schools groups and teachers, tourists, including the 'Fifty Plus Forum' and tourists from all over the world. The visitor books contain thousands of positive comments and compliments on the quality of the venue and the excellence and content of the exhibitions, which can be a community, schools or professional show. Cultural Tourism is a significant contributor to the Welsh economy. The value of visitors to the venue are also likely to contribute to the local economy with secondary spend in in the area within the retail, catering, leisure and hospitality businesses.

Public Art or Art in the Public Realm

As per the adopted Vale of Glamorgan Public Art Strategy (2003), and the Public Art Supplementary Planning Guide 2018 , the arts development officer has a key role to play in advising the planning service on projects where section 106 monies are set aside for the development of public art, under the Vale's per cent for art scheme. Public Art, or art in the public realm, has an important role to play in place making, in creating coherent, safe community spaces and in reflecting the history and aspirations of the area. While external consultants have an important role to play, an embedded officer can advise and support the council at the earliest opportunity, allowing for more successful project planning and creating the context, for external consultants and project managers to deliver effective projects. When artist working in this field are engaged to develop a public art project, as part of the developmental process they are required to engage with the local community and schools to contribute to the design ideas, take ownership of a project and become part of the developmental process. It enables those participating in the process to closely engage with the arts specialists and realise alternative routes to creative career opportunities.



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Community Arts Activity

Despite a very small arts revenue budget, the arts officer works with other council departments and external arts collaborators and partners to effectively ensure best use of budgets and staff time/resources for community arts projects and activity. The arts officer acts as a first port of call for individual artists' groups and arts organisations wishing to undertake projects in the Vale, acting as a conduit to venues, potential partner organisations providing advice and information about arts funding support. In partnership with the Arts Council of Wales (ACW), the arts service supports the ACW - '*Night Out Theatre Scheme*', this scheme enables local groups to organise affordable professional theatre arts performances and musical events in their local community without financial risk. It empowers the local community to learn about organising and promoting event and has a particular strand that encourages young people to do the same, delivering high quality, professional, participatory events and activities in their area. The arts service also supports music in schools projects. Over the past five years the arts service in partnership with other local authority arts services has been operating The Forte music project. Collaboratively funded by the arts services with additional funding from the Arts Council of Wales of £40K per year (200K over five years) the project provides an annual programme to support young people who wish to develop a career in the professional music industry. The young people have performed at local events in the Vale and other regional local authority areas.

Educational Activity

The Vale of Glamorgan is part of the A2 Connect network of organisations and schools, preparing teachers for the new creatively led national curriculum. Arts Central has acted as a venue for teacher training for the ACW's - Creative Learning Programme and has supported the arts champions meetings, school class visits and has hosted Criw Celf sessions. Criw Celf is a development project for pupils showing an aptitude in the arts. Young people are able to work with arts professionals in a range of arts disciplines to learn new skills for career development and further educational opportunities. Again, this project is regionally funded between five local authority arts services and Arts Active Trust (A2:Connect). It has received funding from the Arts Council of Wales to the sum of £270K over three years at £90K per annum.

The new National Curriculum for Wales, developed by the Welsh Government and the Arts Council of Wales who have over the past five years committed £20 Million pounds to improve literacy and numeracy in schools via creative learning through the arts. Central to the programme is also the 'Lead Creative Schools Scheme' where schools engage with creative professionals in order to explore creative approaches to teaching and learning, improve attainment and develop the skills of teachers. Another strand is the ACW - 'Go and See Fund' where schools can visit high-quality arts events in galleries, theatres, arts centers and other venues. We have seen schools engage in gallery activities at Art Central. The gallery's programme of artist's talks and lectures and professionally delivered workshops offers a soft route into to Life Long learning and self-development. Through A2Connect, Vale schools have also visited theatre events and engaged in performance activities via the creative learning programme, aiming to inspire arts activity in the classroom.



For the past five years, the Vale's arts development officer has led on a management board to steer the direction of 'A2: Connect - The Arts and Education Network for the Central South Area of Wales'. The network has developed educational programmes for creative learning through the arts in schools. The five local authority arts services, in partnership with 'Arts Active', a charity organisation based in St David's Hall, Cardiff makes up A2: Connect. The network has secured £850K of Arts Council of Wales and Welsh Government funding over the past five years. The partnership has delivered professional arts training for teachers and educational arts workshops for pupils across the region, developing case studies for the delivery of cross-curricular expressive arts education learning for the new national curriculum in Wales. The organisation is currently developing a strategy to apply for further funding deliver this service more widely over the next few years.

The Welsh Government and Arts Council of Wales have recently announced a further investment of £3m of National Lottery funding to extend these schemes to support the creative learning process over the next two years. Thereafter, the new curriculum will come in to being for ages 3-19 years, 2022 (primary) and 2026 (secondary). The expressive arts dance; drama; music; literature; the digital and visual arts will play a fundamental role integrating into the core subject areas in a pioneering learning process for the new curriculum.

Arts and wider Strategies

The Vale of Glamorgan Council has an adopted arts strategy. The 'Arts and Cultural Strategy: An Aspirational and Culturally Vibrant Vale', reflects the Council's Corporate Plan objectives, and sets out the vision for arts and culture in the area. The strategy is influenced by current legislation, found in the Welsh Governments Wellbeing for Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, which identifies, 'A Wales of Vibrant Culture and Thriving Welsh Language'. The arts strategy also reflects the Welsh Government 'A Light Springs Through the Dark: A Vision for Culture in Wales. The Wellbeing for Future Generations (Wales) Act requires public bodies, including local authorities, to deliver a cultural programme, valuing the arts alongside sport, recreation and the Welsh language. Today the arts are no longer seen as a luxury, but instead are viewed as intrinsic part of a healthy local economy, to enhance the environment and impact on social, cultural well-being and health. The Vale's art strategy stipulates that: *'sometimes the arts can be seen as a luxury... the council firmly believes that they are a fundamental part of everyday life, with the ability to enrich the lives of our citizens, promote our culture and facilitate strong communities with a bright future'*.

Given the right resources and support, the arts can development service could more effectively: deliver an arts provision that can look at generating: additional income; seek new opportunities for increasing sales at Art Central Gallery; effectively market the arts and gallery services; develop existing and new partnerships; widen access and increase arts experiences and opportunities; continue advise and support the arts community; increase the cultural tourism offer; continue to develop opportunities for learning and arts in relation to the new curriculum and local community arts participation and learning.

While there may be a short term saving in cutting the arts service such a cut would have longer-term implications in relation to:

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- the economic development of the Vale (through support into careers in the arts and creative industries – volunteers and interns have gone on to careers in the arts or other areas).
- would impact on the success of future public art projects and community engagement
- Would cut off a point of contact for community groups and professional independent artists and arts organisations wishing to develop projects in the Vale, to the benefit of tourism and local businesses.
- Support for the arts community in the Vale of Glamorgan
- All options for funding an arts and cultural programme required by the Welsh Government Well-being and Future Generations Act, including the loss of the Arts Connect and A2 Connect partnerships and other Arts Council of Wales funded regional and community schemes.
- The arts Council of Wales Collectorplan scheme, operated by Art Central gallery creates opportunities to generate income making buying art affordable, while helping to support artists working in Wales and more...

Income generation

Alternative support to generate income for the arts service can be explored through other sources

One officer operates and delivers the arts service and Art Central Gallery. A better-resourced arts service could attract significant additional funding into the Vale through grants, sales of work, accessing national projects and programmes. It takes time to develop and generate any significant money with few resources. The arts sector is more than often deprived of money so generating significant sums from arts community users is difficult. Funding through applications is time consuming and can be challenging without the necessary human resources. It can be challenging, particularly when it is a local authority trying to source external funding, as options are limited.

The recent 'provisional' settlements by the Welsh Government (WG), to the Vale of Glamorgan Council for 2020/2021, of additional funding will hopefully, relieve the pressure off statutory services. This in turn might enable the council to retain non-statutory but important provision in the Vale as well as the Council Tax windfall that could also support the arts service and Art Central Gallery.

Art Central Gallery has always been generated income through commission from the sale of artworks and in the past year, via venue hire charges. The opportunity for a percentage of Section 106 monies from developers to be used to support the gallery, in exchange for a programme that create debate around art in the public realm and invites community feedback on proposed public art projects. Income generation for the arts via the creative industries, film and Television recharges. Where the Vale generates income via the creative industries at present, none of the money is allocated to the development of the arts service. This money generated through the arts and therefore, it's suggested that it could be top sliced and a percentage redirected to the arts service and used for the development of community arts and Art Central Gallery.

With a dedicated member of staff to effect sales at Art Central gallery, the venue could potentially generate more revenue from sales and commission, when artwork is available for sale. An annual open art exhibition, with modest entry fees, open to amateur and professional artists in the Vale, would also generate income to support the gallery programme.

It has been suggested in previous reports that a *Creative Café*, (devoid of competition with local businesses,) could be developed to create opportunities for local people to visit, particularly for those who might be vulnerable or isolated, to come together to learn new skills, talk, participate and attend creative cultural arts activities and opportunities. The creative programme can encouraged communication and develop community, health and wellbeing. Held in a welcoming environment creative activity can address some of the strategic social issues the council is aiming to address.

The Cabinet Report for the Council's Revenue of Monday 3 February 2020, identifies an additional £6.626M for the new financial year. The increase identified in part as reliving cost pressures for the Council, particularly within the Learning and Skill Department, where the Arts Development Service and Art Central Gallery is currently situated.

In addition to the Welsh Government increase, the Council has also proposed an increase in Council tax (in Band D Only) of 4.5% that is likely to rebalance the budget. This increase was suggested as a source for funding a museum in Barry at a 0.2% cost recovery rate for £150K.

The report, to reshape and review the delivery of the Arts Service and Art Central Gallery was produced prior to, knowing about the significant Welsh Government budget and other additions. The arts service and art central gallery could also benefit from these increases. In continuing to keep 'the status quo' the arts service can continue to support and programme Art Central Gallery, a venue the council can be proud of supporting, continue to develop and deliver the Council's Arts Strategy and to advise and support the arts community in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Information links:

Vale of Glamorgan 'Arts and Cultural Strategy: An Aspirational and Culturally Vibrant Vale'
<https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Enjoying/Arts/Arts-Strategy-2017-2022.pdf>

Vale of Glamorgan Council's Corporate Plan
https://www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/en/our_council/achieving_our_vision/Corporate-Plan.aspx

Welsh Governments Wellbeing for Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/well-being-of-future-generations-wales-act-2015-the-essentials.pdf>

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Welsh Government 'A Light Springs Through the Dark: A Vision for Culture in Wales'
<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/arts-and-culture-vision-statement-light-springs-through-the-dark.pdf>

Public Art Supplementary Planning Guide 2018

<https://valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Documents/Our%20Council/consultation/Draft-Public-Art-in-New-Development-SPG-2018.pdf>

A2: Connect - <https://a2connect.org/>