

Task and Finish Group on Participation in the Arts in Wales

Inquiry into Participation in the Arts in Wales

Response from Torfaen County Borough Council – Arts Service

1. What organisation do you represent?

Torfaen County Borough Council – Arts Service

2. Which groups of people participate in your organisation's arts activities?

General Public Existing Arts Groups Community Groups Adults & Children Local Arts Organisations

3. Do you think that budget changes have affected participation in the arts, either positively or negatively?

Yes

4. Do you think that certain groups of people have been affected more than others?

Possibly – some community groups and possibly specific age groups who previously enjoyed 'niche' events and activities. Also main stream arts organisations members who lost revenue funding under the recent Arts Council of Wales review.

5. Are there gaps in provision for people to participate in arts activities, either demographically or geographically?

Restrictions in budgets and confusion over the changes to community first areas has made provision 'stumble' somewhat. Reduced resources result on arts providers making activities more 'main stream' rather than focusing on the needs of specific age groups ie. older people and very young children. Budget conflicts in the youth service has also restricted partnership funding for the arts.

6. Are there enough funding sources available other than the Arts Council for Wales? Are alternative funding sources accessible?

NO – lots of private funding streams that exclude local authority applications. European funding is also very difficult to apply for and manage long term.

7. What role does the voluntary arts sector play in promoting participation in the arts in Wales and how can this be supported?

Very little following the loss of Arts Council funding to Voluntary Arts Wales. This organisation was resource limited to start with and the problem is now further exacerbated.

8. Is the strategic relationship between the Welsh Government and the bodies that distribute arts funding effective in increasing participation?

That is not clearer seen to be the case.

9. All public bodies in Wales will have published a strategic equality plan by April 2012. Do you think that these new public sector equality duties will help to increase participation in the arts among under-represented groups in Wales?

Yes hopefully. Again resource dependent.