

VAN Update

The voice of the Voluntary Arts

A leadership debate for the voluntary arts – are you a hidden leader?

It doesn't seem so very long ago that leadership was something that was only talked about in management circles. Yet its role in the general election and the global financial crisis has made all of us more aware of its value. It has been gaining prominence in the arts too, with the emergence of leadership programmes like the Clore Cultural Leadership Programme. But for small, voluntary organisations set up purely for the love of a creative pursuit, leadership may seem completely irrelevant, or only possible when a particular 'type' of person gets involved. So can voluntary arts groups learn anything from leadership, or vice versa?

Everyone seems to have a different view about what leadership is all about. Ask a selection of people and you're sure to hear words like 'charisma', 'confidence' and 'vision'. But even those working in the field of leadership development can't agree on a definition.

The one thing people do seem to agree on is that leadership, practised well, can change things for the better. It can turn a failing organisation into a successful one, motivate and inspire people to reach their potential, and enable people to achieve common goals. Yet ask most people who are actively involved in voluntary arts group whether they consider themselves to be a leader – and we've been doing just that recently – and most will say no.

The Cotswold Players – an amateur theatre company that presents around six productions a year and runs its own theatre in Stroud, Gloucestershire – is an organisation full of 'leaders' who wouldn't classify

themselves in this way. Over the past four years the group has managed a £526,000 building project (opened by Sir Ian McKellen) and navigated both financial and practical setbacks. At the same time, they continued to develop new ideas and ways of working, win awards and increase the number of supporters and participants. The group will reach its centenary year in 2011 in rude health, having maintained the high standards set by its founder members (for more on the Players' story, see the website links in the box on page 2).

Success without leadership?

Is such success possible without strong leadership? The Players' ways of working are typical of the thousands of voluntary arts organisations across the UK – run by an elected committee of dedicated individuals, but with strong involvement from everyone. In this case, however, there are more than the usual number of roles available, both within and outside the committee – and many of them involve 'leadership' of some form. There are committee positions including Theatre Manager, 'Member Development' and 'Box

Contents

- Report 2
- Opportunities 3
- Sector news 3
- Legal issues 4
- European and International news ... 4
- VAN news 4

With this edition of Update

VAN Briefing I34:
Welcoming speakers of different languages

VAN Briefing I35:
Gift Aid and tax-effective giving – making the most of your charitable income

If your address or contact details have changed, please let us know.

© Copyright notice: Unless otherwise stated, all material published by VAN is subject to copyright. However, we do encourage members of the voluntary arts sector to copy and disseminate this material for non-commercial purposes. Prior to doing so, please send details of your requirements to info@voluntaryarts.org.

We also require that you acknowledge VAN wherever such material is used.



AfroReggae samba band in the Vigário Geral favela, Rio de Janeiro
See Chief Executive's news on page 4

A LEADERSHIP DEBATE FOR THE VOLUNTARY ARTS – ARE YOU A HIDDEN LEADER?

Office’, and non-committee roles ranging from Director (of the production) to ‘Lighting’.

Patrick Howell, who was Chair until recently, believes this is the key. “I’m not a leader,” he explains, “but what I do is to support people... I think I am able to recognise when someone has a particular aptitude, and encourage them to use it.”

Patrick is reticent to accept the title of ‘leader’, but he acknowledges that ‘leadership’ has played a part in the group’s success. “I can think of many organisations that are struggling because of lack of leadership,” he says. “People won’t join an organisation that’s badly run. But perhaps it’s not necessary for a leader in the voluntary arts to have all the qualities a business leader needs.”

In the Players, it seems that many people take leadership roles – no matter what ‘official’ title they have: “Our organisation has been very well run and, yes, I guess it’s involved leadership... the Front of House person has to lead and organise a team of front of house staff, the Technical Director is the ideas man, he has a vision for how he wants the theatre to be in the future... and the Theatre Manager came up with the idea for a Friends’ scheme and it’s growing all the time. The ideas come from the committee, not from me... I’m not an innovator.”

Opportunities for everyone

Typical of voluntary arts organisations, everyone is encouraged to make an active contribution in all areas to the success and the development of the organisation. Patrick stresses the importance of being prepared to do whatever needs to be done. Members are discouraged from joining just to act, or to be on the committee – they get involved in everything from a weekly working party “doing whatever needs to be done, painting, maintenance, cleaning...” to the myriad backstage activities.

Everyone’s role is valued and acknowledged. “Lots of theatre companies allow play readings or even rehearsals to get underway before involving the rest of the crew like lighting, sound or wardrobe,” says Patrick. “We involve everyone from the very start. That’s very important.” This extends to the annual award-giving ceremony too, where alongside the usual ‘best actor’ type awards, there are other awards, e.g. one for the ‘non-committee member who’s done the most for the organisation’.

There’s an annual members’ cabaret evening, for those who would like to act, but haven’t been successful in getting, or don’t want, a part in the main productions. “There’s a danger that these people may feel overlooked,” Patrick continues. “It’s important as a social activity too – because if you’re not in the play, you may not see people that often – and it raises funds from members.”

There’s also a strong sense of developing people. An apprenticeship system exists for people to try out new roles: “If there’s someone wanting to take on a particular role, like

Director, we’ll let them experience what it’s really like first by being Assistant Director first. It gives them an insight, and an awareness of any pitfalls.”

A distributed form of leadership

One of the factors contributing to this group’s success, it seems, is that leadership extends far beyond one individual or a particular job title – and that’s surely the strength of leadership in the voluntary sector.

Patrick is a leader – he’s taken on the traditional role of Chair and has helped the group to achieve its vision. As well as contributing his own talents and ideas, he’s recognised and encouraged the abilities of its members, ensured that people are involved and offered opportunities, and facilitated the generation of ideas and innovation. But he’s not the only one – everyone is contributing to the leadership of organisation.

If leadership isn’t about one individual – if it’s instead about achieving common goals through a shared vision and passion, collective ownership, a distribution of influential roles, and opportunities for people to develop – then it’s very much part of the way we work in the voluntary arts. Perhaps some of us are performing leadership roles without even realising it. Are you?

Facts about the Cotswold Players and Playhouse

- **Membership:** 150 members (80/90 who are regularly and actively involved), 400 friends, 11 committee members.
- **Committee members’ roles:** Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Theatre Manager (all officers of the committee). Box Office, Theatre Development, Membership Development, Marketing and Publicity, Production Planning, Social Activities, Bar, Front of House, Archives (some members take more than one role).
- **Other members’ roles:** these include Director, Assistant Director, Actors, Scenery, Lighting, Sound, Props, Costume and Prompt.
- **More information:** www.cotswoldplayers.co.uk and www.cotswoldplayhouse.co.uk.

To read the full case study, plus a second case study featuring the Guild of Enamellers, see www.voluntaryarts.org/strongertogether.

Unlocking the potential in your voluntary arts group

The ‘Stronger Together’ Briefing 1 (available to download from www.voluntaryarts.org/strongertogether) encourages you to think about leadership in a new way and explore why it is relevant to your group – to help you get more out of the time, resources and people that you have at your disposal. It’s part of a 2010 programme that includes three Briefings and a training course in the autumn.



OPPORTUNITIES

The Big Arts Give

The **Big Arts Give** is a brand new Arts & Business UK initiative, which has been made possible through partnership with the Reed Foundation and the Big Give. This new challenge fund scheme aims to help arts organisations build and develop the income they receive via individual giving. Through the scheme, Arts & Business aims to see £3 million donated to the arts across the UK by Christmas.

The Big Give has already helped raise millions of pounds from individual donors for charity. However, this is the first time that a dedicated arts and culture challenge fund has been established.

Applications to join the scheme may be made up until 9 July 2010. If you are interested in finding out more, please visit the Big Arts Give website, where you can register to attend one of the Big Arts Give briefing events in Bristol or Manchester. www.artsandbusiness.org.uk/central/individual-giving/the_big_arts_give.aspx.

Big Dance 2010

Register your event for Big Dance week, which takes place from 3 to 11 July 2010, and help make **Big Dance 2010** the ultimate dance experience.

Whether it's a class, competition, performance, course, exhibition or debate, as long as your event is about dance it can be part of the celebration. The Big Dance 2010 logo and brand guidelines will be available to help promote your event to the public and details of your event will be listed on this website.

Register online at www.bigdance2010.com.

Children's Art Day 2010

Children's Art Day (held between 12 and 18 July 2010) aims to inspire children, teachers and families to engage with the visual arts.

Organisers across the UK are invited to devise participatory visual arts events, and will receive support from engage to run and publicise their events, and balloons and stickers.

Artists and artist educators can get involved by teaming up with a school, gallery or community group to devise an event to take place between 12 and 18 July. You should then register your event on the engage website at www.childrensartday.org.uk.

I23sing!

If you would like to be part of something really special that aims to inspire more people to sing whilst raising money for music education projects for the most disadvantaged children and adults across the UK, register your interest for I23sing!

I23sing!, taking place from 1 to 3 October 2010, is the biggest celebration of singing ever – a national singing weekend to celebrate singing, inspire thousands more people to get involved in singing and raise money for music education projects. There will be three radio broadcasts over the weekend where everyone will be invited to tune in and sing along with people all around the UK.

I23sing! is an initiative of Classic FM and Making Music with generous support from Sing Up, Youth Music and all the major national singing organisations. Visit www.classicfm.co.uk/I23sing to register your interest.

Youth Music Week 2010

From 27 October to 3 November 2010, Youth Music will be promoting the power of music to transform young lives. Youth Music Week is the biggest annual national celebration of young people's music making.

You can publicise your event and/or open workshop through Youth Music's website at http://musicispower.youthmusic.org.uk/youth_music_week.

SECTOR NEWS

Cultural Learning Alliance website launched

The **Cultural Learning Alliance** has launched its website, the first part of its campaign to bring attention to the importance of cultural learning and participation. The Cultural Learning Alliance is for everyone who believes that children and young people should have an entitlement to quality cultural experiences.

The broad aim of the Alliance is to promote the vision of a stronger cultural entitlement characterised by quality, range, rigour, progression, and opportunities for all, as well as to drive cultural learning forward to ensure that it continues to be a core value in children and young people's educational, social and emotional development. www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk.

Community Media arts strategy

The **Community Media Association (CMA)** has launched its arts strategy, focusing on establishing creative and enduring collaborations between the arts and the community media sector. The strategy was developed with support and input from Arts Council England and Voluntary Arts. Over the next 18 months, CMA aims to enhance participation and engagement in the arts by reaching out to wider audiences through community media and encourage arts content through these mediums.

CMA is the UK representative body for the community media sector and is committed to promoting access to the media for people and communities. It is set up to enable people to establish and develop community-based communications media for empowerment, cultural expression, information and entertainment.

To read the arts strategy please visit the website at www.commedia.org.uk/2010/03/22/arts-strategy.



LEGAL ISSUES

Charitable Incorporated Organisation status (UK)

The new dual legal structure of **Charitable Incorporated Organisation** (CIO/Welsh equivalent SEC) established in the Charities Act 2006 was expected to become available in summer 2008 but following a consultation that raised a number of issues, was pushed back, and is now (according to charity law consultant Sandy Adirondack – www.sandy-a.co.uk) not expected to come in until early 2011 at the soonest.

It is likely that implementation will be phased, with new registrations first, then conversions from existing charitable companies and other incorporated structures. For more on CIO status, see VAN Briefing 129 – Taking the next step from an informal group to a registered organisation (available to download free from www.voluntaryarts.org/briefings).

Once in a Lifetime

Voluntary Arts, with co-funding from Making Music, has recently appointed Helen Thomas as 'Once in a Lifetime' Project Officer. Helen will be encouraging voluntary arts groups across the UK to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad.

We will be publishing the fourth in our series of Once in a Lifetime briefings within the next couple of months. This will be announced in the e-news (sign up at www.voluntaryarts.org/news) and on the website at www.voluntaryarts.org/2012.

VOLUNTARY ARTS NETWORK NEWS



**Robin Simpson –
VAN CEO**

On his appointment as Brazilian Minister of Culture in 2004, the legendary musician Gilberto Gil launched a programme known as *Cultura Viva* – Living Culture. Gil's Secretary of Culture, Celio Turino, developed a system called 'Pontos de Cultura' – Cultural Points. Gil described Cultural Points as "sharp interventions into the depths of urban and rural Brazil that aim to awaken, stimulate and project what is characteristic and most positive in communities in marginalised societies".

There are now more than 2,500 Cultural Points across Brazil, each receiving around £48,000 to develop activities according to what it needs and wants to do, usually a continuation of existing practices, in some cases never previously remunerated. What fascinated me was the idea of building on existing community cultural activity rather than always starting something brand new, and offering funding with little stipulation about how it should be used, trusting that the groups selected as Cultural Points will use it in a way that will create a positive social impact.

I was very excited to be offered the chance to visit Brazil to learn more about Pontos de Cultura as part of 'Points of Contact' – an exchange programme between the UK and Brazil organised by People's Palace Projects (and funded by the British Council, Arts Council England and the Brazilian Government). I was invited to join a small group of policymakers and funders to visit Brazil during the initial exchange visits. Our group included Mick Elliott, Director of Culture at DCMS, together with senior representatives of Arts Council England, the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games, Liverpool City Council, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, as well as two Clore Fellows. It was great for Voluntary Arts to be included in this company – not least for the opportunity to network with the other members of the group.

Our visit started in São Paulo – the fourth largest city in the world with a population of 20 million people – where we took part in a formal seminar with the Secretaries of Culture for the State and the City of São Paulo. We then flew to Rio de Janeiro for a debate in the old Ministry of Culture building with representatives of the federal and municipal governments. We visited several Cultural Points in Rio, including three favelas to see the work of AfroReggae – an amazing organisation that is using culture to bring hope to some of Brazil's poorest and most violent communities – literally saving lives.

From Rio we flew to the northeast of Brazil to the city of Fortaleza to join the Teia (literally 'the web') – the biennial festival of the Pontos de Cultura. Representatives of most of Brazil's 2,500 Cultural Points had travelled from across this vast country for a week of celebration, performances, demonstrations and discussions. It was great to see such a mass of voluntary artists celebrating the cultural activities developed in their own communities.

I had a brilliant time in Brazil, but the real value of the trip will be in what happens next. As we prepare for the return visit by the Brazilians in July our policymakers group will be meeting to discuss

EUROPEAN AND INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Pan-European e-mentoring scheme launched for voluntary groups

Charities and non-profit organisations from across Europe met in May to begin a new pan-European peer-to-peer support scheme. The project is the first major programme by the newly-established European Network of National Civil Society Associations (ENNA). It will allow up to 250 organisations from across five European countries to forge new relationships with similar groups, share learning and improve the way they work.

ENNA also launched its website at the conference – www.enna-europe.org.

Organisations can add their name to campaign to reform European funding

The Euclid Network is stepping up its campaign to reform European funding for civil society organisations with a letter to the President of the European Commission.

For more information and to add your organisation to the signatories, visit www.euclidnetwork.eu/news.php/en/356/sign-our-letter-to-barroso.



whether the Pontos de Cultura system might provide models we could adopt in the UK. I feel inspired to continue the debate and I think we have the beginnings of a strong alliance with the other UK organisations in the group which may produce some exciting results for the voluntary arts sector.

Robin Simpson, Voluntary Arts Network CEO
info@voluntaryarts.org

Voluntary Arts England

EPIC Awards 2010 – the voluntary and amateur arts in England are gaining increased recognition in the shape of a national award scheme which launched in May, which will highlight the great work undertaken by voluntary arts and crafts groups. The EPIC Awards will acknowledge groups that have excelled in one or more of the following categories: Engagement, Partnerships, Innovation and Creativity. Award winners will gain publicity, recognition and an invitation to a winners' reception. For further information or to nominate your group visit www.epicawards.co.uk.

Once in a Lifetime – we have recently appointed a 'Once in a Lifetime' Project Officer for an initiative co-funded by Making Music. Helen Thomas will be encouraging voluntary arts groups across the UK to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad. The 'Once in a Lifetime' project will encourage voluntary arts groups to develop their own projects to be put forward for the Cultural Olympiad through application for the London 2012 Inspire mark. It will also build on existing links with the LOCOG Culture Team, Creative Programmers and the organisers of the Cultural Olympiad 'major projects' to ensure maximum involvement of voluntary arts groups. For more information contact Helen Thomas – helen@voluntaryarts.org.

Up for Arts – huge congratulations to everyone that was involved in our collaboration with BBC Radio Merseyside. 'Up for Arts' encouraged people across the whole of Liverpool to get involved in voluntary and amateur arts groups and saw thousands of people participating. Take a look at the 'Up for Arts' website to see what went on and listen again to the fantastic coverage of the voluntary arts that went out on the BBC airwaves – www.upforarts.co.uk.

Voluntary Arts Ireland

Up4Arts event – our thanks to all who were involved in the very successful 'Up4Arts' event in Ballyshannon in Co Donegal on the 22 May. Ballyshannon people came out to see and take part in a range of arts activities. The day also featured the hallmark 'Art at the Hearth' sofa in the heart of Ballyshannon. The event was organised as part of Voluntary Arts Ireland's 'Another Way In' project in association with Donegal Volunteer Centre and the Abbey Arts Centre. The project is part of the DSD (NI)/DCGRA (RoI) funded pilot Volunteering in Arts, Sports and Faith-based organisations. More about the day and the project from isobel@vaireland.org.

Youth Arts Creativity Co-operative (NI) – exciting developments with this programme – Larne Youth Arts Co-operative has made connections with a similar group in Dublin – with a view to working towards proposing the Co-operative model as best practice to the Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon. More information from pauline@vaireland.org.

Art:Take Part – we met with Joanne McConway (Head of Arts and Creativity, DCAL) and Nick Livingston (Arts Council of Northern Ireland) to discuss the 'Art:Take Part' campaign and measures to increase public participation in the arts. If you organise or want to take part in arts activities and have a twitter account, follow us at www.twitter.com/arttakepart.

Strabane – for our team meeting in April, we headed to the Alley Theatre, Strabane and combined it with a support workshop, a committee meeting and a Republic of Ireland planning session. This meeting was hosted by the Theatre and Strabane District Council and we are working to develop further relationships with local venues as voluntary arts hubs. If you would like to know more contact kevin@vaireland.org.

City of Culture – in a show of support for the Derry–Londonderry 2013 UK City of Culture Bid, a consortium of organisations, including Voluntary Arts Ireland, with Henderson Music, placed pianos at Lisnagelvin, Richmond and FoyleSide Shopping Centres to give music makers in the city a chance to raise their voices to support the bid.

Voluntary Arts Link

Stronger Together – earlier this year we were approached by the Community Sector Coalition (CSC) to help deliver their Liberating Leadership programme to the voluntary arts sector. The programme is based on the premise that existing models of leadership do not work well for community groups. CSC believes that leadership skills can be learned; that leadership is a series of processes rather than individuals; and that these processes are better shared among various members of a group rather than relying solely on one person. This makes a group more accountable, inclusive, participative, and reduces stress on individuals. Stronger Together is a voluntary arts version of the Liberating Leadership package that will help give individuals and groups the tools to develop their leadership potential. The programme includes a series of distance learning materials (e.g. briefings), an inspirational set of case studies giving examples from the sector, short snippets of useful information, an article and a training day in the Autumn to tie all the preceding information together. For more details, visit www.voluntaryarts.org/strongertogether.

Barriers to participation – Making the Difference is a multi-faceted project that will include case studies showing the difference participating in the arts has made to those with a chronic/long term condition (one in three of us). It will offer tools and tips for voluntary arts groups to engage with people who are living normal lives but have specific limitations caused by their illness, e.g. mobility problems, ever present pain, tiredness, low levels of concentration, mental health issues etc. It will also offer organisations supporting these conditions information on how to engage their members with the voluntary arts and the benefits they will gain from taking part.



Voluntary Arts Scotland

Arts Ambassadors – our new Arts Ambassadors programme is now up and running, and we've successfully recruited our first volunteer. Based in Aberdeen, Jayne Carmichael will help ensure the arts are represented in community planning, and promote voluntary arts and crafts in her area. We'll also link Jayne up with voluntary sector agencies (such as Volunteer Centres), local authority arts officers and Aberdeen-based arts and crafts groups, to generate some joined-up thinking. Our ultimate aim is to recruit a Voluntary Arts Ambassador in all 32 local authorities across Scotland.

Make a Splash! – our Make a Splash! project also stretches across the country, and so far it's ten local authorities down, 22 to go! The information events help voluntary cultural groups explore the barriers that can stop people getting involved – and how to pull them down. Groups can also apply for £250 to £2,000 to try something new and encourage more people to participate in arts and crafts activity.

Find out more about our events (including one at this year's Edinburgh Fringe) and the small grants programme at www.peoplemakingwaves.org.uk/makeasplash.

Creative Scotland – and finally, Creative Scotland is due to be up and running by the summer, with new Chief Executive Andrew Dixon at the helm. Formerly Chief Executive of the NewcastleGateshead initiative, Dixon has had close ties with the voluntary sector in the past, and we look forward to working with him to ensure the voluntary arts and crafts in Scotland gets the recognition (and funding!) it deserves.



Voluntary Arts Wales

First steps in marketing – we are working with Audiences Wales to provide free training workshops in June and July 2010 for voluntary and community arts organisations in South Wales. The two workshops will provide an opportunity to get to grips with publicising an arts event, activity or workshop, and will give participants a chance to learn how to reach more members, participants and audiences. The training will include an overview of arts marketing, how to set up a campaign, and the tools available to help including press, direct mail, print distribution and e-marketing.

The TIR project – TIR grew from the Celtic Neighbours project which Voluntary Arts Wales led over a period of three years. Its programme of residencies brought artists from the three native-language cultures of the Hebrides, the Gaeltacht and Y Fro Gymraeg to live and work in each other's communities, linking with local artists, schools and groups.

Therese Urbanska, artist, Wales: *"In early 2009 I spent ten weeks as Artist in Residence on the stunning Inis Oirr, one of the Aran Islands off the West coast of Ireland. There I was exposed to the extreme weather conditions that are an integral part of island life, dramatic sea and skylines became every day occurrences that stored in my subconscious. When I returned to Wales the experience had had a profound effect on my painting and I began to concentrate on the dramatic sea and skylines that are in abundance around our own coastline in Pen Llŷn."*

As well as enriching the artists' own work and experience, the programme has offered many opportunities for the communities themselves to learn from each other and to gain in confidence. With the programme of residencies now at an end, work has begun to select artworks from the programme for a travelling exhibition which will visit all three Celtic nations between winter 2010 and spring 2012.

**Information contained here may go out of date and you are therefore advised to check its currency.
Updated information may be available on the VAN website: www.voluntaryarts.org**

Disclaimer: Reasonable precautions have been taken to ensure the information in this document is accurate.

However, it is not intended to be legally comprehensive; it is designed to provide guidance in good faith at the stated date but without accepting liability. We therefore recommend you take appropriate professional advice before taking action on any of the matters covered herein.

**Do you need this publication in an alternative format?
Contact T: 029 20 395 395 E: info@voluntaryarts.org**



VOLUNTARY ARTS NETWORK



**The Voluntary Arts Network, Ground floor, 121 Cathedral Road, Pontcanna, Cardiff CF11 9PH
T: 029 20 395 395 E: info@voluntaryarts.org W: www.voluntaryarts.org**

The Voluntary Arts Network is registered in Scotland as Company No. I39147 and Charity No. SC 020345.

Voluntary Arts acknowledges funding from the the Arts Council of England, Northern Ireland and Wales, the Big Lottery Fund, National Lottery through the Scottish Arts Council, Legacy Trust UK, Glasgow City Council, Binks Trust, Hugh Fraser Foundation and the Austin & Hope Pilkington Trust.

Registered office: 2nd Floor, 54 Manor Place, Edinburgh EH3 7EH.

VAN Update is published quarterly and is distributed to all national regional and horizontal umbrella bodies working with local amateur and voluntary arts groups throughout the UK. VAN Update is also distributed to local authority arts officers, the four national Arts Councils, ACE regional offices in England, and selected MPs and Government Departments across the UK and ROI.

ISSN: 1357-504X