



department for  
**culture, media  
and sport**

improving  
the quality  
of life for all

# Our Creative Talent: the voluntary and amateur arts in England

Prepared for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
and Arts Council England



DCMS aims to improve the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities, support the pursuit of excellence, and champion the tourism, creative and leisure industries.



# Contents

---

<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>2. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>12</b>
2.1 METHODOLOGY	13
<b>3. THE SIZE AND SCALE OF THE VOLUNTARY AND AMATEUR ARTS SECTOR</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>4. PEOPLE AND GROUPS</b>	<b>19</b>
4.1 WHY ARE GROUPS STARTED?	20
4.2 MEMBERSHIP	20
4.2.1 How do people get involved?	20
4.2.2 Who gets involved?	21
4.2.3 Why do people continue to participate?	23
4.2.4 Turnover of membership	23
4.2.5 Membership capacity	24
4.2.6 Artistic and creative skill levels	25
4.3 MANAGEMENT	26
4.3.1 Management and administrative structures	26
4.3.2 Financial management	27
4.3.3 Planning and developing artistic activity	29
<b>5. INFRASTRUCTURE AND SUPPORT</b>	<b>30</b>
5.1 SELF-SUFFICIENCY	30
5.2 INFORMAL SUPPORT	31
5.3 AUDIENCES	33
5.4 FORMAL SUPPORT INFRASTRUCTURES	33
5.4.1 Local Authority support	34
5.4.2 Regional and sub-regional arts bodies	35
5.4.3 National umbrella bodies and organisations	38
5.5 VENUES	38
5.6 NETWORKING WITH OTHER ARTS GROUPS	39
5.7 LINKS WITH THE PROFESSIONAL SECTOR	40
5.7.1 Progression from amateur to professional	40
5.7.2 Employing professionals	40
5.7.3 Benefits for professionals	41

<b>6.</b>	<b>IMPACTS</b>	<b>42</b>
6.1	DEMAND FOR ARTISTIC AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY	43
6.2	THE VALUE OF PARTICIPATION	43
6.3	SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL	44
6.4	BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY	44
6.5	IMPACT ON THE ECONOMY	45
6.6	ARTISTIC AND CREATIVE VALUE	48
<b>7.</b>	<b>CHALLENGES AND ENABLERS</b>	<b>49</b>
7.1	VENUES	49
7.1.1	Cost of venues	49
7.1.2	Suitability and quality of venues	50
7.1.3	Venues owned by voluntary arts groups	51
7.2	FINANCE	51
7.2.1	Self-sustaining	51
7.2.2	Additional activity	52
7.2.3	Applying for funds	52
7.3	MANAGEMENT AND MEMBERSHIP CHALLENGES	54
7.3.1	Managing the group	54
7.3.2	Attracting and retaining members	54
7.3.3	Developing and planning creative activity	55
7.3.4	Bureaucracy and legislation	56
7.3.5	Access to kit, equipment and instruments	56
7.4	PERCEPTIONS OF THE SECTOR	57
7.4.1	Quality and excellence	57
7.4.2	Traditional British artforms	57
7.5	PRESS AND PUBLICITY	58
<b>8.</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>CREATIVE ADULT LEARNING</b>	<b>62</b>
9.1	LEVELS OF PROVISION	63
9.1.1	Craft	65
9.1.2	Dance	66
9.1.3	Literature	67
9.1.4	Media	68
9.1.5	Music	69
9.1.6	Theatre	70
9.1.7	Visual Art	71
9.2	LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION	72
9.2.1	Arts, media and publishing	72
9.2.2	Crafts, creative arts and design	73
9.2.3	Languages, literature and culture	73
9.2.4	Media and communication	73
9.2.5	Performing arts	74

9.3	QUALITY OF PROVISION	74
9.3.1	Quality in creative adult learning	75
9.4	THE EXPERIENCES OF LEARNERS	76
9.4.1	Time spent participating in creative arts learning	76
9.4.2	Identifying courses	76
9.4.3	Motivations for participation and desired outcomes	76
9.4.4	Barriers to participation	77
<b>10.</b>	<b>ADULT LEARNING INFRASTRUCTURE</b>	<b>78</b>
10.1	FUNDING FOR ADULT LEARNING	79
10.1.1	Distribution of funding across England	79
10.1.2	The impact of LSC funding changes	82
10.2	DELIVERING ADULT LEARNING	83
10.3	THE IMPACTS OF ADULT LEARNING	84
10.4	DEVELOPING CREATIVE ADULT LEARNING	84
	<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>86</b>

Enquiries about this report may be addressed to its authors:

Fiona Dodd  
 Andrew Graves  
 Karen Taws

TBR  
 TBR House  
 16 Jesmond Road  
 Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4PQ  
 Telephone: +44 (0) 191 281 9955  
 Fax: +44 (0) 191 281 9966  
 Email: [info@tbr.co.uk](mailto:info@tbr.co.uk)  
[www.tbr.co.uk](http://www.tbr.co.uk)

## Tables

---

Table 1:	Number of voluntary and amateur arts groups by artform and region	17
Table 2:	Members of voluntary and amateur arts groups by artform and region	17
Table 3:	Participation in arts across England	18
Table 4:	Socio-economic status of group members	22
Table 5:	Distribution of total artform income across sources of finance and funding	27
Table 6:	Distribution of total artform expenditure	28
Table 7:	Average profit or loss per group across artforms	28
Table 8:	Total number of people involved in sector	31
Table 9:	Informal assistance received by voluntary and amateur groups	32
Table 10:	Performances and attendance figures	33
Table 11:	Total turnover by artform and region	46
Table 12:	Total income by source of funding/finance	46
Table 13:	Total expenditure by artform and region	47
Table 14:	Total expenditure on services/goods	47
Table 15:	Proportion of expenditure on venues	50
Table 16:	Proportion of groups generating finance by artform	51
Table 17:	Proportion of groups sourcing funding by artform	53
Table 18:	Courses available by region and artform	63
Table 19:	Courses per head of population	64
Table 20:	Enrolments 2003/04 – 2008/09	72
Table 21:	Comparison of satisfaction with teaching in adult learning	76
Table 22:	Distribution of funding by region	82
Table 23:	Providers offering non-qualification related adult learning courses	83

# Glossary

---

ACE	Arts Council England
ACL	Adult Community Learning
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
FE	Further Education
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institute
LA	Local Authority
LSC	Learning and Skills Council
NALGAO	National Association of Local Government Arts Officers
PCDL	Personal and Community Development Learning
RFO	Regularly Funded Organisation
TBR	Trends Business Research
UFI	University for Industry
VAE	Voluntary Arts England
VAN	Voluntary Arts Network
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector

# Acknowledgements

---

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who contributed to this research for the time and effort they dedicated to it. Particular thanks go to the 2,200 individuals who completed the online survey and the organisations who promoted it on our behalf.

Further thanks go to the following individuals for additional input into the research:

## PROJECT STEERING GROUP

---

Paul Blaker (Chair)	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Adam Cooper	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Althea Efunshile	Arts Council England
Andy Lewis	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Hilary Turner	Association of Guilds of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers
Laura Gander-Howe	Arts Council England
Louise de Winter	National Campaign for the Arts
Nick Ockenden	Volunteering England
Paul Kirkman	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Phil Cave	Arts Council England
Reemer Bailey	Voluntary Arts England
Robin Osterley	Making Music
Robin Simpson	Voluntary Arts Network
Sue Isherwood	National Association of Local Government Arts Officers
Tom Williams	Central Council for Amateur Theatre

## IN-DEPTH CONSULTATION PARTICIPANTS

---

### Voluntary and Amateur Groups

#### *Craft*

Amanda Hannaford	Peter Tavy Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers
Angela Macpherson	Lewes Mosaic Makers
Clare Mall	Narthex Sparkhill Ladies Craft
Heather Smith	Newstead Woodcarving Club
Hilary Burton	The Common Thread
Hilary Turner	Merseyside Guild of Weavers
Irene Heywood	Mansfield Plus Woodcarvers
Mrs M Allott	Doncaster Association of Redoubtable Needlers in Thorne
Jenny Kirton	Elgar Quilters
Margaret Whally	Activity, Learning and Leisure for Over 50s
Anonymous	West Oxon Woodturning Association

#### *Dance*

Chris Nelms	Bristol Dance Eisteddfod
Christopher Holliday	Over Stratton Folk Dance Club
Christopher Saunders	Dolmetsch Historical Dance Society
Eamonn Andrews	Golden Star Morris



Jason Standing	Westminster Morris Men
Jayne Rose	Rattlejag Morris
Ros Bachelor	York Ceilidh Club
Stan Otterburn	Lancre Morris Men
Steve Tunnicliffe	New St George Morris
Tom Glynn	UC Crew

*Literature*

Anne Funnell	Norwich Writers' Circle
Christine Collings	Creche Goes to Book Group
David Evardson	Yarburgh Writers
Frank Kennedy	Shorelink Community Writers
Judith Badman	Somerton Literary and Poetry Society
Mary Bell	Easington Writers
Maureen Fenton	Clitheroe Writing Group
Peter Evans	Poets Anonymous
Rachel Kramrisch	Telling Tales Writers Association

*Media*

Alan Lodge	Film Club
Andrew Frostick	Warminster and District Film Society
Christine Moorshead	Reel People Film Society
Dennis Ansell	Park Media Group
Douglas Mathie	Basingstoke Video Film Makers
Ian Lynch	Chorley Film Society
June Edwards	Stoke Cine and Video Society
Marcin Kwiatkowski	Leeds-Manchester TV
Mark Secombe	Doncaster Movie Makers Camcorder Club
Terry Popplewell	Coast Video Club

*Music*

Ann Dent Smith	Denmead Operatic Society
Debra Heaton	Manchester Chamber Choir
John Hart	Solihull Society of Arts Recorded Music Circle
John Mackenzie	Darlington Clarinet Ensemble
Judith Sunderland	Sheffield Symphony Orchestra
Robert Willis	Ockment Valley Handbell Ringers
Tim Thirst	Stalham Jubilee Brass Band
Tom Frank	Putney Choral Society
Vincent Allen	Black Country Brass
Viv Watson	St German's Singers

*Theatre*

Bernice Wolfenden	Popp Up Theatre
Brian Fairchild	Haddenham Amateur Dramatics Society
Brian Johnson	Westovian Theatre Society
Dan Lake	Spiritus
David Dewar	Brampton Players
Gordon Stockman	Cary Comedians Carnival Club
Jack Slater	Trinity Players
Miriam Stead	Mendlesham Amateur Dramatic Society
Roger Williams	The Attfield Theatre Company
Sandra Simpson	Bolton Little Theatre

*Visual arts*

Anne Head	Anne's Art Group
Colin Bentham	Chromazone
David Harris	Funtington Literary Society
Hilary Bithell	Poole Leisure Painters
Janet Dutton	Huntingdonshire Art Group
Jannetta Sosin	Guild of Silk Painters (Essex Branch)
Katherine Jenkin	The Tantalus Project Association
Laura Mathieson	Newbiggin Arts Forum
Lionel Foreman	Ringwood Art Society
Mr Charlton	Stockton and Billingham Art Society
Peter Milward	Art Profile

**Supporting Organisations**

Alison Clarke-Jenkins	Arts Council England
Anna Whitehead	Torbay Council
Brenda Seymour	North Norfolk District Council
Brian Crossley	The Basketmakers' Association
Brian Mitchell	London Borough of Camden Council
Bruce Clarke	Swindon Borough Council
Carol Candler	Digital Women's Network
Chris Minter	Leicester City Council
Christine Rawnsley	Southampton District Council
David Martin	Community Arts North West
David Power	North East Lincolnshire Council
David Scott	Penwith District Council
Debbie Thomas	Bristol City Council
Dianne Hill	Solihull Council
Ernie Maxy	Marquetry Society
Garry Morris	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Gwen Harris	Blackpool Borough Council
Jean Goodeve	The Third Age Trust
Liz Lawson	Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS)
Lorna Brown	National Association of Local Government Arts Officers (NALGAO)
Lorraine Cox	Swindon Borough Council
Marissa Wakefield	Development Initiative for the Voluntary Arts (DIVA)
Michelle Chorley	Disability Arts Development Agency (DADA)
Pamela Butler	Chesterfield Borough Council
Peter Templeton	Workers' Education Association
Phil Taylor	Liverpool City Council
Reemer Bailey	Voluntary Arts England
Robin Osterley	Making Music
Robin Simpson	Voluntary Arts Network
Sally Staples	Kent County Council
Shirley Lundstran	Salford City Council
Stephen Wiper	Wear Forest District Council
Tony Gibbs	National Operatic and Dramatic Association (NODA)

**Training Providers and Professionals**

Adrian Bawtree	Professional Conductor
Alison Baxter	West Dean College
Angie Jackson	Art Academy
Anna Wilkinson	Northern Print
Christine O'Toole	Bensham Grove Community Centre
Dennis McGeown	Academy of the Science of Acting and Directing
Frances Goldfinger	London College of Fashion
Franz von Habsburg	Brighton Film School
Jenny Harriman MBE	Brixham Adult and Community Learning Centre
Jill Race	Professional Accompanist
Kim Miller	Greenwich Community College
Nick Moore	City Lit
Shirley Harrell	Professional Artist
Tessa Wills	Professional Choreographer, Street Soul
Tom Benjamin	Paddock Art Studios
Wendy Andrew	7 Limes Pottery
Will Carr	The Poetry School
William Reddaway	Farncombe Estate Adult Learning Centre

**Learners**

Amanda Holland  
 Anna Robinson  
 Anne Head  
 Christine Selby-Sly  
 Hilary Dodd  
 Howard Smith  
 Janet Dutton  
 Jo Roach  
 Joe Macleod-Iredale  
 Katie Edwards  
 Katie Oldfield  
 Kim Hilton  
 Kirsty McNaught  
 Liz Morgan  
 Margot Swift  
 Rowan Brook Thompson  
 Roz Bottomley  
 Valerie Josephs  
 Victoria Bell  
 Vivien Cragg

**Additional contributors**

Cat Settle	Learning and Skills Council
Charlotte Beckford	Learning and Skills Council
Colin Bentham	Chromazone
David Kay	Workers' Educational Association
Graham Marsh	Workers' Educational Association
Isobel Woodliffe	Leicester University
John Herrick	Adult Residential Colleges Association (ARCA)
Jonathan Treadway	Arts Council England
Pete Bryan	National Association of Local Government Arts Officers
Steve Martin	Workers' Educational Association

# 1. Executive Summary

---

- Formally organised voluntary and amateur arts groups are a crucially important part of the arts ecology and account for almost **one fifth of all arts participation** in England, although in some regions it is much higher than that – rising to 36% in the South West.
- There are **49,140 groups** across the country with a total of 5.9 million members. An additional 3.5 million people volunteer as extras or helpers – a total of **9.4 million people taking part**.
- The sector has an **income of £543m a year**. In general, it is not looking for core public funding. Groups are entrepreneurial about generating income, including ticket income, subscriptions, selling programmes, local sponsorship and other fundraising. Groups take pride in this remarkable ability to be self-sustaining and deliver quality artistic product.
- In 2006/07 groups put on **710,000 performances or exhibitions** which attracted **159 million attendances**. On average a voluntary and amateur group attracts **220 people** to each performance or exhibition.
- **564,000 people have management roles** in voluntary arts groups. Planning and developing creative activity which is high quality, engaging and meets the needs of members is complex and challenging. The time, expertise and commitment these individuals invest in the sector is a real asset that, if not delivered for free, would come at a high price.
- The voluntary arts sector is embedded in the grass roots of local communities and has a complex impact on developing **vibrant and inclusive communities**. At a time when there is huge competition for time and money, voluntary and amateur groups rely heavily upon the expertise, experience and relationships of their members, their friends, families and the local community, highlighting the value placed on voluntary arts activity.
- Voluntary and amateur groups provide opportunities for people who would not otherwise participate in the arts to do so within their local community. Arts groups are often associated with other groups and activities (such as learning, religious groups, older people's groups and women's organisations) and are particularly well placed to engage **new audiences and participants** in the arts.
- There is support and advice available at regional and national level. Local Authority **arts officers can play a crucial role** in developing capacity but their engagement is often reactive and ad hoc. Although most Local Authorities have cultural and arts development strategies, voluntary arts are often ignored. This is to miss a significant opportunity. The introduction this year of local data collection on levels of arts engagement, which will enable comparisons to be made between Local Authorities for the first time, may be a powerful lever for change.
- Appreciation of the artform is the main motivation for participation in a group. There is a belief that the amateur arts are low quality, which is totally at odds with the ambitions of groups who **strive for the highest standards** and take pride in the quality of their work.
- The sector plays an important role in **sustaining cultural traditions and developing new artistic practice**. There are a large number of groups with a national and even international reputation for

the quality of their work. Over the last five years, 34% of amateur groups have had members who went on to become professional.

- The **relationship between the amateur and professional sectors** is of vital importance and the two sectors are mutually supportive. Groups spend £125m employing professional artists, either on a long term or ad hoc basis. Professional artists benefit not only in terms of employment but also developing their creative practice, experiencing new ways of working and deepening their understanding of audience development.
- **The amateur/professional relationship is changing**, particularly with the development of new technology. It has not been possible to explore this in detail in this study, and we recommend further research should be done into this rewarding area.
- Access to **good quality venues**, at a reasonable cost that is suitable for the artform, is a key issue. Groups spend £67m on venue hire for performances and £26m on venues for rehearsals/meetings. There is widespread concern about the rising cost of venue hire.
- **Other issues** affecting the sector are the complexity of grant application processes, the need to raise profile and attract new members and advice and guidance on compliance with legislation.
- The **sector has tremendous potential**, but there are constraints on the extent to which any one group can expand. There are significant challenges involved in moving to a larger venue and taking on additional management burdens, and individual members can have less opportunity to contribute in larger groups. This might lead to people establishing new groups or sign-posting new members to other groups.
- There is a view that in some areas the professional sector has been unduly prioritised by policy makers, perhaps in part because of the belief that the voluntary sector is low quality. However, policy makers need to engage more effectively with the voluntary and amateur sector if they are not to **miss a major opportunity** to increase opportunities for participation in the arts.
- In the last three years there were **1.9 million adult enrolments** in unaccredited training funded by the Learning and Skills Council. There are 36,800 classes across England offered by 4,560 providers. However, the number of enrolments is decreasing, from 558,000 in 2003/4 to 423,000 in 2006/7. One important issue is the fact that only 25% of courses are offered over the weekend.

## 2. Introduction

---

This study was commissioned by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Arts Council England (ACE) to improve the knowledge base on the voluntary and amateur arts sector in England. The study is the first of its kind on a national scale and represents the first step towards developing a comprehensive understanding of a very complex sector. The study considers two key aspects of the sector:

- Voluntary and amateur arts groups
- Informal adult learning in the arts.

Arts participation is increasingly recognised as valuable for individuals and communities, both for its intrinsic and instrumental value. Arts Council England held the Arts Debate to encourage the public to highlight their view of the role the arts play in their lives. A key finding of this debate was the "importance of the social aspect of the arts. People associated the arts with friendship, spending time with family and a sense of a shared experience. Often people come to art in the first place through these social networks and dynamics."<sup>1</sup> This research provides an opportunity to gain a stronger understanding of how the voluntary arts and adult learning feeds into an arts environment which is placing an increasing value on participation.

Voluntary and amateur arts activity happens in a wide range of settings and whilst it is often completely self-generated, it is also often closely related to other activities such as faith groups, community associations and learning. The voluntary and amateur arts sector is therefore a crucial player in encouraging people to access and participate in the arts. The sector is well positioned to reach people that would otherwise not engage and who are excluded from other aspects of society and community life, e.g. skills and expertise development. It is often in the voluntary arts sector that individuals get their first experience of participating in the arts, and the sector has a major impact on audience development for the broader arts sector.

Whilst a number of studies considering voluntary arts at a local and sub-regional level have been carried out, they have tended to use a broad definition encapsulating voluntary, amateur and community participation. This study focuses on participation in formally organised voluntary and amateur arts groups across eight categories: craft, dance, festivals, literature, media, music, theatre and visual arts. It looks specifically at:

- Voluntary and amateur arts groups that are governed or organised by those also participating in the activities, which members attend for reasons such as self-improvement, social networking or leisure, but primarily not for payment.
- Adult arts learning that does not lead to external accreditation and is undertaken for personal development, cultural enrichment, intellectual or creative stimulation and enjoyment.

The remit of the study did not include 'community arts' where a group is governed or organised by a paid individual (or individuals) or where the activity is organised on behalf of members. Nor did it include people who participate in an artform individually. The definition did not exclude voluntary arts groups that bring or buy in the skills of a professional for 'artistic direction', e.g. a conductor, dancer or sculptor.

<sup>1</sup> The Arts Debate: stage one findings & next steps, Catherine Bunting, Arts Council England, February 2007

The aims of the study are two-fold:

1. Examine the size, make-up and impact of the formal voluntary and amateur arts sector, providing an understanding of how groups are structured, what formal and informal support is available to them, what the challenges to and enablers of participation are and suggesting opportunities for growth of the sector.
2. Produce an authoritative evidence base about the arts in adult learning that can be used to help broaden and deepen levels of engagement in the arts and enable the development of individuals' skills and creativity.

The objectives of the study are therefore to:

- Estimate the size and make-up of the voluntary and amateur arts sector
- Examine the barriers to and enablers of participation
- Gather and assimilate existing information about the impact of voluntary arts
- Estimate the size and scale of adult learning in the arts and the infrastructure that supports it
- Understand the range and quality of existing provision
- Understand who participates in arts-related adult learning and the motivations for and barriers to their participation.

## 2.1 Methodology

The study was undertaken by TBR<sup>2</sup> over a period of six months between November 2007 and April 2008 and consisted of a programme of quantitative and qualitative research that included:

- Desk research to identify and review relevant literature contributing to the study. This process involved a combination of web-based research and contact with a number of organisations in order to identify and access published documents as well as any internal work or forthcoming evidence pertinent to the study.
- Consultation with the 'identifiable infrastructure' supporting voluntary and amateur arts activity in order to bring together the collective knowledge of the size and scale of the sector. This involved making telephone and email contact with approximately 300 supporting organisations and umbrella bodies to gather information and statistics on levels of participation in voluntary and amateur activity.
- A nationwide online survey amongst voluntary and amateur arts groups completed by approximately 2,200 groups. Completion and return of a paper copy of the survey was facilitated on request. The survey returned approximately 1,600 useable responses; 380 were returned with no data and 220 were completed by groups either not based in England or who did not fit the study definition of a voluntary and amateur group.
- Accessing and analysing a number of secondary data sources including the National Learning Directory (a government funded database of learning opportunities), the Learning and Skills Council's Individualised Learner Record for Adult Community Learning (data about learners and learning aims collected from providers that are in receipt of ACL funding) and the National Learner Satisfaction Survey (data on learners' satisfaction with and perceptions of education).
- A programme of 145 depth or case study telephone interviews with voluntary and amateur arts groups, local, regional and national supporting organisations, professionals working in the sector, Local Authorities, public and private learning providers and current and lapsed learners.

<sup>2</sup> TBR is the trading name of Trends Business Research Ltd



A key element of the project was providing an estimate of the total number of voluntary arts groups and people participating in them across England by artform and region. This was achieved by bringing together a range of information gathered over the course of the research. A key difficulty in quantifying the size the sector is that much of the activity, by its very nature, is unrecorded. There is no requirement for groups to be registered with an umbrella body or membership organisation, therefore there is no central source of information about the sector. The umbrella bodies, membership organisations, guilds, associations and supporting agencies that groups do interact with are therefore a crucial source of information on the population of groups.

At the outset of the project the research team compiled a comprehensive list of organisations that have the potential to interact with voluntary arts groups and undertook a consultation exercise to gather information from these organisations about the characteristics of the voluntary arts groups they were aware of. Using information provided by the Voluntary Arts Network and Voluntary Arts England combined with investigative research, a 'population' of 286 organisations was identified. These were all contacted by telephone and/or email: 117 returned useful information and 30 were excluded as they had no relationship with voluntary and amateur arts groups. Of the remaining 139 organisations, a significant proportion were unable to provide any information as to the voluntary or community or professional status of their contacts as their membership was very mixed, while others were simply unwilling to provide any information at all, or successful contact could not be made. Organisations were asked how many voluntary and amateur groups they were aware of, what information they could provide about their members and whether they would be willing to distribute information about the survey or provide contact information for their members.

The project relies on standard statistical techniques to generate population estimates for voluntary and amateur arts groups and their members. The information provided by the sample of 117 umbrella bodies enabled the production of an estimate (by artform) of the average number of groups that a supporting organisation is aware of and delivered detail on the proportionate distribution of groups by region. Applying these averages and distributions to the 'population' information enabled the production of an estimate of the total number of groups in England. Weighting factors for each group and survey response could then be applied to the sample data in order to calculate estimates of group and membership populations and to generate a range of additional analyses examining the activities, participation, income and expenditure within and by voluntary and amateur arts groups.

It is important here to recognise some of the limitations of this approach:

- Some of the voluntary arts are more formalised than others. For instance, amateur theatre and music are well represented by umbrella bodies whereas photography or book clubs, which are generally activities carried out in less formalised groups, are not. This means there is more opportunity for groups to belong to an umbrella body in some artforms than others.
- The estimate in this study is based upon groups that are members of, or associated with, a supporting organisation. As stated above, not all groups have a relationship with a supporting organisation, therefore the estimate of the number of groups delivered by the study should be viewed as an estimate, with recognition that without a census of groups a total figure will always have a degree of estimation about it.
- A number of supporting organisations deal with groups on a multi-artform basis and were unable to provide an accurate breakdown of the number groups they were aware of by artform. This was particularly the case for organisations such as the Women's Institute or sub-regional arts development organisations, which were aware of a significant number of groups, but not the artform. This has given rise to an estimate of a large proportion of 'multi-art' groups where the artform is either variable or unknown.



- Given the overlapping nature of some umbrella groups, there will be some element of double counting in estimates of numbers, but this is not easily mitigated.
- The study relies on groups to self-select as to whether or not they fit the definition of a voluntary and amateur arts group. Given the close relationship that many voluntary and amateur groups have with other group activities such as faith groups, community groups and so on, it is likely that many may classify their group according to associated group activity as opposed to the art group. This is particularly likely for minority faith groups.

Despite these limitations this study is founded on a robust approach and represents a significant step in understanding the importance of voluntary and amateur arts in our society.

### 3. The size and scale of the voluntary and amateur arts sector

---

A firm understanding of the size and scale of the voluntary and amateur arts sector is something that has long eluded those leading the development of the sector. It has always been known that many people participate in the arts on a voluntary basis, and that many people do so collectively in groups every week, fortnight and month across England. This study is the first step towards gaining a true picture of how many people participate in the arts in this way and what can be done to support their participation.

This first section of the report provides an overview of the key information about the size and scale of the sector produced by the study. The key headlines are:

- There are approximately 49,140 voluntary and amateur arts groups in England.
- 5.9 million people participate in voluntary and amateur arts groups across England.
- Voluntary and amateur arts groups generated a total income of £543m in 2006/07 and incurred expenditure of £406m.
- An additional 3.5 million people participated in voluntary and amateur arts groups in an auxiliary capacity as extras or helpers.
- 3.5 million women and 2.4 million men are engaged in voluntary and amateur arts.
- 1.8 million people aged between 45 and 64 take part in voluntary and amateur arts compared to only 506,700 people aged between 16 and 24.
- 97,100 members of voluntary and amateur arts groups are from a black or minority ethnic (BME) background.
- 154,000 members of voluntary and amateur arts groups consider themselves to have a disability.
- 2.4 million voluntary and amateur arts group members are employed (including self-employed).
- 147,000 people contribute to voluntary and amateur arts groups on a paid basis.
- 564,000 people undertake a management role within a voluntary or amateur arts group.

Table 1 (below) shows the estimated number of voluntary and amateur arts groups (associated with a supporting organisation) in England by region and artform. The region with the most groups is the South East with 9,140, followed by the South West, East and then London. Music is by far the most represented artform with 11,220 groups across England, followed by Theatre with 5,380 groups and Dance with 3,040.

**Table 1: Number of voluntary and amateur arts groups by artform and region**

Artform	East	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire and Humber	England
Craft	80	100	70	130	130	70	110	90	90	840
Dance	450	280	490	140	320	550	240	250	310	3,040
Festivals	100	80	70	60	90	150	170	100	110	940
Literature	100	90	20	130	100	150	60	60	50	760
Media	60	40	70	20	90	150	270	30	80	820
Music	1,340	960	1,290	540	1,160	2,290	1,610	950	1,070	11,220
Theatre	650	470	650	570	700	770	750	550	260	5,380
Visual Arts	290	90	200	120	110	570	310	30	80	1,810
Multi-Art	2,940	2,080	2,740	1,820	2,740	4,440	3,590	2,110	1,880	24,330
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,010</b>	<b>4,190</b>	<b>5,600</b>	<b>3,530</b>	<b>5,440</b>	<b>9,140</b>	<b>7,110</b>	<b>4,170</b>	<b>3,930</b>	<b>49,140</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W1/S6)

Table 2 shows the estimated number of members of voluntary and amateur arts groups across England by region and artform. As with the groups, the region with the most members is the South East, with 1.3 million people, followed by the South West. However, while the East has the third largest number of groups, London and the North West have more members. This suggests that while there are a large number of groups in the East they tend to be small. Conversely, while the North East has the lowest proportion of groups, they do tend to be slightly larger and therefore give the region a higher level of participation.

**Table 2: Members of voluntary and amateur arts groups by artform and region**

Artform	East	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire and Humber	England
Craft	2,000	3,000	1,000	2,000	6,000	2,000	6,000	5,000	2,000	28,000
Dance	12,000	15,000	12,000	2,000	15,000	43,000	6,000	8,000	16,000	128,000
Festivals	4,000	18,000	24,000	12,000	20,000	66,000	159,000	13,000	11,000	328,000
Literature	2,000	2,000	*	2,000	2,000	3,000	2,000	2,000	3,000	17,000
Media	3,000	1,000	3,000	1,000	2,000	5,000	41,000 <sup>3</sup>	1,000	4,000	62,000
Music	156,000	106,000	179,000	159,000	256,000	403,000	208,000	81,000	93,000	1,642,000
Theatre	78,000	78,000	229,000	71,000	118,000	233,000	157,000	76,000	73,000	1,113,000
Visual Arts	25,000	23,000	63,000	23,000	15,000	56,000	36,000	18,000	7,000	265,000
multi-art	135,000	159,000	299,000	154,000	231,000	542,000	587,000	125,000	107,000	2,339,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>417,000</b>	<b>405,000</b>	<b>810,000</b>	<b>426,000</b>	<b>665,000</b>	<b>1,353,000</b>	<b>1,202,000</b>	<b>329,000</b>	<b>316,000</b>	<b>5,922,000</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W1/S6) \*Figure too small to report

Table 3 (below) considers the distribution and membership of groups across England alongside figures on total participation in the arts from the DCMS Taking Part survey. The table also shows the contribution that membership of a voluntary and amateur arts group makes to arts participation in England and each region.

<sup>3</sup> It is recognised that this figure may appear high. However, the number is not calculation error. Given the nature of the topography of the region and of activity in media groups it is likely that groups tend to operate remotely with a larger number of members. The underlying sample for media contains 14 responses in the South West out of a total of 44 responses for media in England, nine of whom had in excess of 100 members. If this research is repeated in future, we recommend that this issue is examined in more detail.

**Table 3: Participation in arts across England**

Region	Group	% Group	Group Membership	% Group Membership	% National Arts Participation	National Arts Participation	Group membership as a proportion of national participation
South East	9,140	19%	1,353,000	23%	5,372,435	17%	25%
South West	7,110	14%	1,202,000	20%	3,362,944	11%	36%
East	6,010	12%	417,000	7%	3,591,566	12%	12%
London	5,600	11%	810,000	14%	4,592,333	15%	18%
North West	5,440	11%	665,000	11%	4,050,784	13%	16%
East Midlands	4,190	9%	405,000	7%	2,605,692	8%	16%
West Midlands	4,170	8%	329,000	6%	3,133,851	10%	10%
Yorkshire & Humber	3,930	8%	316,000	5%	3,013,753	10%	10%
North East	3,530	7%	426,000	7%	1,469,255	5%	29%
<b>England</b>	<b>49,120</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5,923,000</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>31,192,613</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 and Taking Part (Ref: W14/S1)

NB: Source for 'National Arts Participation' column is Taking Part Year 1 dataset weighted to population

Source for 'Group' and 'Group Membership' column is TBR Art Survey 2008

Activities included in arts participation column are as listed in the glossary of the Taking Part annual report 2005/2006

The distribution of voluntary and amateur arts groups is similar to the distribution of people taking part in the arts in general across the country. The South East hosts the majority of groups, the highest proportion of members and one of the largest proportions of arts participation in general.

It is interesting to note the key role of voluntary and amateur arts groups in the South West, South East and North East in contributing to arts participation. Membership of a group is equal to a third of all arts participation in the South West and a quarter of participation in the South East and North East.

## 4. People and groups

---

This section of the report presents a range of information from the online survey and in-depth interviews with groups across England, considering the people who participate in groups and the format the groups take.

### **Key messages:**

- At the core of the motivation to establish a voluntary arts group is the desire to participate in a particular artform or creative practice, with some groups occurring as a spin out from publicly funded arts activity or community activity.
- Word of mouth is the primary tool for attracting new members, followed by public events and links within the community, which develop a group's reputation for high quality activity and a welcoming social environment.
- The majority of people involved in the voluntary arts are employed and diversity tends to be dependent on the local area.
- The gender balance across the sector is approximately a 60:40 female/male split although there are some artforms where there is a higher propensity for single gender groups such as all female textile crafts or all male wood craft.
- 75% of groups feel that members join and remain involved in groups for enjoyment and appreciation of the artform.
- Membership of groups tends to be based on a sustainable core group of members around which a broader peripheral group of people will come and go.
- Some groups experience limits on the number of members they can accommodate, but develop approaches to addressing this either through expanding and diversifying activity or supporting people to set up their own groups.
- Many groups have a mixture of skill levels which enables members to mutually support each other's creative development.
- In certain sectors, particularly music and performing arts, there are a large number of groups which perform to a professional level and therefore audition for members who have reached a particular level of creative skills attainment.
- The major source of finance for the sector is from ticket or similar income (49%).
- Income levels are extremely variable, ranging from an average turnover of £1,600 in craft to £27,200 in festivals.
- Artistic and creative activity is planned and driven by the members of the groups.

## 4.1 Why are groups started?

There are many situations which lead to the establishment of a voluntary arts group. Many groups have been established for a considerable time, some for over one hundred years, so it is often difficult for current members to know the circumstances under which the groups were established. However, the primary driver is a desire to be involved in the particular artform, craft or practice.

In many circumstances a group of friends, neighbours or local people that already know each other will discover that they have a common creative interest and where there are existing groups in the area it is likely that these people will simply join those groups. However, if there is no local provision or if the groups in the area are up to their membership capacity this leads to people establishing a group of their own. This provides an opportunity for them to share their interest, become more formally involved and encourage other local people to get involved in the creative practice. In the case of more traditional artforms such as woodcraft, morris dancing or folk music, groups are often established by people with a desire to ensure that the artform and skills associated with it are not lost.

Groups have also been started as the result of publicly funded arts projects, exhibitions or events held in the area. This type of activity can generate a real interest in a particular artform amongst local people, but many projects only have time-limited funding. It is not unusual for local people to establish purely voluntarily run arts group at the culmination of a class or course or after funding for projects has finished and professional staff are no longer involved. This enables them to continue their engagement with the artform and further develop the skills which they have acquired as part of that project. Nor is it unusual for publicly funded projects to bring together arts groups – voluntary, community and professional – who otherwise may not have the opportunity to work together. This can often lead to interesting spin-offs with groups set up to try out new collaborations or work in new artforms.

Non-arts organisations such as community associations, Women's Institutes or older people's groups can also provide a hub around which creative activity can be generated. Some of these organisations will run arts activity as part of their broader remit or run taster sessions which generate an interest and provide people with an opportunity to try out an artform. This can lead to the development of independent, voluntarily run arts and crafts groups enabling people to develop more focused and ongoing opportunities to share their creative skills.

At the core of establishing any group is a strong motivation to participate in an artform, share creative output and skills and provide other people with the opportunity to get involved. Essentially, this is down to entrepreneurial individuals, either in groups or independently, spotting an opportunity, having a passion about a particular artform and finding ways of getting people together to make it happen. This entrepreneurial spirit is at the heart of both individual voluntary arts groups (even those which have been established for many years) and the sector as a whole.

## 4.2 Membership

### 4.2.1 How do people get involved?

Voluntary arts groups have a broad range of approaches to promotion/publicity. The majority of groups (average of 50%) attract members through word of mouth. The next most popular methods are the internet (16%) and the local press (14%). This pattern is not necessarily mirrored across artforms; literature and media groups rely less on word of mouth, with 20% of literature groups attracting new members through their local library and 11% of media groups attracting members by placing adverts in local shops or businesses. Music groups tend to make most use of the internet, with 20% of groups attracting members this way. Conversely craft groups make least use of the internet (9%). Most groups (70%) tend to use just one method of attracting new members.

Approaches to publicity are broad ranging and include producing leaflets and posters to be put in local libraries, shops or other venues, working closely with the local press to raise the profile of the group through advertising and editorials and developing a website for the group or being included on the listings websites of other organisations. Use of online publicity is fairly widespread; 54% of groups have a website, 21% have a presence on someone else's website and 9% have an entry on a social networking site. Craft, literature and visual arts groups are least likely to have a website with only 30% and 35% respectively having their own site.

Many groups also find that their public performances, exhibitions and open events are an invaluable approach to attracting members. This is the most public presence of the group in a community and is a key way for them to promote the quality of their work and activity and build a reputation that will encourage and inspire people to become members. Some groups run competitions, publish work or run festivals which generate a broader interest in the group and can encourage more people to get involved. These members might not join the group on an ongoing formal basis but may be involved in activity at particular times of the year or for particular events or activities.

Reputation and profile are therefore crucial for groups, both in terms of their artistic practice and their open and accessible ethos. In line with this, word of mouth is an invaluable way of getting members to join the group. Recommendations from trusted family and friends can often encourage people to get involved in an activity which they may otherwise find a little intimidating or unfamiliar. Groups work hard to build their reputation within the local community and place a high value on good relationships with residents and organisations in their area.

A lot of groups are open and do not have any specific membership criteria. If prospective members find out about the group they can simply turn up at a session and get involved. Where there are membership forms, this tends to be to enable the people who are running the group to keep up-to-date contact details for members and to find out what people are expecting from the group, helping to determine the types of activity they should be delivering.

There are, however, other instances where there are strict membership criteria, particularly in relation to level of attainment in the specific artform. This is often the case for music groups such as orchestras or choirs and for theatre groups. Many of these groups, although considered amateur, perform to a professional level and recruit members for particular roles or orchestral positions who have achieved a minimum performance standard. In these instances auditions are generally held and groups often have more people wanting to join than can be accommodated in the group or for particular productions or performances. Where this is the case, there are waiting lists to join the group and rather than turning people away they are encouraged to get involved in other important volunteer capacities, for instance front of house or behind the scenes.

#### 4.2.2 Who gets involved?

Although a small number of groups have a fairly broad geographic spread, most groups are based on a very local membership. People who get involved in groups are generally those who have a keen interest in the particular artform and a desire to share that experience and develop their skills and it is not unusual for people to be a member of several local groups, often in various artforms.

A third of participants are aged between 45 and 64. The next largest age groups are 65-74 and 25-44, with 19% of members in each category. Craft, literature, visual art and media all have less than 5% of members aged below 25.

As shown in Table 4 (below) in terms of socio-economic status the highest proportion of people participating in voluntary and amateur arts groups are employed (42%), followed by 29% retirees and 23% full-time students.

**Table 4: Socio-economic status of group members**

Sub-artforms	Full-time student (including school)	Not employed	Employed (including self-employed)	Retired	Total
Craft	1%	11%	36%	54%	100%
Dance	51%	2%	37%	11%	100%
Festivals	47%	2%	22%	30%	100%
Literature	1%	6%	35%	53%	100%
Media	2%	6%	44%	48%	100%
Music	17%	7%	46%	31%	100%
Theatre	21%	7%	50%	22%	100%
Visual Art	1%	5%	34%	60%	100%
Multi-Art	27%	5%	39%	29%	100%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W04/S5)

Only 6% of respondents are not employed. This varies depending on the age distribution of participants; in sectors with fewer people below the age of 25 (craft, media, literature and visual art) there are very few full-time students and more retirees.

The diversity of groups tends to be dependent on the local area in which it operates. If the group is in a rural area with a low BME population then it will not have a particularly diverse membership. Groups are also conscious of their capacity and resources to manage diversity within a group. For example, it would be very difficult for an English speaking writers group to include people with low levels of literacy or those for whom English is not their first language. There are also instances where the artform has an impact on diversity of membership, for instance, morris dancing is a very traditional English artform and does not tend to attract people from diverse communities.

An average of 2% of group participants are from a BME background. There is little variance across the sector; craft has the highest proportion with 3% BME participants, followed by dance, festivals, literature and theatre with 2% and media, music and visual art with 1% BME participants. London has the most diverse groups with 10% BME members across all artforms, while the North East is the least diverse (0.3%). A number of interviewees felt that low rates of ethnic minority participation could be attributed to a lack of 'cross-over' between communities. Additionally a number felt that as many arts groups operate around faith or worship, some groups may not classify their activity as being voluntary and amateur arts and may therefore exclude themselves from the classification.

In terms of disability, many groups mentioned that they do have some members who might be considered disabled, but possibly not under the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) definition. Equally, they felt that although some members may have some form of disability or impairment, they would not necessarily define themselves as disabled. Across the sector an average of 3% of participants would consider themselves to have a disability. Craft has the highest proportion of disabled participants (7%) followed by literature, visual arts and media (6%). Festivals have the lowest reported proportion of disabled participants (1%).

As a whole, the sector is fairly well balanced in terms of gender, enjoying a mix of male and female members. The survey revealed that an average of 59% of participants in voluntary and amateur arts are female and most groups tend to follow this pattern of a roughly 60:40 female/male split. However, the proportion of male and female participants varies across artforms. Craft has the highest proportion of female members (79%) and media the lowest (45%). Dance has the most even split with 52% male and 48% female members. In some artforms there is a tendency for groups to cater for either all-female or all-male membership. Examples include specifically gender-based music groups such as male voice choirs and less intentionally, groups that tend to attract either men or women, e.g. textile craft which tends to attract mainly female participants or wood craft, which tends to attract mainly men.



All groups consider themselves open and inclusive and do not actively discriminate against any potential members. There is a moderate level of fear about being judged on crude national targets for diversity and membership that are not relevant to local circumstances. It was felt that stipulated criteria would place too much of an emphasis on 'ticking boxes' and that the best way for groups to be inclusive is to focus on developing an open, welcoming, friendly and enjoyable environment which a broad range of people will be keen to be involved in.

#### **4.2.3 Why do people continue to participate?**

High on the list of motivation for continued participation is a desire to be better skilled at the particular artform. This does not necessarily mean that members are developing their skills to become professional artists, but rather for the sense of personal achievement. Many groups have a very broad skills base ranging from beginner through to experienced, which creates a mutually supportive environment where members are keen both to develop their own skills and support other members to do the same.

On average 75% of groups feel their members join for enjoyment and appreciation of the artform. This does vary significantly between artform, from 83% of members joining for enjoyment in music to 49% in craft. 31% of craft groups believe their members join to develop new skills and 8% for health or relaxation purposes. Media, festivals and visual arts groups also demonstrated a high rate of participation in order to develop new skills (approximately 25% in each artform). Participating for social benefit was, perhaps surprisingly, one of the lowest ranking reasons for joining, with an average of only 6% of groups identifying this as the main reason.

At the heart of many groups is the desire to share creative output with a broader audience. For example, writers only tell stories because they want people to read or hear them. Voluntary arts groups are a real opportunity for people to share their creative talents, both with other members of the group and with a broader audience. This sense of pride, particularly being part of a group which has a strong reputation for high quality output, is a key driver for people remaining involved.

People responsible for managing groups also work hard to develop programmes of interesting activity. This might be a broad range of workshops with high quality interesting speakers and demonstrators or a challenging and diverse music or performance programme and the opportunity to be involved in festivals, events and other public performances. It is this commitment to a broad range of high quality activity which helps groups to both attract new members and retain existing members by keeping their work interesting and engaging.

Although all groups are driven by the creative activity, underlying all of this is the sense of being amongst likeminded friends. As the membership of the group changes and new people join, this also provides the opportunity for people to make new friends and expand their social networks. Voluntary arts groups provide a real opportunity for people to socialise and have fun. If the activities were not enjoyable, people would not continue to participate in the groups.

There is a large proportion of older and retired people involved in voluntary arts groups; an average of 30% of members are retired and 25% are aged 65 or over. Such activity provides people who are retired with a real opportunity to continue their personal development and have the focus of formalised activity and social networks that would previously have been provided by their working environment.

#### **4.2.4 Turnover of membership**

The majority of groups are based on a strong and sustainable core membership around which a broader peripheral group of people will come and go. There seems to be general confidence across the sector that groups have a good turnover of membership which ensures their sustainability, with enough new members coming in to replace those who have left and thus keep the group running.

48% of groups have seen membership increase over the last five years. Craft and literature groups in particular have grown, with almost 60% of groups in each artform reporting an increase in members. On average, 38% of groups have seen static levels of membership. Media and dance have seen the most decline in participation; 21% and 18% of groups respectively have experienced decreased membership in the last five years.

Some groups are more informal than others. For instance, writers or craft makers will run sessions that people can drift in and out of, whereas amateur theatre and music groups need commitment from members to regularly attend rehearsals and commit time to backstage tasks such as set construction and costume design to ensure quality of performance. For the more informal groups it is often difficult to measure turnover of members as some people may not attend the group for long periods of time due to other commitments and will then get involved in sessions again at a later date when they have more free time.

Turnover of membership can also be dependent on the area that the group is based in. For instance, groups based in very stable and established rural communities with an older population will have less turnover of membership than a group based in an urban area with a more transient population. Turnover can also be cyclical, and groups which hold annual events or competitions will experience a large influx of new members as a result of these specific initiatives.

In general, the majority of groups do not seem concerned with turnover or losing members. There is often an acceptance that a group cannot be everything to everyone and while groups try to accommodate individual needs and aims, they will not necessarily be in a position to meet the expectation of every potential member. This is particularly the case where new members have a particular perception of what is on offer from the group which does not match the reality. Groups therefore focus on delivering activity which meets the expectations of the majority and retains an appropriately sized core membership. Although groups provide a flexible range of activities, they try to guard against being sidetracked into niche provision which only meets the needs of a small number of members and which could perhaps be better supported by another group in the area.

In terms of recruiting participants, 24% of groups feel that they are doing as much as they can to increase membership and 35% are taking some steps to recruit new members. 22% of groups would like to increase membership but are not taking any active steps to do so and 19% are happy to stay as they are. This does vary significantly between artforms; in literature, for example, 38% of groups would prefer to maintain their current membership and only 16% are actively seeking to increase membership. Media groups show the highest propensity to actively recruit participants, with 45% doing as much as they can on this front. One might therefore also expect dance groups, which saw a similar decline in membership to media, to be as active in recruitment; however, only 25% are doing as much as possible to increase membership.

#### 4.2.5 Membership capacity

Voluntary arts groups recognise that not all members will attend all sessions, so there is an optimum level of membership which will ensure there is a good turnout for the majority of sessions, making the activity both creatively and financially viable. Generally groups are happy with an organic and healthy turnover of membership and will only proactively recruit if the overall membership becomes too low to sustain the activity of the group.

For some groups the number of people they can accommodate is limited by the size of the venue they use. Often groups have a long standing relationship with their venue and have negotiated a low rate or even get the facility free, making it financially risky to secure an alternative venue. This problem is exacerbated in areas where there is limited choice of suitable venues for groups to hire at a reasonable rate. The decision to move the group to a larger, more expensive venue can be a particularly challenging one. They have to be confident that there will be a sustainable increase in

membership to enable them to cover any increased venue costs through increased subscriptions or session fees. In some cases, groups will address the issue of venue limitations by running a series of smaller groups and sessions at different times, enabling them to accommodate a broader membership, only requiring a larger venue on the limited number of occasions, often social, when they bring the full membership together at one time.

Other groups are conscious that the number of members can impact on the quality of activity and the experience of being involved in the group. Once attendance at individual sessions gets too high, it becomes difficult to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to be actively involved. For many groups sessions involve supporting members to develop their expertise. A good example of this is writers groups where members do 'homework' around particular themes which are then discussed in detail at the following session. If there are too many members, the opportunity for people to share work, have feedback from other members and input into the critiques of other people's work are limited. Similarly, a large membership for very interactive groups would require sessions to last several hours, which is impractical in terms of both the time which people are able and willing to commit and the cost of hourly room hire.

It is also important to recognise that on the whole, the larger the group membership, the more complex and time consuming the management requirements become. There are a large number of groups who actively ensure that management is kept to a minimum. This is because they feel that the burden of management can distract from the enjoyment of being involved in the group and they are concerned that there may be challenges getting members to volunteer for management roles, resulting in the responsibility being on the shoulders of only one or two members.

Although groups are conscious of their capacity limitations, at the heart of what they do is a passion for enabling likeminded people to get involved in their artform. Many groups highlighted that if they are approached by potential new members when their group is at full capacity they actively support those people in establishing their own group. Others, who are comfortable with the additional management, expand their activity and run extra sessions to accommodate more members.

#### **4.2.6 Artistic and creative skill levels**

One of the primary drivers for people to get involved in voluntary arts groups is to develop their skills in artistic and creative practice. One of the key approaches to enabling this is through mutual support from within the membership, while the level of skill expected for potential and existing members tends to vary across artforms.

The majority of groups in artforms such as literature, visual arts or crafts do not stipulate the level of skill which prospective members need to display before they join. Groups therefore have a broad range of skills, ranging from complete beginners through to experts, and this is usually seen as a real bonus for the group. It provides an opportunity for members to share experience and expertise and create a mutually supportive learning environment for all involved. There are some instances in music groups where there is also a mix of expertise. However, it was recognised that this can present some challenges in relation to artistic programming. For instance, for music groups with a broad mix of expertise, careful attention has to be paid to ensuring that the programme of music is not so challenging that it is beyond the capability of less experienced members yet is still interesting and demanding enough for the more accomplished players.

In music and theatre particularly, there are a large number of groups which strongly stipulate the level of competence of their membership. This is because many of these groups, e.g. orchestras and choirs, although amateur, perform to a professional standard so are not in a position to accept members who do not meet these standards. Although some groups do struggle to get performers for particular instruments or performance roles, on the whole they do not struggle to recruit members. Many groups stated that they hold regular auditions for membership and often have waiting lists of people who would like to join.

## 4.3 Management

### 4.3.1 Management and administrative structures

All groups require some level of administration and there are a broad range of approaches to group management across the voluntary arts sector. Because the sector is generally financially self-reliant, these structures and governance models are developed based on the needs of the groups rather than on funder demands. Groups therefore develop the most appropriate management structure for their specific circumstances, ensuring that the level of management is proportionate to the size, activity and complexity of the groups and, crucially, is complementary to the 'culture' and ethos of the membership.

22% of groups do not have a constitution and groups without a constitution tend to be smaller. There is significant variance between artform here. 53% of literature and 40% of craft and dance groups operate without a constitution, compared to only 13% of theatre and 20% of media and music groups. London has the highest proportion of non-constituted groups, with 33% of groups in the region operating without a constitution. Groups in the North East are most likely to be constituted, with only 12% not having a constitution. It is interesting to note that the region with the most constituted groups also has the largest groups.

On average, each voluntary arts group has eight managing members. This varies between artform, from five in craft, dance and literature, to 13 in festivals. Media and music groups tend to have seven managing members, theatre nine and visual art six. Clearly, the level of management required varies drastically across the sector. A large amateur dramatic group, which owns or manages a venue and programmes 6-12 public performances throughout the year, will require a much more structured approach to management than a more informal craft group, which runs ongoing sessions throughout the year and perhaps has just one small scale annual public exhibition.

The approach to governance and management within the sector is highly entrepreneurial and groups will develop flexible structures which operate as and when needed. During general ongoing operation, for instance, a group may take a very minimalist, low-level approach which ensures that the basic needs are covered. However, at times when they are in receipt of grant funding to run additional projects they will adopt a more structured approach to ensure that they are meeting the funders' requirements.

Those groups which have developed a management and committee structure have not done so to create a hierarchy, but rather to enable them to spread the responsibility of management across a number of members. There is strong recognition that running an interesting and varied programme relies on a huge amount of time and commitment from a management committee and there is a danger that this can become burdensome. A structured approach to management guards against this overload and makes it easier for groups to encourage and recruit members to take on some of the management responsibility.

The tasks required to manage groups are broad ranging, including co-ordinating activity and communicating with members, managing the accounts and legal responsibilities of the group, marketing, press and publicity and sourcing and hiring performance, rehearsal and meeting venues. It is very difficult to quantify the time spent managing groups. Although many groups spend time in formal management committee meetings, a lot of activity goes on behind the scenes with individuals taking on particular tasks in their own time. Levels of management required can also be cyclical depending on the activity of the group, for instance if a group runs an event once a year the amount of time members will have to commit to management activity will need to increase to accommodate that event.

Groups also have a range of processes to encourage members to take on management responsibilities. For smaller, more informal groups it is generally the case that people simply 'muck in'. Larger groups

tend to hold an AGM at which new members are elected to the committee as and when vacancies come up. In these cases people either volunteer their services or potential candidates are approached by existing committee members in advance of the AGM to ascertain if they are willing to be elected. When specific tasks are identified, during ongoing management, committee members either volunteer or are nominated to take responsibility for ensuring that those tasks are delivered. Groups that have a formal management structure feel that this makes it easier for them to recruit committee members and get people to take on responsibility for particular tasks as the management of the group had been broken down into manageable 'bite-sized chunks'.

Crucially, all groups recognise that the success of their group is thanks to the unpaid and willing commitment of time, and in some cases money, of their core membership. It is also recognised that no task is more important than any other and that the amount of time required or committed bears no relation to its resulting value, as even the smallest contribution is essential for keeping the group running effectively. All input to group management is highly valued and is recognised as one of the sector's most important assets.

### 4.3.2 Financial management

The major source of income (49%) for groups is ticket income or similar. This varies significantly across artforms, from 61% of all theatre income from tickets to only 23% in craft, 16% in visual art and 12% in literature.

**Table 5: Distribution of total artform income across sources of finance and funding**

Sub-artform	Subscriptions/ Membership Fees	Ticket income or similar	Programmes e.g. sales or selling advertising space	Local Authority	Local Businesses (e.g. sponsorship/donations)	Fundraising e.g. raffles, sale of goods	Donations	Other Unknown	Arts Council Lottery Funding	Other Lottery Distributor (inc. Awards for All)	Trusts and Foundations	Total Income (All Groups in Artform)
Craft	47%	23%	1%	4%	0%	9%	1%	0%	1%	3%	10%	100%
Dance	33%	32%	3%	3%	21%	14%	3%	1%	0%	3%	7%	100%
Festivals	8%	40%	6%	8%	8%	3%	2%	6%	11%	4%	3%	100%
Literature	20%	12%	1%	7%	3%	8%	0%	0%	25%	19%	5%	100%
Media	39%	27%	1%	2%	4%	8%	0%	0%	0%	1%	17%	100%
Music	30%	40%	3%	3%	5%	7%	3%	1%	1%	4%	3%	100%
Theatre	8%	61%	5%	2%	3%	8%	1%	1%	7%	2%	2%	100%
Visual Art	48%	16%	2%	4%	1%	11%	6%	1%	0%	9%	3%	100%
<b>Average</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W5/S4)

Visual art relies far more on subscriptions and/or membership fees, as does craft (48% and 47% of income respectively). Literature groups are more likely than any other artform to receive Arts Council Lottery funding or funding from another lottery distributor, with 44% of funding coming from this source. Music groups are fairly evenly balanced between subscriptions and/or membership fees (32%) and tickets (39%) as the main source of income.

Table 6 (below) shows that a major area of expenditure for groups is hiring professional artists to contribute to the group. 31% of expenditure across the sector is in this area. Although the level of expenditure varies across groups, only media spends less than 19% of total expenditure on professionals. Music spends the most with 47% of expenditure being on professionals.

**Table 6: Distribution of total artform expenditure**

Sub-artform	Rehearsal/meeting room hire	Vehicle hire for performance/exhibition	Hiring professional artists	Arts equipment or technical services	Non-arts equipment	Other professional services	Insurance	Copyright fees/music hire	Transport	Other	Total Income (All Groups in Artform)
Craft	20%	4%	20%	29%	7%	4%	6%	4%	1%	4%	100%
Dance	30%	14%	19%	12%	4%	4%	4%	0%	7%	6%	100%
Festivals	1%	20%	37%	12%	7%	13%	2%	1%	1%	6%	100%
Literature	9%	8%	38%	7%	7%	16%	0%	0%	4%	11%	100%
Media	8%	14%	3%	16%	33%	4%	3%	8%	1%	10%	100%
Music	10%	11%	47%	6%	4%	7%	2%	5%	4%	5%	100%
Theatre	5%	19%	21%	21%	5%	6%	5%	7%	1%	9%	100%
Visual Art	30%	7%	21%	5%	7%	5%	3%	0%	4%	18%	100%
<b>Average</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W9/S3)

Rehearsal/meeting venues are an extremely variable cost for groups, with the proportion of expenditure ranging from only 1% in festivals to 30% in dance and visual art. There is similar variation in spend on performance/exhibition venues.

19% of groups turn over between £1,001 and £2,500 per year, a further 15% turn over between £2,501 and £5,000 and 11% between £501 and £1,000. Some groups do have a much higher turnover; festivals and theatre groups tend to turn over the most averaging £27,200 and £22,700 respectively. Festivals and theatre also demonstrate the highest variation in turnover and are the only artforms to turn over more than £150,000. Craft groups have the lowest average turnover at £1,600 per year. Dance, literature and visual art groups all turn over a similar average of between £2,300 and £2,400 per year. Music and media turn over an average of £7,100 and £3,200 respectively. Perhaps unsurprisingly, London shows the highest average turnover per group (£37,000). The West Midlands has the lowest average turnover at £8,700, followed interestingly by the South East with £9,300.

Patterns of average expenditure follow a similar trend to patterns of income. Festivals and theatre have the highest average expenditure, spending £19,000 and £16,200 respectively. Craft, dance and visual art groups have the lowest levels of expenditure, each spending between £1,600 and £1,800. Overall, media expenditure is higher than income, craft just breaks even and all other artforms make some (even if only a little) profit. Festivals and theatre make the highest return.

**Table 7: Average profit or loss per group across artforms**

Artform	Average Turnover	Average Expenditure	Average Profit/Loss
Media	£3,200	£3,500	-£300
Craft	£1,600	£1,600	£0
Literature	£2,300	£1,900	£400
Dance	£2,300	£1,700	£600
Music	£7,100	£6,500	£600
Visual Arts	£2,400	£1,800	£600
Theatre	£22,700	£16,200	£6,500
Festivals	£27,200	£19,000	£8,200
<b>Average</b>	<b>£12,300</b>	<b>£8,800</b>	<b>£,500</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W9/S2)



### 4.3.3 Planning and developing artistic activity

Each group plans the timing of its meetings to ensure the maximum possible member engagement. The most popular meeting format is a weekly meeting lasting between one and two hours, with 28% of all groups using this format. The second most popular is a weekly meeting lasting between two and three hours (29% of groups). Only 3% of groups meet for less than one hour.

Half of all groups meet on weekly basis. Meeting monthly is the next most popular interval (17% of groups) followed by fortnightly (8%) and quarterly (7%). Weekly meetings are particularly common amongst dance, music and theatre groups. Theatre and music groups are also the artforms most likely to meet multiple times per week (usually in the weeks preceding a performance). Craft, literature and visual arts groups tend to favour a monthly meeting, while media groups are balanced between weekly and fortnightly meetings. Craft meetings tend to last the longest, with 37% of meetings in the artform lasting for more than three hours.

Smaller, more informal groups generally take a collaborative approach to planning artistic activity. Individuals will bring forward ideas for activity, themes for sessions or suggestions for speakers and workshops, which will then be discussed and agreed by the broader membership. This creates very strong ownership of the programme for the group and ensures that all members get an opportunity to contribute their ideas and influence activity. Many groups are conscious that they cannot please all of their members all of the time but feel this approach ensures that there is a broad range of activity. This ensures that over the course of the year there is something for all members to engage in, even if they choose not to collaborate in other sessions which are not of particular interest to them.

Other groups, particularly music and performance groups, take a different approach to programming. Many of these groups employ an artistic director who selects productions or orchestral pieces for the group to perform. Importantly, such a post is always recruited with the ethos of the membership in mind to ensure that programming decisions are made in the context of the agreed objectives, culture and ambitions of the group. The group, both in the broader membership and through the management committee, still has influence over the programming as the employer of the artistic director. It is therefore strongly positioned to question any artistic decisions which it is uncomfortable with and, in extreme cases, terminate the contract with a particular individual.

Essentially, voluntary arts groups pride themselves in providing a broad range of high quality artistic activity which is both interesting, challenging and developmental for their members and engaging, captivating and entertaining for their audiences. Although groups have different approaches to developing their artistic programme, their membership is always at the heart of the decision-making.

## 5. Infrastructure and support

---

The following section considers the infrastructure and support that groups make use of. The section begins though with a note on self-sufficiency, a recurring theme of high importance for groups across all artforms.

### Key messages:

- Voluntary arts groups are self-sufficient and entrepreneurial but still need access to relevant and up-to-date support, advice and information.
- The sector receives a significant amount of informal support and good will from family, friends and the local community, highlighting the value which is placed on voluntary arts activity.
- Sharing the creative output of the group either through exhibitions or performances is a crucial element of voluntary arts activity and groups place a high value on the support they receive from their audiences.
- Groups tap into a broad network of support organisations including Local Authority arts officers, artform-specific umbrella and membership bodies and organisations established at a regional or sub-regional level to support the development of arts activity.
- The arts and culture are recognised in a range of community development strategies at a local and regional level, but these strategies tend to overlook the voluntary arts sector and the impact it makes both in terms of community development and quality of artistic practice.
- Networking amongst groups is not consistent and some groups have concerns regarding competition from other arts activity, both voluntary sector and professional, in their local area.
- There are links with the professional sector, with a large number of groups employing professional artists either on a long-term basis or on an ad hoc basis as speakers and tutors.

### 5.1 Self-sufficiency

Voluntary arts groups are extremely entrepreneurial and rely heavily on the expertise and experience of the members of their groups. A large number of the organisations that responded to the survey highlighted that their membership was primarily made up of employed or retired people who have a broad range of professional management skills and networking opportunities which they bring to the group. This means that they are generally very good at problem solving within the group and if the management expertise is not available within the membership, someone is likely to have connections which will enable them to access this expertise.

However, although there are high levels of management skills within the sector, it is important for groups and supporting organisations not to assume that this means no support is needed. It is particularly important to recognise that although groups may have good management skills this does not mean that they have an in-depth knowledge of more specific issues in areas such as artform development and networks and legislation such as charities law, companies law, child protection and performance licensing.



The management expertise of members of voluntary arts groups is highly valued and should be more broadly recognised as an asset to both the development of artistic practice and the broader impact of the voluntary arts sector. Many of these groups do not need significant hand-holding. However, they do require, and deserve, easy access to appropriate and up-to-date information and a commitment from the supporting infrastructure to champion their efforts and raise the profile of the high quality work which they are committed to achieving.

## 5.2 Informal support

The term 'informal support' is used in this report to refer to assistance which is not received through regulated, structured or formally organised agreements. Sometimes this support comes from people who are not members of the group but give up their time to support activity for specific events or initiatives. Some groups do have members who are not interested in participating in artistic activity themselves but are committed to being involved in the group and give their time in crucial support roles. As shown in Table 8 below, an additional 3.5 million people participated in voluntary and amateur arts groups in an auxiliary capacity as extras or helpers across 2006/07, bringing the total number of people involved in the sector to 9.4 million.

**Table 8: Total number of people involved in sector**

Artform	Group members	Extra Participants (e.g. extras, helpers and volunteers)	Total Participants (group members plus extras, helpers and volunteers)
Craft	28,000	13,000	41,000
Dance	128,000	12,000	140,000
Festivals	328,000	395,000	723,000
Literature	17,000	11,000	28,000
Media	62,000	12,000	74,000
Music	1,642,000	643,000	2,285,000
Theatre	1,113,000	687,000	1,800,000
Visual Arts	265,000	52,000	317,000
Multi-Art	2,339,000	1,692,000	4,031,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,922,000</b>	<b>3,517,000</b>	<b>9,439,000</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W2/S3)

Groups identified the following different types of informal support:

- 'Advice' or administration assistance, including advice on funding applications and useful information from contacts.
- 'Donations' received as one-off payments (rather than formal sponsorship). Local businesses have been highlighted by a large number of groups as invaluable supporters of voluntary arts activity.
- 'Good will' from local figures and the community in general, in the form of positive attitudes and providing opportunities e.g. through extending invitations to voluntary and amateur groups.
- 'ICT or the Internet', which is often used as an informal resource.
- 'Premises/rent discount' – while this may be contractual (and therefore formal), many groups enjoy the use of reduced cost or free premises on the basis of an informal agreement.
- 'Other discounts' received by voluntary and amateur groups included rates and/or insurance premium reductions where informally agreed.
- 'Publicity' in the form of free (usually local) press coverage was frequently identified as a vital form of informal support. It also refers to word of mouth communication.

- 'Teaching/skills assistance', including technical support and informal support from skilled practitioners across the full range of artforms, such as conductors, stagehands and choreographers who gave their time voluntarily.
- 'Other informal' – this includes assistance from family and friends with transport, catering, ushering and boosting audience numbers, as a few examples.

Table 9 shows that across all artforms, 'other informal' is the mostly commonly received form of informal support (32% of all groups), followed by good will at 20% and premises/rent discount and donations at 10%.

**Table 9: Informal assistance received by voluntary and amateur groups**

Artform	Other informal	Goodwill	Premises rent/ discount	Donations	Advice	Publicity	Teaching/ skills assistance	Other discounts	ITC based/ Internet	Total
Craft	13%	0%	33%	7%	13%	13%	13%	0%	7%	100%
Dance	27%	25%	10%	8%	4%	12%	8%	6%	2%	100%
Festivals	32%	17%	12%	17%	12%	6%	4%	0%	0%	100%
Literature	29%	11%	18%	4%	11%	14%	7%	0%	7%	100%
Media	10%	38%	5%	0%	29%	10%	10%	0%	0%	100%
Music	33%	15%	9%	15%	9%	10%	6%	2%	0%	100%
Theatre	35%	29%	8%	6%	5%	8%	5%	1%	2%	100%
Visual art	34%	21%	4%	6%	11%	6%	13%	2%	2%	100%
<b>Average</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W12/S1)

This does vary by artform. Media groups tend to receive the most informal support in the form of both advice (29%) and good will (38%). However, theatre and dance groups also tend to rely on significant amounts of good will, perhaps due to their need to draw an audience and develop a positive reputation. Craft groups showed high levels of informal support in terms of premises/rent discount (33%). Finally, festival and music groups received the highest levels of informal support through donations (17% and 15% respectively).

The support needed from family and friends varies across the sub-sectors of the voluntary arts. Very small informal groups, particularly those that hold their sessions in private homes, are thankful to the support of their families opening up their homes and providing refreshments for the members, with a little extra support if the group puts on a larger workshop session or exhibition. At the other end of the scale, putting on a production or exhibition requires a lot of input above and beyond the performers and exhibitors. For example, amateur theatre groups rely on significant amounts of support from their friends and family. This ranges from front of house activity such as box office and selling programmes through to back stage tasks ranging from building sets through to making costumes, all of which are essential to the quality of experience for the audience.

Local communities on the whole place a high value on and have a lot of good will towards the voluntary arts groups in their area. Groups often rely on the local community to promote their work both in terms of encouraging new members to join and generating audiences for performances. It is common for local shops and venues to hold leaflets and posters produced by the groups and, through word of mouth, generate an interest and buzz around the group's activity. Local businesses have been highlighted by a large number of groups as invaluable supporters of voluntary arts activity. Support from businesses is broad ranging and can include the donation of money and sponsoring activity, donating gifts which can be used for raffles and fundraisers and providing venues or loan of equipment for use by the group at low or often no cost.

All groups place a very high value on the support which they get from their friends, family and local community and recognise that they often rely heavily on good will for the ongoing support of their group. They therefore have a very strong commitment to ensuring that they show their gratitude, provide reciprocal support for other community activity and work hard to ensure that the group has a good reputation and is seen as being of value to individuals and the broader community.

### 5.3 Audiences

Table 10 shows the number of performances put on by voluntary and amateur groups per year and total audience attendance. On average 220 people attend each performance.

**Table 10: Performances and attendance figures**

Artform	Groups	Total Performances	Total Audience	Average audience per performance
Craft	840	3,000	924,000	300
Dance	3,040	57,000	10,906,000	190
Festivals	940	12,000	3,481,000	280
Literature	760	4,000	191,000	50
Media	820	21,000	1,563,000	70
Music	11,220	160,000	39,325,000	250
Theatre	5,380	92,000	21,166,000	230
Visual Arts	1,810	8,000	1,289,000	170
Multi-Art	24,330	353,000	79,789,000	230
<b>Total</b>	<b>49,140</b>	<b>710,000</b>	<b>158,634,000</b>	<b>220</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W3/S5)

For many groups, particularly performing arts groups, the continued support of their audiences is one of their most valued assets and the opportunity to perform and share their creative output with a wider audience is the life blood of the majority of voluntary arts groups. What is the point of writing a story if nobody reads it or hears it and what is the point of developing an exceptional musical talent if it is only ever performed in the privacy of your own home?

Support from audiences has a vital role to play in relation to the sustainability of groups. Financially it is the commitment from audiences to continue coming to performances and buying tickets and programmes that enables a group to continue performing and providing an opportunity for members to participate. Equally, for groups across the whole spectrum of the voluntary arts, their public activity is the key to them demonstrating the quality of the work they do and raising the profile of the group, which in turn encourages new members to join.

It is not surprising, then, that there is a strong commitment from groups to develop programmes of activity which sustain their reputation and encourage audiences to engage with what they do. This ranges from a craft group presenting small scale local exhibitions through to a professional standard orchestra performing large-scale symphonies at high-profile music venues.

### 5.4 Formal support infrastructures

The sector is supported by a vast network of organisations and individuals that all contribute in different ways, either through providing support directly to a voluntary or amateur arts group or by assisting organisation. In order to provide an insight into the formal support available, the following section identifies the key information from a programme of in-depth interviews undertaken with local, regional and national supporting organisations. Support across these levels is used to varying extents by voluntary groups; 67% of groups surveyed had links with a national umbrella body/organisation, 28% with a local and 5% with a regional body. Dance and media groups demonstrated the most

linkages, with 90% of groups associated with some form of organisation. This was followed by festivals, theatre and music (80%). Literature, craft and visual arts groups showed the least propensity to form linkages, with only half of groups being associated with a supporting organisation.

Formal support organisations are a key source of information, guidance and advice for voluntary arts groups. Figure 1 on pages 36 and 37 shows the organisations, individuals and participating bodies operating within the sector and the information flow between them. The diagram is divided into local, regional and national levels and organisations/bodies are colour coded according to their focus of activity. The sector's supporting infrastructure is shown in the medium and dark blue bands. In many instances organisations overlap the geographical boundary lines or coloured bands; this demonstrates activity at multiple geographical levels or the provision of support combined with participation in the sector.

#### 5.4.1 Local Authority support

Local Authority arts development officers can play a crucial role in supporting the sector at a local level, although the picture can be patchy across the country. The kind of support they can offer includes advice and guidance, logistical support to help groups run events, promotional support and providing access to performance, rehearsal and meeting space at a reduced or no cost. Many Local Authority arts officers also run small pots of funding for voluntary art groups which can support them in developing new activity, getting access to professional speakers/demonstrators or developing publicity and websites. On average, however, voluntary arts groups only receive 4% of their income from Local Authorities. This varies by artform (theatre and literature groups, for example, receive 8% and 7% respectively of their income from Local Authorities) but the figures are still low.

Most Local Authority arts officers do not see supporting the voluntary arts as their core remit and many give support in an ad hoc manner when they are approached, rather than proactively engaging with the sector. The Local Authority arts officers who were interviewed for this research felt that voluntary and amateur arts were an important part of the arts sector, playing a valuable role in local communities and offering great opportunities to participate, particularly for people and communities who might otherwise not engage with the arts. Despite this, they felt that voluntary groups were not central to their activity as local arts officers. Although most Local Authorities have cultural and arts development strategies, voluntary arts are often unrepresented in these strategies.

Many arts officers are tied to broader strategic development and regeneration programmes within their authorities. Arts development is generally recognised as a key factor in the development of local planning and regeneration policies, for example. This can lead to funds from non-arts budgets being made available for arts activity, but not necessarily for supporting voluntary arts groups. The need for Local Authority arts officers to feed into strategic development can mean they have very limited capacity to provide a significant amount of 'hands-on' support for a large number of groups. This is a particular challenge for arts officers who have to balance the need for strategic development with a desire to connect more closely with arts groups at the grass roots level. Many arts officers can only signpost groups to other sources of support and advice, such as Arts Council regional offices and local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) organisations. Although CVS organisations do not specialise in arts activity, they can provide one-to-one guidance on issues such as constitutions and governance and accessing funding.

There is also work at national level to make the case for investment in arts activity, particularly activity which encourages participation. In 2007 the Local Government Association published *Taking part counts: the contribution of art, culture and sport to national outcomes*. Prepared by IDeA, the Improvement and Development Agency, this publication aims to support cultural services to strengthen their data and performance measurement and demonstrate the impact that cultural activity has on local development priorities.

Our research suggests that voluntary and amateur groups account for almost a fifth of all arts participation in England. It is good to see that there is a strong commitment to the value of culture and arts to local communities. However, there is some concern that Local Authorities which overlook the voluntary arts sector and do not recognise the contribution it makes or provide the necessary support services are seriously missing a significant opportunity to support the growth of truly community-driven arts participation. This mixed attitude towards the voluntary arts sector may begin to change with the introduction this year of local data collection on levels of arts engagement, which will enable comparisons to be made between Local Authorities for the first time. The new National Indicator 11 on local arts engagement may also have an impact.

#### 5.4.2 Regional and sub-regional arts bodies

The mapping exercise undertaken at the outset of this study identified more than 60 organisations across the country which have been established to develop the arts infrastructure at a regional or sub-regional level. Many of them are Arts Council Regularly Funded Organisations (RFOs) and many receive core funding from Local Authorities and other regeneration bodies and will secure funding for specific initiatives from a range of other bodies, including trusts and foundations. Their primary role is to develop and support the broad arts sector including professional artists and arts organisations, community arts projects and the voluntary arts sector. They also help develop social and economic regeneration strategies and arts development policies at a local, sub-regional and regional level.

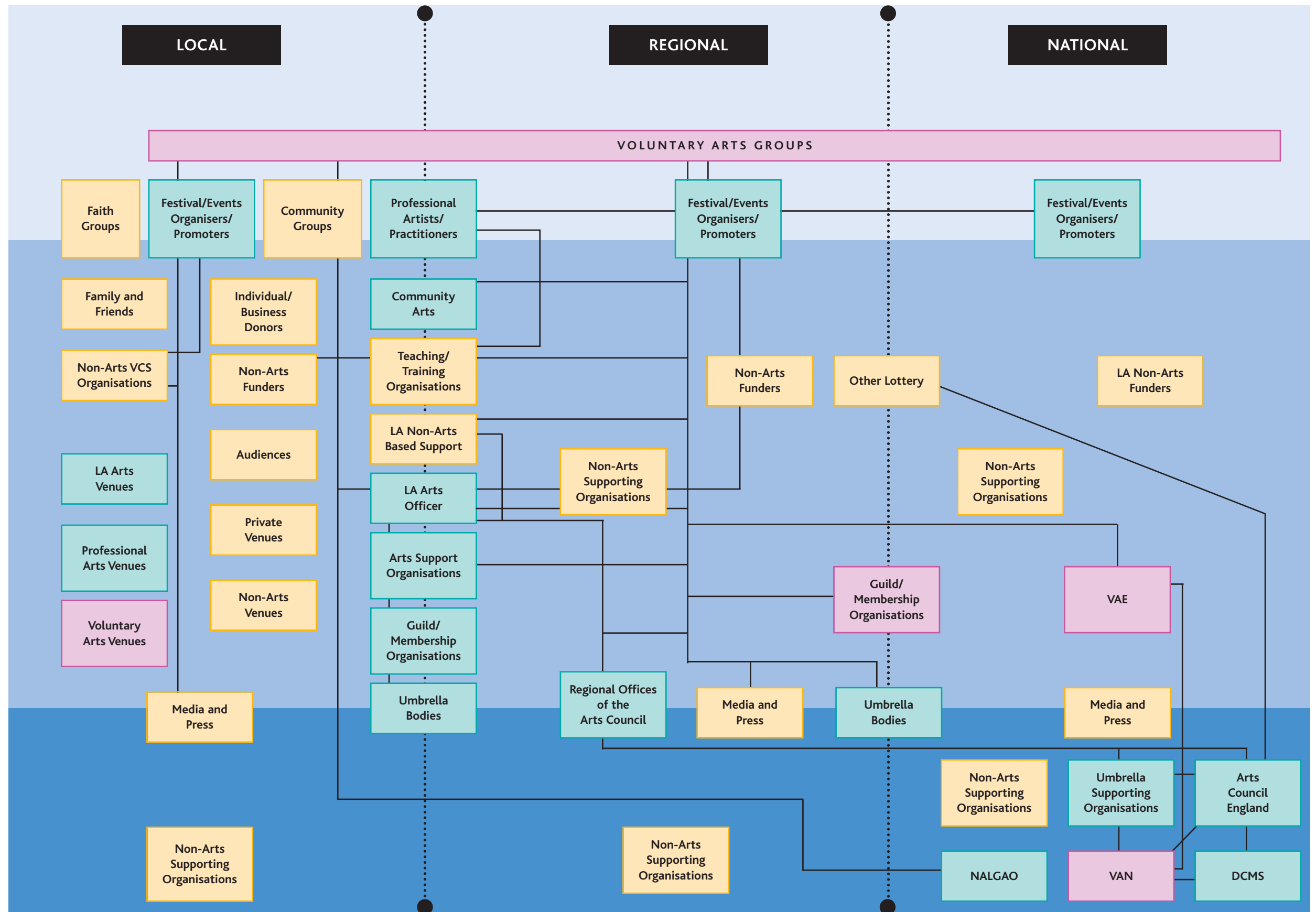
A key role for these organisations is to provide advice and guidance. It is difficult to quantify the number of voluntary arts organisations which are supported through this part of the infrastructure, but the support organisations which were interviewed for this study reported that they were regularly approached by voluntary arts groups, particularly at start-up stage, for advice on constitutional, legal and governance issues and for signposting to funders and advice on making applications for grants. However, only one of the support organisations interviewed was specifically established to focus on supporting the voluntary arts sector, providing targeted, focused and bespoke support to voluntary arts groups and a voice for the sector.

Many of the arts support organisations are also responsible for delivering project-funded community arts activity which also has an impact on the voluntary arts sector. These initiatives often provide opportunities for voluntary arts groups to participate in festivals and arts development activity involving community and professional arts organisations, enabling them to develop networks and contacts, build their skills and raise their profiles. It is also not unusual for voluntary arts groups to be established as a result of such activity. When the funding for the arts project has come to an end the chance to be involved in arts activity has often created a spark amongst a group of local people who will then go on to set up their own group to enable them to have continued participation in the artform.

The regional and sub-regional support organisations we spoke to felt they were effective because they were relatively local and embedded in the arts infrastructure of the area they work in. This means they are accessible and trusted by the arts communities they served and recognised as having a detailed knowledge of a specific and valuable sector.

All the organisations we interviewed felt that the voluntary sector was a valuable part of the arts infrastructure and they were concerned that sometimes this was not fully recognised by policy makers outside the sector. There was concern that there is often a misconception that the sector's activity is poor quality and that as a result the professional sector was often unduly prioritised over the voluntary arts. This meant that many policy makers were missing a major opportunity to increase opportunities for participation.

Figure 1.



Source: TBR 2008

KEY  Voluntary arts focus  Broader arts sector  Non-arts focus  Information flow line



### 5.4.3 National umbrella bodies and organisations

The mapping exercise undertaken at the outset of the study identified more than 250 national organisations supporting voluntary arts in some capacity. Their primary objective is to support amateur groups (and often individuals) participating in an artform and many undertake considerable additional work to promote new participation. The Voluntary Arts Network acts as an 'umbrella body of umbrella bodies', promoting participation in the arts and crafts, helping to develop the sector and working on behalf of umbrella bodies.

The proactivity of umbrella bodies can vary quite significantly. Some are extremely active in lobbying for their artform, while others prefer to remain more reactive to the needs of the groups and individuals engaged in the artform. In some cases this depends on how proactive the organisation's chair and board are. The funding arrangements for umbrella organisations vary significantly. Many operate solely on membership subscriptions and, depending on the level of membership, this can often restrict the range of activities and services the organisation is able to provide. Some organisations are in receipt of regular funding from Arts Council England. Many also rely on fundraising and income from sales and events.

On the whole, the activity of umbrella organisations is driven by the needs of their members but many organisations also play a role in developing the sector. Their activity is often a balance of following demand and leading change and development. The proactivity of members also tends to vary, from those who are members simply for the purpose of 'kite-marking' the group at one end of the scale, to those who are looking for a high level of support to assist in exploring new and different ventures at the other. The majority of members, however, use umbrella bodies as a source of support and guidance, using services on a needs basis.

Information provision is a key function for national bodies and information is disseminated in a range of formats. Umbrella bodies tend to provide advice specific to their artform and related to running a group. Organisations answer direct queries from groups and will signpost any queries which they can not answer. Information is distributed in a variety of formats such as magazines, briefing papers, bulletins, emails and online. The Voluntary Arts Network in particular is very proactive in producing information, which is distributed to its network of umbrella bodies who are encouraged to re-package and distribute the information to their membership. This process has evolved through recognition that groups are often more receptive to information received from an artform-specific organisation.

A number of umbrella organisations offer specific services to groups, either related to artistic or operational practice, for example:

- Making Music has developed a 'Block Insurance' package that is available to all members. The package provides a basic range of cover suitable for most music groups with the option of additional cover to meet particular requirements. The insurance is renewed by Making Music with subscription fees and provides groups with a convenient and much simplified method of sourcing insurance.
- The National Operatic and Dramatic Association (NODA) offers a number of services through its regional committees to support the development of productions, for example assistance with casting, access to choreographers, reviewing productions and so on.
- Some umbrella organisations also deliver workshops, conferences, seminars and training sessions. Others run festivals or events involving a range of their members. This is hugely valued as it is an opportunity for groups to meet like-minded people, share experiences and perform new pieces with other groups.

## 5.5 Venues

Voluntary arts groups use a broad range of venues for a broad range of purposes including formal management meetings, artistic sessions, workshops and training, rehearsal and performance and

exhibitions. Groups are also keen to provide opportunities for their members to socialise outside the formal activity of the group, so many look for a venue that can also provide space for social interaction. Some groups need quite complex spaces in which to practise, for instance a potters group will require wet and dry space, space for storage and use of glazes and chemicals and specialist equipment including kilns and wheels.

21% of groups meet in a community or village hall, 19% in a church, church hall or other religious building, 13% meet in a private residence and 13% meet in a school or other educational establishment. Only 9% of groups meet in an designated Arts Venue. Craft, dance, theatre and visual arts groups most commonly meet in community or village halls. Music groups tend to meet in either a church, church hall or other religious building or a school. Literature and media groups commonly meet in a private residence, though media groups also make the most use of Arts Venues out of all artforms. The artform least likely to use an Arts Venue is dance. Schools seem to be becoming an increasingly valuable potential venue, particularly specialist schools which can provide arts groups with access to high quality purpose-built space and specialist facilities and equipment.

The majority of groups use just one meeting venue. Literature and theatre groups show the highest propensity to use multiple venues, with 22% and 21% respectively using two to three venues. Music and dance groups are least likely to use multiple venues, with 86% and 84% respectively using only one venue. Most groups have been in their venue for a long period of time and have negotiated a reduced rent or even free access. There are also a number of groups who own or manage their own permanent venue, although numbers vary across artforms. On average 6% of groups fall into this category.

It is important that venues are accessible and in a central location to ensure easy access for both members and audiences. In the case of performance venues it is important that they are in a location which has a good catchment area to attract the level of audiences required to ensure that performances are financially viable. In rural areas access to public transport, particularly if meetings finish after 9pm, can be a challenge. However, groups tend to get around this by ensuring that venues are as central as possible, have a good level of affordable parking and are perhaps rotated to cover a broader geographic membership. Generally, groups which do not have access to good public transport overcome this problem by car sharing between members.

Importantly, it is not just the venues supporting the voluntary arts sector; voluntary arts groups are key to supporting the venues (see Table 14, page 47). Performances, ongoing rehearsals and meetings held by voluntary arts group are a key part of demand for community venues, which ensures that they are financially viable and can continue to provide services to their local community. Voluntary arts groups also add vibrancy to these venues, encouraging more and more people to use local facilities.

## 5.6 Networking with other arts groups

There is a mixed perception of both the level of collaboration and networking between voluntary arts groups and its value. Interviews with arts support organisations and Local Authority officers highlighted a concern that the quality of networks amongst voluntary arts groups was varied, with a prevailing impression that they did not interact to a notable extent and tended to 'keep themselves to themselves.' However, it is important to recognise that these comments are sometimes based solely on personal perceptions.

Some groups who responded to the survey felt quite strongly that other arts groups in the area – either voluntary or those supported by public sector funding – were in direct competition with them for members and audiences. Others were more confident about their relationship with other groups and were keen to explore opportunities for collaboration, networking and joint activity. Organisations who were members of umbrella bodies saw the opportunity to develop connections with other members of the body, locally, regionally and nationally, as a positive benefit of being a member of that organisation.

Many groups placed high value on opportunities to be involved in festivals which incorporated performances from a range of arts organisations across a range of artforms. It was recognised that this



provided opportunities to make connections and be 'on the same bill' as professional arts organisations and artists, although there was sometimes concern that voluntary arts groups were not necessarily given the best deal in terms of programming of their performances. Although in some cases festivals do lead to groups developing more longstanding partnerships with particular groups, it does not necessarily follow that groups involved in such festivals will engage in networks on a more ongoing basis.

Many groups are based in small local communities where there is a lot of other community activity happening. In these cases, even if the group itself has no formal connections with other groups in the area, it is not unusual for its members to be independently involved in a range of community activity. A painters group may have members who are also involved in local music or writers groups and are proactive in other community based activity such as churches or community associations.

## 5.7 Links with the professional sector

There is some concern that the sector has a tendency to fall between stools, both in terms of policy making and funding. Because it is arts focused it is often overlooked by the voluntary sector and because it is voluntary driven it is often undervalued by the arts sector. However, the sector is a very valuable part of the broader arts sector, or arts ecology as it is often described. Above and beyond playing a role in increasing participation and access for audiences, voluntary arts groups have other connections with the professional sector.

### 5.7.1 Progression from amateur to professional

Professional progression does not appear to be a significant motivation for participating in a group. Although there are instances in some groups of members having work published or selling pieces of their work, it is unlikely that they are able to earn a living from their artistic practice.

However, in the last five years 34% of groups have seen members progressing to become practising professionals in the artform. This varies between sub-sector; in theatre 52% of groups have seen members become professional, compared to 16% of dance groups. While the number of groups reporting progression to professional practice is high, the actual proportion of members making the progression is relatively low; the average across all groups is just 4% of current members. Dance demonstrates a much higher rate, with 9% of members becoming professional, compared to only 3% in theatre.

### 5.7.2 Employing professionals

Many groups hire the services of a professional to contribute to their group. This 'employment' could be a professional brought in on an ad-hoc basis or regular payment of a member. The following statistics refer to the latter. The level of paid members varies between artforms; in music, craft, festivals and visual arts 3% of members are paid to attend the group, in theatre 2% and in literature and dance 1%. Media is the least likely artform to employ the services of a professional with less than 1% of groups reporting such activity.

The survey found that across the sector 31% of expenditure was on employing professionals to work with the group, with music groups spending the most at 41%. Clearly, groups from across the sector see the opportunity to work with professionals as a valuable resource, inspiration and skills development opportunity for their members (see Table 14, page 47).

For some groups, particularly music and amateur theatre groups, professionals are employed on an ongoing basis. The contribution of the professional will clearly be specific to the artform, for instance choreographer, conductor or musical accompanist, and they will often take on the role of 'artistic director'. This professional input supports the groups in developing an artistic programme of activity which is both challenging and enjoyable for the members and draws in a broad and committed audience for the work.

It is important to recognise the difference between a professional employed by a voluntary arts group and similar activity in areas such as community arts. In the community arts sector the professionals are generally employed by an agency and their salary is often funded by an external grant maker. This means that although participants in the project are able to raise concerns if they are not happy with the performance of the professional, they are not in a position to cease the contract. In the voluntary and amateur arts sector, the professional is employed by the participants of the group through the management committee and their payment is primarily covered from the group's self-generated income. This means that the members of the group have the power to dismiss the professional if they feel they are no longer the most appropriate person for the role.

It is also common for professionals to be employed on an ad hoc basis, with groups bringing in professional artists to deliver workshops and masterclasses for their members or as speakers for events which might be open to a broader audience. Some of these groups highlighted that they sometimes find it difficult to find artists. Some said they found it difficult to access information on how to contact potential candidates and find people with the necessary experience of and interest in working with voluntary groups. Others found that the costs associated with hiring artists often limited their ability to do this on a regular basis with many artists and professionals expecting fees as well as expenses and subsistence, which although appropriate for the more resourced professional and community arts sector are often beyond the financial constraints of voluntary arts groups unless they are able secure additional funding.

### 5.7.3 Benefits for professionals

There are significant benefits for artists working with participation driven voluntary arts groups: "Involvement in arts activities can have a positive impact on the confidence, skills and training of the artists themselves."<sup>4</sup> To gain an insight into the activities of professionals working with groups and the way in which they contribute, interviews were conducted with a small number of professionals working in the roles most commonly employed by groups – an accompanist, a choreographer, a visual artist and a conductor. Although one of the professionals interviewed is now retired, there was consensus that involvement in a voluntary arts group is complementary to a professional career. For example, one professional described their inclusion in a community-based voluntary and amateur group as an asset to their professional CV, because it helped to show prospective clients that they were experienced in a diverse range of areas related to their artform.

There are also some instances where professional or retired professional artists become members of voluntary arts groups. It seems that for these professionals this tends to be for personal benefit rather than part of their commercial practice and for retired professionals it provides an opportunity for them to continue sharing and maintaining their creative skills.

It is clear that professionals in voluntary and amateur groups find their involvement beneficial to their main occupations in a number of subtle but significant ways. This ranges from opportunities to explore new creative practices and new ways of working through to developing innate qualities such as 'people skills' and teaching ability. Involvement can also help to diversify professionals' experience and marketability in the context of their main occupation. There is evidence that more could be done to promote the opportunities and benefits of working with the voluntary arts sector amongst professional artists.

It became clear during this research project that the relationship between the amateur and professional sectors is crucial and that this relationship is changing, particularly with the development of new technology. The two sectors support one another and are inter-related in many complex ways. It has not been possible to explore this in detail in this study, and we recommend further research should be done to look into this rewarding area.

<sup>4</sup>Use or ornament? The social impact of participation in the arts, Francois Matarasso, Comedia, 1997

## 6. Impacts

---

In 1997 Comedia published Francois Matarasso's influential study *Use or Ornament? The social impact of participation in the arts*. This study argued that although the debate regarding the economic impact of the arts, kick-started by John Myerscough's survey *The Economic Impact of the Arts in Britain* published by the Policy Studies Institute in 1988 was useful, it was perhaps limited and did not address the broader and deeper impact of participation in creative and artistic activity. *Use or Ornament?* highlighted that: "arts produces impacts as complex as the human beings who create and enjoy them."<sup>5</sup>

These studies on social and economic impact were hugely influential in starting the debate and discussion regarding the multi-faceted impact that the arts and creativity can have on both individuals and society as a whole, and there is now a significant body of literature which both advocates and attempts to provide evidence for this impact.

Although all of these studies are building a strong evidence base for and advocating the value of the arts, the focus has primarily been on making the case for public investment. As the voluntary arts sector is not a primary recipient of public sector funding, the specific role that the sector plays in relation to opportunities for participation is not generally covered in these publications. Equally, there is a tendency to focus on the instrumental rather than intrinsic value of the arts, when the focus of the majority of voluntary arts groups is to enable people to participate primarily in order to enjoy an artform.

The findings of this study begin to highlight the crucial role which voluntary and amateur arts groups play in the arts ecology. The sector is well placed to enable people to access creative activity and arguably can sometimes be in a position to fill gaps which other parts of the broader arts sector are not well placed to deliver. This suggests that those policy makers and support agencies which disregard or overlook the value of the sector are in danger of missing a significant opportunity.

### Key messages:

- There is evidence of a significant demand for access to the arts and culture across the population and the voluntary arts sector plays a crucial role in supply and demand at a local level.
- The voluntary arts sector has been and will continue to be sustained through the time and financial commitment of its members, even in a society where there is huge competition for time and money.
- Participation in the arts and management of groups has a significant impact on individuals and the member-driven and managed nature of the voluntary arts has a significant (if secondary) impact on social inclusion, social capital and empowerment.
- Embedded in the grass roots of local communities, the voluntary arts sector has a deep, fundamental and complex impact on developing vibrant and inclusive communities.
- Driven by enjoyment and appreciation of the artform and with a focus on developing high quality activity and skills, the voluntary arts sector has a high artistic and creative value both in terms of sustaining cultural traditions and developing new artistic practice.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

## 6.1 Demand for artistic and creative activity

There is now a significant body of evidence which demonstrates a huge demand for access to high quality arts and cultural activity throughout the population. The arts and culture in contemporary society is no longer an elite pastime enjoyed by a privileged minority: "The arts are a delight and enrichment to the lives of millions of people: that is why they participate, in countless ways, in countless places, on countless occasions."<sup>6</sup>

From October 2006 to September 2007 the Arts Council held its first public value inquiry, The Arts Debate. This exercise consulted a broad range of stakeholders, including members of the public, artists, arts managers and partner organisations, to ascertain the value people in England place on the arts. This major study found that: "The majority of people believe the arts can play an important role in the lives of individuals and society."<sup>7</sup>

The *Taking Part* survey commissioned by the DCMS collects data on the number of people engaging with arts and culture. According to the survey, 77% of all adults in England have taken part in the arts in the last 12 months. 66% of people attended arts events, 52% of people participated in an arts activity, and 43% did both. In its current form this survey cannot unpick the detail of how and where people participate in the arts.

However, the role that the voluntary and amateur arts sector plays in relation to participation has been clearly highlighted by this survey. It has found that a total of 9.4 million people participate in voluntary and amateur arts groups. On average 75% of groups who responded to the survey feel that their members join for enjoyment and appreciation of the artform. It is also important to recognise that the sector is primarily resourced by self-generated income. 15% of income comes from participants, for example through subscriptions and event fees and 49% from audiences through ticket income and similar activity.

In a society where there is a significant amount of competition for people's time and money, this level of personal and financial commitment is a huge asset for the sector and an indicator of its value. Crucially, the voluntary arts sector is a prime example of balancing supply and demand at a local level. This has enabled many groups to be sustainable over a long period of time, some for decades and even over 100 years, and indicates that the sector is highly valued by those directly participating in creative activity, by audiences and by the wider community.

## 6.2 The value of participation

Although it is recognised that culture as a whole is of significant value, *Use or Ornament?* focused specifically on the value of participation, particularly the social impact. It identified six key themes into which the social impact of participation could be divided:

- Personal development
- Social cohesion
- Community empowerment and self-determination
- Local image and identity
- Imagination and vision
- Health and well being<sup>8</sup>

Participation is the prime driver for the voluntary arts sector and participation at all levels is highly valued. From creative practice to group management to technical and practical support, voluntary and amateur arts groups are defined and driven by their members. In essence, for many people, being involved in voluntary arts activity is a key part of ensuring they have a good quality of life. It provides

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

<sup>7</sup> What people want from the arts, Arts Council England, March 2008

<sup>8</sup> Ibid

them with both an outlet for their creative talent and an opportunity to develop and build broader social networks.

### 6.3 Social inclusion and social capital

As well as the creative element there is of course a strong desire to enjoy this creative development in a welcoming, sociable and supportive environment:

“... the desire for fun, relaxation or excitement; to escape the pressures or tedium of day-to-day working life; to experience something unusual or uplifting or surprising; and for the opportunity to learn something new. For many people the arts are a positive, happy but also challenging aspect of their lives. Participants described the social dimension as particularly important... associate the arts with friendship, spending time with the family and sharing an experience with others from all walks of life.”<sup>9</sup>

Groups did not define their value in language used by policy makers and community development practitioners with terms such as ‘social inclusion’ or ‘social capital’. However, analysis of responses to the survey and interviews with groups highlighted that for many people this social element is a vital part of engagement in a voluntary arts group. Although groups do not necessarily proactively recruit members from diverse communities, they nevertheless see themselves as open and inclusive and keen to encourage participation in the artform to anyone who wishes to do so.

Fundamental to the ethos of voluntary arts activity is providing a supportive and cooperative environment. This is an environment in which members are keen to both learn from other members and share their own skills and in which people feel a collaborative sense of individual and group achievement. This might be particularly important for the large number of retired members, for whom being involved in a group can often provide an opportunity to socialise, focus and attain personal development which would previously have been provided by the workplace.

A key part of social inclusion and building social capital is the concept of ‘empowerment’, enabling people to take control of their personal environment and giving them confidence that their voice will be heard. In his *Use or ornament?* research, Francois Matarasso found that groups where people felt most empowered “tended to prioritise active involvement in all levels of decision-making associated with the work, including administration and management”.<sup>10</sup> By definition, voluntary and amateur arts groups are ‘governed or organised by those also participating in the activities’. This suggests that the recognition that self-empowerment is at the heart of their activity could provide some valuable lessons for policy makers, although care must be taken to guard against forcing voluntary and amateur arts groups into a role which would be contrary to their self-sufficient, arts-focused and membership-driven ethos.

### 6.4 Benefits to the community

It is recognised that arts and culture have a key role to play in regenerating communities. Key reports in this area include the 2004 report to the DCMS, *The contribution of culture to regeneration in the UK: a review of evidence* by London Metropolitan University,<sup>11</sup> which was closely followed by the DCMS publication *Culture at the Heart of Regeneration*. As with similar impact studies, these primarily focused on the impact of the publicly funded cultural sector, in particular the role that it plays in strategic regeneration initiatives and urban capital development.

Being developed from and embedded in the grass roots of local communities, the voluntary arts sector has a much deeper, fundamental and complex role to play in developing vibrant and inclusive communities, a role whose very nature is dependent on and embedded in local communities and cannot easily be replicated by top-down, policy-driven initiatives. As with social inclusion, although groups did not use policy terms such as ‘neighbourhood renewal’, they did refer to having a significant

<sup>9</sup> Public value & the arts in England: discussion & conclusions of the arts debate, Catherine Bunting, Arts Council England, November 2007

<sup>10</sup> Use or Ornament? The social impact of participation in the arts, Francois Matarasso, Comedia, 1997

<sup>11</sup> The contribution of culture to regeneration in the UK: a review of evidence, a report to the DCMS, Graeme Evans & Phyllida Shaw, London Metropolitan University, January 2004

amount of good will and informal support from their local community, which suggests that these aspects are highly valued.

Voluntary arts can often provide access, both as participants and audience members, for people who would otherwise not consider engaging in the arts or have no access due to living in an area where there is low service provision. All groups aim to be inclusive and welcoming and are keen to enable as many like-minded people as possible to engage in the artform. Where there is not capacity in the group to take in new members, it is not unusual for groups to proactively support people to set up their own groups, thus ensuring that there is a range of opportunity for people throughout the community to get involved and providing a diverse range of creative opportunities.

Importantly, voluntary arts organisations play a key role in creating demand for and supporting local venues and community facilities. Community associations, community schools and religious buildings provide a core hub around which activity is generated for many small communities. Voluntary arts groups are a key part of the range of community activity which ensures that community buildings are financially and socially viable. It is also common for voluntary arts organisations to hold fundraising events to raise money which they donate to local charities.

Often it is the local communities' voluntary arts groups that are centrally involved in performing at and organising community festivals, fairs and events. Morris dancers will perform throughout the summer at local pubs, folk singers will perform at buskers nights and events, film clubs will run screenings of films for young people for whom attending a cinema requires significant travel and the local amateur dramatic society will organise the village's annual pantomime. This is particularly important in rural areas which often suffer from an under-provision of arts facilities. It is this activity which brings a vibrancy and life to communities, develops and keeps alive local cultural traditions and, probably most importantly, has local residents at its heart.

## 6.5 Impact on the economy

The economic impact of the voluntary arts sector is seen through direct financial measurements of income and expenditure, but in fact it needs to be considered much more broadly. The sector contributes to the economy indirectly through improved training and employment opportunities, local spending and involvement in regeneration programmes. A number of studies have been undertaken at local, sub-regional and regional level that explore these economic contributions and though each has approached the issue from a different perspective they provide a useful insight into the impact of the sector.

Creative Yorkshire's study<sup>12</sup> considers the sector's contribution to economic regeneration and argues that although the sector has been involved in development activity through regeneration programmes and closer links with public policy objectives, its direct involvement in delivering economic regeneration is very limited. In Yorkshire and Humber, the sector has been involved in the work of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Forum. The Forum highlighted the difficulties in measuring the sector's economic contribution through "crude economic terms alone" arguing that "voluntary activity generally has a positive impact on the individuals involved and on society as a whole. Providing services for particular groups is often directly relevant to economic activity levels".

The Voluntary Arts Project for Cumbria<sup>13</sup> provides an interesting perspective on the economic impact of voluntary arts at a community level, specifically the unpaid labour and time on which arts groups and projects rely. The study argues that one method by which economic value in this sector can be measured is by the number of hours of unpaid staffing recorded in an area – for Cumbria this figure was over 4,000 hours per week. There are 136 paid staff carrying out 450 hours' work per week. Annual expenditure on staffing in this area amounted to £194,000. Assuming that staff work for a standard 48 weeks per year, this equates to 21,600 hours at a cost of £194,000 or £8.98 per hour. If this hourly rate was applied to the 4,000 hours of unpaid staffing the cost would be £35,920 per week and £1.7m over a 48 week year.

<sup>12</sup> Creative Yorkshire, The Voluntary Creative Sector in Yorkshire & Humber (2005)

<sup>13</sup> Cumbria County Council and Eden Arts (2008) The Voluntary Arts Project for Cumbria



The Valuing the Voluntary Arts research in Somerset and Dorset<sup>14</sup> provides more detailed financial figures, demonstrating the direct and significant economic impact of the voluntary arts sector. The study showed that in Dorset, voluntary arts groups have an annual turnover of at least £2.6m and support the local economy by around £1.3m a year. In Somerset, voluntary arts groups have an annual turnover of over £4m and support the local economy by around £1.1m a year. The study's results also showed that the majority of sector expenditure in Dorset and Somerset is spent locally (55% and 62% respectively).

As shown in this study (section 4.3.2 (page 27)) the average turnover and expenditure of groups is extremely variable, with group income ranging from £1,600 (craft) to £27,200 (festivals). Table 11 (below) shows the estimated total turnover for voluntary and amateur groups across England by region and artform. In 2006/07 groups generated a total income of £543.6m.

**Table 11: Total turnover by artform and region:**

Artform (All figures in '000s)	East	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire & Humber	England
Craft	£130	£160	£110	£210	£210	£110	£180	£140	£140	£1,340
Dance	£1,040	£640	£1,130	£320	£740	£1,270	£550	£580	£710	£6,990
Festivals	£2,720	£2,180	£1,900	£1,630	£2,450	£4,080	£4,620	£2,720	£2,990	£25,570
Literature	£230	£210	£50	£300	£230	£350	£140	£140	£120	£1,750
Media	£190	£130	£220	£60	£290	£480	£860	£100	£260	£2,620
Music	£9,510	£6,820	£9,160	£3,830	£8,240	£16,260	£11,430	£6,750	£7,600	£79,660
Theatre	£14,760	£10,670	£14,760	£12,940	£15,890	£17,480	£17,030	£12,490	£5,900	£122,130
Visual Arts	£700	£220	£480	£290	£260	£1,370	£740	£70	£190	£4,340
Multi-Art	£36,160	£25,580	£33,700	£22,390	£33,700	£54,610	£44,160	£25,950	£23,120	£299,260
<b>Total</b>	<b>£65,440</b>	<b>£46,600</b>	<b>£61,510</b>	<b>£41,970</b>	<b>£62,000</b>	<b>£96,010</b>	<b>£79,710</b>	<b>£48,930</b>	<b>£41,040</b>	<b>£543,670</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (W5/S3)

Groups in the South East generated the most income overall (£100m), followed by the South West (£79m) and the East (£65m). Yorkshire & Humber, the North East and the East Midlands generated the lowest total turnovers, ranging between £41m and £46m. As may be expected given the high average turnover per group, theatre contributed the most turnover with £122m of the total. Music had the next highest total turnover, with £79m. Table 12 (below) shows the breakdown of total income from the various sources of funding and finance across the sector in 2006/07.

**Table 12: Total income by source of funding/finance**

Funding/Finance Source (All figures in '000s)	Total Income
Ticket income (or similar)	£266,410
Subscriptions/Membership Fees	£84,260
Fundraising e.g. raffles, sale of goods	£37,080
Arts Council Lottery Funding	£31,830
Programmes e.g. sales or selling advertising space	£25,330
Local Businesses (e.g. sponsorship/donations)	£23,870
Local Authority	£20,190
Other Lottery Distributor (inc. Awards for All)	£16,500
Trusts and Foundations	£16,350
Donations	£10,390
Other unknown/misc.	£11,460
<b>Total Income (All Groups)</b>	<b>£543,670</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W5/S3)

<sup>14</sup> Voluntary Arts England (2004) Valuing the Voluntary Arts – The State of the Sector in Somerset and Dorset

Half of the income generated by groups came from ticket sales (or similar). This demonstrates not only the key role that audiences have in supporting the voluntary arts but also the extent to which the voluntary arts are accessed by the public, demonstrating a high level of demand at a local level. Arts Council Lottery Funding granted £31m to the sector in 2006/07, £10m more than was granted through Local Authorities.

Table 13 (below) considers the total expenditure of groups by region and artform in 2006/07. Overall, groups spent £406m across the year. Groups in the South East incurred the most expenditure at £72m, followed by the South West with £59m.

**Table 13: Total expenditure by artform and region**

Artform (All figures in '000s)	East	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire & Humber	England
Craft	£130	£160	£110	£210	£210	£110	£180	£140	£140	£1,340
Dance	£770	£480	£830	£240	£540	£940	£410	£430	£530	£5,170
Festivals	£1,900	£1,520	£1,330	£1,140	£1,710	£2,850	£3,230	£1,900	£2,090	£17,860
Literature	£190	£170	£40	£250	£190	£290	£110	£110	£100	£1,440
Media	£210	£140	£250	£70	£320	£530	£950	£110	£280	£2,870
Music	£8,710	£6,240	£8,390	£3,510	£7,540	£14,890	£10,470	£6,180	£6,960	£72,930
Theatre	£10,530	£7,610	£10,530	£9,230	£11,340	£12,470	£12,150	£8,910	£4,210	£87,160
Visual Arts	£520	£160	£360	£220	£200	£1,030	£560	£50	£140	£3,260
Multi-Art	£25,870	£18,300	£24,110	£16,020	£24,110	£39,070	£31,590	£18,570	£16,540	£214,100
<b>Total</b>	<b>£48,830</b>	<b>£34,790</b>	<b>£45,950</b>	<b>£30,880</b>	<b>£46,160</b>	<b>£72,160</b>	<b>£59,640</b>	<b>£36,400</b>	<b>£30,990</b>	<b>£406,130</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (W9/S3)

Theatre and music incurred the largest expenditure, £87m and £72m respectively. Craft and literature had the lowest total expenditure, £1.3m and £1.4m respectively. Table 14 (below) shows the breakdown of total expenditure on services/goods across the sector during 2006/07.

**Table 14: Total expenditure on services/goods**

Services/Goods (All figures in '000s)	Total Expenditure
Hiring professional artists (e.g. professional conductors, performers or tutors)	£125,120
Venue hire for performance/exhibition	£67,410
Arts equipment or technical services (e.g. materials, scenery, costume making, lighting technicians etc)	£58,870
Other professional services (e.g. accountant, printers)	£31,310
Rehearsal/meeting room hire	£26,600
Non-arts equipment (e.g. stationery, postage)	£23,260
Copyright fees/music hire	£20,370
Insurance	£14,830
Transport	£8,510
Refreshments	£3,780
Volunteer expenses	£2,880
Advertising, promotions etc	£2,250
Charitable or other donation	£1,710
Affiliations and memberships to professional bodies	£340
Other unknown/misc.	£18,890
<b>Total</b>	<b>£406,130</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (W9/S3)



In 2006/07 voluntary and amateur arts groups spent £125m hiring professionals, £67m on venue hire and £58m on arts equipment and technical services. Securing the services of a professional is by far the largest expense for the sector and constitutes almost twice the spend on venues.

While it may well be the case, as noted by Creative Yorkshire, that the sector does not play a significant role in economic regeneration, the financial contribution that the voluntary and amateur sector makes to the arts sector and its supporting infrastructure cannot be overlooked. As groups are at the core of local communities, many for long and sustained periods of time, it is also important not to overlook the sometimes difficult to measure economic value in terms of groups buying and sustaining local services, from venues for rehearsals through to caterers for events.

## 6.6 Artistic and creative value

Although the voluntary arts sector clearly has invaluable social, community and economic impacts, it is important to recognise that these are perhaps secondary to the prime driver for the sector. 75% of groups feel that their members join for enjoyment and appreciation of the artform. Further analysis of narrative responses and interviews with representatives highlighted that people get involved in the voluntary arts because they are passionate about the particular artform and want to develop their own artistic practice. Although this is not necessarily associated with a desire to become a professional artist, it is very strongly associated with a sense of personal development, pride in achievement and the opportunity to share this creative practice with other people.

For some parts of the sector, particularly more traditional English artforms and crafts, it was also recognised that many groups have been established thanks to a desire to ensure that these traditional creative skills are not lost to future generations. It could be argued that as these artforms are not areas which are financially supported by the broader arts funding system, these groups play a crucial role in keeping cultural traditions and artforms alive.

Excellence and quality of artforms is at the heart of the sector and section 5 of this study considers the strong links between the amateur and professional sectors. It is therefore important to recognise the value of the sector as a core part of the broader arts ecology which is driven by creative practice, both in relation to keeping traditional artforms alive and developing new and innovative creative products.

## 7. Challenges and enablers

---

The following section details the various challenges and enablers to participation in, and the operation and maintenance of, a voluntary and amateur arts group.

### Key messages:

- Access to good quality suitable venues at a reasonable cost is essential for voluntary arts groups and there are concerns that rising costs of venue hire for meetings, rehearsals and performances may result in a need to increase membership fees and ticket prices which could have a negative impact on membership levels and audience figures.
- Groups which manage or own their own venue face additional management and financial challenges particularly in relation to ensuring the upkeep of the building as a resource, not only for their group but for wider public benefit.
- 82% of the sector's income is self-generated but some groups are keen to access funding for new or additional activity and there are concerns that voluntary arts groups do not fall into the funding criteria of some programmes, that application processes can be complex and time-consuming and that often funding comes with strings attached.
- Attracting and retaining members and getting members of the group to volunteer for management and administrative tasks is crucial and can be a challenge for some groups.
- Planning and developing creative activity which is high quality, engaging and meets the needs of members is essential and is logistically complex and challenging.
- Bureaucracy and compliance with legislation is a key challenge for voluntary arts groups and can be restrictive of creative activity, with a sense that legislation has been developed in the context of the professional sector with limited understanding of capacity in volunteer run organisations.
- Some groups require access to specialised equipment, instruments and facilities.
- There is a misconception that the voluntary and amateur arts are low quality, which means groups are often overlooked by policy makers, funders and the broader arts sector.
- Press and improved publicity is crucial to raising the profile of the sector both for generating interest in individual groups and raising the profile and perception of the sector as a whole.

### 7.1 Venues

#### 7.1.1 Cost of venues

Many groups have negotiated a reduced rate for the venue they use but it is recognised that venue providers are under increasing pressure to generate income from venue hire to cover the increasing costs of insurance, legal compliance and building maintenance. In some cases groups felt that the potential increases in rent could threaten the future existence of the group.

On average 23% of group expenditure is on venues, either for general meetings (7%) or performances (17%). This varies significantly by artform, as shown in Table 15 below.

**Table 15: Proportion of expenditure on venues**

Artform	Rehearsal/meeting room hire	Performance/exhibition room hire
Craft	20%	4%
Dance	30%	14%
Festivals	1%	20%
Literature	9%	8%
Media	8%	14%
Music	10%	11%
Theatre	5%	19%
Visual Art	30%	7%
<b>Average</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>17%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W9/S3)

As the voluntary arts sector is primarily supported through self-generated finance, there are particular challenges for the sector to balance the books. Any increase in venue costs has to be covered somehow. If this is through an increase in subscriptions and session fees, there is concern that this could result in a drop in membership which would make the group unviable. Equally, rising venue costs impacting on ticket prices could be off-putting for audiences, making it difficult for groups to finance good quality performances.

There was concern that in some areas voluntary groups are priced out of the market for the use of professional performance venues. It was felt that sometimes venues did not have a sliding scale of charges to meet the needs of a range of potential users from not-for-profit organisations through to, for example, bands that perform at venues generating commercial profit. This is a particular challenge in areas where there is a high demand for performance space. Equally, when booking larger scale performance venues, groups have to be confident that they are able to generate enough of an audience from the production run to cover the higher costs of venue hire.

### 7.1.2 Suitability and quality of venues

A large number of groups said that they had found it difficult to find venues in a good location that provided them with the range of facilities that they needed. Often the range and types of activity which groups undertake means that they require a broad range of facilities.

The size of space available is often important. Some groups find that their capacity to take on new members is constrained by the size of the venue which is available to them. On the flip side of this, others find that there are only extremely large venues in the area which means that their group is 'rattling around' in the venue. Although this is not insurmountable, it is not ideal for a positive experience of being involved in the group. There is a similar challenge when groups are sourcing performance venues. If they are too small there will be limits on the audience they can attract, but if they are too large they may be playing to a half-empty auditorium, which is never a positive experience for performers.

The need for storage space, particularly for groups which needed to store props, sets, instruments or uniforms, was also raised as an issue, as was the need for some groups, particularly media or craft groups, to have access to a range of specialist technical and practical space which is sometimes not available in the local area.

For most groups, the opportunity to socialise outside the practical participatory activity was also important. This means that finding a venue which has either a café or bar facility, or these facilities close by, is high on the list of venue requirements.

Crucial to any experience of the voluntary arts, be that as a participant or as an audience member, is the quality and upkeep of the venue which activity takes place in. It is important that venues are

comfortable and warm and have clean, good quality facilities. In response to the survey some groups highlighted concerns that the buildings which they had access to were now starting to fall into a poor state of repair and although they were sensitive to the financial challenges which the building owners face and tried to be as supportive as possible, deterioration was a major concern. Although there is in reality no link, there is concern that a poor quality building might reflect on the perception of the quality of the voluntary arts group itself.

### 7.1.3 Venues owned by voluntary arts groups

An average of 6% of groups meet in a venue that is owned or managed by the group. This varies by artform; theatre groups are most likely to own or manage their own venue (13%), followed by craft (5%). Of the remaining artforms, 2-3% of groups own or manage their venue, with the exception of media, where ownership or management of a venue is a very rare occurrence.

The responsibility of running a building can place extra pressure on a group's management. All voluntary arts groups who have responsibility for running buildings do so with a very strong commitment to providing a resource for public benefit. As such they take the responsibility for its upkeep and refurbishment, accessibility, insurance and compliance with legislation and licensing laws very seriously. All of this creates particular challenges in relation to management and finance. Crucially, groups need to ensure that they are generating enough income not only to cover the costs of running their activity but also to make enough of a surplus to plough back into the maintenance of the building. There are grants and funding streams which organisations can access for help with key refurbishments and developments, but there are very few which will support the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of buildings.

## 7.2 Finance

### 7.2.1 Self-sustaining

Across the sector 82% of finance is self-generated, though this varies by artform. 83-90% of finance in dance, music, visual art, and theatre is generated by the group compared to 44% in literature. Approximately 80% of craft and media finance is self-generated. Groups are very entrepreneurial about how they generate this income, with methods including subscriptions and activity fees, ticket income and selling programmes, running competitions which charge for entry, publishing and selling anthologies and fundraising through raffles and other charity events.

As shown in Table 16, 75% of groups generate finance through subscriptions/fees and 71% through ticket sales. Only 25% seek finance or sponsorship from local businesses and 13% generate finance through donations.

**Table 16: Proportion of groups generating finance by method and artform**

Artform	Subscription/ Membership Fees	Ticket income or similar	Programmes e.g. sales or selling advertising space	Local Businesses (e.g. sponsorship/ donations)	Fundraising e.g. raffles, sale of goods	Donations	Other unknown
Craft	87%	33%	9%	7%	48%	11%	7%
Dance	73%	56%	11%	8%	41%	8%	7%
Festivals	52%	84%	74%	57%	38%	18%	17%
Literature	81%	33%	8%	8%	36%	6%	3%
Media	78%	55%	13%	15%	48%	8%	3%
Music	74%	78%	32%	26%	49%	19%	12%
Theatre	81%	87%	68%	30%	58%	8%	7%
Visual Art	88%	35%	10%	10%	37%	9%	11%
<b>Average</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>10%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W5/S4)

There is clearly a pride in this ability to generate finance. Interviews with representatives from voluntary arts groups highlighted that they felt this gave them an independence which ensured that the activity they deliver is always driven by the paying members of the group rather than dictated by the particular criteria or monitoring requirements of funders. That is not to say that groups do not access funding for project activity when they want to develop additional projects. However, it was remarked that once a group started accessing core funding for their activity there was a danger that this could make them reliant on one primary source of funding rather than spreading their income across a range of income streams, leading to financial vulnerability.

There were some concern, however, that being financially sustainable could go against a group if it did decide to apply for funding for developing new activity or holding one-off additional events.

### 7.2.2 Additional activity

Although groups are generally able to generate enough income to cover the ongoing running of their groups, their finances can often not stretch to more ambitious additional activity.

Many groups are keen to bring in professional speakers and demonstrators to add value to the skills sharing which exists within the group. It is strongly felt that this opportunity to engage and work with professional artists can be hugely inspirational and build members' confidence in their artistic ability and creativity. However, many groups find it difficult to source speakers who will provide their services at an affordable rate. This is often exacerbated if the professional also charges travel costs and accommodation on top of their fee.

It is also felt that occasional additional funding can enable groups to expand the scale of what they do and even open up access to the group sessions and performances to a wider public. Carrying out activity of this kind often requires significant additional costs including securing speakers who will be a big enough draw for a wider audience, hiring a larger, more expensive venue and in some cases (if these are not covered by the venue) having to cover the cost of additional insurance and licensing associated with public events.

Festivals and opportunities to perform will always be important for groups, and many groups highlighted that they would like to access funding to hold such events. Equally, many groups are involved in performing in festivals across the country and even internationally. This is seen as vital for the development of the groups, both in terms of raising their profile and in terms of skills development opportunities for their members. However, attending such festivals can be beyond the financial limitations of many groups. Travel and accommodation can be extremely expensive, particularly if events are overseas and if young people are involved, meaning chaperones are required to accompany them. This is a particular challenge for groups which work in more disadvantaged communities with people who are unlikely to be able to afford to cover the costs of their own travel.

### 7.2.3 Applying for funds

Although the majority of income for the sector is self-generated, some groups do access funding and some highlighted that they would be interested in accessing grants. As shown in Table 16, 4% of groups have received funding from the Arts Council, 5% from another Lottery distributor and 10% from trusts and foundations. The most commonly accessed is the Local Authority, with 18% of groups having sourced funding from their local council.

**Table 17: Proportion of groups sourcing funding by artform**

Artform	Arts Council Lottery Funding	Other Lottery Distributor (inc. Awards for All)	Trusts and Foundations	Local Authority
Craft	4%	4%	4%	7%
Dance	0%	2%	5%	8%
Festivals	14%	10%	20%	43%
Literature	14%	6%	6%	28%
Media	0%	3%	5%	10%
Music	4%	5%	12%	19%
Theatre	3%	5%	8%	16%
Visual Art	0%	2%	4%	8%
<b>Average</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>18%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W5/S4)

This is primarily for one-off projects such as events, exhibitions and festivals, for bringing in professional speakers and demonstrators, for purchasing kit, equipment and instruments or for specific communication initiatives such as website development, publishing anthologies or promotional literature. Although some groups are accessing funding it is also apparent that many groups have not previously considered this and were not even aware that they might be eligible for funding.

Across artforms only 16% of income is from a funding source. Again this varies across artform, with literature groups being the most likely to access funding (56% of income across the artform from funding). Dance and music source the least funding (10%). Between 20-25% of craft, festivals and media income is obtained through funding sources.

Concerns about accessing funding were raised by a large number of the groups who responded to the survey. In particular, there are concerns that in recent years there have been reductions in the levels of funding available and the grant schemes that do exist seem to focus on areas of disadvantage or on particular target communities. It was felt that this is particularly the case for Local Authority grant schemes. As voluntary and amateur arts groups are extremely successful in generating income and are often based in areas which are not considered disadvantaged, there is a perception amongst some groups that they are precluded from accessing funding. This is a real challenge for groups as they are often delivering high quality arts activity in areas which have very limited provision and for people who would otherwise not have easy access to participation in an artform. There was a suggestion that 'cultural' disadvantage is an equally worthy cause.

Some felt that funding application forms were often over-complicated and perhaps designed for arts organisations with professional staff, and that for groups that are purely voluntary, making applications is time consuming and frustrating. There is a sense that the questions asked in applications forms and criteria for investment are often not relevant to voluntary arts groups. Many groups also highlighted that they were reluctant to access grant funding as they felt that there were often strings attached which would dictate the activity that they deliver and require additional management to ensure they were complying with monitoring and evaluation requirements.

It is also important to recognise that many of the challenges highlighted in response to the survey may be down to misconceptions and a lack of knowledge of available funding rather than based on the reality of funding programmes. Not all funding has strings attached and complicated forms. Nonetheless, it is important to ensure that where funding is available it is accessible, appropriately light-touch and enables groups to achieve their ambitions. Support for fundraising, signposting, making the criteria and application processes clear and appropriate for voluntary arts groups and providing advice and support to complete the necessary paperwork would constitute essential support services for the sector.

Clearly, being able to access funding is a significant boost for many voluntary arts groups. There is a real sense in many cases of 'chicken and egg' where a group would like to expand or try new activity and need more members to achieve this, but cannot get the new members without expanding or adding new activity.

## 7.3 Management and membership challenges

### 7.3.1 Managing the group

As highlighted throughout this study, the success of voluntary arts groups is based on a huge commitment of time and expertise from a large number of volunteers. This means that one of the primary challenges for any group is finding the time and the volunteers to carry out management and administrative tasks which are essential to ensuring the group runs smoothly and efficiently.

Although a large number of groups felt that they did not have any problems getting people to volunteer for management committees and specific tasks, others found that it can be a struggle. There was a particular concern from many groups that they found it difficult to get younger adults to volunteer for management responsibilities. It was generally felt that this is due to work and family commitments that make it difficult for this age group to find the time. This means that responsibility for management sometimes falls to the older, retired members of the group.

Some respondents to the survey felt that there was a certain level of apathy amongst members of their group with many members coming along purely to get involved in the artistic, creative and social activity and not being prepared to take on more onerous and less enjoyable management tasks. For small groups with very little management, this is not an issue. However, for larger groups which often have more complex management needs this can be a real challenge, and existing committee members have to spend a lot of time promoting the importance of management roles in ensuring the group's continued existence.

The survey also highlighted concerns that the responsibility of being a committee member can be off-putting. Above and beyond the time commitment, a committee or board member is entrusted with ensuring that the group is run for the benefit of the members, including financial management and compliance with legal, insurance and health and safety requirements to ensure the appropriate protection of the members. Where a group owns or is responsible for managing a building, this responsibility is increased due to a commitment to ensuring their building is a resource not only for their group but for the wider community.

Being unable to recruit an adequate number of people to take on management tasks is a real challenge. It means that existing committee or management group members have to spend significant amounts of time not only on the administrative tasks but also working to get more management volunteers.

### 7.3.2 Attracting and retaining members

Voluntary arts groups rely on a healthy turnover of membership to ensure they stay vibrant and are sustainable. Although a good number of groups stated that they had no problems in this area, some found that attracting members was a real challenge. Even those which felt that this was not an issue for them at the moment were very aware that it was important for them to keep their eye on the ball in this area.

One issue which came through very strongly was the challenge of attracting younger members, particularly young adults, to get involved in the group. In some cases this was based on a concern that attracting this age group was important for ensuring that the group could continue. For others, the focus was more on the artform and ensuring that skills and interest in a particular craft is not lost to future generations. It is recognised that this age group is likely to have many other commitments – family, work or education – which makes it difficult for them to participate in voluntary arts activity.



It is also likely that this age group accesses arts activity in other ways. Some may be involved through university or academic activity, while others may not have the time to participate actively in an artform but will be attending theatres, galleries and other artistic events.

Retention of members is as important for groups as recruiting new ones and some groups found this the bigger challenge. Voluntary arts groups work hard to ensure that the services and activity which they are providing to their members is engaging and interesting and ensures a committed core membership over a period of time. This is a particular challenge for performing arts groups, where it is essential that their members commit to a structured rehearsal schedule leading up to a performance.

### 7.3.3 Developing and planning creative activity

Programming times and locations which are suitable and convenient for the majority of members is a key challenge and the logistics of running general activity should not be underestimated. "Herding cats" was the analogy used by one respondent to the survey.

Many groups overcome this by having set times and venues for their activity. However, if anything happens which disrupts this, somebody has to take responsibility for making alternative arrangements and ensuring that all members of the group are aware of any changes. When organising events there is a huge amount of logistical planning required to ensure that there is time for the group to prepare and that there are both time and people available for setting up and taking down any exhibition or sets and technical equipment. Groups also have to think about how their event links in with other activity in the area. In some cases it will be advantageous to run at the same time as other initiatives to support critical mass and generate higher attendance; in others it will be important to ensure that there is no diary clash to guard against competition for audiences.

Many groups said that they had to spend a significant amount of their time sourcing speakers, demonstrators and professional artists to support the activity of the group. For those who are well networked this is not an issue, but networks are not consistent across the sector. Some organisations have an effective database which enables groups to access local professionals, such as Making Music's Concert Promoters' Network, which exists to facilitate member societies' booking of professional artists. Resources like this are not available across the whole of the voluntary arts, so many groups have to spend a lot of time trying to find professionals and speakers. Many get so frustrated that they simply give up.

As well as timing, programming a diversity of activity to ensure that the majority of members remain engaged is a major challenge. For music groups which have some mix of skills but perform to a high standard, it can be a particular challenge to ensure that work is not too demanding for less experienced members and yet challenging enough for the experts in the group. Equally, there can sometimes be a clash between the type of work which different group members want to be engaged with. Older, more longstanding members of a group might enjoy a traditional repertoire while younger or new members of the group might want to try more contemporary work. It is down to those who are running the group to find ways of managing these potential conflicts.

The majority of groups are keen to have a diverse and interesting range of activity for their members. However, for many there is concern that the ambition to have a diverse programme can put significant pressure on those managing the group and there has to be a careful balance to ensure that the committee or management group is not overloaded. The quality of experience of the members and audiences is at the forefront for all groups, so it is important that a balance is maintained to ensure that an overload of management tasks is not detrimental to the quality of the group's activity. This is a particular challenge for those groups who struggle to get people to volunteer for management tasks.



### 7.3.4 Bureaucracy and legislation

One of the biggest management challenges for the majority of voluntary arts groups is increasing bureaucracy and the need to comply with legislation. This ranges from simply knowing what procedures or legislation the group should be complying with through to having a robust understanding of what that means for the group.

Child protection legislation was raised as a particular challenge for many groups. Although there is an appreciation of the need for child protection, there was concern that much of the legislation puts a significant burden onto groups and limits their potential to develop activity for children and young people. At a basic level, many groups are not aware of the detail of the legislation and do not know where they can get support and advice on the compliance processes they need to go through. The need for 'chaperones' also creates challenges. It requires a time (and sometimes financial) commitment from parents and families to attend sessions with their children. For many parents the opportunity for their children to take part in organised activity provides them with time on their own. In these cases it is likely that parents will choose to place their children in provision from professional or community services who have more capacity to engage with legislation.

Licensing and public entertainment legislation was also raised as a concern by many groups, particularly the more informal groups such as folk and morris dancing. There was concern that both within these groups and within the range of potential performance commissioners, there is not the necessary level of knowledge of the legislation. This means that legislation can be over-applied, which can mean a performance simply doesn't happen or does so in an unprofessional manner, putting the group and individuals within it in an extremely vulnerable position.

Much of this legislation has been developed with the professional world in mind, where there is more capacity to manage bureaucratic processes and systems. For voluntary groups this can be a serious burden and can place huge limitations on their ability and confidence to deliver and expand activity. However, it is important to recognise that this is not limited to the arts sector and has an impact on groups across the voluntary sector. It is also recognised that work has been carried out by national bodies such as Volunteering England to support organisations in understanding legislation. Their support and advice on legal and compliance issues is invaluable.

### 7.3.5 Access to kit, equipment and instruments

For some groups having limited access to specialist kit, equipment and instruments can seriously limit the range of work and activity which they are able to deliver. For media groups this might be access to production and editing equipment and facilities; for photography groups, particularly those who do not work in a digital format, this might be access to dark rooms and printing facilities, and for music groups such as brass bands it could be instruments and uniforms.

Some groups are finding creative ways of accessing some of the specialist facilities. Other groups are developing partnerships with specialist schools and Higher Education colleges which are becoming important points of access for up-to-date equipment that would otherwise be outside the financial scope of voluntary groups. It was also suggested that it would be interesting to explore better links with the professional sector. This could involve enabling groups to access kit from professional companies and facilities in 'down time', when it is not being used by the host organisation. There may also be opportunities to encourage professional arts organisations to donate their old kit to voluntary arts groups rather than discarding it when they invest in more up-to-date equipment.

Being able to provide access to instruments was raised by many music groups as a real challenge when it comes to attracting new members. This is a particular issue for groups working in less affluent areas or trying to attract younger members who may not be able to afford to purchase their own instruments. Many performance groups also require members to wear uniforms for their performances. For people who may not have been involved in musical performance for some time, there may also be

some reluctance to invest in instruments or uniforms in case they find that they do not enjoy being involved in the group. It is felt that there are very few funding streams which enable groups to accumulate banks of instruments and uniforms which would allow them to loan potential new members instruments and uniforms free of charge.

## 7.4 Perceptions of the sector

### 7.4.1 Quality and excellence

A very strong message that came through the survey, the interviews with voluntary arts groups and interviews with support organisations was the feeling that voluntary and amateur arts is perceived, amongst the wider community, as low quality. This is totally at odds with the ambitions of groups whose members strive to develop their creative skills and take pride in the quality of their work.

There are a large number of groups which have a national and even international reputation for the quality of their work. This ranges from amateur orchestras performing at high profile international festivals and competitions through to writers groups running competitions and collating anthologies which attract submissions from around the world. Although this quality is often recognised within the sector it is generally not appreciated more broadly, particularly amongst policy makers and funding bodies and the broader arts sector.

Concern was expressed that the arts funding system does not recognise the value of the sector as a key opportunity for enabling people to participate in high quality activity, and it was also felt that the sector is equally overlooked by local government. Although many Local Authorities have arts and cultural strategies, the voluntary arts sector is generally not specifically recognised in these strategies. Equally, when organising festivals and events, there is concern that voluntary arts groups are overlooked in programming with preference given to professional, and more expensive, performance groups or workshop facilitators.

### 7.4.2 Traditional British artforms

The survey highlighted a major concern amongst groups who are involved in more traditional, particularly British, artforms and crafts. The concern is that their practice is overlooked as not being a true part of the arts sector. It was felt that often these practices are not valued and are even seen as the butt of jokes rather than taken seriously as contributors to the broad cultural heritage of the country requiring a high level of skill and expertise.

It was felt that there is often much more interest in contemporary artforms, for instance contemporary dance rather than folk dance and new media rather than painting. Equally, where there is a focus on the traditional, this tends to be directed towards the traditions of ethnic and refugee communities rather than traditional British artforms. It was felt that a group of people getting involved in morris dancing or even performing Gilbert and Sullivan is just as much about keeping in touch with their culture and heritage as an Asian dance or music group. There is an overriding sense that traditional British artforms may be seen as 'white middle-class' preoccupations, which overlooks their value in keeping traditions alive.

The perceptions of these artforms often mean that groups find it challenging to recruit new members, particularly younger people. It is recognised that there is less teaching of traditional artforms in schools, so there are fewer opportunities for young people and children to get involved in the activity. It is strongly felt that work needs to be done to change the profile of these sectors of the voluntary arts, as one respondent commented, the "flat cap" reputation of brass bands does nothing to attract young people.

## 7.5 Press and publicity

Clearly, press and publicity have a key role to play in raising the profile and changing perceptions – and dealing with misconceptions – of the sector. Local press and media organisations are crucial partners for many voluntary arts groups doing significant work to raise the profile of the activity within the local community through free publicity, low cost advertising and positive editorials. However, some groups find it difficult to get good press coverage at an affordable price. Many felt that they spent a disproportionate amount of money on advertising and press in comparison with the benefits to the group.

Press and publicity have an important role to play at many levels. They can be beneficial to individual groups, enabling the attraction of new members and audiences, but equally can have a much broader strategic impact. Good quality press and media coverage can go a long way to raising the profile of the voluntary arts as a whole. Stories are featured in the community sections of the press, highlighting the positive social value of the groups. However, stories rarely appear in coverage of arts activity, which tends to be dominated by listings, critiques and reviews of professional companies and activity. Providing opportunities for voluntary arts organisations to feature more in the arts coverage of local, regional and even national media will go a long way to raising the profile of the sector as a key aspect of high quality arts provision.

## 8. Opportunities for growth

---

People running groups are hugely entrepreneurial, highly committed to their artform and ready to rise to any challenge, hence the large number of sustainable groups which have been running for many years. Groups provide an extensive range of opportunities at a very local level to participate in and engage with the arts and for this reason alone it is important that the sector continues to thrive and develop. The research undertaken outlines a number of opportunities that could be explored further to promote the growth of the sector:

- The study has demonstrated that the availability of appropriate venues is a key issue for many groups. Both for practice and performance, groups often struggle to find space that is appropriate for their needs, well-maintained and affordable. Ensuring sustained availability of venues for groups would provide fundamental assistance in maintaining a high level of voluntary and amateur arts groups.
- It is clear from the research that the voluntary and amateur arts sector makes a significant contribution to the broader arts sector economically, socially and creatively. It is also clear that there is often a lack of awareness or recognition amongst supporting organisations of the value and quality of voluntary and amateur arts, and that engagement with the sector can therefore be limited. Improving the level of understanding of the value of voluntary and amateur arts for organisations and individuals would assist in maximising the impact and potential of amateur participation across the sector.
- The amateur arts sector is rarely a high priority in terms of policy and strategy. Therefore, although there are many valuable support organisations already engaging with the sector they often have limited resources and capacity to do so proactively. Organisations operating at a local level are in the best position to provide direct support and signposting to groups and influence local funding and policy, which can have an extremely positive impact on the sector. Supporting regional and sub-regional arts organisations to proactively engage with, evaluate and build a stronger knowledge of the sector would have a positive impact on strengthening its support infrastructure.
- Local Authority Arts Development Officers are an invaluable resource and important conduit for interaction with the sector. However, research has shown that officers are disparately engaged with the sector. Improving the resources available to Local Authority Arts Development Officers to enable further engagement would be extremely beneficial. In many cases the action required may simply be a case of raising awareness of the role of the amateur sector in the arts environment.
- Supporting engagement is not necessarily about increased investment; it may involve reviewing where investment is already being directed, particularly in arts development agencies/departments, and empowering these structures to engage more actively with the voluntary and amateur arts sector.
- Raising the profile and recognition of the value of the voluntary and amateur arts, particularly in relation to the quality of the work, is of vital importance. Many amateur arts constantly struggle against stereotypical views of low quality and a 'just for fun' stigma. However as observed in the study, the quality of work is often very high because the social aspect, together with collective enthusiasm for the artform, means that people are well motivated.

- A key motivating factor for many groups participating in traditional artforms and crafts is ensuring the continuation of the artform. The preservation of cultural heritage and promotion of traditional arts and crafts is also a priority for many of the umbrella and membership organisations or associations supporting participation in them. A key challenge for these groups is a perceived lack of recognition for traditional arts. This is perhaps a result of a lack of critical mass. It would be interesting to explore the development potential of an 'Endangered Arts' sub-group, whereby supporting organisations joined together to lobby on behalf of this element of the sector.
- It is clear from the research that groups are determinedly self-sufficient and most show little interest in becoming engaged in the funding process, particularly for ongoing core funding. It is also apparent that there is a general lack of awareness amongst groups about the funding available to them. However, there are some areas where assistance to alleviate financial pressure would be beneficial:
  - Groups often struggle to meet the fees of professionals to speak/demonstrate at meetings or assist in the artistic direction of groups. Establishing a scheme whereby the cost of hiring a professional is met by the group and another agency (or whereby the groups pays a proportion of the cost and the professional claims the remainder) would have a significant impact on the artistic range of groups. Given the benefits to professional development noted in the study, this may be something Arts Council England wishes to explore further.
  - Sourcing materials and equipment can also be an issue for groups, either because they are expensive or difficult to locate. One possible solution could be the establishing of a materials exchange, whereby professionals and businesses could donate unwanted materials and equipment to be purchased by voluntary and amateur groups at a discounted rate, e.g. if a company updates its equipment.
  - While it is clear that the sector operates on a significant amount of self-generated income, funding can help groups take risks with artistic activity or hold larger scale events which can be open to a broader range of people. Identifying ways in which funding can 'add value' to the activity that is being carried out in the sector could therefore increase the range and diversity of voluntary and amateur activity.
- The study highlighted a number of links between the professional and amateur sectors. Further research with professionals working with amateur arts groups and those who have progressed to professional practice following involvement with a group would provide an invaluable insight into the developmental benefits of participation in the voluntary and amateur sector.
- It would be interesting to explore the potential for links between Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) and voluntary and amateur groups, particularly in terms of sourcing tutors/demonstrators for groups. Brokering a relationship with local HEIs whereby Masters students, particularly PGCE students, demonstrate to groups or teach sessions could be hugely beneficial for both group development and the individual development of the student.
- The research identified relatively low participation in the sector by people from BME groups. It was also noted that low rates of ethnic minority participation could potentially be attributed to a lack of identification with the term 'voluntary and amateur arts', particularly where groups operate around faith or worship. A valuable insight into the balance of professional, community and voluntary and amateur participation would be gained through research focusing on arts participation in BME communities.
- In order to maintain a flow of information about the voluntary arts and support the sector's development consideration should be made for a regular monitoring survey of the sector. The sector benefits from extensive good will toward engagement with this kind of research; 84% of participants in this study were happy to participate in further research. Alongside a periodical

review, it would be interesting to develop a 'panel survey' whereby a number of groups are tracked regularly. This would provide a deep understanding of the life cycle of groups and the internal and external factors impacting on development.

- To allow for swift monitoring of a sample of the voluntary and amateur sector, umbrella bodies should be encouraged and supported to collect a standard set of basic information about members upon joining and renewing membership. This could be fed back to a central source and provide a ready bank of information on the sector.

## 9. Creative adult learning

---

The key objective of this element of the report is to provide an understanding of the size and scope of Adult Community Learning (ACL) in the creative sector from the perspective of providers and learners. This involves considering the infrastructure supporting adult learning as well as those taking part and understanding reasons for and barriers to participation.

While a substantial amount of information is available on arts engagement and adult learning as separate entities, this document aims to bring together information on adult learning and arts engagement, provide detail on the number of adults participating in creative adult learning and understand their motivations and experiences.

### Key messages:

- A vast number of organisations and institutions are engaged in the delivery of creative adult learning: 4,560 providers falling into three main categories of further education, private classes and public community education.
- The 36,800 creative adult learning courses are available across England. Two-thirds of these courses are offered in craft and visual art subjects and less than 10% of the total offering is in Northern England (North East and North West).
- The majority of courses are offered over a period of 4 to 12 weeks and generally offered Monday-Thursday. Less than a quarter of courses are available over the weekend.
- An average of 96% of adults participating in creative courses are satisfied with their learning experience, rating delivery organisations and tutors above average on their knowledge of the subject and ability to understand learners. Areas where learners felt provision could be improved included the quality and availability of teaching materials and setting goals and targets to assist improvement.
- Between 2003/04 and 2006/07 1.9 million adults enrolled on a non-qualification related creative course funded by the LSC. The most popular courses tend to be arts, media and publishing, with 43% of learners taking courses in this category.
- The majority of learners are located in the South East and London. Of the other regions most learners are in the North West. 85% of people enrolling on courses are of white ethnicity, 77% are female and 36% are over 60.
- Learners tend to participate in courses for enjoyment and personal satisfaction. However, there are a number of individual motivating factors such as a desire to develop skills, desire to test skills before progressing to further study or potentially professional activity, relaxation and escapism or simply something to do in spare time. Post-completion learners are inspired to engage further with the arts and show an interest in or actively seek to take part in other arts activities.
- The key barrier identified was cost. While subsidies are available for certain groups, the initial outlay for tuition combined with often expensive materials can be off-putting, particularly if the individual is unsure that they will enjoy the course.

The following section presents an analysis of the provision of and participation in non-accredited courses available across England and considers learner perceptions of provision.

The section presents a range of information from the National Learning Directory, a government database of almost 1 million learning opportunities. It also presents information from the LSC's Individualised Learner Record (ILR) for Adult and Community Learning, in order to provide an insight into the level of participation in adult learning across England. The ILR is a rich data resource built on information obtained from learners participating in LSC funded adult learning across the nation. It is recognised that participation in private courses is a significant element of total participation that is not captured by this dataset. However, given the scale of funded adult learning and the high levels of public provision it is felt that the statistics will be indicative of the likely trends within private provision and the profile of participants. It is also expected that the forthcoming DIUS consultation on informal adult learning and the LSC's review of PCDL provision will provide some illumination on levels of private participation.

It should be noted that owing to differences in reporting information in the two datasets, information on participation is presented in artform groups that differ to those used for participation. For example the LSC reports data on 'performing arts' rather than breaking this down into artforms such as music, dance and theatre.

## 9.1 Levels of provision

- There are 36,800 adult learning courses in creative subjects available across England.

**Table 18: Courses available by region and artform**

Region	Craft	Dance	Literature	Media	Music	Theatre	Visual Art	Grand Total
East	1,100	300	100	200	300	0	1,100	3,200
East Midlands	1,100	200	100	200	300	0	700	2,500
London	2,400	1,400	500	700	1,100	400	2,300	8,900
North East	500	200	0	100	100	0	300	1,300
North West	700	100	100	100	200	100	700	2,000
South East	2,200	700	200	300	500	100	2,400	6,400
South West	1,100	200	200	200	300	100	1,400	3,600
West Midlands	1,000	200	100	200	300	100	800	2,700
Yorkshire and Humber	1,700	300	200	300	300	100	1,000	3,900
Region Unknown	300	200	600	700	100	100	400	2,400
<b>England</b>	<b>12,100</b>	<b>3,800</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>11,100</b>	<b>36,900</b>

Source: National Learning Directory (Ref: W6a/S1)

- 24% of all courses (8,900) are offered in London and 17% (6,400) in the South East. The North West and North East have the lowest levels of provision, with 5% and 3% of courses respectively (2,000 and 1,300).
- 33% of all courses (12,000) available are in craft and 31% (11,200) are in visual arts subjects. Literature and theatre have the fewest courses with 6% (2,200) and 3% (900) respectively.
- The majority of courses available (45%) run for between four and 12 weeks, though this varies across artforms. One day courses are most likely to be offered in literature and media (30% and 24% respectively).
- The most popular day of the week for courses to run is Wednesday. 69% of courses are offered Monday-Thursday, while only 20% are available over the weekend.



Table 19 shows the courses available per 10,000 adults in England and across the English regions. On average there are 8.8 creative non-qualification related courses for every 10,000 residents across the nation. As shown below this can vary significantly between artforms and regions.

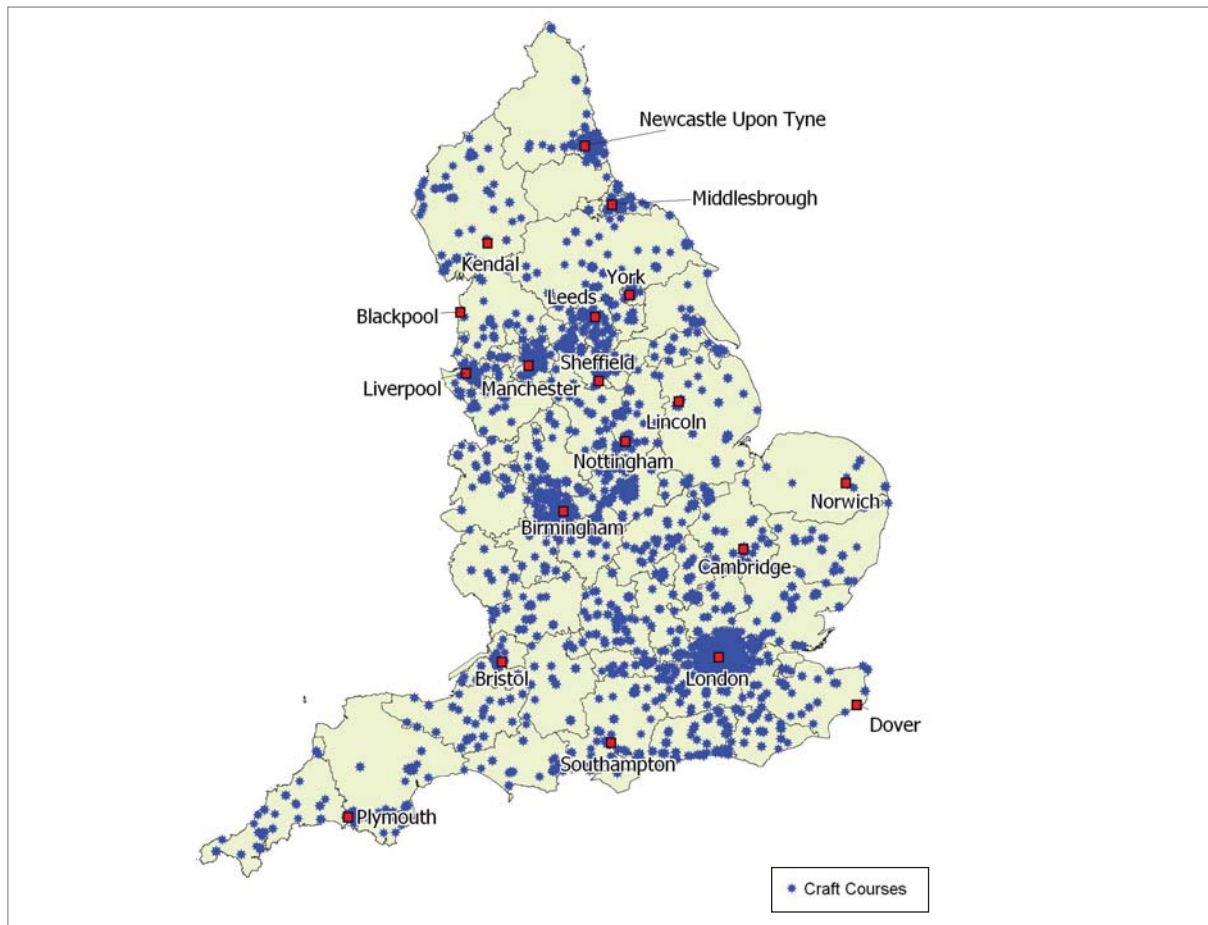
**Table 19: Courses per head of population**

Region/Artform	Craft	Dance	Literature	Media	Music	Theatre	Visual Art	Creative Courses
London	3.9	2.3	0.8	1.1	1.8	0.7	3.7	14.5
South East	3.3	1.0	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.1	3.5	9.5
Yorkshire and Humber	4.0	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.2	2.4	9.2
South West	2.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.7	0.2	3.3	8.4
East	2.4	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.7	0.0	2.4	7.0
East Midlands	3.1	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.8	0.0	1.9	6.9
West Midlands	2.3	0.5	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.2	1.8	6.2
North East	2.4	0.9	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	1.4	6.1
North West	1.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.2	1.2	3.6
<b>England</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.8</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>8.8</b>

Source: National Learning Directory and National Statistics (Ref: W06/S4)

The highest levels of opportunity per head are in London, the South East and Yorkshire and Humber; the proportion per head is above the national average. Interestingly, although the North East has the lowest level of provision (3% of all courses), the opportunity per head is on a par with the East and West Midlands. The North West has the lowest level of courses per head with only 3.6 per 10,000 people. Across all artforms the availability of courses per head in London is above the national average, particularly dance where there are more than twice as many courses compared to England.

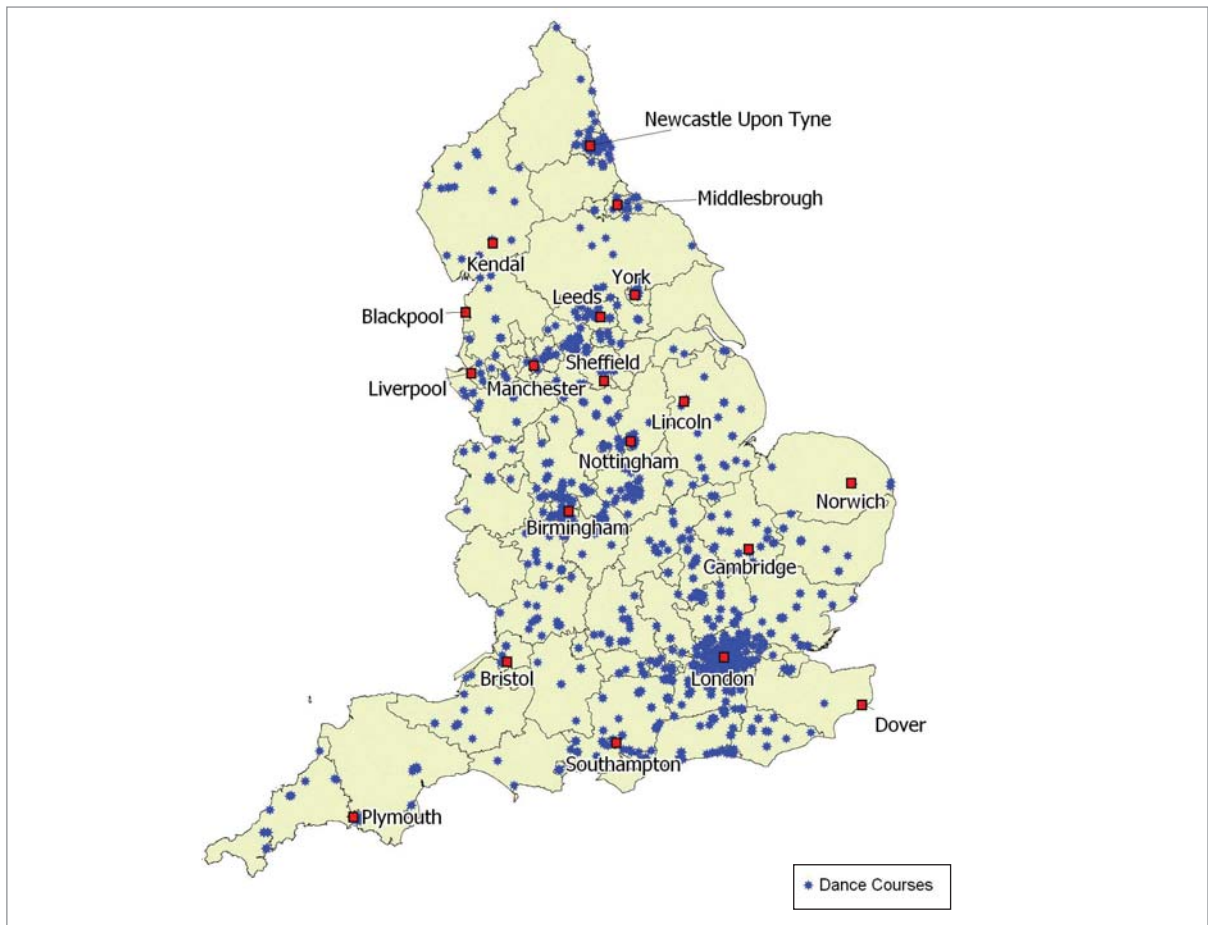
### Distribution of craft courses across England



#### 9.1.1 Craft

- There are 12,000 non-accredited craft courses available across England.
- Craft courses constitute one third of all creative adult learning courses available.
- After London and the South East, Yorkshire & Humber offers the most craft learning opportunities with 14% of all courses. The North East has the fewest courses with only 4% of the total.
- The largest proportion of craft courses available are in textile crafts such as embroidery, crocheting or knitting, which constitute 40% of craft courses across England. Glass, ceramics and stone crafts make up 18% of courses, followed by decorative crafts with 16%.
- Availability differs across regions. In the North East, textile courses constitute 32% of those available in craft, and decorative crafts make up 28%. The East Midlands has the largest proportion of decorative metal craft courses (13% of learning opportunities).
- The largest proportion of craft courses (44%) run for between four and 12 weeks. Again this varies by region, in the North East 64% of courses run for this period. The South East, South West and East Midlands all have a substantial number of one-day craft courses, with approximately 25% of the courses available in each region taking this format. In the North West 25% of all courses last between 12 and 52 weeks. Across England relatively few craft courses (4%) run for between one and four weeks. Yorkshire and Humber offers the most variation in duration with 59% of courses being available at different durations.
- Across England the majority of courses are offered on Tuesday, Wednesday or Saturday (18% on each day). Only 5% of courses are offered on Sunday.

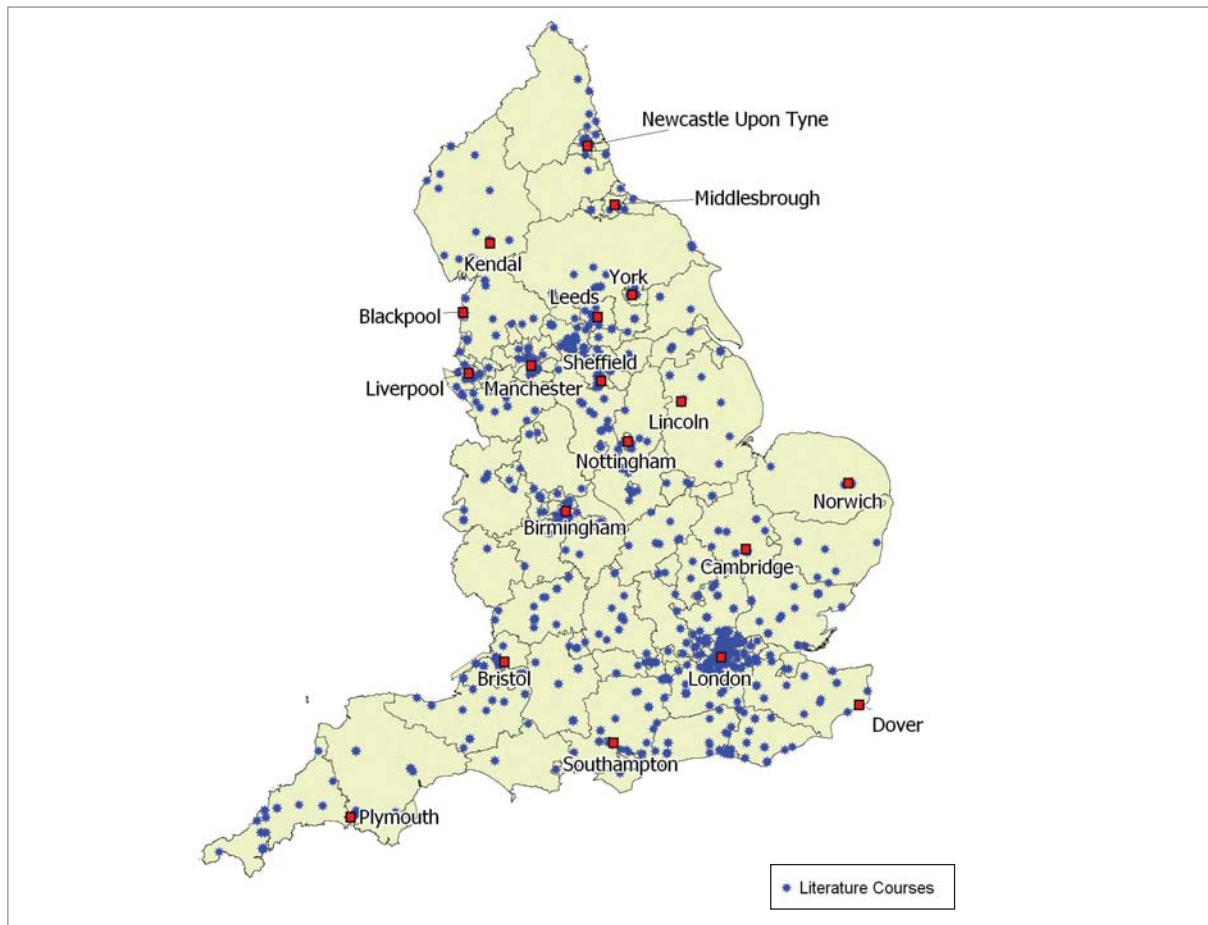
### Distribution of dance courses across England



#### 9.1.2 Dance

- There are 3,900 non-accredited dance courses available across England.
- Dance courses constitute 11% of all creative adult learning courses available.
- After London and the South East, Yorkshire & Humber offers the most dance learning opportunities with 7% of all courses. The North East has the fewest courses with only 4% of the total.
- The majority of dance courses available after 'other dance courses' and those that were uncategoryed (which make up 49% and 19% respectively of all courses) are in folk dancing, which constitute 15% of dance courses across England. Ballroom dancing classes make up 13% of courses, followed by ballet with 5%.
- Availability differs across regions. In Yorkshire and Humber folk dancing classes constitute 22% of those available in dance. The East has the largest proportion of ballroom dancing courses (23% of learning opportunities). The highest proportion of ballet courses is in London with 8% of learning opportunities.
- The highest percentage of dance courses (47%) run for between four and 12 weeks. Again this varies by region; in the South East 72% of courses run for this period. The North East and Yorkshire and Humber have a substantial number of courses of varying durations (48% and 47% respectively). Across England relatively few dance courses run for between one day and one week (2%) or between one week and one month (3%)
- Across England, the largest proportion of dance courses are run on Wednesday (21%) or Monday (20%). Only 7% of dance courses are run on Friday and only 6% on Sunday.

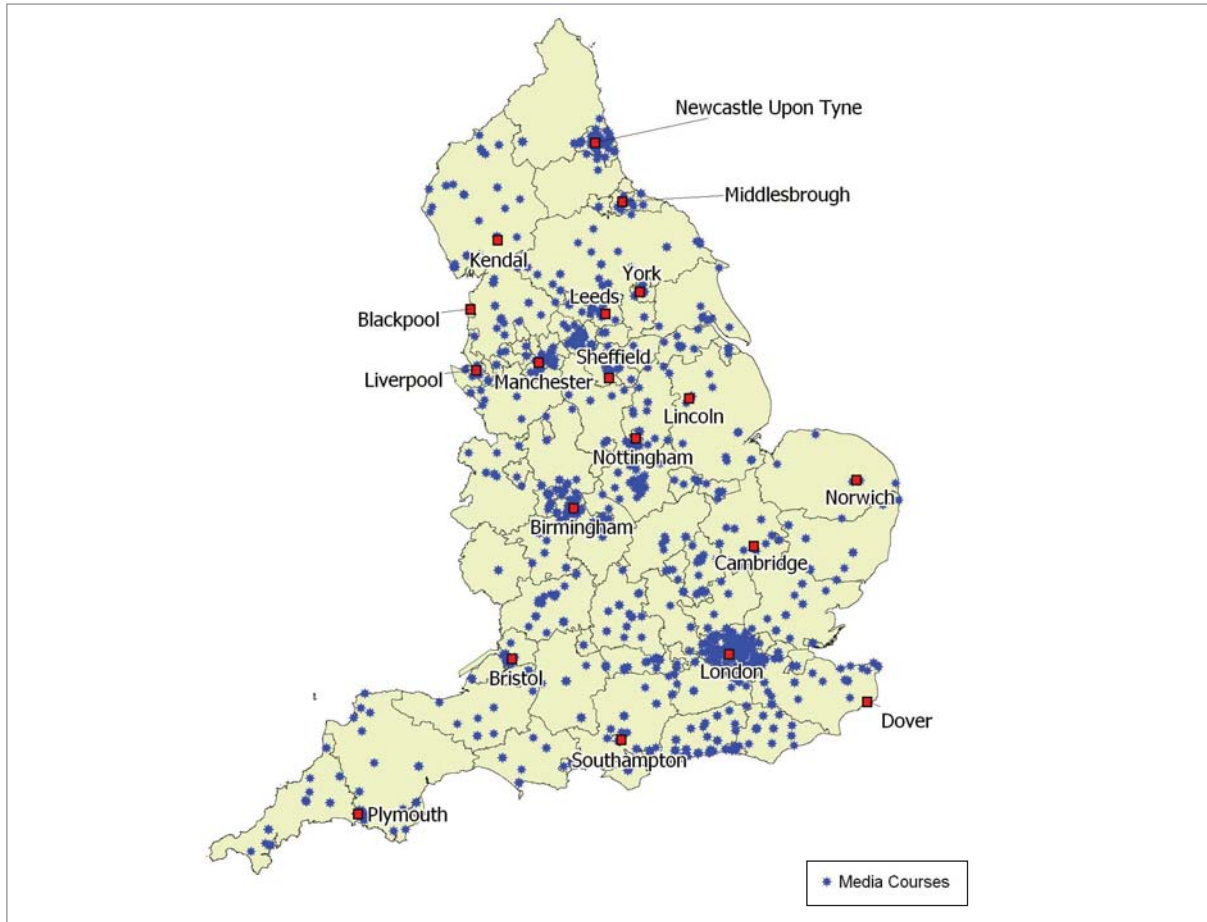
### Distribution of literature courses across England



#### 9.1.3 Literature

- There are 2,200 non-accredited literature courses available across England.
- Literature courses constitute 6% of all creative adult learning courses available.
- After London, Yorkshire & Humber and the South West offer the most literature learning opportunities, both with 11% of all courses. The South East offers 10% of all literature courses. The North East has the fewest courses with only 2% of the total.
- The majority of literature courses available are in creative writing, which constitutes 59% of literature courses across England. Journalism makes up 22% of courses, followed by writing for performance with 9%.
- Availability differs across regions. In the North East creative writing courses constitute 91% of those available in literature. London has the largest proportion of writing for performance literature courses (18% of learning opportunities). This percentage is only slightly lower in the East Midlands at 15%.
- The largest percentage of literature courses (38%) run for between four and 12 weeks. Again this varies by region; in the North East 80% of courses run for this period. London and the North West have a substantial number of one-day craft courses on offer, with approximately 25% of the courses available in each region taking this format. In the West Midlands, 21% of courses run for between three months and a year. Across England relatively few craft courses (3%) run for between one and four weeks. Yorkshire & Humber offers the most variation in duration with 20% of courses being available at different durations.
- Across England, the largest proportion of literature courses (21%) are run on Saturday, followed by Tuesday (20%). Only 5% of courses are offered on Sunday.

### Distribution of media courses across England

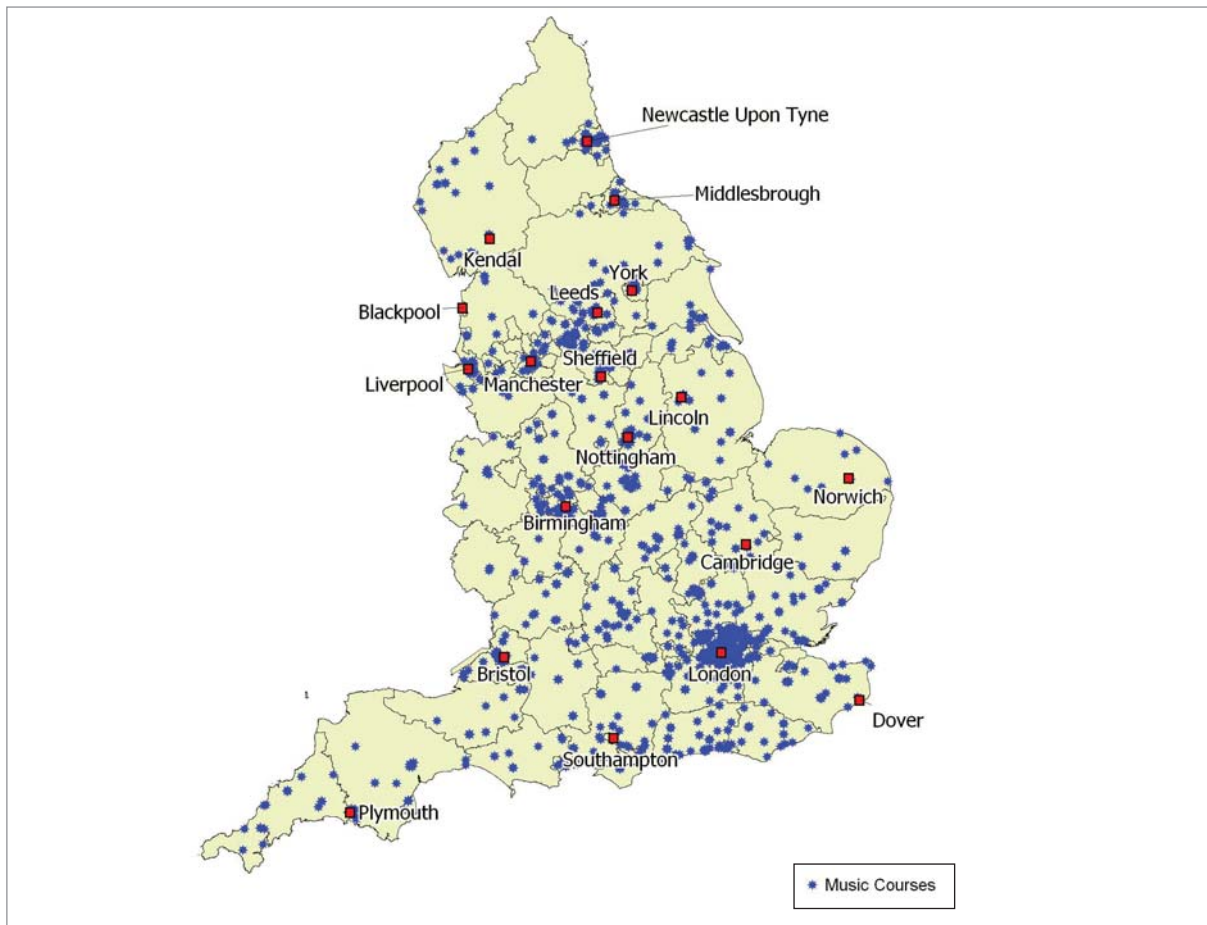


#### 9.1.4 Media

- There are 3,000 non-accredited media courses available across England.
- Media courses constitute 8% of all creative adult learning courses available.
- After London and the South East, Yorkshire and Humber offers the most media learning opportunities with 11% of all courses. The North East has the fewest courses with only 4% of the total.
- The majority of media courses available are in photography or publishing, which constitute 39% and 26% respectively of media courses across England. Making films or videos as an artistic activity and studying media both make up 16% of courses.
- Availability differs across regions. In the South East, photography courses constitute 65% of those available in media. London has the largest relative proportion of making films or videos as an artistic activity media courses, with 26% of learning opportunities in this sub-sector. The East Midlands has the largest proportion of publishing media courses, with 28% of learning opportunities in this sub-sector.
- The largest proportion of media courses (35%) run for between four and 12 weeks. Again this varies by region; in the North East 55% of courses run for this period. London and the South East both have a substantial number of one-day media courses on offer; 26% and 19% respectively of the courses available in these regions take this format. Across England relatively few media courses (6%) run for between one and four weeks. The North West and the South West offer the most variation in duration, each with 21% of courses being available at different durations.
- Across England the largest proportion of courses (22%) are run on Wednesday. Only 8% of courses are offered on Friday.



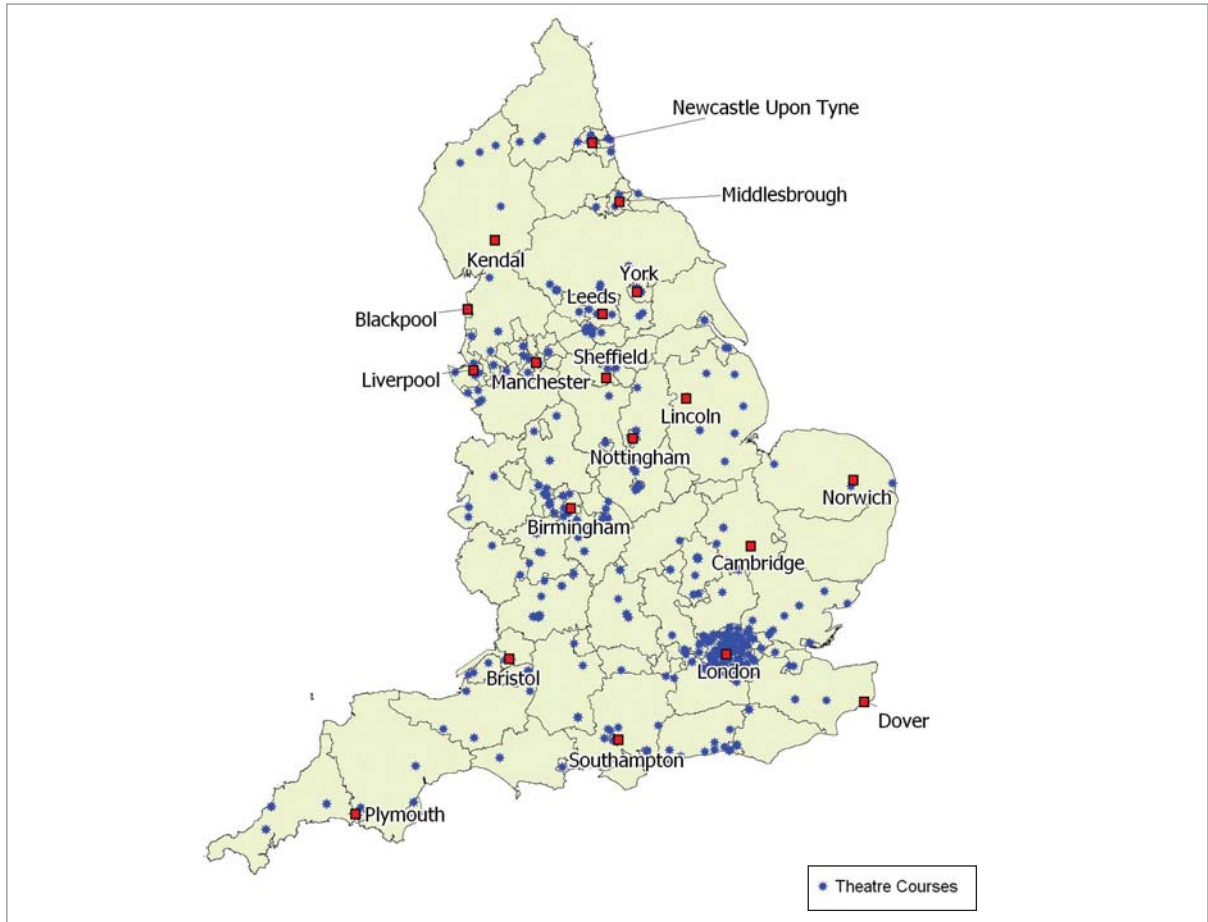
### Distribution of music courses across England



#### 9.1.5 Music

- There are 3,500 non-accredited music courses available across England.
- Music courses constitute 10% of all creative adult learning courses available.
- After London and the South East, the West Midlands offer the most music learning opportunities with 10% of all courses. The North East has the fewest courses with only 3% of the total.
- The largest proportion of music courses available are in stringed instrument playing, which constitutes 22% of music courses across England. Music theory and history makes up 19% of courses, followed by singing with 18%.
- Availability differs across regions. In the North East stringed instrument courses constitute 46% of those available in music. The South East and West Midlands have the largest relative proportions of music theory and history courses, each with 24% of learning opportunities in this sub-sector.
- The highest percentage of music courses (49%) run for between four and 12 weeks. Again this varies by region; in London 60% of courses run for this period. The South East has a substantial number of one-day music courses, with approximately 14% of the courses available in the region taking this format. Across England relatively few music courses (3%) run for between one and four weeks. Yorkshire & Humber offers the most variation in duration with 27% of courses being available at different durations.
- Across England, the largest proportion of music courses (20%) are run on Tuesday. Very few courses (6%) are run on Friday. Compared to other subject areas, there are a relatively large proportion (15%) of courses available on Sunday.

### Distribution of theatre courses across England

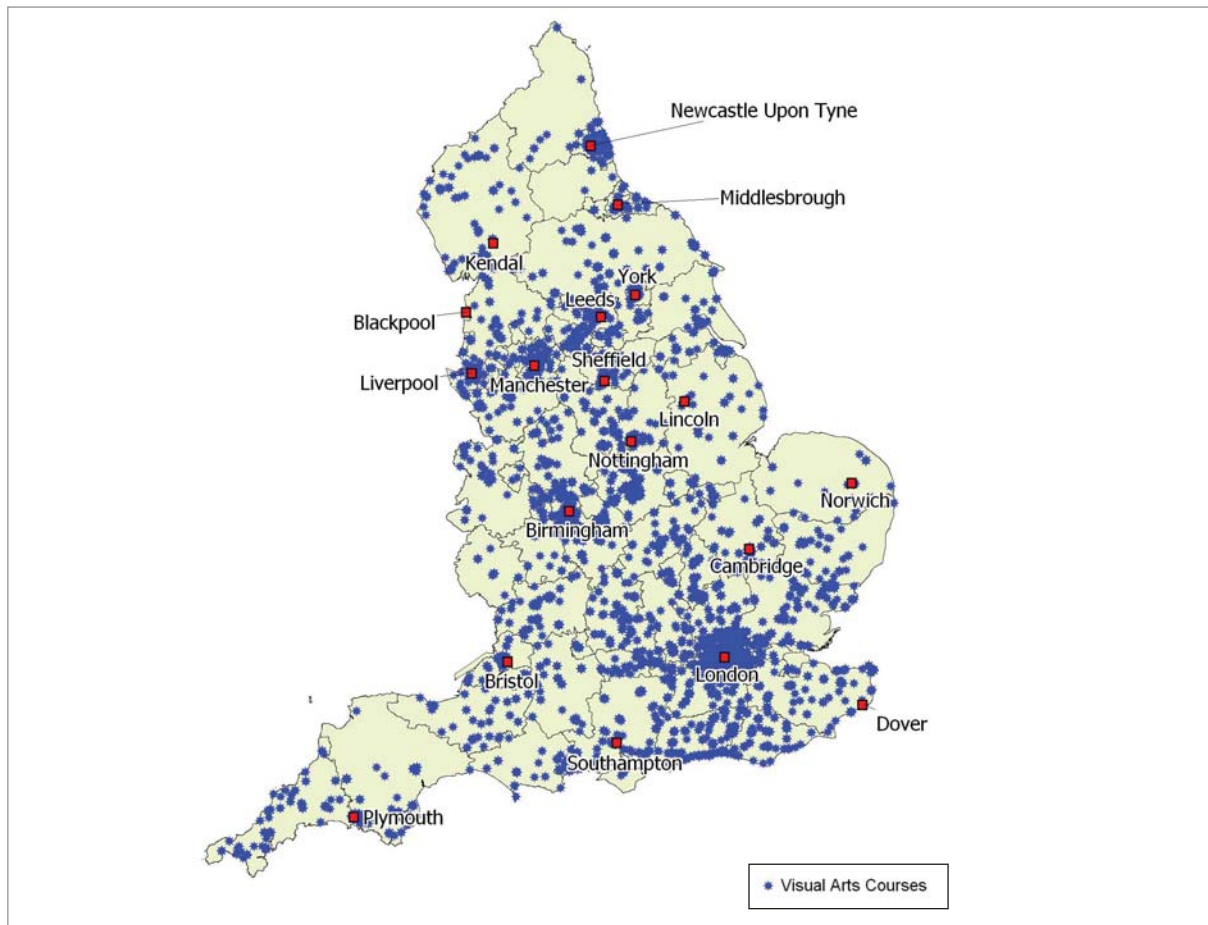


#### 9.1.6 Theatre

- There are 900 non-accredited theatre courses available across England.
- Theatre courses constitute 3% of all creative adult learning courses available.
- After London and the South East, theatre and performance courses are quite evenly spread across other English regions, ranging from 7% in both the South West and West Midlands to 4% in the East Midlands.
- The largest proportion of theatre courses available are in acting, which constitutes 49% of theatre performance courses across England. Carnival courses make up 9% of courses, followed by production with 6% and circus art with 5%.
- Availability differs across regions. In London acting courses constitute 57% of those available in theatre. The West Midlands has the largest proportion of carnival courses (29% of learning opportunities).
- The highest percentage of theatre courses (38%) run for between four and 12 weeks. Again this varies by region; in Yorkshire & Humber 67% of courses run for this period. The North West offers a substantially higher number of one-day theatre courses than other regions, with 27% of the courses available in the region taking this format. Across England relatively few theatre courses (7%) run for between one and four weeks. The North East offers the most variation in duration with 65% of courses being available at different durations.
- Across England, the highest proportion of theatre courses are run on Tuesday or Saturday (16% each). The rest of the courses are all relatively evenly spread out across the other days of the week, with the lowest number of courses (13%) being offered on Monday.



### Distribution of visual art courses across England



#### 9.1.7 Visual Art

- There are 11,200 non-accredited visual art courses available across England.
- Visual art courses constitute approximately a third (31%) of all creative adult learning courses available.
- After London and the South East, the largest proportion of visual art courses are offered in the South West (12%) and the East (10%).
- The majority of visual art courses available are in painting, drawing, printmaking or sculpture, which constitutes 68% of courses across England. Art appreciation and art history courses make up 17% of courses, followed by design with 5%.
- Availability differs across regions. In the West Midlands, painting, drawing, printmaking or sculpture courses constitute 76% of those available in visual art. The North West has the largest proportion of art appreciation and art history courses (24% of learning opportunities).
- Half of all visual art courses run for between four and 12 weeks. Again this varies by region; in Yorkshire & Humber 60% of courses run for this period. The East Midlands offers a substantially higher number of one-day courses than other regions, with 20% of the courses available in the region taking this format. Across England relatively few visual art courses (4%) run for between one and four weeks. Yorkshire & Humber offers the most variation in duration with 24% of courses being available at different durations.
- Across England, the highest proportion of visual art courses are run on Wednesday (19%), followed by Tuesday (18%). Only 6% of courses are run on Sunday, although in the West Midlands 14% of visual art courses are run on this day of the week.

## 9.2 Levels of participation

- Between 2003/04 and 2006/07 there were 1,932,600 enrolments on LSC funded adult learning courses with no qualifications in the creative sector across the whole of England. As shown in Table 20 below, the number of enrolments has decreased over the last four years. Following these trends it will continue to decrease over 2007/08 and 2008/09.

**Table 20: Enrolments 2003/04 – 2008/09**

Year	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	Total	Prediction 2007/08	Prediction 2008/09
Enrolments	558,126	517,834	463,730	422,620	1,962,310	375,422	329,360
% change		-7%	-10%	-9%	-24%		

Source: LSC ACL ILR 2006/07 (Ref: W7a/S6)

- The largest proportion of enrolments are in arts, media and publishing courses (43%), followed by crafts, creative arts and design (26%), languages, literature and culture (21%), performing arts (8%), and media and communication (1%).
- The largest proportion of total enrolments are in the South East (21%), followed by London (18%) and the North West (12%). Only 4% of total enrolments were in the North East.
- The majority of course enrolments are female (77%), a pattern which is followed across all English regions.
- Just over half of all enrolments are in the 25-59 year age range, followed by 36% in the 60 and over group. There are very few younger enrolments on courses with no qualifications; in total only 5% of enrolments are for people aged 24 or under.
- 85% of all enrolments are of white ethnicity, followed by 3% Asian or Asian British ethnicity and 2% Black or Black British ethnicity. Less than 1% of enrolments are Chinese or Mixed ethnicities. Outside of London, these ethnicity patterns are quite similar, with the exception of the North West where 4% of all enrolments are Asian or Asian British ethnicity and the East Midlands where 2% of all enrolments are Asian or Asian British ethnicity.

### 9.2.1 Arts, media and publishing

- Between 2003/04 and 2006/07 there were 846,100 enrolments on arts, media and publishing courses across England. This constitutes 43% of all creative enrolments.
- The largest proportion of arts media and publishing enrolments (20%) are in the South East. Only 4% of these enrolments are in the North East.
- The majority of arts, media and publishing enrolments are female (80%). This varies very little across regions.
- The majority of arts, media and publishing enrolments (53%) are aged between 25 and 59. This varies between 47% in the North East and 58% in London. There is also a relatively high number of enrolments (39%) aged 60 and over. Only 5% of enrolments are aged 24 or under.
- The majority of enrolments are of white ethnicity (85%). This is followed by Asian or Asian British at 3%. The ethnicity was unknown for 8% of enrolments. Only 0.47% of arts, media and publishing enrolments were Chinese. Ethnicity patterns for enrolments follow a similar pattern across all English regions, although after London, the North West has the highest proportion of Asian and Asian British enrolments (4%).

### 9.2.2 Crafts, creative arts and design

- Between 2003/04 and 2006/07 there were 512,500 enrolments on crafts, creative arts and design courses across England. This constitutes 26% of all creative enrolments.
- The largest proportion of crafts, creative arts and design enrolments are in the South East (20%), followed by London (18%) and the North West (13%). Only 5% of these enrolments are in the North East.
- The majority of crafts, creative arts and design enrolments are female (82%). This varies very little across regions.
- The majority of crafts, creative arts and design enrolments (51%) are aged between 25 and 59. This varies between 46% in the North East and 59% in London. There is also a relatively high number of enrolments (43%) aged 60 and over. Less than 4% of enrolments are 24 or under.
- The majority of enrolments are of white ethnicity (87%). This is followed by Asian or Asian British enrolments at 3%. The ethnicity was unknown for 6% of enrolments. Only 0.35% of enrolments were Chinese. Ethnicity patterns for enrolments follow a similar pattern across all English regions, although after London, the West Midlands and the North West have the highest proportion of Asian and Asian British enrolments (both 5%).

### 9.2.3 Languages, literature and culture

- Between 2003/04 and 2006/07 there were 407,200 enrolments on languages, literature and culture courses across England. This constitutes 21% of all creative enrolments.
- The largest proportion of languages, literature and culture course enrolments are in the South East (24%), followed by London (18%) and the North West (11%). Only 3% of these enrolments are in the North East.
- The majority of languages, literature and culture enrolments are female (67%). This varies very little across regions. However, it is slightly more balanced than enrolments for other artforms.
- The majority of languages, literature and culture course enrolments (62%) are aged between 25 and 59. This varies between 49% in the North West and 67% in London and the East Midlands. There is also a relatively high number of enrolments (29%) aged 60 and over. Less than 4% of enrolments are 24 or under. Although only 4% of enrolments fall into the 21 to 24 age category, this is higher than for enrolments in other sectors.
- The majority of enrolments are of white ethnicity (86%). This is followed by Asian or Asian British enrolments at 3%. Only 0.02% of enrolments are Chinese. Ethnicity patterns for enrolments follow a similar pattern across all English regions, although after London, the West Midlands has the highest proportion of Asian and Asian British and Black and Black British enrolments (5% and 2% respectively).

### 9.2.4 Media and communication

- Between 2003/04 and 2006/07 there were 17,700 enrolments on media and communication courses across England. This constitutes only 1% of all creative enrolments.
- The largest proportion of media and communication course enrolments are in London (22%), followed by the South East (19%), the North West (14%) and the East of England (13%). Only 3% of enrolments are in the South West.
- Just over half of all media and communication course enrolments are female (56%). This varies across regions from 45% females in the North East, i.e. a majority of male enrolments, to 64% female enrolments in the South West.

- The majority of media and communication course enrolments (56%) are aged between 25 and 59. This varies between 37% in the North East and 69% in London and the East Midlands. There is also a relatively high number of enrolments (35%) aged 60 and over. Less than 4% of enrolments are 24 or under. Similarly to languages, literature and culture courses, 4% of enrolments fall into the 21 to 24 age category.
- The majority of enrolments are of white ethnicity (84%). This is followed by Mixed ethnicity at 10%, Black or Black British ethnicity at 4% and Asian or Asian British ethnicity at 3%. Patterns appear to be quite different for this sector than for other sectors analysed. However, there is still a very small minority of Chinese enrolments (0.36%). Ethnicity patterns for enrolments follow a similar pattern across all English regions, with the highest proportion of mixed ethnicity enrolments being 22% in London.

### 9.2.5 Performing arts

- Between 2003/04 and 2006/07 there were 149,100 enrolments on performing arts courses across England. This constitutes 8% of all creative enrolments.
- The largest proportion of performing arts course enrolments are in London (23%), followed by the South East (20%), the North West (10%) and the East of England (10%). Only 4% of these enrolments are in the East Midlands.
- The majority of all performing arts enrolments are female (70%). This varies across regions from 64% females in Yorkshire & Humberside to 74% female enrolments in the East Midlands.
- The majority of performing arts enrolments (65%) are aged between 25 and 59. This varies between 57% in the North East and 70% in the East Midlands. There was also a relatively high number of enrolments (25%) aged 60 and over. Less than 4% of enrolments are 24 or under. Similarly to languages, literature and culture and media and communication courses, 4% of enrolments fall into the 21 to 24 age category.
- The majority of enrolments are of white ethnicity (82%). This is followed by Black or Black British ethnicity (4%) and Asian or Asian British ethnicity (4%). Ethnicity patterns for enrolments follow a similar pattern across all English regions, with the highest proportion of Asian and Asian British and Black and Black British enrolments in London (9% and 13% respectively).

## 9.3 Quality of provision

The LSC carries out and publishes the National Learner Satisfaction Survey (NLSS) every year. The 2006/07 report is not available until spring/summer 2008, and the survey was not conducted in 2005/06<sup>15</sup> therefore this review covers the 2004/05 report.

The NLSS is the largest survey of post-16 learners undertaken in England. It provides an overview of delivery and learner satisfaction levels with education and training in England among learners aged 16 and over by capturing their views on various aspects of their learning. This provides invaluable insight into learners' perceptions of what is already working well and what might be improved. The survey also allows for an analysis of key sub-groups within the learner base, such as younger learners, learners from minority ethnic backgrounds and learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The objective of the NLSS is to provide an overview of 'delivery and learner satisfaction levels with education and training in England among learners aged 16 and over'. The adult learning sub-report focuses upon overall satisfaction and the quality of teaching in adult learning, both in non-accredited learning and in FE delivered by adult learning providers. The 2004/05 NLSS findings were obtained through consultation with 43,671 interviewees, of which 3,770 (9%) were people taking part in Adult and Community Learning.

<sup>15</sup> When it was suspended to test whether or not it was fit for purpose.

The 2004/05 NLSS reported that overall satisfaction levels of adult learners across all learning areas were the highest they had ever been:

- In the 'non-accredited Adult and Community Learning (ACL)' group 94% expressed overall satisfaction with their learning experience (33% extremely satisfied, 41% very satisfied and 19% fairly satisfied).
- In the 'FE delivered by adult learning providers' group, levels of satisfaction with the overall learning experience were similar, with 93% expressing satisfaction.

In addition:

- Overall satisfaction levels have increased year-on-year in ACL as a whole.
- Learners from BME backgrounds were less satisfied than white learners. 27% of BME learners were 'extremely' satisfied with their overall learning experience, compared with 40% of white learners.
- In general, female learners and older learners were considerably more satisfied than male learners and younger learners.

### 9.3.1 Quality in creative adult learning

Of the 3,770 ACL participants interviewed for the NLSS ACL sub-report, 199 (5%) studied performing arts and media-based subjects or courses including drama, dance and photography.

- 96% of ACL learners participating in performing arts and media-based subjects were satisfied with their overall learning experience. This rating is slightly higher than the 94% of ACL learners across all subject areas expressing satisfaction.
- 96% of performing arts and media ACL learners expressed satisfaction with the quality of teaching they received. Again, this was slightly higher than the 94% average level of satisfaction with the quality of teaching across all subject areas.

As part of the NLSS research process, respondents are asked to provide feedback on satisfaction with aspects of teaching/tuition. Opinions are rated on a 1-10 scale, where a response of 9 or 10 is considered to indicate a positive appraisal.

Table 21 shows a comparison of teaching satisfaction scores provided by learners involved in performing arts and media and ACL learners overall. At a glance it is clear that performing arts and media ACL learners rate tutors particularly highly on their knowledge of the subject (5% above the average) and their ability to make the subject interesting and enjoyable (8% above average). Their ability to understand learners and how they like to learn, as well as their management of groups of learners, were also rated highly.

In contrast, performing arts and media ACL respondents rated teachers as lower than average on the support they provided, lesson planning, the quality and availability of teaching materials they used, and their provision of feedback. In particular, the quality and availability of teaching materials was poorly rated, with a positive score rating of 43% compared to the 51% average.

**Table 21: Comparison of satisfaction with teaching in adult learning**

Aspects of teaching	(%) Performing arts and media ACL satisfaction	(%) Overall ACL satisfaction
Knowledge of the subject	82	77
How well they relate to you as a person	67	67
Making your subject interesting and enjoyable for you	66	58
Understanding you and how you like to learn	53	49
The support they give you	45	47
Planning their lessons	50	52
The quality and availability of teaching materials they use	43	51
Setting clear targets or goals to help you improve	40	45
Providing prompt and regular feedback	44	51
Managing the group of learners	59	56

Source: LSC NLSS 2004/05

## 9.4 The experiences of learners

In order to gain an insight into the experiences of learners participating in creative adult learning, a number of in-depth interviews were carried out with current and lapsed learners. Learners participating in a variety of artforms were consulted, including poetry, creative writing, a variety of styles of dance, painting, pottery, glass jewellery making, photography and design.

### 9.4.1 Time spent participating in creative arts learning

The range of timescales spent participating in courses were extremely variable ranging from one day up to one year. Some courses had no fixed timescales and were ongoing. A small proportion of participants consulted for this study took part in 10-week termly courses and most of the respondents had been doing a variety of courses on and off for two years or more. This variation in participation reflects the varying duration of courses available.

### 9.4.2 Identifying courses

The internet was a common method of identifying available courses, along with a number of formal and informal avenues including local college and council prospectuses, advertising, local press, social networks and parents attending in support of their children. Public provision appears to be more visible within the community. The learners consulted in the study tended to source courses from public providers such as local colleges and through Local Authorities, though a few did go to privately run courses. The learners appeared to be very focused on their objectives and showed determination in finding suitable courses.

Messages were mixed from learners with regard to choice; some felt that provision had remained the same in recent years while others felt it had decreased. None felt that the range of provision in the area had increased. The changes described by learners reflected the focus on Skills for Life, with more courses focusing on basic skills.

### 9.4.3 Motivations for participation and desired outcomes

Learners participated for a variety of individual reasons. Overall, the main motivating factor was enjoyment and personal satisfaction. This was followed by the desire to develop new skills, relaxation, the desire to be attain a more 'professional' skill level and the inclination to practise an artform with the later goal of entering professional fields (i.e. getting work published, commissioning paintings, widening horizons and cultural awareness and providing goals to work towards).



There were often more specific reasons, such as to support professional employment/development, to go on to teach others or to set up an art group. There was little interest in gaining formal accreditation through learning activities; rather there was a preference to engage in informal learning that did not require a set number of extra hours or adhere to a formal attainment structure.

After completion, learners were inspired to continue participating in the arts, either showing interest in or actively seeking (or having already signed up to) another course or art group. Learners who were not currently participating had stopped doing so either because of prohibitive costs, other demands on time or not being able to find a suitable course in terms of artform or location.

#### 9.4.4 Barriers to participation

Cost was the most frequently cited barrier to participation. This was not always related to course fees (though many learners found that subsidies were essential in order to support individuals who struggled to afford fees) but often to the cost of materials necessary for many artforms. A secondary cost barrier can be paying fees in advance for a full term of classes. This is particularly an issue if people are 'trying something out' and are unsure if they will stay the course. Where learners had participated in a number of courses across a long time period it was noted that increased costs could cause 'a downward spiral' as fewer people could afford the class, numbers would drop and the class would be cancelled.

Additional barriers included:

- Access – finding a suitable course in terms of artform, teaching ability and availability in terms of timing, location and/or course existence.
- Restriction on personal time.
- Lack of confidence – important in the context of attending a class with new people and concern that standards could be set too high.
- Teaching standards – knowledge that teachers do not need a qualification to establish a private class creating uncertainties about quality.

Learners proposed a number of solutions to the barriers identified. These included:

- Graduated payments – providers could develop a scheme to pay monthly or weekly (not termly), but still fully commit to all courses from the start. The possibility of developing adult education vouchers was also suggested.
- Holding taster sessions.
- Testimonials from previous students.
- Increasing advertising and/or developing a central information point.
- Allowing prospective learners to try out shorter courses with friends, so they can build up the confidence to commit to longer courses.
- Providing clear information on course requirements such as skill levels.
- Introducing a standard evaluation of tutors or asking the more established ones to remain in creative arts ACL.



## 10. Adult learning infrastructure

---

In order to provide an overview of the infrastructure supporting the delivery of creative adult learning, the map below has been developed in order to represent the structure of the sector in England, according to broad classifications of:

- education and learning activity
- arts and culture
- advisory and research bodies

The diagram on pages 80 and 81 represents the major funding streams and cooperative relationships that support the sector. Organisations are ordered in approximate hierarchy from top to bottom depending upon whether they are primarily disseminators or recipients of funding. In addition, each is colour coded according to their direct association with creative adult learning. The remainder of this section then describes the different activities and remits of the organisations represented on the map.

Organisations and institutions engaged in education and learning provision represent the most visible aspect of creative adult learning infrastructure in England. As funding is most commonly sourced through public sector provision, the funding sources and mediating organisations that support their delivery play a crucial role. However, providers situated within the arts and cultural sector tend to rely more heavily upon non-governmental sources of funding. Arts Council England serves as a key funding body for a number of RFOs providing learning opportunities in the arts. In 2006/07, 787 RFOs provided 'education and/or training programme(s)'. In total 3.6 million people attended informal education sessions, including approximately 680,000 adults.<sup>16</sup>

Local Authorities (LAs) play a key role in planning the range of provision to be delivered in a local area, coordinating adult learning opportunities through a range of local organisations. Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) between LAs, local delivery organisations (e.g. colleges, museums, libraries, schools) and partners are important vehicles for this process.

Educational co-operatives are important mediating influences within creative ACL. They have been included under 'Education and Learning' because they tend to offer arts-based learning as part of a wider programme, and deliver learning opportunities directly. Examples include the Adult Residential Colleges Association (ARCA), the Workers' Educational Association (WEA), and the University of the Third Age (U3A).

Voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations – including but not limited to charities – also provide extensive adult learning provision across England, and are classed as mediating organisations here as they tend to direct provision across multiple local branches. VCS organisations maintain philanthropic ideals and provide learning for the purposes of personal enjoyment, leisure or recreation. Some adopt an explicit emphasis on the wider social benefits of inclusive ACL, such as ContinYou and the Development Education Association. As a rough approximation, the Charities Commission lists nearly 400 registered charities covering arts-related activities.

Additionally there are a number of advisory and research bodies that provide invaluable support to the sector, such as:

<sup>16</sup> ACE Education Learning Participation 06/07. (Adults aged 20+).

- The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) which 'exists to encourage more and different adults to engage in learning of all kinds',<sup>17</sup> and therefore serves as an important promotional, advisory and research body for adult learning, including creative ACL.
- A range of governmental and non-governmental think tanks which serve to influence learning provision across England. Examples include the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), the Adam Smith Institute and the Social Market Foundation.
- Voluntary Arts England (VAE) is one of relatively few examples of an arts-centred advisory/research body, aiming to 'work towards an empowered, participative, fulfilled and healthy civil society by promoting practical participation in the arts and crafts'.<sup>18</sup>

## 10.1 Funding for adult learning

The majority of mainstream adult learning provision is funded through allocations to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS). DIUS' overall vision for adult education is of a service in which people from all backgrounds can participate, with access for all but with a focus on attracting people who have benefited least from such learning in the past.

The DCMS also works nationally through non-departmental public bodies such as the Arts Council, English Heritage and Sport England, who in turn support a range of specifically creative and cultural adult learning opportunities through Regularly Funded Organisations.

The LSC aims to provide a balance and mix of provision that takes into account the full range of provision available in a particular area and within institutions. This includes ensuring the continued availability of a wide range of adult learning opportunities for personal and community development learning (PCDL). While a tighter focus on key priorities in adult learning has resulted in more provision delivered at full cost (and therefore significant increases in fees) there remains a safeguarded level of PCDL funding of £210m per year. This 'safeguard' will be provided until 2010/11 in order to support a range of adult learning opportunities for personal development, cultural enrichment, intellectual or creative stimulation and enjoyment and community development learning. In its current format the £210m is broken down as follows:

- £153m for leisure and community related learning for personal and community development
- £20m for neighbourhood learning in deprived communities
- £25m for family, literacy, language and numeracy
- £12m for wider family learning.

The safeguard is delivered mainly through Local Authorities and also FE colleges but also through course subsidy, i.e. direct support to organisers of informal adult education, or through funding to individuals/groups to enable them to design and purchase their own informal education.

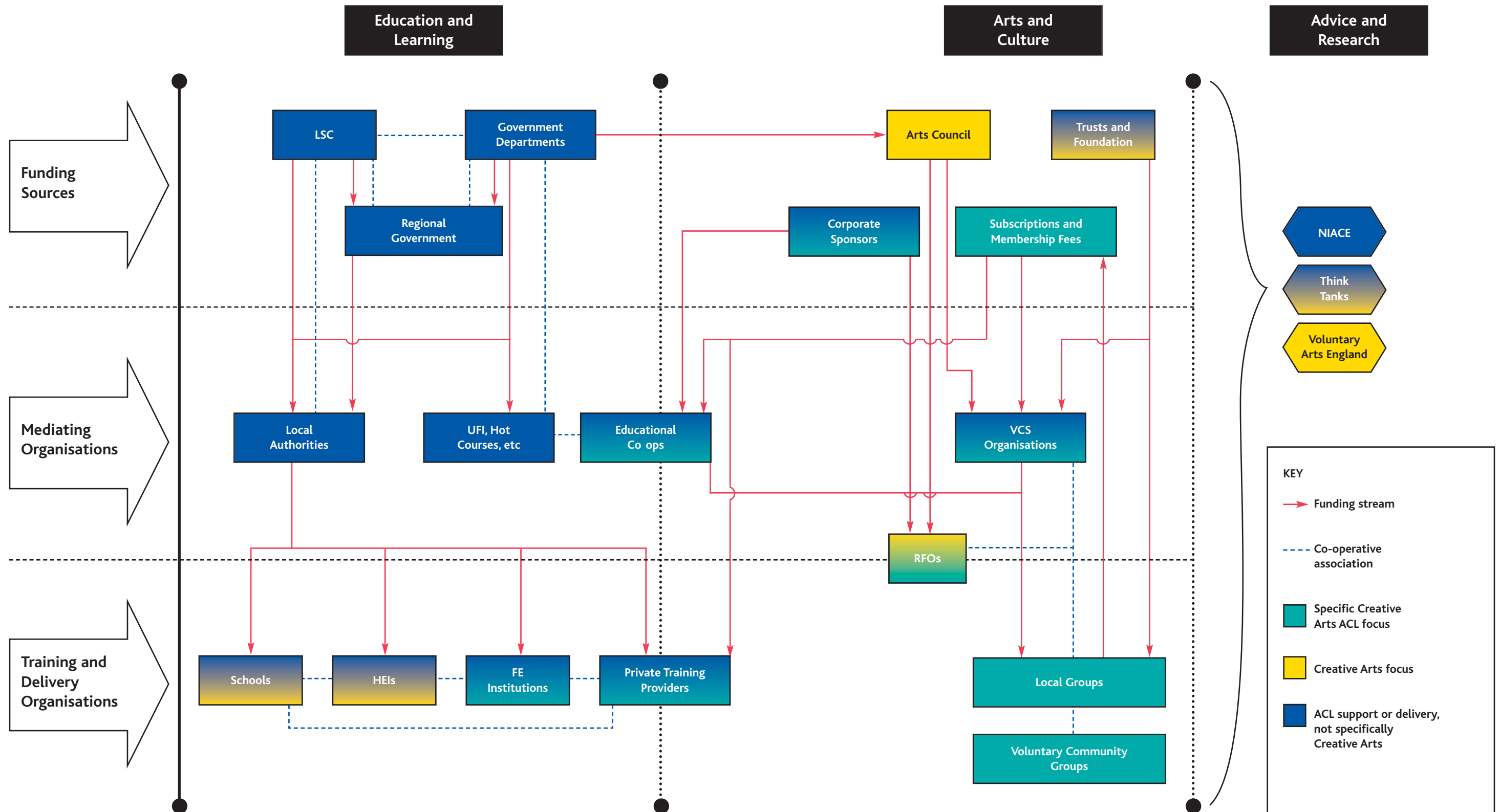
### 10.1.1 Distribution of funding across England

In order to provide an understanding of the changing distribution of funding across the nation information was obtained from the LSC on funding allocations to Local Authorities, which constitute approximately £120m of the £153m available for PCDL. The information was then aggregated to a regional level to provide an overview that would allow for a comparison across England. Information has been combined with data on resident population levels in order to provide a figure for the average funding per resident in each region.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.niace.org.uk/organisation/>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.voluntaryarts.org/cgi-bin/website.cgi?tier1=england>

Figure 2: Creative adult learning infrastructure map



**Table 22: Distribution of funding by region**

Region	PCDL funding 2006/7	PCDL funding 2007/8	06/07-07/08 % change	07/08 % total funding per region	07/08 funding per resident aged 15+
North West	£17,106,167	£19,071,788	11.5%	15%	£3.39
East	£10,543,488	£11,407,544	8.2%	9%	£2.48
West Midlands	£12,432,124	£12,890,582	3.7%	10%	£2.94
London	£24,959,683	£25,340,821	1.5%	20%	£4.12
North East	£4,837,574	£4,837,574	0.0%	4%	£2.28
South East	£18,692,817	£18,483,866	-1.1%	15%	£2.73
East Midlands	£15,701,798	£15,230,078	-3.0%	12%	£4.23
Yorkshire & Humber	£9,067,498	£8,305,011	-8.4%	7%	£1.96
South West	£11,402,613	£9,761,686	-14.4%	8%	£2.29
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£124,743,762</b>	<b>£125,328,950</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£3.00</b>

Source: Learning and Skills Council and National Statistics

Table 22 shows that overall there was a increase of 0.5% in funding allocated to Local Authorities over the period 2006/07-2007/08. This did vary significantly across the regions, with the South West receiving 14% less funding and Yorkshire & Humber 8% less. Funding in the South East, London and North East remained fairly static, while the North West and East regions saw increases of 11% and 8% respectively.

In terms of the distribution of funding across regions, London authorities receive the highest sum with 20% of all funding, followed by the South East and North West each receiving 15%. The North East and Yorkshire & Humber receive the lowest proportions with 4% and 7% respectively. Looking at this in comparison with resident population figures reveals an average figure of £3 of funding per adult resident across England. This varies significantly across regions from £4.12 per adult in London to £1.96 per adult in Yorkshire & Humber. Only the North West and London receive a higher than average level of funding per resident.

### 10.1.2 The impact of LSC funding changes

The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) provides an outline of the most significant impacts of LSC adult learning funding reductions in its 2007 Unison report, *Understanding the impact of funding changes on adult learning*. NIACE conducted interviews with 18 colleges and 15 Local Authorities. The most significant headline findings include:

- Early evidence of a reduction in the numbers of older participants in ACL.
- The loss of outreach centres and the 'dismantling of some of the adult curriculum' is likely to make it increasingly difficult to engage with learners in the near future.
- Skills for Life is becoming an increasing important delivery focus for LAs.
- Most providers have had to reduce staff numbers as a result of funding reduction for ACL.
- Local Authorities anticipate that major reorganisation will be necessary as a result of projected LSC funding cuts between 5% and 25%.
- On a positive note, providers are becoming more efficient and target-driven as a result of the pressure to reduce unnecessary expenditure.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly in the context of ACL in the creative arts:

- "There is evidence of a reduction in both the overall offer and the numbers of courses in certain traditional adult curriculum areas, for example arts and crafts..."

## 10.2 Delivering adult learning

Table 23 shows that there are currently 4,560 providers offering non-accredited creative learning courses across England.

**Table 23: Providers offering non-qualification related adult learning courses**

Region	Craft	Dance	Literature	Media	Music	Theatre	Visual Art	Providers
North East	140	60	20	60	40	20	110	240
North West	230	50	80	90	80	30	250	440
Yorkshire and Humber	290	90	110	140	130	40	300	620
East Midlands	240	90	50	80	90	20	230	460
West Midlands	240	90	50	80	90	40	210	450
East	160	90	60	70	90	30	240	380
London	260	190	120	170	210	130	310	690
South East	320	160	120	140	170	50	480	790
South West	230	70	90	100	100	40	290	500
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>900</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>930</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>2,430</b>	<b>4,560</b>

Source: National Learning Directory

NB Rows do not total horizontally because providers often offer more than one type of course.

The South East has the most providers, with more than three times as many located in this region as in the North East. London also has a high number of providers, which generally offer a more varied range of courses. Visual arts and craft have the most providers offering courses, with 2,430 and 2,100 respectively. Yorkshire & Humber has a much larger proportion of providers who offer courses in literature, media and music compared with other areas; its offering is similar to that of London and the South East.

An extensive range of partners are engaged in the delivery of adult education:

- Schools
- Further Education (FE) colleges
- Higher Education (HEIs) Institutions
- Private class-based providers
- Private self-study courses (with delivery supported through a public/private provider)
- Public Sector Community Education
- Voluntary Sector Education.

The majority of non-qualification creative courses are delivered through public sector community education (35%), Further Education providers (28%) and private class-based providers (21%). Given that private providers account for only 15% of the 4,560 providers, it is interesting that so much provision comes from this source.

As may be expected, without the constraints of following an agenda set by government priorities, private providers consulted tended to develop the range of provision in order to follow market demand, placing the emphasis on individual development. Conversely, public providers tended to place higher emphasis on harnessing the strength of local communities. In terms of developing the teaching and learning process, private providers appeared less thorough at gathering feedback from learners at the end of courses.

### 10.3 The impacts of adult learning

A number of key supporting organisations were consulted in order to gain an insight into the impact of adult learning. Interviewees included Heads of Adult Learning in a number of Local Authorities, representatives from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), Voluntary Arts England (VAE), the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) and the Third Age Trust. Interviewees were generally in consensus that adult learning – and in particular adult learning in the creative arts – has a strong positive impact.

The influence of creative adult learning in promoting social inclusion, especially amongst priority groups, was cited as a major benefit in promoting people's development across the country as well as developing individuals' self-confidence, creativity and social esteem. The social value of group participation in arts learning for promoting community cohesion was commonly mentioned by Local Authority representatives, a number of whom provided creative learning through Neighbourhood Learning for Deprived Communities (NLDC) funded provision. Another substantial benefit mentioned was the role of creative learning in bringing multicultural communities together, as some artforms (such as music and dance) were especially suited to promoting open-mindedness and cultural awareness. In addition one respondent in particular stressed the benefits to health and well-being, especially in later life when 'the creative mind' was seen to become notably active.

Participation in creative adult learning opportunities can also assist in educational and professional development. Non-accredited courses are often a useful 'stepping stone' to further formal accredited learning and/or employment within the sector. Interviews with learners reinforced this to some extent, with a number of younger learners stating that an element of motivation to participate was gaining broad experience in the sector for CV enhancement. However, interviewees were keen to stress that informal learning was not *only* seen as a means to an end – it was also recognised as inherently beneficial.

In providing continued support to the creative adult learning sector to enable these impacts, the supporting organisations felt it was important to ensure continued and (where possible) increased promotion of the opportunities available for members of the public to get involved in adult learning in the creative arts. Suggestions for awareness raising activities include:

- 'Taster' events based in local communities, which would have the potential to spark people's interest in creative arts adult learning.
- Open days, where a number of groups come together under one roof and share promotional responsibilities.

Consultees also felt that a common set of values for adult learning would assist in informing a cohesive adult learning system and the delivery of universal aims. Given the range of funding available to creative adult learning, the creation of a common application gateway through which funding from all streams/organisations concerned could be channelled in order to meet local needs would be welcomed.

### 10.4 Developing creative adult learning

The aim of this element of the project was to:

- Produce an authoritative base of quantitative and qualitative evidence about the arts in adult learning that can be used to help broaden and deepen levels of engagement in the arts and enable the development of individuals' skills and creativity.

This report has distilled a number of potential areas of development for the sector:

- The reformed LSC streams have altered funding arrangements for many Local Authorities, resulting in a move away from subsidised mainstream public programmes towards participant-financed

learning. However, some authorities have developed an innovative approach to planning the delivery of creative adult learning based on the contributions it can make to the community. The observed social value of group participation in creative adult learning courses means that some authorities have begun to offer courses under the Neighbourhood Learning for Deprived Communities stream. This potentially provides an opportunity to combine arts engagement initiatives with learning in deprived communities.

- Accessing courses is a significant issue for a variety of reasons. While cost is an issue, the problem in many cases is less to do with affordability and more to do with investment. The cost of materials and upfront fees to participate in a new artform which the individual might not enjoy means that some are understandably reluctant to try new things. Taster sessions and one-day courses are therefore an ideal introduction to the sector. Currently only 15% of creative courses available are day-long courses and only 10% run for between one day and one week. In addition to this LSC funding has ceased for very short learning aims (those below nine hours) as they are felt to have limited benefits in terms of progression for learners. It is therefore feasible that the number of short courses will decline further.
- The consultation undertaken also provided an indication that some priority groups (such as the elderly) do need additional support with regard to participation in creative arts learning. The obstacles faced often relate to straightforward considerations such as choice, access and costs. However, another consideration voiced by both learners and providers and which is especially relevant to priority groups is the lack of emotional support (i.e. advice and encouragement) available to some learners, which is vital to maximising the potential social benefits of adult learning. The sector would benefit from a stronger focus upon attracting and retaining participants from priority groups by addressing issues such as low confidence and social exclusion.
- There is often a significant emphasis on continued participation in the sector following completion of a course. There is a perceived ideal that people will move on to further accredited study, formal learning or even employment. Many consultees were keen to stress the importance of participation for pleasure and the benefits of individual and personal self-development unrelated to educational or professional progression. Interviews with learners demonstrated a lack of interest in training that was too structured or formal, therefore continuing to develop an arts environment which emphasises and encourages participation in isolation from progression would undoubtedly benefit the sector. However, while the need to develop an arts environment which recognises non-accredited participation as inherently valuable is important, it is also necessary to recognise that the learning experience can often transform people's attitudes towards accredited learning. The capacity of the creative sector to engage people who may then move on to further learning may provide an opportunity to link with the level 2 skills agenda.



## Appendices

Distribution of groups by artform and region (region totals)

	East	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire and Humber	England
Craft	1%	2%	1%	4%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Dance	7%	7%	9%	4%	6%	6%	3%	6%	8%	6%
Festivals	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Literature	2%	2%	0%	4%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Media	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	4%	1%	2%	2%
Music	22%	23%	23%	15%	21%	25%	23%	23%	27%	23%
Theatre	11%	11%	12%	16%	13%	8%	11%	13%	7%	11%
Visual Arts	5%	2%	4%	3%	2%	6%	4%	1%	2%	4%
Multi-Art	49%	50%	49%	52%	50%	49%	50%	51%	48%	50%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W1/S6)

Estimated distribution of groups by artform and region (artform totals)

Artform	East	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire and Humber	England
Craft	10%	12%	8%	15%	15%	8%	13%	11%	11%	100%
Dance	15%	9%	16%	5%	11%	18%	8%	8%	10%	100%
Festivals	11%	9%	7%	6%	10%	16%	18%	11%	12%	100%
Literature	13%	12%	3%	17%	13%	20%	8%	8%	7%	100%
Media	7%	5%	9%	2%	11%	18%	33%	4%	10%	100%
Music	12%	9%	11%	5%	10%	20%	14%	8%	10%	100%
Theatre	12%	9%	12%	11%	13%	14%	14%	10%	5%	100%
Visual Arts	16%	5%	11%	7%	6%	31%	17%	2%	4%	100%
Multi-Art	12%	9%	11%	7%	11%	18%	15%	9%	8%	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W1/S6)

Distribution of members by artform and region (region totals)

	East	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire and Humber	England
Craft	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%
Dance	3%	4%	1%	0%	2%	3%	0%	2%	5%	2%
Festivals	1%	4%	3%	3%	3%	5%	13%	4%	3%	6%
Literature	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Media	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	1%	1%
Music	37%	26%	22%	37%	38%	30%	17%	25%	29%	28%
Theatre	19%	19%	28%	17%	18%	17%	13%	23%	23%	19%
Visual Arts	6%	6%	8%	5%	2%	4%	3%	5%	2%	4%
Multi-Art	32%	39%	37%	36%	35%	40%	49%	38%	34%	39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W1/S6)

Distribution of members by artform and region (region totals)

	East	East Midlands	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire and Humber	England
Craft	7%	11%	4%	7%	21%	7%	21%	18%	7%	100%
Dance	9%	12%	9%	2%	12%	34%	5%	6%	13%	100%
Festivals	1%	5%	7%	4%	6%	20%	48%	4%	3%	100%
Literature	12%	12%	0%	12%	12%	18%	12%	12%	18%	100%
Media	5%	2%	5%	2%	3%	8%	66%	2%	6%	100%
Music	10%	6%	11%	10%	16%	25%	13%	5%	6%	100%
Theatre	7%	7%	21%	6%	11%	21%	14%	7%	7%	100%
Visual Arts	9%	9%	24%	9%	6%	21%	14%	7%	3%	100%
Multi-Art	6%	7%	13%	7%	10%	23%	25%	5%	5%	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W1/S6)

Number and distribution of male and female members

	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Craft	6,000	22,000	28,000	21%	79%
Dance	66,000	62,000	128,000	52%	48%
Festivals	120,000	208,000	328,000	37%	63%
Literature	6,000	11,000	17,000	35%	65%
Media	34,000	28,000	62,000	55%	45%
Music	691,000	951,000	1,642,000	42%	58%
Theatre	452,000	661,000	1,113,000	41%	59%
Visual Arts	100,000	165,000	265,000	38%	62%
multi-art	946,000	1,393,000	2,339,000	40%	60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,421,000</b>	<b>3,501,000</b>	<b>5,922,000</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>59%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W4/S1)

## Number of members by age

	Under 16	16-24	25-44	45-64	65-74	75 and over	Total
Craft	0	500	4,000	13,000	8,000	3,000	28,000
Dance	48,000	17,000	15,000	38,000	8,000	2,000	128,000
Festivals	135,000	37,000	32,000	46,000	52,000	26,000	328,000
Literature	0	200	2,000	8,000	5,000	2,000	17,000
Media	300	1,000	5,000	31,000	17,000	7,000	62,000
Music	157,000	101,000	379,000	553,000	353,000	99,000	1,642,000
Theatre	170,000	134,000	256,000	348,000	158,000	47,000	1,113,000
Visual Arts	400	3,000	27,000	99,000	105,000	32,000	265,000
Multi-Art	482,000	213,000	404,000	671,000	423,000	146,000	2,339,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>992,700</b>	<b>506,700</b>	<b>1,124,000</b>	<b>1,807,000</b>	<b>1,129,000</b>	<b>364,000</b>	<b>5,922,000</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W4/S2)

## Distribution of members by age

	Under 16	16-24	25-44	45-64	65-74	75 and over	Total
Craft	0%	2%	14%	46%	29%	11%	100%
Dance	38%	13%	12%	30%	6%	2%	100%
Festivals	41%	11%	10%	14%	16%	8%	100%
Literature	0%	1%	12%	47%	29%	12%	100%
Media	0%	2%	8%	50%	27%	11%	100%
Music	10%	6%	23%	34%	21%	6%	100%
Theatre	15%	12%	23%	31%	14%	4%	100%
Visual Arts	0%	1%	10%	37%	40%	12%	100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W4/S2)

## Participants in voluntary and amateur arts groups

Artform	Extra Participants (e.g. extras, helpers and volunteers)	Members involved in management	Members participating on a paid basis
Craft	13,000	4,000	1,000
Dance	12,000	14,000	1,000
Festivals	395,000	12,000	9,000
Literature	11,000	4,000	200
Media	12,000	6,000	60
Music	643,000	183,000	50,000
Theatre	687,000	112,000	20,000
Visual Arts	52,000	35,000	8,000
Multi-Art	1,692,000	194,000	58,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,517,000</b>	<b>564,000</b>	<b>147,000</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W2/S3, S4, S2)

Disabled and BME participants

Artform	Disabled members	Proportion disabled	BME members	Proportion BME
Craft	2,000	7%	800	3%
Dance	2,000	2%	2,900	2%
Festivals	3,000	1%	6,500	2%
Literature	1,000	6%	400	2%
Media	3,000	5%	600	1%
Music	40,000	2%	23,900	1%
Theatre	34,000	3%	17,700	2%
Visual Arts	15,000	6%	3,600	1%
Multi-Art	54,000	2%	40,700	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>154,000</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>97,100</b>	<b>2%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W4/S3, S4)

Participants by employment status

Sub-artform	Full-time student (including school)	Not employed	Employed (including self-employed)	Retired	Total
Craft	400	3,000	10,000	15,000	28,000
Dance	65,000	3,000	47,000	14,000	128,000
Festivals	153,000	6,000	71,000	97,000	328,000
Literature	100	1,000	6,000	9,000	17,000
Media	1,000	4,000	27,000	30,000	62,000
Music	275,000	109,000	751,000	507,000	1,642,000
Theatre	230,000	75,000	561,000	248,000	1,113,000
Visual Art	2,000	13,000	90,000	160,000	265,000
Multi-Art	634,000	117,000	910,000	679,000	2,339,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,360,500</b>	<b>331,000</b>	<b>2,473,000</b>	<b>1,759,000</b>	<b>5,922,000</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W4/S5)

Proportion of expenditure on venues

Artform	Community Village Hall	Arts venue (eg. theatre, arts centre, gallery)	School	Other Educational Establishment	Private Residence	Venue/premises owned or managed by the group	Church, church hall or other religious building	Function Room	Other (please specify)	Total
Craft	30%	16%	7%	7%	5%	5%	11%	1%	18%	100%
Dance	37%	2%	8%	3%	6%	2%	20%	8%	15%	100%
Festivals	15%	9%	8%	3%	32%	3%	10%	3%	18%	100%
Literature	9%	6%	0%	4%	21%	3%	6%	13%	37%	100%
Media	15%	21%	9%	4%	19%	0%	15%	2%	15%	100%
Music	12%	6%	15%	3%	13%	2%	29%	6%	13%	100%
Theatre	26%	13%	9%	2%	8%	13%	14%	3%	11%	100%
Visual Art	29%	11%	3%	5%	11%	3%	16%	2%	21%	100%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W3/S4)

## Reasons for joining the group

Sub-artform	Enjoyment and appreciation of the artform	Health/relaxation	Other	Promote sense of community	Promote/support the artform	Social benefits	To develop skills	Total
Craft	49%	8%	4%	0%	2%	6%	31%	100%
Dance	75%	4%	1%	0%	3%	9%	7%	100%
Festivals	56%	0%	8%	4%	3%	3%	25%	100%
Literature	67%	2%	0%	0%	2%	8%	20%	100%
Media	63%	0%	0%	0%	0%	10%	28%	100%
Music	83%	0%	2%	0%	0%	3%	10%	100%
Theatre	79%	1%	2%	0%	1%	10%	8%	100%
Visual Art	66%	1%	4%	0%	3%	3%	23%	100%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>74%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W3/S8)

## Would you say that the number of people in your group over the last five years has grown, declined or stayed the same?

Artform	Declined	Grown	The same	Total
Craft	10%	59%	31%	100%
Dance	18%	43%	39%	100%
Festivals	14%	47%	39%	100%
Literature	8%	58%	34%	100%
Media	21%	49%	31%	100%
Music	14%	48%	38%	100%
Theatre	16%	47%	37%	100%
Visual Art	14%	43%	43%	100%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W3/S9)

## To what extent would your group like to increase its membership?

Sub-artform	Don't mind/ Happy to stay as we are	We'd like to increase our membership but we're not taking any active steps to recruit new members at the moment	We're doing as much as we can to increase our membership	We're taking some steps to recruit new members at the moment	Total
Craft	29%	33%	20%	18%	100%
Dance	15%	25%	25%	34%	100%
Festivals	14%	15%	30%	41%	100%
Literature	38%	28%	16%	18%	100%
Media	10%	15%	45%	30%	100%
Music	22%	18%	21%	39%	100%
Theatre	13%	26%	25%	36%	100%
Visual Art	31%	21%	17%	32%	100%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: TBR Art Survey 2008 (Ref: W3/S9)



*Image credits: Nick David, Tanya Lloyd,  
Geoff Wilson, South West England RDA,  
English Heritage, Britainonview*

We can also provide documents  
to meet the specific requirements  
of people with disabilities.  
Please call 020 7211 6200 or  
email [enquiries@culture.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@culture.gov.uk)

Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
Printed in the UK on recycled paper  
© Crown Copyright  
June 2008/pp 1035



department for  
culture, media  
and sport

2-4 Cockspur Street  
London SW1Y 5DH  
[www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk)