

# **tees valley arts strategic plan**

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## **3 year plan 2003-2006**

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## **tees valley arts strategic plan**

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### **executive summary**

**“It is about improving the quality of life for all, allowing people both to derive pleasure and to fulfil their own potential and broaden their horizons. Equally, cultural services play a crucial role tackling social exclusion, contributing to regeneration, promoting safer communities, encouraging healthier lifestyles, providing opportunities for voluntary and community activity, and stimulating lifelong learning.”**

Draft Guidance on Local Cultural Strategies – Summer 1999

- **tees valley arts will focus on embedding cultural activity in lifelong learning initiatives, to improve the quality of life and to broaden the horizons of people and communities in the Tees Valley.**
- **Participation in arts projects encourages individual and community empowerment and will contribute to the long term social and economic regeneration of the Tees Valley.**
- **tees valley arts will celebrate diversity and advocate inclusion, working in partnership with communities, and statutory and voluntary organisations in the strategic context of the tees valley**
- **tees valley arts will encourage excellence in socially engaged art, supporting artists, and contributing to the development of their skills and achievements, encompassing all art forms.**

## **tees valley arts strategic plan**

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### **vision**

**to lead cultural education across the region through developing partnerships to deliver innovative creative programmes**

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**“Creative talent will be crucial to our individual and national economic success in the economy of the future. Above all, at their best the arts and creativity set us free.”**

**“We can help to create a coherent pathway for individuals who want to develop and enjoy their creative potential from the starting point of education through to professional excellence.”**

**Tony Blair, Culture and Creativity: The Next Ten Years, March 2001**

# tees valley arts strategic plan

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## context



**tees valley arts** operates throughout the Tees Valley, a sub-region in which every deprivation indicator is worse than the National Average and is generally inferior to the regional average.

The Regional Economic Strategy for the North East, Unlocking our Potential, states that,

“cultural activity will be used as an effective means of enhancing community participation, promoting personal development, boosting aspirations, and encouraging new forms of self expression.”

The Tees Valley Action Plan 2002-05, highlights the need to:

“Build a confident and vibrant society. And to instigate a strategic programme that will encourage cultural renaissance and social inventiveness.”

**tees valley arts** was created in 1982 as Cleveland Arts, a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, to act as a Local Arts Development Agency for the county of Cleveland. Since then the company has instigated cultural activity in areas of education and social inclusion. The experience we have gained in these areas of work has provided evidence of the need for arts and cultural activities to inspire, to engage with, and to develop the skills of residents in the Tees Valley.

The revised Regional Economic Strategy, stresses the need to work together to promote diversity, inclusion, and sustainability in the North East. In particular to:

- Accelerate the Renaissance
- Empower Communities
- Invest in Sustainable Communities

The Tees Valley Cultural Strategy provides an assessment of the value of using cultural activity to promote cultural change.

“The proposed cultural strategy for the Tees Valley is designed to *underpin* the economic renaissance of the sub-region, by laying the foundations for the cultural production of a creative economy. The strategy will tackle issues of poor self-esteem, low aspirations, reluctance to engage in economic risk-taking, and poor levels of social inventiveness as well as addressing the important issues of place marketing, image

**improvement, employment creation, social inclusion, and the enhancement of cultural facilities.”**

**Tees Valley Cultural Strategy, Final Report November 2002**  
**Executive Summary, p5. GHK and BOP**

**Each town in the Tees Valley has Community and Cultural Strategies and there are many opportunities to work in partnership with other initiatives to add value to and develop arts and consultation activities with target communities. Each Local Community Strategy has particular local emphasis, but there are many areas in common, such as the need to engage with hard to reach groups such as young people, to address health and security issues and neighbourhood renewal. **tees valley arts** will work with communities using the arts as a tool to address these issues.**

**Cultural activity can be a valuable tool to engage people of all ages, encouraging inter-generational understanding and tolerance and involving them in developing activities around issues that affect their lives, building their organisational capacity as they develop transitional skills such as researching information, problem-solving and creative thinking.**



**tees valley arts focuses on integrating cultural activity in education and lifelong learning. We operate throughout the Tees Valley; encompass all art forms; work with educational organisations and community groups using the arts as a tool, to add value to existing activities and develop new ones; work in partnership to embed cultural activity in education and lifelong learning and in neighbourhood renewal and regeneration initiatives.**

**We do this because we believe that participation in the arts:**

- **Stimulates creative imagination**
- **Encourages self-expression and self-awareness**
- **Enhances self-esteem and confidence**
- **Increases motivation and concentration**
- **Improves social interaction and communication skills**
- **Develops new ways of looking at situations**
- **Gives space for change and personal growth**
- **Develops insight and awareness of difference**
- **Encourages the development of respect, tolerance and broad citizenship values.**



**It is clear to us that working with artists who are professional practitioners in their own field, as well as experienced in working in community settings, is empowering because they are responsive, flexible and creative in their approach.**

**The arts in education agenda is an area of intense development. The impact of Creative Partnerships in the Tees Valley will be significant, with the greater goal of encouraging the integration of creative education in mainstream education. It is worth noting that our own Arts Education Agency has over the years contributed a great deal of creative added value to work in schools and in after school and play scheme activities.**

**tees valley arts education programme works across primary and secondary education, using a classic arts development process of working *with* schools, building on their ideas, but aiming to expand their aspirations and raise expectations and quality. Projects have been developed that both relate to the national curriculum and operate independently of it.**

**The Agency's newest arts education project, starting in September 2003, will place artists in residence in nine different schools for a whole year. The artists will work alongside students and teachers, developing collaborative ways of working together, that highlight the value of sharing ideas and processes, monitor the process of the developing residencies and evaluate the effect of new styles of teaching and learning. Incorporated in the project are regular opportunities for participant schools to get together to share work in progress, and to encourage the cross-fertilisation of ideas.**

## **tees valley arts strategic plan**

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### **strategic direction**

Political, economic and social changes in the region have heralded a need to re-structure and re-launch **tees valley arts**.

**tees valley arts** has been operating as Cleveland Arts in Teesside since 1982. It was established to act as a Local Arts Development Agency for the County of Cleveland. Since the reorganisation of the county into four separate boroughs, each with their own local authority services, and with the addition of Darlington, the area is being encouraged by Government Office North East [GONE] to think and act sub-regionally, as the Tees Valley. Cleveland Arts continued to operate as an independent agency, not tied to specific borough boundaries, but was unable to redefine itself appropriately with the five successive unitary authorities of the Tees Valley. Each unitary authority has developed its own arts/cultural service and these are given support from local authority resources over Cleveland Arts.

It is important to note that **tees valley arts** is also operating in a period and location of great political upheaval. The Government's Modernisation Agenda is requiring the Tees Valley's local authorities to restructure and reorganise themselves, focusing their actions and services through Local Strategic Partnerships on their customers or constituents needs.



In the Tees Valley there are a significant number of wards amongst the most deprived in the country. Neighbourhood Renewal and Regeneration, Community Cohesion and Community Empowerment are government initiatives that are focusing on re-involving local people in decisions that effect their lives.

Government Office North East is keen to foster the identity of the Tees Valley sub-region and has therefore sponsored a Tees Valley Strategic Partnership to develop strategies and relationships that will encourage local authorities to act collaboratively and clarify areas of work. This will help to avoid duplication of effort and resources, and gain maximum benefit for the sub-region. Local Authority reorganisation is running alongside this push for greater sub-regional working, and there are signs that this period of reorganisation is beginning to settle with strategies and action plans for joined up working in development. Key organisations in the development of Tees Valley initiatives are, the Tees Valley Joint Strategy Unit, the Tees

## **Valley Development Company and the Urban Regeneration Company.**



**The political, economic and social changes in the region have had a significant impact on the financial situation at Cleveland Arts. In mid 2002 it was identified that there would be a major shortfall in funding for the organisation.**

**In December 2002 an external review of Cleveland Arts by Roger Lancaster Associates was initiated by our major strategic sponsors, ACENE, and confirmed, amongst other things that there would be a significant shortfall in the organisations funding for the next financial year.**

**In January 2003, the Board of Directors, made the decision to refocus the organisation as a Cultural Education Agency, with a remit to work in Lifelong Learning. This direction was the one that would be supported by the Arts Council England North East, and in the consultant's opinion, the area where there would be the greatest degree of success for the organisation to find a "fit" in the new sub-regional climate. The refocusing of the organisation and its priorities has provided a firm and financially stable base for Tees Valley Arts redefined focus.**

**ACENE have confirmed their level of funding and expressed support of the organisations new direction and have affirmed their intention to make the Tees Valley a priority for cultural and arts educational funding from 2004.**





This Strategic Plan then, is based on the assumptions that:

- There will be a focus on culture and its effect on renewal and regeneration in the tees valley
- There will be increased demand for strategic sub-regional development towards the formation of a cultural education partnership
- The demand for the strategic development and delivery of creative programmes in the sub-region will increase
- Although Local Authorities will be the primary channel of support for local arts delivery, there will be capacity issues that **tees valley arts** can help them to address
- There will be an increased need for partnership working and networking
- There will be an increase in demand by local authorities to work with the voluntary sector in both strategic planning and service delivery
- Internally, the smaller staff team will be required to operate on a more strategic level
- There will be an increase in demand for freelance project managers to help deliver the strategically planned programmes
- The role of artists in the development of socially engaged projects will increase as freelance project managers are often artists themselves
- The need for artists' training and mentoring, for work in educational and community settings will increase
- **tees valley arts** needs to develop an effective marketing strategy that will raise awareness of our new identity and focus
- Strategic funds agreed will cover the organisations staffing costs
- A new system of accounting will need to be developed, based on cost-centred budgeting, that will produce realistic assessments of project costs
- Project income will increase through the development of partnerships with statutory and voluntary organisations that result in cultural education projects
- **There is a clear opportunity here for tees valley arts to proactively define and promote its potential future**



## **tees valley arts strategic plan**

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### **strategic aims and objectives**

#### **strategic aims**

- 1. to promote cultural education across the region focusing on lifelong learning, embracing both formal education and social inclusion, and encompassing all art forms**
- 2. to work in partnership with local and sub-regional organisations and communities to advocate for the embedding of cultural activity in lifelong learning and in neighbourhood renewal and regeneration initiatives**
- 3. to work with artists to support the development of their skills and projects, develop opportunities for the mentoring and training of artists, in particular in the field of socially-engaged art**
- 4. to develop and manage a programme of cultural activity in lifelong learning, in the strategic context of the Tees Valley**



## **tees valley arts strategic plan**

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### **strategic aim 1**

**to promote cultural education across the region focusing on lifelong learning, embracing both formal education and social inclusion, and encompassing all art forms**

### **objectives**

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- 1. advocate for the inclusion of cultural activities in lifelong learning, including formal education, community development and social inclusion**
- 2. promote diversity, inclusion and sustainability in the Tees Valley by developing opportunities in cultural education to contribute to accelerating the Renaissance, empowering and investing in sustainable communities**
- 3. raise awareness of the work of tees valley arts, locally, regionally and nationally**
- 4. demonstrate the value of cultural education processes in educational settings and in capacity building, by developing innovative, creative programmes and by monitoring and evaluating both quantitative and qualitative information**
- 5. encourage a diverse and eclectic mix of art forms in the creative programme, encouraging collaboration between artists, between artists and communities and with a wide cross-section of statutory and voluntary organisations**
- 6. Promote project management processes and procedures that encourage project development and management in a strategic context**

## **tees valley arts strategic plan**

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### **strategic aim 2**

**to work in partnership with local and sub-regional organisations and communities to advocate for the embedding of cultural activity in lifelong learning and in neighbourhood renewal and regeneration initiatives**

### **objectives**

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- 1. develop partnerships with local and sub-regional organisations that work in the field of lifelong learning**
- 2. develop partnerships with local and sub-regional organisations to promote the role of the arts as a tool in education and in community capacity building**
- 3. using the arts as a tool, work with people resident in the Tees Valley to develop their capacity to be more equally and assertively involved in their communities through empowering, cultural activities**
- 4. work with organisations and people resident in the tees valley to address the issue of jobs and employment, progressing towards the development of community industries**
- 5. encourage participation in cultural activity to provide experience in the arts, in voluntary and [potentially] employed management positions of arts-based community enterprises; using community arts facilities; in arts and community planning forums; and in training and learning programmes**
- 6. assist organisations and communities in the development of projects that focus on environmental issues, health, security and the promotion of I.T. skills through digital arts projects**



## **tees valley arts strategic plan**

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### **strategic aim 3**



**To work with artists to support the development of their skills and projects, developing opportunities for the mentoring and training of artists, in particular in the field of socially-engaged art**

### **objectives**

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- 1. compile a database of local artists who have experience of working in community settings**
- 2. develop opportunities for artists for mentoring, shadowing and training**
- 3. advocate for the development of socially engaged art projects throughout the sub-region and work with artists to devise innovative, creative socially engaged projects**
- 4. in collaboration with others, support artists in the setting up of community/cultural industries**
- 5. sign-post artists to relevant information, training and resources that will contribute to the development of their careers**

## **tees valley arts strategic plan**

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### **strategic aim 4**

**to develop and manage a programme of cultural activity in lifelong learning, in the strategic context of the Tees Valley**

#### **objectives**

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- 1. develop arts projects in schools, with students and teachers**
- 2. develop after and out of school cultural activities with young people and teachers**
- 3. work with training and basic skills organisations to embed arts and cultural activities in training courses for young people**
- 4. using the arts as a tool work with disaffected young people, to address issues of inclusion, citizenship and democracy**
- 5. develop “You Are Here” an arts and integration project with Asylum Seekers and Refugees**
- 6. develop In:volve, an arts and capacity building project, working towards employability with Tees Valley communities**
- 7. work with others to promote art form development in the Tees Valley**
- 8. work in collaboration with local and sub-regional organisations and communities to develop new arts projects that contribute to the cultural renaissance of the Tees Valley**





## **tees valley arts strategic plan**

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### **organisation and management**

**tees valley arts** is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee, governed by a Board of Directors and managed by a team of two Programme managers and an Administrator.

The Board of Directors of **tees valley arts** is made up of a mix of individuals from the voluntary, public and private sectors, all with an interest in the arts/culture. The Board is an empowered body of persons, charged before the law with ultimate accountability for and authority over organisational activity.

The Board's Basic Tasks are:

- To determine the purpose of the organisation
- To determine the pace and style of the organisation's development
- To provide continuity of management for the organisation
- To establish and promote the organisation's role in the community

The Boards responsibilities include , financial, managerial and administrative reporting. They meet quarterly and from time to time will participate in sub-groups to look at particular issues such as marketing or quality assurance. The new focus for the organisation will need to be reflected in the make up of the Board, so that a skills audit, and a review of Boards roles and functions will be an important piece of work for the first years activities.

The staff team at **tees valley arts** comprises two Programme Managers and an Administrator. We also work closely with a number of freelance project co-ordinators and have in the last year worked with over 100 different artists. We employ a comprehensive system of project agreements with host organisations and artists, and have appropriate Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety, Child and Vulnerable Adult Protection, Grievance and Disciplinary Policies and Procedures in place. The Administrator is responsible for maintaining our administration systems and procedures and managing the book keeping for the organisation.

The Programme Managers work closely together to maintain the focus on education and lifelong learning. Each manager has responsibility for a specific area,



- education work linked to schools and colleges
- lifelong learning, linked to social inclusion and neighbourhood renewal

The underlying principles of diversity, inclusion, working in partnership, advocacy and quality, socially engaged arts practice, unite the programmes.

The Programme Manager: Social Inclusion takes greater responsibility for strategic development, programme planning and control, financial management and organisational budgetary control. The management of the organisation needs to promote the development of an integrated network of internal and external relationships [see appendix1] that will encourage collaborative project development in a strategic context.

Key organisational developments over the first year of this strategic plan will be the research and development of a stakeholder analysis, a comprehensive risk analysis, strategies for marketing, monitoring finances and fundraising. The implementation of a process of continuous improvement and the management, support and development of both staff and freelance workers are also important considerations.

The processes and procedures of project management in the arts, need to be flexible and responsive, but based on a strong foundation of knowledge and experience. The **tees valley arts** staff team have experience of working as artists in community settings and as teachers, in schools and colleges, and so are able to bring first hand experience to the development of projects. These skills are backed up by sound managerial experience and training. Freelance Project Co-ordinators are chosen because of their knowledge, experience and practice as an art form professional. They are line-managed by a **tees valley arts** Programme Manager.

**tees valley arts** feels that the designation of projects as action research projects enables us to plan better for the future, as the process encourages a responsive and flexible approach to the planning of projects and schemes, encourages the development of partnership working and influences long-term development and planning.

Action-research responds to a particular situation and is essentially collaborative, a process of working together, researcher and participant, to generate a process that involves planning, acting, observing, monitoring, reflecting, evaluating



and re-planning. Much of our work takes into its remit both social and artistic considerations, hence socially engaged arts, and we are continually monitoring and reflecting on the balance between the two, as projects unfold.

We have found this way of working to be particularly responsive and flexible. It encourages participants and partnership organisations to be involved in the development process and promotes ownership by the participants, of the work they produce and in the continuous development of projects.

Consultation, monitoring and evaluation are an integral part of the processes and procedures used by **tees valley arts**. **tees valley arts** has a comprehensive set of monitoring and evaluation procedures which include:

“I’ve been told I’ve got good listening skills. I listened to where they were; I opened my eyes to their experiences. I’ve got a greater understanding of the variations of disability and the way it affects people. I learnt an enormous amount.”

*Participant, Articulate,  
Shoot your Mouth Off*

- Registration documents, recording basic quantitative information with some identification of development needs
- The development of client and project specific questionnaires
- Individual and group discussions, semi-structured interviews and evaluation reviews
- The production of group diaries, journals, video documentaries, portfolios of work
- Evaluation reports by artists, partners, participants and Development Workers
- The end product, either a performance, exhibition, publication or event is significant evidence of achievement
- External evaluation is encouraged where appropriate



## **tees valley arts strategic plan**

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### **financial management**

The financial management of the organisation is overseen by the Senior Programme Manager, assisted by the Administrator. Quarterly management accounts are presented to the Board of Directors and verbally updated by the Administrator at Board Meetings.

Annual accounts are published as part of the organisations annual report. Our accountants, Stanley V Bye & Co, audit the accounts annually and work with us to produce the quarterly management accounts.

We use the Sage Sterling Financial Management package to record our financial transactions. Orders are processed at the same time as contracts for work are issued and invoices are responded to within four weeks. All invoices are signed by the Programme Manager responsible for the project and the Chair of the Board before payment is made. The payroll is managed according to law by our Administrator using Sage software.

**tees valley arts** receives strategic funding from the Arts Council England North East, and from local statutory authorities.

As a Registered Charity there are many trusts and foundations that **tees valley arts** is eligible to apply to.

As part of our first years operation as **tees valley arts** we will research , develop and implement a fundraising strategy. We will also develop and implement a new accounting and budgeting system that better reflects the true costs of project work and supports the strategic work of the organisation.

## tees valley arts strategic plan

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### track record

#### Arts Education Programme



During 2002/03 the Arts Education Programme worked with 2460 children in 27 schools in Teesside, at key stages 1, 2, 3, and 4. It also managed 4 summer schools a number of arts based INSET activities for teachers and worked with Middlesbrough Arts Service and Stockton Riverside College to develop and teach an Artists Training Programme.

Much of **tees valley arts** recent emphasis in education work has been on exploring how people learn and in experimenting with new ways of learning through the arts. The AIRIS [Artists in Residence in Science] project has placed artists in science departments of secondary schools, the artists working alongside the teachers and students to introduce different ways of teaching and learning. A poet looked at new ways of presenting, learning and recollecting text based science. This led to children writing their own science texts, using poetry as a format, and developing a performance and a publication. A dramatist focused on the development of new learning skills through role-play, improvisation and play scripts. This emphasis on process, encourages the creative learning of students, artists and teachers.

#### Social Inclusion Programme

tees valley arts has a wealth of experience in managing socially engaged arts projects. We work with community groups to encourage participation in arts activities that encourage capacity building.

Articulate is an arts, disability and social inclusion programme, inspired by, involving and relating to disabled people. Over the course of the three year programme we have collected evidence that being involved in creative activity, whether it is drama, visual art, dance or creative writing, is exciting, challenging and motivates people to get involved in decisions that affect their lives.

Our processes of working with people stress the importance of involving participants in the development of the project, of listening carefully and working together to build a responsive project. This encourages a sense of ownership for the participants and empowers them to make more informed

"I love drama.  
I'd like to do more drama  
about my own life.  
I like talking to people,  
coming up with a plan,  
talking to you."

*Participant, Articulate,  
Get a Life*

choices. This project has informed the development of In:volve, an arts and capacity building project working towards employability with Tees Valley Communities. This project will be part financed by the European Union

This way of working is particularly effective with disaffected young people. The Seen and Heard project during the last three years, has used the arts to engage with over 150 of the most disaffected, and disadvantaged young people in Middlesbrough, challenging them to get involved, to learn new skills, to communicate their ideas through performance, visual imagery, words and music.

The process works best when developed in partnership with a host organisation that already has a relationship with the participants, can use the process to build relationships as part of the projects aims, and uses the arts activity as part of a more intensive intervention into the young people's lives.



One of the Seen and Heard projects has been based at SECOS, a Barnardo's project for children at risk of sexual exploitation in Middlesbrough. Two artists have worked with a small group of young people to create an information leaflet, "Love is... Love isn't," that intends to alert other young people to the characteristics of abusive relationships. They have also produced an animated film version of Cinderella, a fairy story that contains elements of abuse and victimisation. As they create puppets and write the script for the film, the young people are also exploring characterisation and stereotypes, and relating the story to their own lives.

The project has made a significant contribution to the work at the Barnardo's centre, where the staff are very pleased with the quality of motivation and personal insight that the creative activities have achieved with the participants. Staff at SECOS describe the project as "extremely valuable" to the personal development of the young people, and are very keen for the work to continue. Involvement in the arts project has been both a therapeutic and a creative experience for all of the young people and has been instrumental in the centres adoption of an arts element into its day to day activity.



You are Here is an arts and integration programme that works with refugees and people seeking asylum. The project aims to explain, ease and celebrate the contribution that refugees and people seeking asylum can make to the Tees Valley communities that they inhabit. The project works across the sub-region, programming local arts activities, making links between

**communities and aiming to collate the art work made and the information collected into an educational and community outreach programme and a public event. The project demonstrates the use of the arts as a cultural engine of integration, and the benefits of working sub-regionally to maximise resources and impact.**