



# *Act 2*

**Rejuvenate and Realize**

**Fermanagh Integrated County Development Strategy  
2000-2010**

## **Arts and Culture**

**An Action Plan 2005 – 2010**

Prepared by  
**Voluntary Arts Ireland**  
for Fermanagh District Council





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## Introduction

In 1999 Fermanagh District Council compiled 'People and Places' an Integrated County Strategy covering the first decade of the new millennium. Within the publication, an entire chapter was devoted to presenting a Vision, Priorities and Actions for Arts and Culture. Its contents are summarised on pages 2 to 5. A report on progress against the strategy was published in 2001.

In September 2004, the Arts Officer of Fermanagh District Council identified the need to review progress against the forty actions presented in 'People and Places'.

The Council established Act 2 early in 2005 as a process through which it could join with interested parties to review progress since 2000, assess the extent to which the strategy remained relevant given the passage of time, and rejuvenate commitment to arts development by devising clear action plans for the second half of the decade.

Act 2 consisted of a series of three meetings. The first involved representatives of the key arts organisations in the county. Together they reviewed progress and major changes in the operating environment and identified people and organisations to be included in the open meetings.

The Act 2 open meetings were held over two days and provided a forum through which anyone with an interest in the arts and culture could input their expertise and opinions to the review and action planning process. Personal invitations were sent to almost one hundred groups and individuals and the meetings were promoted in the local press.

A draft Action Plan, containing proposals stemming directly from the needs and proposals arising from the three consultative meetings was published in May 2005 and views sought at an open meeting and through the press.

This document is thus based on the views of those engaged in the arts and culture in Fermanagh, whether as a profession, career, voluntary activity or personal interest.

Fermanagh District Council is deeply appreciative of the time and thought that the people of the county have given to this process and looks forward to working in partnership to create a flourishing, vibrant, inclusive & creative arts & cultural sector across the county.

July 2005

## **People and Places**

### **Fermanagh Integrated County Strategy 2000 to 2010**

Published for the new millennium, the integrated county strategy included a Vision, Priorities and Actions for Arts and Culture. (See pages 4 and 5 )

This strategy drew upon information about the nature and expressed needs of the local community gathered through an 'Arts Audit' conducted in 1997. The audit involved a survey of youth, arts and women's groups as well as individual artists, all venues and schools. It also drew information from a focused group meeting on visual arts.

The Audit findings showed that the main arts venues were reasonably well used, but required improvement in terms of accessibility. In addition to the Ardhowen, Enniskillen Castle and the Garrison Cultural Centre, it identified 26 community halls and centres and three National Trust properties being used to a greater or lesser extent for cultural activities. It also established that fourteen out of the fifteen schools surveyed, would be prepared to hire out their facilities to arts groups in the immediate vicinity, although few did and under a third could offer disability access.

In relation to community and voluntary arts, the audit identified

- 56 bands
- 33 traditional dance classes
- 15 historical societies
- 12 mummers groups
- 10 choral/music societies
- 10 performing arts groups
- 3 visual arts groups
- and over 200 community groups of which three (Kesh, Knocks, Sliabh Beagh) had started working in the arts.

There were, at the time, 16 festivals and feiseanna, mainly held between March and October and including Lisnaskea, Belcoo, Knocks, Newtownbutler, Lady of the Lake, Upper Lough Erne, Eddie Duffy, Fermanagh County Fleadh, and the Cinema Festival.

Education and training in the arts were provided by Fermanagh College, the Workers Education Association (WEA) and the Aisling Centre. The audit also noted a large number of public and private sector tutors in the visual arts compared to a dearth of performing arts tutors. Music was the largest arts activity in the county and the vast majority of tuition was provided in the voluntary/community sector. At that time, the audit identified a gap in the provision of youth arts.

The audit's review of funding showed that total spending on the arts in the year 1995/6 was £452,000.

Fermanagh District Council provided over half of this (£278,000) with 96% being dedicated to Enniskillen Castle and the Ardhowen. The balance of £11,000 was split evenly between grants from the Environmental Services Department and Community Relations Grants (There being in addition and extra £18,000 that year from the Central Community Relations Unit).

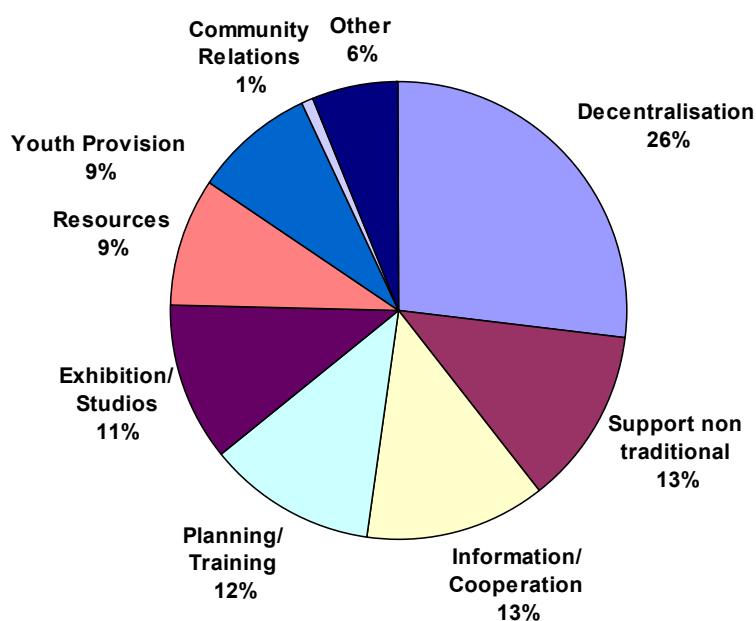
The only other main funder was the Arts Council of Northern Ireland that provided £110,000 from Lottery funds and £50,000 from its other award schemes. Groups raised just over £6,000 from Trusts and other sources.

The surveys that formed a major part of the audit asked respondents to identify their main needs and concerns in relation to arts provision.

The chart below shows that over a quarter of respondent called for greater provision outside of Enniskillen. Support of non-traditional art forms (e.g. photography), increased information flow and co-operation, improved arts planning and training and a need for increased exhibition and studio space were each identified by over 10% of the combined sample.

Fermanagh District Council took these findings on board, and the actions laid out in the 2000-2010 strategy include distributing resources evenly throughout the county, supporting non-traditional art forms, an information consortium, and increasing gallery and selling space.

Concerns Expressed by Respondents to the 1997 Fermanagh Arts Audit



## **Arts and Culture**

**Vision A flourishing, vibrant, inclusive & creative arts & cultural sector**

### **The Priorities**

1. Raise the Profile of Arts and Culture
2. Promote an appreciation of Cultural Diversity
3. Social Inclusion
4. Education and Training
5. Develop the Economic Potential of the Arts

### **Actions**

#### **1. Raise the Profile of Arts and Culture**

- 1.1. Build on and expand the existing audit and strategy
- 1.2. Develop further sub groups to advise and support the Arts Advisory Committee
- 1.3. Develop an arts information consortium
- 1.4. Create a County bulletin board/ Creative Arts Publication
- 1.5. Develop the Fermanagh annals on a website – building on 'Artspark' model
- 1.6. Market existing success stories and celebrate good practice
- 1.7. Develop a Marketing and Communications Strategy for arts and culture
- 1.8. Develop a pro-active relationship with the local and regional media
- 1.9. Support the development of a local radio station
- 1.10. Street and Public Art
- 1.11. Encourage support networks for artists
- 1.12. Maximise use of Ardhowen and Arts venues in an imaginative and innovative manner

#### **2. Promote an appreciation of Cultural Diversity**

- 2.1. Build on the Cultural Traditions work of FDC exploring both diversity and identity
- 2.2. Develop opportunities to share cultural experiences across a diverse range of interest and groups
- 2.3. Pro-actively market and promote the County's rich shared cultural heritage

**3. Social Inclusion**

- 3.1. Develop non traditional and innovative approaches to the arts such as photography, video, computing and multi media
- 3.2. Explore the use of non formal / traditional places for exhibiting art
- 3.3. Develop a diverse range of outreach community arts activities
- 3.4. Support initiatives for arts in the community
- 3.5. Encourage the provision of all amateur arts to counteract social isolation
- 3.6. Encourage initiatives that create opportunities between differing social groups and classes
- 3.7. Pay particular attention to issues of accessibility including physical access and pricing
- 3.8. Explore the use of the arts as a therapeutic tool
- 3.9. Ensure that resources are distributed evenly throughout the County

**4. Education and Training**

- 4.1. Use arts infrastructure to deliver education and training in the community
- 4.2. Register of local experts willing to share their skills
- 4.3. Encourage local educational establishments to use arts as curricular tool
- 4.4. Develop cradle to grave programme of creative education for all

**5. Develop the Economic Potential of the Arts**

- 5.1. Build on the art, design and craft sector
- 5.2. Develop an 'Arts Means Business Fair'
- 5.3. Develop an on line website for marketing and selling local arts and crafts building on work of Fermanagh Crafts Consortium
- 5.4. Provide more gallery/exhibition/studio selling space
- 5.5. Maximise out of season opportunities to support tourism
- 5.6. Create a new arts festival building in current activity
- 5.7. Develop an annual high quality crafts promotion
- 5.8. Develop 'Wilde Weekends' on Oscar Wilde theme
- 5.9. Create an events calendar
- 5.10. Market arts as a business opportunity, developing internal and external links
- 5.11. Package and sell the arts and culture as a tourist attraction
- 5.12. Attract incoming artists of highest calibre to establish a business base in the county

## Progress Against Strategy Noted by Act 2 Participants

Actions in the 2000 – 2010 Strategy	Developments as Noted by Participants in the Act 2 Consultative Meetings
<b>Raising Profile of Arts &amp; Culture</b>	
<i>Build on the existing audit and strategy Further subgroups to support the Arts Advisory Committee</i>	<i>The Act 2 process is the start of doing this.</i>
<i>Develop an arts information consortium, a County bulletin board/Creative Arts Publication and develop the Fermanagh annals on a website.</i>	<i>Arrival of Broadband has opened up internet information opportunities. FUPB web development has potential to expand. There is an arts database at FDC FDC sends out a regular arts newsheet by email and this is on the website too. There are plans to make it into a printed newsletter. The 'What's On' publication has been developed Fermanagh Craft Consortium leaflet on local craft workers Irish Central Border Area Network has a new strategy to build links and information exchange across Fermanagh and the central border area</i>
<i>Market success stories and develop a Marketing &amp; Communications Strategy for arts and culture</i>	<i>Local groups have had some success gaining press coverage and there is scope to develop a new strategy</i>
<i>Develop a pro-active relationship with the local and regional media Support the development of a local radio station</i>	<i>Relationships with the local press are good. Fermanagh Crafts Consortium has a PR/Media representative who has built contacts and profile. Q101, BBC Arts Extra, BBC West, BBC Your Place and Mine, and BBC Blast mini documentaries have all added to local arts coverage</i>
<i>Street and Public Art</i>	<i>Lady of the Lake Project Lough MacNea Sculpture Trail Lisbellaw Wall Murals Glass Bricks Millennium Project at Lakeland Forum Sensory Garden at The Knocks, Elmbrook and Erne Special Schools Sliabh Beagh has delivered a range of public art projects Mosaic at Roslea Wood carvings at Brookeborough Carrowshee and Sylvan Hill sculpture Share Arts - Sign Sculpture, Buoyant Sculpture &amp; The Light Sculpture</i>
<i>Encourage support networks for artists</i>	<i>Fermanagh Crafts Consortium established and meets every 4 to 6 weeks to support craft workers Local private sector increasingly providing artists with access to materials and workspaces. The Council has started a Newsletter for artists and information on line</i>
<i>Maximise use of Ardhowen and Arts venues in an imaginative and innovative manner</i>	<i>Ardhowen well used – for theatre and exhibitions. Higher Bridges Gallery developed and used to exhibit arts and crafts. The Share Centre now has a gallery and Ardess and some community halls are used for arts events. Some hotels and restaurants are also used for displaying art work. Express Art Festival held in 2001 The Museum increasingly used as arts venue and for cultural activities</i>

<b>Promote and appreciation of Cultural Diversity</b>	
<i>Build on the Cultural Traditions work of FDC exploring both diversity and identity</i>	<i>FDC now have a Community Relations Officer &amp; Community Services Officer in the same Department as Arts &amp; Tourism; this presents opportunities for co-ordinated working. The 'Peace Dividend' has opened up funding and opportunities. New groups such as Women of the World and Community Connections are building relations with new communities The St Patrick's Parade and Fools Festival celebrate local culture.</i>
<i>Develop Opportunities to share cultural experiences across a diverse range of interest and groups</i>	<i>The Museum's Public Archive is being used more by schools Share have established Potato Bred youth project The Hare Krishna community have a new Development Plan The Council have secured four year funding for the Art of Regeneration project which will bring groups together.</i>
<i>Pro-actively market and promote the County's rich shared cultural heritage</i>	<i>The 'Hidden Fermanagh' CDs and book helped promote local culture Waterways community (Yachting, Cots etc) increasingly promoting local waterways cultural activity Fermanagh Craft Consortium leaflet on local craft workers</i>
<b>Social Inclusion</b>	
<i>Develop non traditional and innovative approaches to the arts.</i>	<i>Wheelworks and Sonic DJ Academy have both worked with FDC The Share Arts Centre Multi Media Project Sliabh Beagh Video Production Workshop Fermanagh College offers- courses in Art and Design (AVCE, BTEC, Diploma and HNC levels plus short courses in Ceramics, Oil Painting, Photography)</i>
<i>Explore the use of non formal / traditional places for exhibiting art</i>	<i>LAMP arts and crafts show. The Share Centre, Sliabh Beagh. Manor House Hotel all used. Fermanagh Crafts Consortium have demonstrated crafts in the Buttermarket and Florence Court National Trust properties used for jazz, classical music and crafts.</i>
<i>Develop a diverse range of outreach community arts activities and support initiatives for arts in the community</i>	<i>Funding through the Art of Regeneration will open up opportunities for performing arts, environmental sculpture and outreach. Ardhowen writers workshop pilot and Dance Development project. Sliabh Beagh arts tutors course. Aisling centre. WELB work. Share Centre Rotunda programme. Dance for Youth. ICBAN have arts within their new strategy. Museum workshops for older people, children, writers etc. Fermanagh College run art classes around the county</i>
<i>Encourage the provision of all amateur arts to counteract social isolation</i>	<i>FDC grant aid via the Arts Advisory Committee U3A (University of the Third Age) has song, art appreciation and heritage groups Comhaltas active throughout bringing different ages together Support available from Making Music and Voluntary Arts Ireland</i>
<i>Encourage opportunities between differing groups</i>	<i>The Art of Regeneration project will promote this Sliabh Beagh and Share – Cross community and Cross Border</i>
<i>Pay attention to accessibility</i>	<i>Access 300 for County Fermanagh and ADAPT Conference Plans are currently in action for 2005 for the Ardowen Theatre for a full facility redevelopment which includes a floating jetty and full accessibility for people with disabilities.</i>
<i>Explore the use of the arts as a therapeutic tool</i>	<i>Aisling Centre. Two Sensory Gardens have been created – The Knocks, Aghadrumsee and Erne Special School. Crafts Consortium members created art gardens for schools with WELB Arts Care is operational. Hope Centre. Drumcoo. Lakeland Youth Centre. New Horizons</i>
<i>Ensure resources are distributed evenly throughout the County</i>	<i>Share Centre, Sliabh Beagh, ARC as centres outside Enniskillen Fermanagh College offers arts courses in Community Out Centres</i>

<b>Education and Training</b>	
<p>Use arts infrastructure to deliver education and training in the community</p> <p>Register of local experts willing to share their skills</p>	<p>WEA is active in the County</p> <p>Work commenced on a register of artists and CYP has a list too.</p> <p>Museums and Galleries NI is offering training to groups (e.g. project management)</p> <p>Share Arts Centre offer master classes for artists and arts educators</p> <p>Fermanagh Crafts Consortium members active in delivering workshops and demonstrations for children and teachers through WELB and local groups</p>
<p>Encourage local educational establishments to use arts as curricular tool</p>	<p>WELB &amp; FDC have a clear plan for this. Creative Youth Project was part of the direct consultation process with local authorities within NI / FDC and has been running for over a year now.</p> <p>Peer Education projects in Ardhowen and Museum</p>
<p>Develop cradle to grave programme of creative education for all</p>	<p>WEA Programmes</p> <p>Fermanagh College offers arts courses in Community Out Centres</p> <p>Reminiscence project at the Museum</p> <p>Annual Family Fun Day at the Museum each August</p>
<b>Develop Economic Potential</b>	
<p>Build on the art, design and craft sector</p> <p>Develop an 'Arts Means Business Fair' and an on line website for marketing and selling local arts and crafts building on work of Fermanagh Crafts Consortium</p> <p>Provide more gallery/exhibition/studio selling space</p>	<p>Fermanagh Crafts Consortium development worker appointed</p> <p>Fermanagh Crafts Consortium held a Christmas craft Fair and has represented the county at Trade Fairs in NI, the Republic or Ireland and New York.</p> <p>NI Visual Arts Forum available to support work in the county</p> <p>Fermanagh Crafts Consortium website is established</p> <p>Museum site in March</p> <p>FDC Arts Officer has developed a newsletter (print and online) of opportunities for artists and craftworkers</p> <p>Clinton Centre available and used</p> <p>Ardhowen being used for exhibitions of photography</p> <p>Share Arts-Space Gallery</p> <p>Museums collection is displayed around the Town Hall now</p> <p>Roslea Community Centre increasingly used for arts</p>
<p>Maximise out of season opportunities to support tourism</p> <p>Create a new arts festival and develop an annual high quality crafts promotion</p> <p>Develop 'Wilde Weekends' on Oscar Wilde theme</p> <p>Create an events calendar</p> <p>Market arts as a business opportunity.</p> <p>Package and sell the arts and culture as a tourist attraction</p> <p>Attract incoming artists of highest calibre to establish a base in the county</p>	<p>Restructuring means that for the first time Arts, Tourism and Community Relations are in the same Department of FDC creating real opportunity to co-ordinate development, events and marketing.</p> <p>Range of Festivals – but no ONE festival programme</p> <p>Oscar Wilde Festival</p> <p>There is now a What's On calendar from Tourist Information and a regular Arts Newsletter – 'Opportunities and News for Artists'</p> <p>Potential for co-ordination of marketing is presented by the appointment of a marketing officer for Marble Arch Caves</p>

## The Proposals

During the course of the consultation meetings, participants were asked to consider whether the Vision and five priorities presented in the Strategy were still relevant and sufficient to meet their expectations for arts development over the coming five years. In all cases, participants reaffirmed their relevance.

However, many participants felt that the forty actions identified in the strategy varied in their applicability. Some were no longer as pressing (e.g. establishing a local radio station) whilst others were considered so broad as to be guiding principles rather than concrete action points (e.g. 'Develop opportunities to share cultural experiences across a diverse range of interest and groups.')

Asking participants to specify actual, measurable actions that they felt should be in the plan for the next five years produced a wealth of ideas. Collated and condensed, these proposals form the basis of this action plan.

The plan does not replace the strategy, but gives guidance as to the priorities for the coming years. Participants did not raise all areas of the strategy as being of priority importance, for example, the development of art as a therapeutic tool. It is therefore not included as a specific action point in this plan. However, it should remain an area of interest under the overarching ten-year strategy and the Council remains prepared to develop actions under the original strategy as changing circumstances demand or opportunities arise.

In a reflection of the findings of the audit, some eight years ago, a number of the proposals related to improved planning and training, particularly in relation to marketing, and enhanced information flows both within the arts sector and between the sector and Fermanagh District Council.

Taken as a whole, these proposals translate as calls for improved infrastructure to facilitate coordinated planning and effective communication across the county. The first section of the action plan address these issues as they relate to the Council, setting out actions for the development of an internal infrastructure within Fermanagh District Council to support the delivery of the action plan and the strengthening of the Council's Arts Advisory Committee as a resource for the arts in the county. The second proposes the creation of a range of networks within the arts sector to enable those with common interests to meet, participate in planning, identify their common needs, and communicate them effectively to the Council and others.

The third section looks at the setting up of Working Parties to take forward potential projects and the fourth draws actions together in cross cutting themes.

## Infrastructure Development

*Fermanagh seeks to be held up as an example of how a Local Authority and the arts and cultural sector can work together to advance the arts and culture.*

There are now in Fermanagh, many agencies and groups delivering art and craft in a range of contexts; Share Arts, Sliabh Beagh, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, the Ardess Arts Society, U3A – the University of the Third Age, Women of the World and a large number of festivals to name but a few. There are also a range of venues from the Buttermarket, to the Higher Bridges Gallery, the Ardhowen, the Museum, and numerous community halls. Both groups and venues contribute to the total cultural programming for the county and marketing of events has expanded with the creation of a 'What's On' publication, Fermanagh Crafts Consortium and the addition of marketing personnel to the Marble Arch Caves. In addition, the focus on arts education has increased with the developments at WELB, Creative Youth Partnerships and Fermanagh University Partnership Board.

Arts activity is not confined to Enniskillen and across the county a myriad of groups harness the value of voluntary input to bring arts to their communities. However, it is in this spread and diversity of activity that the weak link is found: in that what exists is not so much a chain as a series of scattered pearls.

The Act 2 consultation process, like the earlier audit, highlighted the sense of isolation felt by many groups and practitioners, expressed as a call for greater networking, coordination and information exchange.

The move to bring Arts, Tourism and Community Relations into the one Department in Fermanagh District Council and the launch of the Council's Artists Newsletter and What's On Guide have been steps in the right direction. The Council recognises however, that while these changes help to deliver information, they do not build personal links between sector activists or between the sector and the Council itself.

It is now timely to capitalise upon these improvements. By strengthening the infrastructure, both internally and in the independent arts sector, Fermanagh District Council will promote the lines of communication, peer support and synergies needed for the Council and the sector to act in tandem to deliver the action plan. Thus the majority of the Actions proposed for the coming five years relate directly to the strengthening of systems and structures.

Regular meetings of the infrastructure networks will help to build exchange and co-ordination between the constituent groups, with a particular focus on cross cutting themes of promoting arts and crafts as an option for:

- Employment/career
- Community work and tackling social exclusion
- Personal development and Enjoyment
- Tourism
- Inter region work, linking with ICBAN, Community Connections & others

## **Internal Infrastructure Development**

### **1. An Arts and Culture Strategy Implementation Team**

*Fermanagh aims to be regarded as a model of good practice in Council led development of a cross cutting arts strategy contributing to social inclusion, education, good relations and the economy through direct arts employment, sector support jobs and tourism*

Following the restructuring of the Environmental Services Department, there is opportunity to refresh the focus, leadership, and coordination for arts development

Fermanagh District Council will set up an Arts and Culture Strategy Implementation Team (ACSI Team) within the Leisure, Tourism and Arts Department. This will be lead by the Director of that Department and will include the Arts Officer, Community Relations Officer, Community Services Officer, Tourism Department and administrative support.

The ASCI Team will meet no less than four times a year to facilitate joint planning and coordination in the implementation of the Arts and Culture Action Plan. It will be responsible for monitoring progress and reporting to the Council and external stakeholders.

The ASCI Team will seek to build strong links between arts and elected members.

## **2. A Marketing Strategy for the Arts and Culture**

*Fermanagh intends to be a county where residents and visitors are easily able to discover arts and cultural attractions and events through a variety of channels and visitors are attracted by sustained marketing of culture and the arts outside of the county.*

To build on recent developments in marketing in both arts and tourism, Fermanagh District Council will create a Marketing Strategy for the Arts and Culture in Fermanagh.

The ACSI Team will be responsible for initiating the development of the strategy and will secure resources to engage appropriate marketing expertise as required. The strategy will take a holistic approach to marketing, including attractions and events operated by the Council, private concerns and the voluntary sector. It will seek to promote art and culture to both local residents and tourist visitors alike.

The strategy will include:

- A co-ordinated media relations strategy (local, regional and national)
- Proposals for use of the internet, email and SMS text messaging.
- Advertising in all its forms.
- Publications / print materials.
- Signage.
- Product development and pricing.
- Consideration of the potential for the development of a 'County of Culture' brand to be used by arts & cultural events and venues.
- Methods to ensure coverage of community based arts events.
- A statement of the resources required to implement the strategy.

The development of the strategy will be the responsibility of the Director of Leisure, Tourism and Arts through the ACSI Team, supported by a skilled marketing facilitator (internal or external consultant).

The Arts and Culture Marketing Strategy will be completed and presented to Council.

### **3. Monitoring, Evaluation and Strategy 2010 – 2020**

*Fermanagh District Council aims to see the Action Plan fully implemented, or adjusted in light of changes. By so doing, the Council wishes to engender a positive attitude towards participation in future planning. Future strategies and plans will be challenging but realistic and based on sound information and consultation.*

The Act 2 Action Plan represents an opportunity to rejuvenate commitment to the Council and its stakeholders working together to pursue the priorities set out in the ten year Strategy.

The Council will launch and widely publicise the Action Plan and annually monitor progress. This monitoring will also facilitate the adjustment of plans to environmental changes and generate information on which to base future planning.

Each year, the ACSI Team at the Council will formally ask the Arts Advisory Committee, Crafts Consortium, Voluntary Sector Network and Festivals Forum to assess progress against the action plan in their area of interest and will publish the results in an annual progress report, identifying any corrective action required.

The ACSI Team in the Leisure, Tourism and Arts Department will be responsible for leading the monitoring and review process. This should be completed between November and December of each year to allow relevant adjustments to the budget in the following financial year.

The Council will facilitate a new arts audit in 2008 – 2009.

#### **4. Arts Advisory Committee Review and Development**

*Fermanagh District Council aims to provide an arts grant scheme which supports the implementation of the action plan, distributes funds across the entire county and is regularly reviewed to ensure priority objectives are reflected in grant making criteria and practice.*

The People and Place Strategy identified the need to build on the 1997 audit and establish sub-groups to support the FDC Arts Advisory Committee. The AAC is the mechanism by which the Council distributes arts grants. As a group of people who have developed an understanding of the arts in the county, the AAC represents a resource that for co-ordination and cooperation that is currently under utilised as a forum for exchange.

In order to better harness and strengthen its infrastructure, Fermanagh District Council will work with the Arts Advisory Committee to agree, develop and implement a process to strengthen its role as a resource for the arts sector. To this end it is proposed to:

- revise and refresh grant-making criteria
- establish a Training and Education audit
- establish an audit of Venues
- refresh its membership to bring in expertise to fill any gaps

#### **Grant Making Review**

*Fermanagh District Council aims to tackle social exclusion through the planned delivery of financial and other assistance to voluntary and community arts groups with a particular emphasis on encouraging new people into the arts by supporting non-traditional art forms and promoting accessibility.*

Whilst new application forms have been created, it is several years since the pattern of arts grants has been analysed or the actual criteria for grant making reviewed. Monitoring is essential to establish the extent to which grants are supporting policy priorities (e.g. distributing funding across the county, promoting social inclusion, encouraging networking) and to enable the AAC to monitor its own work.

The review and development process will therefore include:

- An audit the distribution of grants in the past five years
- A review the criteria for funding in light of the priorities set out in the Strategy and Action Plan
- Consideration of the need for ring fenced funds and/or proactive grants to address specific geographic, art form or issue based gaps in the applications received
- A review of ways to enhance information exchange so that those making grant decisions remain fully abreast of current activities and needs in the community

- The potential for formalising in kind support offered by the Council (e.g. photocopying and admin services)

To ensure that grant making reflects the cross cutting theme of promoting social inclusion, the review of current funding streams should include consideration of ways to target support on endeavours to maintain and increase arts participation on a local level and by increasing the choice of activities to include non-traditional art forms.

In this respect, the review can draw on the advice of the members of the Arts Advisory Committee itself, the Fermanagh Voluntary Sector Arts & Culture Network, Fermanagh Voluntary Association for the Disabled, Erne U3A, the Beacon Centres and other local organisations representing communities that may find themselves socially isolated. Support can be drawn from regional bodies such as Voluntary Arts Network, Community Arts Forum and Arts and Disability Network.

The aim of this element of the review of grant making will be to

- Ensure grant making reflects the priority of promoting social inclusion and accessibility through carefully devised and agreed criteria to target support on endeavours to increase arts participation on a local level
- To widen the range of participation by supporting:
  - an increase in the choice of arts activities to include non traditional art forms, especially those that will engage people from new and diverse communities, and
  - endeavours to promote access including innovations in transport, physical access and internet usage.
- Instigate biannual monitoring of grant making against agreed criteria so that the AAC has the data it needs to monitor its own work.

The Council Arts Officer will work with the Arts Advisory Committee to instigate the process. If felt necessary, external facilitation can be obtained and a training day will take place for current and new Arts Advisory Members.

The revised grant criteria will be published by January 2006.

## **Education and Training Audit**

*Fermanagh intends to be a place where arts and crafts are presented as a real career option to young people, supported by further and higher education courses in arts and associated skills, and where people of all ages in are able to access arts/crafts training whether for career or personal development*

In recent years, bodies such as the Western Education and Library Board, Fermanagh College/ FUBP and the Creative Youth Partnership have developed delivery of arts education. Voluntary sector organisations such as the Worker's Education Association, the Share Centre and Sleabh Beagh, to name but a few, have also contributed greatly to the range of courses available.

To date, however, there has been no cross sector co-ordinated endeavour to promote a career in the creative industries to young people, or to equip workers in other sectors in using art to deliver their objectives, nor to provide artists and arts groups with the business skills they require to operate effectively.

As a first step to addressing these needs, Fermanagh District Council will work with the Arts Advisory Committee to commission an audit into current Education and Training provision for the arts in the county

The audit will enable AAC to establish what is available, to identify gaps and make proposals for future action..

## **Venue Audit**

*Fermanagh plans to be a county where artists and craftspeople are able to find accessible, affordable facilities to create and present their work and where audiences grow in size and diversity from year to year.*

The Higher Bridges Gallery plays an important role in promoting community arts as well as Fine and Applied / Contemporary Visual Arts and has increased the exhibition space available in Enniskillen and the Ardhowen continues to be well used for performances and exhibitions. Nonetheless, participants in the Act 2 consultations called for additional exhibition and selling space and an increase in the use of non-traditional venues to make art more accessible.

Venues space across the county has not been assessed since 1997 and there is no comprehensive listing of facilities available to groups and practitioners.

To ensure venues are used to their full potential by the whole community and to meet the space needs of groups, artists and craftspeople, Fermanagh District Council will facilitate the Arts Advisory Committee in commissioning an audit of current exhibition and performance spaces including:

- The current use of non traditional venues (e.g. hotels shops, outdoors, day centres) and
- The potential use of alternative venues, especially in small rural settlements (in liaison with the Artists Network and Crafts Consortium)
- The demand for affordable, accessible meeting space for local groups (in liaison with Voluntary Sector Arts & Culture Network )
- A publicly accessible database of arts venues and workspaces
- Methods being successfully used to develop audiences and promote accessibility
- The potential for an annual small works competition in the Higher Bridges Gallery at the Clinton Centre, administered by the Council's Arts Officer-

## External Infrastructure Development

### 5. Fermanagh Crafts Consortium Development Plan

*Fermanagh seeks to be a county where craftspeople are supported in marketing their products and can easily find peer support and link to systems for professional development and therefore a county where the crafts and crafts workers thrive.*

Across Ireland, individual craft workers have improved success in marketing their work by joining with others to form crafts consortia and multi-craft outlets, offering a range of choice to the potential buyer.

Craftspeople in Fermanagh enjoy the support of the Fermanagh Crafts Consortium and the Buttermarket, a dedicated crafts retail space.

Five years into the Strategy, and with the proposal to develop support to individual artists (below) Fermanagh District Council wishes to support Fermanagh Crafts Consortium by resourcing it to create a five-year development plan.

The planning process will be an opportunity for the Council and the Consortium to work together to identify its development needs, clarify its role as a craft-marketing agency and/or as a support agency for individual craftspeople and identify priorities for crafts development in the county.

Actions that the Council hopes to see in the Consortium's five-year plan include:

- The creation and maintenance of a Crafts Database
- A review of the uses and marketing of the Buttermarket (in liaison with the AAC Venues sub committee,) including renovation and the potential for a crafts and country products fair.
- A study of other current and potential outlets for crafts products (with the AAC Venues sub committee).
- Opportunities to work with other bodies
- An analysis of the training needs of craft workers (with the AAC Training and Education sub committee).
- The potential to develop a Crafts Apprentice Scheme (with the AAC Training and Education sub committee).

As an independent organisation, the Consortium is supported by Fermanagh District Council and the Council will facilitate the planning process through grant aid towards the costs of preparing the development plan.

The Arts Officer will dedicate time to supporting the project and should be invited to attend future meetings of the Consortium as observer and direct link to the Council's services.

The Council would like to see the draft of the Development Plan available by early 2006.

## **6. Fermanagh Artists Network**

*Fermanagh aims to be a county where artists can easily find peer support and link to systems for professional development and thus a county where the artist and arts thrive.*

Individual arts practitioners often work alone, and thus face the sense of isolation that is associated with sole trading. Whilst in other business sectors, individuals find support through trade and professional associations, no such network currently exists for artists in Fermanagh.

To enable artists to develop their practice and skills, link to available support, and effectively identify and express their needs, Fermanagh District Council will facilitate the founding of a Fermanagh Artists Network, covering all art forms.

The Network will be open to all local artists and, drawing support from each other and resource organisations such as the NI Visual Arts Forum, Community Arts Forum and Equity etc, it will develop its own annual plan.

Actions that the Council hopes to see in the Network's annual plan include:

- A database of local artists
- An annual analysis of the training needs of members (in conjunction with the AAC Training and Education sub committee)
- A review of current and potential venues for exhibition/performance and outlets for arts sales (in liaison with the AAC Venues sub committee)
- Work with other local and regional support and development bodies

As an independent network, the Network will not be part of Fermanagh District Council; however, the Council will help with the administrative process associated with such meetings until such time as the group is able to access alternative resources.

Initiating the Artists Network will be the responsibility of the Council Arts Officer who will develop a starting database of artists to invite to an exploratory meeting. Before the Network is established, consideration will be given to the option of expanding the role of Fermanagh Crafts Consortium as a means to meeting the support needs of individual artists.

The Arts Officer will assist the Artists' Network in investigating possible models and will facilitate visits to Clones Artists Consortium, Down Artists Collective and similar groups to inform the debate. The Council Arts Officer should be invited to attend meetings as observer and direct link to the Council's services.

First meeting of the Artists Network (or expanded Crafts Consortium) will be before the end of 2005 with quarterly meetings envisaged thereafter.

## **7. Voluntary Sector Arts and Culture Network**

*Fermanagh aims to be renowned as a place where arts and crafts reach into every geographic community and community of interest through high quality local provision made by the community. To facilitate this Fermanagh aims to be a county that excels in recognising and enhancing the value added by voluntary groups and arts volunteers.*

A myriad of arts groups and volunteers in the voluntary and community sector tirelessly work across Fermanagh to encourage participation in the arts and the use of creative activity in community work. Each makes a unique contribution in their own area but too often struggle to find the time to gather the information and resources that could support the development of their activities. Elsewhere in the UK and Ireland, voluntary groups have enhanced their work by coming together to access training, funding information and to pool resources (e.g. storage space, costumes, sharing postage costs on marketing mail outs).

To maximise the access to arts participation offered by these groups, Fermanagh District Council will facilitate the setting up of a Voluntary Sector Arts & Culture Network.

The Network will be open to all local voluntary and community sector groups engaged in arts, culture and heritage. Support can also be drawn from regional bodies such as Voluntary Arts Ireland, Community Arts Forum, Arts & Disability Forum, NI Council for Voluntary Action and the Volunteer Development Agency.

The Network will develop its own annual plans, within which the Council hopes to see projects including:

- A database of local artists.
- The development of email/web information point for voluntary and community arts sector
- An annual analysis of the training needs of members (in conjunction with the AAC Training and Education sub committee)
- An analysis of need for affordable, accessible meeting space for local groups (in liaison with the AAC Venues sub committee)
- Work with other local and regional support and development bodies

Fermanagh District Council will work with Voluntary Arts Ireland to initiate the Voluntary Sector Network and will support it with information and advice.

As an independent group, the Network will not be part of Fermanagh District Council; however, the Council will help with the administrative process associated with such meetings until the group is able to access alternative resources.

First meeting of the Network should take place by 2006 with quarterly meetings envisaged thereafter.

## 8. Fermanagh Festivals Forum

*Fermanagh aims to be celebrated as the county of festivals throughout the year, attracting wide spread local participation and visitors to a range of cultural festivals put in place by organisers who actively share support, advice and resources to maximise the individual and joint impact of all festivals*

Fermanagh is the proud home to a large number of festivals and feiseanna embracing a range of art forms. These festivals encourage awareness of the arts and stimulate the involvement of young and not so young alike. However, the majority run between March and October, leaving a gap through the festive season to Easter. In addition, many are run by voluntary groups, and face challenges in finding the time to gather the information and resources to support growth. Elsewhere in the UK and Ireland, local festivals have strengthened their activities by coming together to access training, exchange tips about performers, exercise group power in buying insurance and combining resources.

To build on the asset of the many festivals in the county, maximise their combined impact on participation and tourism, and encourage the sharing of expertise and resources, Fermanagh District Council will facilitate the setting up of a Fermanagh Festivals Forum.

The Festivals Forum will be open to all local festivals and can access support from the Association of Irish Festival Events, the NI Festivals Forum and other major festival organisers as well as the Art of Regeneration Project.

The Festival Forum will develop its own annual plans, within which the Council hopes to see projects including:

- A database of local festivals
- Development of joint festival marketing
- A review of the spread of festivals through each year, including recommendations for developing new events to fill any major gaps
- An annual analysis of the training needs of members (in conjunction with the AAC Training and Education sub committee)
- Work with other local and regional support and development bodies

The Leisure, Tourism and Arts Department will be responsible for initiating the Festivals Forum, developing a starting database of groups to invite to an exploratory meeting, which should include members of the Crafts Consortium, Voluntary Sector Network, Artists Collective and Arts Advisory Committee.

The Festivals Forum will be independent of Fermanagh District Council; however, the Council will help with the administrative process associated with such meetings until such time as the group is able to access resources.

The inaugural meeting of the Festivals Forum should take place by early 2006 with biannual meetings envisaged thereafter.

# Potential Project Development

## FDC Led Working Parties

### 9. Physical Infrastructure

*Fermanagh aspires to be the home of arts centres that act as beacons for arts development, offering high quality facilities to professional and voluntary groups and attracting cultural tourism to the county*

There has been significant movement in the provision of venues since 2000, with the development of the Higher Bridges Gallery and the Buttermarket and the exhibiting of part of the Museums collection in the Town Hall. However, the Act 2 consultation, like the audit in 1997, reaffirmed the call from artists and craftspeople for additional exhibition and selling spaces.

The Council will begin to develop a business plan to research the potential need for a new Arts Centre to be based within Enniskillen town.

Fermanagh District Council will take action on this longstanding proposal by identifying and inviting skilled individuals to form a fixed life Physical Infrastructure Working Party to undertake initial demand analysis (or appoint consultant so to do) and prepare proposals for future development.

The Working Party will include members of the AAC Venue Providers sub committee (once established) and invited advisors with expertise in capital fundraising, venue development, business planning etc.

The Working Party will devise and instigate an audit and displacement analysis to include:

- A review of the models of development for arts centres across Ireland
- An audit of supply & demand covering:
  - exhibition and workshop space for visual artists
  - rehearsal, performance and storage space for performing arts groups (drama, dance)
  - workshop space for community arts programmes
  - additional performance space
  - meeting rooms, office space and services for local arts groups and artists
- A review of the use of current facilities
- A Displacement Analysis reviewing the likely impact on current venues and service providers

If the audit indicates a demand for a new centre, the Working Party will:

- Evaluate
  - the potential for meeting demand through the extension of existing venues
  - the option of an independent arts organisation establishing a new venue in Fermanagh
- Present a proposal and supporting evidence to Council in 2006 for the chosen option.

The Arts Officer with the support of the ACSI Team will hold meetings with interested parties to identify members for the Physical Infrastructure Working Party and will report progress on a regular basis to the Arts Advisory Committee and the independent networks in the arts infrastructure.

The first meeting of the Physical Infrastructure Working Party should take place by November 2005 with meetings thereafter as required.

## **10. Enniskillen Festival**

*Fermanagh will be famous as the home of the Enniskillen Arts Festival that attracts thousands of tourists and highlights the creativity of the county's population*

One of the strengths of Fermanagh's cultural scene is the number of festivals held each year. However, as noted by the 1997 audit, and by participants in the Act 2 consultations, there is no major multi-art festival covering in Enniskillen itself to provide a focal celebration and raise the profile of arts and crafts activities in the county.

The instituting of a major festival that can enhance current activities and is capable of becoming self sustaining within a short number of years, is a challenge that necessitates widespread community support and thorough planning.

Fermanagh District Council will act on this proposal by identifying and inviting individuals to form a fixed-life Working Party to investigate the potential for a high profile, commercially viable international Enniskillen Arts Festival run as an independent company.

The Working Party will include Festival Forum members and invited advisors with expertise in festivals, business planning, cultural tourism, sponsorship and fundraising. Support will be sought from the Association of Irish Festival Events, the Northern Ireland Festivals Forum and other major festival organisers.

The Working Party will devise a project development plan to include:

- Research into the development patterns, financing and sustainability of major Festivals across Ireland and the UK
- Working with Fermanagh Festival Forum and tourism staff to identify a time of year and art forms/themes that will complement existing festivals
- Investigate likely levels of support from the local business community and major funders
- A business plan and budget

The Arts Officer, with the support of the ACSI Team will hold meetings with interested parties to identify members for the Enniskillen Festival Working Party and will report progress on a regular basis to the Arts Advisory Committee and the independent networks in the arts infrastructure.

The Council will to service the Festival Working Party until it becomes a separately constituted body or otherwise concludes its business.

The first meeting of the Festival Working Party should be held by October 2005 with meetings thereafter as required.

## Cross Cutting Themes

### 11. Cultural Traditions

*Fermanagh aims to be well known as a place worth living and visiting for its living cultural history*

Fermanagh is home to an abundance of traditional arts and crafts, from dance to wooden boat building, weaving to music and story telling. Such cultural activities add to visitors' experience of the unique ethos of Fermanagh. Yet, to date, there has been no major co-ordinated endeavour to build upon the community's cultural traditions and link them to tourism promotion.

The Action Plan will encourage the development and retention of local arts and crafts skills in a range of ways:

- Contact details of traditional arts groups and practitioners will be collected through the databases of Fermanagh Crafts Consortium, The Voluntary Sector Arts & Culture Network and the Artists Collective.
- These networks will provide a means for gathering and sharing information about cultural traditions work and for developing future proposals for a cultural traditions archive including documentation of oral history, story telling, local dance, crafts and song.
- The Fermanagh Crafts Consortium is a potential vehicle for developing proposals for an intergenerational project to encourage skills transfer (liaising with the Fermanagh Crafts Consortium).
- The Festivals Forum provides a channel for assessing the incoming/diverse cultures in the county with a view to forging links with them; including the possibility of a Multicultural Festival.
- The Arts Advisory Committee review provides opportunity to direct support towards work that promotes appreciation of local and new cultures.
- The Art of Regeneration Project will use Dance, Carnival Arts, Music and Drama, and Environmental Arts to explore and share cultural traditions. (See Appendix Three)

## 12. Art in the Environment

*Fermanagh seeks to be a place where arts and crafts are an integral part of the built and natural environment.*

Fermanagh's stunning natural environment is one of the key attractions for spending time in the county. It offers both venues and contexts in which to present art so that those enjoying the beauty of the countryside might discover it and add to their experience.

Public art is used in a variety of contexts in Fermanagh, both to enhance the visitors' experience and to make arts accessible to all. Public sculpture projects have placed art in front of residents and tourists alike. Visitors are encouraged to explore the county through a series of walking and cycling trails and to rest a while in public spaces supplied with benches, waste bins and lighting.

To encourage best use of the county's natural and built environment to promote arts and culture and to use arts to enhance the experience of the countryside, Fermanagh District Council will

- Make available its policy on public art which will be extended to cover:
  - Specially commissioned work including functional art /craft work in the sourcing of street furniture/ signage etc.
  - Sculpture trail projects in the many walking and cycling trails already under development.
  - The use of public premises to display art and craft work (including permanent and temporary exhibitions by contemporary artists).
  - The percent for art scheme to be set before Council. (Whereby all new developments are required to set aside a proportion of total costs for art provision)
- Establish, partnership fund and manage an Environmental Sculpture Development Programme as part of the Art of Regeneration Project. (See Appendix Three)
- Encourage the Arts Advisory Committee, infrastructure networks and local providers to develop art in context of the environment, including:
  - Harnessing the potential and infrastructure surrounding the waterways (e.g. Lakeland artists exhibitions in conjunction with lakeside walks.)
  - An arts project for young people in Marble Arch Caves
  - Maximising the potential benefits of the Global Geopark conference in September 2006 that will bring delegates to the Marble Arch Caves.

### **13. Social Inclusion**

*Fermanagh District Council aims to tackle social exclusion through the planned delivery of financial and other assistance to voluntary and community arts groups with a particular emphasis on encouraging new people into the arts by supporting non-traditional art forms and promoting accessibility.*

Voluntary arts groups, and community groups making use of art in their work, tackle social exclusion by bringing people together and forming bonds between them through a common interest in the art form or art project. They operate at a local level and through the medium of art are able to reach out to people who may not engage in other networks (sport, employment, church etc)

Fermanagh District Council will continue to promote and support activities that bring arts participation opportunities to the widest range of people in order to promote social inclusion, tackle social isolation and engender personal and community development.

This Action Plan enables the Council to sustain its focus on social inclusion in a number of ways:

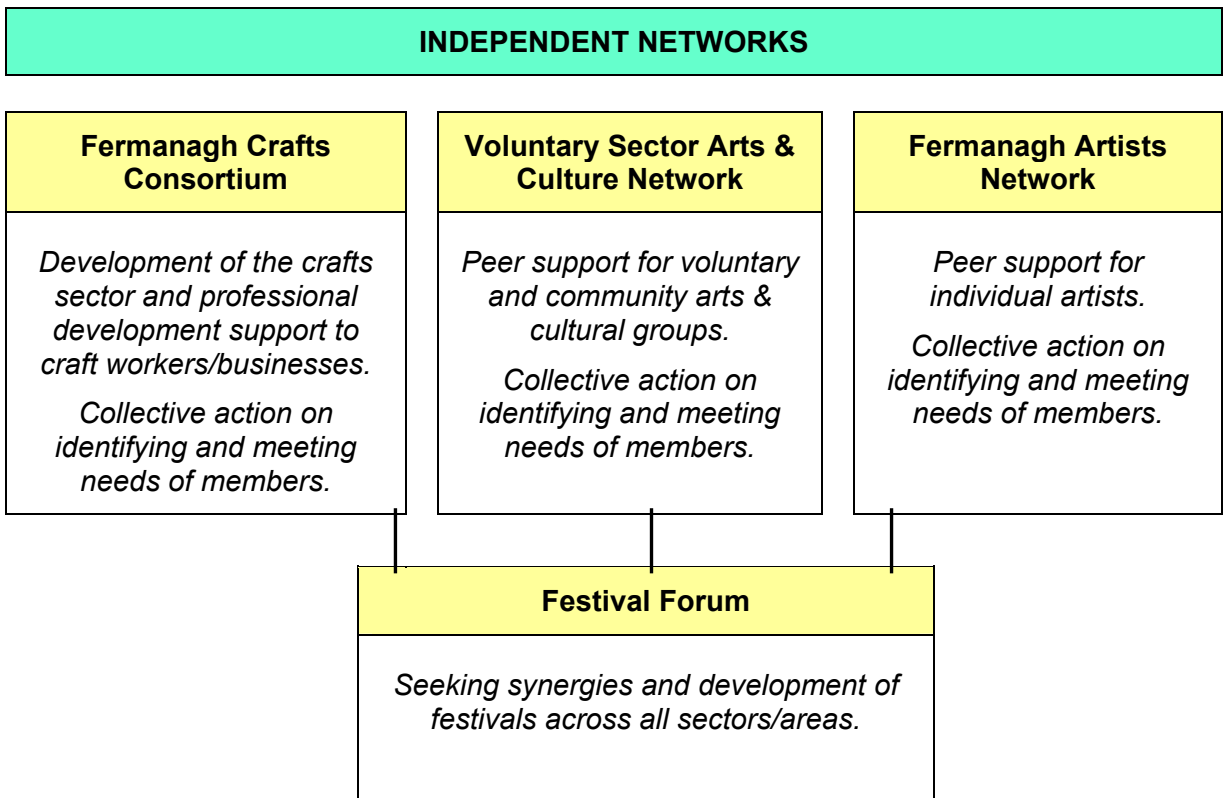
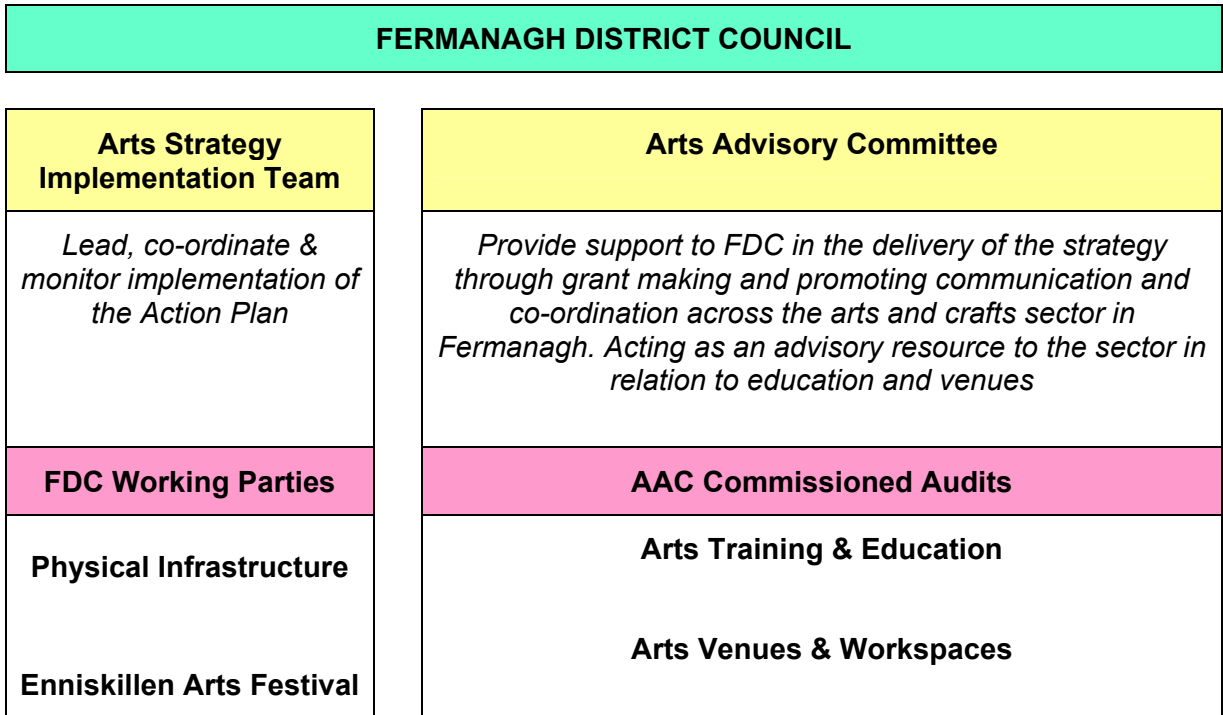
- The Arts Advisory Committee review of grant making will ensure it reflects the priority of promoting social inclusion and accessibility.
- The establishment of a Voluntary Sector Arts & Culture Network will link and support groups working with those who are marginalized or isolated in society.
- The development of a Festivals Forum will maximise the potential of Festivals to take arts out to everyone in the community.
- A Venue Providers Sub Committee to the Arts Advisory Committee will provide a vehicle for developing accessibility and new audiences.
- The Art of Regeneration Project will use Dance, Carnival Arts, Music and Drama, and Environmental Arts to promote social inclusion. (See Appendix Three)

## Draft Time Table Year One (2005/6)

	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 06	Feb	March	April	May
<b>Internal Infrastructure FDC</b>											
1.Arts & Culture Strategy Implementation Team	Meet	Regular Quarterly meetings									
2. Marketing Strategy for the Arts and Culture	Prepare strategy						Monitor Marketing Strategy each November				
3.Monitoring, Evaluation and Strategy							Monitor Strategy & report each December				
4.Arts Advisory Committee Review	Initiate and conduct review						Report	Monitor Grants May & November			
4a. Trainers & Education Audit Committee				Set Up	Audit						
4b. Venue and Wprkspaces Audit						Set Up	Audit				
<b>External Infrastructrue Development</b>											
5.Fermanagh Crafts Consortium Development Plan				Set up review process & implement			Report				
6.Voluntary Sector Arts & Culture Network				Set up	Meet			Meet			Meet
7.Fermanagh Artists Network			Set up	Meet			Meet			Meet	
8.Fermanagh Festivals Forum							Set Up		Meet		
<b>Fixed Life Working Parties</b>											
9.Physical Infrastrucutre Working Party				Set Up		Meet				Meet as required	
10.Enniskillen Festival Working Party			Set Up		Set Up					Meet as required	

*It is suggested that meetings be held both in the Town Hall, to create links with FDC and thereafter in locations across the county to ensure that work does not become solely focussed on the Council and Enniskillen*

## APPENDIX ONE - Proposed Infrastructure for Arts & Culture in Fermanagh



## **APPENDIX TWO - List of Contributors to Act 2 Consultations**

Andy Haliwell  
Ardess Art Society  
Ardhowen Theatre  
Bryony Flanagan  
Celebrating the Arts in Rural Areas  
Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann - Roslea  
Community Connections  
Creative Liaisons  
Hannah Curr  
Davy Kirkpatrick  
Dreamers and Weavers  
Dylan Quinn  
Enniskillen Amateur Dramatic Society  
Enniskillen Photographic Society  
Erne Music Collective  
Erne Arts  
F.D.C Marble Arch Caves  
Fermanagh Arts Advisory Committee  
Fermanagh College of Further and Higher Education  
Fermanagh County Museum  
Fermanagh Crafts Consortium  
Fermanagh Traditional Music Society  
Frances Morris  
Irish Central Border Area Network  
Janie Crone  
Jeanne Munroe  
Karen Weaver  
Making Music  
Material Things  
Nina K Jewellery  
Northern Ireland Theatre Association  
Ruthanne Baxter  
Share Arts  
Sheelin Irish Lace Museum  
Sliabh Beagh Cross-Border Partnership  
The Buttermarket  
The Clinton Centre  
Triskele Tattoos  
University of the Third Age (Erne)  
Western Education & Library Board - Creative Youth Partnership  
Women of the World  
Wove in Hove

## **APPENDIX THREE – The Fermanagh District Council Art of Regeneration Project 2005-2009**

### **Opening up and Sharing the Arts**

The programme is a 4 year grass roots multi strand creative community arts participatory programme that will strengthen the community arts infrastructure in Fermanagh, & equally, will improve people's access to that infrastructure within and between communities of cultural difference, providing a dynamic & high quality & self-perpetuating programme of artistic endeavour for those marginalized from the arts due to the nature of their rural location and / or disability.

### **Specific aims under the Art of Regeneration Programme**

- Develop a culturally diverse programme in a wide plethora of creative arts disciplines that will be delivered as an outreach initiative from the Share Arts Centre in Lisnaskea.
- Rejuvenate existing & forge new, links and new strategic partnerships within the community arts infrastructure of County Fermanagh.
- Develop new, innovative & self-perpetuating creative arts programmes that are both culturally diverse and dynamic as well as challenging for all beneficiaries & artists involved in the 4-year initiative.
- Support the introduction of a structured community arts outreach programme.
- Employ a full time Arts Coordinator to manage the 4-year initiative & 1 part time technician.
- Develop new opportunities for socially inclusive activity.
- Promote Good Relations.
- Promote sustainable development for the environment through the arts.
- Develop ethos for Health & Well Being throughout the art programmes activities.
- Create a sustainable model for community arts participation in Fermanagh.
- Establish Carnival arts in the North West.

### **Aims**

The programme aims to increase the profile of the arts on a more local level and improve the social inclusiveness of the arts by heightening the importance of creativity and cultural diversity for society generally in both social & economic terms. The proposed programme will focus the potential of the arts & arts related activities to help achieve other objectives in the areas of regeneration, community understanding, local image and social inclusion.

## **New Partnerships**

This will happen through the administering of an innovative and challenging programme that will help break down barriers to participation in the arts and encourage, as well as highlight the need for, cross –fertilization of ideas in terms of more partnership and joined-up working in the field of community arts. The objectives of this 4 year initiative will be to not only strengthen the current community arts infrastructure and growing dynamic of the arts, but also to encourage informal learning through the arts in areas such as emotional / physical health and well being, social inclusion & the raising awareness of environmental issues and strategies.

## **Benefits**

Fermanagh District Council understand the importance of culture and the arts in terms of being a vehicle through which community development can take place, peace building can be identified & as an aid to regeneration for society as a whole in relation to working towards pluralism & mutual understanding within and between communities of cultural difference. The programme will also be developmental in terms of using the art & social model through which to generate employment and encourage general health and well being – through youth capacity building, arts based skill developmental courses, improvement to accessibility to the arts for rural communities and people with disabilities.

\* The Art of Regeneration Programme will create challenging changes in the arts through a model that is both distinctive and will impact people’s lives in regard to the promotion and development and respect for the many cultures, beliefs and traditions of Northern Ireland.

\* The 4-year cultural programme will also develop opportunities through which to challenge stereotypes and division, in order to develop strong and solid pluralistic relationships for communities and society as a whole within and between communities of cultural difference.

\* The art of regeneration programme will help establish and develop understanding and increase co-operation between different cultural, ethnic and local community identities.

The target groups for this project will be rurally based community, voluntary & statutory groups including farming groups throughout the County of Fermanagh.

There are three components to the creation of a climate in which arts & culture can flourish:

- Skilled individuals
- Professional organisations
- Effective policy frameworks

The potential of this initiative will be within the developmental process of sustainability for cultural organisations which are able to contribute to the creation of a strong cultural sector within Co. Fermanagh.

## **Positive outcomes**

- Community learning & the creation of new creative opportunities
- Health & Well Being – through the arts
- Improved life skills and communication – through participatory arts involvement
- More involvement at a community level – increased participation in the arts
- Enhanced rural opportunities through which communities can have better access to the arts at a grass roots level
- Healthier active people and communities – through therapeutic arts activity and physical arts activity.
- Enabling communities to tackle local environment problems & improve their green environment through creative – informal learning – and through the enhancement of public spaces and the holistic benefit to people’s lives.
- Improved socially inclusive policies within the arts – disability / ethnic minorities / non-disabled individuals – Inclusion.
- Broad cross cutting themes that will directly impact rural focused activity in the arts.
- Creative programmes tailor-made that will explore local peoples natural and grass roots focused homegrown culture.
- Opportunities in the arts for Fermanagh and the NorthWest arising from peace to establish new links and partnerships within and between the NorthWest.
- A rich & Culturally dynamic new and innovative creative arts programme for 4 years

The programme will encompass the creative disciplines of contemporary dance, crafts, sculpture, carnival arts, animation & filmmaking, theatre, new media, literature & music.

The objective of each of the four strands of this programme will be to create a new quality of cultural activity & lifestyle for the wider community, working in partnership with key people focused on the development of the arts within Northern Ireland – partners – strengthening solidarity networks and creating Best Value principles for the citizens of Northern Ireland and in particular Fermanagh, through the contribution of a partnership support network that will have a huge impact both culturally, socially and economically within a County that has an evidently weak cultural and community arts infrastructure due to it’s TSN status & rural location.

## **Resources**

The National Lottery through the Arts Council of Northern Ireland has awarded: £339,300. Fermanagh District Council Our Partnership funding is £145,367 giving a total budget over the four years of £484,667. This includes a salary for a full time arts co-ordinator for the project and a part time technician.

## **The Four Strands proposed for the Art of Regeneration are:**

Dance Development Programme

Carnival Arts Development Programme

Drama & Music Development Programme

Environmental Sculpture Development Programme



**Prepared by**  
**Voluntary Arts Ireland**  
**on behalf of**  
**Fermanagh District Council**

**Further information, online and alternative versions from:**

**[www.fermanagh.gov.uk](http://www.fermanagh.gov.uk)**  
**[diane.henshaw@fermanagh.gov.uk](mailto:diane.henshaw@fermanagh.gov.uk)**

**July 2005**