

# RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 19 JULY 2011  
title: GENERAL REPORT  
submitted by: JOHN C HEAP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
principal author: KATHERINE RODGERS, ARTS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

## 1 **PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To update Committee on the work carried out by the Arts Development Service in June.

## 2 **ARTS DEVELOPMENT SERVICE - ROUND-UP OF ACTIVITY JUNE 2011**

### 2.1 **North West Sound Archive(NWSA) – Revisit, engagement programme**



#### **Sound Gems**

As part of its Revisit programme, Creativity Works, a Pennine Lancashire Partnership, has commissioned ADEPT to create work that responds directly to the wealth of material held in the collections of the North West Sound Archive, the largest collection of sound recordings in the UK, outside of London. They hope that their work will help to promote awareness and use of this invaluable resource.

As ADEPT explored the Archive, they discovered many ‘gems’ in the collections. That metaphor informed their approach to this project and led them to design and create a limited edition range of jewellery, comprising QR codes laser-etched onto hardwood which open audio clips from the Archive collection when scanned by smart phones. Sound Gem jewellery is available for purchase at Clitheroe Castle, home of the North West Sound Archive, at other Revisit venues and online.

(QR codes are square ‘bar codes’ that open web pages in smart phones equipped with a QR reader app. There are free QR readers apps available for all smart phone operating systems).

In the second strand of the project, ADEPT invited members of the Pennine Lancashire Poetry Stanza to write and record poems inspired by Clitheroe Castle, its grounds and the landscape. They then created a QR code Poetry Gem Trail, enabling visitors to listen to, and enjoy, the members’ poems at the locations which inspired them.

Visit [www.soundgems.co.uk](http://www.soundgems.co.uk) for more information, and to hear some of the clips. An interview by the artists featured in an excellent interview on the BBC Lancashire John Gillmore show.

Other heritage venues taking part are Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery, Haworth Art Gallery (Accrington), Rossendale Museum (Rawtenstall) and Towneley Hall (Burnley).

Laura Rodgers, Creativity Works Arts Engagement Officer adds *'It is fantastic that artists of this calibre and renown are coming to work with Pennine Lancashire heritage venues in this way. We want to breathe new life into the important but often overlooked collections in the museums and galleries, and encourage more people to visit and enjoy what is on offer.'*

This project is funded by Arts Council England and Renaissance North West.

## 2.2 Contemporary Heritage – TAKEN, Clitheroe Castle Grounds



Mid Pennine Arts initiated and are managing a collaboration with Lancashire Museum Service and RVBC on a project called Contemporary Heritage, a programme of site-specific commissions sited at heritage venues across Pennine Lancashire. The programme launched at Towneley Hall in September 2010. Clitheroe Castle, the second venue, opened in June 2011. The partnership project draws on the uniqueness of each site by commissioning artists of national and international standing to create new works in response to the history, architecture, collections or landscape of each site.

Contemporary classical composer Ailís Ní Ríain was awarded the Clitheroe commission. Her composition is inspired by the story of the Lancashire Witches and the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Witch Trials in 2012. Ailís has spent time imagining how they might have spent their final four months in captivity whilst awaiting trial. A sound installation has been created in the Castle Keep.

The aim of the commissions is to stimulate a response from current visitors and entice existing audiences to revisit the museum. Through the commissioning of contemporary art work, we aim to attract a new audience to Clitheroe Castle Museum and bring Clitheroe to the attention of audiences who will travel to destinations offering interesting and unusual contemporary art experiences. Please visit <http://www.midpenninearts.org.uk/contemporary-heritage> for more information and to view the excellent documentary film that has been created which can also be seen in the Castle Museum.

## 2.3 Kicking Leaves Literature Festival



We have supported Mid Pennine Arts to include Ribble Valley School children in the Kicking Leaves Literature Festival held in Autumn 2010. Partnering with Transdev, the bus company, some Ribble Valley children's poems will be reproduced on

coving posters and on display in Mainline buses from June with a potential audience of 300,000 passengers each month!

The festival aims to exercise the muscles of a child's imagination by providing opportunities for the children of Pennine Lancashire to work alongside professional writers, poets, storytellers, illustrators and other artists, to present a high quality programme of work for young people and their teachers during the Autumn Term of 2010. What makes the Festival different is that it focuses on the creativity of young people, encouraging them to write imaginatively, working alongside professional artists. There are opportunities for pupils and students at all levels, from nursery to primary, from special schools to secondary schools and colleges. The Festival is supported by a strong partnership including Lancashire Library Service, Towneley Hall, Renaissance North West and local councils.

#### 2.4 **Arts Regenerating Town Centres**

Through supporting local businesses this project aims to create a fresh buzz around the shop fronts in Clitheroe encouraging new and repeat shoppers and tourists into the area. By having exceptionally creative window displays the town will feel unique and vibrant. Traders will be given the opportunity to have expert advice on how to improve and develop their curb appeal by a Mary Portas Retail Master Class trainer from Preston College with additional support of local artists to unleash the potential of their window display.

There will be a Best Window competition for the public to get involved in over six months with prizes being awarded to the public and the businesses and a promotional campaign to support it.

It is hoped that this project will act as a pilot project that could be rolled out to other Ribble Valley areas if successful. The project will provide case studies and will be evaluated to create a base for future development.

This project is supported by RVBC Arts, Tourism and Regeneration departments and Creativity Works, the Pennine Lancashire Arts Partnership.

#### 2.5 **Spot On Rural**

Touring Please see the attached document for last 12 months activity of Spot On, which brings professional theatre, dance, comedy and music to our doorstep.

#### **Other Ongoing Arts Development projects:**

- Arts Development Forward Planning 2011/12
- Arts Excellence Awards – Grant Scheme
- Arts Active Ageing Project
- Arts Funding / Development Advice Sessions
- Creative Skills Database
- Castle Museum Steward's Gallery Development and Programming 2011/12
- Community Rail Festival 2011
- Platform Gallery - Development and Programming 2011/12
- POPL - Perspectives of Pennine Lancashire Visual Arts Network
- Ribble Valley Art Alliance
- Ribble Valley Arts Alliance Website [www.ribbonvalleyarts.org](http://www.ribbonvalleyarts.org)
- Ribble Valley Arts Festival 2011/12
- Recycling Books Project - Lancashire libraries and RVBC Recycling department
- Ribble Valley Art What's On Emailout
- Ribble Valley Sculpture Trail
- Ribble Valley Public Art Maintenance 10/11
- Ribble Valley Borough Council Website, Arts Section
- Ribble Valley Arts Trail
- Spot on Rural Touring – bringing professional theatre, music and comedy to village halls within the Ribble Valley

5 **RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE**

Note the contents of this report.

JOHN C HEAP  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

For further information please ask for Katherine Rodgers tel: 01200 440311.

If you would like to know more information about arts development projects please contact Katherine Rodgers on 01200 443071 or [arts.development@ribblevalley.gov.uk](mailto:arts.development@ribblevalley.gov.uk)