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# Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Report for:</b>	Housing and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Title of report:</b>	Arts and Culture - Activity Report
<b>Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> March 2024
<b>Report on behalf of:</b>	Councillor Sheron Wilkie, Portfolio Holder for Place
<b>Part:</b>	I
<b>If Part II, reason:</b>	N/A
<b>Appendices:</b>	N/A
<b>Background papers:</b>	None
<b>Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:</b>	

## Report Author / Responsible Officer

Diane Southam – Assistant Director Place Community and Enterprise



<b>Corporate Priorities</b>	A clean, safe and enjoyable environment Building strong and vibrant communities Ensuring economic growth and prosperity Ensuring efficient, effective and modern service delivery Climate and ecological emergency
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards
<b>Purpose of the report:</b>	1. To provide an update on Arts and Culture activity
<b>Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s):</b>	1. That Members note the report and identify any areas where they require additional information
<b>Period for post policy/project review:</b>	N/A

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This paper provides an update on Arts and Culture activities during 2023/24 to date. It should be noted that the arts and culture activities have a direct impact on the wellbeing of our residents.

## 2. Arts, Culture and Wellbeing

### 2.1 Dance

#### 2.1.1 'Let's Dance' - seated dance sessions in Supported Housing for older adults and those with low mobility (April – date)

- Weekly seated dance sessions in two Supported Housing Schemes in Hemel Hempstead and Tring for DBC tenants and the wider community to support active ageing. A new session started at William Crook House in Hemel Hempstead in February.
- Partnership project with DBC Supported Housing Team and Dacorum Community Dance.
- Funded until December 2023 by DBC - an application was successful to the National Lottery Awards for All for just under £10,000 to continue the sessions up to December 2024. It also includes funding for weekly sessions for learning disabled adults at Dacorum Day Service.
- From April 2023- date:
  - Sessions delivered: 60
  - Attendance: 722

#### 2.1.2 Wake Up and Dance – short drop-in online daily dance sessions for all ages (ongoing)

- Ten minutes of freestyle dancing each weekday morning for all ages and abilities, supporting health and wellbeing.
- Partnership project with BEEE Creative and Dacorum Community Dance
- Funded until December 2024 with up to 20 daily participants. Currently working with DBC's Health Inequalities Officer and CDA Herts to engage more people from ethnically diverse communities.
- From April 2023- date:
  - Sessions delivered: 212
  - Attendance: 2,648

#### 2.1.3 Dance Re:ignite - funding success for a two year community dance programme for adults and people with disabilities and/or those disadvantaged accessing dance (2023/4 – 2025/6)

- £100,000 funding awarded in July by Arts Council England for a 2-year community dance programme which will include workshops, performances, festivals and training.
- A partnership project with BEEE Creative, East Herts, Watford and Three Rivers District Councils
- Project delivery started in January 2024 with weekly workshops being held at The Old Town Hall until end of March. There will then be a performance and workshop tour to community venues and settings and a festival in July 2024.

### 2.2 Visual Art

#### 2.2.1 Recycled art sculpture competition and event - a project challenging schools and children's/youth groups to create a sculpture out of recycled materials, culminating in an event in Hemel Town Centre on 14th October to promote National Recycle Week (July-October 2023)

- Sculpture challenge competition launched in July 2023 and closed on 6<sup>th</sup> October. 29 sculptures were submitted.
- An event was held in the Marlowes Shopping Centre on 14<sup>th</sup> October, displaying the sculptures with recycled art activities and local environmental organisations involved. Competition winners were chosen by a panel of judges and certificates awarded by the Mayor. Prizes included workshops with a local artist or organisation for the winning schools/group.
- Partnership project with DBC's Climate Change Team and Sustainability Officers, Hemel BID and Marlowes Shopping Centre.

#### 2.2.2 **Colourful Minds: art for wellbeing programme** –social prescribing programme for adults involving visual art, craft and mixed media sessions to support mental health and wellbeing (May- date).

- These popular sessions run weekly at the South Hill Centre with taster sessions held in the Employment and Wellbeing Hub to engage those from low socio-economic backgrounds and those who may not normally access to creative activities.
- Two courses have been delivered since April 2023 with a third starting in March 2024, which is currently over subscribed.
- Delivered in partnership with Herts Inclusive Theatre and in collaboration with Dacorum Healthy Hub and South Hill Centre.
- From April 2023- date:
  - Sessions delivered: 28
  - Attendance: 205

#### 2.2.3 **Subway art projects**

##### **Grovehill underpass art/mural project** (May 2023 - date)

- Partnership project with Hemel Hempstead Police, Grovehill Neighbourhood Association, Osborne Property Service Ltd. (OPSL), Hertfordshire County Council and Astley Cooper School to improve the underpass outside Astley Cooper School used by many of their pupils.
- Cllr. Colette-Wyatt Lowe has funded £800 from the HCC Locality Budget to support the project with in-kind equipment and paint donations from OPSL.
- The mural will be designed and painted by students and art teachers from Astley Cooper School
- The painting of the mural has been delayed due to the school's time constraints and inclement weather and will take place once the weather improves in Spring/Summer 2024.

##### **Plough Roundabout underpasses**

- Plans are underway to paint the underpasses leading to the town centre
- Partnership project with local artist Anna Schofield and Dacorum Creatives who will design and paint the underpasses with the help of students from Hemel Hempstead School
- Anna will deliver workshops for the students to help create the design, using the Think Hemel place branding colour palette
- OPSL have offered to support in-kind and there is £3096 funding from Hemel BID to put towards the project

#### 2.3 **Theatre and Performance**

##### 2.3.1 **Nothing on Earth** – theatre and storytelling project about inspiring women in Hertfordshire (Jan-December 2023)

- Partnership project with Pursued By A Bear Theatre Co (PBAB), Hertfordshire Libraries, Three Rivers District Council and other Hertfordshire theatre venues, funded by Arts Council England and the University of Hertfordshire (UH).
- The project has involved a theatre show at The Old Town Hall, workshops with DBC Supported Housing tenants, two short films and a book.
- A film and book launch event was held at UH Arts in December 2023 to celebrate the end of the project with DBC Supported Housing tenants attending.
- The films are now available on the [UH Arts website](#) to watch online with information about the project.
- The film '[Women of Courage](#)' was created using stories told by DBC Supported Housing tenants about the inspiring women in their lives.
- Currently in discussion with PBAB to develop the project and submit another Arts Council bid.

### 2.3.2 **The Shakespeare Circus** –Shakespeare workshops and performances for schools (Feb-July 2023)

- Worked with Gobstoppers Theatre Company in Berkhamsted to deliver accessible and inclusive theatre workshops and performances for schools in Dacorum with funding support from Councillor Locality Budgets.
- 400 primary pupils from Hemel Hempstead attended workshops and performances of a Midsummer Night's Dream in the woodlands at Boxmoor Trust, including pupils from a special educational needs school.
- Performances and workshops also took place at the Rectory Lane Cemetery Project for Berkhamsted schoolchildren.
- A performance for the public and local community took place at the Boxmoor Trust to raise funds to support the education element.

### 2.3.3 **Nysa Projects: Planet Munch** – musical puppet shows and workshops about healthy eating for families and schools (Feb-July 2023).

- Supported a successful research and development project, funded by Arts Council England, to create and deliver interactive musical puppet performances and workshops for children, families and schools to promote and educate on healthy eating.
- Performances took place in June in Hemel Hempstead Library and at two local primary schools, engaging 240 schoolchildren.
- Based on the success of the R&D phase the project has received funding to deliver further performances and workshops in Dacorum with plans to submit another Arts Council application to develop a touring model.

## 2.4 **Other/General**

2.4.1 Involvement in strategic countywide cultural groups and Dacorum partnership groups: Hertfordshire Cultural Education Partnership steering group (HCEP), Herts Association of Cultural Officers (HACO), Creative Hertfordshire network group, Dacorum Families First Partnerships, Dacorum Youth Strategy Group.

2.4.2 Support and advice for local artists and cultural/creative organisations with arts funding opportunities and applications, to increase arts investment and cultural activities. Promotion of local arts and cultural activities and opportunities through the Active Dacorum initiative, via the website and social media pages.