

Peter D. Taylor
Consultancy and Research

Arts in the City
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Evaluation
for
the big step

Peter Taylor
Christine Hamilton

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56, Turnberry Road, GLASGOW G11 5AP
Tel: 0141 586 7588/ Fax: 0141 586 7529/ peter@pdtaylor.com/www.pdtaylor.com

■ Monitoring and evaluation ■ Economic and social regeneration ■ Community development ■ Partnership processes

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Executive Summary

1. The year long Arts in the City project was sponsored by 'the big step' Social Inclusion Partnership and funded by the Scottish Arts Council, using National Lottery funds, and Glasgow City Council. It aimed to offer experience of participation in arts activities to young people who were in the transition from care to independence (*Section 1*).
2. We completed the systematic collection of data begun by the project itself, and analysed it. It gives a rich picture of people's experience of the project, but not its possible longer-term impact. However we sought to assess whether the immediate outputs and outcomes were consistent with progress towards longer-term changes (*Section 2*).
3. Some of the project's primary objectives specifically concerned increasing awareness of and participation in the arts; others were about reducing the social exclusion of young people and increasing their independence in the community. No requirement to meet specific employment or training objectives was specified.
4. It also had *secondary* objectives concerned with influencing arts organisations. Ways of achieving these were not so clearly established.
5. There was no fundamental alteration to the objectives of the project in operation. It adapted to circumstances in a variety of ways (*Section 3*).
6. Arts activities were led by three experienced local organisations specialising in video, photography and drama. They were delivered in six short blocks with exhibitions or performances at the end of each, culminating in one major multi-media performance. A wide variety of prestigious locations were used to showcase the work of participants. The project also offered participants the chance to take part in a programme of accompanied visits to theatrical and musical events and visual arts exhibitions in the city.
7. A total of 47 people attended at least one workshop. The average number of workshops that each attended was 8.0, and the average attendance per session was 3.1. The typical experience involved intensive work with very small groups, with individuals dropping in and out of the programme (*Section 4*).
8. The appointment of a full time Arts Development Worker was important to making the project possible. It was delivered in relative independence from other *the big step* and Social Work services.
9. New partnerships between arts organisations and Social Work were developed. The key mechanism was a Steering Group. Although its membership and agenda were appropriate it was not always able to resolve the issues that were raised (*5.1-5.10*).
10. Any vision of using the work to empower young people more thoroughly must be a long term one, but their contributions to the ongoing evaluation influenced current and future activities. (*5.11-5.14*).
11. The partnership between Social Work services and other agencies was of key importance for recruiting participants and caused some frustrations. Leaving Care Services promoted the project extensively. Information was less widely received in residential care settings, as a result of high turnover of young people and difficulties in contacting all staff. Lessons were being learned as the project progressed (*5.15-5.20*).

12. The venues used received a mostly enthusiastic reaction from participants (5.21-5.25).
13. Provision of the required staff presence at workshops in addition to arts tutors, and defining its role, sometimes proved difficult. Demands on Social Work staff meant that they attended less often than hoped. Involvement could be increased with greater advance information and planning (5.26-5.32).
14. The objectives of the project required it to work with challenging behaviour, and it appears to have had a reasonable degree of success. Such behaviour raises unfamiliar issues for some staff. The guidelines that the project produced are of wider applicability (5.33-5.43).
15. No specific target had been set for the number of participants and perceptions of the relative degree of success achieved vary. The project was set up to find ways to involve young people facing difficulties, and its flexibility allowed many to return after missing elements. A 20% minority attended large numbers of workshops.
16. The majority of participants were male, spread across the age range. Only a minority came from residential care, but those that did attended relatively well. The high proportion looking for work confirms the high degrees of social exclusion involved.
17. The benefits of the gallery and theatre visits were concentrated upon the small numbers who were most involved with the project (*Section 6*).
18. The programme met its specifically artistic expectations in many respects. The emphasis on exhibition and performance brought young people very positive experiences, though it affected the process in the workshops. A high standard of artistic output was reached
19. Arts organisations learnt about the difficulties and potential of collaboration, which improved during the project.
20. Young people's overall evaluation of the arts work was extremely positive and confirmed by observers. The things they enjoyed were mostly closely related to the artistic work undertaken, with a mixture of learning and fun being emphasised. There were no strongly felt issues about the programme itself that undermined attendance (*Section 7*).
21. The staff involved observed evidence of changes in participants that, however individual and fragile, relate to key life skills. The most identifiable gains were made by individuals who were most involved.
22. In spite of the brief average involvement at least 50% of participants reported improved self-confidence, attitude to meeting new people and communication skills and almost 50%, improved team-working abilities.
23. Almost all young people consulted wanted to come back to the project. The extent to which the project created the skills or confidence to allow people to extend the experience in other ways, and helped to create more effective 'progression' routes, is more in doubt (*Section 8*).
24. A summary of the strategic strengths and weaknesses of the completed project, and the opportunities and threats that will be faced in continuing and developing the work is presented (*Section 9*).
25. The conclusions of the evaluation are summarised (*Section 10*) and a series of recommendations applicable to future work are offered (*Section 11*).

Introduction

- 1.1 The first Arts in the City project ran from May 2002 to March 2003 and was sponsored by '*the big step*' Social Inclusion Partnership. It was funded by the Scottish Arts Council, using National Lottery funds allocated to its 'Arts and Social Inclusion' programme. Cash and in-kind funding was also received from Glasgow City Council Social Work Services and Cultural & Leisure Services.
- 1.2 The project aimed to offer young people who were in the transition from care to independence an opportunity to experience participation in mainstream arts activities from which they might otherwise be excluded and to increase their awareness of and access to art facilities in Glasgow.
- 1.3 It consisted of a series of 'blocks', each a short series of workshops in various arts activities and media, together with a variety of presentations, trips and visits. These 'blocks' are referred to throughout and described more precisely in section 4.
- 1.4 A substantial amount of attention was paid to evaluation in the design of the project and during the period of its operation information was collected both for ongoing evaluation and as a contribution to this final evaluation. The collection of information has been completed and this report has been compiled by Peter Taylor, a researcher and consultant specialising in community development and regeneration, and Christine Hamilton, Director of the Centre for Cultural Policy Research at the University of Glasgow. Unless clearly designated as quotations from interviews, the opinions stated here are their own and not necessarily those of *the big step* or any other agency.

Evidence and Methods

- 2.1 A systematic approach to the monitoring and evaluation of the project was specified in the original funding application. It provided for basic monitoring of participants, end of block evaluations, including Focus Groups and forms returned by young people, and an overall final evaluation.
- 2.2 A good deal of material was gathered during the project and immediately after its end, and this has already been used to influence subsequent activities and project proposals. However subsequent staff turnover prevented immediate completion of data collection for the final evaluation and analysis of the material collected.
- 2.3 This report is based upon the following principal sources of information:
- A record kept by the Arts Development Worker (ADW) of all participants, including which activities they participated in and some basic demographic information
 - Accounts of the work undertaken in each block compiled by the ADW after each was complete, including attendance records; plus other project documents
 - Records of Focus Group discussions with young participants after the ends of blocks 1, 2 and 3
 - Detailed evaluation sheets filled in by young people, principally, we understand, at these Focus Groups, plus a handful after block 5. None appear to have been completed after block 4, and none were attempted after the final block six, being replaced by interviews aimed at informing this final evaluation
 - Those interviews, conducted by *big step* staff with eight young people after the end of the project, six in June/July 2003 and two in December 2003
 - In depth interviews¹ with nine Steering Group members or arts staff working on the project; seven were undertaken at the close of the project and two, plus one re-interview in December 2003-January 2004 (see Acknowledgements); unfortunately one of the arts companies involved, GMAC was not represented due to staff changes
 - Material illustrating the artistic outputs of the project (video, scripts, photographs etc).
- 2.4 The original evaluation framework suggested that at the final stage there would be an “attempt to contact young people who failed to sustain involvement in the project”, but this has not proved feasible in the time available.
- 2.5 Analysis of the interview and evaluation material is a little complicated. Participants filled in different sections of the evaluation form depending

¹ Quotations have been reconstructed from notes taken during interviews

upon whether they had attended previous blocks or not, and the design of the form was also changed slightly between blocks. However, the information that would allow us to discover whether 'returners' had previously filled in another evaluation, and if so, which one, does not appear to have been preserved. We have accounts of 23 identifiable experiences of Arts in the City blocks, but cannot say with certainty how many different individuals these represent.

- 2.6 In addition the end of project interviews with young people were based on a schedule that was in many sections the same as that used for the block evaluations. We have therefore for many purposes analysed the interview data along with the evaluation data, which allows for greater numbers and a fuller representation of experience throughout the duration of the project. Again, it is not certain how many individuals are represented, but comparison of their age and gender profiles and workshop choices with the known characteristics of all participants suggests that the results of this combined analysis are broadly representative.
- 2.7 It is perhaps unfortunate that the opportunity of the interviews was not used to explore in a little more depth young people's feelings about their experiences and what they had gained.
- 2.8 Nevertheless, the materials available add up to a rich picture of what the project attempted to achieve, what people felt about it at the time and soon after, and what issues arose. Any analysis of its possible longer-term impact must depend upon extrapolation from this information. We suggest that attention should be paid in future to a more consistent recording of who participants were and how each responded.
- 2.9 It cannot be expected, given the nature of the work and the relatively small degree of commitment required from participants, that a detailed recording of possible outcomes in their lives would be feasible or, if it were achieved, that the influence of the project could be clearly identified. As with many innovative projects, an evaluation on this scale can only trace whether previously untried processes appear to have worked in practice and achieved their intended outputs, and whether the immediate outcomes, as perceived by those involved, are consistent with progress towards the longer term changes to which the project aspired to contribute.

Project Objectives

3.1 The application for SAC funding contained the following 'Aims'

"1. To support young people in/leaving care in Glasgow to develop their social networks, skills and confidence through participation in community-based arts activities.

2. To increase the number of young people leaving care participating in the arts in Glasgow, through a distinct programme of activity, alongside the delivery of support in pursuing other mainstream arts opportunities.

3. To work towards *the big step* SIP's aims and in line with their principles."

3.2 In alternative language, these might be seen as the broader *outcomes* that the project sought to achieve.

3.3 The application went on to specify the following 'Objectives'. These might be described as the more specific *outputs* through which it sought to achieve broader outcomes.

"1. To provide opportunities for young people in/leaving care in Glasgow to participate in arts activities in a way that is responsive to their needs and abilities.

2. To support young people in/leaving care to interact with others in an environment that supports the development of communication, team working and listening skills.

3. To provide a safe environment for young people in/leaving care to express themselves using a variety of means.

4. To work with Glasgow City Council Cultural & Leisure Services, the Social Work Leaving Care Team and community arts organisations to ensure mainstream arts opportunities are responsive to the needs of young people in/leaving care.

5. To elicit the views of young people in/leaving care regarding the preferred shape of a future or continued project."

3.4 It is made clear that the principal way in which the project was seen as "working towards *the big step* SIP's aims" was as part of its Health Strategy. Most of the objectives of that strategy were seen as relevant to one or more of the above project objectives (see Appendix B). Both by working directly with young people and by influencing agencies, the project was seen as a contribution to reducing the social exclusion of young people and increasing their independence in the community.

3.5 In summary, the project's *primary* objectives were focused on the experiences and opportunities that could be provided for young people in the particular circumstances of leaving care; some specifically concerned awareness of and participation in the arts; others were about the more

general personal benefits that young people might obtain as a result. It also had *secondary* objectives concerned with influencing arts organisations.

- 3.6 These primary objectives, as is the case with much youth work, especially with groups that are disadvantaged and excluded from the labour market, do not specify a particular pre-set agenda of outcomes that participants could be expected to achieve. They refer instead to achieving some movement, towards different personal goals for each individual, and leading towards greater social inclusion in different ways and to differing extents. As one Steering Group member expressed it:

“It depends on a young person’s starting point. Just to be able to turn up every week might be a major achievement for them. Others might find a hidden talent and go on to develop it for the rest of their lives.”

- 3.7 The summary of objectives gives no indication that there was any expectation that the project could lead directly to ‘hard’ practical outcomes, such as entry to jobs or educational courses, for the young people involved. One Steering Group member believes that it was originally envisaged that there would be such ‘hard’ outcomes. S/he recognised that “the achievements have been much more on the emotional front” and argued that these may eventually lead to outcomes such as jobs. But so far as we can determine it was precisely such achievements of an ‘emotional’ nature that were always at the core of the project’s stated objectives.

- 3.8 The Steering Group members and other staff interviewed all gave their own accounts of the objectives of the project in terms that stayed close to, and were entirely compatible with, those stated in the original proposal, even if they had only become involved subsequently.

- 3.9 The secondary objectives of influencing arts organisations contain several possible components. The project application refers at various points to intentions to:

“Inform arts organisations about this group and help them to adapt their services to meet their needs and prevent further exclusion
Introduce young people to the arts venues/ events of Glasgow and overcome barriers to access.
Skills building in arts organisations. Enable them to work with the group and each other.”

- 3.10 There appear to be at least four main possible types of influence that could be involved.

- building the capacity of the arts organisations involved in the project to work with this and other socially excluded groups
- identifying good practice from the experience and disseminating it to other arts organisations

- influencing the future behaviour of exhibition and performance venues towards this group of young people through experiences gained from their visits
- encouraging arts organisations and venues to offer more opportunities to young people to become either spectators or participants.

3.11 Steering Group members expressed ambitious objectives such as “every arts organisation in Glasgow to be aware of young people leaving care as a group they should be tailoring their services for”. But we are not so sure that the project clearly identified the possible ways of approaching these secondary objectives, and its priorities for addressing them, as we are in the case of the primary objectives.

3.12 None of the interviewees thought that there had been any fundamental alteration to the objectives of the project whilst it was in operation, though it had adapted to circumstances in a variety of ways, as described below.

3.13 The only change that might be considered to be a change in a basic parameter, though not in practice a major change in how the project operated, was a relaxation of the lower age limit for involvement. The limits had been specified as 16-25, because young people leave care at 16. But in practice it was felt to be desirable to engage with a few young people while they were still in care at 15, so that project activities contribute to preserving some continuity in their lives at this point.

Project Activities

- 4.1 The plans for the project were based upon the experience of a short pilot project conducted in autumn 2001². This tested the idea of delivering arts activities in short blocks with exhibitions or performances at the end of each, so that young people could achieve something within a short space and benefit from relatively brief involvement. As a result the proposed programme was to be split into 6-week blocks with a small event at the end of each, 'culminating in a multi-media performance in a high profile venue', rather than a yearlong programme with one closing event.
- 4.2 Provision for publicity materials was included in the bid, and part of the Development Worker's remit was dedicated to promotion of the project amongst young people and appropriate social work staff. The expected role of social work staff in recruiting and supporting participants was also discussed in advance, as described below.
- 4.3 The total cash budget for the project was £90,448, with contributions of £18,331 from Glasgow City Council and £7,500 from *the big step* to supplement a Scottish Arts Council grant of £64,617. In addition in kind contributions were expected to be received to the value of £9,794 from the City Council, £2,748 from the arts organisations involved and £4,200 from *the big step*.
- 4.4 The programme of activity - drama, video and photography - was led by three experienced arts organisations in the city: TAG Theatre Company, GMAC (Glasgow Media Access Centre), and Street Level Photoworks. Both TAG and Street Level had been involved in the earlier pilot, but GMAC were involved for the first time.
- 4.5 Street Level Photoworks provided training in black and white photography, digital photography, and collage work as well as developing and printing of photos. Tag Theatre Company examined all the elements that go towards producing a show, including drama skills, improvisation, devising, scripting and production skills. GMAC provided training in digital video production and editing.
- 4.6 According to the project application, it was the possibilities for collaboration between arts that excited both the arts organisations and young people themselves. "None of the arts organisations have worked together in this way before, and they have been meeting regularly since the pilot to discuss the many creative possibilities for the larger project."

² The authors of this report have described that pilot and the plans for the Arts in the City project as a Case Study in their evaluation of the Scottish Arts Council's Arts and Social Exclusion Programme ('Not Just A Treat': Arts and Social inclusion (Hamilton C, Goodlad R & Taylor P) Scottish Arts Council (2002) www.culturalpolicy.arts.gla.ac.uk/getFile.php?id=14)

- 4.7 The programme was split into blocks as planned, with a total of 20 workshops in the first block. The numbers were slightly less in subsequent blocks because, whilst two sessions of Drama a week continued to be provided, photography and video changed to one longer session in response to young people's requests. The sixth block contained almost twice as many sessions as the others as a result of preparations for the final presentation. In addition the photographers required a number of 'field trips'.
- 4.8 Although not every unit had a specific closing presentation for every medium, a wide variety of prestigious locations were used to showcase the work of participants, especially the photographers. Work was shown initially at GMAC and later at Glasgow School of Art, the Tramway and the Glasgow Art Fair. Some displays included video presentations (some of them showing the drama groups in action). At the start of the second unit a launch event at the Arches presented work from all three media in the presence of the Minister of Culture & Tourism. The Theatre group prepared a Pantomime, performed it publicly, and toured it to two special schools. The final performance, again at the Arches, included material from all the media.
- 4.9 The project also offered participants the chance to take part in a programme of accompanied visits to theatrical and musical events and visual arts exhibitions in the city. The following visits were completed.

Programme of arts visits

'Terra Nova' at the Glasgow School of Art - highlights of graduation show
 'Beck's Futures' - ten short-listed artists at the CCA
 'Skate Shorts' - collection of best short films about skateboarding. CCA
 'Journey' - dance, drama and choral music by the University of Namibia Choir and Dancehouse Scotland.
 'The Odyssey in Glasgow' - promenade performance by Italian company 'Stalker Teatro'.
 'The Importance of Being Earnest' - at the Citizens Theatre
 'Heavier Than Air' - exhibition by Tom McKendrick at the Collins Gallery, Strathclyde University.
 'Aladdin' - the Kings Theatre Christmas Panto
 'Glasgow Art Fair'
 Royal Scottish National Orchestra concert

- 4.10 A summary record of participation by young people in the main workshop programme is given in Table 1. Details of who participated, and of involvement in visits etc are discussed below (6.1 -). A total of 47 people attended at least one workshop³. Three participated in three different arts, one in two arts, and 31 in one only. Some of these did of course attend several, or even all of the blocks, in their one preferred art form.

³ According to records supplied to us. Reports written at the time say 48.

Table 1 Numbers of young people involved

	Recorded participants	%	Total workshops attended (A)	Average per participant	Total workshops attended (B)
Video	11	31.4	63	5.7	67
Photography	11	31.4	98	8.9	104
Drama	20	57.1	201	10.1	203
Total individuals	35	100.0	362	10.3	374

Source: records of all participants

(A) By participants of whom full details are recorded

(B) Including 12 one-off attendances by other 'unrecorded' participants

4.11 The project reported that seven young people consistently attended all blocks (whether in one or more art forms). But the typical experience involved, as expected, a significant amount of 'coming and going'. As a result the average number of workshops that each participant attended was 10.3 (or 8.0 if we include twelve who did not attend for long enough for proper details of their identity to be recorded).

4.12 Drama attracted the highest number of attendances, not only because it continued to run more and shorter workshops than the other forms, but because more people in total were attracted to try it at least once. However, given the longer durations involved, the people attracted to photography probably spent longer in workshops than other groups.

4.13 Table 2 records the total number of workshops that were actually offered in each art form over six blocks. It is very clear that this was a programme that worked intensively with typically very small groups of young people - perhaps too small for fully effective group work as required especially for some Drama work. The average attendance per session was the same for Drama and Photography. The Video workshops appear to have had the greatest problems in attracting and retaining participants (though as we shall see, this is not reflected in the satisfaction of those that did attend).

Table 2 Workshop totals

	Total no. of workshops offered	Average attendance per session*
Video	36	1.9
Photography	29	3.6
Drama	57	3.6
TOTAL	122	3.1

* Based on totals (B) in Table 1

Management and Organisation

Management arrangements and Partnership working

- 5.1 The project funded the appointment of a full time Arts Development Worker (ADW), who was responsible for the day to day promotion, administration and planning of activities. She was employed by Glasgow City Council's Cultural and Leisure Services (CLS), but for one day a week was physically located in the Council's Leaving Care Services (LCS) headquarters, which was of great assistance both in making links with that section of Social Work and with young people. She also worked closely with *the big step's* Social Support Development Officer.
- 5.2 Although the ADW herself is concerned that the arts organisations may have been confused about her role, the others involved praise the role played by the post and its holder in making a complicated and innovative project possible.
- 5.3 The role of *the big step* in providing practical support, additional contact with young people and chairing the Steering Group (as well as a direct financial contribution) was important. Interviewees suggested that operating within the framework of a Social Inclusion Partnership gave a flexibility that it might be difficult for a mainstream service operated by a local authority department to reproduce.
- 5.4 Although the project was clearly designed to contribute to *the big step's* health and general objectives, it does not ever appear to have been intended that it should form part of a closely integrated package of support for young people. "The project was not meant to be part of a Social Work programme, it was meant to be something different that could stand on its own" (SW interviewee). Examples of integration, such as one where a participant was matched with a mentor as part of another *big step* project, appear to have been exceptional. One consequence is that young people did not come to the project with, or as part of, any form of Personal Development Plan that might have defined more clearly what they expected to get out of it. The partners might wish to consider whether or not any closer integration of services would be desirable in future.
- 5.5 We were told that the original germ of the project came from CLS staff seeing the potential to develop a new form of partnership, which as well as allowing new approaches to arts work might allow access to funds not directly available to local authorities. Certainly new partnerships had to be created for the project, and in particular far closer links between Social Work services and arts organisations than people had previously experienced. Leaving Care Services report that it was quite new to them to have arts organisations so closely involved; and one arts worker found it "good when roles are clearly defined and agencies are playing to their

strengths”, with arts organisations not having to take on the initial recruitment of young people.

- 5.6 To some such arrangements may seem very complex. One arts worker described it as “a very complicated management structure” and was “used to something much simpler.” But by the standards of interagency work in other fields, the structure does not appear to us to have been exceptionally unwieldy.
- 5.7 The key mechanism, apart from the good informal contacts between staff, was the creation of a Steering Group. *The big step*, all the participating arts organisations, all relevant sections of Social Work and appropriate CLS staff were represented. It was undoubtedly, as one member explains, “a learning process for the Steering Group. CLS and the arts organisations are used to communicating with each other, but the relationships with the other partners are new”.
- 5.8 Although the Steering Group had an appropriate list of members and continued to provide them with a Forum to discuss their collaboration in the project, views on its effectiveness vary. Again, this may depend upon people’s prior expectations and experience of partnership working. For one member “It has had a real influence in the shaping of the project” although “It was always going to be difficult bringing disparate agencies together”. For another there were “an unusually large number of meetings particularly in the run up to the start” and they were “not relevant to me, not a good use of time”.
- 5.9 Except perhaps for the Group member just quoted, frustrations with the Steering Group appear not to have related to any basic inappropriateness of its membership or agenda, but rather to the fact that although some key issues for the project were regularly aired there, this did not necessarily lead to their resolution. “Similar issues kept coming from the arts workshops but there was not much change after they were raised at the Steering Group”.
- 5.10 In fact much of the frustration centres on the closely related issues of Social Work staff support for workshops and for the recruitment of participants, which we shall consider below. Opinions vary on the extent to which Steering Group discussion moved these issues along. But the difficulty of resolving them clearly lay largely outwith the Steering Group, though variations in attendance by different sections may have contributed. In particular the Families and Children Section of Social Work, dealing with foster care, was little involved during the initial Arts in the City project.

Involvement of young people

- 5.11 The project’s objectives refer to a desire to involve young people in its development, specifically referring to deciding priorities for a future project. Short sessions of workshops within a time limited project

however offer little scope for a thoroughgoing 'empowerment' approach to youth work. The ADW's vision of working towards a situation where young people might 'take ownership' of the work and set up a project in their own right is still very much a long term one, and to realise it would require substantial additional support.

- 5.12 Within the arts programme itself, there seems to have been reasonable flexibility of approach to respond to ideas that came from young people, notably the idea of a Panto performance by the Drama group. However there does not appear to have been time or capacity for a fully developed approach to deriving themes for exhibition or performance from the experiences and desires of the participants. The theme of 'Pressure', which featured strongly in the final performance, apparently came from one of the arts organisations.
- 5.13 However the monitoring and evaluation framework has allowed for a substantial amount of feedback from young people. It is interesting to see that some of those who took part in Focus Group discussions were pushing for greater involvement, asking for feedback on the implementation of their discussions and suggesting that they should get Steering Group minutes.
- 5.14 As a result the one specific objective that was set in this area has clearly been achieved in that both the proposals for a second phase of the project and the activities undertaken in the intervening period have clearly been influenced in several respects by the feedback from the young people in the first phase.

Recruitment of participants

- 5.15 The project application promised that "the project will develop an 'outreach strategy' to actively reach out, target and 'pull in' young people". The partnership between Social Work and the other agencies was of central importance for this, and in particular the relationship between young people and their 'keyworkers'. Social Work is legally required to retain regular contact between the ages of 16 and 21 with young people who have left care. Leaving Care Services, as they have developed in Glasgow, have a team of staff each of whom work with 25-30 young people, in some cases up to the ages of 24/5. All of these staff were informed about the project and were expected to pass information personally to all young people. The project also had posters and a part time personal presence in the well-used LCS building. Young people in residential or foster care of course have contact with specific Social Work staff. Contact in these sectors was less complete, as we shall see.
- 5.16 Information is recorded in interviews and evaluation forms about where 19 participants got their first information about the project. Fewer than half (7) heard of it from their keyworker. Of the rest, 7 heard from *the big step*, 3 direct from project staff, 1 from a poster or flyer and 1 from another project. At first impression, this suggests limited success for the

outreach strategy. However these responses contain a high proportion of participants in the first block⁴. But the project deliberately recruited to the first block mainly from existing contacts and people who had taken part in an earlier pilot programme. A full launch was delayed until after that block, in the hope that the outputs from the block would allow a more effective showcasing of the project to a wider group.

- 5.17 Even amongst the small sample of eight young people interviewed after the end of the project, still only half had heard of the project from a keyworker (3 LCS, 1 residential). In practice what seems to have been happening is that processes for contacting and recruiting young people were being developed and tested as the project progressed, and lessons were hopefully being learned for future work. These young people are however unanimous in reporting that at least one contact and frequently more had explained the project to them before they started.
- 5.18 In particular the issue of the extent of support for the active recruitment of participants within the residential care sector was a frequent topic of debate at the Steering Group. Some particular residential schools or units became well involved, but the majority were not. The practical difficulties are however very great, and lessons have been learnt. The ADW visited all the units, but found the difficulties caused by both staff turnover and shift changes “phenomenal, it is difficult to phone and get same person twice”.
- 5.19 The account given from within the sector confirms this. “We could have got through to more in the residential sector if jointly we had found ways of targeting or channelling information better. We tend to tell people once and think that should be it, but in the reality of residential life it doesn’t work like that” (SW interview). Turnover of young people is also constant. Whilst no young people in a particular unit may have come forward at the time of the initial publicity, others who could benefit might be there a few months later. Better communications would appear to require both more regular repeat publicity and a concentration on informing staff about what kind of resource is available.
- 5.20 It has already been concluded that more advance ‘taster’ sessions would be desirable in future, as a result both of these experiences and of the views of young people, for example:

“How could it have been made easier to be in groups?” “Eye openers, icebreakers; a cup of tea, chat and cake somewhere first, then visit the site where the workshop will take place before it all starts”

“What one thing would you change in future?” “Let folk try out stuff at homes or schools, then they might come to town”, “Build the work into the education system in residential schools and units” (Participant Interviews)

⁴ The question was not asked in evaluations when a person had already been involved in a previous block

But it appears that in residential establishments ‘tasters’ might usefully be aimed as much at getting staff interested as young people.

Venues and practical arrangements

5.21 The availability of venues clearly places constraints on the artistic development of the project - some arts workers spoke of preferences to have all workshops under one roof to facilitate joint work, or to shorten gaps between blocks to allow continuous development, but such adaptations were not possible within the lifetime of the project.

5.22 Nevertheless, the venues used did on the whole receive an enthusiastic reaction from participants (Table 3). In spite of the frequently described nervousness of this group about new environments and their need for support, the fact that they had to travel to the City Centre for their workshops seems to have been a very positive factor for most. Almost all had to use public transport to get there (20 by bus and 6 by train) and only 3 report walking, at least one unwillingly through shortage of cash.

Table 3 Participants’ responses to venues

(N of responses)	Brilliant	Good	OK	Poor	Very Poor
Arches	9	4	9	1	
Street Level	9	3	3		
GMAC	5	3	4		
Food	4	8	6	1	3
Being in City Centre	10	9	6		

Source : Interviews and evaluation sheets combined

5.23 Some young people had their criticisms (GMAC needed to be cleaned up, had too many stairs and the lifts didn’t work; the Arches was not always organised to welcome them appropriately). However, in general, the young people responded being treated seriously in a mainstream arts venue. One commented that they were “Good - trendy places [where you] see real artists”. Although one worker felt that “only the very motivated will come” to workshops at Street Level, those who did rated it highest on average of all the venues. All three got a strong majority of positive endorsements.

5.24 The more mixed reactions to the food provided appear to reflect strongly divided views on the attractiveness of burgers, since in many cases a MacDonald’s voucher was offered.

5.25 It was the policy of the project to offer child care during workshops and other activities, but a zero take-up is reported. However one young interviewee did complain of a lack of child care. Future plans for working specifically with care leavers who are also parents are now actively under consideration.

Staff support

- 5.26 A variety of forms of support are relevant to getting young people to take part. Of 25 who responded to a question on what support they had received from 'the staff where you live', only five reported 'none'. Twelve reported receiving travelling expenses and six some other form of 'help with transport' (more than one reply per person was possible). Six reported that they were 'encouraged to come' but only five that staff actually 'came to workshops'. In reality it was the project that provided travelling expenses. As a matter of policy, all young people participating received travel expenses at the end of every workshop. A decision had been made at the Steering Group not to identify some young people to receive expenses and not others.
- 5.27 The question of an additional staff presence at the actual workshops was, after recruitment, the other issue that probably most exercised the Steering Group. Policy requires that groups should have constant supervision from two adult workers (larger groups would require more). An additional person was therefore almost always required to accompany a single arts worker. In practice we were told, two people were not always enough to deal with issues that might best be dealt with by an individual temporarily leaving a group. Drama workshops in particular may require the active engagement of all present. All workers present were asked to participate fully in activities, making their presence less intimidating for young people.
- 5.28 This additional support was in many cases supplied by LCS staff on rotas, which bore no necessary relation to their previous contact with any of the young people involved. But a variety of pressures also required the involvement of the ADW or staff of *the big step*, which had not originally been intended.
- 5.29 Clearly some feel that a greater involvement from residential care staff would also have been desirable at this point. That service's policy was that workers should accompany young people to their initial workshop and "where possible" thereafter. But again there are serious practical difficulties. Although the project was not uniquely demanding, just "one of a range of activities that need to be planned and prioritised" (SW interview), staffing ratios in small units are always difficult to maintain and young people may well be taking part in different outside activities simultaneously. In the service's view, whilst there are "always going to be limits", staff involvement could in future be increased with greater advance information and planning.
- 5.30 It would appear that some greater involvement by the workers that already support a young person is often desirable - arts workers report several instances where a young person decided not to take part because the worker who had accompanied them on their travel was unable to stay. However it should be emphasised that this need not require a permanent presence. Experiences where a worker was able to

withdraw successfully after perhaps two sessions are reported, and another case where “one worker got in the way and created an environment too closely tied to Social Work, so it became part of the system that we were trying to give them a break from” (Arts worker).

5.31 The project’s programme of visits to shows and exhibitions raised similar issues. In these cases many staff were assisting in their own unpaid time. Supervision on a voluntary basis is “a difficult role with no power, and the young people knew this”. (Steering Group interview).

5.32 In general the provision of support during activities appears to be an area where the project was beginning to work out but had not fully arrived at solutions to problems. These problems extended not just to the availability of support workers but also to their role. “When it is a different person each week, their role is uncertain, all about control and power” (Steering Group interview).

Behaviour management

5.33 The issue of the management of behaviour is the final one of the three interrelated support issues that concerned all the partners, both during the project and in their evaluative reflections: whether or not they had successfully handled the occurrences of potentially disruptive behaviour that were always known to be likely when working with this group.

5.34 It should be emphasised that this is also very much an issue for the young people involved. This was reported by arts workers:

“There were difficulties for young people who didn’t get on with each other. Some were embarrassed to be ‘tarred with the same brush’ because of the behaviour of others”

“We lost a lot of the group due to the abrasive, undermining behaviour of some young people”

“Half the class were disruptive and half very, very shy - we lost three or four good people from them”

5.35 It is also reported by young people themselves:

“A couple of folk made it uncomfortable”

“People would come in and be idiots, come in drunk and vandalise equipment. It builds tension, when [someone wants] to get attention all the time. It puts you off.”

5.36 Deciding how to deal with disruptive behaviour and equipping staff to manage it are clearly key aspects of the work of the project in piloting ways of working with this group. Young people are aware of the importance of different approaches:

“One tutor needs more training on working with the group - sometimes couldn’t cope”

“People should be spoken to BEFORE the new project starts, in private rather than in front of everyone”

“One young person was a problem - came drunk a lot - but he was dealt with OK, and I kept out of the way.”

- 5.37 Although the problems should not be exaggerated - one interviewee speaking from Social Work experience says that there were “some control issues, but not a great deal” - it is clear that working out how to do successful arts work in the context of behaviour and more subtle motivational difficulties was an important aim of the project.
- 5.38 Some arts workers clearly had initial difficulties. One reports that they were not sure what to do and felt “complicit” when some young people discussed criminal activity. Another still feels that “It is difficult for arts workers to be involved in disciplining the group. ... It would be better for other staff to deal with this”.
- 5.39 Staff from *the big step* and the ADW initially met the workshop leaders to make them clear about the difficulties there would be. Subsequently they offered advice and support. After the first block they drew up workshop guidelines based largely on advice from Social Work, which tried to set out best practice for working with this group. These guidelines are in themselves a valuable output from the project, of relevance to other work. They set out principles for staffing levels, deciding staff roles, establishing ground rules, dealing with challenging behaviour, aggression and substance abuse, and excluding young people.
- 5.40 At the outset it was hoped that it would be possible never to exclude anyone completely. In practice, the behaviour experienced and the need to give the rest of the group the assurance that it was not accepted sometimes made suspension for one full session necessary. But staff were expected to meet the young person concerned individually in the course of the intervening week and talk to them about the reasons for the suspension and the conditions of their return.
- 5.41 The direct influence of the guidelines is unclear. Some workers appear not to have seen them. One felt that they were helpful, but should have come earlier. Another felt that appropriate ground rules were implemented from the start and that staff support was the key issue.
- 5.42 Given that the objectives of the project clearly required it to work with challenging behaviour and accept the consequences, it appears to have had a reasonable degree of success. In the considered view of Leaving Care Services “even those that caused difficulties were supported and made to feel welcome back, and we were able to sustain them”.
- 5.43 Another observer believes that “At the outset [the arts organisations] would not have had much idea what the difficulties could be with this client group, but to their credit they have developed good ways of working with groups through this project”.

Outcomes - participation

- 6.1 One Steering Group member states, "the bid was overambitious about the numbers of young people and the way they would commit to the project for a length of time". But in fact the application for SAC funding for the project states no specific target for the number of young people who were expected to participate and specifically recognises that long term commitment would be difficult to achieve. As we have seen (Table 1) a total of 35 young people actually attended at least one workshop, with an average of 10.3 workshops each. In addition there were another 12 whose attendance at one workshop was so fleeting that their identities were not properly recorded.
- 6.2 The ADW reports that people with experience of working with this group offered the prediction that "if you can get fifteen you will be doing well". Nevertheless the constant struggle to recruit and retain participants clearly made some of those involved feel that they were not reaching enough young people. According to one Social Work source, the project could be of potential benefit to a high proportion of young people in and leaving care: "clearly there are some people you would rule out, because of the nature of their difficulties, but the rest should be available to rule themselves in". But as we have seen it is likely that many in residential care, and even more in foster care, never got to know about it.
- 6.3 But information is not the only issue. Another Social Work interviewee estimated that around three times as many young people were referred to the project as actually attended. "Getting them involved in external activities can always be an issue. It would be largely outwith their experience - they can be a very conservative group in some things". The project was aimed at periods of time in young people's lives when there might be considerable change occurring and many distractions, not least the succession of panels, review meetings etc that might be helping to determine their future. The project was set up precisely to find effective ways to cope with young people facing such issues.
- 6.4 It is unfortunate that it was not possible to record the identity of 12 of those who only came to one 1 workshop and therefore to trace them to find the reasons. Occasionally these are known to be practical - a young person has moved or gone to College. Feedback from support workers is a missing part both of the operation of the project and the evaluation framework.
- 6.5 The information that we have on those who did participate (Table 4) shows that a clear majority were boys, and these boys attended slightly more often on average. This is positive insofar as it implies that 'non-masculine' stereotypes of the arts were not a major deterrent. However the high proportion of female care leavers with young children of their own may be a factor in reducing female participation.

Table 4 **Participation by gender, age and accommodation**

	N	%	Average N of Workshops attended
All participants*	36	100.0	10.3
Male	22	61.1	10.9
Female	14	38.9	9.5
Age 15-17	10	27.8	7.9
Age 18-20	14	38.9	8.5
Age 21-25	11	30.6	14.9
Residential schools and units	8	22.2	13.6
Supported accommodation/tenancy	26	72.2	8.2

Source: records of all participants

* excluding 12 unrecorded participants

(Age: 1 missing)

- 6.6 Participation was spread fairly evenly across the eligible age range, but the staying power of those that did attend increased with age. It is recognised that the most ‘chaotic’ behaviour is likely to be exhibited by those towards the younger end of this range. However LCS’ long term objective would be that the younger group now receiving their support will by age 22+ have reached the stage where they will not still want to be part of a group closely associated with Social Work.
- 6.7 A minority of all participants came from residential care settings (4 each from residential schools and other units). However those that did manage to come from this sector attended more workshops each than average (in spite of a tendency to be younger than average). This provides positive encouragement for the belief that further efforts to involve young people in residential care in the future would be worthwhile. As a young person told a Focus Group:
- “You should try to reach people in residential establishments. It would be good for them. Ice skating and swimming gets boring after a while.”
- 6.8 The great majority of the rest were in some form of supported accommodation (18) or supported tenancy (8) after leaving care. Only one person in foster care was registered, and one other was back at home at the time of registration. However changes can be rapid. Amongst our small number of interviewees, over a third (i.e. 3) were in some form of independent accommodation at the time of interview.
- 6.9 The block evaluation sheets record some additional information about the profile of the participants, not available elsewhere. All who completed them were white (though we understand that one young black women did participate). The future involvement of ethnic minorities has already been identified as an issue. Of the 15 cases where information is available, one was still at school, six were in some form of education or training and eight were in none. But none were in work. At a time of relatively low youth unemployment nationally, the relative degree of social exclusion of

this group is very apparent. Ten said they were looking for work, and five were not looking - only two of whom were actually in education.

6.10 Although only two of the eight interviewees could recall no previous involvement in the arts at all, most of the experiences described were at school, and not all positive ones. Only two described other previous involvement, one in the Arts in the City pilot session, and one in an LCS group.

6.11 The desirability of building arts experience into preparation for leaving care at an earlier stage was the theme of some comments both from young people and staff:

“You should look at giving young people information on arts very early e.g. 15, and look at the arts having a higher profile than all the usual “preparation for leaving care’ materials”(Focus Group)

“Secure an ongoing programme, available to young people much younger, so it’s part of their life from an earlier stage” (Arts worker).

6.12 The amount of time that young people spent with the project varied enormously (see below, Table 6, first column). Almost half attended five workshops or fewer, whilst a 20% minority attended 21 or more, up to over 40. It must be borne in mind that completed evaluations and the recollections of observers will inevitably tend to be biased towards the experience of those most involved.

6.13 But it appears that, apart from the worrying initial high dropout rate from mostly unrecorded people who only turned up once, the structure of the project’s activities did fulfil its objective of providing young people with something that could accommodate their lifestyles, and which they could participate in to varying extents. The ADW suggests that there was no-one who, after completing one block, left and did not return at some point. In some cases the project offered “something consistent to come back to” for people who had had intervening personal difficulties.

6.14 This would clearly be easier to achieve if activities could in future be offered on a longer term and more continuous basis. LCS point out that often in their work it can take 6-8 weeks to get a young person to come to a meeting and an open door policy, with young people always able to come back is required. Although the project to some extent achieved this, short sessions do not make it easy.

6.15 The spread of reasons that young people gave for why they had missed sessions does not appear all that different from those that prevent any other section of society from full attendance at regular activities (Table 5), except perhaps for a high proportion of ‘personal reasons’.

Table 5 **Reasons For Missing Some Sessions**

Reason	Number of responses
Transport	1
Personal	7
Illness	2
Forgot	1
Couldn't be bothered	3
Something else on	2
Financial difficulties	1
Sleeping	1
None missed	4
TOTAL GIVING ANY RESPONSE	20

Source: Interviews and evaluation sheets combined

- 6.16 The responses that young people gave when asked what additional support would have been of assistance (examples below) raise a similar range of issues to the rest of the evaluation: practical assistance, staff support, widening recruitment etc.

Responses to question “What kind of support do you think would help you, or other young people, to get the most out of the project?”

Somebody to come & pick me up
 Taxi fare
 More information about the projects, more funding
 More info before going about what you're working towards
 ‘A lot of {residential staff?} have different ways of running things. They may be short staffed, have no minibus, keep people in because of behavioural issues’
 Make the projects a lot more exciting
 Encourage more folk to go
 More people from residential/schools
 Level of support is fine
 Depends on individual

- 6.17 An overall assessment from LCS, who understand the setting within which the project is working, is that it has succeeded in working with “very difficult and chaotic kids” and that it is a “real positive” that this group has been able to take part at all.

- 6.18 Similarly an arts worker now feels “pleased to have been involved in project, reaching young people we wouldn't normally work with. It has made us realise that there are a lot of young people who ‘slip through the net’”.

6.19 Similar issues affected participation in the project's programme of theatre and other visits. Here however, the benefits were even more concentrated upon a relatively small number of participants (Table 6). Over three quarters of all such visits were made by the seven young people with the greatest level of participation in workshops, an average of over four each. Only a minority of all other participants ever went on a visit, and only one went more than once.

Table 6 Participation in visits

N of workshops attended	N	%	Average visits attended	% of all visits
1-5	17	48.6	0.2	7.9
6-20	11	31.4	0.5	18.4
21+	7	20.0	4.1	76.3
TOTAL*	35	100.0	1.1	100.0

Source: records of all participants

* Excluding same 12 as Table 5, plus 1 other who "should not have been attending"

6.20 Visits of the type supported by the project should therefore be seen as an aid to broadening an involvement in the arts that has already been stimulated by the project. If it is desired to make participation in the arts as a spectator more interesting and accessible to a wider range of young care leavers, then a different approach, probably involving substantial advance preparation would be required.

6.21 Little information is recorded in the data available on participation in the events more directly related to the project. Only one of the interviewees had attended the final performance at the Arches. However most turned out for one or more of the shows at which project photographs were shown, which they appeared to have appreciated, most describing the work as good or very good and the venues as excellent, good or according to one "funky".

Outcomes - artistic

7.1 The specifically *artistic* aims and objectives of the Arts in the City project, can be identified as:

- the provision of a distinct programme of arts activity for young people in or leaving care; and
- an introduction to mainstream arts programmes.

Through this, the aim was that young people would develop specific skills and self-confidence and hence increase their opportunities to develop social networks.

7.2 There is evidence that the programme in many respects met these expectations and there were also some additional positive outcomes.

7.3 The format of the overall programme i.e. four week blocks of activity with two workshop sessions per week or the equivalent, leading to a final presentation, is a format which had been tested in the pilot project. It allowed for flexibility for the young people – more than taster sessions and yet affording opportunities to try new things. There were some drawbacks raised by the young people and organisers. Comments from TAG however suggest that the drama element might have benefited from people working together over a longer period of time.

7.4 In general though, the young people’s responses (Table 7) overwhelmingly endorse the project’s choice of timing within the day and week for activities, and their clear belief that workshops were too short and too few in number may simply reflect the level of enthusiasm generated.

Table 7 Young People’s views on practical arrangements

Workshop length	Too short	OK/ just right	Too long	
	18	5	2	
Number of workshops	Too few	Enough/just right	Too many	
	19	3		
Time preferred	Evening	Day	Either	Both
	16	3	3	3
	Weekday	Weekend	Either	Both
	20	1	1	4

Source: Interviews and evaluation sheets combined

7.5 The focus on performance/exhibitions at the end of the blocks had both positive and negative effects. There was a concern from the ADW that too much focus on the final outcome undermined the process. On the other hand the young people expressed very positive feelings about “seeing finished articles on display” or performing the show to school children or a full house at the Arches. The opportunity to sell their photographic work at the Glasgow Art Fair is something that both the

young people and Steering Group members commented on positively. Not only did the work have a monetary value, it also under pinned the view that their art was being taken seriously. One Steering Group member commented, “for the first time in their lives they have done something they feel proud of”. Another said “it was good to see so many people talking to young people about their art” at an exhibition. The only negative aspect was that only a very small audience came specifically to see the young people’s work - very few other young people, Social Work staff etc are said to have attended.

- 7.6 While the objectives of the project did not change, the arts organisations were flexible in their approach and made changes to the delivery of the programme as they went along to meet the demands of the group.
- 7.7 One positive learning experience for the arts organisations as a result of the project was about the difficulties and potential of collaboration with each other. Collaboration is said to have been difficult at first but to have improved. Each had different ways of working and negotiations could be “tricky” at times.
- 7.8 The original idea was to develop a collaborative process, combining the three different art forms. In the end the view expressed by one of the arts workers was that they completed a collaborative *project* but the *processes* were separate. This may have been an appropriate response to the circumstances, but may have somewhat undermined the extent to which the finished output was a product of the young people’s own decisions. Some young people in the Focus Groups raised ideas for stronger links between three media, such as creating props for immediate use in drama workshops. By some accounts the initial difficulties in collaboration were significant. The organisations should ideally “have been more used to the culture of sharing things ... Coming together was prompted by the need to organise for a show. We would plan better next time, with collaboration from the beginning”.
- 7.9 Another change was made within the drama programme. Originally the idea was to have a different skill and member of staff in each block but that proved to be inappropriate for the numbers of people involved and their skills.
- 7.10 Overall, the feedback on the arts work as a whole from the participants (Table 8) was extremely positive and was endorsed by comments from the ‘non-arts’ members of the Steering Group on the flexibility of the organisations, their ability to learn quickly and adapt and the skills they used to engage with the young people. One Steering Group member observed how this project had made the arts organisations think about issues they would not normally deal with like (bad) behaviour, motivation and child protection. Another commented, “the arts staff and young people have responded to each other better than I imagined”.

Table 8 **Young People’s evaluations of Arts Programme**

(number of responses)	Brilliant	Good	OK	Poor	Very Poor	Not recorded
Block (or project) as a whole	10	12	3			6
Workshop Leaders						
Drama	2	6	5	1		1
Photography	6	2				2
Video	7					2

Source: Interviews and evaluation sheets combined

7.11 The feedback from the young people was mostly equally enthusiastic about the arts workers (in fact two scored the leaders higher than the overall experience, and two vice versa). The great majority scored them workshop leaders as ‘brilliant’ or ‘good’. Drama received the most mixed responses, possibly because it appears that it may have faced the greatest behavioural challenges - as we have seen it still managed to attract some participation from over half of those involved. Overall the arts workers seem to have moved up the learning curve to gain the respect of the young people.

7.12 The motivation of young people who took part varied from a sophisticated “wanted to widen my knowledge of the media industry; you never can know too much” or “want to learn how to take photos” and “be creative” to the more prosaic, “to give me something to do”. The young people may not have a great deal of involvement in arts activity, but they certainly had some expectations of learning and fun from the programme. When asked ‘what they liked most’ about the workshops some simply said “all of it”, “it was some laugh”, “the fun of it all “ and a minority spoke about their own personal development (see Section 8), but the great majority of their responses were clearly related to the artistic content, with especial enthusiasm from the photography group (see below).

Responses to “what did you enjoy most about the workshops”

- Extra experience of photography
- The field trip to Glencoe; made a photo with a coffee tin
- Free materials; getting photos, framed picture
- Working in the dark room
- The camera work
- Using the camera
- Taking photos
- The educator's way of explaining the camera
- Acting out the scenes
- Taking part in short plays and working with people
- Getting to take home stuff
- The outing.

- 7.13 In addition another eight responses spoke about aspects of learning: “being able to learn about new things”, “how to do new stuff I’ve never done” and “it taught you more than you think you would get taught!” These responses provide clear confirmation of the view from one Steering Group member that “the project has an educational value for a group who have often missed out”.
- 7.14 Amongst the fewer responses to what young people liked least, almost all referred to a wide variety of practical points about the implementation of the programme, which suggests that there was no strongly felt issue that might have contributed to other young people’s lesser attendance.

Responses to “what did you like least about the workshops”

Didn’t like [2 workers] - boring
 Too short, and want video with music
 The tour
 The planning
 Not getting to [take home stuff] {see above}
 Sessions too short
 There was a lot of waiting around, not exactly picking up where we left off
 The last session was a bit boring - too much talk about images for show.

- 7.15 It is important to look at the content and the quality of the work being produced and to gauge how the young people responded to this. From the documentary evidence (scripts, videos, photographs, CD-ROM etc), a high standard was reached. The programme was developed specifically for this group of young people, they were given an opportunity for some real ‘hands on’ experience and, it appears, were encouraged to explore issues which were of interest to them, and which especially in the drama workshops tackled a range of profound and controversial aspects of behaviour. In the final drama piece at the Arches, notwithstanding some problems of drop out just before the event, the performances were of a high standard, engaging and uncompromising and overall offered an entertaining night out⁵.
- 7.16 The aims of the project were both to develop the confidence and skills of the young people and to give them specifically artistic experiences and opportunities. We consider in the next section what balance was achieved between these. Artistic learning however can be directly linked to confidence building. For example, one Steering Group member comments that the workshops gave the young people confidence that they are good at something and made them realise that “you don’t need someone else to take pictures for you”. One of the arts workers also commented that the programme challenged the young people’s view of “what kind of people artists are”.
- 7.17 Whilst young people seem to have appreciated the additional activities directly related to the workshop programme, such as the exhibitions

⁵ By coincidence one of the report authors saw this performance.

(6.19) and the trip to Loch Lomond as part of the photography project, the visits to other arts organisations that were organised as a distinct part of the project attract relatively little comment. However, all who gave responses about them said they would go again and two suggested what they would like to see more of in future (pantos, musicals, comedy). We have argued (3.9-3.11) that a variety of ambitious objectives were put forward for this relatively small programme of activity, and we have seen that participation was mostly confined to a small minority of regular workshop attenders (6.19).

- 7.18 There were clearly positive aspects to these experiences. Though most interviewees claimed to have been to theatres and/or galleries before, there were certainly some for whom these were first time experiences. The Steering Group commented on the way in which these visits helped young people to gain experience of 'appropriate behaviour' e.g. you do not touch the exhibits in art exhibitions and generally putting your feet up on the seats is frowned on. "They would have been asked to leave if the staff had not been there - they were not trying to disrupt things, but didn't understand how to behave. They needed an explanation". But it is not clear to us what if any influence these visits were meant to have upon the host organisations, or even if one is desirable, because the ultimate objective is surely not for care leavers to be identified and treated as a category with special needs in such environments.
- 7.19 One unexpected outcome is that genuine talent was uncovered- one participant refers to going on to further study in the arts. The Steering Group members comment on the quality of work being very good and how some young people have shown real talent. This is borne out by our own experience in seeing the show.
- 7.20 The feedback uncovered a wish for music workshops and this has been added to the proposal for the next programme. Other improvements to the programme suggested by the young people centre around making it bigger "change the scale- just now low budget small scale- want it more professional" and "more sessions per week". Other suggestions for the future from those consulted include the development of more projects for this group of participants and work for younger groups i.e. those still in care.

Outcomes - for young people

8.1 Changes in confidence, motivation and interpersonal skills are difficult to measure accurately even with extensive 'before' and 'after' psychological testing, and even more difficult to trace conclusively to changes in people's lives. Unfortunately perhaps, it was not within the scope of this evaluation to discover the views of the key workers who may have observed young people before and after their participation, and these also only appear to have been fed back to management in occasional cases.

8.2 However, the difficulty of quantifying such changes does not mean that they are not readily apparent to observers. The experiences of the staff who worked directly with the young people on the project, or saw them in action are full of descriptions of the changes that they saw. These observations link artistic outputs and skills to personal gains to varying extents.

"For the first time in their lives they have done something that they feel proud of and positive about, been able to express some of their feelings in safe ways. It made a huge difference to one young person who is very depressed - [s/he] has actually been happy at times. "

"For some young people it is a potential alternative to dangerous lifestyles - drink or drugs - motivated them to try to stay off .. for a period of time. The small steps are very important. For some young people they are the first small steps that they have taken".

"I have seen a young person come to the first couple of sessions and sit quietly and not join in, but by the end they were up on stage giving it laldy".

"I noticed big changes in young people - especially in being able to come without their friends. They did give commitment. Shyness was overcome, they learned to develop skills and receive feedback, and come out of their shell with the rest of the group".

"It has given people an awareness of more creative ways to spend their time, and confidence to go to a new environment, which they may not have felt they fitted in to."

"It developed how they work with people; more confidence and sense of achievement because of the quality of what was being produced."

8.3 These may be, as one Steering Group member eloquently says "personal, individual, fragile gains". But the changes that are reported in "confidence" and "openness", being "self-reliant" and "taking responsibility for liaising with others" are key life skills that can be used in many different environments. One Social Work interviewee hopes that the experience will "help them recognise that they do have potential and skills, which could be channelled towards employment."

- 8.4 A particular experience that several observers single out as offering distinctive benefits was the performances of the Drama Group's panto to Special School pupils. This was said to be an "empowering" experience because young people "were in a helping role, giving rather than receiving a service, not the victims this time".
- 8.5 Even small gains for young people may have long term benefits. One social worker hopes that the project has provided participants with "one part of their care history at least which they could reflect upon happily", and LCS believes that "the successes may not be discovered until they are in their 30s and remember and realise we did for them." An arts worker thinks, "Some young people will have a level of enjoyment of the arts that will continue for a long time".
- 8.6 The most identifiable gains were made, inevitably, by the core of individuals who did the most work with the project. One social worker noted that it may have benefited the young people who were more receptive rather than some others, perhaps with more 'chaotic' lives. But very few of these young people worked their way right through the programme without interruption. One worker who says that "the difference in the manner of a couple who stayed from the beginning is quite incredible" also points out that in the meantime "they came and went and came back".
- 8.7 Some practical issues should be considered in future work. Increasingly, other initiatives that focus on personal development tend to try to work with their clients to help both parties to recognise and document progress. Some of the interviewees thought that jointly preparing some form of Personal Development Plan for each young person at the point of referral would help to define what they wanted to achieve and assess progress.
- 8.8 Whether or not this would prove feasible, some form of record of achievement or certificate after the event might be desirable, to supplement the existing opportunity to obtain references from workshop leaders, and use the experience in CVs etc.
- 8.9 Twenty-seven out of the thirty participants who gave opinions, at various stages in their evaluations or interviews or evaluations, wanted to come back to the project. Their enthusiasm for the experience is not in doubt. However, the extent to which the project has yet created the skills or confidence to allow people to continue and extend the experience in other ways is much more in doubt. The potential of some particular young people is singled out by staff: "X seems to have really got in to photography"; "Y has enthusiasm and genuine talent, and should be encouraged to pursue this".
- 8.10 So far the progress made in finding effective 'progression' routes appears limited, though there are some individuals for whom there may be significant outcomes. Efforts have been made to involve people in activities associated with the 'Inspirations' youth festival with limited

success. One or two young people have kept up an individual relationship with Street Level, and LCS has helped to support them financially with a view to eventually tapering off this support. Opportunities may be available through TAG, but take-up so far is low. There is a concern that “the project provides a comfort zone for young people” and that they may want to continue together with the relative luxury of their own worker rather than move on.

- 8.11 The feedback from the young people goes some way to confirming the personal gains that they made from the project, though as we have seen what they ‘liked most’ about it typically related to its artistic content or educational value. This suggests a big success for the arts workers and those who planned the project: these young people have recognised the pleasure that can be gained from learning. A minority did quote other personal benefits.

Responses to “what did you enjoy most about the workshops”

Learnt how to co-operate as a team
Try different things and meet new people
Meeting other people (x2) .
Learning new things, meeting people
Getting motivation from others and learning from them
‘It gave me an opportunity to focus my energies on new things and forget about my troubles, even if it was only for 2 nights a week’.

- 8.12 None quoted dislikes of such a personal nature, except perhaps the one who hated being put in a “hot seat”, presumably as a workshop exercise.
- 8.13 The reasons why the vast majority wanted to come back mostly reflect pleasure they got from it: “something worthwhile to do”; “project is a buzz”; “I am really interested in the photography” “I want to experience more”. The programme was also described as “a good laugh” and “cool”. A few identified more specific challenges: “because I like drama a lot and hope to use it in a future career”, or benefits “it stops me from getting into trouble”. All the interviewees would recommend the project to other young people (depending, in one case, on the art form).
- 8.14 Interviews and evaluation sheets also asked young people to rate directly the effect that participation had on various personal skills and characteristics (Table 9). These 23 or 24 responses (depending on the question) surely represent a wider range of people than the core ‘stars’ of the programme. However only one of the people who attended just one workshop is included (this individual is responsible for all the ‘slightly worse’ responses).
- 8.15 The enthusiasm for the specifically artistic outcomes of the work is again apparent. Half thought that their skills were ‘greatly improved’ and the great majority saw some improvement both in these and in their knowledge of opportunities in the arts.

Table 9 Reported effect of participation

(number of responses) Effect on:	Greatly improved	Slightly improved	No difference	Slightly worse	Much worse
Self confidence	1	13	8	1	
Team working	6	5	12	1	
Comfortable meeting new people	3	9	10	1	
Knowledge about opportunities within the arts	9	10	4		1*
Communication Skills	5	6	11	1	
Drama/video/photography skills	12	8	4		

Source: Interviews and evaluation sheets combined

* Possibly a joke response?

- 8.16 Reported levels of influence on more personal characteristics are a little lower. In interpreting this it must be noted that it is probably psychologically more difficult to admit to improvements in such areas, because it can seem as an admission of previous inadequacy.
- 8.17 We therefore take it as significant that with such a brief average involvement (10.3 workshops) at least 50% of participants feel able to report improvements in their self-confidence, attitude to meeting new people and communication skills, and almost 50% in their team working abilities.
- 8.18 Perceptions about team working were in fact quite divided, with a relatively high number perceiving a 'great' improvement. These responses may have varied according to the differing collective experience of different 'teams'. Young people were also asked 'how easy they found it to work in groups and as part of a team?' and opinion was again clearly divided: Very easy 10, Quite easy 4, OK 10. We have already quoted some of the answers they gave about what they thought about the groups and how they could be improved, because these elicited several comments about 'behaviour' issues (5.36).
- 8.19 By contrast, although a clear majority thought their self-confidence had improved - the highest proportion for a personal characteristic - hardly anyone thought the improvement was a 'great' one.
- 8.20 Finally, the young people were asked quite a difficult question: "People often use the arts to express themselves, focusing on the things they feel strongly about. Did you feel comfortable enough to use the sessions to express your feelings, views or opinions?" Fifteen of the 22 who replied to this (68%) said that they did. When asked how this made them feel, their responses were not particularly sophisticated, but generally confirmed their positive feelings. Four talked about self-confidence,

several just felt “happy”, “OK” or “comfortable”, and some found it “cool” or “good for having a buzz”.

- 8.21 We therefore feel that there is sufficient evidence from young people themselves, except in the case of those whose participation was minimal, to confirm the perceptions of staff that the relatively short experience of the project did create genuine advances in personal and social skills, as well as the artistic and learning experiences that many young people were enthusiastic about.

Strategic Assessment

9.1 In this section we present a summary of the strategic strengths and weaknesses of the completed project, and the opportunities and threats that will be faced in continuing and developing the work.

STRENGTHS

- New and exciting activities for most participants
- Almost all saw positive outcomes for themselves
- Genuine talent uncovered/ some progression to new activities
- High quality artistic products
- Funding sufficient to allow work with quality materials etc.
- Achievement of performances/ exhibitions at quality venues
- Real life issues explored in work
- Young people more interested and informed; introduced to arts events
- Well targeted on very disadvantaged group
- Potential to engage and keep them involved demonstrated
- Disruptive behaviour handled appropriately, without permanent exclusion
- Flexibility of SIP as sponsor
- Joint role of ADW helped build relationships
- Availability and flexibility of LCS staff
- New partnership working established
- Supportive Steering Group
- Good relations between arts groups
- Strong public profile in arts community
- Well monitored - issues identified early

WEAKNESSES

- Constant struggle to obtain and retain sufficient numbers of participants
- Difficulties in providing enough Social Work support/ getting balance and timing right
- Different involvement of different sections of Social Work
- Some participants alienated by others' disruptive behaviour
- Guidelines not always known or applied
- Role of SW support workers within groups uncertain
- Group work (e.g. drama) difficult with small/ inconsistent group
- Forced choice of art form when workshops run simultaneously
- Split into blocks and gaps between threaten continuity
- Participation in event visits confined largely to most involved
- Some care leavers prefer more integrated non SW provision
- Integration of media and joint work by companies not fully achieved or thoroughly planned into programme
- Unclear how wider influence on arts organisations is to be achieved or disseminated
- Insufficient audience of friends or peer group for performances/exhibitions
- Lack of system for feedback from support workers

OPPORTUNITIES

- Previous arts organisations are keen to continue/ offer additional opportunities
- Real interest in possible mainstream provision from CLS and SW
- Commitment has continued even when funding reduced
- The potential may exist to:
 - Build on involvement from residential care during project and subsequently from foster care
 - Implement lessons already learnt from monitoring
 - Extend to new arts media
 - Provide more outreach work and tasters
 - Clarify young people's ownership of products and build resulting sense of achievement
 - Offer longer term programme, offering more opportunities to progress and/or return
 - Plan to meet individuals' objectives through more co-ordinated support
 - Utilise more of wide range of potential arts providers in Glasgow
 - Establish wider, or mixed, groups, linking to existing arts activities
 - Develop links with other venues, and the wider arts community
 - Possible new recognition and support from Community Planning Partnership

THREATS

- Continuing non-engagement of large numbers of young people who could benefit
- Continuing involvement of more experienced young people might discourage new participants
- Lack of continuity
- Insufficient funding could make model unworkable
- A mainstream service might not offer same resources and priority
- Satisfactory model for joint working by arts organisations/ multimedia productions might not be achieved
- Partnership working can be time consuming
- Reorganisation of Leaving Care Services might lead to dissipation of experience
- Possible impact of moving towards Community Planning Partnership taking over co-ordinating role currently undertaken by the SIP.

Conclusions

- 10.1 Overall the project has succeeded in its aim of offering a programme of arts activity that was very specifically aimed at involving young people leaving care and at taking into account the difficulties and disadvantages that they experience. It has managed to engage a significant number of them and arouse their interest and enthusiasm.
- 10.2 Many issues arise about the most effective way of achieving the objectives, but they are mostly issues that the project has identified itself through its ongoing monitoring and has begun to address where possible.
- 10.3 Challenging work of good quality was produced. The opportunity to produce work of good quality in 'mainstream' venues, and the experiences of performing, exhibiting and selling work were valued by young people.
- 10.4 Young people had expectations that arts workshops could offer both learning and fun and a large proportion reported that these expectations were fulfilled.
- 10.5 A high proportion of young people involved gained skills in the arts, understanding of opportunities and experience of access to arts venues. In a few cases unexpected talents were revealed.
- 10.6 Visits to other unrelated arts events contributed mainly to adding to the learning experience for the minority who were most involved. It is difficult to see how they were meant to have any wider impact on the behaviour of arts organisations.
- 10.7 Working with this group was sometimes a challenge for the arts organisations and they both learnt themselves and valued the close working relationships established with the other staff and agencies involved. It is not clear to us how the learning gained by these organisations and enshrined e.g. in the workshop guidelines will be more widely disseminated.
- 10.8 The pattern of relatively small blocks of workshop activity before each planned output and the ability of young people to move in, out and back in to the programme were both important to engaging young people in transition who are often dealing with difficult personal issues.
- 10.9 Other aspects of the organisation of the programme - the gaps between blocks, the location of workshops, whether they are consecutive or simultaneous, the extent to which all art forms are working towards a single project - have all been the subject of debate and their effectiveness has been questioned. Fully effective joint working

between arts organisations may require more advance planning and agreement.

- 10.10 Both the testimony of young people and of those who worked with them provides ample evidence that the relatively short programme of activity that each on average experienced began to have an impact on their self-confidence, group and communications skills. These represent small steps towards achieving the objectives that '*the big step*' has set for improving young people's health and life chances.
- 10.11 Those who have gained most from the project have done so in spite of sharing in the same range of difficulties as other young people in or leaving care.
- 10.12 They include a good range of ages. Males appear somewhat overrepresented, but this is already being addressed by plans for work with care leavers who have young children. Young people still in residential care were underrepresented, but the good response of those who did take part suggests that there is considerable scope for more involvement.
- 10.13 However, a significant number of young people did not sustain their initial contact or were 'lost' between referral and attendance. We have little information on the reasons for this.
- 10.14 The provision of support from Social Work staff in recruitment and establishing initial involvement, and their continuing personal participation in the project to assist in dealing with behavioural and other issues is vital. It will always be difficult given other competing claims on time and resources. The respective roles of everyone involved in workshops could be better defined and agreed.
- 10.15 However, especially in the residential sector there is considerably more scope to involve more staff and recruit more participants, given advance planning, repeat publicity and a concerted attempt through on-site tasters or other means to make staff and residents familiar with the work. The scope for involving participants and associated staff from the foster care sector has scarcely been tested yet.
- 10.16 There may be scope for a more systematic approach, possibly to agreeing objectives with participants in advance and certainly to recording their participation and achievement.
- 10.17 Expenditure on the project is relatively high in relation to the numbers involved, but since few other arts and social inclusion projects are able to target their efforts so unequivocally on their target groups, it can be seen as still offering excellent value for money in terms of impact.
- 10.18 In the long run it would be desirable for approaches learnt from the project to be adopted by mainstream services. A similar level of co-

ordination and therefore expenditure would be required. If a more individualised approach and a more flexible approach to the timing of activities could be offered by a mainstream service, this would have considerable advantages.

- 10.19 Any continuing project or service will have to face the issue of how to 'wean' increasingly experienced participants away from activities supported by Social Work and allow work to continue with new and on average younger participants. The work undertaken during Arts in the City has barely begun to establish the scope for this and influence the creation of other arts provision to bridge the gap.

Recommendations

1. The model of working with young people in and leaving care pioneered by the project should be continued and developed, and the partnership between Cultural and Leisure Services, Social Work and local arts organisations should be further strengthened.
2. In future monitoring and evaluation, face-to-face interviews with young people should be used to explore their feeling about the project and its impact upon them in more depth, rather than repeating structured questions from evaluation forms.
3. In a longer-term project, records of who participates should be kept in a database (for internal use) along with their responses to evaluations etc, and updated information on their circumstances, to allow more effective tracking of impacts.
4. A continuing high level of co-ordination and support from a dedicated Arts Development Worker (or similar post) will continue to be required.
5. The Steering Group may wish to take time before embarking on a more ambitious project to carry out a strategy development and team building exercise.
6. The potential for synergy with other *big step* projects should be reviewed.
7. There should be clearer advance discussion and planning of the degree of any collaboration required between different providers to produce multimedia outputs, and its timing.
8. In a longer term programme the Focus Groups should be developed into a more effective vehicle for young people's involvement in influencing the work of the project, with feedback provided.
9. Better communications with, and recruitment from, the residential care sector would be aided by the programme of 'tasters' in residential venues that is already proposed. They will also require both more regular repeat publicity and a concentration on informing staff about what kind of resource is available.
10. A more proactive approach to offering child care (or joint parent/ child activities) may be required.
11. The project's own guideline: "Prior to each workshop, arts workers and Social Work staff should discuss the different roles they will fulfil and how they will approach the work with young people" should be implemented. The Steering Group should also consider a clearer definition of the expected role of support staff.

12. Systems should be established for keyworkers to provide feedback (directly or through their service management), which would enable better monitoring of the reasons for non-participation and dropout.
13. Any future programme should seek to aim for a quality of artistic output at least as good as that achieved in this project. High profile opportunities for exhibition and performance should continue to be offered, though their timing may vary.
14. Efforts should be made to involve other young people, staff and other contacts in the audience at exhibitions and performances.
15. The Steering Group should clarify the aims of the programme of visits to other exhibitions and performances. If it is decided that these should aim to benefit a wider range of young people than at present, a specific programme of preparatory linked arts activities may be needed.
16. A strategy should be developed for the wider dissemination of the experiences of project to young people and to arts organisations within the city; including the wider application of the project guidelines, and training for arts workers and organisations.
17. The feasibility of a more systematic approach to agreeing objectives with participants in advance should be investigated.
18. Participants should be offered a record of their participation and achievements. In the longer term, the relevance of this to national qualification frameworks should be investigated.
19. The long-term aim should be a mainstream service that offers arts experiences when young people are ready for them, and then supports them individually to move on gradually to unsupported provision, if they desire.
20. In order to enable such a service to succeed in allowing experienced participants to progress and younger care leavers to continually become involved in their place, more work needs to be done with city arts organisations to develop models for 'intermediate' levels of support for potential participants in mainstream youth arts programmes.

Appendix A Acknowledgements

In addition to the young people who responded to questionnaires, interviews and Focus Groups, the following contributed their views at various stages in the evaluation process:

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Appendix B Relationship to *big step* Health Strategy

The Project's 'Objectives' were (see 3.3.):

1. To provide opportunities for young people in/leaving care in Glasgow to participate in arts activities in a way that is responsive to their needs and abilities.
2. To support young people in/leaving care to interact with others in an environment that supports the development of communication, team working and listening skills.
3. To provide a safe environment for young people in/leaving care to express themselves using a variety of means
4. To work with Glasgow City Council Cultural & Leisure Services, the Social Work Leaving Care Team and community arts organisations to ensure mainstream arts opportunities are responsive to the needs of young people in/leaving care.
5. To elicit the views of young people in/leaving care regarding the preferred shape of a future or continued project.

The big step's Health objectives are as follows. The relationship of each to the above list, as identified in the project application is shown.

1. To develop & support programmes and systems that facilitate the involvement of young people leaving care in informing and contributing to the health agenda of the partnership and other relevant agencies
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: 1,4,5
2. To promote the Health & Well-being needs & issues of young people leaving care amongst key health providers and relevant agencies
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: 1,4
3. To develop and support multi-agency partnerships and health alliances which further the development of holistic and sensitive responses towards improving the health outcomes of young people leaving care
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: 1,3,4,5
4. To contribute towards the development and promotion of health related policy, good practice standards and strategic approaches which improve the health outcomes of young people leaving care
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: n.a.
5. To support the development of responses which investigate and respond to the needs and issues of birth parents and carers in responding to the health needs and issues of young people in and leaving care
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: n.a.
6. To contribute to the identification and implementation of appropriate and relevant responses to barriers to access to medical care, health services, health information, support and advice
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: n.a.
7. To promote and develop appropriate and relevant health promotion and education responses which improve the health outcomes of young people leaving care
PROJECT OBJECTIVES: 4, possibly 1

8. To identify and promote appropriate social support responses which respond to young peoples social isolation and exclusion which contribute to the improvement of the health and well-being of young people leaving care to independence **PROJECT OBJECTIVES: 1,2,3,5**
9. To support the development of responses which support the practical, interpersonal and self care tasks for the maintenance of positive and meaningful independence in the community and the management of health **PROJECT OBJECTIVES: 1,2,3,4**
10. To identify the mental health support needs of young people leaving care and, in partnership with a range of agencies, develop suitable responses. **PROJECT OBJECTIVES: ALL**