



Aberystwyth Arts Centre

University of Wales Aberystwyth





Part I

Where We Are Now

- **Background**
- **Arts Centre Facilities**
- **Artistic Programme**
 - **Performing arts**
 - **Exhibitions**
 - **Community arts**
- **Facts and figures**

Part II

Developments

1990- 2005

- **Artistic Vision**
- **Partnerships**
- **Staff**
- **Building Development**
- **Funding**
- **The Next Stage**



BACKGROUND

University :

- 1872 First College of University of Wales at Aberystwyth
- Aberystwyth population 15,000
- Students 8,000 plus 1,000 staff
- Science/arts mix with increasingly strong performing arts and media
- Number of national institutions including National Library of Wales, Welsh Books Council

Arts Centre established 1972



Region :

- Ceredigion population 80,000



ARTS CENTRE FACILITIES

The major regional arts centre for mid and west Wales
– a ‘National Flagship for the arts’

Performing Arts

- Concert hall 1,250 seats
- Theatre 310 seats
- Studio theatre 100 seats
- Cinema 125 seats





Exhibition Facilities

- Art gallery
- Photographic gallery
- Ceramics gallery
- Café gallery





Community Arts Facilities

- Ceramics Studio
- 3d studio
- 2d studio
- Print workshop
- Photographic darkrooms
- Recording studio
- Video editing suite
- Dance studios
- New media studio-2006



Facilities cont...



Trading Facilities

- University Bookshop
- Craft and Design shop
- Cafes
- Bars

Facilities cont...

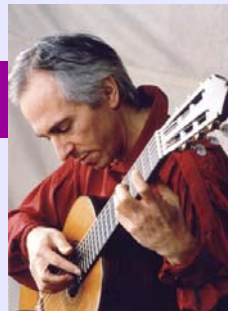




ARTISTIC PROGRAMME

Performing arts

- Wide ranging programme of theatre and dance companies from Wales, U.K. and internationally
- Arts Centre professional productions
- Community and youth productions
- Classical music programme includes symphony and chamber orchestras, opera, contemporary music plus wide range of community choirs and orchestras
- Wide range of popular music particularly world music, folk and jazz





Exhibitions

- Major regional gallery
- Focus on contemporary artists working in the visual arts, multi media and applied arts.
- Eight exhibitions each year in the main gallery
- Two of these exhibitions will tour to venues in the U.K.
- Photographic Gallery, Café Gallery, Ceramics Gallery.
- Over 30 exhibitions each year





Cinema

- Main regional arthouse cinema
- 800 screenings each year
- UK and world cinema plus re-released classics
- Audience development through partnerships and festivals including;
 - WOW, Wales wide celebration of third world film.
 - FFresh, the Wales Student Moving Image Festival.





Community Arts

Most extensive and comprehensive community arts programme of any arts venue in Wales. -Arts Council of Wales recent survey

- Strong emphasis on working with young people as the artists and audiences of the future.
- Includes all art forms including drama, dance, music, literature, visual arts, crafts and new media.
- Extensive range of weekly courses – accredited and non accredited
- Working with all age ranges starting with pre school creative work.
- Youth theatre, adult drama and community performance groups working with professional directors
- Theatre education -workshops, master classes and talks to develop understanding of theatre programme
- Professional development for young performers and emerging theatre companies
- Special projects with major dance, theatre and opera companies



- Extensive artists in schools curriculum linked programme.
- Creative writing courses for adults and young people-including Ceredigion young writing squad
- Extensive programme of talks, master classes and conferences, supporting exhibition programme
- Special educational projects covering schools throughout whole region of mid Wales
- Arts for all programme to open the boundaries for new attenders
- Film and media workshops and courses
- Open access studios for photography and new media





FACTS AND FIGURES

- Live performances and events 100,000 paid attendances
- Cinema 27,000 attendances
- Community arts and education programme 98,000 attendances
- Exhibitions- Main gallery 62,000
 - Photographic Gallery 100,000
- Main regional employer 40 full time, 119 part time
- Total turnover £3.3 million-2004-5
- 71% of total turnover £2.4 million earned income
- Over 650,000 visitors annually





Development of Arts Centre

How did we get from:

1990 - turnover £600,000 and small staff base

2005 - turnover £3.3 million 105 full time equivalent staff?

- **Artistic Vision**
- **Partnerships**
- **Staff**
- **Building Development**
- **Funding**
- **The Next Stage**



1 ARTISTIC VISION

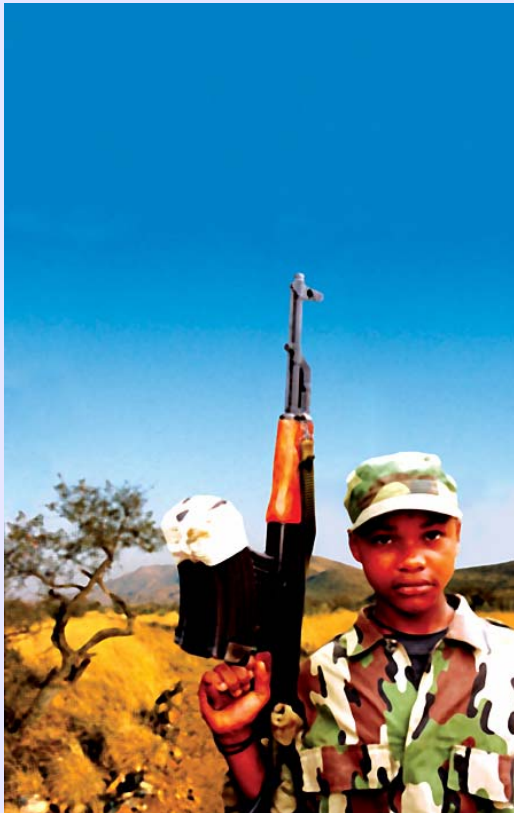
- Emphasise value of arts to the community
- Give Arts Centre a regional role
- Offer inclusive bilingual, bicultural programme
- Offer an extensive participatory programme both at Arts Centre and in community
- Develop partnerships to deliver programme
- Independence of action to implement artistic programme





Arts and Politics

Theatre for Change Macbeth –Out of Joint Theatre





Arts and Science

- “Sunbathers”
Heather Ackroyd
and Dan Harvey
- IGER project
 - Science Cafe



Arts and Community

Visual Arts Programme.
Egin- Three year Mid
Wales wide artist in
Schools project. Barclays
and Arts and Business
sponsored.





Arts and Festivals

- **International Ceramics Festival** - Largest ceramics festival in UK
- **Musicfest** - Classical music festival and summer school
- **Booktide** - Children's literature festival
- **Agor Drysau** - International children's theatre festival
- **WOW** Wales One World - Celebration of third world cinema
- **Ffresh** - Wales Student Moving Image Festival
- **Chinese New Year Festival**
- **Giving Voice** - International celebration of vocal work
- **Mid Mad** - World music festival.
- **DS1** - Digital Storytelling Festival 2006





2 PARTNERSHIPS

- Working with other organisations in the creative arts and other sectors.
- Important in developing the sector.
- Greater strength in numbers.
- Networking.
- Working together on joint projects.
- Development of best practice
- Lobby decision makers, funders and media.



- **The Circuit** - Regional organisation for the eight professional Mid Wales theatres/arts centres
- **Creu Cymru** - National Touring Agency for Wales - 45 main theatres and arts centres of Wales
- **Visual Arts Galleries of Wales** - Fourteen main revenue funded contemporary arts galleries in Wales
- **Wales Cinema Exhibition Group**
- **Canllw on Line** - Wales wide media development for young people
- **CCAT - Cultural Cooperation and Touring - Arts Centre /Temple Bar partnership.** European funded INTERREG project. Develop links cultural links between Wales and Ireland.

Partnerships Cont...





3 STAFF

Specialist staff crucial to develop and manage each part of the operation.

Artistic programme

- **Performing Arts Officer**
- **Exhibitions Curator**
- **Visual Arts and Crafts Education Officer**
- **Associate Artistic Directors**
- **Freelance art form specialists**
- **Large team of tutors covering all the art forms**



STAFF

Trading

Catering Manager

Bar Manager

Craft and Design Shop Manager

Bookshop Manager

Service support staff

- Technical Manager
- Administrative Manager
- Financial Manager
- Marketing Manager
- Front of House Manager
- House Services Manager



STAFF

- Major redevelopment completed in 2000 required reassessment of the staffing structure
- In 1998 formalised new departmental structure
- Introduced a new management team of the key department heads
- Introduced an appraisal system for all staff
- Investors In People 2006



4 Building Development

Phase 1

- D.I.Y – Few sources of funding so adaptation of existing spaces at minimal cost to establish new areas arts and trading activity.

Phase 2

- 1993 ERDF £350,000
- Largest part of funding into income generating areas to build sustainability
- Cafes, bars, shops, box office, redesign of public areas



Building development phase 3

- Extensive period of consultation and research 1995-97
- 1997 ACW Lottery £2.6 million award - total project £4.3 million
- Redevelopment completed in April 2000
- Design element crucial – Organic - Design awards
- Galleries, community arts workshops, recording studio, studio theatre, dance studios, cinema, bars, café, box office, public spaces





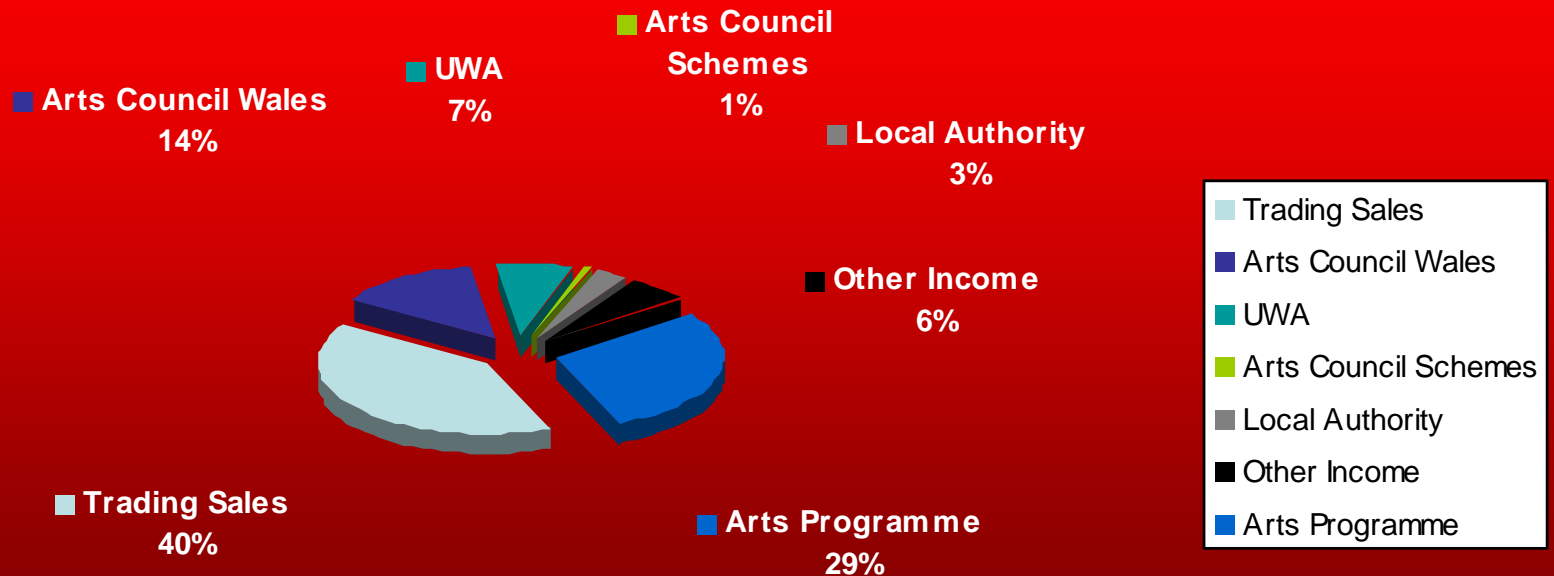
5 FUNDING

Main sources of funding:

- **Arts Programme.**
- **Trading**
- **Sponsorship**
- **Grants**

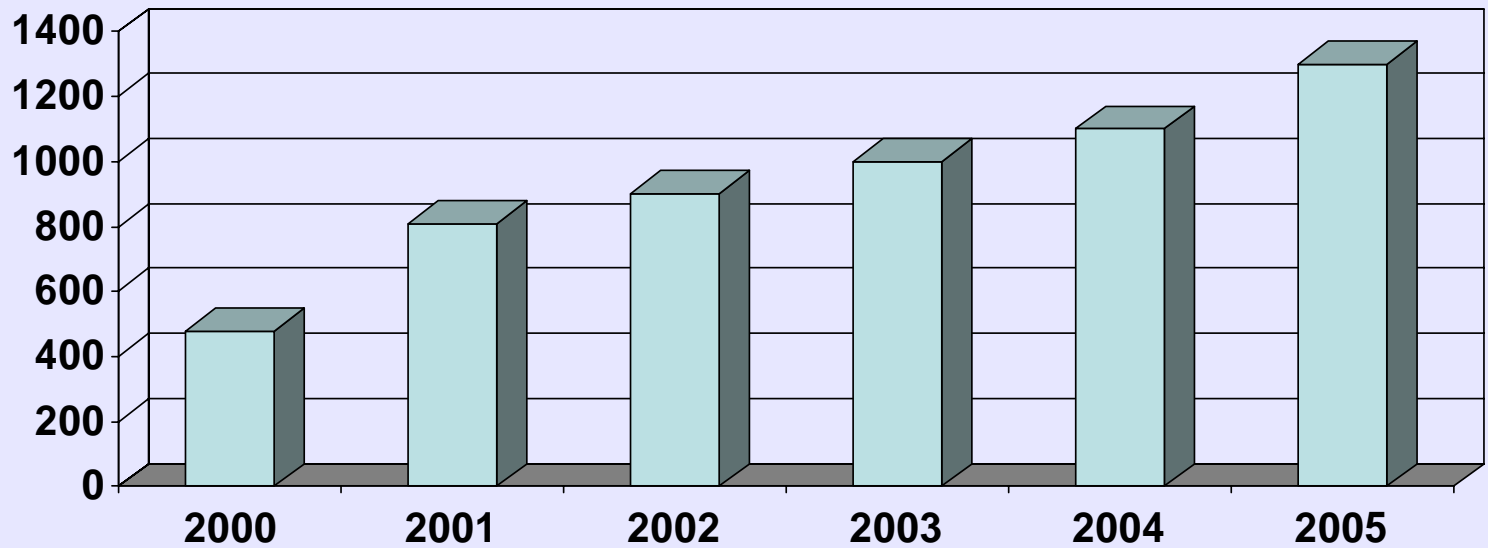


Income 2003-04





Trading Income £'000





Trading Income

- Redevelopments of 1993 and 2000 show success of capital investment
- Café income -1992 £125,000
-1995 £200,000
- Café income -2000 £260,000
-2005 £600,000



Sponsorship / Fundraising

- Difficult in rural Mid Wales - no large industries
- Perception that Arts Centre as part of University does not need funding
- Part time sponsorship officer raised over £500,000 over last 9 years
- Recently focused on projects linked community arts education programme.
- Particularly successful in gaining continued commitment from Barclays, Arts and Business and numerous trusts and charities
- 2005-6 Additional £60,000 for Travel Project



Grants

- Trading and arts programme income 75% of £3.3million turnover
- **Grants vital to fill 25% funding gap-providing quality and accessibility**

Sources of grants

- University
- Arts Council of Wales
- Local authorities
- Lottery
- European

Funding cont...



Grants

- **University** - Strong commitment and in particular from key individuals within the institution. Important factor in Arts Centre's success
- **Arts Council of Wales** - in recent years tremendously supportive through revenue and capital lottery funding.
- **Grants** most susceptible of all funding to significant fluctuations due to changes of policy. In the past policy changes by Arts Council, University and local authorities have meant real or potential withdrawals of funding.



Multiplicity of funding sources particularly from trading and arts programme income gives :

- Measure of artistic and financial independence
- Makes grant funding more secure by demonstrating value for money to funders
- Better able to respond to either reductions in funding but also funding opportunities



6 The Next Stage

Arts Centre Development Plan 2005-2009

Artistic Programme

Three main strands

- Creation and presentation of professional work across all the arts forms.
- Professional development and training
- Community development and training



Development plan 2005-2009

Artistic Programme

- Commissioning new work –link to new sources of funding e.g. Assembly/Arts Council of Wales Arts Outside Cardiff scheme.
- Artist and creators in residence programme
- Specific areas of development particularly new media
- Professional development programme, nurturing new and existing professionals
- Encouraging critical study and debate
- Development of accredited/non accredited courses.
- Link developments to new Creative Arts Business Complex



ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY 2004

Undertaken by staff of the Cardiff School of Business concludes that Aberystwyth Arts Centre:

- brings £4.9 million of turnover to region
- supports 105 full time equivalent jobs
- directly benefits over 200 households
- only 4 private sector local companies have a higher turnover
- earned income far higher than comparable cultural facilities in U.K.
- as part of University offer higher than Welsh average levels of pay and pension, holiday and training opportunities substantially better than in other parts of the economy.



- “the Arts Centre provides both the ‘bread’ of the jobs and incomes and the ‘circus’ of the high quality arts performance and cultural space that protects and develops the uniqueness of its local place”



- “the Arts Centre is an important facility within the sector (tourism and leisure) that is playing an increasingly vital role as the income from traditional industries continues to decline”
- “there can be no doubt that Aberystwyth Arts Centre is a substantial asset to the University, town, county and Mid Wales region. It is also clear that the Centre should be regarded as a Welsh asset.”





Building Development 2006-8

- Phase 3 redevelopment outstandingly successful
- Currently planning additional facilities to cope with doubling of business
- Dance studios
- Café redevelopment
- Major new development of creative arts business units



Creative Arts Business Units

Series of business units/studios for a wide range of creative arts businesses, arts development agencies, artists and craft workers

- Creative arts - significant contribution to the regional economy, faster growth than other sectors in U.K. in last 7 years.
- Arts Centre important focus as the major regional arts centre and growing role as national centre for arts development.
- Arts Centre part of a growing Aberystwyth creative cluster including University, National Library, Welsh Books Council, Science Park, new WDA Technium and new Visualisation Centre.
- Economic Impact study forecasts 60 jobs created and stabilised plus additional £1 million turnover to the region.



Benefits of creative arts business project

- Gives the Arts Centre a creative community to work closely with.
- Uses existing strengths of Arts Centre's artistic programme and facilities as springboard to encourage further high quality development
- Concentration of creative excellence giving opportunities for generation and exchange of ideas.
- Links into Spinout, University Commercialization Unit, Assembly's strategy to prioritize development of creative industry sector.
- Design competition to select a low cost imaginative solution. Thomas Heatherwick one of UK's top designers chosen.









Conclusions

- **Artistic Vision-** have clear vision of what you are trying to achieve
- **Partnerships-** make connections, work together with like minded organisations and individuals
- **Staff-** commitment to staff and from staff
- **Building Development-** important key to move to next stage
- **Funding-** multiplicity of funding sources, actively engage with funders, understand what they want
- **Future-** keep planning for The Next Stage

The Arts Centre's successful development has been in the context of the inextricable connection between culture and economic forces each feeding off the other to their mutual benefit.

“Alan Hewson must dream at night of statistics and economic impact studies, but he also creates and promotes brilliant art and engages with a local community – the funding has been a means to a visionary end.”-Report on 2006 Arts Council of Wales Conference.