



Annual Review 2014



January 2015

v1.0

Charity Details

Creative Village Arts is a company limited by guarantee, and registered with HMRC as a charity.

Trustees (Directors) at the date of this report and their areas of expertise are as follows;

- **Dr Caroline Murphy**, Chair: Psychiatrist and Complementary therapist, experienced in health, well being and mental health issues. Caroline is CVA's Safeguarding Officer.
- **Janet Hoy**, Secretary. Formerly a founding Director of a 'Top 10' London Marketing Agency, with over 20 years experience in company management and below the line marketing and advertising, and digital media.
- **Stephen Lewis**, Treasurer. Degrees in Art History and Fine Art, Stephen has over 20 years experience in business finance and administration.

Registered Office: 32 Victoria Road Londonderry, BT47 2PT

Website: www.creativevillagearts.com

Company name: Creative Village Arts Ltd

Banking: HSBC, The Diamond, Londonderry.

Accountants: Patrick Durkan & Co., 8 Springrowth House, Springtown Ind. Est., Derry, BT48 0NA

Studio Address 1 : 9 Pump Street, Derry, BT48 6JG

Studio Address 2 : 11A Bishop Street, Derry, BT48 6PL

Company Reg.: NI613283

Charity Reg.: XT36256

Executive Summary

Creative Village Arts is an artist-led charity that provides support to the creative community of Derry-Londonderry, and facilitates and promotes artistic activity in the city centre.



Following on from our inaugural year, which coincided with the highly successful City of Culture 2013, we have concentrated our voluntary efforts on serving our core membership base of Visual Artists in Derry-Londonderry, whilst ensuring that the operation of our charity is kept on a sound financial footing during these difficult times.

In summary, our voluntary efforts this year have been focused upon three key projects:

- 1 **The on-going successful management of the Pump Street Courtyard Studios**
- 2 **Securing additional studio space for the former 'Studio 6ix' artists**
- 3 **Contributing to the Derry-Londonderry Visual Arts Strategy Review; in particular sharing the experience of helping to implement the London Street Gallery project during 2013 and audience research insights.**

During 2014, CVA took the difficult decision to withdraw from the management of a retail unit in the Pump Street Courtyard which was being used to stage solo and group exhibitions for local artists. Although this unfortunately meant that there would be one less outlet for exhibiting artists in the city centre, we felt that - with the continued absence of funding support for the running costs of CVA and the Derry Print Workshop - it was wise to focus all of our available budget on ensuring the utility overheads of the Pump Street Courtyard building were covered for both ourselves *and* the Derry Print Workshop.

Happily we have managed to achieve this objective.

Furthermore, we have thought it wise to plan for 2015 on the basis of a continued absence of public funding for CVA. We are confident that we can continue to support our members with the provision of studio space across two properties, so long as Derry Print Workshop can meet their rent and utility bills in this coming financial year. We will continue to provide support on a voluntary basis, with no salaried positions, to keep our operating costs as low as possible.

In 2015, CVA hopes to cement its position as the leading provider of low cost artists' studios for the Visual Arts community in Derry-Londonderry, and as a facilitator for creative activity within the city centre. In doing so we will achieve a lasting legacy for the City of Culture 2013, delivering on the promise of establishing a creative community in the Cathedral Quarter and raising the profile of Derry-Londonderry's practising Visual Artists.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caroline Murphy". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Caroline Murphy
Chair

Introduction

This document summarises CVA's second year of operation, 2014, and outlines our plans for 2015.

Our aim is to continue to deliver a Visual Arts legacy for the City in a sustainable way, while meeting the Charity's Objects as stated in our Memorandum & Articles.

These are :

- (1) Promote arts and creativity to the general public in Derry/Londonderry and its environs (the "area of benefit") by:
 - (a) establishing and maintaining affordable studio, office and work space for artists and craftspeople on terms appropriate to their means, enabling direct engagement with artists and craftspeople in a studio or workspace setting;
 - (b) promoting, organising and publicising events which improve public access to, and participation in, arts and crafts;
 - (c) providing facilities for exhibitions, workshops and seminars;
 - (d) providing non-formal, creative education in a range of creative disciplines;
 - (e) encouraging interest in, raising awareness of and fostering the development of creative projects.
- (2) Provide opportunities and facilities for artists and craftspeople to collaborate, offer mutual support, engage in critical debate and share ideas and help advance their professional development.
- (3) Promote co-operation and partnership working between arts and cultural organisations, community groups, public and statutory bodies and agencies, and others to facilitate the development of the creative industries sector and so provide employment and training opportunities and enable artists and craftspeople to be gainfully employed in creative activities.
- (4) Advance the creative education of men, women and children within communities that suffer from economic and social disadvantage so as to:
 - (a) seek to make arts relevant to their communities and as a medium of information and expression;
 - (b) strengthen their capacities to improve their lives, thereby allowing them to gain confidence in their own abilities and to influence decisions that affect them.
- (5) Act as a collective voice and consultative forum for artists and craftspeople based in the area of benefit.

This document details our activities to date, in order to clarify the skill set and services that CVA voluntarily provide to the artistic community and local bodies, and further indicates how the charity aims to progress in the coming year.

Summary of 2014 Activity

(1) The Pump Street Studios

The refurbishment of the property was completed in April 2013, on budget and within the schedule required by the ACNI, liaising with the Central Procurement Directorate.

During 2014 all CVA's studios have been occupied, and snagging issues identified and rectified.

In May 2014 the snagging list was completed and CVA released the final 5% retention fund to the contractor, as per the contract agreement.

Since opening the ground floor has been occupied by Derry Print Workshop, who are a separate Visual Arts charity specialising in the provision of Fine Art printing facilities for practising artists, and educational programmes for artists and local communities.

The Workshop has attracted 16 fully subscribed members during its first year of operation, and has in addition successfully implemented a number of training programmes and community based activities. It has, in a short space of time, become a vital and valued part of the Visual Arts community in Derry-Londonderry.

The second floor artists' studios have been fully utilised during the year, with 3 'permanent' artists in residence, and several part-time artists renting the fourth room for exhibition preparation.



Felting Workshops (right) run by Suzanne Woods and Watercolouring classes run by Mary Crowley in the Group studio Pump Street Studios.

The second floor group studio has been a great success, catering for artist-led classes in painting, life drawing, crochet, knitting, iconography, ceramics, millinery, and clay modelling – it has even been used as a photographic studio and exhibition space. This has provided a welcome source of additional income for covering CVA's operating costs.

(2) London Street Gallery & Visual Arts Strategy Review

For the Visual Arts community, especially local artists and local people interested in the Visual Arts, the London Street Gallery became one of the high spots of the year in 2013; we are very proud of the voluntary contribution we made to the successful implementation of this project.

Recognising the importance of this gallery space to the participating artists and visiting public, CVA devised a Visitors' Survey, to gather data from the gallery's visitors to help inform any future planning for the Visual Arts in Derry-Londonderry post 2013.

From April to December 2013 the London Street Gallery attracted c.10K visitors, hosting 14 exhibitions and welcoming visitors, from local communities and schools through to VIPs, such as President Michael Higgins. In addition the work on show boosted the profile of visual arts in the city, and generated extensive radio, television and newspaper coverage, both local and national.

Following on from this, we used the insights gained from the Visitors' Survey to inform our response as Stakeholders in the Visual Arts Strategy Review being implemented by Derry City Council and the Arts Council NI.

We have been proactive in contributing to the debate on behalf of our member artists by

- championing the need to support local practising artists in the city, in particular with the provision of low cost studio space
- highlighting the gap in provision of a mainstream gallery, featuring modern and traditional Irish Art, which proved so popular during the City of Culture 2013
- underlining the need to support Derry Print Workshop in a manner similar to the support given to the Belfast Print Workshop and Seacourt in Bangor.

This review is still on-going, and is due to report in April 2015 (when the Council merger is complete).

(3) The Reflect Gallery – closed

At the start of 2014 CVA had the use of a retail unit in the Pump Street Courtyard for staging solo and group exhibitions.

We had planned to implement a programme of exhibitions across the year in support of local artists and community groups, and approached the Arts Council NI for a Small Grants project to fund exhibition costs, such as artists' transportation expenses and marketing materials. Unfortunately we were unsuccessful in securing a project budget during the Visual Arts review period, although the Arts Council indicated that they were not objecting to the proposal per se.

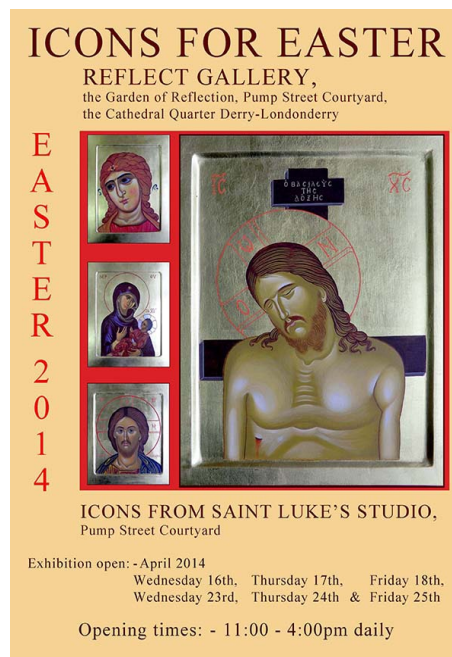
We did not cancel all of our programme, but decided to use CVA funds to support key local groups and events that we had verbally committed to, and which we thought were important for the local community, while we re-applied to the Arts Council and sought funding elsewhere.

Firstly we supported the Craft Apprentices programme, which featured local people who had completed a training programme with local craft makers as part of Derry City Council's and the Craft Council's joint initiative.

We also supported the network of local Iconographers who have been trained by the St Luke's Iconography Studio in the Pump Street Courtyard. 16 Iconographers from Derry-Londonderry and the North West peninsula each submitted a single icon for display during Easter 2014. The exhibition was opened by the Deputy Mayor, Gary Middleton, and visitors journeyed from as far afield as Belfast, Lisburn and Omagh to view the icons, as the exhibition was publicised through the church network. This exhibition proved very popular with senior citizens who enjoyed the contemplative atmosphere in the small gallery, and often stayed to talk and socialise for more than an hour on some occasions, questioning how the icons were made and learning about the stories behind each image. It would be a shame not to develop this idea to become a regular feature of Derry-Londonderry's Easter celebrations, as Iconography is such a special form of art and such an unusual offering to have in a city.

Finally we staged a group exhibition for Derry Print Workshop during the Jazz Festival. This exhibition showcased fine art printing images produced by their associate members, demonstrating the different forms of printing available – from lino cut to etching, digital images and screen printing. This exhibition acted as a marketing platform for Derry Print Workshop to attract new members and to sign up local people to summer workshops and training days through the gallery.

Unfortunately we were unsuccessful in securing any funding for the gallery, and having subsequently used it only for storage space for the "Images of Ulster" exhibition that showed at the Playhouse and toured Northern Ireland, we decided to relinquish our use of it and return the keys to the Inner City Trust at the end of the summer.



Alderman Gary Middleton, Deputy Mayor chats with visitors at the Icons for Easter exhibition

(4) Local Artist Support

As part of our primary aims we have continued to voluntarily provide business and marketing consultancy support to a number of local artists, including ceramicist Tom Agnew, textile artist and illustrator Bridgeen Gillespie and Rebecca Strain, and have also helped the Derry Print Workshop with developing and writing funding applications.

We worked with Rebecca Strain in association with the Craft Council of Ireland, for which CVA received additional income.

During 2014 we became directly involved in the support of the 'Pump Street Artists' who were a community of artists renting studios at 13 Pump Street from a charitable organisation, Studio 6ix.

In June 2014 the 13 artists were required to relinquish their studio spaces, opened during the City of Culture 2013 as a legacy project, when their landlord, Studio 6ix, could no longer support the venture.

CVA's Director, Stephen Lewis, was renting one of the studios within the building and was asked by the other artists if CVA could support their quest to retain the studios with Arts Council NI or Derry City Council support.

With CVA's voluntary help – creating a Facebook/Web campaign, providing PR coverage, liaising with DCC, the Arts Council and DCAL - the artists campaigned for their studios under the banner of “Just Hanging On” and gained a lot of local community and media support for their plight.

Unfortunately there was no intervention by the Council or Arts Council to save the building, so the artists with CVA continued to search for an alternative solution.

In October 2014 the Pump Street Artists' group was successful in finding new accommodation within the Cathedral Quarter – at 11 Bishop Street. By this time some of the group had secured rooms elsewhere or returned to their own homes and the group now comprised 10 artists.

CVA negotiated a lease with the landlord which could be paid for out of the rent generated by the artists. CVA intend to continue to supply all managerial and book-keeping services on a voluntary basis, with no salaried employees, to keep overheads as low as possible so that the studios if necessary can run without public funding support.

The artists are due to move into their new studios in 2015.

(5) Legacy Activity

Dr Rory Harron, curator of the “No Jury, No Prize” exhibition at the London Street Gallery, approached CVA for assistance with submitting an application to the Legacy Fund to re-stage the Open Call exhibition in Derry-Londonderry in 2014, with a view to it becoming a regular feature of the Visual Arts calendar in the city.

CVA helped draft and budget the proposal. Unfortunately the application was rejected.

Subsequently Dr Harron and CVA worked with Artlink in Buncrana to stage “No Jury, No Prize 2014” at the Fort Dunree Gallery on the Inishowen Peninsula. The event attracted widespread support in the artist community from both sides of the border, and was well attended and received by the public. Both Artlink and CVA anticipate repeating the exhibition in the coming year.

In a second submission to the Legacy Fund, CVA developed, drafted and budgeted a

project for Derry Print Workshop aimed at celebrating the Maritime culture of Derry-Londonderry, and supporting the forthcoming Clipper Festival. We await the announcement of this final Legacy fund allocation in April 2015.

Assessment of Activities and Objects

| Object | Activity |
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| 1 (a) Establishing and maintaining an Arts centre that will provide affordable studio, office and work space for artists and craftspeople on terms appropriate to their means, enabling direct engagement with other artists and craftspeople in a studio or workspace setting; | Pump St Studios redeveloped, occupied and fully functional. In process of negotiating new premises for 10 artists at 11 Bishop Street (opening in 2015). |
| 1 (b) Promoting, organising and publicising events which improve public access to, and participation in, arts and crafts; | London Street Gallery's final show was in January 2014, which completed a very successful project from the City of Culture year. 3 exhibitions in 2014 in the Reflect Gallery, and one in the Education space in the Pump Street Studios featured local artists and local Visual Art and Craft groups. |
| 1 (c) Providing facilities for exhibitions, workshops and seminars; | CVA Pump St in constant use for art and artist support activities. |
| 1 (d) Providing non-formal, creative education in a range of creative disciplines; | Workshops and classes conducted in group studio on a regular basis. |
| 1 (e) Encouraging interest in, raising awareness of and fostering the development of creative projects. | Strong web presence advertising opportunities, face book site thriving and active in local campaigning for gallery and artist support |
| 2. Provide opportunities and facilities for artists and craftspeople to collaborate, offer mutual support, engage in critical debate and share ideas and help advance their professional development. | Group studio used by several groups for interaction and education. New accommodation for the Pump St Artist group within the Cathedral Quarter will help grow the creative community and professional environment to generate greater commercial presence in the city centre. |
| 3. Promote co-operation and partnership working between arts and cultural organisations, community groups, public and statutory bodies and agencies, and others to facilitate the development of the creative industries sector and so provide employment and training opportunities and enable artists and craftspeople to be gainfully employed in creative activities. | Facilitated the involvement of community, school, special needs groups in both exhibitions and educational activities. The Pump St studios have become a high profile venue for publicising community arts activities and regeneration projects, hosting Ministerial visits in support of council and other charitable initiatives. |
| 4. Promote artistic activity within communities of the area, including those that suffer from economic and social disadvantage, so as to encourage a view | Our organisation is located within a an area of economic and social disadvantage – the Diamond and Fountain wards. Our activities are targeted at promoting artistic engagement and creative |

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| of the arts as a medium of information, expression, and advancement. | <p>fulfilment via artist led initiatives.</p> <p>We strive to keep barriers to participation, be they cultural or financial as low as possible to maximise our reach and social impact.</p> |
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Financial Review

As of December 2014, CVA is financially sound, despite being unable to secure additional funds during the DCC-ACNI Visual Arts Strategy review period.

We were financially assessed by ILEX in relation to our capital funding, and also by the Culture Company/DCC, who provided a grant for City of Culture activities in 2013. Gratifyingly both organisations signed off on our expenditure, project management and return on investment without query.

Given the current financial environment the Directors have taken the decision to divest the organisation of the Reflect Gallery. All available funds are focused on ensuring that CVA can maintain the Pump Street Studio complex without the need for additional public funding – in the coming year this will be reliant upon Derry Print Workshop being able to meet their financial obligations to us in relation to rent and utility bills. To date we have subsidised their utility overheads.

In the coming year we will be prioritising the negotiations with the Inner City Trust for long term future rent obligations.

In 2015 we forecast that it will be possible to break even given our anticipated income, through rent and fund-raising activities. We will continue to rent out studio spaces at very favourable rates (an average studio is £85 per calendar month, inclusive of ALL services, broadband access etc), to help support local artists in the most practical of ways.

The addition of 10 new studios will offer new challenges and opportunities.

Plans for 2015

- To voluntarily maintain provision of 2 Visual Arts complexes in the Cathedral Quarter of the city.
- To run the organisation with high standards of financial probity and good governance.
- To continue to support the regional artistic community, with targeted business advice and marketing campaigns.
- To promote the availability of a city centre fine art and crafts educational facility, hosting artist-led classes and fine art printing; enhancing employment opportunities for local artists and craftspeople.
- To maintain a web presence for disseminating relevant information on the Visual Arts, and promoting awareness of exhibition opportunities both regionally and nationally.
- To continue to engage with statutory bodies to help raise the profile of local artists and give voice to their needs.
- To help develop the creative identity of the Cathedral Quarter as a visitor attraction in the city centre, while engaging with the local community to help foster direct involvement with the arts in the Diamond and Fountain ward.
- To help develop the regional profile for the Visual Arts, working in collaboration with Artlink in Donegal; for example, re-staging “No Jury, No Prize” in 2015.

All of our activities are undertaken on a voluntary basis.

