

## **REPORT OF THE ARTS DEVELOPMENT OFFICER**

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### **SUBJECT: PERFORMANCE REPORT ON THE ARTS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME AT ORIEL Y PARC TO 30 NOVEMBER 2015**

#### **Purpose of Report**

#### **Introduction/Background**

The National Park Authority Improvement Plan Part 1 for 2015/16 sets out the following strategic outcomes:

- 1 The landscape, environment and culture of the National Park are conserved for current and future generations.
- 2 Residents and visitors from a wide range of backgrounds enjoy, appreciate and understand the National Park.
- 3 The work of the National Park Authority has a positive impact on the local economy and the well-being of residents and visitors to the National Park.
- 4 The National Park Authority, in consultation with residents, visitors and other partners, adapts to the reduced funding over the period 2014/2016 while still maintaining good governance, quality services, and value for money.

This Performance Report presents the progress to date of the arts development service delivered jointly by Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) and Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority (PCNPA) with a specific focus on the outcomes delivered at Oriel y Parc.

#### **Oriel y Parc context**

Oriel y Parc Gallery and Visitor Centre operates as the National Park's gateway for visitors to St David's and as an arts centre serving visitors and the local community.

Its main purpose is to:

- Inspire people to discover, value and conserve the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park; its landscape, culture and heritage
- Widen access to the collections of Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales through a programme of exhibitions and displays
- To provide an appropriate setting for the display of works from the Graham Sutherland collection
- To link the wider Pembrokeshire landscape, culture and heritage with a unique learning experience and make this accessible to diverse audiences

Oriel y Parc comprises a Main Gallery, Artist's Studio, Discovery Room education facility and Tower Room flexible gallery and meeting space. The Main Gallery's exhibition programme is a unique collaboration between Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales (AC-NMW) and the National Park (PCNPA). Using artworks, artefacts, specimens and materials from across the varied collections of AC-NMW, the gallery provides a regularly changing exhibition programme that responds to the Park's context and purpose, including images by Graham Sutherland, whose work was influenced profoundly by the Pembrokeshire landscape. Aspects of the Sutherland collection at AC-NMW form a key part of the rolling exhibitions at OyP.

OyP is responsible for producing and managing the wider arts programme that sits alongside the Main Gallery exhibition and which includes an annual programme of artist's studio residencies and participatory arts and creative learning activities that promote engagement with and interpretation of the culture, heritage, landscape and environment of the National Park, as well as supporting and promoting the artistic and cultural life of the National Park.

However, over the last few years the impact of public sector budget cuts has reduced the level of support that both AC-NMW and PCNPA can provide to Oriel y Parc to support the development of its arts programmes. As a result, the Park Authority in conjunction with PCC employed an Arts Development Officer (Kate Wood) to help develop and improve access to the arts for a range of audiences across Pembrokeshire with a specific focus on expanding arts opportunities at Oriel y Parc.

### **Summary of Arts Development work to date**

The Arts Development service has taken steps to create a more constructive and sustainable environment within which to develop and promote the arts programme at OyP. Integral to this has been encouraging partnership and collaboration in order to support high quality artistic production, creative learning and interpretation activities and grow OyP's profile and reputation amongst visitors, local communities, the education sector, and the arts sector both locally and across Wales.

### **Artists as Learners**

A partnership programme with engageCymru, the national body that supports the visual arts and gallery education.

Artists as Learners provided a mentoring programme for artists to develop gallery interpretation and education expertise. The project engaged a lead artist and two mentee artists whose knowledge and skills were developed through working with pupils from Marloes School (residential school for Looked After Children) and Tasker Milward.



Artists as Learners

### **Artist in Residence Programme**

#### **Môr Plastig (Plastic Sea)**

OyP commissioned Pembrokeshire-based fine art photographer Mike Perry to produce a new body of work which was exhibited in the studio space. Working in partnership with Keep Wales Tidy and local volunteers, Mike's work highlighted the impact of plastic detritus on the environment. Funding for the project was secured from Arts Council of Wales with partnership funding from AC-NMW. The exhibition was featured on S4C's Heno programme and an interview with Mike based on this work appears in the current issue of the art journal CCQ. Works produced as part of the commission were shown at this year's extremely prestigious Venice Biennale alongside an accompanying film that illustrated the National Park context of Mike's work. A number of these works were also included in a group exhibition in New York

in September. Based on Mike's Venice exhibition, Arts Council of Wales invited him to apply for Creative Wales funding (investment in the development of artistic talent). The Arts Development Officer provided advice and guidance for this and anticipates a successful outcome.

Môr Plastig was complemented by an artist's talk and a bespoke creative learning programme produced in partnership with Springboard (Communities First Family Learning) and photographer Bev Thomas. The programme saw parents and children from five Communities First primary schools take part in Ranger-led beach cleans gathering plastic that was then used as material for photographic imaging. The participants developed a range of creative and technical skills, including the making of pinhole cameras, which they used in conjunction with digital equipment to create a series of images highlighting the environmental damage caused by discarded plastic, and which mirrored the techniques displayed in AC-NMW's early photography Natural Images exhibition and Mike Perry's contemporary photography. The pinhole camera images were exhibited in the cafe at OyP. Only 8% of participants had previously visited OyP.



Mike Perry, *Môr Plastig*

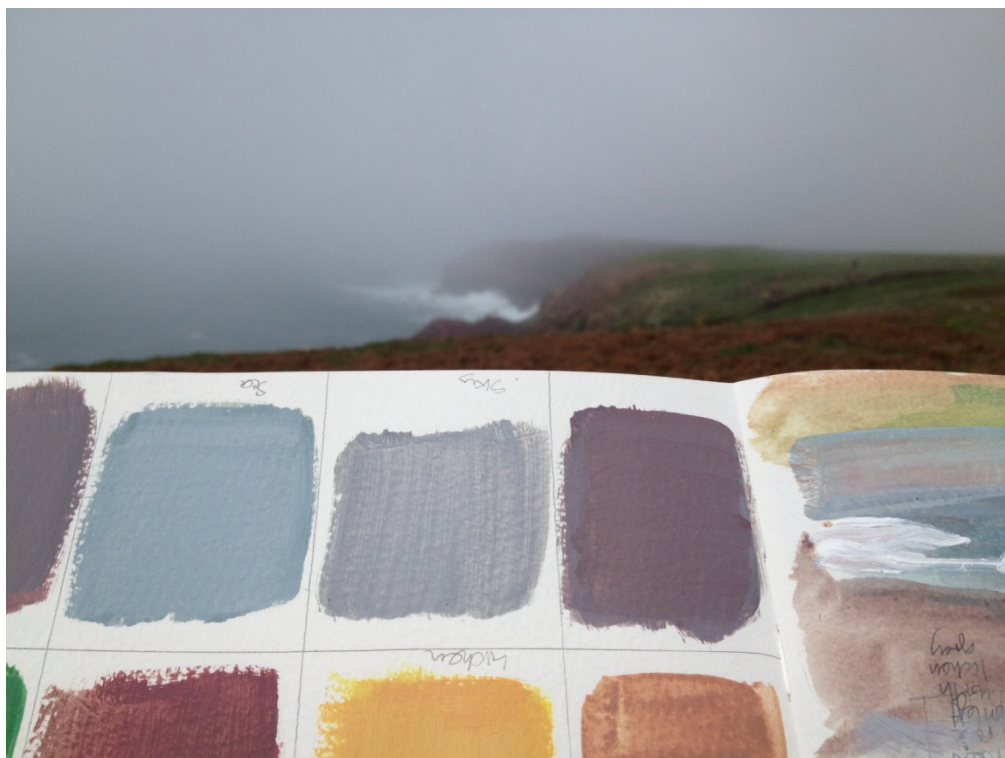




Springboard Workshop

#### Ob:serve

OyP is working as the creative partner with artist Linda Norris. This has involved providing advice and guidance on her successful funding application to Arts Council of Wales and supporting her work as artist-in-residence at Skokholm and OyP. Work arising out of this residency will be shown in the Tower Gallery in July and August 2016. Linda will continue to work with OyP in the interim providing a programme of open access and schools workshop activities. The Arts Development Officer is working with the Friends of OyP to submit an application to Age Concern's Granwyn Festival to fund Linda to facilitate arts activities with members of the Mind Cafe, an initiative for older people hosted by OyP.



Linda Norris: Ob:serve

### **Unfunded residencies**

OyP continues to provide opportunities for artists to work in the studio on a self-funded basis and is now proactively working with these artists to deliver a range of engagement activities, including artist's talks and projects with schools.

The Arts Development Officer worked with the artist Pauline LeBritton to develop and deliver an integrated learning and engagement programme with primary schools in Communities First areas. This comprised Ranger-led nature safaris followed by arts activities that linked the safaris to guided tours of the Alfred Wallace exhibition and wildlife themed craftmaking sessions.

### **Makers Guild of Wales/Craft in the Bay**

A pilot partnership project with the Makers Guild of Wales, a social enterprise supporting the work of its membership of craftmakers was developed by the OyP Centre Manager, Jenn Jones, in consultation with the Arts Development Officer, Kate Wood. An income generation initiative, this project is delivering an exhibition of work for sale in the period leading up to Christmas. There is potential to develop this project into a longer-term partnership with the Guild.

### **Gwyl Jams Niclas Festival**

The Arts Development Officer provided advice to the St Davids Community Forum regarding a successful funding application which enabled a week-end programme of events celebrating the life and work of Gwyl Jams Niclas who was born in St Davids. Activities took place in venues across St Davids, including OyP which hosted a series of talks and workshops.

## **Projects in development and future opportunities**

### **Pembrokeshire Drover**

A partnership project with Confluence, a consortium involving PLANED, spacetocreate (community arts organisation), iDeA Architects, Transition Haverfordest and Pembrokeshire County Council which is delivering a three-year arts and regeneration programme as part of Arts Council of Wales' Ideas:People:Places initiative. The partnership received funding from Arts Council Wales and PCC to the value £450K and has commissioned Karen Ingham, a BAFTA award winning artist and filmmaker to create a socially-engaged moving image work that responds to and interprets the inter-connections and inter-relationships between Haverfordwest as the county town and market centre and its rural and coastal hinterland. The work will be shown initially in Haverfordwest and then at OyP in August and September 2016. The Arts Development Officer is working with colleagues to link with wider National Park activities, eg walks programme, heritage talks, support for local food producers and the Constable exhibition.

### **Writer in Residence**

A new initiative bringing a writer in residence to OyP for the first time. Children's author Eloise Williams will be resident April – June 2016 developing a new literary work. During her residency Eloise will be carrying out creative writing workshops with schools. The Arts Development Officer is working with Eloise to submit a funding application to Literature Wales to deliver a workshop as part of the Roald Dahl Festival 2016.

### **Collectorplan**

The OyP Manager, Jenn Jones, has signed up to this initiative whereby Arts Council of Wales provides interest free loans to people wanting to purchase works of art and craft. The scheme is based on a contractual relationship between ACW and the purchaser, with no risk to the gallery. OyP will be subject to a small administration fee of 6% of the sale price. It is expected that offering the scheme will promote the sale of works priced above casual or encounter spend - £100 plus. The recent, very popular exhibition of work by Evie Antonio in the Tower Gallery included work priced between £900 - £1,200 and it is probable that had Collectorplan been in place, this would have resulted in more sales. OyP receives the standard commission rate of 40% on all sales.

### **Cymal membership**

Cymal is the national body for museums, archives and libraries standards and accreditation. Whilst the Main Gallery is accredited through AC-NMW, to date OyP has not had accreditation in its own right. The OyP Manager, Jenn Jones, is applying for registration and accreditation which will bring benefits via opportunities to participate in national programmes and special events. In addition, it will open up funding opportunities for which it has been previously ineligible, eg Esme Fairbairn Trust.

### **Creative Learning Plan for Wales**

A flagship Welsh Government and Arts Council of Wales programme promoting creative learning through the arts which will be run over five-years, supported by £20M funding. Four Regional Networks are being established to deliver this

programme. Pembrokeshire County Council is included in a bid led by University of Wales Trinity St Davids to deliver the South West Regional Network. Oriel y Parc has been included as one of a small number of local arts organisations that can 'in principle' be involved in the delivery. There are a number of programme strands of which the 'All Wales Arts and Education Programme' presents the best opportunity for OyP to contribute to the programme. As part of this programme's 'Experiencing the Arts' fund, schools can draw on this resource to support visits to arts and cultural venues to enrich learning in the classroom, or use it to support innovative collaborations between schools and arts and cultural organisations. There is a particular focus on learners from deprived backgrounds with limited access to active participation in the arts. The Arts Development Officer participates in the Communities First Learning Group and is seeking to develop partnership projects with Communities First schools once the funding becomes available.

### Options

The Arts Development service provides the only professional arts expertise within the National Park Authority. If the service is maintained, it can build on achievements to date and utilise its growing reputation to draw in resources not previously available, thereby developing its programme and profile further to become a significant arts provider in West Wales. Future opportunities such as those presented by the Creative Plan for Learning and arts funding bodies are contingent on organisations demonstrating professional arts capability. Withdrawal of the service and the attendant expertise within it will mean the National Park Authority will not be able to take advantage of these opportunities in future.

### Financial considerations

The Arts Development Officer's post is a post jointly funded by the National Park Authority and Pembrokeshire County Council. The current cost to the National Park Authority is 0.5FTE of the Arts Development Officer's salary, which represents £14,421 for the year 2015-16. There is no operating budget attached to the post. Activities have been supported through officer time and either direct fundraising or indirect funding through partnership initiatives.

### Risk considerations

Public perception of OyP's arts programme has increased as a result of a dedicated arts development service. Enhanced visitor experience has been demonstrated by feedback and education providers are requesting partnership opportunities for creative learning activities. In addition, OyP is regarded by the local arts community as a centre that provides a dynamic and supportive environment to work within and, with its growing reputation for producing high quality art, a respected platform for the exhibition of their work. This development is at risk if the Arts Development service is withdrawn.

### Compliance

The service complies with objectives 1 and 2 of the Improvement Plan Part 1 2015-16 and the main purposes of OyP, as set out in the introductory section of this performance report.

### Human Rights/Equality Issues

The Arts Development service conducts its programme of work within the context of Human Rights and Equalities. The Arts Policy and Strategy acknowledges that



participation in the cultural life of the community and enjoyment of the arts is a fundamental right (Article 27, Universal Declaration of Human Rights). It actively promotes the principle that arts provision must be accessible and address barriers to participation and engagement by specifically targeting socially excluded individuals and communities, as demonstrated by the partnership project with Springboard.

#### Biodiversity implications/Sustainability appraisal

The Arts Development service can contribute to promoting issues relating to nature conservation, climate change and resource use through producing projects that encourage knowledge and understanding of these issues, eg *Môr Plastig*.

#### Welsh Language statement

The Arts Development service complies with the National Park Authority's Language Policy. All published material is produced bilingually.

#### Conclusion

The Arts Development service has delivered progress in terms of the quality, breadth and reach of OYP's arts provision. This has been achieved through utilising the arts expertise within the service to:

- promote a partnership based approach to supporting, developing and sustaining a breadth of high quality arts provision, so that everyone can take part in arts activity that is relevant to their needs and aspirations;
- improve opportunities for young people to access and take part in high quality arts activities. This is particularly important for young people living in parts of Pembrokeshire where there are major inequalities in life opportunities: improving educational attainment and access to arts education and experiences are integrally related
- promote arts role as a mechanism for engaging people in learning about the National Park: its environment, culture and heritage.

#### Recommendation

Members are requested to RECEIVE and COMMENT on the Performance Report

(For further information contact Kate Wood, Arts Development Officer, on (01437) 720392).

