

[HI~ARTS]

ARTSPRAY

UPDATE – MAY 2002

It has now been a year since I was appointed Regional Co-ordinator for ArtsPlay and I thought it was about time I updated you on our progress.

After an uncertain start in Caithness & Sutherland and Ross & Cromarty (I must add that this was mainly due to the timing of the project and not to the groups or the artists who all worked very hard.) the project has gone from strength to strength.

GROUPS INVOLVED

Caithness & Sutherland

Childminders – Elizabeth Ross, Brora
Playgroups- Kinlochbervie Playgroup
Out of School Clubs – Far Edge, Bettyhill
Croileagan- Parents Agis Scholag, Ullapool
Sradagan – Tongue
Local Co-ordinator - Meg Telfer

Shetland

Playgroups - Lunnasting
Bright Sparks- Firth & Mossbank
Burra Playgroup- Burra
Pirrie Breeks- Mid Yell
Mid Yell Nursery
Sound Out of School Club, Lerwick
Kinderkids, Lerwick
Local Co-ordinator - Jane Moncrieff

Moray /Badenoch & Strathspey

Childminder – Karen Lomond Lawson
Croileagan, Newtonmore
Playgroup- Pinefields, Elgin
Kinraig Under 5's
Kinloss OOSC
Local Co-ordinator - Clare Evans-Teush

Lochaber

MacKintosh Playgroup- Fort William
Croileagan Acharacle
Sradagan, Fort William
Lochaber OOSC Project, Fort William
Waterbabies/waterworld OOSC, Ft William
Local Co-ordinator - Helen Semple

Ross & Cromarty

Sandra Patience – Balblair
Tore Under 5's Playgroup
Toybox, Gairloch
Croileagan Inbhir Theorsa
Sradagan – Dingwall
Local Co-ordinator - Siobhan Docherty

The Western Isles

Julie Olley Childminder/(OOSC)
Little Teddies Nursery, Stornoway
Saoghal Beag Nursery, North Uist
Croileagan Ness, Ness
Sradagan Point, Point
(Training Days Only) – An Cotan

Local Co-ordinator - Eilidh Thompson

Inverness/Naim

Childminder Wendy Taylor, Inverness
Croileagan Baile Chunic, Inverness
Playgroup- Junior World, Naim
Fliperz Day Care, Inverness
radagan Hilton – Inverness
Local Co-ordinator - Jelica Holmes

The Western Isles Phase 2

Croileagan Chinn a'deas, Daliburgh,
Benbecula Under 5s, Balivanich
Croileagan Eirisgeidh, Eriskay
Rowantree Childcare Centre, Balivanich
Croileagan lochdair
Castlebay Playgroup, Barra
Croileagan Bagh a'Chaisteil, Barra

Local Co-ordinator - Eilidh Thompson

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who took part for all your hard work and commitment to the project.

PROJECT DELIVERY

- We learnt that this sort of project is not really suited to being run over the summer holidays. Groups are too busy in June, and it is not really suitable to go into groups in August when the children are just getting back and settling down. The project therefore only really started to gather any momentum in September, by which time the four month contracts for the local co-ordinators had come to an end. We therefore altered the timetable for 2003 to take this issues into account. This involved delivering three areas (Inverness and Naim; Moray, Badenoch and Strathspey, and Lochaber) more or less concurrently. Due to the difficulty in managing to programme enough sessions with the groups involved, we hope, budget permitting, to return to the Caithness & Sutherland and Ross & Cromarty areas and run extra Training Sessions. We will have to consider carefully the best method of running ArtsPlay Training in order to take full advantage of any remaining budget.

(Please contact me if you have any suggestions or thoughts as to what might be the best method of doing this.)

THE TRAINING DAYS

- The first Training Weekends in Caithness & Sutherland and Ross & Cromarty were a bit hectic, trying to fit in too many practical workshops in a very limited time. We cut this to four over two days after these areas. The pilot project in 1998 had run a Residential weekend, but we found this was not the best method of delivery for the ArtsPlay Training. We now run the Training over two week days, and these are non residential. We also now pay groups 'cover' to allow them to release the staff for Training. (This is still not ideal in rural situations when cover is not easily found), and we ask the local childcare partnerships and the co-ordinators to suggest suitable dates.



THE LOCAL CO-ORDINATORS

- Originally we started the employment of the Local Co-ordinators on the day of the Training Sessions in order to make the most of their four months in the post. We realised, however, after the first two areas, that it would be better to start them before the Training Days. In Shetland and the Western Isles they took up their posts a week in advance. Again we have revised this and we now arrange for the Local Coordinator to have eighteen hours before the Training Days, which can be spread over a few weeks. This allows them to contact each group and visit them prior to the Training Days. We also ask groups and artists to fill in an availability form and send them in to the Local Co-ordinators. This allows the Co-ordinators to start planning a timetable prior to the Training Days, so the project can start straight after them.

THE BUDGET

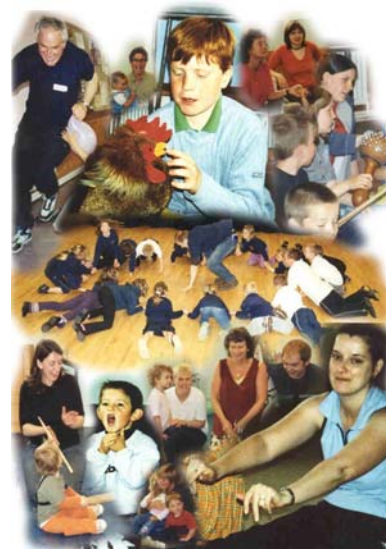
- We will be reviewing the budget over the summer, as we are still short of achieving the total budget which was originally proposed. However, we have managed to make substantial savings on our Training Days by running them on a daily basis in local halls rather than as residential courses run in hotels.

Travel has proved to be a big problem: for example, artists travelling for three hours to run a one hour workshop. In the Western Isles the winter ferry timetable added further difficulties. To try and overcome this we have started targeting more concentrated areas rather than trying to service groups from all over each Local Enterprise Company area.

Nonetheless, in the Western Isles we were able to make some significant savings, and these were topped up by The Local Childcare Partnership. This added enough funding to allow us to deliver ArtsPlay Phase 2, as a scaled down version of the ArtsPlay model, in Barra and South Uist.

NATIONAL CERTIFICATE

- We developed an NC in Creative & Aesthetic Experiences for Children with HI-MATS and have been piloting it in the Inverness / Nairn and Moray / Badenoch and Strathspey. The NC involved the childcarers filling out additional 'planning forms' after every artist's session. These, combined with other research, formed the portfolio for the NC. The Assessment was based on two of their sessions which they planned in great detail, including the words of songs, room plans etc. and sent these to their Assessors. The Assessors then came out and observed them delivering these sessions.



We have still to evaluate the delivery and content of the NC, but we will be doing this with HI-MATS once all the candidates have been assessed.

CREATIVE RECYCLING CENTRE

- We have been making some headway with 'the scrap store'. This is a resource centre that collects usable clean waste from businesses, (eg. paper, end of newspaper rolls, coloured plastics, cloth, wool etc.) and makes it available to playgroups, youth clubs, afterschool organisations, childminders etc. We have drawn up a 'dream scheme': a centre that would have a scrap store, an arts and crafts store, an outreach training programme, an artist in residence, a workshop and exhibition area and possibly a coffee shop. The centre would be easily accessible and probably located in Dingwall. The Ross-shire Childcare Partnership were very interested in this idea and four members of it--Susan Kruse (HEN), Katie Kitchingham (WHAM), Ian Goode (Family Resource Officer), Helen Turnbull (Network 21)--and I formed a committee to push forward the idea. We are now a constituted body and are currently applying for funding to have a consultant undertake a Feasibility Study. We have had a lot of support everywhere we have raised the idea and so are quite hopeful. I will keep you posted.

FUTURE PLANS

- The project has been very successful and everywhere people want more. Groups are holding fund raisers to continue to bring artists in. In the Western Isles, the Childcare Partnership has supported (as their number one bid to NOF) an application drawn up by the Local Co-ordinator to run an ArtsPlay style project, in all the playgroups in the Western Isles.
- In Shetland a similar bid put together by a local consortium has been put forward as their Reserve Bid.
- In Inverness and Nairn the artists have constituted themselves as 'ArtsPlay Highland' and are going into business with their Local Co-ordinator
- In Moray the Local Co-ordinator is applying for funding from a variety of sources to continue 'ArtsPlay'
- In Lochaber the Local Co-ordinator was also the job-share Council Arts Officer and so there is a lot of potential for future projects involving artists and the pre-fives.
- We have also had a good deal of interest from training organisations and individual playgroups wishing to access our database of artists.
- We have had some interest from SPRITO in the NC we were piloting. They found the innovative way it is being delivered very exciting, as it makes it accessible for rural areas. They are investigating funding to expand and develop it.

Kay Smith

ArtsPlay Regional Coordinator

May 2003