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# **Lost in Location?**

**Arts Development and Policy in Rural Scotland**

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**BA, MA**

**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**University of Glasgow**

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**Centre for Cultural Policy Research**

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## Abstract

This thesis examines arts development and policy in rural Scotland in recent years. In this formerly unexplored field, it looks at the relationship between arts policy and arts development practice in rural Scotland and the impacts and (dis)connections that the nationwide arts policy has had on arts in rural Scotland, particularly during a period of major change in Scottish arts policy between 2010 and 2013. Nine rural regions with a population density of under 30 people per kilometre<sup>2</sup> as of 2009 were selected as the key geographic regions in this research: Dumfries and Galloway, Scottish Borders, Argyll and Bute, Highland, Eileanan Siar (Western Isles), Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands, Moray and Aberdeenshire. Examples and data on particular regions, arts organisations and events were drawn from the said regions to investigate the role of the arts in rural development and the role of local communities, local authorities and national agencies in shaping the arts in rural Scotland. This thesis will articulate and discuss the relationships between the arts and local communities and the economy in rural Scotland and further demonstrate how the arts in rural Scotland have been surviving. The thesis concludes with presenting the advantages and issues caused by common approaches in arts development for rural Scotland, advocating what is needed for the arts in rural Scotland today with suggestions for future top-level policy development.

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## **Author's Declaration**

This thesis represents the original work of Yu 'Tonia' Lu unless explicitly stated otherwise in the text. The research upon which it is based was carried out at the Centre for Cultural Policy Research, University of Glasgow, under the supervision of Professor Philip Schlesinger and Professor Raymond Boyle, during the period October 2010 to February 2014.

## Definitions

The terms used in this study distinguish between Scottish and British identity. 'National' refers to Scotland while 'UK national' designates the UK framework; 'Parliament' assumes discussion of the Scottish Parliament unless stated otherwise. Before 2007, the government of Scotland was termed the Scottish Executive. In 2007, this term was changed by the incoming Scottish National Party (SNP) to what was argued to be a less confusing term, the Scottish Government. The terms Executive and Government are used interchangeably throughout this work to reflect these changes.

Unless otherwise stated, the term 'the arts' / 'arts' refers to all art forms including visual arts, craft, music, dance, literature, theatre and other performing arts. It does not include creative industries such as advertising and design, or digital media. Most of the arts and arts organisations discussed in this thesis have a non-commercial nature, however commercial/independent art galleries and events are included in the discussions where appropriate.

'Rural Scotland' in this thesis refers to the nine selected regions of study unless otherwise stated. The selected regions are: Dumfries and Galloway, Scottish Borders, Argyll and Bute, Highland, Eileanan Siar (Western Isles), Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands, Moray and Aberdeenshire. The reasons for the selection are presented in Chapter 2. Additionally, 'Highlands and Islands' refers to the local authority (LA) areas of Highland, Argyll and Bute, Eileanan Siar, Orkney and Shetland Islands while 'Highland' refers to the council area rather than the geographic area of the Scottish Highlands. These terms are further defined in Chapter 2.

The 'SAC' in this thesis refers to the Scottish Arts Council while the Scottish Agricultural College is referred to by its full name.

A full list of acronyms and abbreviations is provided in the glossary.

## Introduction

‘Is there any? I mean arts in Rural Scotland?’ was the first question asked of the author by a rural studies researcher at a conference organised by SRUC, Scotland’s Rural College, in Edinburgh in 2012. Although the researcher, who asked this seemingly naïve question, might work in a specific field that has little connection with arts and culture, the question represents a key challenge facing this research: the pursuit of bringing rural policy studies together with arts policy research by asking the question ‘Where are the rural arts in Scottish arts policy and politics?’, despite neither of these two fields having established a great interest in the arts in rural Scotland.

With the above primary question in mind, this research explores many aspects of the arts in Scotland that have not previously been looked at: what is the current status of the arts in rural Scotland? How are they supported - by the national agencies, local authorities or otherwise? Are arts in rural Scotland side-lined compared to mainstream arts in urban centres and, particularly, the central belt of Scotland? Also, and most relevant during the time of conducting this research: how are rural arts surviving in the current economic crisis? Starting in the summer of 2010 and continuing through to the summer of 2013, this research saw the post 2008 economic crisis worsen in the UK as significant funding cuts were made and arts policy in Scotland was dramatically changed. Motivated initially to look at where the arts in rural places exist in Scotland’s arts policies and their role in rural society, the research developed further to explore and articulate the many differences the arts in rural places have compared with their urban counterparts, with a particular focus on this current period of change.

This research is driven firstly by the lack of existing research into the arts in rural places, despite the increase of studies into the social and economic impact of the arts in both academia and the arts and cultural sector in recent years.<sup>1</sup> The arts and cultural needs of rural areas are increasing with populations rising in many rural areas in Scotland over the past decade (Scottish Agricultural College, 2010; 2012), and decentralisation fast becoming a fashionable tool for development and planning, creating greater numbers of returning and new residents in rural areas,

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<sup>1</sup> A review of recent research and publications can be found in Chapter 1.

especially in 'Accessible Rural' areas (Scottish Government, 2010). Secondly, this research builds on the author's own experience of working with arts organisations and events both in and outside Scotland's urban centres. As someone who continues to work in the industry, the author is eager to discover what best practice is needed for arts organisations to sustain themselves, based on an understanding of the differences in politics, organisational operation and public engagement found between the arts based in urban centres and those based in rural places.

### **Why the Arts in Rural Scotland?**

Firstly, one must acknowledge that in comparison to urban centres, the arts in rural Scotland must be viewed as having unique features due to their different geographical contexts, audiences and resources. Although 'counterurbanisation' and the improvement in communication technology and transportation in recent decades might have changed traditional life styles in rural regions, the arts in rural areas remain largely community-focused, personal and often relatively 'free' from specific strategies made by central or local government. In comparison, the arts in urban centres have become increasingly instrumental in fulfilling social roles and being politically directed under the influence of the national agencies. Therefore, when examining the arts in rural Scotland, and their connections and interactions with a wider social and economic context, it is important to consider them as a separate but relevant case.

As mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, the existing research in both fields of rural studies and cultural policy has limited interest in the arts in rural places. Over the past decades, rural studies have evolved from agricultural studies into a discipline that looks at all aspects of life, development and politics in rural places. However, in Scotland rural studies research is still largely focused on agriculture and, more recently, environmental issues. Community development, where arts and cultural activities are often seen as contributors to bringing out the sense of community and building confidence by policy makers, is sometimes discussed and is gaining growing interest from researchers and policy makers, however, it still remains a small part of the field. For example, as of June 2013, the four research groups in SRUC, the only rural studies-focused higher education institution in Scotland, are: *Animal and Veterinary Sciences*; *Crop and Soil Systems*;

*Future Farming Systems*; and *Land Economy and Environment*.<sup>2</sup> Similar categories can be found in other rural studies-focused universities and university departments in England such as the Harper Adams University, or the School of Agriculture, Food and Rural Development at the Newcastle University, although a few institutes such as the Countryside and Community Research Institute have also been established in recent years.

At the same time, arts in rural areas are often neglected in arts policies and arts policy research in Scotland. This differed from England where drastic change within rural economies and societies during the 2000s drew attention to the arts in rural places. For example, the increasing influence of European Union rural policies and the outbreak of Foot and Mouth, which led to economic and social crises in rural England, called for regeneration and reform of the English rural society. Along with the establishment of the Department of Farming and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in 2001, which subsequently brought out the new Rural Strategy in 2004, these changes and crises encouraged grassroots organisations such as the Littoral Arts Trust as well as the Arts Council of England (ACE) to take interest in the role that the arts could play in rural regeneration. A number of studies were thus conducted on the arts, and sometimes the creative industries, in rural England in the 2000s. As a result, the Rural Cultural Forum was formed in 2004 to campaign for a nation-wide cultural strategy.

However, in the relatively newly devolved Scotland, which was and is not affected by the DEFRA policies and was much less affected by the 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak, no similar nationwide interdisciplinary initiatives or research has been conducted. This is despite its larger percentage of rural land that is subject to new European Union policies. There have been very limited studies on specific subjects, such as *What's Rural About Culture?* by Ian Brown focusing on the Highlands (2008) and *The Same, but Different* by Hamilton and Scullion (2004) focusing on rural arts touring. Although the study by Hamilton and Scullion aims to present all parts of rural Scotland, it has an obvious focus on the Highlands and Islands and Dumfries and Galloway. The focus on Highlands and Islands areas in existing studies is largely due to the support, collaboration and community

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<sup>2</sup> University of Highlands and Islands (UHI) also provides various taught and research programmes relevant to the locality of the different campuses, however the subjects are a mixture of that are part of rural studies and general subjects such as Business and Management, Computing and Psychology.

commitments of the Highland and Islands Enterprise (HIE), which will be identified as a strong influence in arts and cultural development in the Highlands and Islands, and particularly the Highland Council area, throughout this research. Although some of the issues brought forward by the two studies, such as the tension between indigenously developed arts and the touring arts, inform the foundations of this research, most of the findings presented are not applicable to other art forms or rural regions, therefore the existing research is unable to provide a larger picture of the arts in rural Scotland as a whole.

It is also note-worthy that arts and culture are not only becoming increasingly important because of the growing population in rural Scotland, particularly in the accessible rural areas, but also because of the development of new organisations, events and other initiatives since the year 2000. Chapter 5 and Appendix III of this thesis lists 37 key organisations and events in rural regions in Scotland, showing that 13 of these were established after the year 2000 and among the 15 outside of the Highlands and Islands, nine of them were established after the year 2000. This is just one representation of the development of the arts in rural regions in recent years, an area which Chapters 7 and 8 elaborate on further. Despite a significant number of arts organisations and events having been initiated since the year 2000 in rural Scotland, there are still very limited networks and little communication between regions, especially those outside of the Highlands and Islands.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it is important to present the larger picture and the diversity between rural regions, as well as discuss issues that are shared by many rural regions and sometimes across different art forms, rather than simply focussing on a particular subject in a particular region.

### **Research Framework**

This research examines and discusses the arts development and policy in rural Scotland since the start of the New Labour administration in the UK government in 1997 and the Scottish Devolution in 1999. Historical material beyond this time scale was also brought in to provide a fuller picture. The existing literature in this particular field is limited, thus this thesis starts by reviewing relevant publications

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<sup>3</sup> With the HIE and Hi-Arts, the arts and cultural development agency for Highlands and Islands, connecting the different regions of the larger geographic area, the connections between the regions are more sufficient than between other rural regions. However, criticisms were also heard about both organisations being Highland-centric during this research. See Chapter 6 for further discussion.

in the wider field of arts and culture policy research as well as existing studies on the arts in rural places across the UK, most of them focused on England. Literature on the demographic context of rural Scotland and the historical context of arts development in Scotland since the 20<sup>th</sup> Century is discussed in Chapter 2, setting out the wider social and economic context of the research subject. The key findings of this research are based on individual interviews with stakeholders from different organisations and geographic areas.<sup>4</sup> By employing elite interview methods, this research aims to illuminate the experiences and opinions of people both at the policy making end and on the front line of arts development. The reform of Scotland's national arts agency the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) set out a key context for this research, and while the results and consequences are yet to be seen due to the timing of this research, this research captures the reactions to those changes from different perspectives. In particular, the Dumfries and Galloway case study featured in this research looks at the changes in the region's arts infrastructure since the year 2000. The author's professional experience of working in rural arts organisations, and particularly through working in Dumfries and Galloway since autumn 2011, has also contributed to the fieldwork of this research.

Two key features of the arts in rural Scotland were quickly identified as issues worth exploring further: firstly, most of the arts organisations and events in rural Scotland were started locally and are still receiving very limited top-level support; secondly, the arts in rural Scotland have demonstrated a closer and more organic connection with their social and economic context. The author will argue that the lack of top-level support from the national agencies for the arts in rural Scotland has lessened the influence of the nationwide policy on rural arts. This poses a number of questions such as: does this create more risk or provide more opportunities for arts development in rural Scotland? What role do the national agencies play in developing arts infrastructure in rural regions? As for the closure of region-wide and cross-regional arts development agencies such as dgArts, in Dumfries & Galloway and Hi-Arts, in Highlands and Islands in the past three years, is it just another reflection of the current economic crisis and nationwide arts funding cuts or has arts development in rural regions moved on from the format

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<sup>4</sup> Regions covered in this research are: Dumfries and Galloway, Scottish Borders, Argyll and Bute, Eilean Siar (Western Isles), Highland, Orkney, Shetland, Aberdeenshire, and Moray. Chapter 2 will provide details on why these areas are covered in this research.



of a central arts development and funding distribution agency? These questions are explored further through the mapping of arts development in rural regions in Chapter 5 followed by the case study on Dumfries and Galloway in Chapter 6, which focuses on the formation of the region's arts infrastructure during the crises of the early 2000s, when Foot and Mouth disease devastated the region but encouraged communities to seek alternative ways of social and economic development. This thesis thus examines the 2011 collapse of the region-wide agency dgArts, and the roles that dgArts, the national agencies, the local authority (LA), and other organisations and individuals played in this process.

Chapter 7 discusses the role of the arts in the rural economy, particularly in terms of tourism and the contribution of small businesses. Rather than demonstrating the economic impact of the arts in rural regions, Chapter 7 presents the findings, including the dramatic differences in cultural tourism between different regions and how creative crafts businesses stand out amongst all art forms as a key part of the rural economy in Scotland. The chapter explores the connections and disconnections between the arts and their economic context, and illuminates that 'economic impact' is merely one of many ways of assessing the impact of the arts on society. Chapter 8 will follow this line of thought by analysing the connections between arts and rural communities, and in particular the arts in the form of public and participatory art. It unveils a closer, more organic and interactive relationship between the arts and rural communities by looking at examples such as Deveron Arts in Aberdeenshire. Concluding the thesis, the final chapter brings all the findings together, answering the primary research question, 'Where are the rural arts in Scottish arts policy and politics?' and provides suggestions of where the rural arts should be.

### **Limitations and Other Issues**

As the research evolved in this largely unexplored and under-represented field, it became clear that the ambition of covering all aspects of all geographic regions, and all art forms would significantly limit the depth of the research and that there would be a risk that descriptions and explanations would outweigh the discussion and analysis. Therefore, although it is crucial to this research that all regions and art forms are represented in some part in the research, some chapters have a specific emphasis on certain geographical areas and issues. For example, while Chapters 4 and 5 map out the political context of this research, the reform of the

SAC and the arts infrastructure in each region, Chapter 6 emphasises all art forms within the region of Dumfries and Galloway. Chapter 7 focuses on the Highlands and Islands, with examples of performing arts and crafts selected from Orkney and Shetland, while Chapter 8 looks at the challenges for local authorities across the board using public art development in Aberdeenshire as an example of public involvement in the arts in rural Scotland.

Although information was collected from existing research and a monitoring of the press for regions where fewer interviews were conducted, namely the Scottish Borders and Shetland, it is evident that these two regions are less represented in this thesis. Additionally, because the author's specialist knowledge lies in visual arts and crafts, the thesis may emphasise the visual arts and crafts, particularly in Chapter 8. Other limitations due to the methods used for this research will be discussed further in Chapter 3.

This introduction has outlined the parameters for this research, explained the context in which it was undertaken, and sketched out the scale and structure of the thesis. The first chapter will examine and review the historical, social and political framework and concepts that have contributed to cultural policy in the UK and existing studies on the arts in rural places UK-wide in the past decades.

## Chapter 1 The Arts and Their Social Roles

Before discussing the issues around the arts in rural Scotland, it is important to look at the historical and political context within which this research sits. This chapter examines claims made about the social roles and definition of the arts from a critical-historical aspect and looks at how politics has influenced and shaped contemporary arts institutions, especially in the UK. This research traces the historical, social and political reasons influencing shifts of the definitions and social roles of the arts during different times, and how the arts have been used as a political instrument. Specifically, this chapter explores the post-war period and the establishment of institutional theories, to the period after the 1990s when the arts in the UK became something 'for everyone' under the New Labour administration including the recent arts funding cuts seen across the UK,

The second section of the chapter will look at studies on the arts and their social roles in rural places in the UK in recent decades. Although efforts were made to include existing studies from different parts of the UK, the vast majority of the publications found are focused on England, many of which were motivated by the radical political and social changes affecting rural society in England since the 1980s. Although very few mentioned the arts in rural Scotland, these studies illuminate key issues around arts development in rural places and enable this research to look at the differences between England and Scotland and subsequently to focus more clearly on Scottish-specific matters.

In order to elaborate on the special features of rural arts and culture, as mentioned in the introduction, this chapter will argue the importance of the role of artists and other individuals in arts development and draws attention to their influence on art politics.

### **Discussions on the Political and Social Roles of the Arts**

The role of the arts has changed throughout time and different disciplines have always found different ways of being part of society. Historically, while music and other performing arts might be popular and enjoyed by people from different backgrounds, visual art was often commissioned exclusively for the upper and ruling class. Through the Age of Enlightenment, with the establishment of many public institutions such as museums and art galleries, the arts, and particularly

‘high arts’, were given a social, and often educational, role in public life (Bennett, 1995). Additionally, the Industrial Revolution increased social mobility and thus, enabled people from all walks of life to become part of the artistic community. While in the early and mid-18th century, many accomplished European artists such as Francisco Goya and Thomas Gainsborough came from an artisan/craftsman background, artists in the 19th century, especially the impressionists, tended to come from much more varied backgrounds. For example, J. M. W. Turner’s (1775 - 1851) father was a barber, Édouard Manet (1832 - 1883) was born from a wealthy family of lawyers and descended from royalty, Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841 - 1919) was from a working-class family, and Claude Monet’s (1840 - 1926) family ran a grocery business. These examples highlight the ways in which the Industrial Revolution and social mobility redefined who could become an artist in the 19th century, and subsequently, brand new ideas about the arts started to emerge.

By the turn of the century the arts became more diverse than they ever were before. Technological progress in printing, recording and filming led to the birth of modern popular culture and new methods and styles in creating artwork were being invented and re-invented every day. In the Post-war period, the arts became increasingly influential politically and socially with the rise of the Modern Art Movement, the globalisation of popular culture and the establishment of arts funding bodies including the Arts Council for Great Britain (1946), the Canada Council for the Arts (1957), the National Endowment for the Arts in the United States (1965) and the Australia Council for the Arts (1968).

In order to look at how the arts have influenced rural development, it is important to trace the discussions around the definition and social roles of the arts in recent years and particularly how contemporary arts, institutions and artists have been shaped into what they are today.

#### *Post-War: Modern Art Movements and Arts Councils*

Many art forms went through dramatic changes in the post-war period, in the way they were produced, promoted and transmitted. The increased diversity in the creation of, and the audience for the arts made it impractical and impossible to recognise and appreciate the arts based on a set criterion. A new system emerged in recognising the arts, which was defined by Danto as ‘The Artworld’. By Danto’s definition, The Artworld is an institution that includes museums, galleries, and experts such as curators, art critics, collectors and established artists. By being

authorised to enter a museum or gallery or by being recognised by an expert, an artefact becomes an artwork (Danto, 1964). Widely recognised as the foundation for Institutional Theory, particularly in the visual arts, Danto's theory established the idea that the arts in the modern age were no longer defined by a special feature in the object itself, but by how the object is perceived by an institution of established organisations and individuals.

Danto's theory was expanded upon by George Dickie, whose definition of what a work of art 'in the classificatory sense is:

- (1) an [original] artefact
- (2) a set of the aspects of which has had conferred upon it the status of candidate for appreciation by some person or persons acting on behalf of a certain social institution (the artworld).' (Dickie, 1974: 464)

In order to expand to different art forms, the artworld would include a variety of establishments such as museums and galleries, performance venues, established awards, art and drama schools, record companies, publishers, festivals etc.. These establishments determine their aesthetic and, especially in the context of the commercial arts, the economic worth of a piece of artwork. The views of its creator - the artist and anyone outside of these establishments - were disregarded in this theory. The idea of the establishments determining the value of the arts was not only influential at a theoretical level. Although arts funding and development bodies laid the foundation for the development and enhancement of the political and social roles of the arts in the post-war era, the elitism of the artworld was also found in their early policies and politics.

In the case of the UK, the early national bodies for arts funding and development were seen closely connected to, if not part of, the artworld because of its elitist approach. The Committee for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) was founded in 1939, which later became the foundation for the Arts Council for Great Britain (ACGB), to financially assist struggling cultural societies during the war. The arguments for 'supporting arts for its instrumental value' such as social cohesion, education and 'supporting arts for its excellence/art for art's sake' were put forth by CEMA members Dr Thomas Jones, a civil servant and educationalist, and John Maynard Keynes, an economist. Keynes became Chair of CEMA in 1941 and a key architect for the arts policies that were centred around larger southern

cities and organisations. In ACGB's early years, his views remained influential in the Arts Council until the 1960s (Arts Council of England, 2007). In the 70s and early 80s, the Arts Council of Great Britain came under attack for elitism and political bias from the Conservative party minister Norman Tebbit. Arts funding was subsequently heavily cut during the 80s and in 1987, a restructure cut the number of organisations receiving Arts Council funding by half (Arts Council of England, 2007). As a consequence, arts organisations, projects and artists had to seek private sponsorship to survive, which led to further criticism of another form of elitism in the arts: a perceived risk of the arts to be used by a rich minority through their sponsorship.

Looking at some of the most influential modern and contemporary art figures in the UK, especially the YBAs (Young British Artists) during the 1990s, we cannot imagine them being so well-known without sponsors like Charles Saatchi, and competitions such as the Turner Prize. In John Tusa's interview, artist collaboration duo Gilbert and George recall a story of an exhibition they had held in 1970s. The morning after the opening, the artists went to the gallery just after the cleaning lady left, and found the curator sitting there very depressed. When they asked what was wrong, the curator said 'Oh, the cleaning lady, she LIKES your exhibition' (BBC, 2002). This is an extreme example however it does show a certain level of unconcern, or even dismissal by the artworld for what could be viewed as 'public opinion'.

The elitism of the artworld, especially of publicly funded art, had to break down at some point because of the arts' sensitivity to economic and political change. With the recognition that popular music, literature and film contributed largely to the economy and influenced daily public lives, people started to question the value of 'high arts' within society - and what economic and social influence it could bring.

### *The 1980s-1997: Creative Industry and the Emphasis on the Economic Impact of the Arts*

While Danto's theory provided the foundation for early publications on the subject of the sociology of art, Howard Becker's *Art Worlds* (1982) was seen as the foundational text for researchers working on the arts from sociological perspectives. Although using the word 'Art Worlds', Becker gave the phrase a completely different meaning. In the *Preface to Art Worlds*, Becker stated that

his approach to the study of art uses 'the network of cooperation' instead of the artist and art work, 'as central to the analysis of art as a social phenomenon' (Becker, 1982: xi). He further specified the ways in which art was shaped by social organisations and interests.

Unlike Dickie's theory, which sees a qualified and isolated few as the social institution, or in other words the artworld, which defines and influences the arts, Becker connected the arts to its social context. Including different art forms from historical paintings to contemporary popular music in his discussions, Becker suggested that not only the establishments, but 'all the people whose activities are necessary to the production of the characteristic work', from the providers of the material to the visitors to the museums and galleries, form Art Worlds (Becker, 1982: 34). The anti-elitism brought by Becker was echoed by sociologies such as Inglis and Hughson who believe the sociological study of the arts should not be exploring 'esoteric things that are of interest only to a special few' (Inglis and Hughson, 2005: 2). The emphasis on the arts as a social activity and its relationship with policy makers and its audience was partially reflected in the increased interest in the social and economic value of the arts in the 1980s and 1990s.

During this period in the UK, publications such as *A Great British Success Story* (Arts Council of Great Britain, 1985) and *The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain* (Myerscough, 1988) emphasised the economic value of the arts. Supporting the arts because of their excellence or recognition from the establishments was no longer the foremost criterion for the public funding of the arts. Rather, arts councils and organisations started to demonstrate and sometimes magnify the social and economic impact of the arts.

Belfiore (2002) believes this was a passive reaction to public funding cuts made by the Thatcher Government and an effort to justify arts funding as worthy of public spending. However, with the onset of technological developments such as colour television, video home systems, cassette tapes, and the Walkman in the 70s and 80s, the growth of the creative industries - especially commercial industries such as media, popular music, film and literature - was significant. Despite both the UK and the US being in the midst of an economic recession in the early 1980s, these commercial and popular art forms were generating money for the economy and playing a large part in people's everyday lives. For example, in 1986 around 6 million videos were bought in the UK with a retail value of £55

million, which increased to 96 million in 1999 with a value of £882 million (ONS, 2001: 226). Additionally, the percentage of spending on music records, tapes and CDs in total consumer spending doubled between 1983 and 1989 in the UK (DCMS, 1998: 70). With popular culture becoming more accessible and profitable than ever before, it was inevitable that the public would eventually question why, despite their money being spent on it, the public-subsidised arts had such little power or social return.

The elitism in the arts in Britain from the past decade, as mentioned earlier, only aided the public sentiment that the arts were not seen as part of people's lives and discouraged wider access to fulfilment or any other benefits the arts could provide. Therefore, in the context of more and more people being able to enjoy popular arts or popular culture, discussions around the economic impact of the arts or any other instrumental values of the arts, such as its role in regeneration, did not take place in Britain only to prevent the Thatcher Government's funding cuts. In fact, because of the growth of the creative industries and popular culture in Europe and North America in the 1970s and 1980s, discussions around the economic impact of the arts were taking place in many other countries as well as in the UK (Dupuis and Rouet, 1987; Hillman-Chartrand, 1986; 1989; Wassall and Sullivan, 1979). This is especially true of the US, where a significant number of publications in the 80s and early 90s emphasised the impact of the arts on the local economy (Cwi, 1980; Greater Columbus Arts Council, 1986; Peterson, 1990; Wassall, 1989). The economic crisis was just the opportunity for funding bodies and arts practitioners to utilise this information and argue in their defence.

However, the arguments supporting the arts' ability to make a positive impact on economic development were less than strong. As pointed out by Hansen (1995), there was no efficient way to demonstrate that the arts played a significant part in local economic growth. Hansen summarised that there were three common arguments for the economic impact of art: 1) as a localising factor for new enterprises; 2) for their ability to attract tourists; 3) as promotion of the sale of goods in export markets.

Hansen argued firstly, that the arts were the least important factor for local development, such as for attracting investments where companies regard hard business factors - e.g. sales opportunities, infrastructure, manpower, wage level, land prices and tax levels – as far more important than arts or cultural factors.



Secondly, he stated that it was hard to argue that the arts were the main purpose of tourist visits. Lastly, he posited that the arts in country areas were least important when buyers imported products from the country. Agreeing with Hansen's arguments, a case study on the role of the arts in the regeneration of Liverpool by Lorente examined the symbolic economy in a city in the 80s that failed to create stable jobs and attract tourists:

Culture and the related business of the so-called symbolic economy provide many jobs, but they are mostly part-time, insecure or low-waged. It is not with the arts budget that politicians are going to solve all the problems of unemployment and poverty in Liverpool. Too many expectations for economic boosting and tourism attraction were raised on the arrival of a new branch of the Tate to Albert Dock. Only now this junior sibling of the National Gallery of Modern Art is starting to be judged for questions really related to contemporary art encouragement and curatorship. (Lorente, 1996: 6)

Amongst the strongest criticisms, was the emphasis on the economic value of the arts which overlooked the most essential value of the arts: that 'the arts are good for people' because of their intrinsic value. However, despite this justifiable criticism, the emphasis of the economic and social value of arts was adopted and continued by the UK government into the 1990s.

#### *1997-2010: New Labour and Instrumental and Intrinsic Values of the Arts*

While many public museums and galleries in the UK started to attract more visitors and invest in education in the late 1980s, real changes in public investment in the arts and culture did not start until the 1990s. Former Conservative Prime Minister John Major set up the post of Secretary of State for National Heritage in 1992 overseeing the country's cultural affairs - which at that time were mostly heritage related. In 1993, the National Lottery Fund gave public arts funding a boost, and the Arts Council of Great Britain was finally and formally divided into the Arts Council of England (ACE), the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) and the Arts Council of Wales, with each of the regional councils benefiting from both UK Government funding and the National Lottery Fund.

Real political change occurred when New Labour came into power in 1997. The then Prime Minister, Tony Blair, changed the post of Secretary of State for National Heritage to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport with Chris

Smith appointed as the first secretary. At the same time, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) was established. Although some questioned the method in achieving this, Smith made many efforts to increase the financial support for arts and culture, and in 2001 public museums and art galleries began to open to the public for free. New Labour's policies were also accompanied by various publications reviewing the sector. Among them *The UK Culture Sector: Profile and Policy Issues*, edited by Sara Selwood, who presented the funding, management, profile and context of different aspects of the cultural sector at the time (Selwood, 2001). It featured over 20 contributors from the sector and academia making it a helpful reference book for arts administrators and policy makers. A review of post-war arts policy in the UK, although with a very strong focus on England, was written by Gray (Gray, 2000) and a collection of essays and speeches discussing the arts policies of the Thatcher/Major Governments and the New Labour Government *Art Matters*, was also published around the time by John Tusa (Tusa, 1999). By 2009/2010, annual visitor numbers for national museums was reported to have doubled (DCMS, 2010). The period of rapid increase in public funding for the arts in the 2000s was referred to as 'The Golden Age' by the then Chair of the ACE, Sir Christopher Frayling (Frayling quoted in Moss, 2004).

New Labour's arts and cultural policies encouraged 'everyone' to be engaged with arts and cultural activities based on the belief and commitment that 'Arts and sport, cultural and recreational activity, can contribute to neighbourhood renewal and make a real difference to health, crime, employment and education in deprived communities' (DCMS, 1999: 8). Continuing the focus on the economic impact of the arts from the last decade, Tony Blair said:

They (culture and creativity) also matter because creative talent will be crucial to our individual and national economic success in the economy of the future. (Blair quoted in Smith, 2001: 3)

The promotion of the idea of 'arts for everyone' was echoed by John Carey. In his 2006 book, *What Good Are the Arts?*, Carey questioned the authority of the artworld today, and within the context of 'high' and 'low' culture, whether there really is an institution to decide on what art is. After reviewing the signs of a split between what the artworld identifies as art and what 'the public' or 'low culture' identifies as art, he concludes that today, art is what the individual sees as art - which Carey knows is relativist, but believes that from this, there is no way to

escape. Based on this theory, he suggested that if art is defined by what we like, then:

A work of art is not confined to the way one person responds to it. It is the sum of all the subtle, private, individual, idiosyncratic feelings it has evoked in its whole history. And we cannot know those, because they are shut away in other people's consciousness. Yet if we do not know them, we cannot really know even a single artwork. So it seems that none of us knows much about art, though we know what we like. (2006: 31)

This theory is largely based on interpretive sociology theories that claim that society is interpreted through the meanings constructed by individuals. Although some sociologists still believe that meanings can be generalised, many agree that meaning is particular and different between individuals (Alexander, 2003: 10), which has provided an important discourse for disciplines and practices such as Museum Studies and Art Education.

In his discussion, Carey did not take the intentions of the creators of the artwork into account at all and defined art entirely by the subjective interpretations of the audience. He ignored the thoughts and existence of the artists and from his viewpoint, one could say that even something that is not man-made, such as natural landscapes or machine productions, could be art. This sounds even less convincing than the illusionist definition of art - at least the illusionists believed that art should be something crafted by men and the creator's skills were what was crucial for the object to be classified as art. The denial of the creator of an artwork are also found in New Labour's policies, as Chris Smith stated,

...DCMS will sign funding agreements with each sponsored body that focus on delivery of a few key strategic outcomes and in particular customer satisfaction. (Smith, 2001: 37)

This statement shows the UK government prioritised the needs of the audience over the needs of artists, and considered art to be almost a commodity or consumer product by positioning viewers or audiences as customers, thus further dividing the artists or creators from the public. This position and prioritisation might be suitable for the creative industries such as media and entertainment, and may indeed have contributed to the success of British popular culture

internationally in recent years; however it is questionable whether it would be as applicable for the arts and cultural sectors.

Unlike the recording, film and video gaming industries, many art forms cannot be mass reproduced and mass marketed. While many agree that public funded productions should have social purposes, the creations of these art forms, or 'products', are often expressions of the creators' ideas and very often there are no 'target clients' in mind. Carey's position also denies other definitions of artwork. He argues that literature 'is superior to the other arts, and can do things they cannot do' such as criticising, arguing and rejecting itself (2006: 173), however, 'criticising, arguing and rejecting' can also be found in other art forms. For example, many visual artists are also recognised and respected activists and use their work as a form of protest and criticism.

Modern artists express their ideas through their works and have their own definitions of what art is. While critics define art by its value either historically, socially or economically artists usually see their work as something unique, expressive and personal, hence often dislike being misinterpreted and labelled. Damien Hirst once said, 'As an artist you're looking for universal triggers. You want it both ways. You want it to have an immediate impact, and you want it to have deep meanings as well. I'm striving for both. But I hate it when people write things that sound like they've swallowed a fucking dictionary' (Hirst quoted in Ayres, 2007). Artists are concerned with political issues including cultural politics. They often make work in response to current issues and aim to influence people through their artistic expressions. Most notably, *Dinner Party* (1974) by Judy Chicago was significant in contributing to the feminist movement and also became a popular subject for studies in the field of gender politics (Chesler et al., 1995: 125; Koloski-Ostrow and Lyons, 2000: 117; Robinson, 2001: 346).

However, instead of taking the opinions and the fundamental value of artists into account, the idea of 'arts for everyone' and the arts should be defined by their public value were key parts in New Labour's Cultural and Arts Minister's speeches and articles. Chris Smith (2001) himself stressed the educational function and economic benefit of arts and culture. Additionally, since 1997 arts councils have published various reports and publications to demonstrate that 'arts are for everyone' and can also economically benefit the public by strengthening tourism and helping local businesses. As a result, during this time the arts, particularly the

publicly subsidised arts, appeared to become increasingly public-oriented and investable. Consequently, arts organisations have had to demonstrate the value of projects when applying for public funding by listing ‘measurable outcomes’ such as the numbers of jobs created, visitor numbers, numbers of people involved and percentages from audience evaluations. These outcomes respond strategically to the political aims of the funding bodies and policy makers, rather than to the public or to artists.

As Caust (2003: 52) points out, during New Labour’s reign government policy debates were dominated by an economic paradigm and the arts, like most other government-subsidised areas, had to provide economic reasons for its continuing government support. ‘Thus the sector has developed arguments about the instrumental economic value of the arts, giving this greater value than arguments about the intrinsic value or worth of the arts to society’ (Caust, 2003: 52). From Caust’s point of view, discourse in the field of cultural policy and museum studies after the year 2000 raised many discussions around the instrumental and intrinsic value of the arts. Although the instrumental values were promoted practically to make social changes, for example to drive urban regeneration under New Labour’s policies, there were criticisms on the extent of the instrumentalism in the policies and the potential ignorance of the intrinsic values of the arts. For example, Tusa (1999) argues that the rationale behind the DCMS’s ambitious plans was to boost employment numbers and generate money. He criticised that as the DCMS relied on employment and finance figures to evaluate their funded projects, the arts in the UK became generators of entertainment and employment rather than pursuits of artistic excellence.

Voices opposing the ‘impact studies’ have been heard since the mid-2000s. For example, *Culture Vultures: Is UK arts policy damaging the arts?* published in 2006 by Policy Exchange presents a selection of articles by authors including academics Sara Selwood and Eleonora Belfiore and journalist Josie Appleton, who criticised aspects of mostly English arts policy, such as the abuse of evidence collection, economic impact data and the social impact of the arts.

Reviewing New Labour policies, recent publications and reports on arts and its social impact, academics and practitioners like Belfiore (2002; 2007; 2009) and Caust (2003) point out the problems with New Labour’s ‘arts for everyone’ policies, notably the simplistic approach they took as shown in the McMaster Review (2008)

*Supporting Excellence in the Arts - from Measurement to Judgement* commissioned by the DCMS. Focused on encouraging ‘Excellence, Innovation and Risk-Taking’, the report seems to believe that if arts institutions, such as the national galleries or national theatre companies, provide artwork of the highest excellence, hard-to-reach audiences will just come in. As its main recommendation to develop ‘Wider and Deeper Engagement with the Arts by Audiences’, it also suggests that high arts institutions should simply open to the public for free for a week.

However, making the arts accessible to a wider audience is based on much more complex factors than just charging an entrance fee - all publicly funded museums and galleries gave up their entrance fees in 2001, yet very few museums have been successful in bringing in C2DE audiences, which are traditionally less likely to be engaged in arts and cultural activities<sup>5</sup> - particularly the art museums and galleries. For example, the statistics in the DCMS’s *Taking Part 2012/13 Quarter 4: Statistical Release*, shows that of the lower socio-economic group surveyed in England only 39.5% had visited a museum or gallery in the past 12 months, compared with 61.6% of the upper socio-economic group, and 67.3% compared with 85.3% who engaged in the arts during this same period (DCMS, 2013). Similar differences between different socio-economic groups can be found in Scotland as well. It was reported in the SAC’s *Taking Part in Scotland 2008*<sup>6</sup> report, that a staggering 87% of the ABC1 socio-economic groups and 97% of those with a household income of £50,000 or more took part in the arts (including attending

<sup>5</sup> The UK Office for National Statistics produced a new socio-economic classification in 2001:

Group	Description	Grade
1	Higher professional and managerial workers	A
2	Lower managerial and professional workers	B
3	Intermediate occupations	C1 and C2
4	Small Employers and non-professional self-employed	C1 and C2
5	Lower Supervisory and technical	C1 and C2
6	Semi-Routine Occupations	D
7	Routine Occupations	D
8	Long-term unemployed	E

<sup>6</sup> The 2008 report was the latest public engagement statistics available for Scotland. Unlike the DCMS *Taking Part* statistic releases, the report was not published with a set of original statistics, but merely the summarised and selective report. For example, although the percentage of ABC1 socio-economic groups’ participation in the arts was included, there was no data for the lower groups to compare with.

museum / gallery / cinema) in the previous 12 months, compared with the overall percentage of 77% (SAC, 2008: 15).

Caust (2003) also criticises the establishment of the watchdog committee QUEST (Quality, Efficiency and Standards Team) in 1999 to focus on economic performance indicators of the publicly subsidised arts. The philosophy behind establishing the committee seems to suggest that they could potentially play a censorship role of 'policing' rather than 'facilitating' arts practice. In announcing this committee, Chris Smith publicly said that the committee was to give direction, set targets and chase progress and would take action where appropriate to *make sure that the policy maker's objectives were achieved*. In addition, all members of the committee were civil servants, showing no evidence of any desire to include artistic judgment and up-to-date practical knowledge of working in the sector in the process of overseeing. Caust therefore believes that the arts in the UK were used for political purposes and concluded:

The government is clear that the transaction between the government and the arts sector is about the artists pursuing the government's objectives, in return for the arts organisations receiving the money they want. (Caust, 2003: 58)

In response to New Labour's belief in and commitment to the instrumental values of the arts and their evidence Belfiore and Bennett (2008) pointed out that, 'instead of a rigorous exploration of the complex issues involved, a rather simplistic debate has taken place, which has focused on measurable "impacts" of the arts and which has left a number of fundamental assumptions unchallenged'. The authors list further considerations and evaluate former British Arts Minister Estelle Morris' statement, which calls for a study on the social impact of the arts in the public funded arts sector in Britain. They concluded that research on the social impact of the arts had been so far largely based on 'policy-based evidence making', where the public funded arts sector was pushed into achieving goals to fit in with New Labour policies, and needed a detachment from any advocacy concerns.

*Now*

The pressure of worth-measuring and value-proving from arts policy makers continued beyond the time of New Labour's administration and remained a focal

point of discussion on arts funding, especially in the context of the arts budget cuts made during the current economic crisis that began in 2008. During the economic crisis, it was once again demonstrated how sensitive the arts are to economic change. Evidence found, or made, during and beyond the New Labour years continues to be used to defend the arts from further budget cuts. In April 2013, the UK Culture Secretary Maria Miller said in her speech at the British Museum that arts organisations should demonstrate their worth to the economy if they are to receive funding (Miller, 2013). This speech sparked great controversy as covered by the nation's broadsheets including the Guardian, the Independent and the Financial Times. In June 2013, Miller commented further to say she was frustrated by the arts sector's apparent 'perpetual gloom' and that previous suggestions about the crises for the arts were almost 'laughable' (Miller quoted in Higgins, 2013). In January 2014 at the British Library, Miller made another speech counter-responding to criticisms towards her previous speech, which she claimed were based on 'selective hearing'. She stated:

I make absolutely no apology for emphasising culture's economic potential in the debate about public spending on the arts. But there are so many arguments to be made and they need to be nuanced for each and every audience.

The key for me - and for you - is the need to make the economic, the social and the cultural arguments for our sector. They cannot be mutually exclusive. (Miller, 2014)

Miller's position once again highlights the way policy makers view the role of the arts in contemporary Britain - as something that needs its economic and social potential discovered and developed in order to be an accepted part of British economy and society.

Although there is no fault in recent and current UK governments sending a clear message that publicly funded arts should be part of a wider economy and society, this research, building on the critiques reviewed in previous sections, questions whether top-down strategies such as government regulations, evidence gathering on visible social and economic impact of arts organisations and projects to determine funding decisions are the best and only way to achieve this. Taking the diversity within the sector and the geographic subject of this research into



account, many questions must be raised. What about the other impacts the arts might have that are discounted due to the fact they are not easily measured? How can current strategies account for the great differences that exist between art forms and the geographical context of individual arts organisations and projects? Lastly, does the very existence of a central policy maker result in biased attitudes towards more interactive art forms in more heavily populated areas that provide a higher 'return' on investment?

To help find answers to these questions, it is helpful to further investigate the existing UK-wide studies on arts in rural places. In recent years the arts and culture in rural areas, particularly within England, have attracted increased interest from policy makers, mostly because of the changes that have happened to traditional rural societies since the 1980s. Although this research focuses on issues relevant to Scotland, the following literature review on the arts in rural places UK-wide is essential for understanding the shared issues as well as differences in their social, political and geographical context for the arts in rural England and rural Scotland.

### **Existing Literature on the Arts in Rural places in the UK**

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, although efforts were made to include existing studies on the arts in rural places from all parts of the UK, the vast majority of the material found is exclusively focused on England. This is inevitable for a number of reasons: because England has 84% of the UK population; the impact of London-centred arts and culture policies developed in the 1980s and 1990s; and the Scottish devolutions of political power in the year 1999 which occurred just before the formation of the DEFRA, and greatly influenced rural policies in England. Nonetheless, the studies reviewed in this section informed this research by providing its UK-wide context, highlighting the differences between the arts in rural Scotland and England and subsequently allows the research to explore the Scottish-specific issues in greater depth in later chapters.

#### *Studies on Rural Arts Development between the Late 1980s and 1990s*

The earlier stages of counterurbanisation, suburbanisation, and population growth within rural places in the 1980s (Stote, 1989) saw radical changes happening to rural society and an increased demand for rural community development, beyond economic development centred around agriculture. In 1987, a key organisation in rural community development in England, Action with Communities in Rural

England (ACRE), was founded. This national non-governmental, charitable organisation aimed to ‘improve the conditions of life of people and communities in rural areas’. It established a national profile in its early years through campaigning and expanded in later years through partnership work, funding and working with members at local level (ACRE, 2012). Within this context, an extensive report on rural arts in the UK was commissioned in 1989 by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (CGF), a foundation committed to community development through culture and education, and carried out by Bailey & Scott. Aiming to inform the establishment of the foundation’s rural arts programme, the report sharply stated the following as the rationale for their research:

The suburbanisation of the countryside causes major socio-economic problems and cultural damage for indigenous country people. Rural deprivation is severe but dispersed and, hence, ignored.

Rural arts need to be seen against this background and are naturally integrated with the rest of rural life.

Existing funding practices are ill-suited to rural needs.

There are plain distinctions between the different parts of the UK, but the concern about rural/local culture is found throughout. (Bailey & Scott, 1989: 5)

Bailey & Scott, both from a community development background, argued that the key challenges for the arts in rural places were:

[L]imitations in the rural community’s ability to participate in and enjoy arts activities; difficulties caused by the scale of rural communities and of appropriate provision for them; the cost and organisation of travel and transport; the lack of data about rural provision and the impossibility of raising adequate sponsorship.... [and for rural arts touring particularly] the lack of adequate performing spaces, of equipment, of technical advice and facilities for publicity, and of administrative support. (Bailey & Scott, 1989: 8)

The authors went on to suggest that the best way forward was to ‘strengthen local/rural culture and the position of indigenous country people’ and connect the arts to practical community development (Bailey & Scott, 1989: 90).

The CGF subsequently formed a rural arts consultancy group, including a member from Scotland, and developed its Rural Art Agency Scheme, as well as a strand of funding that was distributed from the CGF directly to larger organisations and projects. Through the scheme the foundation engaged established local arts organisations in rural regions across the UK as their agents to distribute grants to local projects, and a great amount of the grant decisions were made by the local agents. In the mid-project report of the scheme published in 1996, it emphasised that the key features and advantages of the Scheme were its ‘Local, devolved structure’ and ‘Flexibility’ (Hurson, 1996: 55).

In the same year as the *Rural Arts* report published by the CGF, the ACGB commissioned a report *Think Rural: Act Now* by Stote, which provided an overview of the arts activities in Rural England and identified issues including the low status of the arts within local policy agendas: geographic isolation, poor public transport and subsequently poor public access; lack of skilled arts leadership, and poor channels of communication for information, marketing and advice (Stote, 1989). Differing greatly from the Bailey & Scott report, the solutions proposed to the ACGB by Stote would have been implemented mainly through top-down approaches. These would have included creating full-time arts development positions within rural regions, campaigning to emphasise the role of the arts in rural development and establishing partnerships with region-wide arts associations, local authorities and other national agencies.

Despite the report, there was no evidence of a specific rural arts development scheme or policy set up by the ACGB, and in the late 1980s and early 1990s, most of the ACGB’s Cross-Departmental Units were set up for increasing disabled access and promoting cultural diversity. However, as a result of equalising funding spent in London and the rest of England, which was campaigned for by the 11 established Regional Arts Associations (RAAs) in England, the RAAs were replaced by 10 Regional Arts Boards (RABs) in 1990 and a system of ‘integrated planning and accountability’ was developed (Wilson & Hart, 2003: 2). The ACGB & the ACE both saw rural arts as part of RABs’ responsibility and, historically, as something less important. When reflecting on the historical context for the crisis in Britain’s regional theatres in the 2000s, Turnbull pointed out:

From the outset, the regional arts associations’ collective relationship with the Arts Council was patchy. Certainly, the Arts Council was always

ambiguous and suspicious of the regional arts associations, which it traditionally saw as junior partners, existing to take responsibility for smaller, less 'important' art forms such as rural and folk activities - 'amateur theatricals, the crafts and the like', Lord Goodman [chairman of the Arts Council of Great Britain from 1965 until 1972] described them in a House of Lords debate in 1972 - and as marketing officers to develop audiences for existing subsidized companies. (Turnbull, 2008: 56)

The relationship between the ACGB and the RAAs has been troubled since the RAAs' establishments in the 1960s and 1970s (Turnbull, 2008: 55). This continued as Turnbull brought out further evidence during the 1980s showing that the RAAs, and more generally 'the provinces', suffered a funding crisis because of the ACGB's centralised policies. Despite funding distribution becoming more equalised after 1987, the RAAs/RABs' grant allocation from the ACGB/ACE only increased from 16% in 1980/1981 to 31% in 1999/2000 (Wilson & Hart, 2003: 2-3). Subsequently, in a report by Wilson & Hart, *Regional Funding Revisited* (2003) it was concluded that London was still receiving a disproportionately large amount of funding compared to other regions.

In contrast to the ACGB/ACE's lack of reaction to the report commissioned in 1989, the CGF's Rural Arts Agency Scheme encouraged all established arts organisations across the UK to become agents and grants were only awarded to projects happening in settlements with fewer than 10,000 residents. In the mid-scheme report, Hurson provided a comprehensive evaluation through not only summarising the feedback from the agents for the improvement of the scheme itself, but also through analysing the supported projects, articulating what made some projects more successful than others.

Because of the nature of the scheme, the agents could stay on the scheme for a flexible amount of time ranging from one week to two years and the applicants and recipients of the grants could greatly vary, from arts groups, and community development groups to environmental groups. These projects provided a great range of samples and led to the publication of Hurson's reference and handbook for arts development in rural places, *Rural Arts Handbook*, in collaboration with the ACRE in 1997 (Hurson, 1997). The Handbook emphasised the importance of early stage consultation with local communities as well as engaging the communities at later stages of rural arts projects. In addition to their wide

distribution to projects of various sizes, the grants were also distributed more equally across the UK, resulting in 24 agents across the UK including five in Scotland as of 1997.

Interestingly, the 1996 report pointed out that although the CGF suggested that the scheme could provide a model for developing arts in rural places, to which the ACE agreed, Hurson believed the ACE was passive in campaigning arts in rural places and did not take on any of the recommendations from the 1989 report by Stote (Hurson, 1996: 47). There was no evidence that the ACE had taken any of the CGF's contributions on board, despite the scheme continuing to run successfully in many regions until 2000 and inspiring some of the agents, such as Artsreach in Dorset to continue supporting community-based projects in rural areas. In contrast, the ACE was not found to take any further action in developing arts in rural places until the 2000s.

#### *After the Establishment of the DEFRA*

When the DEFRA was set up in 2001, Scotland was already politically devolved with agriculture, environment and rural affairs wielding separate departmental powers. Therefore, Scotland was not engaged in the movements that occurred within rural arts policy in the 2000s after the establishment of the DEFRA. Most of the organisations, events and publications mentioned in this section are only relevant to England. Although some of the changes which caused these movements, such as the changes within European Union rural policies, are also significantly influential to Scottish rural development compared to their English counterparts, which will be discussed in the next Chapter, the Scottish rural and arts policy makers did not make the connection between the arts and culture and rural development in addressing rural issues in the 2000s.

The establishment of the DEFRA following the Foot and Mouth outbreak in 2001 which devastated many rural communities in England sparked a rethinking of the future of rural England. In 2002, a report by a commission led by Sir Donald Curry, widely known as the Curry Report, was published and outlined recommendations for sustaining and developing of farming and food industry in England (Policy Commission on the Future of Farming and Food, 2002). At the same time, the European Union's 1999 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform, which divided the Policy into two 'Pillars' - product support and rural development, including diversification - became increasingly influential across the UK. Within this context

and acknowledging that the arts and culture can play an important role in the diversified rural economy and society, the ACE commissioned the Littoral Arts Trust, a trust for grassroots artist organisations established in 1990 with rural and environmental interests, to conduct a scoping study of arts in rural places in England.

The outcome of this study was a report published in 2003, and later revised to respond to the DEFRA's first 2004 Rural Strategy in 2005, *Investing in Rural Creativity: New Rural Arts Strategy* (Littoral Arts Trust, 2005). Although based on research funded by the ACE in the South West, East Midlands and Yorkshire, the report aimed to be a policy discussion document for the DEFRA. Overall, it illuminated the importance of the arts and culture in rural society and economy by using evidence from previous reports by Littoral commissioned by the ACE, including *RURAL SHIFT: the role of the arts in tackling rural social and economic exclusion* (Littoral Arts Trust, 2003). The report made links between the arts in rural England to the wider rural economy and proposed the development of a nationally coordinated arts, media and cultural strategy in response to the rural strategy.

As proposed by the Littoral Arts Trust report, the Rural Cultural Forum (RCF) was set up in 2005 to discuss, campaign and promote rural creativity and arts and culture 'in the UK'.<sup>7</sup> With support from the ACE, the DCMS and the DEFRA, the RCF has since then organised various conferences and research projects and published *Creative Rural Communities: Proposal for a Rural Cultural Strategy* in 2010, also prepared by the Littoral Arts Trust.

The proposal calls for a joint national strategy for culture in rural England between the ACE, the DCMS, the DEFRA and potentially other relevant agencies such as the Environment Agency, the Design Council and Natural England. The document outlined what the RCF campaigns for rural areas:

**Cultural Entitlement:** promoting equal access and equity for rural communities and artists in relation to available national arts and cultural strategic funding and lottery arts funded investment initiatives;

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<sup>7</sup> This is stated on RCF website's homepage, however, there is no clear evidence of their work outside of England and Wales.

**Cultural Efficacy:** delivering a strategic framework to support development of the creative rural economy, and arts and rural regeneration and social inclusion initiatives in the countryside;

**Cultural Responsibility:** contributing to a new cultural policy discourse and strategy aimed at supporting future national economic and environmental sustainability goals. (RCF, 2010:8)

The document proposed a rural cultural investment programme as part of the proposed strategy and suggested seven projects from establishing a ‘National Rural Cultural Centre and Museum of Contemporary Art and the Countryside’ and an ‘International Rural Biennale’ to developing crafts and design in rural places and new urban-rural cultural partnerships (RCF, 2010:14).

An independent study report on the necessity of a rural cultural strategy was published by the RCF in 2012 by Bianchini, Bailey and Medlyn, summarised by John Holden, emphasising that it was ‘vital’ to establish a national rural cultural strategy (Holden et al., 2012: 3). In June 2013, the *Rural Cultural Strategy* was put down by Tim Farron, Member of Parliament (MP) and president of the Liberal Democrat Party to the House of Commons, as an Early Day Motion and received seven signatures. As of February 2014, the RCF and the Littoral Arts Trust are still campaigning for the establishment of the strategy.

In 2005, the Commission for Rural Communities (CRC) was also set up as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) under the Countryside Agency with the aim to tackle rural disadvantages. The CRC became a close partner working with the RCF until the CRC’s closure in March 2013.

During the same period, the ACE was actively looking at arts development in rural England in addition to its support for the Littoral Arts Trust and the RCF. The council formed its Rural Working Group in 2004 and carried out consultation ‘to renew the partnership between the Arts Council and people who support the arts in rural areas’ (Matarasso, 2005a: 7). An advocacy publication, *Arts in Rural England: Why the arts are at the heart of rural life* was published at the end of the consultation, showcasing case studies of the various arts projects in England. In this publication, Sir Christopher Frayling, the then Chair of the ACE, stated:

In 2004 we looked at all of our policies, programmes and investment streams to make sure that we were meeting the needs of the arts in rural areas. That work included one of the largest consultation exercises undertaken by Arts Council England, with more than 400 artists, creative people, agencies and communities participating in regional and national meetings. (Frayling quoted in Matarasso, 2005b: 2)

Summarising the arts in rural England, and in great contrast to the ACGB/ACE's historical attitude towards arts in rural places, the publication further stated:

The days when the phrase 'rural arts' suggested bucolic stereotypes should be long gone... The quality and variety of arts work in rural areas is outstanding, and fully comparable to what our cities offer. (Matarasso, 2005b: 7-8)

However, despite the comprehensive consultation process, well summarised report and beautifully designed advocacy publication, there was no evidence of an action plan being published by the ACE or its regional boards following the consultation, even though a published action plan and a final report should have been a crucial final part of this consultation, as pointed out in the Stage 2 report (Matarasso, 2005a: 8-9). There has been no further publication specifically about the arts in rural places by the ACE beyond the Stage 2 report and the advocacy publication in 2005. This could be due to the establishment of the RCF, which was jointly funded by the ACE, and its long campaign for a national rural cultural strategy. However, the awareness of rurality and the possibility of a rural policy/strategy are sometimes included in the ACE's policy documents including the agency's 10 year plan for 2010 - 2020 *Great Art and Culture for Everyone* (2010, revised in 2013) and the most recent publication *This England: how Arts Council England uses its investment to shape a national cultural ecology* (2014) which mentioned that the ACE is working with the DEFRA on a rural agenda.

In 2007, the National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (NESTA) published a collection of articles on rural innovation in the UK, which included a chapter on creative industries prepared by the Burns Owen Partnership, a consulting agency based in London and Edinburgh. Although the statistics used in the chapter were inconsistent in terms of its geographic subject, for example some statistics were UK-wide while some were English, it does provide an insight



into the creative industries in rural places in comparison with those in urban settings. This article informs some of the arguments in Chapter 7 of this thesis.

Although no written strategy or action plan on the arts or culture in rural places was published as a result of the studies around arts in rural England in the 2000s, the published documents and reports revealed the distinctive features of arts in rural England in more recent years. In the Stage 2 Report of the ACE consultation, Matarasso summarised that many who contributed to the consultation believed that the situation of the arts in rural England has been transformed in the past 20 years with higher levels of both public and private investment and greater support from local audiences. Unlike the 1989 reports by Baily & Scott and Stote, in which there was little mention of any advantages of arts development in rural England, the Matarasso report presented the strengths of the arts in rural England along with some unique characteristics of rural places including:

- Rural organisations and venues are more likely to be multidisciplinary and multifunctional;
- Rural arts organisations are entrepreneurial in building partnerships;
- Village based activities have proved to be an especially effective and popular ways of extending participation and access beyond traditional urban centres;
- The artistic production of rural England often has a distinct perspective, rooted partly in the culture that nourishes it, but also in developing away from the dominant cultural, social and economic centres of the country. Arts work created in rural areas often has different concerns, including many that emerge from the rapidly changing situation of those areas themselves. (Matarasso, 2005a)

It also brought forward the perceived weaknesses of the arts in rural England such as organisational fragility; a lack of resources and enforced opportunism resulting from a grassroots approach; remoteness; limited resources and lack of support from local authorities; poor infrastructure; difficulties in access; lack of recognition for artworks created in rural places; limited opportunities for private sponsorship and self-generated income; and limited channels for marketing (Matarasso, 2005a: 18-24).

There are clear features that rural Scotland and rural England share, such as the remoteness and the difficulties in access, however not all of these features apply

to the arts in rural Scotland, and shared issues are not necessarily on the same scale.

Rural Scotland and rural England are geographically and demographically very different. For example, based on the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) mid-year estimates from 2011, the local authority area with the lowest population density in England is Northumberland with 63 people per square kilometre (PPK) (ONS, 2011b), while Highland, one of the regions with lowest population density in Scotland has a density of merely 9 PPK (General Register Office for Scotland, 2009) and all rural regions included in this research have population densities of less than 40 PPK. The demographic profile of rural Scotland will be further articulated in Chapter 2.

Furthermore, the arts in rural Scotland are situated in a very different political and administrative context. As mentioned earlier in the Introduction and the earlier part of this chapter, there has been no research conducted into the arts in rural Scotland as a whole. Although briefly mentioned in Huston's 1996 report for the CGF that the SAC was 'in the process of funding a booklet on the impact of arts in rural areas which is specifically intended as an advocacy document for Local Authorities', no booklet of such was seen during the period of this research and none of the interviewees had any recollection of a booklet of this nature. There has been no existing rural arts specific research or consultation carried out by the SAC or any other national body in Scotland. This could be because many events that enabled the discussions around the arts and culture in rural England, such as the Foot and Mouth outbreak in 2001 and the establishment of the DEFRA and its 2004 rural strategy, have a much smaller or no influence at all on Scottish rural policy.

Another major difference is that there are only a few regional or cross-regional arts organisations in Scotland in contrast with regional arts organisations in England that cover all geographic regions. An earlier part of this section mentioned how the ACE believed that rural arts development should be part of 10 Regional Arts Boards' responsibility during the early and mid-1990s. In 2001, the ACE announced that the Regional Arts Boards would be absorbed into the ACE and become a single new body, Arts Council England (removing the 'of' from its previous name), with nine regional offices in line with the English regional

development agency areas. After yet another restructure it now has five regional offices and one national office.

In comparison, the SAC or Creative Scotland does not have a regional office, there are few regional arts development organisations in Scotland, and two out of the three in rural Scotland were closed down during the period of this research. This phenomenon will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

## Conclusion

Based on the reviews in this chapter, the arts have been used as a political instrument throughout history. However, today, when the arts can be made more accessible to the public than at any other time in history and with a focus on artists' initiatives and ideas within contemporary art, it is now important to discuss both the instrumental and intrinsic values of the arts.

This thesis considers four different elements to have shaped and influenced the arts:

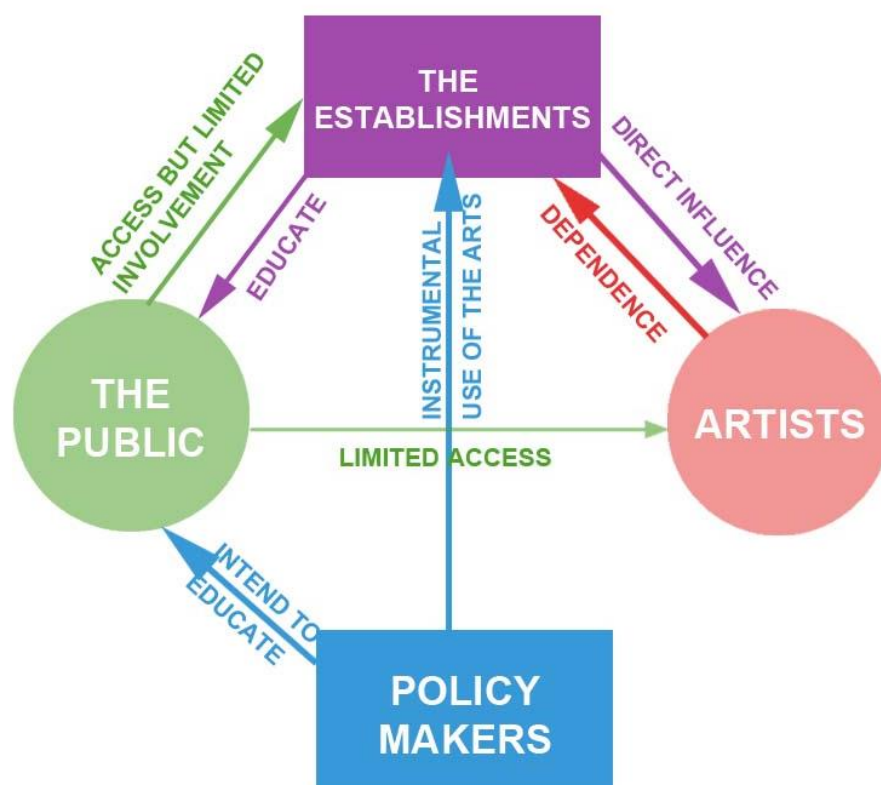
- *the Public* - who may or may not be interested in the arts, but largely do not have any art training or experience of working in the arts as a profession;
- *the Artists* - the makers of the arts;
- *the Establishments* - established institutions and commissioners of art;
- and *the Policy Makers* - mostly governments and politicians, and sometimes national agencies.

These four elements are not isolated from each other, instead they are closely connected, on occasions have blurred boundaries, and their relationships change throughout time. For example, in ancient times when what we now identify as historical art was produced, the concept of an 'artist' was not established and hence the boundary between the artists and the public did not exist, and anyone would feel comfortable, right and free to judge work by their peers. The concept of the 'artist' was born when society's ruling class became the establishment and commissioned craftsmen for their magnificent architectural and interior projects.

Since the Age of Enlightenment, the power of the establishments and policy makers has been enhanced through the increasing number of art dealing and curatorial institutions. The use of the arts for political purposes was also developed further through the establishment of national agencies. During the post

1945 modern art movement, we saw the power of the establishments became maximised. Because of the diversifying nature of artists' practices, artists also enjoyed a higher level of artistic freedom than ever before.

However, their work and careers were also more dependent on the establishments. By setting the standard and criteria for art, the establishments, comprising of a set of institutions, highly powered individuals and the art market, also became the main, if not only, medium through which art was presented to the public, leaving little or no direct access between the public and the artists. At the same time, more instrumental values such as social cohesion, regeneration, economic benefit and tourist potential were given to the arts by policy makers which required more social and public outcomes from the establishments, as can be summarised in Figure 1 below. This is especially true of the publicly subsidised part of the arts, which is what this thesis will explore.



*Figure 1 The Elements Influencing the Arts in Present Days*

In the most recent decades, particularly in the UK, as reviewed earlier in this chapter, the influence of policy-makers has grown with the number of institutions asked to demonstrate their 'public value'. Although institutions made efforts to develop programmes to engage the public and collected data to reflect their social

and economic impact, public opinion has little importance in the current development of the arts. In addition, the voices and intentions of artists are often ignored in the discussions around arts politics. Instead, the current system puts the artists and the public at the two ends of the spectrum, as creator and customers, and further limits the connections between them. As mentioned in the Introduction of this thesis, artists, among other individuals, are an important part of rural arts development, but from the discussion and literature review above, it seems that artists have not only been excluded from the discussion of the social impact of the arts, but also from direct contact with the public.

More directly, despite the history of public funding bodies not taking the voice of the artist into account, artists and artists' unions are now influencing policy making within cultural politics. The efforts of the Littoral Arts Trust and the Rural Cultural Forum to establish a national-wide cultural strategy in England have artist and researcher Dr Ian Hunter, the key author of many of the organisations' documents, as the driving force behind them. The Scottish Artists Union (SAU) was set up by a group of artists in 2001 to support visual artists and protect their rights through campaigning and advocacy, and it is still the only trade union for visual artists in the UK. They state that 'setting up a trade union for some of the most poorly paid workers in the country has been a delicate matter'.<sup>8</sup> As their 2001 research suggested, 82% of visual artists in Scotland earned roughly £5000 a year from their work. The SAU has also been working with MPs, Members of Scottish Parliament (MSPs) and the SAC/Creative Scotland to publish guidelines for artists' work contracts, payments and Public Liability Insurance Policies. With their membership numbers reaching 1000 by August 2013, the SAU was particularly vocal about the issues facing visual artists during the transition from the SAC to Creative Scotland between 2010 and 2012. This will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

Despite the crucial role of artists within the arts, it was difficult to find references in the existing research to how artists influenced and were influenced by arts politics (Galloway, 1995; Reeves, 2002). Most of the research consists of case studies, numbers and evaluations of the measurable outcomes from organisations or funding bodies, where important links, (mis)communications and (mis)interpretations between artists and organisations were often ignored. What

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<sup>8</sup> Source <http://www.sau.org.uk/about/history.php> Accessed 13 February 2012.

was ‘curated’ has been presented as ‘original’, and the discussions were no longer directed towards the influence of the arts on society, but instead, the influence of the establishments and policy makers. This remained the same in the studies on arts in rural England commissioned by the ACE during the 2000s. While the reports and documents praised the quality of the arts in rural places and recognised efforts from individuals, it was the established organisations and events that were used to highlight ‘what rural areas offer’, such as the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the Glastonbury Festival, award-winning public arts commissions by international renowned artists such as Andy Goldsworthy, while many other case studies were selected because of their social and economic contribution to their geographic areas - creating a division between high-quality arts and arts with social purposes (Matarasso, 2005b: 7).

In conclusion, although the establishments were intended to be more public-oriented and economically beneficial for society under the New Labour policies, which is still a model used for the structure of public funding, it could just simply be the outcome of a ‘policy-based evidence making’ process. This is most noticeable in the visual arts where, on a daily basis, Turner Prize winners and nominees are still mocked in tabloids<sup>9</sup> and self-taught artists who have not gone through the accepted artworld career routes are still despised and rejected by institutions.<sup>10</sup> Most amazingly, artists, the creators of the main ‘products’ in the sector, are the ones who are seldom mentioned and have benefited the least from ‘The Golden Age’. For example, in ACE’s online publication database, between January 2000 and December 2008, 310 arts related documents, including reports, guidelines and toolkits, were published. However, shockingly, only one publication - *Creating Space*, published in 2004 by the agency’s North East branch - featured the subject of supporting individual artists.<sup>11</sup> Very little information and evidence on the support for individual artists and their financial advances were seen whilst conducting this research. This is despite the fact that in its 2005 report, *Good*

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<sup>9</sup> For example, when Richard Wright won Turner Prize in 2009, the Sun published the article ‘£25k prize art...or £8 wallpaper?’ (Deanie, 2009), and when Susan Philipsz was nominated for Turner Prize 2010, they called the artist the ‘Tesco Singer’ (Phillips, 2010) because one of Philipsz’s previous works, which involved singing in a Tesco branch.

<sup>10</sup> Artist Jack Vettriano is a typical example. Despite achieving great commercial success and being the best-selling artist in Britain, up until recently Vettriano was never shown in any of Britain’s major fine art galleries and his work was never discussed in major arts journals such as *Art Monthly* and *Art Review*. Jones (2010) and Smith (2004) discuss more on this issue.

<sup>11</sup> Source: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/browse/?content=publication> Accessed 17 September 2013.

*Practice in Paying Artists*, a-n, an artist news and information service, pointed out that the artist pay rate has not risen since the last survey conducted in year 2000/2001 revealing the unfair pay rates for artists comparing to other professions across the UK (Jones, 2005: 5).

However, is this situation the same for the arts in rural Scotland, where the influence of the establishments is reduced? As mentioned at the beginning of this thesis, individual artists, curators and community members play significant parts in developing arts and culture in rural places, and in a rural situation, they are more likely to work with the public directly without any institutional intermediaries. Therefore, as well as discussing the political and institutional aspects of the arts in rural Scotland and how they influence the local community, this thesis draws attention to and articulates recent arts development in rural Scotland in its very context. The next chapter will lay out the demographic and historical context of arts development in rural Scotland and set out the geographical background of this thesis.

## Chapter 2 Rural Scotland and its Political Context

Chapter 1 discussed the social roles of the arts from historical times to more recent years, which provided the context for discussing arts development and policy in Scotland. This chapter will illuminate the issues that are specifically relevant to the key areas of this thesis - arts development in rural Scotland - in order to put the research into its wider social and geographical context. As noted in the introduction, the development of the arts takes a different route in rural environments. In order to look into individual cases and examine their relationships with cultural policies as well as their possible impact on rural development, it is important to lay out the historical and demographic context of the arts in rural Scotland.

This chapter starts with an overview of the demographic statistics in rural Scotland relating to arguments within rural studies. This will provide a picture of the overall state of contemporary rural Scotland, in particular its growing population in recent years and closer sense of community. Following this, the chapter will define the regions that will be included in this research and identify the different economic and social contexts in different rural regions including the most and least wealthy council areas in Scotland. Based on the regions defined, it will then look back at the development of the arts and rural policy since the 1960s, from the rise of community art during the 60s and 70s to 'The Golden Age' for arts between 1997 and 2010. It will also explain the layout of the 'art scene' in rural Scotland at present including a perspective of how many rural residents are engaged in the arts in Scotland.

### Overview of Rural Studies and Rural Scotland

Although the discussion of the definition of rural has never been settled - neither in a geographic nor in a cultural sense (Newby, 1977; Pahl, 1968), the definition of 'rural' has been commonly defined as 'settlements with a population of less than 3,000' by Scottish policy makers (Scottish Government, 2010). By analysing the driving time to larger settlements, rural Scotland can be divided into:

Accessible rural: those with a less than 30 minute drive time to the nearest settlement with a population of 10,000 or more; and Remote rural: those with



a greater than 30 minute drive time to the nearest settlement with a population of 10,000 or more. (Scottish Government, 2010: 3)

At the same time, settlements with a population of 3,000 to 10,000 with a greater than 30 minute drive to the nearest settlement with a population of 10,000 or more are classified as 'Remote Small Towns'. This definition has been widely used in Government reports and surveys, which act as practical aids to policy making. This chapter will lay out the demographic and social context of rural Scotland based on the review of reports and surveys commissioned by the Scottish government and local governments, which all follow the above definition of 'rural'.

Receiving much less attention compared to the associated discipline of urban studies, rural studies and rural sociology first started to emerge in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Sociologist Tönnies' (1955) [1887] concept of *Gemeinschaft* (community) and *Gesellschaft* (association/society) in the context of the rise of urban industrialism and the demographic shift from the country to the city, is seen as a starting point of the theorising of the rural and eventually the development of the discipline. Tönnies' idea of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* examined rural society during the early industrial period. He saw *Gemeinschaft* as a real and organic connection between people, while *Gesellschaft* was something imaginary, commercial and mechanical - something he saw emerging at the time and causing the decline of 'community' in an increasingly modern world.

Tönnies' theory and his followers created the basis for the research in rural sociology in modern times. The concepts of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* have been important elements of community studies, especially the emergence of rural studies since the 1960s and the more popular and flourishing discipline of urban studies and development. Most notably, Pahl (1968), whose main research and practical interest lies in the field of urban studies, considers the concept of 'rural' and 'urban' to be neither explanatory variables nor sociological categories. Influenced by the emerging discipline of modern sociology, Pahl believes that there is no exclusive continuum from *Gemeinschaft* to *Gesellschaft* and that both relationships could be found in the same localities. He also states that the study of rural sociology shouldn't rely on locale but on the social class as a key influence in determining a lifestyle. His argument directed rural sociology to consider the rural sector in the context of the rest of society and that community and association are part of a social structure that could be found in different locales,

thus restoring the original ideas of Tönnies' theory where *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* are interconnected.

In the late 1970s and 1980s, based on fieldwork in England, Newby (1977; 1985) found that a marginal relevance continues to be attached to the rural, and that geographic location can influence local social structures. While Pahl believes that the connections between local social systems and their locations barely exist, Newby suggests that if social institutions are locality-based and if they are interrelated then there might be a 'local social system' that may be named 'rural' in sociological research. He argued further that the issues in such a system are more related to a wider social system of inequality and/or technological development than to something specific to the locality. His research also drew attention to issues of class conflict, paternalism, property and power in rural communities.

It is easy to agree with aspects of Pahl's arguments regarding the variability of the concept of 'urban' and 'rural' when looking at demographic statistics of rural Scotland. Scotland has one of the largest percentages of rural areas in all European countries, which covers as much as 94% (68% remote rural and 25% accessible rural) of the land mass, while only 18.54% of the population live in rural areas. However, while Scotland's overall population underwent a small growth of 2.1% between 2001 and 2008, this was concentrated in rural areas, where populations grew dramatically by 10.1% in accessible rural areas and 5.3% in remote rural areas (Scottish Government, 2010) - both considerably higher than the statistics for rural areas in England - 6.7% and 3.3% respectively between 2001 and 2010 (DEFRA, 2012: 11). The significant growth in accessible rural areas, in the context of counterurbanisation in recent decades, may also be a direct result of a relevantly larger proportion of the working middle class relocating during the blooming years of the property market before the 2008 recession, to 'commuter towns' where the nearest cities such as Aberdeen and Inverness are within an hour driving distance.

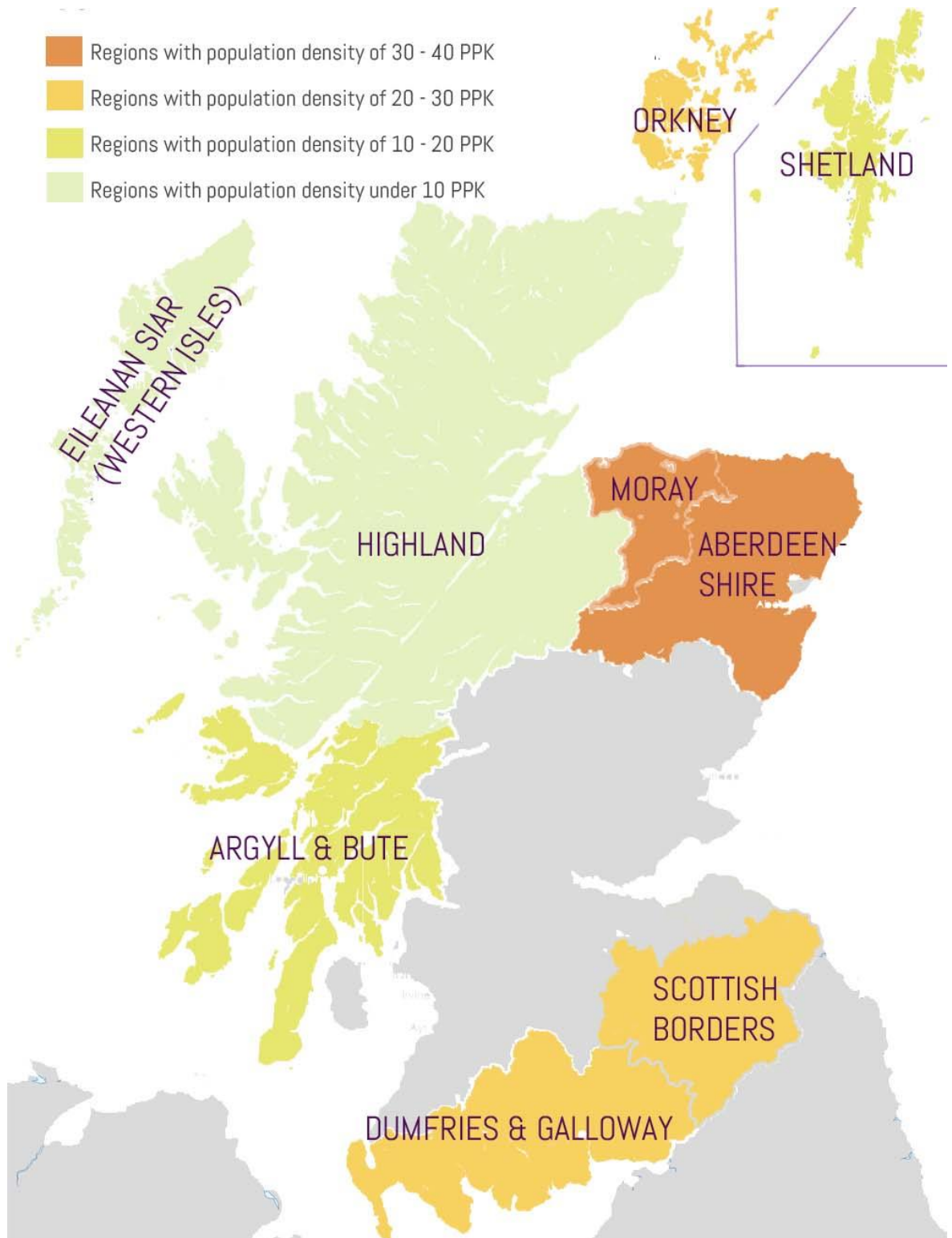
On the other hand, it seems more practical to apply Newby's idea of the influence of geographic locations on social structure when looking at the non-social-economic factors in rural Scotland. For example, like many other rural areas in other countries, rural areas in Scotland have a lower percentage of the population in the age bands 16-24 and 25-34 and a higher proportion in the older age bands, especially at pensionable age. However, the percentages of the population aged

between 0-15 and 35-44 are very similar to the rest of Scotland. This demonstrates that there are smaller percentages of high-teenagers, young adults and young professionals in rural Scotland, more elderly people and a similar proportion of the age groups that represent families (under 15 and 35-44). Reflecting Newby's theory of the connection between locality and the local social system (1985: 157) are the figures from the Scottish Household Survey in 2009 (Scottish Government, 2010) where 80% of people in remote rural areas and 69% in accessible rural areas rated their neighbourhoods as 'very good' places to live, while only 51% of residents in the rest of Scotland felt the same of where they lived. In the same survey, a dramatic number of 86% and 82% of people in remote and accessible rural areas respectively said that they enjoyed the sense of community and friendliness of their neighbourhood compared to 68% in the Rest of Scotland. The sense of a closer community and the suitability of raising a family could be results of smaller population and slower pace of living instead of in direct relation to the social-economic status of the residents.

Nonetheless, as Scott et al. pointed out in their 2007 report *The Urban-Rural Divide: Myth or Reality?* counterurbanisation does not necessarily mean 'rural renaissance' (Scott et al., 2007: 7-11). Before we look at rural Scotland as flourishing, middle class and family-friendly areas, the diversity between different rural locations should be taken into consideration.

### **Demographic Statistics in Rural Regions**

Scotland has diverse rural areas, and this diversity has resulted in incredibly different policies, particularly arts policies. The rural regions discussed in this thesis are the local authority areas in Scotland that have population densities of fewer than 40 people per square kilometre (PPK). They are: Aberdeenshire (38 PPK), Argyll and Bute (13 PPK), Scottish Borders (24 PPK), Dumfries and Galloway (23 PPK), Highland (9 PPK), Moray (39 PPK), Orkney (20 PPK), Shetland (15 PPK) and Eileanan Siar/Western Isles (9 PPK) (General Register Office for Scotland, 2009). Although Highland council area is included in this research, organisations and events based solely in Inverness City are not discussed in this thesis unless specifically stated.



*Figure 2 Map of Regions included in this Research*

Additionally, although Perth and Kinross has a population density of 29 people per square kilometre, the region is excluded from this research for the following reasons. Firstly, the region is in the geographic centre of Scotland, with Perth, the 7<sup>th</sup> city in Scotland, populated with approximately 50,000 and growing. Perth is also less than 30 miles away from both Dundee and Stirling, and most parts of the region are easily accessible from Inverness, Aberdeen, Dundee, Stirling or

Edinburgh. Secondly, the population in Perth and Kinross is highly concentrated in the south of the region with Perth holding over 1/3 of the region's population - other large county towns in rural Scotland such as Inverness and Dumfries hold only approximately 1/4 and 1/5 of the regions' population (General Register Office for Scotland, 2009). The furthest north town with a population over 2,500 is Pitlochry, which is still 30 miles away from the region's north border - it seems the main reason for the low population density in the region is because of the Cairngorms National Park and Natural National Reserves in the north. Subsequently, the vast majority of arts activities in the region happen in the south of the region. Therefore, Perth and Kinross is seen as an exception to this research.

The demographic and economic differences between regions included in this research are obvious. For example, the largest rural council area is Highland, which covers an area of 25,659 km<sup>2</sup> (32.92% of the land mass of Scotland) but has a 'Population per Square Kilometre (PPK)' of only 9, while the two northern council areas, Aberdeenshire and Moray, have the highest PPK (38 and 39).

Despite the fact that the overall average income in rural regions is no less than that of the rest of Scotland, the differences between regions can be extreme. According to the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2009, amongst all Scottish council areas, two of the rural councils have the highest (Shetland Islands, £543.50 Median GRO(S)s Weekly Earning for Full Time workers) and lowest incomes (Borders, £370.30 which is only 68% of the earnings for Shetland). Only Shetland and Aberdeenshire were in the top 10 highest earning council areas (Office for National Statistics, 2008), mostly because of their connections with the North Sea oil industry. However, all of the rural council areas have lower unemployment rates compared to the Scottish national average.

Based on the demographic & economic differences in different council areas, this research categorises the regions into three larger areas:

**a. Northeast (Aberdeenshire and Moray)**

Both of the regions had the highest PPK amongst rural regions. Although Aberdeenshire has one of the highest average incomes amongst Scottish council areas, Moray remains one of the regions with the lowest (£370.20 per week, ranked 30 out of 32 council areas in 2008). This could be because of the significant percentage of the working population in Aberdeenshire

commuting to Aberdeen City, which varied from 11.5% in Fraserburgh to 65% in Westhill, and Aberdeen City was the council area with the second highest income in 2008.

Despite the difference in residents' income, both areas had a similar Council Revenue Budget per capita in the financial year 2010/2011 (£2330 and £2352).

**b. Rural Lowlands (The Borders and Dumfries and Galloway)**

Although the Borders and Dumfries and Galloway areas have similar population densities (24 PPK and 23 PPK) and average incomes (both are among the lowest of Scottish Council Areas), Dumfries and Galloway has almost double the unemployment rate of that of the Borders.

The Borders and Dumfries and Galloway are also the only two councils among all rural councils where the Conservative Party holds the most seats.

**c. Highlands and Islands (Argyll and Bute, Western Isles, Orkney Islands, Shetland Islands and Highland)**

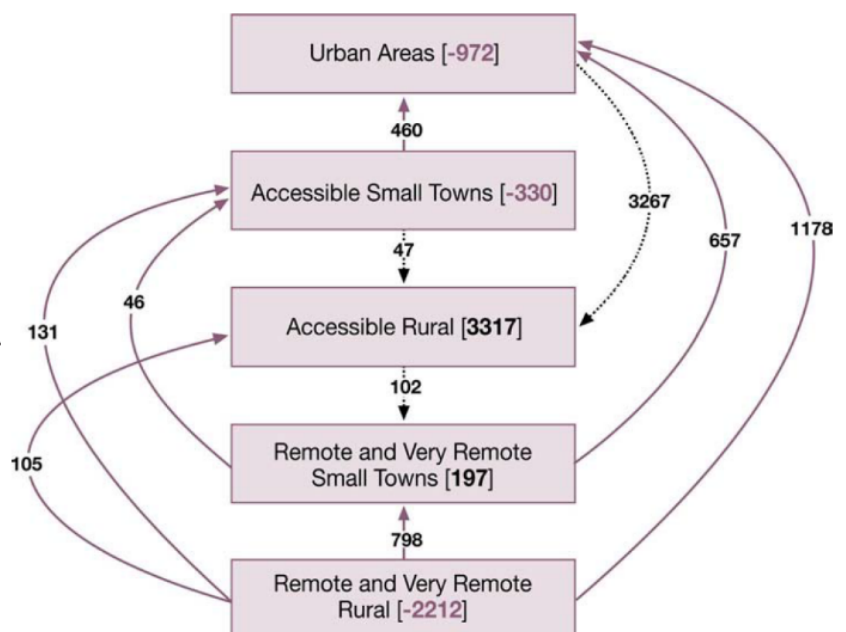
With an understanding of the differences between the Islands and Highland areas, this thesis places them together based on their shared circumstances and interests. All of these areas are the least populated in Scotland with the highest population density at 20 PPK. The establishment of the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) in 1991 helped this region to develop sustainable economic growth and also encouraged arts and cultural activity as a method to develop community activities in this region.

There is also a significant holiday-maker population in the region. According to the information on the Argyll and Bute Council website, 11% of real estate in the area was purchased for and used as second homes. This might also explain the higher percentage of population of people from the rest of the UK in rural areas in Scotland. Islands like Orkney and Shetland have a substantial Council Revenue budget per capita of £4545 and £4794 for the financial year 2010/2011.

The evidence above illustrates that although the population is increasing in rural Scotland in general, huge differences between different rural regions, as well as remote and accessible rural areas still exist. In the report by Scott et al. (Scott et al. 2007), the diagram below, based on the 2001 census in Scotland, demonstrates that ‘Accessible Rural’ areas had the largest population increase, while ‘Remote and Very Remote Rural’ areas had a dramatic population decrease.

Although the data found in Figure 3 and report are not the most current, the migration flows represented are still relevant. In the Rural Scotland in Focus 2012 report, the differences between remote towns and remote rural areas were represented through the portions of housing stock that are second homes or vacant. In 2011, only 2.0% of the housing stock in remote towns were second homes and 2.8% were vacant homes while the numbers increased to 7.4% and 4.6% in remote rural areas - giving a total 12% of the housing stock in remote rural Scotland that is not occupied by regular residents. Furthermore, regions with more towns that provide opportunities to commute and greater access to larger cities, such as Aberdeenshire - Aberdeen, Highland - Inverness, Scottish Borders - Edinburgh and Moray - Inverness, have predicted population increases of 10% to 25% in the run up to 2035, while regions that provide fewer opportunities for commuters: Dumfries and Galloway, Argyll and Bute and Eilean Siar have predicted decreases in population of up to 13%.

*The arrows indicate magnitudes of net migration flows from a settlement where the arrow begins to that where the arrow ends; the solid lines stand for net migration upwards while broken lines denote net migration down the settlement hierarchy. A large proportion of rural out-migration occurs directly to large urban areas, bypassing nearby settlements. For instance, the largest number of out-migrants from remote rural areas moved directly to large cities. On the other hand, almost all population movements from large urban areas are accounted for by short-distance movements to nearby accessible rural areas or accessible small towns.*



**Figure 3 Net Migration Flows between Urban-Rural Settlement Categories, numbers represent people (Scott et al. 2007)**

The differences in migration flows between rural regions and areas in Scotland are clearly linked to whether the regions enable easy access to larger cities and towns. The access to urban centres does not only mean that residents are able to commute to larger cities for work - 52% of the population of accessible rural areas in Scotland commutes to urban areas (OECD, 2008: 4) - but also provides opportunities for other economic and leisure activities, such as shopping, dining and seeing high-quality arts. However, as mentioned at the beginning of the thesis, the past few decades saw a dramatic growth in available arts organisations and events locally in rural Scotland. Before moving on to look at recent arts developments in each rural regions, the next section will look at the wider context of rural and arts development in Scotland from the late 20th Century until now and its relevance to arts in rural Scotland.

### **Rural and Arts Policies and Practice in Scotland since the 1960s**

Chapter 1 reviewed the studies around the arts in rural places, mostly in England, and revealed the connections between the arts development in rural places and the needs of rural community and regeneration. The following section will look at the arts and rural policy developments in Scotland and particularly through the development of community-focused arts in Scotland.

#### *1960s-70s Arts for community improvement and cohesion*

Although the UNESCO and the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) were both established as early as the 1940s, the development of the arts in Scotland was still largely driven by individuals and art schools before 1960. Before the 1960s, the ACGB was very much focused on supporting organisations and projects in Central London and its larger institutions including the Royal Opera House and Royal Court Theatre.

It was during the first Harold Wilson administration, between 1964 and 1970, when the ACGB started to obtain its modern functions. Jenny Lee was appointed as the First Minister of the Arts when Wilson was elected in 1964. Originally from a miner's family in Scotland, Lee, along with the then Arts Council Chairman Arnold Goodman, were key figures in pushing the ACGB to support organisations and build partners across the UK and the setup of the original Scottish Arts Council as an autonomous committee in 1967, which was the basis for the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) in 1994. In the same year of the setup of the Scottish Arts Council, the



Scottish National Party had a milestone victory in the Hamilton by-election which led them to become the second largest party over the Conservative party in the Scottish election of 1974 (Wilson, 2009).

During the 1960s and 1970s the contemporary arts scene started to shift from Edinburgh to Glasgow. Established in 1947, the Edinburgh International Festival and the Edinburgh Fringe Festival were among the biggest festivals to promote contemporary arts, and therefore attracted top artists, writers, actors as well as tourists to Scotland. Richard Demarco established the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh for experimental theatre and visual art in 1963 and in 1967 local artists set up the first open access print workshop in Britain - The Edinburgh Printmakers Workshop (Lowndes, 2010). While in Glasgow, the post-industrial and trading city left a large number of vacant warehouses and shipyards, a high unemployment rate and gangs among the fascinating architecture from the late 19th and early 20th century. The visits of Joseph Beuys to the Edinburgh College of Art also encouraged the creation of public/participatory art in Scotland (Lowndes, 2010), and because of the economic depression of the 1970s, artists were able to acquire abandoned buildings with help from the Scottish Arts Council. The Third Eye Centre, now the Centre for Contemporary Arts, was setup in Glasgow as space for locally based artists to experiment in performance and visual art.

New town planning in Scotland as a solution for over populated cities like Glasgow and Edinburgh provided the soil for public art to grow (Harding, 1995). Most of the post-war new towns, not only in Scotland but across the UK, were prepared to integrate art into the community and included public art projects in their planning. Some of them simply commissioned or purchased sculptures for the towns, while some others chose to work with the artists for longer terms. One of the most significant collaboration being David Harding's town artist residency at Glenrothes from 1968 to 1978. During these 10 years, he created a series of public artworks for the Glenrothes community. Through the same period, important artists like Ian Hamilton Finlay and Mike Cumiskey were also commissioned by the new towns' development committees to create new works for the community (Harding, 1995; Lowndes, 2010).

The use of the arts as a media for building a community and enhancing social cohesion could be said to have developed further from the introduction of the arts used as a form of therapy in Scotland. In 1973, Joyce Laing (Nellis, 2010), the

pioneer of art therapy practice in Scotland helped set up a special unit in Barlinnie prison in Glasgow where art therapy was used for a few inmates including Jimmy Boyle, who was in jail for a murder related to a gang fight, and later became a sculptor and novelist after his release (Lowndes, 2010; Nellis, 2010).

However, compared to the boom of community art in England during the same time period, community art in Scotland did not obtain official recognition until much later. The Association of Community Artists was founded in England in late 1960s, and through the 1970s and later after the conservative party was elected in 1979, the outburst of community art, many with political means, has been recognised as the Community Art Movement (Douglas and Fremantle, 2009; Matarasso, 2011).

At this period of time there were few signs of arts development in rural Scotland, perhaps with the exception of Ian Hamilton Finlay's 'Little Sparta' in Dunsyre near Edinburgh, now considered one of the most important pieces of Scottish contemporary artwork. While rural policy/agricultural policy in Scotland was still very much focused on the Highlands and Islands and a national rural development programme did not exist until later (Keating and Stevenson, 2004), the development of community art in new towns illustrates the direction of decentralisation by developing public art projects outside of urban centres and pioneered the use of the arts in building community cohesion in town planning.

#### *1980s - 1997 Rural Development and Environment issues, The Scottish Arts Council*

The decade after the economic depression in the late 1970s under the rule of the Conservative Party was often seen as a difficult time for arts development in the UK (Lowndes, 2010). However, as mentioned in Chapter 1, the 80s was also a time when people realised the possible economic impact of the arts. UNESCO published a report by Bernard Miège on cultural industries in 1982 (Miège, 1982) and the short-lived Greater London Council was established in 1983. Globalisation and the rise of arts tourism allowed the arts the potential to become an international business and a boost for the economy (Lowndes, 2010). During the late 80s and early 90s, a number of studies were published including *Arts and the Changing City: An Agenda for Urban Regeneration* (Salvadori et al., 1989); *Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain* (Myerscough et al., 1988); *Glasgow: The Creative*

*City and its Cultural Economy* (Comedia, 1991); *British Invisibles: Overseas Earnings of the Arts 1988/98* etc. (Douglas and Fremantle, 2009).

In Scotland, it was also clear that the government was trying to bring life back to the depressed economy in both urban and rural areas by using arts and culture through various top-level initiatives. Glasgow's campaign during the European City of Culture 1990 was a significant step in positioning the arts in the city on an international platform. In 1985 the Dumfries and Galloway Arts Association was established to 'support and deliver cross border touring and arts development'. In the early 1990s the Highlands and Islands Arts Association (later Hi-Arts) was founded by the SAC and the HIE to help develop the arts and culture for the local community.

Since then the influence of the HIE in arts development in Highlands and Islands has increased. In 1993, the HIE published the arts and cultural strategy for Highlands and Islands. In Hamilton and Scullion's research into arts touring in rural Scotland, it is summarised that the arts strategy of the HIE is firstly about provision and giving access to arts and culture to those who live in or travel to its rural regions. Secondly, it is about the social elements of building community capacity and confidence, and thirdly, about the economic effects in supporting arts companies, developing their professional skills and attracting national attention (Hamilton and Scullion, 2004a).

In 1992 the NVA, acronym of *nacionale vitae activa*, a Latin term for 'the right to influence public affairs', was also set up as an agent to develop public art projects in both urban and rural areas, although most of their early projects were delivered in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

Towards the late 1990s, use of terms such as 'cultural industry', 'cultural economy' and 'arts-based regeneration' were commonplace (Douglas and Fremantle, 2009). The SAC, although it had existed as an autonomous body since the Royal Charter of 1967, officially broke from the Arts Council of Great Britain in 1994 following its restructure. Scottish Screen was established in 1997 to support film and TV productions in Scotland taking on the roles of the Scottish Film Council, the Scottish Film Production Fund, Scottish Screen Locations and Scottish Broadcast and Film Training.

At the same time, the European rural policies started to have greater influence on rural Scotland. In 1995, expanding from the LEADER I project, £12.5m from the LEADER II fund provided by the European Union was invested in rural Scotland to diversify its economic base (Scottish Executive, 1999b: 57).<sup>12</sup> At the same time, the Council Areas Reform in 1996 made the administration of urban and rural areas clearer. For example, the original Strathclyde region was broken into various smaller council areas including both its urban centre of Glasgow City Council and its rural area of Argyll and Bute Council.

Despite criticisms mentioned in Chapter 1 accusing the Conservative administration from the 1980s until 1997 of instrumentalising and further damaging arts development through their cuts to the arts and education, it did provide an opportunity for policy makers and artists to consider the economic and social value of the arts which became the cornerstones for the post-1997 creative industry boom. When looking at the political rhetoric at the time, it is evident that the expected economic and social role of the arts became one of the main reasons for the arts development in rural places at this time.

#### *1997 - 2011 The DEFRA, SRDP, the LEADER Fund, and the Minister of Rural Affairs*

When the New Labour Party was elected in 1997, ‘Social Inclusion’ and ‘Creativity’ soon became the key policy initiatives, as discussed in the previous chapter. The frequent usage of the term ‘Creative Industry’ instead of ‘Cultural Industry’ in New Labour’s arts policies hinted at enforcing the anti-elitism of ‘arts/creativity for everyone’. Meanwhile, influential changes also occurred in rural policy as the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) was formed in 2001, which aimed to take on the roles of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Department of Environment as well as rural development and communities. The formation of the DEFRA not only represented the UK government’s increased interest in rural issues, but also the expansion and changes within rural policy which no longer only focussed on agricultural but wider environmental and social

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<sup>12</sup> Mostly through investing in:

- organic food chain, regional marketing, niche products, quality improvement and market placement of local products;
- farm holidays, agrotourism;
- environmental preservation, land stewardship and local heritage: Rare varieties and breeds, nature park development, orchard meadows etc.
- strengthening the organisational, entrepreneurial and strategic competencies, encouraging training and qualification. (ÖIR, 2003: 203)

issues. As mentioned in the previous chapter, after the outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease in the UK, the Littoral Arts Trust was the key driving force in setting up the Rural Cultural Forum. This was in response to finding a direction for future rural development within changing circumstances in rural economic and community development, including rural policies such as the reform of the European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which also influenced rural policies in Scotland. The term 'agricultural policy' has gradually changed over time to 'rural policy' which no longer only emphasised agriculture but was also expanded to include broader rural economies, environment, identity/traditional culture, and community development (Keating and Stevenson, 2004).

At the same time, important political changes were taking place in Scotland. Scottish rural development was previously largely overlooked as part of the UK Government's rural development, therefore when devolution and the set-up of the new Scottish Parliament occurred in 1999, it presented an opportunity to establish a national rural policy for Scotland. After Ross Finnie was appointed as the first Minister for Rural Affairs in Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Executive launched the first Scottish Rural Development Plan (SRDP) in the year 2000. Following the success of LEADER II, the European Union's new LEADER+ fund (2000 - 2006) was made available to an expanded area. In the same year, the Scottish national cultural strategy was published, with one of its key priorities being 'Developing wider opportunities for cultural access' (Scottish Executive, 2000b). Since 1997 the Scottish Executive has outlined plans for the rural community development of the authorities in publications such as *Best Practices for Rural Development* (1997), *New Ideas in Rural Development* (1999a) and *Social Exclusion in Rural Areas* (2000a).

The arts were starting to be considered as an important part of the strategy for community development at local level in rural Scotland. Many councils were quick to adopt the idea in their policy making. In the 2000s, new posts specialising in public art were created in Aberdeenshire Council and Highland Council, while Moray Council published their first Arts Development Strategy (2002 - 2005) with a very strong community focus. In 2006 the Shetland Arts, an arts development agency for Shetland, was formed.

The Scottish National Party was elected in 2007 followed by the launch of the new Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) 2007 -2013 with a budget higher

per capita than both England and Wales. After achieving success between 2000 and 2006, the LEADER+ fund continued to be an important resource to fund community arts projects in rural Scotland. The Scotland Rural Development Council formed in 2008 ‘to consider how best rural Scotland can contribute to the creation of a more successful country, through increasing sustainable economic growth’.<sup>13</sup>

In 2009 the SAC announced that the new body it would transform into, Creative Scotland, would allocate £5 million towards the Innovation Fund for the 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 financial years. The Fund was set out ‘to invest in new partnerships that cross traditional boundaries and support and sustain the country’s artistic community during the economic downturn. Its aims are to:

- Encourage and Sustain artists and creators of all kinds
- Ensure that their work is accessible to all
- Extend practical help to new creative entrepreneurs
- Support and sustain Scotland’s artistic community and economy now, at this time of recession, by offering new ways of getting funds into the hands of artists and creative practitioners across a wide range of disciplines.’ (SAC, 2010b)

Within the £5 million, £750,000 was allocated as Rural Innovation Fund to support innovative, cross-agency working in rural areas. £300,000 of this fund was invested in the Highland Arts Programme for a range of art forms and support for the marketing and evaluation of the programme. A further £100,000 was awarded to support the South of Scotland Creative Enterprise Initiative Partnership, later renamed the Creative Arts Business Network (CABN), in Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders. However, it was never clearly announced how the £350,000 remainder of the Rural Innovation Fund was spent. In comparison, projects funded by the rest of the £5 million were clearly listed on Creative Scotland website<sup>14</sup>. For the year 2011/2012, there were 24 Creative Scotland

<sup>13</sup> Source: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/Rural/rural-communities/RDC> Accessed 20 March 2012.

<sup>14</sup> The £4.25 million was allocated as the following: £1 million for Vital Spark awards; £1.5 Million for Digital Media IP Fund led by Creative Scotland and Scottish Enterprise; £1 Million for Starter for 6 led by Cultural Enterprise Office, £500,000 for Creative Scotland’s pARTners residency fund and £250,000 for Own Art Scheme. Source: <http://archive.creativescotland.com/explore/showcase/innovation-fund> Accessed 10 October 2012.

Foundation Funded or Flexible Funded organisations in rural Scotland regions compared to 84 in the rest of Scotland (40 in Glasgow and 33 in Edinburgh), however none situated in Moray, the Borders or Dumfries and Galloway. This remains the case as of February 2014.

### *Now*

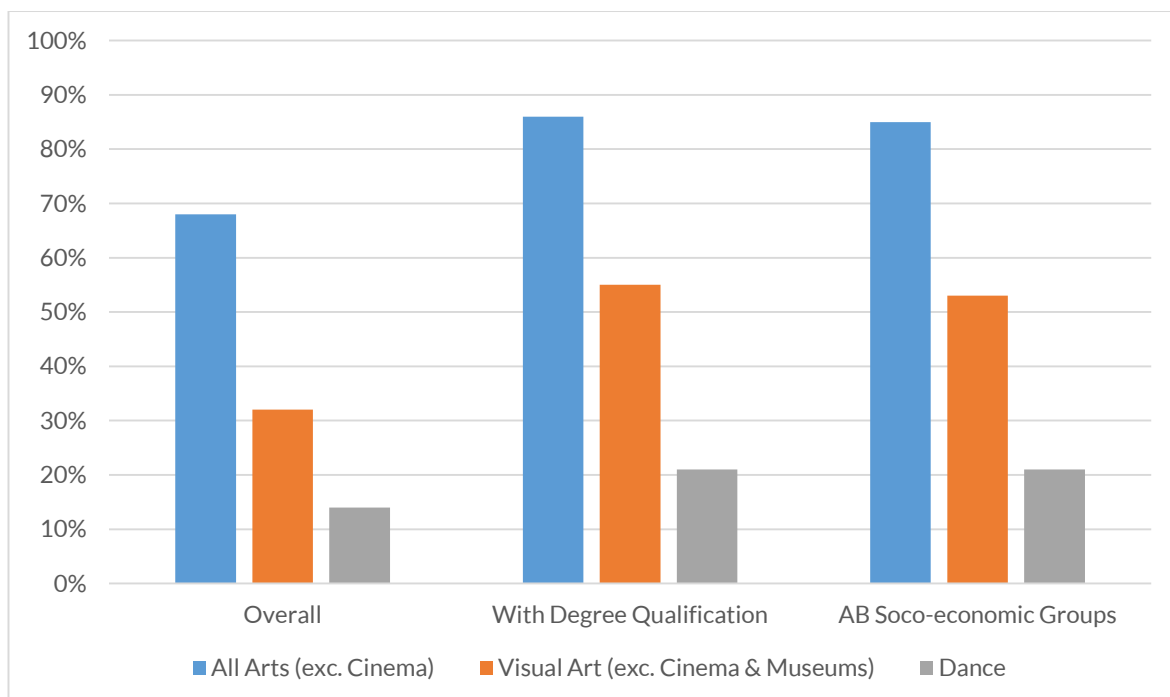
The recent changes in Scottish cultural politics and their influence on arts organisations in rural regions will be discussed further in Chapters 4 and 5. This section will review the participation in arts in Scotland, and particularly rural Scotland prior to the changes, and will present public involvement in the arts from the policy maker's point of view.

Since the late 1980s, Paul Cloke's (1987; 1994) research has been influential for rural development discourse and policy making by directing contemporary rural sociology down a new path. His ethnographical fieldwork led him to argue the importance of social class in sociological research related to rural communities and looks at social-cultural issues, intra-class 'fractions', gender, race, disability and ages issues. Cloke's view is largely relevant to current issues in rural Scotland, especially to how rural residents access the arts.

This section will look at the reported overall public involvement in the arts in Scotland based on the SAC and the Scottish Government Reports from 2008 and 2009 (SAC, 2008; Scottish Government, 2009a). The arts activities included in the surveys can be found in Appendix II.

#### **a. Overview**

The SAC report indicated that 77% of adults living in Scotland attended 'Any Arts' activities in 2008, 68% if going to the cinema is excluded. As a whole, arts and cultural activities (excluding cinema) were most likely to have been undertaken by people from the AB socio-economic groups (85% attended), those with a degree qualification (86%) and those with a household income of £50,000 or more per year (92%).



*Figure 4 Participation in the Arts in Different Demographic Groups (Source: SAC, 2008)*

At the same time, the percentages of people attending events of some art forms are significantly lower. For example, only 32% of adults living in Scotland attended Any Visual Arts (excluding cinema/museums) in 2008 and only 11% attended Any Dance. Similarly to the overall rates of attendance, there were significantly higher percentages of people attending visual arts and dance events from the AB socio-economic groups and people with degree qualification, as shown in Figure 4.

The report also shows that 71% of adults living in Scotland participated in arts events or activity in 2008, however, it was clear in the report, that ‘Book Reading’ accounted for a large proportion of the percentage (SAC, 2008: 29). Only 15% of all people who undertook the survey participated in any ‘Visual Arts’ events and activities.

#### **b. Rural Areas**

The SAC report uses the same classification for rural areas as the Scottish Government. A total of 463 respondents who lived in rural areas are included in its analysis. The report found that in 2008, 90% of rural area residents either attended or participated in arts or cultural activities. This was a similar level to that recorded in both 2006 (88%) and 2004 (86%). Overall, the report shows attendance and participation levels were the same in rural, urban and sub-urban areas (90%).



Residents of rural areas were also more likely to attend Scottish traditional/Scottish folk music events. A larger proportion of 12% of rural area residents attended these kinds of events in the previous 12 months compared to the overall percentage of 9% in Scotland. More specifically, rural respondents were more likely than residents of other areas to have undertaken any crafts (17% and 11% respectively).

Also in the Scottish Government 2008 People and Culture in Scotland report, it revealed that people who live in rural areas are considerably more likely to volunteer than those living in towns or cities, with 34% of those living in remote rural locations volunteering, compared to the national average of 20% of people. This could suggest that people living in rural areas may be more connected to their local community than those living in other areas, as outlined earlier in the chapter.

It is not difficult to say that there is a strong link between social-economic status and participation in the arts. Although it seems that a high percentage of adults were involved in the arts in Scotland, participant numbers in the certain art forms are still considerably low and the profile of attendees to events had a higher social-economic status. This is similar to the overall status of the residents of accessible rural Scotland: higher educated and with higher incomes. The SAC report also shows that rural Scotland residents have the same level of involvement in the arts as seen Scotland-wide, however, many of the activities are classified as 'Book Reading' (especially in remote rural areas) and 'Cinema Going', which are activities not necessarily direct results of public financial support from the SAC or elsewhere. This might indicate that despite the strong link between class and participation in the arts, the geographic accessibility issues in rural areas seem to be more influential on the residents' involvement in the visual arts rather than their socio-economic status. At the same time, amongst the arts activities rural residents attended and took part in, traditional music and craft seems to be more popular, suggesting there is a higher accessibility to these particular activities in rural areas.

Since the rapid development of the tourism and festival industry in the 1990s and most greatly in the 2000s, the arts are not exactly inaccessible in most areas that are identified as accessible towns or accessible rural areas. In the 2013 *The List Scottish Festivals Guide*, there were over 100 festivals in rural Scotland throughout the year from Shetland to the Isle of Islay, most of them arts related.

Particular issues around cultural tourism in rural Scotland and how it relates to the arts will be discussed further in Chapter 6.

## **Conclusion**

Covering as large as 94% of the total landmass of the country, rural Scotland's characteristics are based on both the socio-economic status of its residents and its geographic features. The development of transport and the boom of the property market in the 2000s brought a large increase in population in rural Scotland between 2001 and 2008. There has also been an increased percentage of people with a higher level of education and higher incomes relocating from elsewhere in the UK to rural Scotland. Statistics in the earlier part of this chapter indicate that there is a stronger sense of community and safety amongst rural residents. The different geographic locations in rural Scotland also show large differences in economic status and access to the arts from one region to another, which for the purposes of this research has been grouped into three larger geographic areas: North; Lowlands; and Highlands and Islands.

From the review of policy developments in the arts and in rural Scotland, it can be argued that the arts and arts policy in rural Scotland have a strong connection to community development. This fact is reflected in the statistics reported by the SAC, which show lower numbers of participation in visual arts - which, unlike theatre or music, traditionally have less participatory elements, especially in attendance to art galleries and museums. Although there is a higher percentage of middle-class population in rural Scotland, the shortage of arts organisations and venues, as well as the distance to travel to urban centres for arts activities, are still the main factors that keep rural residents from accessing a broad range of arts.

The demographic characteristics of rural Scotland - the large land mass and small population - no doubt present challenges for building theatre, museums and galleries in accessible rural locations - in fact the dilemma and debate of 'where' surfaced as a key issue for arts development in rural regions during this research, which will be discussed later in Chapter 6. In this context, many arts organisations increasingly use community venues, public art and off-site projects as important ways to engage a wider audience in rural areas and at the same time, arts events and festivals are also becoming increasingly important. With the flexible nature of these projects and their direct connection with the public, they provide

practical solutions suited for rural areas that provide an alternative to traditional venue-based arts infrastructure. Arts events and festivals will be discussed in connection with cultural tourism in Chapter 7. The community focus of the arts development in rural Scotland also resulted in increased number of public art work. Public art, or participatory art, as one of the most discussed areas of art theory and practice, is a challenging practice in finding the balance between public acceptance and artistic quality, and between public involvement and artist leadership (Hein, 2006; Knight, 2008). Add to that a rural location, with the above-mentioned demographic characteristics, public art development in rural Scotland requires a different approach than in urban centres. Community engagement in the arts and public art practice in rural Scotland will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

In the next chapter, the methods of this research will be discussed based on the reviews and discussions seen in the first two chapters. As pointed out in Chapter 1, there is a lack of existing research directly relevant to the subject of this thesis. It was elaborated further in this chapter that, because of the characteristics of rural Scotland and the huge differences in the context for arts development between urban and rural Scotland, it is crucial that original research and fieldwork should be carried out in order to articulate, explore and discuss the subject in depth. Chapter 3 will look at the methods used in the research to understand and represent arts development in rural Scotland with its political, geographic and demographic context taken into consideration.

## Chapter 3 Methodology

The aim of this research is to explore the issues and realities of the arts in rural Scotland and its (dis)connection with nationwide policy making. In order to discuss this subject further, it was necessary to examine and analyse both arts and rural policy movements and changes in Scotland in recent years, as well as to understand the practice of arts development, creative businesses, cultural tourism and community involvement in the arts in rural Scotland. Before engaging with these questions, a combination of desk research of reports, policy documents, academic material and interviews with stakeholders within arts policy in Scotland, were used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data on top-level policy making and the implication of these policies at ground level. Because of the scale and diversity of rural Scotland, a case study provided an insight into one of the regions, Dumfries and Galloway. This chapter reflects on the processes used for this research and analyses the strengths and weaknesses of these methods.

### Key Terms

A number of key terms are used in this thesis with definitions specific to this research, and the following section will articulate how and why these terms are used in this thesis.

#### *Indigenous*

The term ‘indigenous peoples’ is widely used in the field of anthropology and ethnology and by human rights organisations. Although there is no unified definition, the current working definition of the term for organisations and bodies within the United Nations system is:

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal system.

This historical continuity may consist of the continuation, for an extended period reaching into the present of one or more of the following factors:

- Occupation of ancestral lands, or at least of part of them
- Common ancestry with the original occupants of these lands
- Culture in general, or in specific manifestations (such as religion, living under a tribal system, membership of an indigenous community, dress, means of livelihood, lifestyle, etc.)
- Language (whether used as the only language, as mother-tongue, as the habitual means of communication at home or in the family, or as the main, preferred, habitual, general or normal language)
- Residence in certain parts of the country, or in certain regions of the world
- Other relevant factors.

On an individual basis, an indigenous person is one who belongs to these indigenous populations through self-identification as indigenous (group consciousness) and is recognized and accepted by these populations as one of its members (acceptance by the group). This preserves for these communities the sovereign right and power to decide who belongs to them, without external interference. (United Nations, 2004)

However, the term ‘indigenous’ used in this thesis follows the original and non-political definition of the word. ‘Indigenous’ is defined as ‘produced, growing, living, or occurring naturally in a particular region or environment’ in the Merriam Webster Dictionary (Merriam-Webster.com, 2014), and ‘Originating or occurring naturally in a particular place; native’ in the Oxford English Dictionary (Oxford English Dictionary, 1997).

In this thesis, ‘indigenous’ and ‘indigenous approach’ are used to describe a way of developing arts projects and other initiatives, in opposition to ‘top-level’ and ‘top-level approach’. They both refer to the development of the arts that was initiated as a natural response to its particular social and economic context, by people who are not part of the arts or political establishments. They are opposite to the arts initiatives that were set up in, or provided to, the rural regions by the arts and/or political establishments, often from outside of the rural regions such as the Scottish Arts Council/Creative Scotland, and the national arts companies.

As illuminated in Chapter 2, the counterurbanisation in the past decades in Scotland has brought an increasing number of new residents to rural areas, therefore, the use of the word ‘indigenous’ is not uncommon in contemporary rural studies. ‘Indigenous people’ or ‘indigenous population’ are often used along with the terms ‘incoming population’ and ‘incomers’, referring to people who were born, raised and still live in the same rural region or area. This includes those who may have obtained a higher education elsewhere or even lived or worked elsewhere for short periods of time. For example, in his report *What is Rural about Culture?*, Ian Brown highlights the relationship between the ‘incomers’ and ‘indigenous population’ as well as the relationship between arts projects provided to the rural regions from elsewhere and the projects that were developed indigenously. Both relationships will be discussed later on in this thesis. Brown also used the phrase ‘indigenous artists’ to refer to artists, or groups of artists, who reside in rural regions, but are not necessarily from the rural regions (Brown, 2008). However, the assumption of a division between ‘indigenous population’ and ‘incoming population’, and indeed the definition of ‘indigenous population’ or ‘indigenous artist’ in this context will be examined in Chapter 8 of this thesis.

### *Rural and Urban*

As defined in the definition section at the beginning of this thesis and in Chapter 2 of this thesis, the term ‘rural Scotland’ or ‘rural’ in general, refers to the nine regions included in this research. While acknowledging that the definitions of ‘rural’ or ‘urban’ go beyond simply geographic features, and there are many areas in Scotland that are between rural and urban such as Ayrshire and Lanarkshire, this thesis focuses on the examples from the regions that are the least urbanised while drawing some contrasting examples from the areas that are the most urbanised, such as Glasgow and Edinburgh. ‘Urban centres’ in this thesis refers to the cities in Scotland.

### *Community and Top-Level Initiatives*

The discussions in Chapter 2 refer to Tönnies’ theory of two types of human associations: *Gemeinschaft* (‘community’) and *Gesellschaft* (‘society’ or ‘association’). This thesis follows his definition of *Gemeinschaft* where people have a tight-knit social entity because of their shared interest, place and/or understanding. In particular, when referring to the community’s influence in arts development, ‘community’ refers to a group of people who have personal

connections with and interest in the same local geographic area, who are also not part of the arts or political establishments. The term 'Top-Level' refers to the opposite. Although a top level establishment could still be based in the local area and have local interests, it is part of the arts and/or political establishment, which means that its connection with the local geographic area is not organic. For example, a collective of artists and other arts professionals at different stages of their career will be referred to as an 'artistic community', while the local authority arts and cultural service, although are based locally and look after local interests, will be defined as part of the 'Top-Level establishment'.

### **Desk Research**

The starting point for this research was extensive desk research which included the examination of policy documents, academic publications, consultancy reports, business plans, annual reports, published and unpublished research and papers in both fields of cultural policy and rural studies. A preliminary literature review was carried out in order to become familiar with the policy documents relevant to this research which built a foundation for the field research. This process continued as the research progressed to enable up-to-date knowledge of the frequent movements within the changing Scottish cultural policy landscape during the research period (2010 - 2013). This continuous review of the existing literature allowed a comprehensive analysis of the development of Scottish Government policies on the arts and rurality. However, it was discovered that there was also a lack of existing policy documents on this subject specifically.

Currently there is no single coherent package of ideas and strategies that comprises policy for the arts and/or culture in Scotland, let alone one for the arts and/or culture in rural Scotland. Although the Scottish Arts Council (SAC)/Creative Scotland's business plans, funding strands and disciplinary strategies form part of the national policy framework, it essentially only represents and regulates organisations that are funded by the national body. Other national agencies, local authorities and regional/cross-region arts development agencies often have different priorities and strategies. In addition, through the research it is obvious that local enterprises, in particular the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), rural policies and local communities are as influential on the arts as arts policies in rural Scotland. In order to facilitate a coherent understanding of the subject under discussion this thesis takes as wide a view of policy as possible, and

examines documents from a number of sources. Much of the information researched was found in the public domain, including institutional reports, strategic plans and promotional literature. Research papers produced by and for the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe), the Scottish Government online publication database and the SAC/Creative Scotland also contribute to the study.

There is a very clear national rural policy framework set up by the Scottish Executive and the European Commission. The Scottish Rural Development Plan 2010 - 2013 (SRDP 2010 - 2013) is the guiding strategy for rural development in Scotland, however, art and culture are not a focus of the strategy and there is no cross-over between the policies and strategies set up by the national arts bodies. The interviews conducted by the author also reflect the lack of an appropriate arts policy or strategy for rural regions. As will be outlined in Chapter 4, the gap between the nationwide strategy and the practice of arts development in rural Scotland has become apparent since Scotland's devolution, the reform of the SAC and the development of the arts in recent decades. Therefore while the timeframe of this research is between 1999 and 2013, it also takes into consideration the policy documents before and after this timeframe.

The desk research also collected information about rural regions and rural arts organisations through relevant publications, the SAC/Creative Scotland's website, local authority websites, and organisational websites. This information combined with data collected at interviews or through interviewees by other means, enabled the author to map out the arts in rural Scotland with regard to local authorities' involvement in the arts, regional/cross region organisations and a number of 'key arts organisations' defined by this research. However, a key challenge facing this part of the research process was the 2008 economic crisis and the change in the Scottish arts policy landscape resulting in changes to many arts organisations in rural Scotland since the start of the research. To address this and be kept fully informed, online resources such as the Creative Scotland and Scottish Government websites and news articles in national and local newspapers were monitored for up-to-date information and discussions around current issues. Subscriptions to newsletters and e-magazines such as Creative Scotland and other key bodies and organisations were set up, and Google Alert was utilised to regularly collect any online comments, blog posts and other articles on the arts in rural Scotland as



they were published. These contemporary online resources revealed how the movements within Scottish arts policies and politics were discussed and debated by the press and the sector in general, and provided the context for conducting interviews that would capture a range of in-depth reactions to these movements.

In addition, to obtain accurate knowledge of the financial status of the organisations and events under discussion in this research, and in order to understand how they are supported financially, annual accounts, including financial statements and official annual reports of several organisations, were obtained through Companies House.

### *The Strengths and Weaknesses of Desk Research*

The use of electronic databases, search engines and websites has undoubtedly reduced the amount of time that could previously be spent scouring newspapers, journals and academic papers for relevant articles. In addition, Freedom of Information legislation has made many documents publicly available via the internet. These factors have facilitated the research process tremendously but are not without their problems. When using websites and databases of the key newspapers including *The Herald* (and *the Sunday Herald*), *The Scotsman*, *the Press and Journal* and *the Courier*, the news articles often appeared in their web or textual form only, and some articles are only available online and not actually printed. It was often not possible to note the positioning of arts policy-related news reports within the newspapers and therefore the author was not always able to determine the level of prominence given to particular stories. However, as the aim of these searches was essentially to gather factual material rather than to analyse press items, this limitation was not particularly challenging for the research at large and some key news stories - such as the controversies around Creative Scotland in late 2012 - were able to be found in print and sometimes on the homepage of the news websites, thus determining the level of prominence.

Another main weakness of the desk research was also its greatest strength - that of the sheer wealth of available information. This included numerical and statistical data found in both arts and rural policy research. Some data, although not contradictory, was in contrast with other sets of data, with little cross-referencing and confirmation made between any two sets of data. Although the contemporary online resources (especially news websites) provided voices and debates around arts policy movements from the sector, rural voices were rarely

heard. Therefore, despite the overwhelming amount of data from arts and rural policy research, there was a lack of information specialising in the arts in rural Scotland. To address this, the desk research was also supplemented by two further methods. The conducting of a case study enabled the in-depth material collected through observations, further desk research and interviews to reveal a picture of arts development in one rural region; and interviews allowed a fuller articulation of realities and issues felt across rural Scotland. This combination of methods enabled the data collected concerning top-level policy making, regional arts development leadership and indigenous practices to reflect and cross reference each other from different perspectives and to be examined in further detail.

### **Case Study**

A case study of Dumfries and Galloway forms an important part of this research. After conducting part of the desk research, it became apparent that it was necessary to include case studies on one or two rural regions in this thesis in order to develop in-depth discussions. Dumfries & Galloway and Orkney were identified as two possible subjects, but after realising that the time and resources for this research only allowed for one case study, Dumfries & Galloway was selected as the subject. There were numerous reasons for this decision, first and foremost is the changing arts policy landscape in Dumfries & Galloway which attracts great interest in and outside of the region. The end of the more than 20-year history of the region's arts development agency dgArts in 2011 and its aftermath provided an excellent opportunity to explore the arts infrastructure in rural Scotland during its crisis and re-formation. In addition, as mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, the rural lowlands have often been overlooked by arts policy makers and researchers, and the case study hopes to provide an insight to the arts in part of the south of Scotland.

The material used for the case study was collected mainly through both desk research and interviews. Additionally, the author's observation and professional experience of working in the region also made a contribution. Since October 2011, the author has been working with Spring Fling Open Studios (Spring Fling) and was therefore able to work with a wide range of organisations, companies and individuals in the region from the local authority, arts organisations, festivals and artists to local businesses and press. Building on knowledge and involvement in the region's arts development, the author also began work on the region's new

festival: the Environmental Arts Festival Scotland (EAFS) towards the end of this research in March 2013. However, because of the limited timescale to utilise that knowledge and the nature of the festival not being an actual organisation but a partnership between three existing local organisations (Wide Open, Spring Fling and The Stove), only the information obtained through the EAFS was used in this thesis. The author's position as someone works in the field will be discussed further in later part of this chapter.

A total of eight interviews with stakeholders in the region were conducted, and meetings and conferences that were important in shaping the region's arts infrastructure were attended by the author between 2011 and 2013. The changes in arts politics and the movements in arts development were closely followed by the author, sometimes professionally, but for the majority of the time for the purposes of this research. This was achieved by following the local newspapers, including *Dumfries & Galloway Standard* and *Stranraer Free Press*, and signing up to the e-newsletters of forums, groups and organisations within the region. Among these *The Commonty*, an anonymous blog ([thecommonty.blogspot.co.uk](http://thecommonty.blogspot.co.uk)) serves as an online forum and notice board for the arts and culture in the region, and proved to be the most informative, up-to-date and open resource<sup>15</sup>.

The author's employers and the majority of the people the author worked with were made aware of this research. The information collected through work relationships, in addition to those available in the public domain, were used with permission from the organisations or people involved. The following section reflects on the different work relationships the author has developed within the region that have contributed to the case study and this research in general.

The author's roles within Spring Fling included marketing, events management, working directly with artists, partner organisations and members of the public, evaluation, financial administration, assistance with programming and fundraising. This position enabled a fuller understanding of marketing a large scale region-wide event in a rural area and also provided access to direct information regarding the role of the Spring Fling main event within the local community and economy. Although Spring Fling was not a direct research subject of the case study, working

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<sup>15</sup> *The Commonty* is managed and updated by a group of volunteers but all posts on the blog were posted anonymously by a member of the group. Many of those posts were unedited from the information people sent in, and all posts are open to comments and discussion. *The Commonty* also sends out weekly newsletter featuring a selection of goings-on on its blog.

with the organisation ensured a comprehensive insight into where rural arts organisations and artists sit within the national political context and the realities and issues of developing an arts event in a rural context.

Dumfries and Galloway Council, the LEADER programme, a European Commission programme encouraging and supporting innovative projects for rural community development, The Holywood Trust, a local trust supporting opportunities for the local youth, and Creative Scotland, are amongst the main funders the author worked with. Both Spring Fling and the EAFS share the same office building with part of the Council's arts team based in Gracefield Arts Centre in Dumfries. Therefore the working relationship between Spring Fling and the local authority is extremely close, enabling the author access to first-hand information about the movements within the local authority for this research.

As Spring Fling is a membership organisation with over 100 current artist members, this has provided great opportunities for the author to start conversations with a variety of individual artists and creative practitioners directly. Since early 2011, the author started working on an online Q&A series<sup>16</sup> with artists on the Spring Fling website. Although the interviews are primarily for the Spring Fling audience and focus on promoting individual artists, they also exhibit an insight into artists' lives in rural regions, especially through set questions such as 'Why do you make [art] where you do and how long have you worked here?' and 'Are there any benefits to living and working in Dumfries and Galloway?'. Again, although the answers to those questions were not directly used in the case study, they provided the foundation for further research and provided a context to the lives of artists in a rural setting. The work relationships developed in the region also provided the opportunity to better identify potential interviewees and had the advantage of constant updates on further arts development details after the interviews.

One weakness acknowledged by the author is the extent of organisations investigated focusing on visual art and craft, indicating that although the case study aims to include different art forms, types of organisations and different locations, there could be an emphasis on visual art and craft.

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<sup>16</sup> Spring Fling website, LI-LO Q&A: <http://www.spring-fling.co.uk/blog/li-lo-qa/>

## Fieldwork

The majority of formal interviews were carried out between June 2011 and November 2012. The aim of the interviews was to inform and demonstrate knowledge of and issues concerning a selection of topics relating to rural arts policy, rather than to collect quantitative data such as statistics through questionnaires. Therefore, interviews were individually designed and semi-structured with open-ended questions. A full list of participants with their role at the time of interview is reproduced in Appendix I. This section now examines the design of the interviews and explains how participants were selected.

### *Interview Design*

The interviews were designed to capture the interviewee's interpretation of issues and questions that pertained to the focus of the research. As part of the flexible structure, specific key points that were relevant to the roles of individual interviewees were identified, but the interviews were largely open to any new discussions and issues the interviewees might find important to reflect upon. Most interviews lasted between 40 minutes and 1 hour with occasional interviews that were longer with several follow-up emails and requests for further information.

The interviews included a few set questions to start the conversation, which can be found in Appendix IV. Some of the questions and key points were also changed or refined throughout the fieldwork making them relevant to the most recent developments in the arts politics in Scotland.

### *Interview Selection and Access*

The interviewees presented in this research are made up of respondents from national agencies, local authorities, regional and cross-region organisations, key arts organisations and independent arts professionals. The research also aimed to represent each of the rural regions in this research. In total, 31 people were interviewed.

Generally respondents were happy to be involved with the research and few problems were encountered. As well as aiming to select interviewees from all the regions under discussion, care was given to represent interviewees working in a variety of art forms. It is notable that many of the interviewees had worked across the sector and in several other organisations and different roles throughout their careers. Staff at local authorities, the national agency and arts organisations were

relatively accessible, and their willingness to be involved can be attributed to a number of factors, including the strong opinions that this period of change has brought, a shared view that the arts in rural Scotland should not be neglected and a wish to find out where rural arts are within the larger picture. These factors are now considered below.

Interviewees' interest in this area of study and their willingness to contribute to the work can be firstly attributed to the period of the time when the research was conducted. As mentioned in the first two chapters, the economic crisis, changes to Scottish arts policy and subsequent funding cuts, were at the centre of attention for the arts sector and the media. Many interviewees, from directors of arts organisations and local council arts development officers to Creative Scotland personnel, had something they wanted to share on current matters, especially when the public funding available in rural Scotland was already considered extremely limited. Many saw this as an opportunity to present their work and opinions in a subjective way. In addition to the formal interviews, the research also benefited from informal conversations conducted at various events and through professional involvement with interviewees over the course of the research, especially in Dumfries and Galloway. Since starting work in the sector in October 2011, the author has worked with two of the interviewees, Rebecca Coggins and Jan Hogarth, and has had limited professional contact with Alan Thomson, who were interviewed earlier that year. A few other interview candidates also emerged through the author's experience of working in the region. Therefore, there were many occasions where, although conversations were not directly related to the research, interviewees' informal comments were used in this research or had an impact on the author's understanding of the research topic. Those opportunities to talk with people in an environment in which they felt comfortable provided more information than they might have done in a formal interview setting.

There were however, a few people who did not respond to requests for interviews and interviewees who were not available to be reached due to geographical reasons. This was particularly so in the case of Shetland, where time, geographical and financial factors prevented the possibility of conducting formal interviews on the islands. However, after confirming that the research was starting in October 2010, with great encouragement and support from the author's then employer

Fife Contemporary Art & Craft, the author was able to attend the Rural Craft Forum in Shetland in August 2010 which provided an excellent opportunity to build a list of interviewees from rural regions across Scotland, as well as closely inspect and observe arts development on the Shetland Islands. Organised by Hi-Arts and Shetland Arts, the 3-day forum provided opportunities for participants - a group of around 10 craft curators and local authority arts development officers mostly from outside of urban centres - to discuss the current issues and challenges facing craft development in rural Scotland, to visit and speak to local craft artists and curators in Shetland and to gain insight and knowledge of Shetland's visual art and craft scene. During the forum the author made contact with personnel from Shetland Arts who later contributed to this research.

Although interviews proved relatively easy to conduct, existing quantitative data was harder to obtain. While interviewees or organisational points of contact strove to provide this data, unlike the media or tourism industry, there are no industrial standards for quantitative data collection for the arts and existing data for arts in rural Scotland was particularly difficult to come across. In addition, the fact that many organisations and events in rural Scotland are not venue based or ticketed has made collecting quantitative data even more challenging and not necessarily appropriate. The frustration of not being able to produce sufficient quantitative data was also shared by some interviewees during the course of the research. Most of the qualitative data used in this research are based on reports commissioned and/or produced by the Scottish Agricultural College, the SRUC, VisitScotland, the Scottish Arts Council/Creative Scotland and other national agencies.

### *Interview Data Analysis*

Because of the lack of existing research, the interview data were analysed without preconceived theories and concepts in this particular field. The data transcription and analysis were carried out during the later stage of the field work and continued afterward. Notes were made during the interviews and the sound recordings of the interviews were transcribed. Key points were abstracted in the process of transcription and words and phrases repeatedly used by different interviewees were indexed and often became codes as part of the coding method used in the analysis.

The coding method is widely used when analysing qualitative data. The method uses words or short phrases to symbolically assign 'a summative, salient, essence-

capturing, and/or evocative attribute' for a portion of language-based or visual data (Saldana, 2009: 3). The codes are the basic elements that are abstracted, created and assigned based on the content, and the codes are to be categories in order to identify the themes of the findings (Saldana, 2009).

To analyse the interview data for this research, contents were coded throughout the transcripts. The answers to the same or similar questions were compared and shared issues and different opinions noted and analysed within the wider context of this research. In particular, issues and opinions that are different to, or in some cases, in contrast with the material found through the desk research were also highlighted and analysed. Those coded elements were then categorised. Based on the categorising, the main points of discussion for this thesis were identified, and further desk material were gathered and analysed and, at times, additional interviews were conducted in order to explore these points further and conceptualise the findings.

There are also some points found through the analysis that are of importance but not addressed or discussed in details in this thesis. Due to the limited resources and time, the author had to make the decision of selecting the points that were considered to be most significant and interesting for this research.

### **Professional Involvement**

Although it is arguable that the author is an insider-researcher because of her work in the arts in rural Scotland or in the arts in Scotland in general, it was neither the author's intention to employ the insider-research method for this research nor is this research largely based on the author's work experience, hence this research cannot be categorised as a practise/work-based piece. However, the author's professional involvement did influence different aspects of this research, the advantages and limitations of this will be discussed below.

The nature of insider-researcher as a research method has been discussed widely in the fields of anthropology (Aguilar, 1981; Narayan, 1993), ethnic studies (Beoku-Betts, 1994; Zinn, 1979); medicine and nursing (Carter, 2004); education (Carr and Kemmis, 1983; Lomax 2002), and sociology (Merton, 1972) among others. In his book *Understanding the Research Process*, Paul Oliver summarises the advantages and disadvantages of insider-research:



The insider will tend to be familiar with the research field already, which often makes it considerably easier to select a sample for the research. As insiders will normally appreciate many of the subtleties of the research field, they can often collect richer data than the external researcher. They may be aware of various elements of the research field, and hence will be able to take advantage of this knowledge in order to pursue the research aims. There are, however, disadvantages to being an insider researcher. Familiarity with the field means that it is sometimes easy to overlook aspects of the data which an outsider would have acknowledged. This very familiarity with the surroundings also tends to encourage researchers to take things for granted in terms of observation. (Oliver, 2010: 12)

First and foremost, the author's professional involvement in the subject field has indeed provided familiarity and a knowledge base for this research. As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, this research was motivated by the author's professional experience in the arts development in rural Scotland. However, at the start of this research in 2010, the author had only been living in and working in the arts in Scotland for two years, had only worked with one rural-based organisation and was working in Glasgow at the time without a plan to work in rural regions in foreseeable future. Hence, the author had limited experience of working in this particular field, and much of the author's knowledge in this field can be easily obtained by researchers in the field of arts and cultural policy. The unfamiliarity and unknowns of the arts in most parts of rural Scotland was actually one of the original motivations behind this research.

During the period of the research, the author's professional involvement in the field deepened and naturally, her professional knowledge expanded. This has influenced some of the discussions in the thesis, and particularly in the case study on Dumfries & Galloway as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Although being an insider-researcher was not considered a key method for this research, when an opportunity to work in Dumfries & Galloway arose, the author saw it as a great opportunity to develop her professional career as well as to gain further insight into the field for the research. This development may have influenced the final decision of the region as the subject of case study, however, early findings from desk research and interviews have already shown that, in the case that only one

regional case study can be included, Dumfries & Galloway was deemed the most appropriate subject for the case study.

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, three of the interviews relevant to the region were already conducted before the author became involved in Spring Fling in October 2011 - where all interviewees knew the author only as a researcher - and people interviewed after the employment were aware of the author's involvement in Spring Fling, and later the EAFS.

Outside of Dumfries & Galloway, some interviewees may have worked with the author or known the author professionally, but many were not aware that the author was still involved in the field professionally as well as conducting the research when they agreed to the interviews - the vast majority of the interviewees were contacted via the author's University of Glasgow email address with some contacted via the author's personal email address. The role as an insider-researcher, although providing some knowledge for the research, did not have an obvious benefit of increasing access to interviewees. However, as Oliver points out above, this knowledge base and the compassion between 'colleagues' may have contributed to collecting 'richer' data.

On the other hand, the disadvantages of familiarity as a professional insider also surfaced during the research. Although the author has also worked with arts organisations in urban centres and thus was able to compare and identify many key differences between arts development in urban and rural settings, some of the issues might have been overlooked because of the author's familiarity with the subject. Fortunately, the author's two supervisors were less familiar with the arts in rural Scotland and its development, therefore they were able to highlight the points in findings that are new to a wider readership and worthy of further discussion. Additionally, the author frequently consulted professionals and researchers in the fields of arts development in Scotland in general and made sure that key issues were not discounted.

Additionally, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, the author's professional involvement in the visual arts may have made an impact on the balance between art forms in this research. The types of organisation the author has worked with may have also influenced this research, but the same can be said for the author's academic background in Museum Studies and other life experiences.

Although there might be underlying issues that the author is not able to prevent, the author has made every effort to keep the research process as objective as possible and minimise any disadvantages of conducting the research while working in the field professionally.

### **Ethics and Anonymity**

The nature of this thesis and the wider research project was explained to all interviewees prior to gaining access. Respondents were given an outline of the research, and signed a consent form on which they could state their preference as to whether or not they were cited. Consent was given for interviews to be recorded on a digital voice recorder, and where requested, comments were treated as off-the-record or confidential. Verbatim transcripts were produced for most interviews to ensure that none of the data was lost during the process of collection while for others the key points and comments were transcribed or noted. The process of digitally recording conversations minimised background noise and greatly helped with the transcription of the interviews and confidential storing of information. Some excerpts of interviews with people who were willing to be quoted are reproduced in this study.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined the research methodology for this thesis, which used a combination of desk research, a case study and interviews in order to conduct an analysis of arts policy, development and practice. It has discussed the rationale behind the approaches used for the study, outlined the research design, described the selection of the case study and explained the interview process. Each of the methods and modes of analysis discussed above demonstrates strengths and weaknesses. Particularly, a few issues were highlighted, such as the diversity and differences in this field of research and the author's involvement in the industry which, while allowing the author to contribute to the research enormously, might have also decreased the distance necessary between a researcher and their subject. It is also important to keep in mind that there is no current written policy for the arts in Scotland. Although this research aims to contribute and influence future policy making by providing a different perspective, policies are not static but evolve through different times and are adapted by specific individuals and institutions in specific context.

The next chapters will look at the reform of the national arts agency and how it has been reflected on by stakeholders during the course of this research. The reform, which took place in 2010, along with the changes in the agency's politics and priorities, not only set the context for this research, but also became a key point of discussion and debate in arts development in Scotland during the period of this research, and on some occasions, sparked debate between urban and rural arts.

## Chapter 4 National Arts Policies and the Reform of the Scottish Arts Council

As noted in Chapter 2, the years from 2006 - 2013 saw transformational changes in Scottish cultural policy and administration. These changes set out the context of this research and many discussions that occurred during the interviews inevitably reflected and captured the views from the arts sector, particularly in rural Scotland, towards the old and the new national agencies.

After Scottish devolution, it became apparent that the relationships between the Scottish Executive and some of its Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs) including the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) were not clearly defined and, in the context of the UK New Labour government's strong campaigning for the arts, which was responded to by the McConnell Government, the Executive hoped to gain greater control over the arts and cultural sector in Scotland. A series of reviews of the arts and culture have been carried out by the Scottish Executive since devolution (Hamilton & Scullion, 2002; Scottish Executive, 2001; 2002a; 2004a) including the final 2005 report from the Cultural Commission, an initiative set up by the Scottish Executive in 2004 to conduct an independent review of cultural policy in Scotland. It was announced in 2006 that the Scottish Executive intended to assume direct responsibility for the main national arts companies (the Scottish Opera, the Scottish Ballet, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, and the Scottish Chamber Orchestra) and that the SAC was to be replaced by a new national agency: Creative Scotland. The transition and reform period lasted over four years with Creative Scotland finally replacing the SAC and Scottish Screen (SS) and becoming the national agency for arts, screen and creative industries in July 2010.

After the transition, opposing voices towards the policy, administration, and investment decisions of the new national agency were constantly heard leading to the well-publicised controversies in 2012, which eventually ended with the resignation of the Chief Executive Officer, Andrew Dixon and one of the Directors of Creative Development, Venu Dhupa towards the end of the year. However, this research questions whether those voices, many from established organisations, artists and press based in the central belt of Scotland, represent the views of the arts sector in rural Scotland. Despite making very few funding cuts to key

organisations compared to that of Arts Council England's in recent years, why did the transition seem to have gone completely wrong?

In order to answer the above questions, this chapter will focus on the transition from the SAC to Creative Scotland and capture the arts sector's response to its initial changes. The first part of this chapter will examine the causes and process for this transition by analysing the policies and strategies of the devolved Scottish Executive/Scottish Government and their increased influence on the national agency. It will also lay out the initial differences the transition has made to the administration, policy and investment programmes of the national agency. The later part of the chapter will present and discuss the response and reflections to these changes from the arts sector at different levels, which provides the foundation for the discussions specifically around the arts sector in rural Scotland in later chapters.

It is also worth noting that this chapter focuses on the transition from the SAC to Creative Scotland and the discussions around it, mainly from the arts point of view. While being aware that the aspects from the screens industry may differ, due to limited resources and time, this thesis will not discuss the influence of the transition to the screen policy in Scotland.

### **From the SAC to Creative Scotland**

This section will look at the wider political context and the process of the transition and reform of the SAC and compare the organisational structures and personnel changes, strategies, policies, funding/investment programmes of the SAC and Creative Scotland with some reference to the Scottish Screen (SS).

#### *Cultural Policies under the Newly Devolved Scottish Executive 1999 - 2006*

The unclear relationship between the SAC and the Scottish Executive/Scottish Government existed for historical reasons. The SAC was formed under Royal Charter in 1967 as an autonomous body decades before devolution, and became an independent body in 1994 when the Arts Council of Great Britain was officially divided into four different arts councils for the four nations of the UK. Meanwhile, sport and the arts became a devolved power of Scotland in 1998, which meant that the SAC was no longer responsible to the UK Government's Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS). The Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Executive

only started to function as they are today in 1999 with the office of the Scottish Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport not created until 2001.

During this time, as discussed in Chapter 1, the UK-wide policy under the New Labour administration (1997 - 2010), as well as emphasising the social benefits of the arts and culture, created a focus on the government's 'Creative Britain' concept and put creative industries and their economic benefits at the heart of its policy making. Creative Industries Mapping Documents were published by the DCMS in 1998 and 2001, accompanied by two publications by the then Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, Chris Smith, *Creative Britain* (1998) and *Culture and Creativity: The Next Ten Years* (2001).

In comparison, the cultural policies of the Scottish Executive in its earlier years had little mention of their economic value. Neither was there any mention of the arts, culture or creative industries in the Executive's first Economic Development Framework published in 2000. The cultural policies at the time were focused on the social value of the arts, and particularly their role in education. Most pointedly, the 2000 Scottish National Strategy for Culture, the most recent official cultural strategy, has a strong nationalist and educational focus. Although the term 'creative industries' was used in the strategy and key priority 1.2 was 'Enhance Scotland's creative industries' with SS, the SAC, the Scottish Enterprise (SE) and the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) identified as partners in delivering this priority, the term was not used the same way as in the DCMS documents. As defined in the Strategy, they include 'the screen industries, architecture and design, publishing and music. Many are distinguished by their use of digital technology' (Scottish Executive, 2000b: 43) which is distinctively different from the 13 creative industries defined by the DCMS, known as the DCMS 13.<sup>17</sup> There was also no mention of creative economy or the economic impact of the creative industries in the original strategy.<sup>18</sup> The Creative Industries Group was established by the Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport in May 2002, but mainly to represent the views of the creative industries' representatives and was more relevant to the

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<sup>17</sup> DCMS 13 are originally: Advertising, Architecture, Art & Antiques Markets, Craft, Design, Designer Fashion, Film & Video, Interactive Leisure Software, Music, Performing Arts, Publishing, Software & Computer Services and Television & Radio set out in *Creative Industries Mapping Documents 1998*. The categories evolved with minor changes but the same in principle until a new classification was introduced in 2013.

<sup>18</sup> There were some mentions of the economic contribution of culture, creative industries and tourism in the Strategy's annual reports in 2002 and 2003 (Scottish Government, 2002c; 2003).

SE than to the SAC or SS. The only research and development linking the arts and the creative industries, driven by the strategy, was the *Craft Business in Scotland: A Study* report that was published in partnership between the SAC and the SE in 2002. For many years until after the transition to Creative Scotland, the term ‘creative industries’ within the SAC context was closely linked with crafts with the Head of Crafts sharing half of the Head of Creative Industries job, a title that only came into existence in 2007.

The National Cultural Strategy in the year 2000 remained largely focused on promoting Scottish culture and heritage both domestically and internationally, as well as the educational and social roles of culture. This became increasingly obvious in the 2002 and 2003 annual reports of the strategy where most new developments and priorities responded to this remit (Scottish Executive, 2002c; 2003). It was unsurprising that the most significant outcome of the strategy for the arts was the Cultural Co-ordinators in Scottish Schools (CCiSS) programme, a programme that aimed to integrate the arts in schools and deliver cultural experiences to children and young people. Despite the fact that the updates on the National Cultural Strategy stopped in 2003 and a final ‘Achievement Audit’ was published in 2006 (Scottish Executive, 2006a), the CCiSS programme continued until 2009 with the final report published in 2010. The CCiSS, managed by the education department of the SAC, contributed greatly to the setting up of the Curriculum for Excellence between 2004 and 2010, putting the arts at the heart of formal education in Scotland.

Other policy documents and speeches also indicated the social and educational focus of the early Scottish Executive cultural policies: A survey of local authorities’ provision for arts and culture was carried out in the year 2000, (the report was not published until 2002); *Role of the arts in regeneration* (2001) highlighted the benefits of the arts in socio-economic development, including a case study of Ceolas, a Gaelic music and dance summer school in South Uist of Eileanan Siar; First Minister McConnell’s St Andrew’s Day Speech in 2003 emphasised the idea of ‘arts for everyone’; *A Literature Review of the Evidence Base for Culture, the Arts and Sport Policy* was published in 2004, and although there was some mention of the economic impact of the arts, the social impact of the arts on social inclusion, community building, regeneration, health, education was the main focus; *Well-being and Quality of Life: Measuring the Benefits of Culture and Sports* (2005)



and *Arts and Employability* (2006) both illuminated the role of the arts and culture in community building, health, education and employment.

Another initiative set out by the National Cultural Strategy, was the review of national agencies including the SAC and SS. In 2001, the Scottish Executive commissioned its first review of the SAC on the effectiveness of the agency's links and partnerships. The report included the following points as two of the ten key issues:

- There is a lack of clarity in the relationship between the Scottish Executive and the Scottish Arts Council that leads to confusion about SAC's role and remit. This confusion is focused on the meaning and operation of the **arm's length principle**.
- There is now a different kind and level of **scrutiny**, particularly in relationship to the Executive, the Parliament and the Parliamentary Committees. SAC has not yet made the best of the potential new relationships here. (Hamilton and Scullion, 2002: 4)

The report also suggested:

There is confusion about the role and remit of SAC that affects all aspects of its work. To clarify this, the arm's length principle needs to be re-visited and relationship made clearer between the Executive, SAC, the cultural community and the partners and agencies which interact with SAC. 'Ministerial interference' needs to be transformed into 'Ministerial leadership'. (Hamilton and Scullion, 2002: 5)

The Scottish Executive was indeed working towards having more involvement and control over the development of arts and culture in the nation as well as having more direct 'ministerial leadership' at that time. In his St Andrew's Day speech 2003, the then First Minister Jack McConnell said:

Our devolved government should have the courage and the faith to back human imagination, our innate creativity, as the most potent force for individual change and social vision. I believe we should make the development of our creative drive the next major enterprise for our society. Arts for all can be a reality, a democratic right and an achievement of the 21st century. I believe this has the potential to be a new civic exercise on a par with health,

housing and education - the commitment to providing and valuing creative expression for all. (McConnell, 2003)

Using the speech as its cornerstone, the Cultural Commission was set up by the Scottish Executive to undertake a review of the nation's cultural sectors in 2004, or in the words of its Chair James Boyle's, former head of BBC Radio Scotland and former Chair of the SAC, a 'generational opportunity - to look seriously and maturely at our culture and decide the framework for its support in the future'. Amongst the 131 recommendations in the Cultural Commission's 2005 540-page final report, it recommended that a Culture Bill be introduced by 2007 and suggested the establishment of a lead agency for the nation's culture: 'Culture Scotland'. It stated that this new agency should lead all strands of the cultural sector and suggested three options for ways in which it could function - at arms-length, within government or as a federation.<sup>19</sup> It is worth noting that reports contributing to the final report, including *Study of the Input of the Voluntary Sector to Culture in Scotland* (Bonnar Keenlyside, 2004) and *Local Authority Culture and Leisure Provision* (PMP, 2005), were conducted across different cultural sectors from heritage to the arts and had mentions of the differences between the cultural sectors in rural and urban Scotland. Especially in the 2005 report by PMP, the particular inconsistency in the cultural provision between rural and urban areas was highlighted as one of the key issues (PMP, 2005: 67). After the Cultural Commission final report was reviewed by the Parliament, a paper by the Scottish Executive, *Scotland's Culture*, was published in response to the report. Taking up part of the recommendation, it was in late 2006 that the Scottish Executive published the *Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill* for consultation. The Bill proposed a new nationwide cultural development body Creative Scotland and stated:

Ministers believe that there should be a single national cultural development body. It makes sense and should be more efficient to have one public body

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<sup>19</sup> Option 1: at Arms-length: Culture Scotland would function as an arms-length agency with the Scottish Executive and act as a broker between the culture sector and the Scottish Executive, the Culture Fund - a fundraising and distribution body that would operate alongside Culture Scotland. Option 2: Within Government: Culture Scotland would function within the Executive as an advice agency with funding retained by the government, while a small advocacy and Think Tank agency Centre for Creativity, a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB), would operate with a focus on developing creative individuals. Option 3: as a Federation: Culture Scotland would be a high level association with the responsibility of cross-sector advocacy and strategic development, while the Centre for Creativity would take on the role of co-ordinating the Think Tank and the roles of the Culture Fund as in Option 1. (Cultural Commission, 2005: 232-245)

addressing such closely related issues and activities. (Scottish Executive, 2006b: 6)

Also in 2006, in response to repeated requests through the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 to disclose the process and basis of its decision-making including funding decisions, the SAC published the outcomes of its strategic review, which detailed the development of its policy, alongside assessments of organisations. The review also served as a proposal for the strategy of the developing Creative Scotland.

*Cultural Policies of Scottish Government during the Transition from the SAC to Creative Scotland 2007 - 2010*

The consultation deadline for the *Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill* was set for the end of March 2007. The Scottish National Party (SNP) won the Scottish Parliament General Election on the 3rd of May, 2007. The nationalists soon changed the name of the Scottish Executive to the Scottish Government, although this was not legally changed until the Scotland Act 2012. The new Scottish Government brought out its first economic strategy in November 2007, identifying ‘Creative Industries (including digital content and technologies)’ as one of the key sectors with high growth potential, although with little indication on what level of support would be provided to the sector and how.

*The Culture Bill* was not introduced to the Parliament as the *Creative Scotland Bill* until March 2008 by the SNP First Minister Alex Salmond. However, the change of administration did not have an obvious effect on the content of the bill as shown in Table 1. The priorities of the new agency set out by the Bill were almost identical to the ones set out in the Labour-Lib Dem coalition’s *Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill*, with some changes of the wording as a result of the consultation. For example, the last priority was reworded to remove the term ‘creative industries’, and changed from ‘Help to support the success of the creative industries.’ to ‘Support activities which involve the application of creative skills to the development of products and processes’. The Bill fell at Stage 1 because the financial solution was voted against, although the principles of the Bill, including the establishment and general functions of Creative Scotland as well as the dissolution of the SAC were agreed.

	SAC Corporate Plan 2004 -2009 & 2007-2009	Draft Culture (Scotland) Bill 2006 (Labour/LibDem)	Creative Scotland Bill June 2008 (SNP)	Public Service Reform Bill May 2009 (SNP)	Creative Scotland Corporate Plan 2011-2014	Creative Scotland Annual Plan 2013-2014
<b>Public Participation &amp; Engagement</b>	1->2. To increase participation in the arts 3. To place the arts, culture and creativity at the heart of learning	1. Promote understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the arts and culture to people in Scotland, and will in particular seek to increase the number and diversity of people accessing and enjoying them	1. Promote understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the arts and culture... encourage participation, assist others to encourage participation and seek to increase the diversity of people who access and participate in the arts and culture	b. promoting understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the arts and culture c. encouraging as many people as possible to access and participate in the arts and culture	2. Promoting understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the arts and culture 3. Encouraging as many people as possible to access and participate in the arts and culture 4. Increasing the diversity of people who access and participate in the arts and culture	2. Improve access to, and participation in, arts and creative activity
<b>Supporting the Artistic Community</b>	2->1. To support artists in Scotland to fulfil their creative and business potential	2. Identify, support and develop talent and excellence in the arts and culture	2. Identify, support and develop talent and excellence in the arts and culture	a. identifying, supporting and developing quality and excellence in the arts and culture	1. Identifying, supporting and developing quality and excellence in the arts and culture	1. Support excellence in artistic and creative practice 3. Enable a thriving environment for the arts, screen and creative industries
<b>Instrumental Value</b>		3. Seek to realise the benefits of the arts and culture; and,	3. Realise, as far as reasonably practicable to do so, the value and benefits of the arts and culture, and	d. realising the value and benefits of the arts and culture	5. Realising the value and benefits nationally and internationally of arts and culture	
<b>Creative Industries</b>		4. Help to support the success of the creative industries.	4. Support activities which involve the application of creative skills to the development of products and processes	f. promoting and supporting commercial activity focused on the application of creative skills.	7. Promoting and supporting industries and commercial activity based on the application of creative skills	3. Enable a thriving environment for the arts, screen and creative industries
<b>Nationalist Agenda</b>				e. encouraging and supporting creative endeavours that contribute to an understanding of Scotland's national culture	6. Encouraging artistic and creative work that contributes to an understanding of Scotland's national culture	
<b>Other</b>					8. Providing advice to Scottish Ministers relating to the creative industries specialising in the arts and culture	4. Deliver our services efficiently and effectively

*Table 1 The Evolution of the Stated Functions of the SAC/Creative Scotland from 2004 to 2014*

The main obstacle for the proposed transition was the 'Creative Industries'. The term by then was still not clearly defined, neither were the functions of relevant agencies including Creative Scotland, the SE, the HIE and the Skills Development Scotland in supporting creative industries.

Led by the Scottish Government, the Creative Industries Framework Agreement (CIFA) was reached in February 2009 and an Implementation Group (CIFAIG) was formed with members from the key agencies including the SE, the HIE, Creative Scotland, the Cultural Enterprise Office (CEO), the National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts (NESTA), Skills Development Scotland, the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) and the Voice of Chief Officers of Cultural and Leisure Services in Scotland (VOCAL). Adapting the DCMS 13 classification to define creative industries, the agreement outlined the roles and responsibilities of the agencies in supporting creative industries - a 'Team Scotland Approach' (Scottish Government, 2009b), giving Creative Scotland the roles of research, advocacy for the creative industries and coordinating the creative industries partnership between the CIFAIG members. The Bill was revised accordingly and included in the Public Service Reform Bill, which was introduced in May 2009 and passed in March 2010.

However, the definition of and the agreement on roles in supporting creative industries was not the only element that was revised between the two Bills. In the CIFA, the Scottish Government stated that:

The Government wants Scotland to be recognised as one of the world's most creative nations - one that attracts, develops and retains talent, where the arts and the creative industries are supported and celebrated and their economic contribution fully captured. (Scottish Government, 2009b: 1)

The statement illuminated the great international ambition of the Scottish Government, which does not simply lie within the development of cultural tourism or cultural diplomacy, but in the promotion of Scotland as an independent nation through culture and creativity. This required more than the small-scale international development projects the SAC and the British Council worked on in the early years of devolution. Based on this statement, as shown in Table 1, an additional remit was added to the list of functions of Creative Scotland, before the creative industries remit, in the revised Bill:

Encouraging and supporting creative endeavours that contribute to an understanding of Scotland's national culture. (Scottish Parliament, 2009)

Furthermore, the statement was also adapted, almost word-for-word, as Creative Scotland's vision published in the new agency's 2011 - 2014 Corporate Plan - with half a sentence stating the role of the arts and creativity in society, education and well-being added (Creative Scotland, 2011: 5).

The influence of this statement was also shown in the order of the priorities for Creative Scotland in the Public Service Reform Bill 2009, where supporting and developing high quality arts became the top of the list and the public participation and engagement remits followed, and this remained the same in Creative Scotland's remits stated in the agency's plan in 2010 and 2013.

As well as working very closely with the SAC and SS on the transition, the Scottish Government set out its International Framework in 2008, identifying Creative Scotland as a key partner in promoting the nation's creative industries internationally. The Government's first creative industries review was also published in 2009, reporting that although the turnover of creative industries in Scotland was £5.2billion in 2007, a staggering 75% was from computer games and software (£1.7billion), architecture (£1.5billion) and publishing (£0.8billion) - the first two being only remotely relevant to the SAC or Creative Scotland's remit. In 2011, the Scottish Government once again listed 'Creative Industries' as a key growth sector in its Economic Strategy 2011 and identified Creative Scotland as a key partner in developing this sector.

On the social and educational side of the arts, the Single Outcome Agreements with Local Authorities (LAs) in 2007 and a publication, *Culture Delivers*, was published in 2008 as the guideline for LAs in delivering the Government's cultural remit. Reports on the participation of the general public were published in 2009 and 2011 as well as an action plan for education, the arts, culture and creativity in 2010. Therefore, the social and educational role of the arts and culture was not exactly left behind by the Scottish Government, however, there has not been any extensive publication or research into public participation in the arts by the SAC or Creative Scotland since 2008. Instead, with its new role in creative industries, research on the economic impact of the creative industries was carried out, with

a report from a scoping study published in 2011 and the extensive *Economic Contribution Study* in 2012 (EKOS Limited, 2011; DC Research, 2012).

It is noticeable that despite the outcomes of the Cultural Commission and the initial Cultural Bill in 2006 both recommending establishment of a single national ‘cultural’ development body, the merger between the SAC and SS, and the agreed roles and responsibilities in the development of creative industries merely resulted in a national body for the arts and screen with some research and advocacy roles for creative industries - where other aspects of culture, such as media, heritage, history and museums were not considered part of the new agency’s remit. Although there are programmes initiated by Creative Scotland supporting Gaelic language development and preservation and some traditional arts support under the influence of the SNP administration, the lack of links and collaboration between the arts and the heritage sector at the top level between Creative Scotland and Historic Scotland, was likely to become a factor that would restrict the development of the arts in rural Scotland, especially for regions where heritage and tradition have a strong influence on their residents. These issues will be returned to and discussed later in this chapter.

This major transition and reform has brought great changes along with it. As Richard Holloway, Chair of the Joint Board of the SAC and SS during the transition, stated in the final Corporate Plan:

Though Creative Scotland has often been described as a merger of these two organisations, the organisations themselves have never understood it in that way, nor have the architects of the new agency. Creative Scotland will be a new thing entirely, not the fusion of a couple of old things. (SAC and Scottish Screen, 2010: 3)

Although some of the outcomes and consequences of the changes have yet to be seen, the following sections explore the most controversial and influential changes so far that transition has initiated.

### *Organisational Structure and Personnel Changes*

In October 2009 *Creative Scotland: The Business Model* was published. It described the organisation’s own characteristics as:

- New and demonstrably different from its predecessors.

- Fresh, vibrant, enthusiastic and ambitious for Scotland and Scottish artists.
  - Talent focused, a real intellectual community.
  - Very professional, disciplined, well-led and well-managed.
  - Truly national in reach, impact and ambitions.
  - Outward facing, working with and for artists and creative practitioners.
- (Creative Scotland 09 Ltd, 2009: 1)

One of the most significant changes, if not the most significant, was the complete abolition of the SAC's art-form-based structure to be replaced by:

- A realigned Executive Team.
- A new Portfolio-based management structure.
- A flexible pool of Development Officers working on a project basis.
- A strong and business integrated Finance and Operations Directorate.
- A reorganised and strengthened Communications Directorate.
- A new creative industries function. (Creative Scotland 09 Ltd, 2009: 1)

The proposal suggested that five Directors were to report directly to the Chief Executive and along with the Chief Executive, would form an Executive Team. Under the three Directors of Creative Development, there would be 12-14 Portfolio Managers, all senior personnel and very influential in the decision-making process, with two to three Development Officers working under each of them making up no fewer than 34 Development Officers. All Development Officers would share the same job description and would be expected to be 'available to work on any project in any art-form or policy area' (Creative Scotland 09 Ltd, 2009: 5). In each tier of the structure, there was no set definition of how many people from each of the art forms should be present. Furthermore, all tiers were cross-disciplinary except for an initial two Portfolio Managers dedicated to the new Creative Industries function of the body.

A comparison can be made between the structure of the new business model as shown in Figure 5, and the staff structure of the SAC as of 2010, as shown in Figure 6.



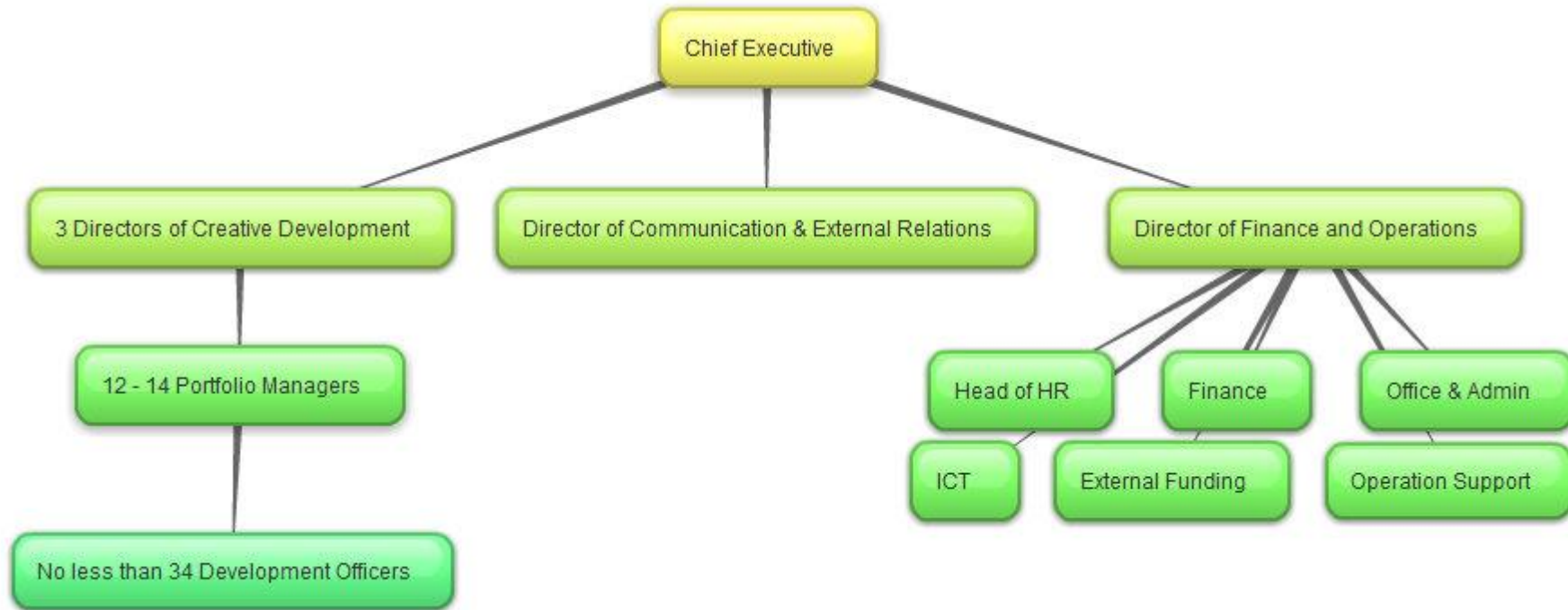


Figure 5 Creative Scotland, The Business Model (Source: Creative Scotland 09 Ltd, 2009)

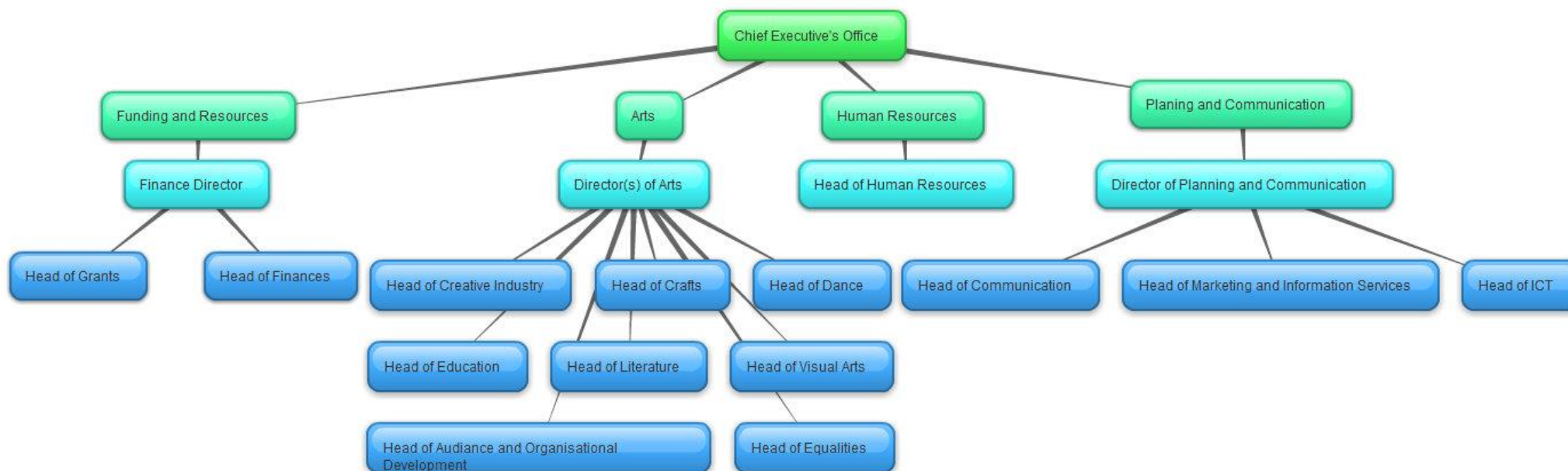


Figure 6 Staff Structure of the SAC as of 2010<sup>20</sup> (Source: Scottish Arts Council organisational structure, 2008)

<sup>20</sup> In the Staff Structure of SAC, the heads under the Arts Department had 2-3 officers working under them. E.g. the Head of Visual Arts holds line manager responsibility to the 2-3 Visual Arts Officers. The art-form officers were responsible for different projects.

Positions	Appointments	Previous Positions / Achievements	Background	Annual Pay rate 2010 (£)
Chief Executive	Andrew Dixon	Chief Executive of Newcastle Gateshead Initiative, promoting cultural festivals and events and managing tourism and conference marketing for the 'twin cities'.	Theatre	125,000 - 129,999
Directors of Creative Development	Venu Dhupa	Cultural Activist, former Director of Arts at the British Council (worldwide)	Theatre	70,000 - 74,999
	Ian Munro	Co-director of Arts, SAC	Music	60,000 - 64,999
	Caroline Parkinson	Director (Scotland and Northern Ireland) for Creative and Cultural Skills	Film/TV/Theatre	60,000 - 64,999
Director of Communication and External Relations	Kenneth Fowler <sup>21</sup>	Head of Communications and Information at Scottish Natural Heritage	Communication and PR	60,000 - 64,999
Director of Finance and Operation	Alyson Hagan <sup>22</sup>	Chief Operating Officer and Company Secretary, Scottish Screen		60,000 - 64,999
Portfolio Managers	Amanda Catto	Head of Visual Arts, SAC	Visual Arts	
	Anita Clark	Head of Dance, SAC	Dance	
	Caroline Docherty	Acting Director of Planning and Communications, SAC	Theatre	
	Dr Helen Bennett <sup>23</sup>	Head of Creative Industries / Head of Crafts	Craft	
	Scott Donaldson	Head of Education Development, Scottish Screen	Education/Film	
	Joan Parr	Head of Education, SAC	Education	
	Morgan Petrie	Head of Market Development, Scottish Screen	Market/Digital Media	
	Ian Smith	Head of Music, SAC	Music	
	David Taylor	Co-director of Arts, SAC	Theatre	
	Dr Gavin Wallace	Head of Literature, SAC	Literature	
	Robbie Allen	Production and Development Executive, Scottish Screen	Film	
	Sambrooke Scott	Market Development Executive, Scottish Screen	PR/Marketing	
	Helena Ward <sup>24</sup>	Training Programmer with TRC Media	Creative Skills	
Laura Mackenzie Stuart <sup>25</sup>	Managing Director, Universal Arts	Theatre		

Executive Team	Portfolio Managers	Former SAC	Former Scottish Screen	External
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*Table 2 Appointments at senior positions of Creative Scotland 2011*

<sup>21</sup> Appointed September 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Karen Lannigan, former HR Manager, Scottish Screen, works alongside Alyson Hagan as Head of HR.

<sup>23</sup> Retired March 2011.

<sup>24</sup> Appointed September 2011.

<sup>25</sup> Appointed September 2011.

The staffing was not only restructured but also slimmed down. The staff head count of the new business model was a total of 113 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff, compared to 146 before the reform, including the proposed new remit of 'Creative Industries'. This drop in staff numbers was planned despite both the 2008 Creative Scotland Bill and 2009 Public Service Reform Bill stating that all employees of the SAC and SS appointed prior to the existence of Creative Scotland would be employed immediately by the new body. The comparison of the statistics and the declaration of the two Bills, implies that as a direct result of the organisational restructure, many former SAC and SS employees would have resigned or had their working hours reduced.

Another major change in the organisational structure during the transition was the appointment of a new Director of Communication, Kenneth Fowler. As well as being responsible for the public relations and research functions of Creative Scotland, the Director had the role of 'representing Creative Scotland in a partnership with the Scottish Government and other agencies in relation to international development' (Creative Scotland 09 Ltd, 2009: 8). The document further stated that Creative Scotland was working with the Scottish Government on 'how best to coordinate the development of Scotland's artistic profile abroad and how best to leverage Scotland's unique cultural heritage for both cultural and economic purposes' (Creative Scotland 09 Ltd, 2009: 8). This is in comparison with the former SAC which, although it had not completely dismissed an international development remit, did not consider it a priority in its policies and strategies. The new Directorate of Creative Scotland not only represented the renewed and closer relationship between the national agency and the Scottish Government, but also the new vision and priorities of Creative Scotland.

As shown in Table 2 on the last page, the Chief Executive and most of the Directors and Portfolio Managers were appointed in early 2010. Only two directors in the new executive team were former SAC and SS directors, with the appointed new Chief Executive and directors bringing expertise in festivals, international development, creative industries and public relations reflecting the new and more business-focused agency to which Creative Scotland was moving towards. At the same time, the roles of heads of art forms, along with their disciplinary expertise were replaced by more flexible roles. While initially all 12 Portfolio Managers were previously working for the SAC or SS, and most of them were still given the remit

they previously had, it appeared the remit of the Portfolio Managers was flexible and not fixed to a particular art form.

For example, in the previous SAC structure if the Head of Crafts resigned they would most likely be replaced by another person with expertise in crafts. However when Dr Helen Bennett, former Head of Creative Industries and Crafts of the SAC retired in March 2011, her position was not filled by someone with similar expertise. Indeed, the two newly recruited Portfolio Managers in 2011 - Helena Ward with training and skills development experience in media and the arts and international development, and Laura Mackenzie Stuart with experience in international touring of theatre productions as Managing Director of Universal Arts, came from diverse backgrounds.

Compared to the senior positions within Creative Scotland, the role of the Development Officers was discussed less in publicly available documents. It appears that most of the officers under the Arts Department of the SAC and some Project Managers and Co-ordinators of SS, who stayed on after the transition, were reassigned as Development Officers. The next section will discuss the directorate appointments made for Creative Scotland within the context of the new vision and priorities of the new agency.

### *Vision and Priorities*

The new vision and priorities of Creative Scotland were officially published in its *Corporate Plan 2011 - 2014*. Considering one of the main causes of the transformation from the SAC to Creative Scotland was the unclear relationship between the SAC and the Scottish Government and a mismatch of their priorities, it is not surprising to find the vision and priorities of Creative Scotland were significantly different from those of the SAC's and are closely relevant to those of the Scottish Government's. Those significant changes within the national agency are an important part of the context of this research.

In the SAC's last *Business Plan* (2009/2010), based on the previously mentioned Strategic Review, the organisation's vision was for 'a confident, cultured Scotland where *everyone* takes part in the arts' with their mission being to 'serve the *people* of Scotland by fostering arts of the highest quality through investment, research and advocacy'. The SAC's priorities were to:

1. increase the scope and quality of our support to artists;
2. secure the foundation of Scotland's artistic development;
3. create flexibility to support the new and the innovative;
4. create opportunities for participation in the arts;
5. build a culture of co-operation with partners and the arts community;
6. make the transition to Creative Scotland. (SAC, 2009a: 3)

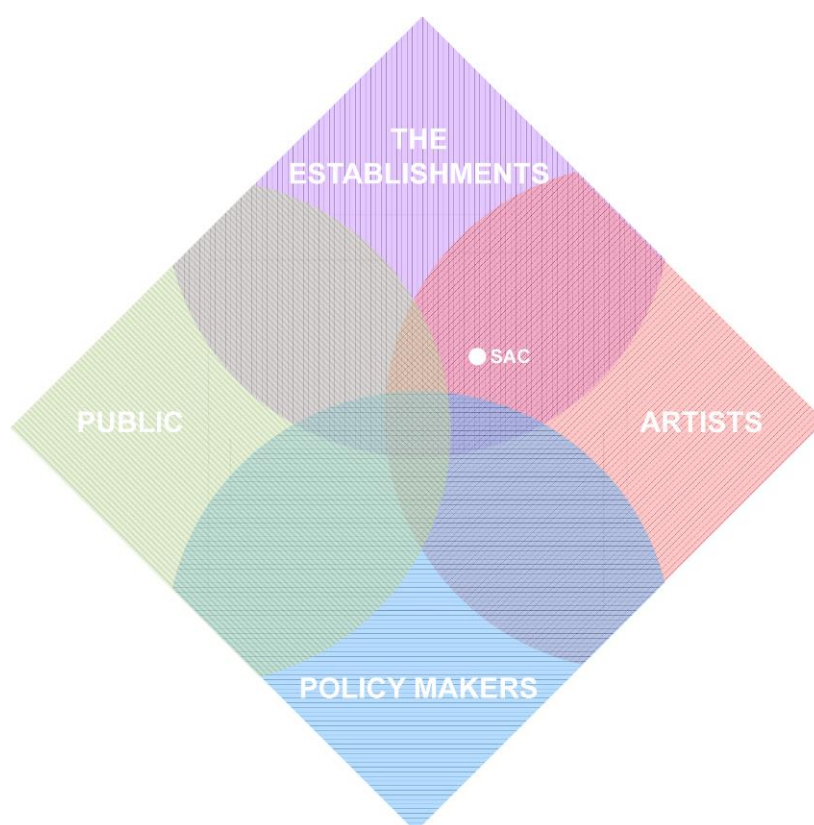
Despite stating that its vision was for everyone in Scotland to take part in the arts, the SAC's commitment to public engagement was far from prioritised. While its mission of 'fostering arts of the highest quality' would benefit the artistic community, it would not necessarily achieve the 'serve the people of Scotland' part of its mission, and the three methods employed to achieve the SAC's mission 'investment, research and advocacy' can hardly be seen as sufficient methods for serving the people but merely ways of 'fostering arts of the highest quality'.

The organisation's priorities are also very much arts-focused, with priority numbers 1, 2, 3 and 5 referring solely to the development of the arts community, and number 4, '*create opportunities for participation in the arts*' taking a rather passive approach to public engagement in the arts. This approach was similarly reflected in Chapter 1 of McMaster's *Support for Excellence* report for the DCMS published in the previous year (McMaster, 2008), which suggests that if arts organisations provide high-quality arts the public will automatically come and be engaged. Additionally, there was very little acknowledgement, if any, of the possible tourism and economic values of the arts in Scotland.

Although under pressure from the devolved Scottish Executive in the 2000s, the strategic review of the SAC in 2006 stated that 'The **contextual** imperatives in a devolved Scotland with new cultural policies, and an expectation that publicly funded arts have a role to play in wider social and economic policies' (SAC, 2006: 1) was a key driver to the changes in strategy, the SAC has been passive in contributing to the strategies set out for the arts and culture by the Executive. Reports evaluating public participation in the arts and culture in Scotland were published in 2006 and 2008, however, the methods and the data presented were far from comprehensive with the original data remaining unpublished. For example, as mentioned earlier in Chapter 2, the 2008 *Taking Part in Scotland* report highlighted the 77% of the population engaged in the arts and the

percentage increasing to over 90% amongst those of higher socio-economical class, without addressing the underlying potential that a much lower percentage would apply amongst those of lower socio-economical class.

Chapter 1 identified the four elements in the arts development: the Establishments, Policy Makers, Artists and the Public, the figure below shows where the SAC sat with their interests in each of the elements. While the SAC should be in the middle of the overlap, instead, it was sitting closer to the Establishments and Artists:



*Figure 7 The interests of the SAC in relation to the four elements set out in Chapter 1*

When the Joint Board of the SAC and SS published their first joint Corporate Plan (2010/2011) in transition to Creative Scotland, the priorities of the SAC and SS changed to:

- encourage and sustain artists and creators of all kinds
- ensure that their work is accessible to all
- ensure that as many people as possible can participate in creative activities

- extend and increase the wider benefits of arts and culture, including their contribution to *the promotion and development of our unique national culture and its wider place in the international sphere*. (SAC and Scottish Screen, 2010: 5)

There are two major changes to the vision and priorities of the SAC/Creative Scotland. Public access and engagement has been referred to in two of the four priorities of the organisation in transition, with the addition of the promotion of Scottish national identity. This Corporate Plan formed the basis of the four-year Corporate Plan of Creative Scotland, in which the vision of the organisation was transformed to achieve international recognition of the nation's creativity:

That Scotland is recognised as a leading creative nation - one that attracts, develops and retains talent, where the arts and creative industries are supported and celebrated and their economic contribution fully captured; a nation where the arts and creativity play a central part in the lives, education and well-being of our population. (Creative Scotland, 2011: 7)

With the first half of the vision adapted almost word-for-word in the Scottish Government's statement in CIFA in 2009, as well as listing 'Scotland as a year-round festival nation recognised as one of the top ten places in the world to visit for culture' (Creative Scotland, 2011: 22) at the top of the new agency's 10-year vision, the new agency is unmistakably much closer to the Scottish Government and its priorities than the SAC ever was. In the introduction of the Corporate Plan, Creative Scotland clearly identifies the Scottish Government as a primary stakeholder. It illustrates Creative Scotland's objectives to reflect the 'social and economic (though not commercial) responsibilities' of the organisation and to contribute to the arts and cultural aims of Scottish Government, which are to:

- promote and develop the crucial role of culture and creativity in making the strongest contribution that we can to sustainable economic development
- focus on the contribution that culture can make to improving the health, well-being, confidence and quality of life for our communities
- raise the profile of Scotland at home and abroad, and ensure that as many people as possible in Scotland and overseas are able to benefit from, be



inspired by and enjoy the very best of Scotland's creative and cultural offer.  
(Scottish Government, 2011a)<sup>26</sup>

Although the investment in 'talent', 'artistic productions' and 'audience development and participation' still remain priorities of the organisation's investment strategy, as the evidence above demonstrates, by 2011 Creative Scotland turned to emphasise the economic and social impact of the arts and added the promotion of the nation's arts and culture to its agenda (Creative Scotland, 2011: 8) - a function previously carried out by working in partnership with the British Council.

This major change of vision is also reflected in the directorate personnel appointments of Creative Scotland, and most significantly the appointment of Venu Dhupa as one of the Directors of Creative Development. Dhupa's previous work as the former Director of Visual Arts of the British Council, for the NESTA and the European Cultural Parliament gave her an international profile in cultural diplomacy, creative industries and business development for the arts, particularly in establishing cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural organisations and forums. Although the new cross-disciplinary structure was already in place when Dhupa was appointed, she came to the new national agency with a vision to enhance its cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural development role. In her new role, Dhupa re-designed the Investment Programme and established the International Development Programme to encourage international conversation and the promotion of the arts and culture in Scotland at an international level.

This new remit motivated by the Government's international ambition is unique among the national arts agencies of the four nations in the UK. Although the promotion of each nation's cultural identities is included in the strategies of other national arts agencies (Arts Council England, 2011; Arts Council of Wales, 2009; Arts Council of Northern Ireland, 2007), none of the agencies identified this as a key priority in its strategies. This prioritisation is also reflected in Creative Scotland's budget with over 20% of its investment budget spent directly on festivals, national events and international development with specific investment programmes in 'International' and 'Festival, Touring and Events' (Creative

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<sup>26</sup> Another point was added in 2013: 'Encourage the understanding, value and enjoyment of the historic environment, and to promote the care and protection of this precious and dynamic resource to ensure a rich legacy for future generations'.

Scotland, 2011: 50-51). It is easy to say that the new national agency's priority and ambition of making Scotland an internationally recognised cultural destination is compatible with, and contributes to, the SNP's strategy and commitment to Scottish nationalism and independence - it aims to promote Scotland to the world as a nation, and not just part of the UK via the British Council.

The relationship between tourism and the arts in Scotland and particularly the role rural Scotland plays in Scottish tourism will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

### *Creative Industries, Cultural Economy and the Sense of Business*

As was reflected in the organisational and personnel changes brought forth by the reform, Creative Industries was suggested as a new key function of Creative Scotland. However because of the disagreement on how the new function would be financed and its relationship with enterprise offices, this function was minimised to research, advocacy for the creative industries and the co-ordination of Scotland's Creative Industries Partnership established by the CIFA. Despite creative industries no longer being on the list of the new agency's remits, the desire to develop creativity in the country as an industry was still obvious. This was reflected by the change in language used in its strategy, documents and marketing. Creative Scotland demonstrated the change of identity from a 'Funding Body' to a 'Development Agency' by replacing the word 'funding' with 'investment', which hinted at the essential features of investment - the expectation of outcomes and returns.

In addition to the change of language and the restructure of its funding/investment programme, the tone present in Creative Scotland documents changed dramatically after the reform. The new documents such as the guidance information for investment applications used more business-style language. For example, in the guidelines for the International Investment Strand, one of the opportunities is entitled 'Presentation of work and engagement overseas with a view to market development' which would not be found normally in previous arts guideline documents.

### *Investment Programmes*

The substantial changes to the organisational structure and the agency's priorities inevitably resulted in changes to its funding/investment programme. For the first

few months after its establishment in July 2010 until the new financial year in April 2011, Creative Scotland continued the funding strands it inherited from the SAC and SS and completed the projects they had funded. The new investment programme began from the beginning of the new financial year.

Greatly different from the SAC's project-based funding strands, i.e. the strands that are not for organisations' day-to-day running costs, except for special funding strands such as the Youth Music Initiative, the majority of the new agency's investment strands became cross-disciplinary with eligible applicants varying from individual artists and grassroots organisations to large establishments such as the British Council. For example, the Quality Production Arts Programme 2011 invested in individual artists such as Anthony Schrag to create new work for an exhibition (£1,350) and also made a contribution to the new commissions by Glasgow UNESCO City of Music (£60,000). When asked about the cross-disciplinary system, Venu Dhupa said:

This way of investing allows you to value a specialism but also to recognise that they are in brush with other art forms and in brush with other specialisms to get the better result, I think the best creativity often happens around fringes of something, not necessarily at the heart of it.... If you only ever talk to specialists and you keep reinforcing specialism, you tend to come out with same result. (Dhupa, interview with author, 30 July 2012)

Despite promising valuing specialisms, the almost complete abandonment of the art-form specialism in both personnel structure and investment programme was one of the most controversial changes in this transition. With numerous strategic changes already happening, it was plenty to take in, not only for the sector, but also for the SAC/Creative Scotland employees. When asked about the different way of working in July 2012, two years after the new agency was officially established, Stephen Palmer, formerly a Visual Arts Officer in the SAC and currently a Development Officer of Creative Scotland said:

My work is, it sort of goes where I need it rather than I have a specific remit.... Now because we don't have departments we work particularly within one of those investment strands. And how does that investment strand work overall? What are we trying to do through professional development across the board? I think that for me the development work is not there yet, but we are doing

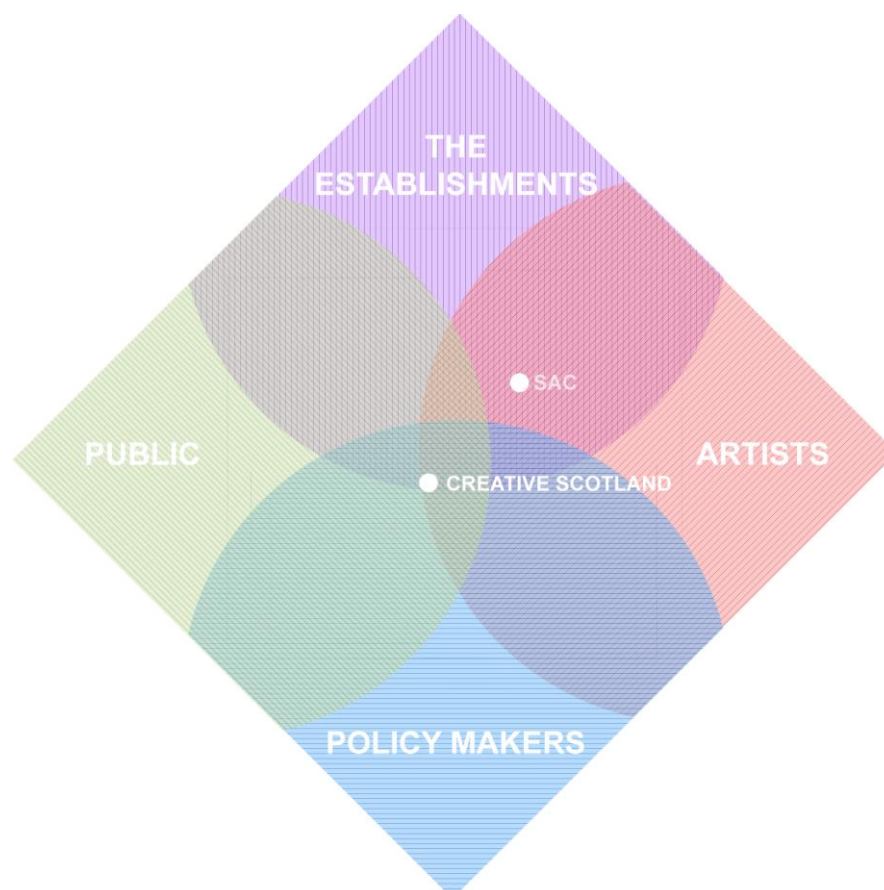
the sectorial reviews which might give us a better idea of actually what we are trying to do within visual arts; within drama etc.... (Palmer, interview with author, 30 July 2012)

Palmer also pointed out that there are only two visual arts specialists left in the new agency including himself, with a few having left during and after the transition.

The application process was changed as well. Most of the investment strands abolished a set deadline in order to accept applications on a rolling basis throughout the year. Instead of filling in a twenty-plus-page SAC form, most of Creative Scotland's new application forms consist only of 5 - 6 pages with word limits for each of the questions - normally no more than 200 words. Development Officers explained that the application forms are for basic information of projects and if the application goes through to the next round, the lead officer would then contact the applicant for more detailed information, but this does not seem to have been made clear to all potential applicants.

Besides the changes in its project-based investment programme, one of the most discussed planned changes was the replacement of the SAC's Flexible Funding Programme with 'Strategic Commissioning'. Until 2011, most of the SAC/Creative Scotland's funding/investment strands were awarded on a project basis except for funding given to Foundation Funded Organisations (FOs) and Flexible Funded Organisations (FXOs). In 2011, Creative Scotland assured FOs would continue to be funded with only a slightly decreased budget subject to a review in late 2011. They also announced that FXOs' funding was to end after the end of the 2010-2013 funding period and would be replaced by Strategic Commissioning. With more than 10% less funding allocated compared to Flexible Funding, the new Strategic Commissioning programme would set general goals and objectives that Creative Scotland would like to achieve through each 'commission', and eligible or invited organisations and individuals would need to apply (or tender) with their proposals on how to achieve these goals (Creative Scotland, 2011: 37). For example, it would call out for a commission to deliver high-quality performing arts touring in North East of Scotland, and organisations such as North East Arts Touring could tender for the commission, or anyone else who might be interested.

Creative Scotland's new funding programme caused a great deal of controversy, which eventually led to the resignation of both Dixon and Dhupa in 2012. Reviews were carried out to determine whether to continue the change from funding FXOs to Strategic Commissioning, and whether it was possible to find a happy medium between Flexible Funding and project-based investments as of February 2014. These major changes brought about by the transition of the SAC to Creative Scotland reflect the changed relationship between the national agency and the Scottish Government. This is evident from the reflection of Scottish Government Arts and Culture priorities such as the development of cultural tourism and promotion of national identity found in those of the new agencies. Compared to the SAC, Creative Scotland's remits and interests seem to lean much more towards the policy makers and the public, as shown in Figure 8.



*Figure 8 The Interests of Creative Scotland in Relation to the four Elements*

### **The Response and Reflections to the Post-Devolution Cultural Policies in Scotland**

Substantial changes in the arts and cultural policies since devolution, most significantly the transformation from the SAC to Creative Scotland, have

influenced a range of organisations and individuals working in the arts in Scotland from local authorities and core funded arts organisations to individual artists, creative practitioners and grassroots organisations. This section will look at how the changes discussed earlier affected different levels in the arts in Scotland and the responses from different stakeholder groups in general, before looking at specific rural issues in the next chapters.

### *Local Authorities*

Local authorities (LAs), especially rural authorities, are considerably more sensitive to the political changes of the Scottish Government because of its more direct influence than that of the SAC or other NDPBs. Although in Hamilton & Scullion's 2002 report on the effectiveness of the SAC, most LAs responded positively about the agency based on their working relationship with them around the year 2000, it could be because the LAs were asked SAC-specific questions for the research. Reports on the general cultural and sport services of LAs in Scotland have much less mention of the SAC. For example, in the Scottish Executive's 2002 report *A survey of local authority provision for arts and culture* based on data from 1998 - 1999, the SAC, along with other NPDBs, was only mentioned as a secondary partner, and in the 2009 VOCAL report *Culture and Sport in Scotland's Local Authorities*<sup>27</sup>, it was reported that although 'Local Priorities' remained the most important influence on cultural strategies within LAs, 63% and 58% of the LAs responded also thought that the 'Scottish Government's National Outcomes' and 'National Cultural Strategy' were important influences and only 5% stated 'Other'. Despite the Local Authority Partnership Scheme (LAPS) funded by the SAC Lottery from 2000 to 2005, which aimed to 'equalise' the investment in the arts in the regions with the least funding available - not only via LAs but in general - and various project-based 'seed funding' awarded to LAs, the above report suggested that the SAC was only seen as the second most engaged partner by the majority of LAs' cultural services, behind the Voluntary Sector, and the vast majority thought the quality of partnership was mediocre.

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<sup>27</sup> There are many issues with this research and the report such as the methodology was not clearly explained, definitions were unclear, the LAs that responded (27 out of 32 LAs responded) were not named, some parts of the data are conflicting and there was no mention of the differences between the LAs. Nonetheless, this is the only review of culture services within LAs covering the whole of Scotland in recent years.

Unlike councils in urban centres such as Glasgow and Edinburgh, most rural councils have very limited budgets for arts development, and as a result, lack the time and resources to develop or update their strategies. Further information will be outlined in the next chapter when mapping out the arts in rural Scotland. Therefore when the *National Cultural Strategy* was published by the Scottish Executive and the CCISS programme initiated in the year 2000, it enabled and encouraged local councils to review their arts and culture budgets and draft their strategies to reflect the national strategy. Most of the resulting strategies demonstrate a strong community focus because of the social and economic development remit of LAs. For example, in Moray Council's *Cultural Strategy 2002 - 2005*, its vision is 'To increase the quality of life for all sections of the community and to develop the well-being of communities within Moray'. This strategy led the arts team there to develop a community focused programme including supporting and establishing various community theatres, open film screenings and projects that tackle social issues.

Of the four Strategic Objectives of the National Strategy, the one that local authorities most identified with was objective number 3 and its priorities:

1. Promote creativity, the arts, and other cultural activity;
2. Celebrating Scotland's cultural heritage in its full diversity;
3. Realising culture's potential contribution to education, promoting inclusion and enhancing people's quality of life;
  - 3.1 Promote and enhance education and lifelong learning in and through arts, culture and heritage
  - 3.2 Develop wider opportunities for cultural access
  - 3.3 Maximise the social benefits of culture
4. Assuring an effective national support framework for culture. (Scottish Executive 2000b)

The guidance for Scottish LAs to implement the National Cultural Strategy was published in 2002 (Scottish Executive, 2002b). The key areas of cultural activities to be developed by LAs were identified as: The Arts; Community Recreation; Heritage, Museums and Historical Records; Libraries and Information; Parks and Open Spaces; and Sport. However, the only mention of rurality is the access issues

in rural areas, which were included in the paragraph on increasing accessibility in the Community Recreation section.

As part of the National Strategy's key action for objective 3, the £850,000 CCiSS programme was initiated by the Scottish Government and operated by the SAC. Initially a two-year pilot project, the project was extended to 2008 and saw all 32 LAs take on Cultural Co-ordinators through the scheme. The remit of the Cultural Co-ordinators included: to encourage creativity in schools; to encourage and facilitate cultural participation of the community (e.g. visits, productions, performances); to liaise with artists and local and national cultural bodies and their education officers; to develop awareness of the contribution of culture to young people's learning and development; and advise on ways to develop children's creativity across the curriculum. The project was seen to have played a key role in ongoing cultural development in rural regions (SAC, 2009c). The role of Cultural Co-ordinators was frequently mentioned by LA officers interviewed for this research. Saskia Gibbon, Arts Development Officer (North) & Acting Public Art Officer, Aberdeenshire Council, pointed out that the Cultural Coordinators were a key part of the council's arts education team and remembered how the posts were lost:

We used to have Cultural Coordinators as part of our arts education team, we don't have many more. Not many authorities in Scotland do, they were an externally funded post... the extra staffing was an excellent addition to the arts education team in terms of bringing the best arts practice into local schools and adding amazing contemporary flavour to what arts teachers were able to deliver. (Gibbon, Interview with Author, 27 July 2011)

The Principle Arts Development Officer of the Moray Council, Nick Fearn also mentioned that the Moray Council's arts team grew from a team of one to a team of seven from 2002 to 2006 with funding from LAPS and CCiSS, and matched funding raised by Fearn through 'go[ing] around with the begging bowl and get[ting] bits from here, there and everywhere within the council'. The addition of Cultural Coordinators brought the team to its height of activities, which meant they were able to develop different art forms in different areas of the region, work with local community groups and bring high quality arts productions such as that of the



Royal Shakespeare Company's to the region twice within this period (Fearn, interview with author, 27 July 2011).

By the end of the CCiSS programme, there were on average 2.3 full-time-equivalent Cultural Co-ordinator posts per local authority (SAC, 2010a). The Cultural Coordinators scheme made a positive difference in rural regions by giving rural councils access to high-quality arts education and public engagement practices, bringing the arts to local schools and by demonstrating the role of the arts in local development. Most significantly, it played an important role in initiating, shaping and delivering the *Curriculum for Excellence*.<sup>28</sup> The CCiSS programme was the only nationwide arts and cultural scheme that continued for over two years and was distributed relatively equally in both urban and rural local authorities. Before the end of the project in 2010, all rural councils had at least one Cultural Coordinator and 14 Cultural Coordinators in total compared with 15 in total in the five city councils of Scotland (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Stirling, Dundee and Aberdeen), which was remarkable considering the huge differences in population.

The scheme helped some local authorities across the board to realise the importance of the arts in education and community development through co-funding the post, however the influence beyond the completion of the scheme is concerning, especially when this was in the time of general economic crisis. The end of the scheme undermined some councils' future plans; when the programme ended in 2010, which coincided with Moray Council's arts budget cut, only one arts officer was left within the council. In 2013 the council made the decision to cut its arts budget completely due to the nationwide public service cuts. Other arts teams such as the Aberdeenshire Council Arts Development Team, when starting to build their own strategy for public art in 2005, had to fight for the new posts to be funded internally within the council to avoid the risk of inconsistency of externally funded posts. As Gibbon remembers:

... it's always the same issues with externally funded post, after the two years quite often there can be the desire by the funder and the local authority to

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<sup>28</sup>The Curriculum for Excellence is a primary and secondary school curriculum in Scotland that was implemented in 2010. The curriculum aims to 'achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3 to 18' (Scottish Government, 2008).

show that there are so much benefits to having that post, that you can't possibly lose it, you can't lose all the good work, but it doesn't always match what funding is available, and quite often those posts go and projects just left unfinished. (Gibbon, Interview with Author, 27 July 2011)

Before the end of the central government's funding for the scheme, only 16 of the suggested 70+ Cultural Coordinators were mainstreamed into local authorities and 10 of the 32 participating councils committed to continue supporting the role of Cultural Coordinator (SAC, 2009c). However there are odd occasions where projects that were initiated through the CCiSS programme, although not the staff, were kept, such as the Orkney Arts Education Network.

The ending of the Cultural Coordinator programme articulated the uncertainty of jointly funded posts placed in LAs. The lack of an updated national cultural strategy from the central government not only discouraged some LAs to continue and enhance their support for the arts and culture, it also led LAs, especially when facing public service funding crisis, to often prioritise other essential services. Fearn suggested before the final axe fell on the arts service of Moray Council:

The arts, in a local authority context, are vulnerable because it's not a statutory service... Because of all these cuts they have to make, they are looking at, what do we legally have to provide, and everything else starts to drop off the end... [Giving an example of inviting all councillors to an event but not one turned up] And that's the annoying thing because you're doing this work, good work, and the councillors are making a decision about cutting it, and they can't even be bothered to come and see. I don't think they've actually got it in for the arts. I think they just think, what can we easily put a line through? It's not going to close a swimming pool, it's not going to close a school, you know. That's unfortunately the atmosphere we're working in. (Fearn, interview with author, 27 July 2011)

Because of this atmosphere of being under constant threat of cuts, as mentioned by a few Arts Development Officers (ADOs) in the research, arts development teams within LAs often have to seek constant support, both strategically and financially, from the SAC/Creative Scotland (Coggins, interview with author, 14 July 2011; Fearn, interview with author, 27 July 2011; Gibbon, interview with

author, 27 July 2011). As Rebecca Coggins, Principal Arts Officer (Nithsdale), later Principal Officer Arts & Museums (Nithsdale), Dumfries & Galloway Council, put it:

[T]here's a real danger that as the cuts come the arts will be pushed out further, but we have always been on the firing line for cuts... What's essential, really, is external funding streams and what I think has made a difference over the last 20 years or so has been the impact of organisations like Creative Scotland or the Scottish Arts Council. (Coggins, interview with author, 14 July 2011)

Although seemingly conflicting with what Gibbon believed earlier, that the arts posts are only secure when funded internally, Coggins' argument is based on the important strategic support and backup at a national level. Most of the ADOs or Arts Officers jobs in the Dumfries & Galloway Council, although may have been started by seed-funding or project funding from the SAC, are currently funded internally by the council, whereas the key influence of the SAC/CS was that they provided opportunities for new projects, as well as strategic and political back-up for the LA arts services. However, not all LAs had strong champions for the arts within the council like Dumfries & Galloway, and many fell in the trap of the Aberdeenshire Council, where external funded posts were unlikely to be mainstreamed. This was also particularly challenging before the transition from the SAC to Creative Scotland, as the SAC and the Scottish Government's priorities were not always complementary as mentioned earlier in the chapter.

As a result, many LA arts, culture, leisure and sports services became independent and were set up as trusts in the past decade, mostly to take advantage of rates relief and external funding. The culture and sports service of the Highland Council also became a trust, High Life Highland, in 2011. Cathy Shankland, the Exhibition Officer of Highland Council/ High Life Highland reflected on the differences in financial pressure before and after High Life Highland:

...we used to be the whipping boy for education, if there were any cuts to be made we bore the brunt of them, and I think now they can't really do that because we're not part of education anymore. So that's a good thing hopefully that we won't have too many more - we will have cuts - but not to the same dreadful extent that we've had them before, whereby the whole

service was decimated with so many cuts being made. (Shankland, interview with author, 19 November 2012)

It is not difficult to say that without continued support, whether financially or strategically from a national level, the arts service within LAs are in a very vulnerable state. The latest guidelines for the local government cultural services from the Scottish Government to achieve the Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) was the *Culture Delivers* publication. However, the SOAs set for rural regions often have very little mention of culture or arts.

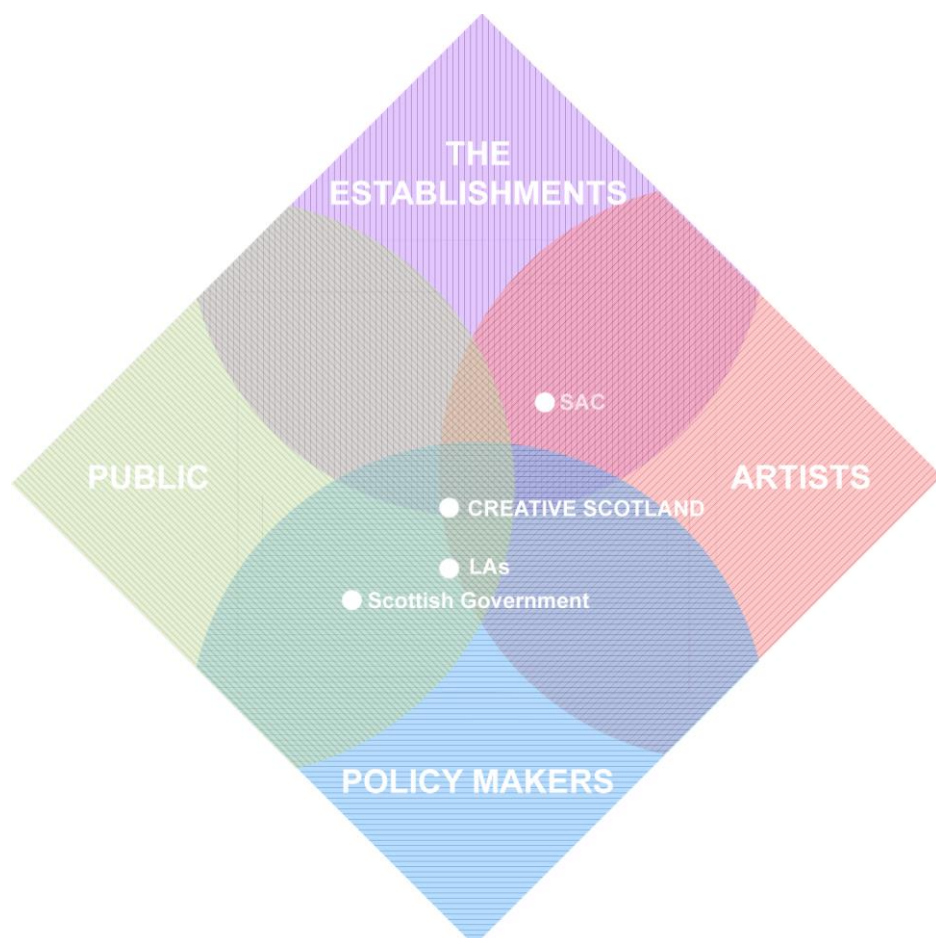
The transition and reform from the SAC to Creative Scotland has certainly brought the agency and the central government closer, and some of the new strategies, visions and priorities of Creative Scotland, were already integrated into the cultural strategies of rural LAs. Although there has been very little top-level guidance from the Scottish Government on the arts, the Government's other international ambitions, before and during the SNP administration and its emphasis on cultural identity and tourism have made an impact on the arts strategies of rural LAs. Tourist campaigns initiated by the Scottish Government included the 2007 Highland Year and the 2009 Homecoming Year also set examples for local authorities to put the place-making and tourist potential of arts and culture on their agendas.

In the vision statement of the *Outer Hebrides Cultural Strategy 2006 - 2010* composed by Western Isles Council, '...nationally and internationally, the islands are characterised and promoted as a place of inspiration and creativity.' In the 2009 Cultural Strategy of the Dumfries and Galloway Council, the vision of the strategy is '...to make Dumfries and Galloway an area of opportunity, where high quality of life, an outstanding natural environment, quality cultural assets and creative people combine to ensure that the area has a reputation as being an exciting, vibrant and inspiring place with national recognition as Scotland's rural capital of culture.' This language is very similar to that used in Creative Scotland's *2011 - 2014 Corporate Plan*, although they were published years before the plan.

Although not all the priorities of the new agency fit in with priorities of rural LAs, the reform has certainly built new relationships. Creative Scotland's 'Invest in Places' priority and the subsequent Place Partnerships have helped a few LAs' arts and culture services, including Dumfries and Galloway, turn the corner at a time

of nationwide funding cuts. The details about Place Partnerships and the role of Creative Scotland in a time of change in Dumfries and Galloway will be discussed in the case study in Chapter 6.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter the SAC had a stronger remit in supporting artists and creative practitioners, and while Creative Scotland included this in its priorities, its remit and interest has moved towards those of the Scottish Government. As can be seen in Figure 9, the interest of all three influential policy-makers and -shapers are in line with the public and the policy makers, while artists and the establishments are left less prioritised. Particularly with the Scottish Government's lack of officially published arts and culture-related documents, LAs have suffered a lack of direction of their arts development. However, the creation of Creative Scotland, despite the confusion and anxiety around it, seems to be able to narrow the gap. The next section of the chapter will expand on the issues of support for arts organisations and artists in recent years.



*Figure 9 the Interest of Key Policy Makers and Shapers in Relation to the four Elements*

### *Core Funded Arts Organisations*

Compared with its impact on local authorities so far, the transition and reform of the SAC has made greater direct impact on independent arts organisations in Scotland, whether private or publicly funded. This section will review the response to the transition and the changes the new agency has brought for arts organisations.

The majority of the core funded arts organisations, FOs and FXOs, were funded by their local council to cover a small percentage of their running costs with a larger percentage of their income and other project-based funding coming from the SAC/Creative Scotland and/or elsewhere. The organisational and personnel changes in Creative Scotland, especially the new cross-disciplinary structure in both its staffing and investment programme, were met with both praise and criticism. The new structure was designed to encourage multi-disciplinary collaboration within and between arts organisations and events. For FOs and FXOs who had been dealing with a Lead Officer, many assigned before the transition, as their point of contact throughout their SAC/Creative Scotland five- or three-year funding period, it would be easier to acquire information and support from Creative Scotland.

However, a 2011 review of the FOs demonstrated some of the issues caused by the cross-disciplinary system. The review process comprised of a comprehensive report to Creative Scotland followed by a long interview, in most cases over two hours, with the organisational director and one board member. It appears that the personnel assigned for the review did not necessarily include the Lead Officer for the reviewed organisation. For example, in the experience of Fife Contemporary Art & Craft (FCA&C), a Fife-based art and craft programming agency core funded by the SAC since its establishment in 2006, as Diana Sykes, the Director of the organisation, recalled, they were interviewed by two Portfolio Managers whose background lay in Screen and Performance Art respectively. The interview was recorded by a member of the Creative Scotland administrative staff. When the notes from the interview were sent back to FCA&C, presumably after being checked by the assigned Portfolio Managers, Sykes found numerous basic mistakes in the minutes including noting down 'Textile Artists' as 'Tech Style Artists'. After corrections and clarifications, the review of the organisation went to the next round, however because the assigned Portfolio Managers misunderstood the

nature of the organisation as an audience development agency, which Creative Scotland considered not investing in from 2012, FCA&C faced the danger of losing their core funding from 2012. It was not until the Lead Officer Amanda Catto pointed out the nature of the organisation in its final stage of review that FCA&C's core funding was once again secured. (Sykes, interview with author, 13 March 2012).

The experience of FCA&C reveals one of the key issues of the cross-disciplinary system: the lack of familiarity Portfolio Managers have with specific disciplines they are assigned to assess. While one could argue that the different forms of the arts and creative industries frequently go hand-in-hand, as quoted from Dhupa earlier in the chapter, some of the best work happens at the fringe between different art forms, the knowledge and language in different art forms are not necessarily universal. In order to validate the cross-discipline system, it is crucial to ensure that the communication between specialised Portfolio Managers is sufficient. However, in the Portfolio Managers' job descriptions, they are expected to travel to organisations and projects for most of their time, leaving limited opportunities for them to be in the office at the same time for communication (Creative Scotland 09 Ltd, 2009).

The plan to replace FXOs with Strategic Commissioning also caused panic and confusion among FXOs, especially those who had just been awarded the Flexible Funding for the first time. Claudia Zeiske, the Director of Deveron Arts, Aberdeenshire, expressed great disappointment at the announcement as this was the first time the organisation was to receive a larger amount of continuing funding so it could embark on longer-term planning. However, the abolition of FXOs meant that after this term had finished, the organisation may have to rely on project-based funding again. It is not hard to imagine the difficulties facing organisations such as this during the climate of economic recession and the Aberdeenshire Council's decision to remove all funding from arts organisations.

While Strategic Commissioning might have its benefits in developing the arts in Scotland as a whole, comments from curators and artists across the board argued that the change would mark the end of (public-subsidised) freedom and diversity that organisations had enjoyed in the previous decade. Most notably, Lindsay Gordon, the Director of Peacock Arts Centre said '...what I feel most is that in

reality, the arms-length principle is gone, completely. And we are now, all of us, cultural workers' (Gordon quoted in Bradley, 2011).

Although it was mentioned at the beginning of the section that core-funded organisations should have better access to information on the new agency and its investment programmes, many who were interviewed found the communication insufficient. Both Sykes, and Robert Livingston, former Director of Hi-Arts, pointed out that all they needed to know was where the new agency was heading and what they could do to contribute to that. They expected that changes would be required for core-funded organisations, but felt they were kept in the dark as to how and when they would happen (Sykes, interview with author, 13 March 2012; Livingston, interview with author, 19 November 2012).

The cross-disciplinary way of working, the overall increase in the emphasis on instrumental value in Creative Scotland's strategy and its closer relationship with the Scottish government certainly made a great impact on its core funded arts organisations. Furthermore, the lack of communication and clarification also led to anxiety amongst organisations, and this issue has become even more obvious amongst those who are not regularly funded by the agency.

#### *Individual Artists, Creative Practitioners, Grassroots Organisations*

As of February 2014, there are 45 FOs and 81 'Programme Organisations and Annual Clients', many of these were previously FXOs. Most of the 126 core funded organisations are based in the central belt with 46 in Glasgow and 39 in Edinburgh. The Highlands is the region with the most core-funded organisations (seven in total) outside of the central belt, while there are none in the rural lowlands of Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders.

Therefore, most of the arts organisations in rural Scotland fall within the category of grassroots organisations and have been receiving minimal and inconsistent support from both the SAC and Creative Scotland. Grassroots organisations and individuals also faced similar issues to those who are regularly funded, caused by the new cross-discipline system and 'open eligibility' application process. Although there are individual artists who receive funding alongside larger establishments - as mentioned earlier regarding the Quality Production - Arts Investment Strand, the idea of individual artists competing with larger establishments such as the British Council and the National Galleries of Scotland



for the same pot of funding is intimidating and disadvantageous for those with fewer resources.

Although the cross-disciplinary system and open eligibility application process appear to be beneficial for smaller and grassroots organisations and individuals which have never received funding from the SAC or Creative Scotland before, for those not familiar with the SAC or Creative Scotland, the new enquiry system creates obstacles for the application process. For example, the Creative Scotland enquiry offices were shut to the public during working hours, and instead Creative Scotland initiated an 'Open Line' hotline with very short scheduled opening hours, e.g. 2-4pm on certain days of the week. The Investment Surgeries, the only way to meet an officer from Creative Scotland face-to-face to discuss investment opportunities, are also only scheduled very irregularly. For artists, curators and other practitioners who usually have various commitments and precarious working arrangements as self-employed businesses, it is not very easy to receive help and assistance from Creative Scotland during the application process. Kate Martin, an Edinburgh-based freelance contemporary art curator who runs grassroots organisation Contemporary Art Exchange, commented: 'In the current system, you will never know who you are competing against and it's also harder to tell what the basis is for the investment decisions - when the award lists were published, you have never heard of half of the successful applicants because they are not in your sector (art form)... It has also become more difficult to approach development officers or anyone who can give you advice... the Open Line is rarely open and the Investment Surgeries are too few and far between' (Martin, interview with author, 1 March 2012).

The lack of communication and poor accessibility of Creative Scotland seem to be the key issues that have made the new cross-discipline system even harder to understand. Artists not only found the new language of Creative Scotland unhelpful (Bradley, 2011) but also felt that it had become harder to approach the right person for advice. At the same time, many felt that Creative Scotland encouraged artists to see their work as a business. In the interviews conducted by *Variant*, Scotland's magazine on cultural politics, one artist and committee member of the Transmission Gallery in Glasgow pointed out that the change in language is an attempt to put business-oriented ideas into the heads of artists, and encourage more organisations and artists to see their work as businesses

(Anonymous quoted in Bradley, 2011). After *Variant* was discontinued after its Spring 2012 issue following an unsuccessful funding application to Creative Scotland, it continued its Creative Scotland blog ([creativescotland.blogspot.co.uk](http://creativescotland.blogspot.co.uk)) and brought forward issues reflected by artists and those who work at the grassroots of the sector. The Scottish Artist Union (SAU) also fought hard and started a petition to Creative Scotland 'To implement policies to improve conditions of artists and makers' on [change.org](http://change.org) in October 2012 which had been signed by over 500 artists when Dixon announced his resignation in December.

## **Conclusion**

The history of the transition from the SAC to Creative Scotland forms part of the larger context of this research. Because of the above mentioned issues, recent controversies such as the resignations of the Chief Executive Officer and the Senior Director of Creative Scotland in late 2012, and the even more recent appointment of a new Director, there are still anxieties and uncertainties concerning the future of the agency and its clients, three years after its official launch.

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, a key political and strategic purpose of the transition was to establish a new agency that would have a stronger connection with the Scottish Government, and therefore be able and willing to advise on and deliver the priorities and visions of the Scottish Government on the arts and culture. This purpose was achieved through prioritising the implications of the social and economic value of the arts in Creative Scotland's agenda as well as promoting Scotland as a nation through arts and cultural diplomacy and tourism. During this process, some issues concerning how realistic this strategy was were presented.

Firstly, although the original recommendation of the Cultural Commission was to establish a national agency that represents all aspects of culture in Scotland, Creative Scotland only represents the arts and screen industries in Scotland, with some connection to creative industries, but minimal connection to the heritage and other cultural sectors. This exclusiveness could become an obstacle if Creative Scotland wishes to achieve greater impact in cultural diplomacy or even cultural tourism - which has become an obvious priority for the agency. Cultural diplomacy agencies such as the British Council and the Goethe Institute often package different aspects of the nations' culture, including language, history, the arts,

education and social customs into one attractive package. Creative Scotland, on the other hand, can only represent the arts and screen of Scotland, which would be out of context without any partnerships with agencies of other disciplines such as Museums and Galleries Scotland, Historic Scotland or Education Scotland. The same issues exist for cultural tourism development. VisitScotland reported that most of the visitors to Scotland are motivated by the nation's landscape and heritage (VisitScotland, 2012f: 22) and, despite having worked with VisitScotland on the 2012 Year of Creative Scotland Campaign, Creative Scotland still has minimal connections with the natural and cultural heritage sector in Scotland. Although the national agency hopes to make Scotland's arts one of its key attractions, at the moment the arts are still often seen as an add-on in the nation's tourism campaigns. Cultural tourism in Scotland and its relevance in rural regions will be discussed further in Chapter 7.

Secondly, by prioritising the social and economic value of the arts with a smaller staff and a budget that was only slightly larger, it is inevitable that investments in other areas would become restricted. In the case of Creative Scotland, the roles of advocacy and supporting the artistic community, which were key priorities of the SAC, were dropped significantly from the priority list. Although the SAC was criticised at times for being elitist in supporting the arts for arts' sake, it was the only national funding body that advocated for artistic communities. LAs and other funding bodies might invest in the arts but it is for the purpose of achieving their own goals, whether it was for community development or educational purposes. After the transition, Creative Scotland's priorities closely reflected the Scottish Government priorities for the arts and culture, which reserve a much smaller place for supporting artistic communities. At the same time, the insufficient communication strategies and unwelcome corporate language of the new agency worsened the anxieties already brought about by the changes. This eventually led to the controversy surrounding Creative Scotland's new direction in 2012, which will be further discussed in Chapter 6 in the context of changes within the Dumfries and Galloway region.

However, despite the controversial nature of the transition from the SAC to Creative Scotland, it is worth exploring how relevant this transition is to the arts in rural Scotland, given that support for the arts in rural regions has always been minimal and inconsistent. The influence of the new 'Invest in Places' priority of

Creative Scotland and the subsequent programmes 'Creative Places Awards', awards of £50,000 - £150,000 to creative towns of fewer than 2,500 residents to fewer than 100,000 residents, and 'Place Partnerships', investment in partnership working between Creative Scotland and local authorities, will be discussed further in Chapter 6. The next chapter will set the context by mapping the arts development in rural Scotland and presenting the status of the local authority arts teams, arts development agencies and lists of key organisations and events, in the run up to and during the transition period.

## Chapter 5 Mapping the Arts in Rural Scotland

Chapter 4 outlined the nationwide arts political context of the research and this chapter will articulate the status of arts development in different rural regions in this research and further illuminate its connection or disconnection with arts politics at the national level.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the demography and economy vary greatly across the regions of rural Scotland. In this thesis, the regions are grouped into larger geographic areas: South of Scotland - Rural Lowlands; Aberdeenshire and Surrounding Areas; and Highlands and Islands. Looking at Scotland as a whole, little connection was found between arts and rural development in existing literature. In Scottish Agricultural College's *Rural Scotland in Focus 2012* report, one of the most, if not the most, comprehensive reports on the facts and status of rural Scotland, 'arts' was mentioned on only two occasions and both times alongside tourism. 'The arts, culture and heritage', as one sector was mentioned once as one of the sectors which could benefit from high-speed internet access, and 'craft' was mentioned to describe a case study on Craft Town Scotland, West Kilbride as an example of a 'bottom-up' approach to enhance rural towns' identities (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012). However, this is an improvement compared with the 2010 version of the report where none of these words were mentioned at all.

This part of the thesis intends to demonstrate the connection between the arts and rural Scotland by mapping out the facts regarding subsidised arts in rural Scotland. Focusing on visual arts and craft, the following will look at the status of arts development services within the LAs in rural Scotland and thirty-five leading arts organisations and events<sup>29</sup> as of 2012.

### South of Scotland - Rural Lowlands

Dumfries and Galloway and Scottish Borders are part of the same larger geographic area because of their neighbouring location and their shared features. Both are

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<sup>29</sup> All organisations and events in this part of the thesis are listed in Appendix II. The criteria of how the organisations and events were selected are: 1. Non-profit organisation; 2. receive at least one resource of public funding as part of the running cost; 3. Matching at least one of the following criteria: a. having more than 1 paid member of staff; b. established for over 5 years; c. annual visitor/audience numbers over 10,000.

politically conservative, both have strong connections with the neighbouring English regions and both suffered heavily during the 2001 outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease.

Despite the resilience of most rural areas in Scotland to the 2008 financial crisis and recent recession compared to urban areas (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012), Southern Scotland (including Argyll and Bute and the Ayrshires) was hit the hardest. In the same report, ninety settlements throughout Scotland were evaluated on their vulnerability,<sup>30</sup> with all five of the most vulnerable settlements in Southern Scotland including two in Dumfries and Galloway.<sup>31</sup>

Past tourism research and reports have shown that both regions have considerably less Scottish visitors compared with the national average. For example, in the evaluation of the 2009 Homecoming year, overall 34% of visitors to the Homecoming events were from Scotland whereas only 17% of visitors to Homecoming events in Dumfries and Galloway were from Scotland (EKOS, 2009;<sup>32</sup> Garnsworthy, 2011). Similarly, in VisitScotland's *Scotland Visitor Survey 2011*, only 39% of visitors to the region were from other parts of Scotland compared with 40% nationwide and 47% in Highland.

### *Dumfries and Galloway*

Being the southernmost region of Scotland, Dumfries and Galloway shares a close connection with both Cumbria in England and Northern Ireland. It is not unusual for residents in the south of the region to commute to work in the English border city of Carlisle and/or go shopping and to events in Carlisle and other larger towns

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<sup>30</sup> The Vulnerability Index provides a means of comparing the vulnerability of 90 different settlements across Scotland. The 90 settlements are located across Scotland and are of varying sizes. The Index is based on four indicators: the proportion of the local population of working age, the proportion of the local population claiming Job Seekers Allowance, the proportion of the local population working in the public sector and a measure of income deprivation devised from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). While only representing four features of a place, these indicators nevertheless reflect important current social and economic processes, in terms of ongoing weaknesses in the economy, public sector contraction and demographic shifts. (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012: 34-35)

<sup>31</sup> The five most vulnerable towns are: Campbeltown and Dunoon in Argyll and Bute, Girvan in South Ayrshire, Stranraer and Sanquhar in Dumfries and Galloway. Besides the two towns in Dumfries and Galloway, the other three settlements are all remote small towns.

<sup>32</sup> The EKOS report was commissioned by the Homecoming Team to evaluate the economic impact of the 2009 Homecoming. The reliability of the report was questioned by VisitScotland and the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee, and the Committee later commissioned Dr Geoff Riddington of GRID Economics to review the report (Riddington, 2010). However, although the estimated economic impact was questioned and reviewed, the visitor numbers stayed the same.

in northern Cumbria. Jan Hogarth, Creative Director of Wide Open, a public art commissioning agency and Alan Thomson, then Director of dgArts both believed that the region's geographic location, along with the fact it was the second most infected region in the UK after Cumbria during the 2001 outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease provided a catalyst for community projects post-2001 (Hogarth, interview with author, 12 October 2011; Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011).

Until 2011, region-wide arts development in Dumfries and Galloway was mainly carried out by the LA's arts team and dgArts, formerly Dumfries and Galloway Arts Association. The LA arts team focused on running the council's arts and museum venues including the Gracefield Arts Centre and the Robert Burns Centre along with Visual Arts and Crafts development. dgArts developed projects in performing arts including theatre and music, literature and public art commissions. In the autumn of 2011 dgArts collapsed leaving the region with a lack of championing and support for certain art forms. Interviewees believed at the time, that senior management of the local authority did not show a strong enough interest in the arts, which caused further anxiety within the arts sector (Hogarth, interview with author, 12 October 2011; Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011).

With support from Creative Scotland, a new body the 'Chamber of the Arts' was founded by the council and the local artistic community in early 2012. The process and the operation of the chamber will be discussed further in the Dumfries and Galloway case study in the next chapter. The following table gives a brief introduction to independent arts organisations in the region.

Name of Organisation	Discipline	Venue Based?	Location	Year of Est.	Project Started By
CatStrand	Performing Arts, Visual Art	Y	New Galloway	2007	Local Community (General)
Mill on the Fleet	Visual Art; Historic Building	Y	Gatehouse of Fleet	1980s	Local Authority
Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival	Performing Arts	N	Region-wide	1979	Local Community
Spring Fling Open Studios	Visual Art and Craft	N	Region-wide	2003	Local Authority
Big Burns Supper	Performing Arts	N	Dumfries	2011	Local Community (General)
Wigtown Book Festival	Literature	N	Wigtown	1998	Local Community (General)

*Table 3 Leading arts organisations and events in Dumfries and Galloway*

### *Scottish Borders*

Similarly to Dumfries and Galloway, Scottish Borders shares strong connections and facilities with its neighbouring English county of Northumberland. The region also has a stronger connection with the central belt. While Dumfries and Galloway's furthest north town Sanquhar is 50 miles away from Glasgow, some of the towns in Scottish Borders like West Linton and Peebles are less than 25 miles away from Edinburgh. This makes the arts and cultural establishments and events in the central belt more accessible to residents of these areas compared to those in other parts of rural Scotland. It also makes a commute to work in Edinburgh possible, which might be one of the reasons why the predicted population increase in the Scottish Borders is in the top five among rural regions (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012: 10). Scottish Borders is also the only region in Scottish mainland without any train stations.

The Scottish Borders Council has a small arts development team with only two members of permanent staff that develops a variety of arts projects. This is handled within the council's Education and Lifelong Learning Department along with the libraries and other education services. As of February 2014, the Scottish Borders Council is working on a new cultural strategy for the region.

One of the most significant developments of the arts infrastructure in the region is the Heart of Hawick. Beginning with a petition from the local community against the demolishing of the Tower Mill in 1998, the Scottish Borders Council raised funds for and supported the major regeneration project in the region's largest settlement. The £9.4 million project took 10 years to complete with the Heart of Hawick opening in 2007 as a multi-agency arts and heritage premises that accommodates the Tower Mill cinema, the Heritage Hub regional archive and local history centre, and the Border Textile Towerhouse textiles museum, all of which are mainly funded and run by the council.

The arts development team also compiles and publishes a quarterly 'What's On' brochure which includes community activities as well as projects and activities organised by the council. Interestingly the arts in Scottish Borders seems to be more connected with their Northumberland counterpart, compared with the connection shared between Dumfries and Galloway and Cumbria. Events in neighbouring Berwick-on-Tweed and Northumberland are often included in the



above mentioned 'What's On' brochure and The Maltings Theatre & Cinema in Berwick is seen as a venue well used by residents of both regions. The venue also identifies itself as 'the premier performing and media arts venue for north Northumberland and the Scottish Borders', although it is not receiving any public funding from the north of the border. The key independent arts organisations in the Scottish Borders are:

Name of Organisation	Discipline	Venue Based ?	Location	Year of Est.	Project Started By
Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre	Performing Arts	Y	Peebles	2004	Local Community (Artists)
Crossing Borders	Visual Art & Craft	N	Region-wide and North Nothumberland	2008	Local Community (Artists)
Borders Book Festival	Literature	N	Melrose	2004	Local Community (General)

*Table 4 Leading arts organisations and events in Scottish Borders.*

### **The Northeast: Aberdeenshire, Moray and Surrounding Areas**

Despite their neighbouring location and similar population density - both the highest in rural regions discussed in this thesis - the local authority areas of Aberdeenshire and Moray appear statistically very different. The economy in both commuter regions is reasonably resilient, the 2011 Bank of Scotland's analysis of house prices in Scotland showed that between 2001 and 2011, Moray had the highest average house inflation at 162% while Aberdeenshire had the highest average housing cost at £198,970 (Bank of Scotland, 2011). In the *Rural Scotland in Focus 2012's* (RSIF2012) ranking of vulnerability among 90 settlements, none of the settlements in the two regions were in the top 45. Aberdeenshire and Moray are also the only two regions that were predicted to have a natural population growth of 5.6% and 0.9% respectively (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012).

Statistics show that Aberdeenshire is one of the least vulnerable regions in rural Scotland. The region was predicted to have the highest population growth (22%) in the run up to the year 2035 among the rural regions discussed in this thesis. Many residents travel to Aberdeen City to work, shop and entertain with some of the region's towns featuring up to 65% of its residents working in Aberdeen City (Aberdeenshire Council, 2010). Its residents have one of the highest average gross incomes in rural Scotland, at the same time, Aberdeenshire is also predicted to be

the fastest ageing region in Scotland between 2010 and 2035 with a 49.7% growth in the pensionable age population (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012).

The Aberdeenshire Council's arts development team remained relevantly strong during the recession with seven core team members of which four are area arts officers - one each responsible for South and North, two for Central, with one designated as the Acting Public Art Officer and the other as the Aberdeen City and Shire Film Officer. The team also works with the Arts Education Officer (post funded through Creative Links), the Youth Music Initiative Co-ordinator, and run ARC Recording Studio and a Media Unit, which is staffed by four people. The Team works under the council's Cultural Services, which aims to widen the community's access to cultural activities. It is the only rural council that still has a Public Art Officer post. In 2011, the Aberdeenshire Council decided to withdraw direct financial support for all independent arts organisations in the region.

Compared with the Aberdeenshire Council, the Moray Council has less support for its arts team. The arts team had its first arts officer in the year 2000, which temporarily grew to a team of four members each with specialist artform knowledge working with cultural co-ordinators funded by the Scottish Arts Council. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the arts budget within the Moray Council has been cut severely in recent years and the council arts service was axed completed in 2013. The leading arts organisations and events in the regions include:

Region	Name of Organisation	Discipline	Venue	Location	Year of Est.	Project Started By
Aberdeenshire and Moray	NEAT (North East Arts Touring)	Performing Art	N	Cross-region	1985	Partnership
Aberdeenshire	Scottish Sculpture Workshop	Visual Art	Y	Lumsden	1979	Individuals
Aberdeenshire	Deveron Arts	Visual Art	N	Huntly	1997	Individuals
Aberdeenshire	Woodend Arts Limited	Performing Art; Visual Art	Y	Banchory	1996	Individuals
Aberdeenshire	Sound	Music	N	Banchory	2005	Local Community (Artists)
Moray	Moray Art Centre	Visual Art	Y	Findhorn	1990s	Individuals
Aberdeenshire and Moray	North East Open Studios	Visual Art and Craft	N	Region-wide	2003	Local Community (Artists)

*Table 5 Leading Arts Organisations and Events in Aberdeenshire and Moray*

### Highlands and Islands

Highlands and Islands - especially when including Argyll and Bute - is a hugely diverse geographic area to discuss together. The regions included in this area are:

Highlands, Western Isles, Argyll and Bute, Orkney Islands and Shetland Islands. During the research, the area showed many shared characteristics, such as the influence of local traditional culture on everyday life, low population density, and limited telecommunication and public transport.

*Rural Scotland in Focus 2012 (RSIF2012)* predicted that Argyll and Bute and Western Isles (Eileanan Siar) will suffer the most significant population decreases in Scotland between 2010 and 2035 by 7.2% and 11% respectively. In contrast, Highland and Orkney have a predicted healthy increase of 15% and 6% respectively, as does Shetland with around 1% (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012: 10-11).

The regions are served by the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) and, prior to 2013, Hi-Arts - a cross-disciplinary agency that developed arts projects in the Highlands and Islands until its closure in early 2013. In addition to the regions in this section, Hi-Arts also supported projects in the LA areas of Moray, Perth and Kinross and occasionally Aberdeenshire.

#### *Argyll and Bute and Eileanan Siar*

Most of Argyll and Bute and all of Eileanan Siar have been categorised as Remote Rural Areas by the Scottish Government (Scottish Government, 2010). The population density in Argyll and Bute is 13 PPK and only 9 PPK in Eileanan Siar. Both regions were predicted to have the steepest population decrease between 2010 and 2035 at 7.2% and 11% respectively (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012). The *RSIF2012* also indicated that overall, 7.4% of the housing stock in Remote Rural Scotland are second homes, and this figure rises to 35% in the Cowal peninsula in Argyll and Bute. As mentioned above, Argyll and Bute was also badly affected by the 2008 economic crisis with two of its settlements at the very top of the list for the most vulnerable settlements in the *RSIF2012* report. Castlebay in Eileanan Siar was also in the top 10 of the list. They are both arguably the most economically vulnerable regions in rural Scotland.

Hi-Arts has worked with Argyll and Bute Council since the Argyll Arts Audit in 1995 and in the setup of the Argyll and Bute Arts Action Group (ABAAG). The partnership between the Argyll and Bute Council and Hi-Arts also introduced the first Arts Development Officer (ADO) post to the council in 1998. Hi-Arts also had a member of staff based in the region who contributes to the maintenance of this partnership.

The Arts Development team in Argyll and Bute Council was a very small team of one with limited administration support from the council's library service. Under the council's Community Services, the ADO developed projects of all art forms in the region. Because of the small size of the team and the wide geographic spread of the region, the ADO 'has subsequently attempted to maximise events that could produce an Argyll and Bute-wide impact and, where possible, bring together voluntary and professional organisations in order to create an identity for the area in the delivery of cultural activity and cultural tourism.' (Argyll and Bute Council, 2008). Many of the past projects supported and developed by the team are performance art and music projects. In 2011, when the ADO retired, the post was not filled and instead, some of the remit of the ADO has become part of the Library Development Officer's - with a change of job title to 'Library and Culture Development Officer'.

Similar issues regarding arts development can be found within the Eileanan Siar arts development team which also only has one full-time post shared between two ADOs. The team also works as part of the Community Life and Leisure Services department of the council, but unlike the Argyll and Bute arts development, the team has been more focused on art and craft among the many art forms.

In 2006 the Council published a cultural strategy (2006 - 2010), still available from the arts and culture section of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar website. The strategy identified 'Language, Heritage, Arts and Creative Industries' as the key aspects of culture in the region, however the importance of language and heritage has largely outweighed the arts and creative industries. In the report, the words 'Language', 'Gaelic' and 'Heritage' were mentioned in total 29 times, while 'Arts' and 'Creative Industries' featured only nine times.

Important to note is that the two people sharing the ADO post are not based in Stornoway where the main council building is based. The ADOs' wide remit ranges from providing support to the local art community, arts projects and individual artists to liaising between organisations and projects. The creative economy and business development side of arts development is also further aided by the Development Department of Comhairle nan Eilean Siar.

Neither of the two arts development teams run any permanent arts venues in the area. The following lists the leading independent organisations and events in both regions:

Region	Name of Organisation	Discipline	Venue Based?	Location	Year of Est.	Project Started By
Argyll and Bute	An Tobar	Visual Arts and Music	Y	Tobermory	1997	Local Community (General)
Argyll and Bute	Mull Theatre	Performing Arts	Y	Druimfin, Tobermory	1966	Individuals
Argyll and Bute	Comar	Performing Arts and Visual Arts	N	Region-wide	2012	Existing Organisations
Argyll and Bute	Cove Park	Visual Art and Craft, Literature	Y	Rosneath peninsula	1999	Individuals
Argyll and Bute	Campbeltown Picture House	Films	Y	Campbeltown	1989 (reopen)	Local Community (General)
Argyll and Bute	Mount Stuart	Visual Arts	Y	Rothesay	2001 (for Visual Arts)	Individuals
Eileanan Siar	An Lanntair	Visual Arts; Performing Arts	Y	Stornoway	1985	Local Community (Artists)
Eileanan Siar	Taigh Chearsabhaigh	Visual Arts; Museum	Y	Uist	1993	Local Community (Artists)
Eileanan Siar	Hebridean Celtic Festival	Music	N	Stornoway	1996	Local Community

*Table 6 Leading Arts Organisations/ Events in Argyll and Bute and Eileanan Siar*

### *Highland*

The local authority area of Highland is also greatly diverse. Based on information from the 2011 census the population density in Highland is only 7PPK whereas the capital city of Inverness has a density of 25PPK - similar to the population density of the whole of Southern Scotland. The *RSIF2012* report predicts a healthy increase of 15% of its population between 2010 and 2035. During the economic crisis, Highland demonstrated a steady recovery with a 6.2% growth in the number of employees in public administration between 2007 and 2010 - the highest in Scotland at this time (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012: 20).

The arts team in the Highland Council used to be a medium sized team with area arts officers responsible for arts development in different areas in the region. The arts team shrank after the previous government funding cuts and local authority cuts, down-sizing the team to 2.5 members of staff - including the Creative Learning Officer funded by Creative Scotland. In October 2011, partly due to further council funding cuts to enable the arts and leisure services to be able to seek sponsorships and support from wider resources, the arts and leisure service

of the council became 'High Life Highland', an independent trust. The arts team, now part of the new trust, curate and tour art exhibitions in High Life Highland's galleries including the craft gallery in Inverness Museum and Art Gallery, as well as develop off-site projects in all art forms. The independent trust enjoys a greater level of freedom in terms of programming, publicity, marketing and fundraising.

While Hi-Arts developed projects in the west and north coast of Highland and the Isle of Skye, the arts team developed projects in Inverness and east coast locations. Within Inverness, the arts team has developed various regeneration projects, some through supporting the Inverness Old Town Art project (IOTA) which brought a number of temporary and permanent public/socially engaged artworks into the city. The IOTA has also started to develop projects outside of the city. Outside of Inverness, the arts team aims to bring arts and cultural activities to areas where arts and culture are less accessible. Despite the fact that most of the visual arts remit of the council was devolved to High Life Highland, the public art has been taken into the Highland Council's planning department, and a public art strategy was published in 2013.

The leading independent arts organisations and events in Highland include:

Name of Organisation	Discipline	Venue Based?	Location	Year of Est.	Project Started By
HICA	Visual Arts	Y	Nr Inverness	2008	Individuals
Highland Print Studio	Visual Arts	Y	Inverness	1986	Local Community (Artists)
ATLAS	Visual Arts	N	Isle of Skye	2010	Local Community & Enterprise Office
Fèis Rois	Gaelic Language Music	N	Ross-shire	1986	Local Community
Fèisean nan Gàidheal	Gaelic Feis	N	Region-wide	1991	Local Community
Moniack Mhor	Literature	Y	Teavarran	1993	Individuals
Timespan	Visual Arts and Heritage	Y	Helmsdale	1986	Local Community
North Lands Creative Glass	Craft	Y	Lybster	1995	Local Community / Politician

*Table 7 Leading Arts Organisations and Events in Highland Council Area (Excluding Inverness)*

### *Orkney and Shetland*

Both far away from the Scottish mainland, Orkney and Shetland are the regions with the lowest population among the Scottish Local Authorities. The two regions elect one Member of Parliament (MP) representing both regions for the UK

parliament and two Members of Scottish Parliament (MSPs) respectively for the Scottish Parliament. Both Orkney and Shetland experienced a rise in political movements supporting greater autonomy for the islands in the 1980s, as a consequence of the devolution debate in the 1970s (Lynch, 2001: 11). Their campaign for greater autonomy continues as the referendum on Scottish independence approaches (McVeigh, 2012; Johnson, 2012; The Shetland Times, 2012). The autonomy movement campaign gained good public support and the phrase 'Going to Scotland' or 'Coming from Scotland' is still frequently used by the residents indicating their independent mind-set. In the *RSIF2012* report, both regions were predicted to have the highest growth of the pensionable aged population at 47.5% in Shetland and 34.5% in Orkney between 2010 and 2035, after Aberdeenshire (49.7%). Orkney and Shetland also have the highest business density among all local authorities in Scotland at 53 - 74 businesses per 1000 people. The *RSIF2012* report commented that this could mean that 'remote rural areas, or the people living within them, have entrepreneurial characteristics which encourage the creation of new businesses. Alternatively, high numbers of businesses may reflect an absence of alternative employment opportunities leaving people forced to set up new enterprises as a means of generating an income' (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012: 45).

Orkney is well-known for its creativity and heritage - which was also reflected during the research where many interviewees based in Highlands and Islands made positive comments on the creativity on the Orkney Islands - which will be discussed further in Chapter 7. The Orkney Islands Council (OIC), in contrast with many other rural LAs, takes great interest in the arts and has developed the region's 4-year arts development strategies since 2004, as well as the Orkney Public Arts Strategy and the Orkney Arts Capital Strategy in 2006. The Arts Development Officer post was created in 2004 with funding from the Scottish Arts Council (SAC), the Orkney Enterprise and the OIC. After the end of the SAC-funded Cultural Coordinator programme, the Cultural Coordinator Manager and the Cultural Coordinator posts were both mainstreamed and made permanent in 2010. The Manager post-holder has since left the council and the Cultural Coordinator post has been restructured as an Arts Officer, and is now fulfilling the function of the Arts Development Officer after the original post holder was promoted to be the Service Manager for Arts, Museums and Heritage. The arts team remains a team of one member of staff, but

with a broad remit across arts and culture in Orkney (Beasant, interview with author, 20 October 2011). The OIC supports six core independent organisations through its Culture Fund: the St Magnus International Festival; the Pier Arts Centre; the Orkney Folk Festival; the Orkney Traditional Dance Association (to run the Orkney Ceilidh Weekend); Stromness Museum; and Birsay Heritage Trust (for running Barony Mills).

Similarly to Orkney, Shetland also has a wealth of artistic culture especially in the textiles industry. Being one of the wealthiest regions in Rural Scotland in terms of average income (ONS, 2011a)<sup>33</sup> benefiting from the North Sea oil industry, the community in Shetland invest greatly in the arts. Shetland Arts was founded in 2006 and is supported by the Shetland Charitable Trust and Creative Scotland. It functions as the arts development body for Shetland replacing the council's arts and cultural services. The leading museum, Shetland Museum and Archives, is managed by Shetland Amenity Trust, making Shetland the only rural Local Authority area where none of the cultural and arts services are delivered, funded directly or solely through the LA service. The function of trusts and Shetland Arts is further explained in Appendix III. Of note is also the strong influence of Viking and Scandinavian culture in Shetland due to its geographic location, one example being the display of the Norwegian flag at the Lerwick quayside that flies alongside both the Scottish and Shetland flags.

The leading arts organisations and events in Orkney and Shetland include:

Region	Name of Organisation	Discipline	Venue Based?	Location	Year of Est.	Project Started By
Orkney	The Pier Arts Centre	Visual Arts and Craft	Y	Stromness	1979	Local Community / Private Donation
Orkney	St Magnus International Festival	Music	N	Region-wide	1977	Individuals
Shetland	Shetland Arts	All Art forms	N/A	Region-wide	2006	Local Trusts

*Table 8 Leading Arts Organisations and Events in Orkney and Shetland*

<sup>33</sup> Based on the Office of National Statistics' 2011 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.



## Regional and Cross-Region Agencies

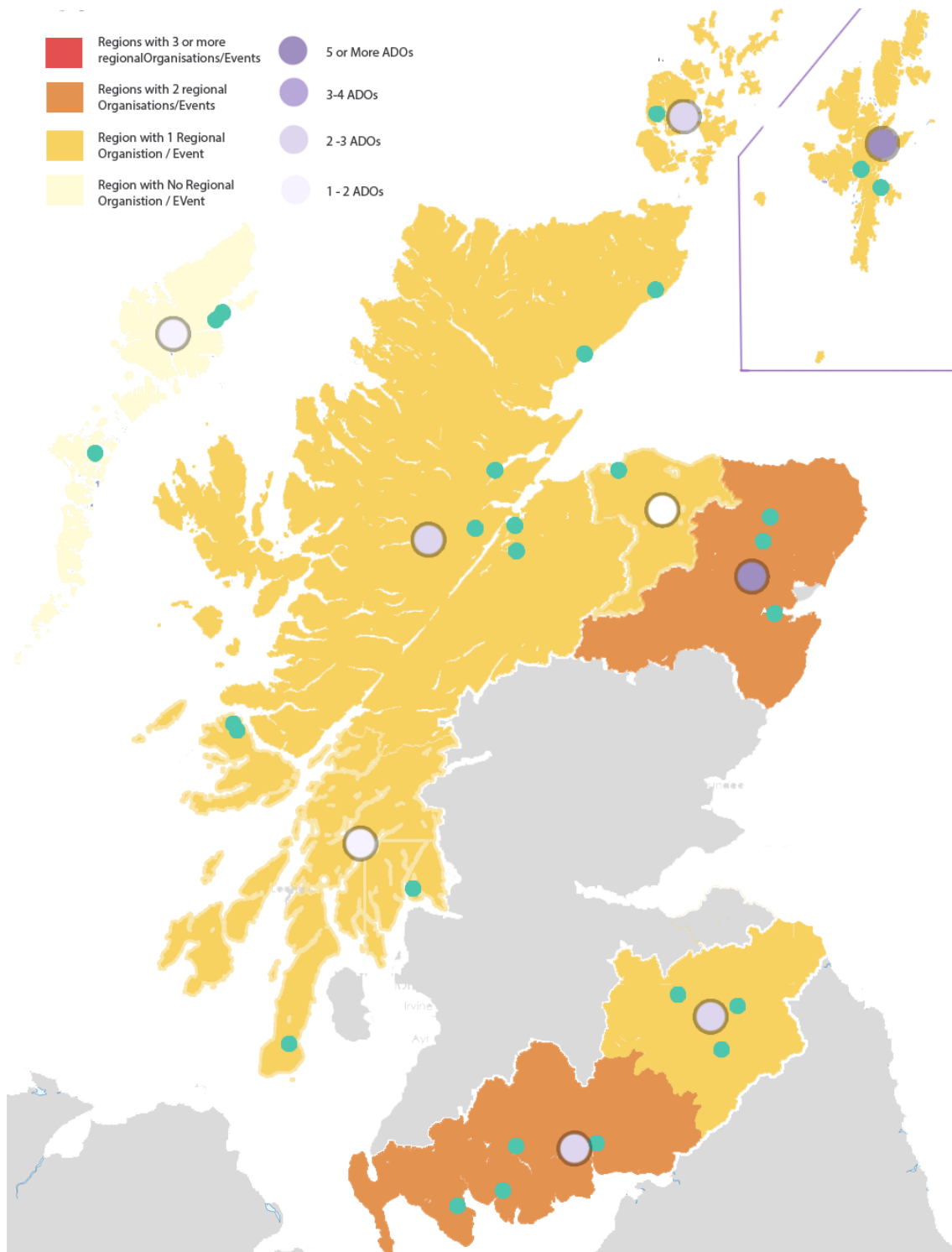
It is easy to see from above that there are only a few regional and cross-region arts development agencies in rural Scotland: dgArts, Hi-Arts and Shetland Arts, and for regions that are not covered by these development agencies, region-wide arts development was still largely carried out by arts teams within the LAs, which are often understaffed and in the case of Moray, with no arts team. The arts development agencies are also very different from each other. While Hi-Arts and dgArts worked alongside the LA arts teams, Shetland Arts carries out all arts development activities in Shetland; and while Shetland Arts and Hi-Arts cover art forms across performing and visual arts, dgArts was primarily developing performing arts and literature.

As mentioned in Chapter 1, a key factor that makes the arts development different in rural Scotland to that in rural England is the absence of regional arts development bodies. In comparison, England had Regional Arts Associations (RAAs) established in the 1960s and 70s, and by the 1990s, the RAAs covered most of the geographic areas of England, urban and rural. After being merged into Arts Council England (ACE) in 2002, the ACE continues to have regional development offices that cover different parts of England, again, all regional offices, except for the London office, cover a mixture of urban and rural areas.

In contrast, the regional and cross-region agencies in rural Scotland were set up much later with Hi-Arts and dgArts around 1990, and Shetland Arts in 2006. They all remained clients of the SAC and their relationships with the SAC before its reform to Creative Scotland were still similar to the relationships between the RAAs and the Arts Council of Great Britain (ACGB) in the 1970s and 80s. As described by Turnbull (2008), historically, the ACGB saw the agencies as merely channels to reach wider audiences and develop rural arts, while the quality and importance of the agencies' work were undervalued. This attitude of the national agency towards arts developed in rural places could still be found in Scotland. Robert Livingston, the then Director of Hi-Arts, said that he was once questioned by the SAC about the necessity of Hi-Arts' community theatre projects in Highlands and Islands. The representative of the SAC asked why they needed to develop theatre indigenously when the SAC had sent them all those touring theatre companies. Livingston commented further that the tendency of the SAC, particularly in the lead up to big events such as the 2012 Olympics and 2014

Commonwealth Games, is 'What can we get out of these (rural) areas?' and not 'What can these areas contribute to Scotland as a whole?' (Livingston, interview with author, 29 July 2011).

The following Figures 10 and 11, show the key arts organisations/events in each rural region, with numbers of organisations and events with region-wide remit represented by colours instead of dots. The reason for having both figures, with and without the cross-region arts organisations in Highlands and Islands, is to highlight the lack of arts organisations in regions such as Eileanan Siar and Argyll and Bute without the support from cross-region organisations.



*Figure 10 Mapping the arts in Rural Scotland without Highlands and Islands cross-region organisations. (Blue dots represent organisations and events listed in Table 8.)*

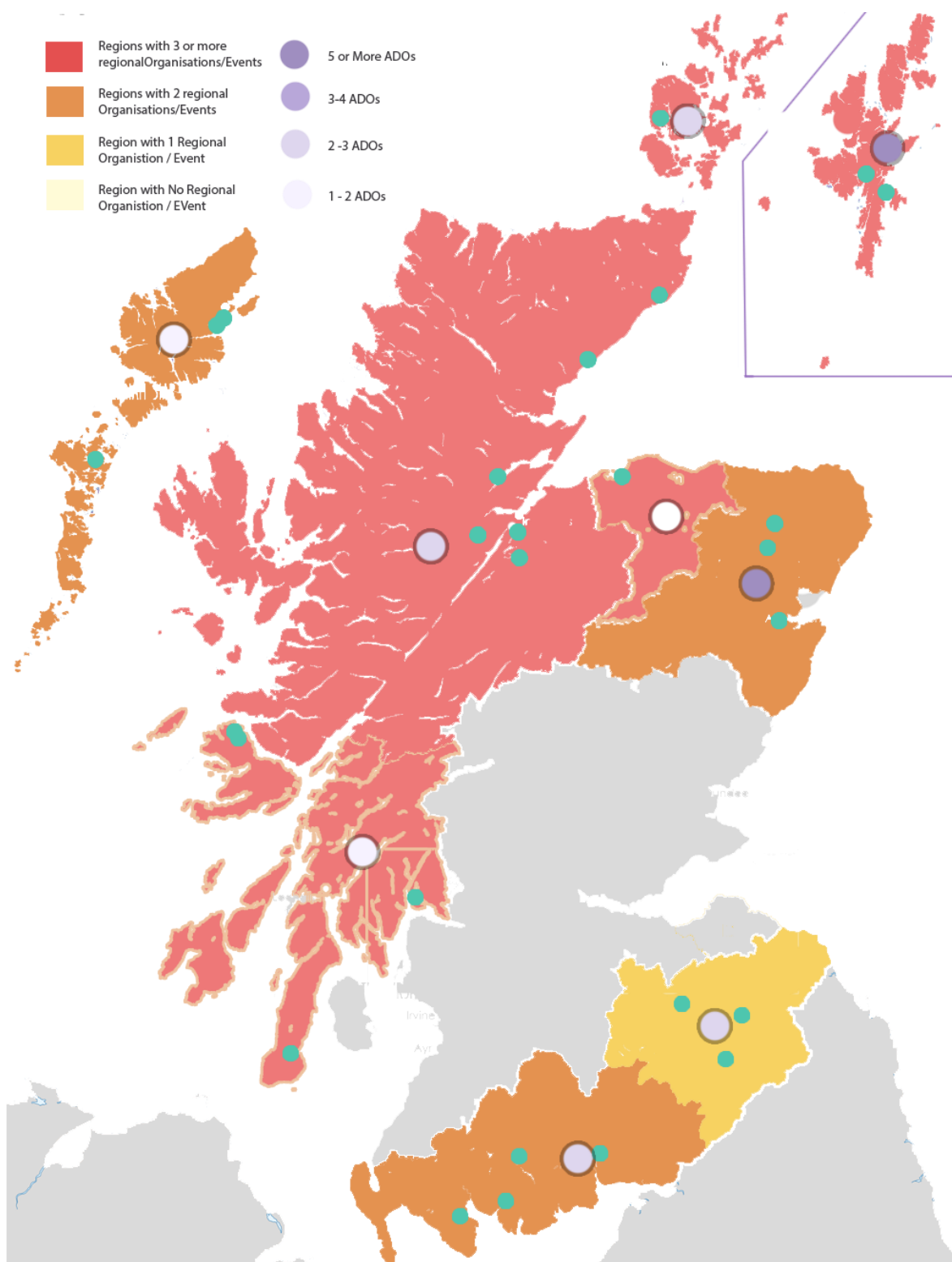


Figure 11 Mapping the arts in Rural Scotland - with Highlands and Islands cross-region organisations. (Blue dots represent organisations and events listed in Table 8.)

## Conclusion

The data presented in this chapter highlights some of the key features for arts development in rural Scotland. Firstly, the LAs of wealthier and economically less vulnerable regions, such as the Shetland Islands - through Shetland Arts, Orkney Islands and Aberdeenshire - showed stronger support for the arts. This is contrary to their urban counterparts, where regional arts policy is often closely related to urban deprivation and regeneration, hence the more vulnerable areas are more likely to receive support from LAs. In rural Scotland, however, as discussed in Chapter 2, the focus of arts development in LAs still lies in community development, where the role of the arts in the local community is more focused on bringing arts and cultural activities to the lives of local residents, who have less access to them and building community cohesion and confidence. It also sees the arts having the potential to attract more visitors, migrants and businesses to their regions. The instrumental roles of fighting against deprivation and social inclusion are not emphasised in public subsidised arts in rural Scotland, even though rural deprivation is becoming a pressing issues in many rural areas (SRUC, 2014).

Secondly, although many of the rural LA's art teams are under-staffed, it is not to say that the arts are not considered an important part of each region. The list of all organisations has shown that only four out of the 37 organisations were started with a 'top-down' approach, while all the other arts organisations were started by the local communities themselves. Many started before the LAs even had arts development services and are now considered some of the most successful organisations and events such as An Lanntair, Deveron Arts and the St Magnus Festival. Some of the arts organisations and events are still dependent on public funding and many have seldom, if ever, received funding from Creative Scotland or its predecessor, instead, they often have more diverse income sources as shown in Appendix III, making them more resilient to public policy changes.

Lastly, analysing the list of the organisations and how many of them the SAC/Creative Scotland has regularly funded, it is not difficult to conclude that there are two types of clients the national agency is more likely to fund: larger and established organisations such as An Lanntair, Pier Arts Centre and Shetland Arts, that cover a wide remit and bring quality productions to local audiences; and

organisations that are primarily benefiting (and not necessarily local) artists in terms of providing opportunities to develop their work, such as Cove Park and Highland Print Studio. The former are normally integrated within local communities and/or are regarded as tourism destinations; however the latter, despite being situated in rural environments, have much less contact with the local community. This shows that the priority of the SAC in rural areas before the transition to Creative Scotland, was to take high quality arts to local audiences, rather than develop arts within local communities. From earlier discussions and as can be seen in Appendix III, a vast majority of the organisations and events included were started indigenously by local communities, whether it was the general or the creative community; many started with community development funds; and many still lack support from the national arts agency. The next chapters will further demonstrate that this indigenous approach is the key feature of arts development in rural Scotland and highlights the mis-match between the priorities of the national agency and the reality of arts development in rural communities in Scotland. However, similarly to the way in which rural arts in England were developed following the Foot and Mouth related crisis, in Dumfries and Galloway, the only Scottish region to have suffered heavily from the Foot and Mouth outbreak in 2001, a crisis resulted in the region's arts becoming further developed.

The discussions and analysis above lead to the next chapter of this thesis, a case study on the developments in the arts in the past decade in the region of Dumfries and Galloway. This research will look at and discuss the importance of an infrastructure in arts development in rural regions, and the role of community, local authority and national agencies in building this infrastructure.

## **Chapter 6 Development of an Arts Infrastructure in a Rural Region**

### ***A Case Study on Dumfries and Galloway***

The regional case study on Dumfries and Galloway forms an important part of this research. It explores not only the arts in the rural development of Dumfries and Galloway but also highlights and analyses certain issues that exist across the rural regions of Scotland. Building on the discussions in Chapter 4 and 5, this chapter will extend and deepen the research into the roles that national/cross-region agencies, local authority and local communities played in shaping the arts infrastructure in Dumfries and Galloway, particularly within the context of economic and social changes affecting the region during the 2000s and the more recent re-development of its arts infrastructure, which coincided with the transition from the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) to Creative Scotland.

This case study presents the larger picture of the arts in Dumfries and Galloway, with a focus on issues of both of the crises over the last decade and how they have influenced the development of the infrastructure of the arts in the region. The actions and reactions of the national/cross-region agencies including the SAC/Creative Scotland, the LA and local communities will be discussed and examples from other regions will also be introduced to support and compare with the examples from Dumfries and Galloway. By providing an in-depth discussion on issues in Dumfries and Galloway, this case study aims to articulate the importance of a stable and functional infrastructure for the arts in rural regions and the role of national agencies, particularly Creative Scotland, in developing this infrastructure.

#### **Arts Development and the Building of an Infrastructure in the 2000s**

Discussions in previous chapters concluded that the rural regions in Scotland are largely diverse in terms of economy and population. Dumfries and Galloway has a more traditional rural economy that relies on farming and local businesses. It is also seen as having a weaker cultural identity compared with many other rural regions in Scotland that have special features, such as highland culture in Highland and Moray, the independence and Viking history of the northern isles, and the Gaelic Culture of Eileanan Siar. Therefore, after the Foot and Mouth disease (FMD) devastated the traditional local economy in Dumfries and Galloway in 2001, the local authority, local communities and organisations started to explore and invest

in diversifying the region's economy. As a result, many arts projects, especially those linked with cultural tourism, were initiated or have been enhanced since then, examples of which will be introduced in this chapter. An infrastructure for the arts in the region was also formed between the council, dgArts, and a number of community initiated organisations and events in the 2000s.

Chapter 5 discussed briefly how the 2001 outbreak of FMD affected Dumfries and Galloway. The outbreak is still regularly talked about by locals and was seen as a turning point for many local organisations and businesses. This section looks at the role of national/cross-region agencies, the local authority and local community during the 2000s, which may or may not be directly influenced by the 2001 outbreak, and how their actions led to the formation of the infrastructure for the arts in the region prior to 2011.

### ***The National/Cross-Region Agencies***

As discussed in previous chapters, there was very limited political guidance for rural community development prior to 2001 as is still the case. Despite a change in language across Europe from 'agricultural policy' to 'rural policy' in policy-making around the year 2000, the core of rural policy in Scotland still lies with agriculture (Jordan and Halpin, 2006). There were a few developments in the 2000s including the increased and diversified use of LEADER funding from the European Union and rural community development network, however, as Jordan and Halpin (2006) state, there was no network for non-farming rural development and there were limited non-farming rural policies in Scotland as well.

Although the LEADER programme and other European rural development initiatives became important income sources for arts projects in rural Scotland, most non-farming strategic guidance was provided by the rural divisions or departments of national and cross-region agencies. For example, the local government umbrella group Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) set up a Rural Affairs Executive group, the British Medical Association Scotland has a 'rural practice' element in its policy advocacy work and the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) has created a Rural Team, focussing upon rural public services levels. The national agencies, including the Scottish Enterprise, the Scottish Arts Council and Visit Scotland, and their role before and after 2001 will be discussed below.



### *Scottish Enterprise*

One of the key differences between the remits of the Scottish Enterprise (SE) and that of the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) is their involvement in community development. Although not separating their covered areas entirely based on local authority regions, the HIE roughly covers the LA regions of Argyll and Bute, Highland, Moray, Orkney, Eilean Siar and Shetland - all of which are identified as rural regions in this research. The SE covers all other regions including the rural regions such as Dumfries and Galloway, Scottish Borders and Aberdeenshire as well as urban centres including Glasgow and Edinburgh. In addition to sharing much of its remit such as economic development, enterprise and innovation with the SE, the HIE also prioritises community development within its remit, with arts and culture identified as a key contributor (HIE, 2012).

Although both enterprise development agencies have 'Innovation' and 'Creative Industry Development' as part of their strategies, those developments led by the SE are often focused on industries that are more profitable, such as media and video gaming, many of which aim to compete globally. The same remit of the HIE covers a higher level of arts and culture as well as small creative businesses and their contribution to local economy and communities. The community focus of the HIE was also the main driving force for the setup of Hi-Arts in 1990, and the arts strategy for Highlands and Islands in 1993 (HIE, 1993). It also provided strong support for arts and creative businesses in HIE areas as recalled by Robert Livingston, then Director of Hi-Arts and Iain Hamilton, the Head of Creative Industries of the HIE (Livingston, interview with author, 29 July 2011; Hamilton, interview with author, 19 October 2011). In comparison, the innovation and creative industries developments led by the SE are more commercial and economically-focused. Therefore most of their creative clients, many of them advertising agencies, gaming developers and design agencies are based in urban centres, especially in the central belt. The services are subsequently less relevant to arts and cultural activity or community development, particularly in rural areas.

### *The SAC and Creative Scotland*

Most of the support from the SAC in the region prior to 2011 went to the local council's arts team and the Dumfries and Galloway Arts Association (later dgArts - and will be referred to as dgArts in this thesis). An arts officer's post within the Dumfries and Galloway Council's arts and cultural service, responsible for curating art exhibitions, was created through the SAC seed funding in the early 2000s and has since been mainstreamed into the council. The Council also co-funded a Cultural Co-ordinator through the Cultural Co-ordinator in Scottish Schools (CCiSS) programme. This post was not mainstreamed but continued to be funded by Creative Scotland and Education Scotland through the Creative Links project as a Curriculum Support Officer within the Curriculum for Excellence team.<sup>34</sup> dgArts, a region-wide organisation delivering and developing performing arts, literature and public art projects among others - alongside the Council's arts team, received foundation funding from the SAC before the national agency's transition to Creative Scotland. The SAC also funded a position to develop public art in dgArts. Before dgArts dissolved in 2011, it was the only core-funded organisation to the south of the Scottish central belt.

Besides the larger amounts of investment and support mentioned above, some organisations and events in the region, such as CatStrand, the Wigtown Book Festival (WBF) and Spring Fling Open Studios (Spring Fling) also received smaller sums of funding from the SAC/Creative Scotland for temporary projects. However, the SAC/Creative Scotland has never been a main financial contributor to the running costs of those organisations or events.

### *VisitScotland*

Since its rebranding in 2005, VisitScotland has caused controversy in Dumfries and Galloway. Amongst the many complaints from organisations in the region, the most high profile was that of the Association of Dumfries and Galloway Accommodation Providers (ADGAP). They launched a petition to 'reclaim' visitscotland.com to public ownership following a few 'Website Rows', as described by local press (Dumfries and Galloway Standard, 2005; Galloway Gazette, 2006). Their successful complaint to the Scottish Information Commission

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<sup>34</sup> The Curriculum for Excellence team is part of the Council's Education service and the Curriculum Support Officer contributes to the local education setup with arts workshops and activities etc.

for the disclosure of all contracts between VisitScotland and eTourism LTD, the Austrian-owned agency who ran [visitscotland.com](http://visitscotland.com) at the time<sup>35</sup> (The Scotsman, 2007; Dumfries and Galloway Standard, 2006). These controversies became a factor that led to the establishment of Destination Dumfries and Galloway (DD&G) in 2011, which took over the role of advocacy and now represents accommodation and other tourism businesses in the region.

However controversial, VisitScotland, mostly through its branch EventScotland, still funded various one-off projects as part of the festivals in the region and has been a key funder of the WBF.

The examination above articulates the amount of top level guidance and support for the arts in Dumfries and Galloway. Amongst the national agencies, the SAC/Creative Scotland has been relatively more involved and supportive of the arts in the region, as their remits indicate they should be, while support from VisitScotland and the SE has been minimal. Moreover, there has been very limited collaboration between the three agencies at a local level. Although there is no clear evidence of conflict between the agencies' strategies, no sign of dialogue was found either, despite Creative Scotland and VisitScotland cooperating on the nationwide Year of Creative Scotland project in 2012 and the involvement of VisitScotland in Creative Scotland's Creative Places Awards. For example, in *Dumfries and Galloway's 2011 - 2016 Regional Tourism Strategy* (Dumfries and Galloway Council, 2011) - developed in partnership between the Dumfries and Galloway Council, DD&G and VisitScotland - there is no mention at all of the SAC, Creative Scotland or even the region's arts, culture or heritage, despite identifying dgArts and the SE as potential partners. This could be because of the differences in the national agencies' interests at a local level and the fact that supporting locally generated arts and culture, which is the most common way for arts development in rural regions as pointed out in Chapter 5, was not on any of their agendas. Instead, as will be discussed in the next section of the chapter, many arts organisations seek support from local foundations and trusts, many of which have community development remits.

Furthermore, more substantial support from the SAC/Creative Scotland was received by the local authority and dgArts, either through creating jobs or

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<sup>35</sup> VisitScotland brought [visitscotland.com](http://visitscotland.com) back to public ownership in 2008.

supporting the council's new initiatives. Rebecca Coggins, Principal Officer Arts and Museums (Nithsdale), Dumfries & Galloway Council, emphasised the importance of the national arts agency when lobbying within the council:

The Council is just about the wellbeing of its citizens and it's got other priorities which are about young people and older people and community safety and things like that. It's not actually the arts. So it's very useful to have the Creative Scotland priorities which are about the arts, about talent and about place...and the Scottish Arts Council before Creative Scotland, that to have the support and advocacy of a body that's for the arts is really important with the Council. Otherwise the Council doesn't really need to be bothered. (Coggins, interview with author, 18 December 2012)

Coggins pointed out that the development of the arts in the region and the success achieved by dgArts are mainly because of the support from outside of the council, and particularly from the SAC. Without an established independent arts venue in the region, like An Lanntair in Eilean Siar or Pier Arts Centre in Orkney which are both core funded by the SAC/Creative Scotland, the SAC/Creative Scotland's support in Dumfries and Galloway went to the council and dgArts, and together they covered the whole of the region and all art forms. Coggins also believes the involvement of the SAC has greatly encouraged bringing high quality art productions to the region, especially to council venues such as Gracefield Arts Centre in Dumfries.

However, as mentioned earlier, there is very limited support from the SAC/Creative Scotland for independent organisations and events in the region, with relevant investments usually being project-based, less strategic and unsustainable. For example, none of the independent organisations, including dgArts, received financial support from the SAC/Creative Scotland in the early years of their establishment, nor do they currently receive regular support from Creative Scotland. The WBF has been receiving funding from the SAC since 2005, but the main running costs of the festival still come from private sponsorship, ticket sales, EventScotland and the Dumfries and Galloway Council.

The cause of this is not only due to the strategic directions of national agencies, but also the nature of these organisations and how they were initiated in the first instance - a perspective that will be discussed later in this chapter. The next

section will look at regional issues, the council's strategies and various independent arts organisations/events in this region and the role they played in shaping the arts in the region.

### ***The Region, Local Authority and Other Local Factors***

#### ***Dumfries and Galloway as a Region***

Before looking at the local authority and the different organisations' roles in arts development in Dumfries and Galloway, it is necessary to introduce one of the clear features of the region. The region of Dumfries and Galloway was formerly divided into four areas and each with local councils: Nithsdale, Annandale and Eskdale, Wigtonshire and Stewartry. The lack of cooperation between the areas was recognised as one of the main issues in the region. Thomson, then Director of dgArts, identified the areas and towns of Dumfries and Galloway as very competitive with each other:

... each elected member has to fight tooth and nail for their own area - which is a feature of Southwest Scotland - that each neighbouring town hates each other and is highly jealous. So it's not a great amount of cooperation, and there's a lot of tension between the east of Dumfries and Galloway and the west of Dumfries and Galloway, each thinks the other gets the bigger share of things. (Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011)

The diversity and contrast within larger regions is not uncommon in rural Scotland as mentioned by both Kevin Baker, Library and Culture Development Officer, Argyll and Bute Council and Saskia Gibbon, Arts Development Officer (North) & Acting Public Art Officer, Aberdeenshire Council (Baker, interview with author, 10 January 2013; Gibbon, interview with author, 27 July 2011). But it seems that the competitiveness between the different areas and towns is more extreme and politically influential in Dumfries and Galloway. Thomson's identification of the region was shared by Coggins (interview with author, 18 December 2012), when speaking about the lack of an established independent arts venue in the region:

There's always really huge tensions in Dumfries and Galloway about, 'Why that town, and not my town?' Yes, Dumfries is the regional capital so there might be a reason there, but then it's like, 'Well, why do that part of Dumfries and why not my bit of Dumfries....' So it's a challenging thing.

There is also an apparent lack of communication with other rural regions, and until the setup of the Creative Arts Business Network (CABN) project, there was very limited communication between Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders. Thomson continued to suggest that Dumfries and Galloway has been largely marginalised within nationwide politics compared to regions like the Highlands, and that there is very limited opportunity to have dialogue with other rural areas. This was seen as largely due to the feeling that there are very little shared features with other regions as well as geographic difficulties (Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011).

### *Dumfries and Galloway Council*

#### **The Arts Service**

The Dumfries and Galloway Council formed its first Cultural Strategy in 1998 in partnership with Dumfries and Galloway Arts Association, and split the lead role for art forms between the Council's arts team and the Arts Association. The council took on the lead role for film, visual arts and craft and the Arts Association took on literature, performing arts and public art. With support from the SAC the arts team was able to expand in the 2000s. In 2010, following the council's structural change, the arts and museums were joined together, with four service managers, each with their own committee and responsible for the arts and museum services in each of the four areas.

#### **The Tourism Strategy**

In addition to the Arts Team's contribution to the arts sector in the region, the Planning and Environment Department of the Dumfries and Galloway Council has also made a progressive impact on the arts events and festivals in the region with its Festivals and Major Events (FAME) Strategy. Aiming to 'support the development of a cluster of internationally significant festivals and events that can profile Dumfries and Galloway and bring benefits to the regional economy' (Dumfries and Galloway Council, 2009), the strategy began in 2005 and would renew itself every three years. Besides funding and directly managing some of the region's events, the signature project within the strategy is to support the growth of Beacon Events, which the council believes is a unique local authority policy. Every three years, 2-3 Beacon Events will be selected and supported as part of the

FAME strategy. Past Beacon Events include the WBF, Spring Fling and The Wickerman Festival among others. The current Beacon Events are the Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival and the Lockerbie Jazz Festival.

The selected Beacon Events, which may have begun as community regeneration or recreational focused projects, received funding to develop their tourism appeal for visitors to the region. These projects aim to open up more of the region's events to attract visitors, which means the events not only need to gear up their marketing strategy but also the quality of their programmes. Although the ultimate aim of the FAME strategy is to benefit the regional economy, it also improves the quality of the region's events along the way.

### *dgArts*

dgArts was initially established in 1985 as the Dumfries and Galloway Arts Association with 1.5 FTE members of staff involved in rural touring and community projects. There were four voluntary members of the association spread to the four district council areas. The organisation reacted to the local council's needs and took on certain roles from local council including supporting performing arts, dance, drama and literature. Although visual arts and crafts development was still led by the council's arts team, dgArts took on the responsibility of providing public art expertise and management. This was largely due to the controversial nature of public art and also because of the association's community remit.

The dgArts supported small community projects with small grants and expertise support through the use of local community coordinators over its 26-year history aiming to develop indigenous community projects to a higher quality. It has also supported and enhanced local festivals including the Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival and the Wigtown Book Festival. Although dgArts brought artists and practitioners from outside of the region through their development of literature and public art projects, it maintained a strong focus on nurturing local talent and less on tourism. When interviewed by the author, Thomson stated that he did not believe that the arts would be a key attraction for tourists:

The people who run the tourism sector have recognised that the large part of the attraction for Dumfries and Galloway is that small scale local things are happening, we don't do massive scale festivals - we've got a couple of niche

festivals which are fine and healthy and we've got 2-3 growing. People don't come to D&G for the music or the cultural events,<sup>36</sup> but they are a very welcome part of the experience they get here. (Thomson, *ibid*)

dgArts was supported by the Dumfries and Galloway Council as well as the SAC until the discontinuation of its SAC Foundation Funding in 2010 and its subsequent closure in 2011.<sup>37</sup>

### *The Growth of Local Arts Organisations, Events and Businesses*

Except for the Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival that was set up in the 1970s, many of the larger events on the region's cultural calendar were initiated around the year 2000. Since then, arts festivals such as the WBF, Spring Fling and The Wickerman Festival have become important dates on the region's calendar.

The Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival was developed by a group of interested individuals who hoped to bring quality arts productions - mostly performing arts and music - to the region. It was run by a group of enthusiastic community members with an administrative assistant, until they were able to employ a programme manager in recent years. The festival has been and is currently supported by the Dumfries and Galloway Council.

The WBF was set up in 1998 soon after Wigtown was designated as Scotland's National Book town by the newly devolved Scottish parliament. The 'Book Town' title was awarded as the result of a competition staged in the run up to the devolution, in which Wigtown participated against Moffat, also in Dumfries and Galloway and Dalmellington, Ayrshire. Besides the literature tradition and the good range of book shops in town, one of the key reasons supporting the campaign for Wigtown to be named as the Scottish Book Town was the fight against deprivation in the area. Two of the main employers in Wigtown, The Creamery at Bladnoch and Bladnoch Distillery,<sup>38</sup> were closed down in the mid-1990s and a project to regenerate and develop the town as the national book town was set up

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<sup>36</sup> This is a personal perception of Thomson's and is applicable for some events but not all events and organisations in the region.

<sup>37</sup> Through working in the region, the author became aware that there are more than the above external factors that contributed to the collapse of dgArts, but also operational issues within the organisation. However, how dgArts collapsed is not a focal point in this thesis.

<sup>38</sup> Bladnoch Distillery was bought out in 1995 but did not reopen for production until late 2000. It is now still producing single malt Scotch Whisky and has become a key visitor attraction in the region.



in 1997, which took the lead in the Book Town campaign. The Wigtown Book Town Company was set up after the success of the campaign and went on to manage the Book Festival until 2007. When the Book Town Company dissolved a new managing company of the Book Festival, The Wigtown Festival Company took over, becoming incorporated in 2007 as a company limited by guarantee and registered as a charity. The WBF is currently the second biggest book festival in Scotland after the Edinburgh Book Festival.

Spring Fling was first set up by the council's arts team in 2003. Part of its purpose was to boost the local tourism which was severely damaged after the 2001 outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease. It was the first festival in the region that was oriented around tourism as well as offering opportunities for local visual artists and craft makers. Although initiated by the council, there has been strong involvement from the local artist community in the decision-making from the very beginning. The event became independent in 2006, run by a committee of local artists and a Project Coordinator/Manager with administrative support. In 2011, the organisation secured funding from LEADER and The Holywood Trust to develop its year around programme.

Additionally, The Wickerman Festival and the Knockengoroch World Music Festival are both successful independent music festivals in the region that have been running for over 10 years and gained national reputations. All four of the younger events, WBF, Spring Fling, Knockengoroch and Wickerman have benefited from Dumfries and Galloway Council's tourism strategy and were once Beacon Events.

Alongside the above mentioned events which are closely linked to tourism, there are also local arts initiatives that were set up by the local community. CatStrand in New Galloway is one of the best known projects. CatStrand started as a renovation project in 2003 that turned an old school which had fallen into disrepair into a new art centre by The Glenkens Community and Arts Trust (GCAT). The Centre opened in 2007 and became the hub of the community, providing a wide range of arts, community and training activities for the residents of the Glenkens as well as becoming a tourist attraction for visitors to the region. Similarly, A' the Airts, a new arts centre based in Sanquhar was also established in 2010 with effort from the local community.

Local businesses, including farms, have also diversified their businesses after the 2001 outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease. For example, couple Alan and Hazel Campbell, a farmer and renowned painter respectively, used to run a farm near Castle Douglas. After the devastation of the 2001 outbreak, they decided to renovate their farm houses and barns, turning them into 'Lochdougan House' artist studios hosting 3 -5 artists and makers in residence.

Through analysing the development of the arts in Dumfries and Galloway in the 2000s, there are a few characteristics of the region and its arts sector that can be concluded. First of all, the local community and the economic context play a very important part in the region's arts, whether it is in setting up an arts project to regenerate a certain geographic area, or community and private sector support for established organisations and events. Secondly, compared to the impact of the local community and economy, the national agencies are much less influential in the arts sector - especially on independent organisations. The next section of this chapter will discuss how those features have made many of the region's established independent organisations and events more resilient financially and less influenced by public policy.

### ***Financial Support for Dumfries and Galloway's Independent Arts Organisations in the 2000s***

The examination of the development and establishment of independent organisations in Dumfries and Galloway suggests their strong connection with their local community and economy. Organisations like the Wigtown Book Town/WBF, CatStrand and A' The Airts were set up to solve a community crisis or realise a community goal, and aimed to lift the region out of the depressed local economy. Most recently since the start of this research in 2010, community campaigns to renovate Theatre Royal, maintain Peter Pan Moat Brae and the setting up of The Stove, a network and collective of artists using a long-empty building in Dumfries as their base to develop activities of various art forms,<sup>39</sup> all have a vision of contributing to the regeneration of Dumfries town centre. This demonstrates the region's characteristic of a strong organic connection between the organisations

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<sup>39</sup> From their statement: '...The Stove Network HQ is at 100 High Street, Dumfries. This building is called "The Stove". The Stove is not an arts centre in the traditional sense - rather it is the base for an ambitious project to use the arts as a means of actively involving the general public in the future of their town.' <http://www.environmentalartfestivalscotland.com/event/the-stove-the-nithraid/> Accessed 25 July 2013

and their local context. It also shows that economic concerns were part of the organisations' operations from their very beginning. Similarly to the mentions of the high density of businesses in Orkney and Shetland in the Rural Scotland in Focus 2012 report (Scottish Agriculture Collage, 2012), because of the lack of reaction and resource from the top level, the community used its own initiatives to set up projects to solve problems and successfully raised the necessary funds to realise their projects. None of the three established organisations was dependant on arts-specific funding when they were first established, and they are still receiving the majority of their income from regeneration and community development trusts.

In the case of the WBF, the festival first gained Creative Scotland funding for parts of their programme in 2005, when the festival was established with a high quality programme. This funding came at a time when they had also diversified their income resources and secured sponsorships from private companies. When the festival registered as a separate company in 2007, it secured £38,000 in cash sponsorship and its total earned income and sponsorship income was over £15,000 more than public revenue income. For its 2011 event, the WBF had 17 different private sponsors including large cash sponsorships from principal sponsors ScottishPower and investment bank Baillie Gifford as well as local Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) who offered in-kind contributions. This diversified income source provided stability to the festival, which is now less dependent on a single source of income whether it was public revenue grants or private sponsorship. When the festival lost one of its principal private sponsors in 2012, it still delivered another successful event and won the Creative Place award from Creative Scotland.

There are many other successful organisations and events in the region that have similar funding arrangements. Although they might not have been as successful as the WBF in gaining private sponsorships, they too did not have Creative Scotland as their primary source for financial support. For example the investments from Creative Scotland count for less than 10% of the annual incomes of CatStrand, A' the Airts and Spring Fling during the 2011/2012 financial year. This phenomenon is not unique in Dumfries and Galloway. Similarly, in Matarasso's recent research on the arts and culture in Orkney, which will be looked at further in Chapter 7, it was found that the St Magnus Festival, even though it was receiving flexible

funding from Creative Scotland, also had a significantly smaller percentage of public revenue income compared to the Huddersfield Festival in Yorkshire (Matarasso, 2012: 23), as did many festivals in Scotland.

In contrast, organisations receiving core funding from one large funding body are often dependent on their main funder. For example, StAnza, the Nation's Poetry Festival which received flexible funding from Creative Scotland, shows a very different income structure. Although not based in a large urban centre, its location of St Andrews has features that are very different from rural towns, including a large non-permanent-residential population of students and those who commute to work at the University of St Andrews - a major employer in East Fife. Therefore the sense of community in St Andrews is largely reliant on the status of one's profession, study or research, instead of one's residency.

Comparing the income sources of the WBF and StAnza (Table 9) it is obvious that the WBF has achieved a greater balance between its public revenue income and other income sources. None of the WBF's funders and sponsors contributed over 50% of the festival's overall income while public revenue income accounted for over 82% of StAnza's overall income, with Creative Scotland's Flexible Funding alone contributing to over half of its overall income. This is also due to the fact that although StAnza had been receiving funding from the SAC since the festival started in 1998, the financial period 2011/2012 was the first year that the festival received flexible funding from Creative Scotland. StAnza has yet to utilise the opportunity to move forward to the next level and diversify its income sources.

	Wigtown Book Festival		StAnza	
<b>Public Funding</b>	£ 107,735	51.44%	£ 92,828	82.65%
- <i>Within which Creative Scotland</i>	£ 19,375	9.25%	£ 57,000	50.75%
			(FXO)	
<b>Private Sponsorship</b>	£ 32,382	15.46%	£ 9,175	8.17%
<b>Self-generated Income &amp; Donations</b>	£ 69,319	23.87%	£ 10,309	9.18%
<b>Total</b>	£ 209,436	100%	£ 112,312	100%

*Table 9 Comparison of income sources of Wigtown Book Festival and StAnza in financial year 2011/2012*

It was understandable that when Creative Scotland announced that it would discontinue Flexible Funding for the next round in May 2012, it was a disappointment to StAnza:

We're very disappointed that flexible funding won't continue, because we've found it extremely useful in helping StAnza develop and expand. (E Livingston, Director of StAnza quoted in Carrell, 2012)

Despite the fact that Flexible Funding was promised for only two years between 2011 and 2013, and Creative Scotland proposed to replace this programme with its Strategic Commissioning programme in 2011, many organisations still found themselves in the same difficult situation as StAnza. While the funding allowed them to expand, and many even doubled the turnover of their organisations, they now faced the threat of needing to shrink dramatically if the Flexible Funding scheme was to cease.

As of the end of the financial year 2011/2012, most of the Wigtown Book Festival's public revenue income came from the Dumfries and Galloway Council (£39,360) and EventScotland (£28,000). In comparison, for the Edinburgh International Book Festival, Scotland's biggest literature festival, Creative Scotland's foundation funding still accounted for over 50% of the festival's public revenue income and over 10% of the festival's overall income in 2011. While it is hard to predict how much the Edinburgh International Book Festival will be affected if any changes are made to their core funding from Creative Scotland, especially due to their scale and position in Edinburgh's tourist economy, it is remarkable to see that the WBF, as a smaller scale festival, has the same level of diversity for their income while receiving very limited support from the national arts agency.

The close connection with local community and the response to the context of the wider economy have made the WBF both successful and more independent. The same can be said for organisations in other rural regions such as Timespan in Highland. The concerns about Creative Scotland's investment strategy are generally less seen in organisations in rural regions, whether they are receiving regular financial support from the national agency or not. Anna Vermehren of Timespan, stated that although she found Creative Scotland's communications not well managed, she was not too worried about Timespan's strategic direction being influenced by the changes of Creative Scotland's investment programme, 'If we don't find [the funding] here, we will find it somewhere else' (Vermehren, interview with author, 19 November 2012).

	Art Forms						Main Audience		Relationship	
	Visual Art and Craft		Performing Arts		Literature		Local	Tourist	With Tourism Sector	With Local Community
	Bring in Quality Arts	Represent Local Arts	Bring in Quality Arts	Developing Local Arts	Bring in Quality Arts	Represent Local Arts				
Council - Arts										
Council - Tourism										
dgArts										
Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival										
Wigtown Book Festival										
Spring Fling										
CatStrand										
Wickerman Festival										
Knockengoroch World Music Festival										

Table 10 The roles of the Dumfries and Galloway Council and local organisations and events as of 2010. Please note the roles are based on the first priorities of the organisations and events.

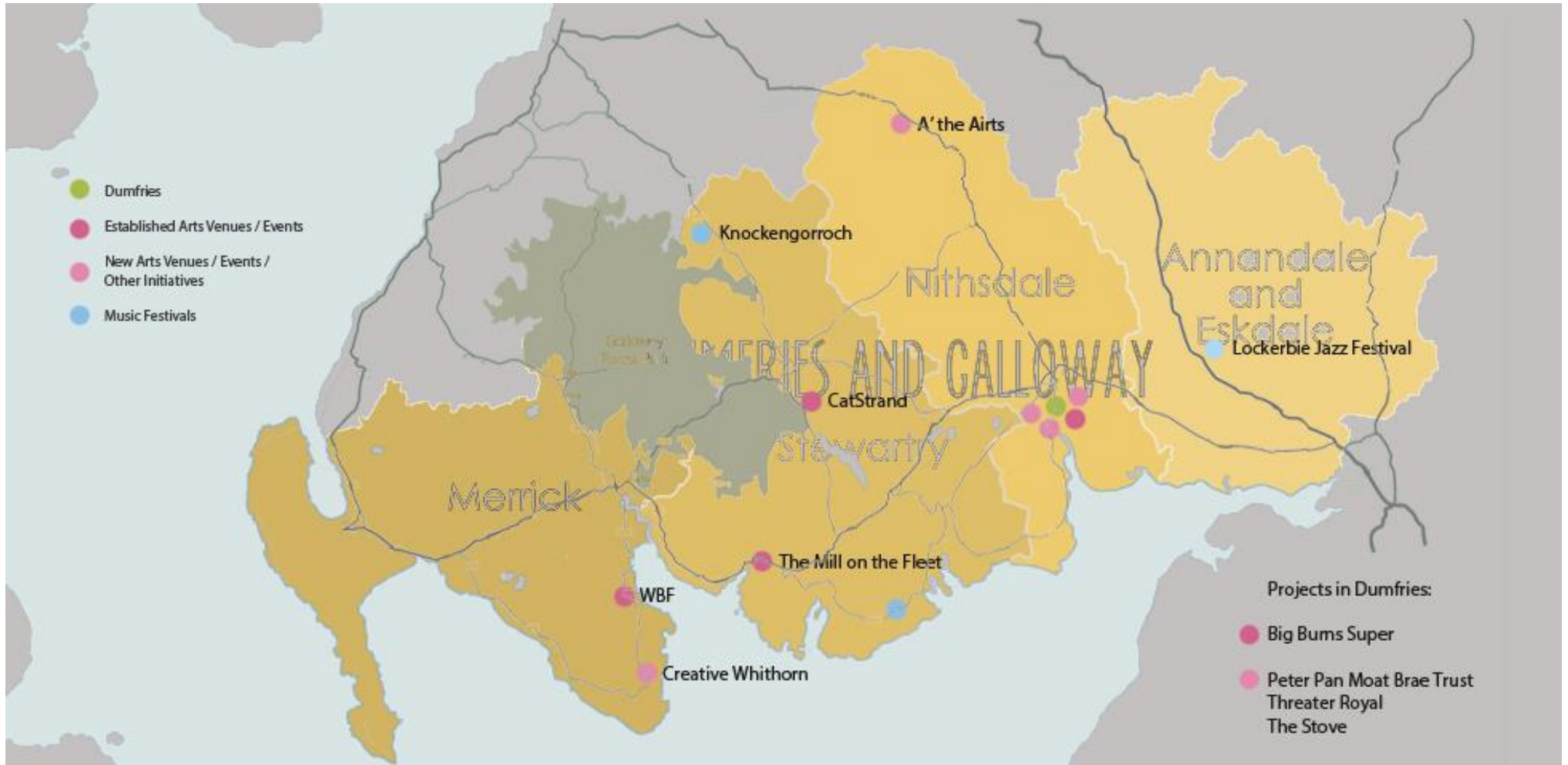


Figure 12 Mapping the arts venues, events and other activities in Dumfries and Galloway

As discussed above, the infrastructure for the arts in Dumfries and Galloway was developed in the 2000s with a strong connection to the local economy and community that supported the development of many indigenous and independent initiatives. The infrastructure of the arts in Dumfries and Galloway as of 2010 is laid out in Table 6.1. The roles of developing different art forms are reasonably balanced between the council, organisations and events, so are the audience structures which make sure there is enough provision for the local community as well as tourists. Partnerships with the tourism sector, local authorities and funders such as EventScotland, whilst maintaining relationships with the local community were key to the development and success of the organisations and events.

Except for the council and dgArts, all organisations and events had diversified income sources. Similarly, Spring Fling also receives its core funding from the Dumfries and Galloway Council, but this only accounted for 20% of its total turnover in 2010/2011 and 10% in 2011/2012 when the organisation's finance was boosted by projects funded by the LEADER programme and The Holywood Trust, a local charitable foundation focusing on young people. The organisation received EventScotland funding between 2009 and 2011 to enhance the festival and only received Creative Scotland investment for a public art project in 2012. Both account for less than 10% of the organisation's annual turnover.<sup>40</sup> Both The Wickerman Festival and Knockengoroch music festivals are very much financially independent from the public bodies with income generated mostly from ticket sales.

Despite the relevant financial stability of those organisations and events, the collapse of dgArts and the council's budget cuts still created a crisis for the arts in the region in 2011. The collapse of dgArts left gaps in the region's arts development and brought anxiety to the local arts community, and while this incident was not necessarily lethal to the local organisations' survival, many feared losing both region-wide agencies for the arts and that their arts development achievements thus far would be compromised (Coggins, interview with author, 18 December 2012). The next section of this chapter will look at the 2011 crisis and the region's recent developments in the arts.

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<sup>40</sup> Figures based on Spring Fling Open Studios CIC annual accounts 2010/2011 and 2011/2012



## The 2011 Crisis and Dumfries and Galloway's Recent Developments

A decade after the 2001 crisis, and while its impact on the wider local economy is not comparable to that of the outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease, the collapse of dgArts together with the UK-wide public service budget cuts led to another crisis for the arts in the region. Fortunately though, as with the 2001 crisis, opportunities have come with it as well. With the Place Partnership investment offered by Creative Scotland in 2011, the efforts of the council's Service Manager and staff and the collaboration from local partners and communities, many new developments have begun since, and a new infrastructure is currently taking shape at the time of writing.

### *The Collapse of dgArts and the 2011 Crisis*

In 2010, dgArts' directors were informed that their Foundation Funded status from the SAC was not going to be carried forward when the SAC transitioned to Creative Scotland. With Foundation Funding as its main income, losing it caused a substantial reduction in the organisation's activities and staff numbers. dgArts was still waiting to know whether the Dumfries and Galloway Council would continue to fund the organisation beyond 2011 while they continued to support activities in the region. Concerns about the future of the arts in the region were raised and the council was 'conscious that [dgArts] were in flux' (Coggins, interview with author, 18 December 2012). In September 2011, dgArts went into liquidation and stopped trading months after Creative Scotland announced their new corporate plan and investment programme, while the Dumfries and Galloway Council itself underwent restructuring as well.

Prior to the liquidation of dgArts, but after the discontinuation of their Foundation Funding in 2010, £100,000 of the SAC's Rural Innovation Fund<sup>41</sup> went to develop the CABN, a partnership project between the Dumfries and Galloway Council and the Scottish Borders Council. The project initially ran for a successful pilot year in 2009/2010 in the Scottish Borders. The CABN aimed to provide an integrated framework of support for creative enterprises across both regions. The Creative Scotland funding was matched by the LEADER fund in the two regions and was initially set to run for 18 months. The CABN team of the Dumfries and Galloway

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<sup>41</sup> In 2009, SAC announced the £5 million Creative Scotland Innovation Fund in which included the £750,000 Rural Innovation fund. For information on this can be found in Chapter 2.

Council was later relocated to be part of the Economic Development Service within the council.

Despite working closely with VisitScotland on the Year of Creative Scotland campaign in 2012, and aiming to achieve their vision of 'Scotland as a year-round festival nation recognised as one of the top ten places in the world to visit for culture' (Creative Scotland, 2011: 22), there are still surprisingly few festivals regularly supported by Creative Scotland. As of February 2014, only four festivals receive Foundation Funding from Creative Scotland - two of them are part of Edinburgh Festivals. Particularly in rural areas, it is more likely for Creative Scotland to give regular financial support to venue based organisations or organisations that deliver cross-region arts projects such as Hi-Arts or region-wide projects such as dgArts.

In this context, it is not surprising that neither Dumfries and Galloway nor the Scottish Borders currently have organisations that are regularly funded by Creative Scotland despite the abundance of established festivals in the regions. As Coggins mentioned, the competitiveness between the different areas in the region made proposals for establishing cultural or arts centres very challenging. One can suggest therefore that communities found it more viable to initiate and establish festivals, most of which are arts festivals.

Before the liquidation of dgArts in 2011, there were employment shuffles and cuts that led to gaps in the presentation of different art forms. The dgArts' Literature Development position went to the WBF, however many performance arts activities originally led by dgArts were discontinued. With the only professional local theatre company, Electric Theatre Workshop, just been set up in April 2011, this left gaps for local performing arts development. Although Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival and CatStrand are now carrying out some local performing arts development projects, their resources have been, and are still, limited.

Mindful about the issues in the region, Creative Scotland offered the Place Partnership<sup>42</sup> opportunity to the Dumfries and Galloway Council in 2011. A conference exploring the future of the arts in Dumfries and Galloway facilitated

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<sup>42</sup> Place Partnership is a new initiative following the new 'Invest in Places' priority of Creative Scotland, through which Creative Scotland invests in partnership working with chosen regions, mostly through the local authorities, more information about this programme will be discussed later in this chapter.

by a professional consultant was held in October 2011, funded by Creative Scotland. The Place Partnership was introduced at the conference by the then Creative Scotland Creative Development Director Venu Dhupa, who was also responsible for the partnership, and Richard Grieveson, who was to become the Head of Community Services, within which the Arts and Museums service sits. Two key messages came out of the conference. Firstly, the local arts sector wanted to have more input in the planning of arts services and projects across the region. The sector claimed that dgArts along with the council, were thinking in their own box, and had not acknowledged the voice of the sector in determining the priorities for the future of the arts. Secondly, the sector wanted more local involvement and decision-making for their areas with more local people and local arts organisations.

With the two key messages in mind and working with Creative Scotland through Place Partnership, Grieveson, proposed the idea of 'hubs' and a Chamber of the Arts. The idea of establishing four area hubs for the arts and a fifth hub to deal with region-wide projects, supported by the council, was officially proposed by Grieveson in November 2011, with all arts hubs responsible for electing representatives for the Chamber of the Arts and be involved in arts funding decisions at regional and local level.

With help and support from the arts expertise from the region, many being art organisation/event leaders or artists, the Chamber started to work on its structure and strategy with the Council and Creative Scotland. The Chamber was formally incorporated as the region's new arts body Dumfries and Galloway Arts Partnership (DGAP) in November 2012, responsible for managing the council's arts commissioning budget, a budget for project-based support for the arts, and the Creative Scotland Place Partnership budget. The new body still has issues to be resolved including how to involve the artist community without a conflict of interest and how best to establish a formal members' election process.

Creative Scotland has played a significant role in the process of re-building the arts infrastructure in Dumfries and Galloway after the 2011 crisis. Not only because of the financial support via Place Partnership, but also top level guidance and partnership working with the council's service manager. Its role was specifically highlighted by interviewees in this research and more publicly, by the

support from many Dumfries and Galloway arts professionals through the new national agency's crisis in 2012.

### *The Role of Creative Scotland in Forming Rural Arts Infrastructure*

Creative Scotland recognises the value of the whole ecology - the culture of volunteering, pipe bands, fish movement and textiles. They are valuable because they add to the whole picture; I think that's also what is different with SAC. SAC is really only concerned with what they put in, whereas Creative Scotland is more concerned with the creative nation and the 'everything' that makes a creative nation. (Venu Dhupa, Director of Creative Development, Creative Scotland, Interview with Author, 30 July 2012)

Routinely, we see ill-conceived decision-making; unclear language, lack of empathy and regard for Scottish culture [from Creative Scotland]. We observe an organisation with a confused and intrusive management style married to a corporate ethos that seems designed to set artist against artist and company against company in the search for resources. (Ainsley et al., Open Letter to Creative Scotland, 9 October 2012)

[O]ur recent experience of working with Creative Scotland has seen an increase in confidence in existing work as well as promising new initiatives springing up from the grassroots... [The Strategic Direction of Creative Scotland] has helped many artists and makers develop their careers and has done much to further build the reputation and confidence of Dumfries and Galloway as a vibrant cultural centre. We understand that many have wrestled with the changes that Creative Scotland has made and we believe that the discussion about the role of the arts in contemporary society is precious and vital. (Agnew et al. Letter of Support for Creative Scotland, 3 December 2012)

The year 2012 was a critical time for Creative Scotland. Despite a lack of interest in arts funding and politics compared to their English counterpart in the previous years, the Scottish media were suddenly drawn to the controversy surrounding the nation's new arts and screen body. These controversies were sparked by a further shake-up of Creative Scotland's investment programme in May 2012 following the Director Andrew Dixon's address to Scottish Parliament in September stating 'We're listening to what arts organisations are saying, but we'd prefer if they said

it to us, rather than on Twitter' (Dixon quoted in McLean, 2012). Many national press publications, including the Herald, the Scotsman, the Guardian, and even the List - primarily a popular event and entertainment guide that is less concerned about politics - drew readers to the issue. The controversy reached a climax when an open letter to Creative Scotland was signed by over 100 established Scottish creative practitioners including high profile artists, writers, filmmakers and musicians. The content of the letter was published in various national media publications, particularly on their front pages. Dixon was invited to appear on STV's Scotland Tonight in debate with actor Tam Dean Burn. The controversy ended with the resignation of both Dixon and Dhupa in November and December 2012 respectively.

As Chapter 5 concluded earlier, historically the SAC was never the key supporter of indigenous arts development in rural Scotland. Furthermore, according to evidence collected in Dumfries and Galloway the development of many individual organisations, although some were supported by the national agency at their later and more mature stages, they were not financially dependent on the SAC or Creative Scotland. Therefore, it is not surprising to see that although many issues arose after the transition from the SAC to Creative Scotland, most of the voices heard were from larger, more established organisations and artists based in urban centres. This is not to say that the arts sector in rural Scotland was unconcerned about the movements of the national agency, many who were interviewed followed the events closely and complaints about Creative Scotland's organisation and communication were heard from rural LAs and organisations during this research, but little criticism of or objection to Creative Scotland's vision and strategic direction was made.

In the case of Dumfries and Galloway, a region that no longer has an organisation that receives regular financial support from Creative Scotland for their core funding, the transition from the SAC to Creative Scotland has given the region more attention through the Place Partnership programme and its support for arts infrastructure development. When asked about the role of Creative Scotland in developing the new arts infrastructure in Dumfries and Galloway, Coggins said:

[Creative Scotland] was important, they were in some ways a sort of catalyst for kicking this all off... the voice of Creative Scotland plus the voice of the

arts sector itself, those things combined with [the effort and vision of the new service manager]. That combination has made this (the Chamber of the Arts and the new infrastructure) happen. (Coggins, Interview with Author, 18 December 2012)

The arts in the region was heading in a new direction, mainly due to the community and arts sector itself, a 'dynamic and visionary' (Coggins, Interview with Author, 18 December 2012) senior manager who campaigned for the arts, and the higher level of support from Creative Scotland. Therefore, it was not surprising to see a letter of support for Creative Scotland sent to the press from the arts sector in Dumfries and Galloway after the critical open letter sent by Ainsley et al.

Signed by over 20 organisations and individuals working in the arts sector in Dumfries and Galloway, the letter was published on Scotsman.com and on the BBC Southwest website in December 2012, however, it attracted considerably less attention than the open letter to Creative Scotland from Ainsley et al. in October. As quoted at the beginning of this section, Agnew et al. share Coggins' view that Creative Scotland has been helpful for the arts development in the region and believe the new agency is moving in the right direction. They added '[w]hile we accept there are questions to be resolved over the delivery of some of its remit, we expect due recognition of the successes of the organisation in committing to a nationwide vision for creativity and cannot countenance a return to the bad, old days...' (Agnew et al., 2012).

One of the key issues pointed out in this letter was 'the discussion about the role of the arts in contemporary society', an issue that was overlooked by the SAC previously and a key part of the transition. As discussed in Chapter 4, Creative Scotland prioritised the connections to and impact of the arts on wider society and the economy. This was already an important element in the development of the arts in Dumfries and Galloway, and many other rural places, therefore Creative Scotland's change in priority was more suitable and practical for many rural organisations.

In July 2012, Dhupa stated that the nation's geography was one of the first things that was looked at when Creative Scotland's strategy was planned. The Place Partnership scheme was set up to give local authorities more structured help with

their arts development. LAs were selected for different reasons including ‘1. A problem needs solving, e.g. the collapse of dgArts; 2. Big opportunity; 3. Something particular to celebrate; 4. The local authority is demonstrating some energy and they have done a lot already’ (Dhupa, interview with author, 30 July 2012). Five local authority areas were selected in the first round of Place Partnership: Highland, Aberdeenshire, Fife, Perth and Kinross and Dumfries and Galloway. Dumfries and Galloway was selected in 2011 because the collapse of dgArts had clearly shaken the arts infrastructure development in the region. After a long period of a lack of financial and other forms of support from Creative Scotland, and historically the SAC, outside of the Central Belt of Scotland, the Place Partnerships were welcomed by many local authorities. Argyll and Bute, which was offered the partnership for its second round in 2012/2013, was another local authority that invested the funding into building a new partnership between arts, culture, heritage and tourism across the region:

[We] are on the right stage (of developing the partnership). We’ve been offered a Place Partnership from Creative Scotland... it will definitely be great for building and test-driving partnerships. (Baker, interview with author, 10 January 2013)

Beginning his role as the Culture Development Officer for the Argyll and Bute Council during the transition from the SAC to Creative Scotland in 2011, Baker also found the Place Partnership demonstrated intent and commitment to rurality. He felt that other investment programmes appeared to compare rural organisations and events with the ones in the central belt and were assessed on the same criteria, as had previously happened within the SAC.

As the Head of Creative Industries of the HIE, Iain Hamilton put it, there was a ‘shared frustration with the central belt’ for rural arts organisations in the Highlands and Islands. This view was shared by other rural regions as well. Alan Thomson said:

We are slightly apprehensive about the attitude towards South West Scotland because the SNP (Scottish National Party) is not strong in the region, and the SNP agenda isn’t necessarily suited to this area. We see them support things like Gaelic language etc. but this doesn’t benefit this area in any way, shape or form. We feel a little marginalised when we are compared to the Highlands.

The Highlands are very good at organising themselves and asking for what they want and getting what they want. And the way that they can use their enterprise company in the way we can't down here is a great benefit to the Arts. We feel a little bit disadvantaged: there's central belt concentration of things and we don't see allies [in] rural areas like us, we don't have many opportunities to have dialogue with them. (Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011)

The concentration on the central belt of Scotland does not only pertain to financial support from national agencies such as Creative Scotland, but also to the attention of the press. When asked about the controversy surrounding Creative Scotland as reported by the Scottish press in late 2012, Murray found that leading Scottish press concentrated on bigger organisations and events, and in the case of his example, the national arts companies when they were still receiving funding from the SAC:

[The national arts companies] were always the headline issues whenever the arts were discussed (in the media)...I think a good example was, for instance, a number of years ago we had to put in our annual funding application...I remember one year we put in and to my astonishment we got quite a significant, for us, a significant hike in our grant income. Something in the order of [£]30,000. And there were a number of other organisations throughout Scotland that had done quite well too, much more than they expected....

But the headline issue at the time was not that any of us... had got an increase in our funding. The headline issue was that Scottish Opera were being put on standstill funding. And their annual budgets were in the order of [£]7 million something. Our annual budgets and funding and that was something like [£]100,000. And we got our increase up to [£]130,000, which made a big difference to us. Scottish Opera, its funding wasn't cut, it just didn't get an inflationary increase. But even that inflationary increase, which might be whatever, 3% on [£]7 million... Scottish Arts Council was able to make a big difference to small organisations (using that 3%)...the head of combined arts at the time tried to make that point but it was completely subsumed under the fact that there was wailing and gnashing of teeth from Scottish Opera,



and it was front page of the Herald and front page of the Scotsman etc..  
(Murray, interview with author, 20 November 2012)

Murray continued to state that he believed that although the development of the arts in Eilean Siar in the past 25 years since An Lanntair started as a community project was mostly due to the campaigning of the community and the organisation, the support from the SAC and Creative Scotland, although little when compared with central belt, was definitely recognised and making differences to the growth of the organisation.

It is predictable that the press would be more attracted to opinions from better-known individuals and organisations. With a protesting letter signed by over 100 established artists and practitioners following the controversy around Creative Scotland, there was little possibility for voices from smaller organisations to be heard, and for opinions from lesser known artists and organisations based in rural areas to be valued equally. This is despite the fact that some of the signatories on the protesting letter, such as popular writer Ian Rankin and the Queen's music composer Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, needed very little support from, and possibly had very few encounters with, Creative Scotland directly at that current stage of their careers.

In the 2012/2013 financial year alone, Creative Scotland invested £1.3 million in its Place Strategy which includes the Place Partnerships and the Creative Places Awards. This may be a small portion of the agency's over £50 million investment budget, half of which was already committed to core-funded organisations, but compared to 2009/2010 when only £190,000 was spent in 'Local Government and External Relationships' this was a huge improvement and a first step towards the commitment to locality and rurality.

Key stakeholders interviewed as part of this research, especially those who were not or little supported by the HIE, expressed their wish that the national agencies, not only Creative Scotland, would have separate strategies and investment programmes for rural regions (Baker, interview with author, 10 January 2013; Gibbon, interview with author, 27 July 2011). VisitScotland and EventScotland have started to invest more in arts events and cultural attractions in recent years, and because of their area-based structure, arts festivals and events have benefitted from the support that is tailored to their local region or area.

With a similar amount of money available for grants and with changes to their government funding and lottery funding, it was only natural for Creative Scotland to develop new investment programmes when it became the new national agency for the arts. Both Dhupa and one of Creative Scotland's development officers Stephen Palmer explained that many of Creative Scotland's restructures aimed to break historical connections in order to see the larger picture with fresh pairs of eyes (Dhupa, Interview with Author, 30 July 2012; Palmer, interview with author, 30 July 2012). After the agency announced its new investment programme, many organisations which had never received funding from the SAC before were awarded funding, including Dumfries and Galloway's Spring Fling. The Place Partnership and the Creative Place awards, two brand new programmes started by Creative Scotland, were both designed to boost the profile of places and projects outside of the central belt and bring them up to the next level of quality. Both programmes now have the potential to provide substantial financial support to establish or enhance the infrastructure of the arts in rural regions.

### **Conclusion**

Through the examination of arts development in Dumfries and Galloway in this chapter, the thesis continues to find and verify the key reality highlighted in discussions in previous chapters: the arts in rural Scotland often developed with very limited continued, sustainable or appropriate top-level guidance or support. Most arts projects in the region were initiated indigenously within their social and/or economic context resulting in a dislocation between national cultural policy and local developments, largely because of the lack of recognition for arts in rural Scotland historically within the national agency as outlined in Chapter 5. However, establishing functional infrastructures for the arts in the region based on the existing organisations and other initiatives is still crucial to arts development in rural regions such as Dumfries and Galloway and Argyll and Bute, and there are important roles that the Creative Scotland can play.

So how was an arts infrastructure developed in a rural context? There are a few essentials for a functioning arts infrastructure in rural Scotland, which are very different from those applicable to urban centres. Firstly, rural arts infrastructure needs to keep close connections with the local economy, culture and community. With many arts organisations started by the local community, this connection needs to be in place at the start of the development of organisations. Although

rural communities value the economic and social benefits arts organisations and events bring to the local area, unlike urban centres with larger established arts audiences who value the arts primarily for its artistic value, many rural residents are still intimidated by the concept of 'art' (Vermehren, interview with the author, 19 November 2012). Therefore, it is always important to demonstrate the purpose of arts organisations to the local community, whether it is to contribute to the cultural lives of the local residents or bring in tourists to contribute to the local economy.

However, as these arts organisations grow, many face the challenge of balancing between their different remits such as representing local artists or bringing in high quality productions from the outside, to creating events that are appropriate for the local community or attracting tourists. In Dumfries and Galloway in the 2000s, these roles were balanced between the council, dgArts and the region's various events, with the council's arts service and dgArts focussing on the local community and the council's tourism strategy and festivals aiming to bring in tourists to the region. However, as concluded in the October 2011 conference, this balance was shaken because the local community - mostly the artist community and indigenous organisations - felt that 'dgArts was thinking in their own box and potentially the council as well to a certain extent, and they hadn't had a voice in determining the priorities for the future of the arts [in Dumfries and Galloway]' (Coggins, interview with author, 18 December 2012). The loss of contact between the council, dgArts and other local arts organisations and communities eventually led to the crisis in 2011.

Although being less relevant in Dumfries and Galloway, in the Highlands and Islands the heritage of the region and the highland culture were also considered crucial for integration in the local arts infrastructure. Many rural residents will be willing to be involved in the arts and consider the arts of greater value and relevance when it is connected to the wider cultural and heritage context (Vermehren, interview with the author, 19 November 2012; Baker, interview with author, 10 January 2013).

Secondly, it is important to have a region-wide agency that coordinates and liaises the development of regional arts infrastructure, although not necessarily programming or awarding grants. In contrast to the concentrated population and

arts activities in urban centres like Glasgow where the visual arts scene is seen there as ‘everything happens and develops from the art school (Glasgow School of Art)’ as mentioned by Kate Martin, Edinburgh-based freelance curator who also worked in Glasgow (Martin, interview with author, 1 March 2012), most rural regions in Scotland are comprised of much smaller populations within larger geographic areas with organisations and events spread miles apart. Many rural organisations and events sprouted indigenously, particularly in the 2000s, and because of their indigenous nature, many of them are heavily focused on their own local areas. Despite being in the same administrative region, they often have little collaboration. Hence, region-wide and cross-region agencies are important to keep the organisations, events, artist communities and groups informed of the larger picture of the regions, especially when there is limited higher-level guidance.

The vital role of a strong region-wide agency in arts development in rural Scotland is articulated in this and previous chapters. Although criticised by some for being ‘Highland-centric’ (Baker, interview with author, 10 January 2013), organisations such as Hi-Arts have contributed largely to arts development in the Highlands and Islands. The active arts scenes in regions such as the Shetland Islands and Aberdeenshire, have benefited from the region-wide Shetland Arts Trust and the strong Aberdeenshire Council Arts Team. In the case of Dumfries and Galloway, the council and dgArts together provided region-wide support for arts organisations and communities and thus have contributed to the region’s healthy development of the arts infrastructure in the late 2000s.

The last essential feature of the success of rural arts infrastructure is the guidance, advice and support from national/cross-region agencies. It has been repeatedly emphasised in this thesis that there is very limited top-level guidance, advice and support for rural regions in Scotland. However, the influence of different national agencies is crucial in forming arts infrastructures in rural regions, particularly for regions with limited leadership and figures to campaign for the arts within the local authority. The concerns of the 2011 crisis in Dumfries and Galloway were not only caused by the absence of a region-wide agency. As interviewees including Thomson and Jan Hogarth, Creative Director of Wide Open, a public art commissioning agency in Dumfries and Galloway, mentioned at the time, they were also concerned by the lack of a leading and lobbying figure in the council

service (Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011; Hogarth, interview with author, 12 October 2011). Coggins commented that it was very fortunate that the new Senior Manager Grieveson came along at the right time and with the support from Creative Scotland through Place Partnership, the development of the new infrastructure for the arts was made possible. As Coggins suspected, if the Senior Manager was less strong on pushing the arts forward, and had Dumfries and Galloway not had the Place Partnership from Creative Scotland, the funding originally designated to dgArts would have simply been absorbed into the council's budget cuts or used for other services (Coggins, interview with author, 18 December 2012).

The benefit of having support from national/cross-region agencies can also be seen in other regions, such as the support from the HIE for the Highlands and Islands, with most arts organisations having received funding from the enterprise office, and also the support from Creative Scotland through the Place Partnership for forming new partnerships in Argyll and Bute.

Besides financial support, national/cross-region agencies can also provide the potential to connect one rural region to another at a time when many regions felt isolated (Thomson, interview with author, 14 July, 2011; Baker, interview with author, 10 January 2013). The CABN project in Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders, although initiated by the LAs, was another good example of the national agency contributing to the conversation between regions and raising the profile of projects in rural areas.

From the 2011 crisis in Dumfries and Galloway, the new arts infrastructure comprised of three key essential elements delivered through its remit to involve local people and organisations while also providing a vision for the region at large. The current development of a new region-wide arts body, Dumfries and Galloway Arts Partnership, with support from Creative Scotland, other council services and VisitScotland, is expected to bring the arts in the region into a new future. The next chapters will place some of the issues highlighted here within the wider context of rural Scotland, focusing particularly on its economic and social relationship with and impact on the arts in rural Scotland. Chapter 7 will place the indigenous arts organisations, events and individual practitioners within the wider rural economic context, with a particular focus on its role in rural tourism

and economic development, and will also discuss the support structures, or the lack thereof, required for arts in rural Scotland to be economically viable.

## Chapter 7 The Arts in a Scottish Rural Economy

In the light of the issues discussed in the case study and the current political context outlined in the previous chapters, this chapter looks at the roles of the arts within the economic development of rural Scotland. Chapters 2 and 4 articulated the series of changes in the economic and political landscape of rural Scotland in the past 15 years from the devolution to the rise of the Scottish National Party (SNP), the outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease to the recent funding cuts/freeze to public services. Arts policy itself changed greatly with the formation of Creative Scotland and its new funding/investment programmes, especially the Place Partnerships investment, which has made an impact on the arts in rural Scotland.

Chapter 1 looked at how over the past decades the economic impact of the arts and culture was frequently discussed in terms of measurable outcomes becoming the crucial evidence of demonstrating the importance of the arts. In the current economic and public funding crisis, there have been a number of recent publications on this subject in the UK, including two extensive reports commissioned by Creative Scotland (EKOS, 2011; DC Research, 2012). They intended to demonstrate the value of the arts for economic development and justify funding for the arts, or at least to achieve some remission amongst the waves of national and local public funding cuts. Despite the high number of publications and articles available on this subject, very few mentions of the arts in rural areas were found.

However, the position of the arts and its relationship with the wider economic context of rural Scotland is an important factor for arts development in rural regions. Chapter 5 highlighted the close connection between the arts and the local economy in Dumfries and Galloway. During this research similar close relationships were found in other rural areas in Scotland. This chapter will build upon the above mentioned existing publications and discuss the relationship between current arts policy, its economic expectations and the realities of the arts and rural economy, particularly of cultural tourism and creative businesses.

The tourism industry plays an important part in the economy of rural Scotland as well as in the arts. It claimed to contribute £5.2 billion in 2011 to the Scottish

economy (Scotland.org, 2012); it also provides some of the largest local employers in rural Scotland, especially in many small towns (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012). Arts and culture are an important part of Scottish tourism, as demonstrated by the success and popularity of the National Museums and Galleries, Edinburgh Festivals and Robert Burns heritage sites, to name a few. This chapter will examine the representation of rural Scotland and its arts and culture in Scottish national tourism campaigns, the position of the arts in tourism in rural Scotland in different regions and the practical reality related to nationwide policies.

In addition to its role in the tourism industry in rural Scotland, the arts, and particularly crafts, contribute to the rural economy in the form of small and medium creative businesses, and in some regions, its significance has been widely recognised (DC research, 2012; Crafts Council et al., 2012). Similar to the rural demography in general, artist and creative practitioner communities in rural Scotland have a very different demographic structure to those in urban centres. This will be demonstrated in the latter section of this chapter, which will articulate the contribution of crafts businesses to the economy and their support for the creative community in rural Scotland.

By analysing the two aspects of the role of the arts in a rural economy, this chapter aims to review the connections or disconnections between recent economic effects and the needs of the arts in rural Scotland and their local and central policy making. Subsequently, this chapter will suggest ways forward to further develop the connections between the arts and local economy in rural Scotland.

### **Scottish Identity and Cultural Tourism**

The Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) 2007 - 2013 identifies the particular importance of rural enterprise and business development, the diversification of economic activity and rural tourism.<sup>43</sup> The *Rural Scotland in Focus 2012 (RSIF2012)* report pointed out that tourism is of great significance to rural economics by providing 13% of employment in remote rural areas and 7% in accessible rural Scotland through businesses such as hotels and restaurants (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012: 47). The report also suggests that it plays an

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<sup>43</sup> Source: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/SRDP/WhatIs> Accessed 25 October 2012



important part in enhancing the rural environment and landscape, particularly for many small towns heavily dependent on tourism.

In addition to their community remits, many of the organisations/events listed in Chapter 5 have developed to become features on Scotland's tourist map and/or calendar. Organisations such as An Tobar on the Isle of Mull and the Pier Arts Centre in Stromness provide programmes of top quality art and performances to residents in the region, and are popular attractions for visitors as well. The promotion and emphasis of arts and culture in the Scottish tourism industry has grown stronger as part of the devolved government's agenda. This is evident in VisitScotland's Year of Creative Scotland 2012 campaign and Creative Scotland's partnership with The List to develop the *Scotland's Festival Guide* (The List, 2011; 2012; 2013). The SNP, like many nationalist parties, shows strong support for the country's traditional culture (Gibson, 2008), with which the arts in many regions in rural Scotland are closely connected. This section of the thesis will look at some facts on tourism in rural Scotland, the representation of Scottish identity and traditions and how the arts in Scotland's cultural tourism are positioned, with particular attention drawn to the northern islands of Orkney and Shetland.

#### *Tourism in Rural Scotland and Scottish Identity*

The national tourism agency, VisitScotland, groups Scottish regions into the following larger areas in its statistics and reports:

- Southern Scotland: Dumfries and Galloway, Scottish Borders;
- Northern Scotland: Highlands and Islands, Aberdeen and Grampian, Orkney, Shetland;
- Eastern Scotland: Edinburgh and Lothian, Edinburgh City, Angus and Dundee, Perthshire, Fife;
- Western Scotland: Glasgow and Clyde Valley, Glasgow City, Argyll, Loch Lomond, Stirling and Forth Valley, Ayrshire and Arran.

Although, Argyll and Bute is grouped in Western Scotland and Northern Scotland includes Aberdeen City, this section will draw data from reports on the Southern Scotland and Northern Scotland groups for analysis.

There are a few significant facts which were demonstrated by VisitScotland's annual reports on tourism in Scotland in 2011 (VisitScotland, 2012a; 2012b; 2012c; 2012d; 2012e). Firstly, arts and culture venues and events are not yet the primary destinations for visitors to rural Scotland. While large institutions in Glasgow and Edinburgh such as The National Museum, The National Galleries of Scotland, The Riverside Museum, Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery and The Gallery of Modern Art occupied five of the top 10 most visited tourist attractions in 2011, very few museums and arts venues in rural Scotland are listed as the most popular tourist attractions. Among all the venue-based organisations mentioned earlier in Chapter five, only the Heart of Hawick (Scottish Borders), Pier Arts Centre (Orkney), Taigh Chearsabhagh (Eileanan Siar) and Bonhoga Gallery<sup>44</sup> (Shetland) made their regions' top five most visited attractions.<sup>45</sup>

Secondly, the reports further articulate that the Scottish scenery/landscape and Scottish heritage are the primary interests of visitors to Scotland. Reviewing the most popular attractions in rural Scotland, it is not difficult to find that visitors to these regions are more interested in heritage and nature. Among the 35 top attractions in the seven rural regions included in the reports,<sup>46</sup> 18 of them are historic or heritage attractions and seven are nature/landscape-related attractions. VisitScotland's *2011 Visitor Survey* also shows that the most popular motivators for visiting Scotland are to see the scenery/landscape (58%) and to learn more about Scottish history/culture (31%) (VisitScotland, 2012f: 22). The same survey also illuminates that among the 20 most popular activities that visitors participated in during their trips to Scotland 'Visiting museums and galleries' ranks 9<sup>th</sup>, which can be attributed to the high number of visitors to the central belt, while 'Music/Arts Festival' was found to be the least popular activity (VisitScotland, 2012f: 42 - 43).<sup>47</sup>

The statistics found in the VisitScotland reports can hardly be used to demonstrate the importance of the arts in rural tourism, and many, including Jan Hogarth, Creative Director of Wide Open, a public art commissioning agency in Dumfries &

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<sup>44</sup> The new arts centre Mareel was not yet opened in 2011, although the Shetland Museum and Archive, which is located next to Mareel, attracted 87,403 visitors in 2011 and was the most popular attraction in Shetland.

<sup>45</sup> Aberdeen Art Gallery in Aberdeen City was the 3<sup>rd</sup> most popular visitor attraction in Aberdeen and Grampian in 2011.

<sup>46</sup> Top five in each of the seven regions.

<sup>47</sup> Sightseeing, trying local food, historic houses and visiting cities are the most popular.

Galloway; Saskia Gibbon, Arts Development Officer (North) & Acting Public Art Officer, Aberdeenshire Council and Alan Thomson, then Director of dgArts, agree that the arts, especially venues, are not usually among the primary reasons for people to visit rural Scotland (Hogarth, interview with author, 12 October 2011; Gibbon, interview with author, 27 July 2011; Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011). However, because the arts in rural Scotland have unique regional features, from depicting rural landscapes and wildlife to local craft traditions to name a few, the arts and crafts made in rural Scotland are often chosen for tourism campaigns to represent the whole nation. As Alan Thomson, the former director of dgArts, mentioned, although the arts might not be the main reason for people to visit Scotland, it can be a 'very welcome part of the experience' (Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011). For VisitScotland's £900,000 2011 European campaign, Hazel Campbell, a landscape painter based in and from Dumfries and Galloway, Sheila Fleet, a jeweller based in and from Orkney and Donald John Mackay, a weaver who works for Harris Tweed based in and from Eileanan Siar, were chosen by the national agency as three of the main campaigners. Campbell and Fleet are also among the campaigners for VisitScotland's 2012 North American campaign (VisitScotland, 2011; 2012g). Additionally, VisitScotland's largest sub-team EventScotland promotes various arts festivals as important features of rural tourism in Scotland. VisitScotland's 2012 Year of Creative Scotland campaign was also evidence that the tourism agency believe that Scotland's arts and culture can be a key tourism campaign element.

Although it would appear that the arts play an important part in representing the nation, one must question whether VisitScotland's tourism campaign and the overall Scottish cultural identity promoted by the nationalist government appropriately represent the diversity of rural Scotland.

In recent years, Scottish identity has become increasingly important in Scottish politics inevitably influencing tourism and arts policies (Curtice et al., 2009). However, Scottish identity as portrayed in many of the nationalist government and VisitScotland's campaigns are often mostly representative of the Highland region of the rural areas. In the Homecoming Scotland 2009 campaign, the branding of Scotland featured a very strong highland identity, deemed quite controversial (Morrison and Hay, 2010; Kemp, 2009). Iain Hamilton, Head of Creative Industries for the Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), commented admittedly that 'in the

past what Scotland has been sold as a country is largely Highlands and Islands (the highland culture)' (Hamilton, interview with author, 19 October 2011). Also of note is that the Highlands and Islands regions are also the best and most consistently supported by the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) and Creative Scotland. As of December 2012, all of the six Foundation Funded Organisations in rural Scotland are based in the Highlands and Islands with two of them being Gaelic Language projects (Creative Scotland, 2011).

It has been widely commented on that the arts and culture in the Highlands and Islands have very strong connections with traditional culture and the Gaelic language. Robert Livingston, then Director of Hi-Arts believes that heritage and traditional culture serves as great inspiration for artists working in the Highlands and Islands:

When you are looking at Highlands and Islands, you can't ignore the heritage. It's so present, whether it's because it's traditional arts, or the inspiration for writers, artists, musicians, the heritage is definitely linked, and I think that's extremely powerful. (Livingston, interview with author, 29 July 2011)

Similarly, Hamilton sees the Highlands and Islands' contemporary and traditional arts as a whole package when it comes to bringing in the tourists:

[What attracts people is] the combination of things rather than a particular artists or piece of music. It's not just one painting of a highland cow, or a piece of Kilt... the key is to use different images of culture here to hit different kinds of markets and bring in different audiences. It can be as contemporary as we can possibly manage or as traditional, whichever fits the bill. (Hamilton, interview with author, 19 October 2011)

However, the Highlands and Islands heritage, and particularly Highland culture, and its connection with the arts can also be very exclusive to their geographic areas. Anna Vermehren, Developing Director of Timespan, commented based on her previous experience working in Aberdeenshire: 'up here (Helmsdale), the identity is very different to [the identity] down in Aberdeenshire. Here is about the **North** and the Highland traditions' (Vermehren, interview with author, 19 November 2012). As mentioned in Chapter 6, Thomson, the previous director of dgArts, felt that southern regions are excluded from this portrait of Scottish

culture (Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011). Baker, the Library and Culture Development Officer, Argyll and Bute Council, mentioned that the central belt and Highland-focused approach of VisitScotland dissatisfied the local tourism industry, which ultimately led to the indigenous formation of Argyll and the Isles Strategic Tourism Partnerships by local tourism and marketing bodies (Baker, interview with author, 10 January 2013). Similar arrangements were made in Dumfries and Galloway where local tourism providers formed a new agency, Destination Dumfries and Galloway, as mentioned in Chapter 6.

The national tourism campaigns focusing on the central belt and the Highlands suggest a chicken-and-egg situation: do visitors come to Scotland for its scenery/landscape and its heritage, as promoted by VisitScotland as found in their survey results, or does VisitScotland promote the nation in such way to meet the audience's pre-existing perceptions and expectations of Scotland? There is no doubt that establishing a brand is the key to a successful tourism and marketing campaign, and under the influence of the nationalist administration, it is almost inevitable that images of traditional culture would be emphasised. Creative Scotland is also under this influence. Venu Dhupa, the then Development Director of Creative Scotland, said that she has never worked with a government so closely before. Although she was glad that the current Scottish Government is investing in and supporting the arts and culture in Scotland, she was also concerned that the government would follow the traditional path of other nationalist parties - by emphasising the country's traditions and neglecting the contemporary (Dhupa, interview of author, 30 July 2012).

The Year of Creative Scotland in 2012 was an opportunity for VisitScotland and Creative Scotland to work together to establish a new brand for the more contemporary and diverse arts attractions in Scotland. Creative Scotland, met VisitScotland in the middle by agreeing to promote Scotland as a 'year-round festival destination' with VisitScotland intending to promote the culture and creativity of the nation alongside the 2012 Olympics. However it is worth noting that the campaign has more or less been over shadowed by the controversies around Creative Scotland itself, and the reports and reviews from the Year of Creative Scotland are yet to be seen as of February 2014. However, it has been refreshing and encouraging to see that through this collaboration, the arts in rural Scotland have been better recognised with specific awards set up for small

settlements, and the Year of Creative Scotland fund itself distributed more equally - with at least one project funded from each of Scotland's rural regions.

Interestingly, although both Creative Scotland and VisitScotland wish to promote cultural tourism in Scotland, on many occasions the 'Scottishness' as defined by their tourism campaigns excluded Orkney and Shetland, despite Orkney being highly regarded as a cultural tourism destination. EventScotland's *The Year of Creative Scotland in Action* Video, which showcases various projects in the Year of Creative Scotland programme, ended with a statement that ignored the participation of island regions: 'From the **Highlands** to the Borders, from the East to the West, it was more than 12 amazing months, it was a winning year, it was the Year of Creative Scotland'. This came despite the programme's investment in both the Papay Gyro Nights Art Festival in Orkney and the Shetland Folk Festival. In her interview with the author, Cathy Shankland, the Exhibition Officer of Highland Council and later High Life Highland, emphasised the differences between Highland and the Northern Isles and suggested that the Northern Isles are sometimes considered more connected to the Northeast (Aberdeenshire and City) than with the Highlands because of their shared involvement in the oil industry. She also believes that Orkney is a special case in the arts in rural Scotland (Shankland, interview with author, 19 November 2012). When asked about the influence of the geography of Orkney, Neil Firth, the director of Pier Arts Centre said:

I think Thurso's a different world altogether. And it's perhaps [the same for] Scotland in that way... It's not like Orkney. At the moment HIE are conducting a study, that they've got a writer called François Matarasso [to evaluate the arts and culture in Orkney]... and the given being that Orkney is different from Shetland, it's different from the mainland of Scotland, even Caithness just across the way, and it's different from the western islands. (Firth, interview with author, 21 October 2011)

However, the disconnection between the Northern Isles and the Scottish mainland does not necessarily result in weaker tourism or arts industries in the regions. In fact, cultural tourism in Orkney is among the strongest in Scotland and arts and culture are exceptionally well-funded in Shetland. To understand better this disconnection and how the tourism and its connection with the arts developed in

the Northern Isles, the following section will look particularly at the cultural tourism in the Northern Isles.

### *Orkney and Shetland*

Orkney and Shetland may share some similar features such as their remote geographic location and their relative independence from the Scottish mainland, but in many ways they are in contrast with each other.

Geographically Orkney is much closer to the Scottish mainland than Shetland, and is well connected to the Highlands and the Northeast of Scotland by ferries and flights, with the travel distance between Kirkwall and Thurso - the larger northernmost settlement in the Highlands - being only 46 miles. Kirkwall is also only 155 miles to Inverness and the same distance by ferry to Aberdeen City. By comparison, the main town in Shetland, Lerwick is 160 miles from Thurso, 224 miles from Aberdeen and 266 miles from Inverness, however at the same time, is only 220 miles from Bergen in Norway.

There are also cultural life and tourism differences between Orkney and Shetland. Many who were interviewed for this research have commented on Orkney's creative atmosphere. Livingston believes that '[Orkney] is one of the most welcoming and genuine places to visit, because there's such confidence and comfort in their culture, and they are happy to present to you' (Livingston, interview with author, 29 July 2011). Pam Beasant, Arts Officer for Orkney Islands Council and Rik Hammond, an artist who re-located from England to Orkney, both believe that the arts, crafts and creativities as well as people's involvement in them in Orkney is exceptional in the UK (Beasant and Hammond, interview with author, 20 October 2011). This atmosphere, combined with internationally well-known artists and makers has brought the arts into the centre of the tourism in Orkney. The 2008/2009 Orkney Visitor Survey has positioned 'Shopping for Crafts or Local Products' as the fifth most undertaken activity among 28 activities listed with 'Photography/Painting', 'Musical Entertainment' and 'Festivals and Events' also sharing significant percentages of the chart (A B Associates Limited, 2010). Although Orkney shares a smaller percentage of overseas visitors in its tourist demography compared to other regions, visitors to Orkney spend 4.1 days per trip on average and 77% of visitors travel to Orkney for holiday (VisitScotland, 2012c) compared with 3.4 days per trip and 67% for Scotland overall. The highly-regarded

Pier Art Centre was the 4<sup>th</sup> most popular attraction in Orkney with 55,000 visitors in 2011 and the St Magnus Festival in June saw average ticket sales of just under 14,000 tickets each year between 2009 and 2011 (Matarasso, 2012: 22).

In comparison, despite its richness of heritage and traditional arts, Shetland is still best known for its oil industry and its wealth. How well the arts were developed, including the Trusts system in Shetland, are largely dependent on its oil economy: Shetland is the only region in the whole of Scotland where the vast majority (85%) of visitors travelled to for business (VisitScotland, 2012c). Additionally, the majority of visitors, 80%, were from England, compared with 44% for Orkney and 46% for the Scottish average. It is not difficult to say that visitors to Shetland are very different to those in other regions in Scotland. The only region that resembled remote similarities is Grampian (Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen), where just under half of visitors (47%) travelled for holiday and 32% of visitors travelled for business (VisitScotland, 2012c).

In contrast with the smaller scale organisations and venues found elsewhere in rural Scotland, the wealth in Shetland created an environment for arts and culture to develop on a larger scale. The arts, culture and heritage are managed by local independent agencies Shetland Arts and Shetland Amenity Trust, both funded by the Shetland Charitable Trust (SCT). The SCT was set up in 1976 to receive and disburse the compensation from the oil industry and still receives funds from the oil industry. It also funds other arts and culture activities and events on the islands. The well-funded trusts were able to build two brand new, large scale venues in the past 10 years: Shetland Museum and Archive, which opened in 2008, and Mareel, a multi-disciplinary arts centre, which opened in 2012, both on the dock of Lerwick. Shetland Museum and Archive was the most visited tourist attraction in Shetland in 2011, attracting 87,403 visitors while visitor numbers to all other attractions on the islands were under 20,000 (VisitScotland, 2012c). Small-scale music festivals also play an important part in the arts in Shetland with the Shetland Folk Festival in May, the Fiddle Frenzy in August, the Guitar Festival and the Blues Festival in September, and the Shetland Accordion and Fiddle Festival in October.

It is not difficult to conclude that although they are often mentioned together, there is little similarity between Orkney and Shetland in terms of the arts and cultural tourism. Orkney's creative scene has been widely recognised by other



organisation leaders such as Roddy Murray, Director of An Lanntair on Isle of Lewis and Robert Livingston, with Pier Arts Centre seen as existing on a different, even higher, level to many other arts organisations in rural Scotland (Murray, interview with author, 20 November 2012; Livingston, interview with author, 29 July 2011). The Orkney islands have the highest occupancy rate of hotels and cottages in June, July and August in Scotland after Edinburgh at over 80%, compared to a national average of 53% - 64% (VisitScotland, 2012a; 2012b; 2012c; 2012d; 2012e). The Orkney Islands Council has also made a great contribution to arts development by having continuous arts strategies since 2004 - the only local authority (LA) in rural Scotland to maintain that. In addition, they published a public art development strategy and an arts capital strategy in 2006. Subsequently, studies and books have been published on the successes of the arts and cultural tourism of the islands (McAuley and Fillis, 2005) and most recently, research on cultural development in Orkney, commissioned by the HIE, was completed by François Matarasso in 2012. In this research Matarasso believes that culture (including cultural tourism) is crucial to the community and economy in Orkney. The local creative businesses and major events have achieved their success by balancing their relationship with the local community, local artists and their audiences from outside of the region (Matarasso, 2012). This finding is agreed upon by Beasant who went further to point out that the link between the creative community and businesses is crucial to the islands' success (Beasant, interview with author, 20 October 2011).

However, the arts in Orkney are not only for tourism, according to Beasant and Hammond. They provide high quality arts for the local residents and have become a year-round destination for people who are interested in the arts. During the interview, which took place in late-October in 2011, Beasant mentioned a poetry tour that was happening the same night featuring poets from Orkney and Shetland islands; Hammond mentioned the opening at the Piers Arts Centre the night before, where he met Christine Borland, a Turner Prize nominated artist who came for the opening from the Scottish mainland (Beasant and Hammond, interview with author, 20 October 2011).

In contrast to the success of cultural tourism, or more generally the tourism industry in Orkney, in Shetland it makes up merely a fraction of the islands' economy. In the *Shetland 2012: Economic Development Strategy* (Shetland Local Economic Forum, 2002), it was proposed that tourism and knitwear, an industry

for which Shetland is well-known for, were areas that have not progressed and therefore argued that there was an opportunity, through the 2000 National Cultural Strategy, to further support and encourage development in both of these areas together. The underdevelopment of the craft sector was also identified as a weakness in the tourist 'offering'. A slogan 'Shetland: Place of Pride' was subsequently launched in 2002, aiming to bring in visitors to the islands. However, this has yet to achieve great success. In 2008, a report evaluating the creative industries in Shetland was completed by EKOS Limited, which identified the 'limited connectivity between the creative sector and the wider economy, despite clear opportunities'. The report suggested further enhancing the link between culture/festivals and tourism and the link between the design/contemporary craft sector to Shetland's textile exports (EKOS, 2008).

As of 2011, most visitors to Shetland travelled for business reasons. Based on the statistics in the VisitScotland report, only 7,200 people travelled to Shetland for a holiday in 2011, in other words, only 0.3 holiday-makers per resident compared to 1.8 per resident in Orkney in the same year. Visitors to Shetland, including business visitors, also stay for a significantly shorter length of time than visitors to other rural regions at an average stay of only 2.5 days. This means that business visitors are unlikely to stay long enough to discover and enjoy the local arts and culture. These statistics compared to the large visitor numbers to the region's new museum and Bonhoga Gallery in 2011 (total visits of 106,642) (VisitScotland, 2012c), suggest that the arts and culture facilities in Shetland are still mostly used and attended by local residents, a behaviour pattern which might be the same for the festivals on the islands.

There is no doubt that the arts in both regions are well developed in different ways, but the contrast between the cultural tourism industries in Orkney and Shetland demonstrates that the link between the arts and the wider economic context, along with the integration of arts and creativity within the traditional cultural environment, are important for contributing to the local economy. The arts in Orkney were developed in a more typical rural fashion - small things began in small places, most projects were started by individuals, and the links between the arts, creative businesses and the local residencies and economies are usually made by those individuals based on their personal connections and skills. The driving force behind the arts in Orkney are the islands themselves, its local

residents and local creative practitioners, and where small projects have developed over the years into the bigger scale projects such as the St Magnus's Festival and the Pier Arts Centre. In contrast, Shetland has a rare approach that partially resembles some features found in urban areas. The trusts although starting out very small, have grown rapidly over time. As mentioned in the list in Chapter 5, the Shetland Arts Trust has its own disciplinary department and almost operate like a miniature arts council, able to develop the arts in a more independent and top-down manner. The quality of the exhibitions in many large-scale initiatives such as the new Shetland Museum and Archive, Mareel, and even in Bonhoga Gallery, is not something that one would often find in rural regions.

Although it is not to say that the success of Orkney's cultural tourism is entirely dependent on its more rural and organic approach, after all Shetland is significantly further away from the mainland and there are other natural and geographical reasons why it is a less popular holiday destination. The indigenous, and sometimes personal, approach that developed the arts within the community was certainly a key factor contributing to the reputation of arts and culture in Orkney today. Like many initiatives mentioned in Chapter 5, these efforts are often made by creative individuals such as individual artists living in rural Scotland. The following part of this chapter will explore the role of these individuals and their contribution to rural development.

### **Creative Practitioners and Businesses**

The above examples of Orkney and the earlier described case study of Dumfries and Galloway, have demonstrated the importance of individuals and communities in arts development in rural Scotland. Among the local residents, creative practitioners,<sup>48</sup> as the initiators of creative businesses, are an essential force for indigenous projects and events and key to the arts in rural Scotland. Many of the organisations and events listed earlier in Chapter 5 were started by individual practitioners or artist collectives. The creative businesses led by practitioners also form an important part of the local community and economy. Focusing on visual arts and craft businesses, the next part of this chapter will look at the demography of the artists in Rural Scotland and the contribution of their work to rural

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<sup>48</sup> Creative practitioners are artists of different disciplines including visual arts, craft, performing arts, film making, music, design etc., although this part of the thesis is primarily focused on visual artists, makers and designers.

development in Scotland. Furthermore, the support for artists in rural Scotland in general will be discussed.

### *Practitioners in Rural Scotland*

Surprisingly, many practitioners who work in rural Scotland are not from these regions nor did they previously have very strong connections with the regions before relocating there. The few practitioners who are originally from local areas often moved out of their regions earlier in their lives to establish their careers elsewhere before moving back. For example, despite the fact that Dumfries and Galloway is predicted to have the lowest net migration rate for 2012 - 2035 in the Scottish mainland (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012: 10), among the 70 locally based artists and makers in the membership of Spring Fling Open Studios (Spring Fling) in the year 2011/2012,<sup>49</sup> 56 of them are from outside of Dumfries and Galloway. Also, among the 14 artists who are from the region, only two have always lived and worked in the region<sup>50</sup> and did not build their careers elsewhere. This phenomenon is commonly found in rural areas, and even in the case of Orkney, which earlier in this chapter demonstrated its vibrant arts and culture scene. When interviewed by the author, Beasant mentioned that her daughter went to study Illustration and Animation in Dundee, and although she is keen to move back to Orkney, she also understands that she will need to build good connections and profile before moving back to the islands and is currently working in Edinburgh (Beasant, interview with author, 20 October 2011).

The reasons practitioners migrate to rural Scotland vary from an attraction to the natural and/or cultural environment (Livingston, interview with author, 29 July 2011; Hammond, interview with author, 20 October 2011), to cheaper housing prices (Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011; Hammond, *ibid*), a better benefit system (Thomson, *ibid*) and a perceived better social environment to raise families or spend the later years of their lives. As discussed in Chapter 2, like other rural places, there is no exception for Dumfries and Galloway to lose its 'young adult' population to urban centres. This issue is becoming increasingly obvious in creative communities across rural Scotland. After finishing secondary schools in

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<sup>49</sup> Spring Fling membership runs from September to August each year and had 96 members for the year 2011/2012. The 70 artists mentioned are those with published areas of origin in their personal statements, websites and other publications.

<sup>50</sup> Who, except for studying for their degrees, have spent less than one year away from the region and have always had properties in the region.

their local areas, students who wish to be artists or start their own creative businesses often need to leave to study in art schools and colleges elsewhere. In the case of visual arts, as of 2012, the only art school offering more than one type of degree-level course in visual arts or crafts or design outside of the seven cities in Scotland is the Moray School of Art. Furthermore, many art students who move from rural regions to study in these cities, stay on upon completion of their degrees - a phenomenon mentioned by Cathy Shankland, Exhibition Officer, Highland Council and Rebecca Coggins, Principal Arts Officer (Nithsdale), Dumfries and Galloway Council (Shankland, interview with author, 29 July 2011; Coggins, interview with author, 14 July 2011). Although there are more young artists going back to their family homes in recent years as a result of the current economic crisis as well as the increased opportunities in rural places in the past decade, it is visible that there are fewer artists aged between 21 and 45 in rural Scotland.

This older demographic of arts practitioners in rural Scotland makes the average practitioner socially and financially more stable than that of their urban counterparts. Many who have relocated to rural places have developed their career as artists elsewhere and are no longer under pressure to establish themselves as artists. However, Shankland, Hamilton and Coggins all commented that one of the issues that rural areas are now facing is the shortage of young artists and new and exciting ideas (Coggins, interview with author, 14 July 2011; Shankland, interview with author, 29 July 2011; Hamilton, interview with author, 19 October 2011). While there are projects attracting young practitioners from time to time, there is nothing consistent to make the regions more attractive for them to stay. Shankland commented:

There's no art college in Highland and all students have to leave to go to art college in other cities, and it's difficult to attract them to come back to work in Highland, and the area is stuck for young artists and will need more young artists to work on more exciting projects. The team is trying to provide opportunities such as residencies and exhibitions but the funding is constrained.... People do come back to Highland in ones and twos, or a hide-away once they have been successful, but *nobody* regards this as a place where they can develop their practices. (Shankland, interview with author, 19 November 2012)

Although the demography of creative communities in rural Scotland is very different from those in Glasgow and Edinburgh, diversity within rural Scotland still exists. Creative practitioners living in rural Scotland include well-known contemporary artists such as Andy Goldsworthy who are commissioned internationally, newly established and self-taught artists; artists whose work is community focused and artists who have developed successful brands like Wendy Inkster in Shetland. Public art and socially engaged art and their influence on the local community will be discussed further in Chapter 8, while this part of this thesis will look at commercially established craft and design businesses in particular, and their contribution to the economy in rural Scotland.

### *Craft and Design Businesses*

Similar to the way in which Turner Prize-winning Scottish artists and well-known independent galleries such as the Modern Institute and Transmission threw Scotland into the international contemporary art spotlight, the craft sector in Scotland developed a reputation as a representative of the nation and had international appeal. Traditional Scottish crafts and textiles including tweed, knitwear and tartan became international Scottish icons, aided most recently by the CraftScotland campaign to promote Scottish contemporary craft.<sup>51</sup>

In 2002 the SAC commissioned the study *Craft Businesses in Scotland* that mapped the craft industry in Scotland. Based on case studies in Orkney and the Scottish Borders the study indicated that:

Many (craft businesses) are based in rural and remote areas where they are contributors to tourism, the local economy and the fabric of the community in general. In addition they make a contribution to artistic and technical innovation and provide further impetus for entrepreneurial activity and indigenous small-firm growth. (SAC and Scottish Enterprise, 2002: 7)

Comparing the 2002 SAC study and the 2012 report *Craft in an Age of Change* by the Crafts Council, Creative Scotland, the Arts Council of Wales and Craft Northern Ireland, the 2012 report shows a significant rise in the percentage of Jewellery businesses from 10.4% to 23% and subsequently became the dominant discipline

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<sup>51</sup> Although there are limited publicised evaluations of CraftScotland's work (Walker, 2012), CraftScotland has brought a range of Scottish-based makers to international craft fairs such as Collect in London, PMA Craft Fair in Philadelphia and SOFA in Chicago and New York.

among makers in Scotland replacing Ceramics. The previous dominant discipline of Ceramics fell to 3<sup>rd</sup> place from 22.4% to 18.3%. This could be as a result of the trends within the craft industry towards design and the decline of degree-level ceramic courses in Scottish art schools in the past decade.<sup>52</sup> The 2012 report also showed that makers in Scotland were more connected to tourism with 30% of the survey respondents saying tourism was very important to them compared to 18% in the UK as a whole, and makers in Scotland are also more likely to use internet selling channels (Craft Council et al., 2012: 78). Orkney based artist Rik Hammond has also commented that many artists and makers are now selling much of their work and making connections through the internet, hence making running a creative business in Orkney much more realistic and easier than before (Hammond, interview with author, 20 October 2011). The Crafts Council et al. report further indicated that among the four UK nations, makers in Scotland are the only ones with an average craft-related income of over £20,000 per annum (Crafts Council et al., 2012: 79).

Influenced by craft traditions, especially those based in the Highlands and Islands, craft and design businesses in rural Scotland play a very important role in the local economy. While there is no recent economic-focused research on craft in rural Scotland, an article on *Craft and Rural Development* by Dr Karen Yair drew on examples from makers and craft events in rural England and concluded:

Working in rural communities, craft businesses can support the evolution of vibrant, distinctive and colourful rural high streets, and encourage innovation by rural businesses. They can play a significant role in growing the local business networks and supply chains which encourage money to circulate in local economies. They can help to diversify these economies away from over-reliance on declining industries, whilst creating new, high value markets for these industries to supply. And they can help isolated young people into employment whilst making their communities more attractive places to live and work. (Yair, 2011)

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<sup>52</sup> Glasgow School of Art, Edinburgh College of Art, Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art Design and Gray's School of Art all provided degree-level ceramic design courses in 2002, however all courses were closed by 2011.

Although the case studies featured in her report were based in England, with more craft businesses per capita,<sup>53</sup> the higher incomes of the makers and closer connections with tourism as reported in the Craft Council et al.'s 2012 report, one can conclude that the crafts play an equally, if not more, important role in rural development in Scotland.

According to the analysis of the *Business Register Employment Survey 2010* found in the *Economic Contribution Study* commissioned by Creative Scotland in 2012 (DC Research, 2012: 31), industries such as visual arts, crafts, fashion and textiles employed 1%, 2.7% and 8.3% of all people working in the Arts and Creative Industries in Scotland respectively. However, the numbers change dramatically in different region. For example, in Outer Hebrides they changed to 0.8%, 2.6% and 16.6% representing the influence of the Islands' traditional tweed design and making. The traditional Harris Tweed, now an internationally recognised brand with its own standard authority, is an industry with many major employers in the region. The influence of jewellery making tradition in Orkney and the wool and cashmere tradition in the Scottish Borders are also demonstrated in the same report. As home to international jewellery businesses such as Ortak and Sheila Fleet, 0.55% of the workforce in Orkney is employed by the craft sector, almost 10 times of the 0.06% reported for the whole of Scotland. In the Scottish Borders, with major cashmere and knitwear brands including Pringle of Scotland, Hawick Cashmere Company and Peter Scott and Co., the fashion and textile industry employs 1.52% of the region's total workforce, contrary to the 0.08% in Scotland overall (DC Research, 2012: 38).

The same chart (Figure 13) shows that rural regions generally have larger percentages of employment in the craft and/or fashion and textile industries. Although many of the established textile businesses were founded in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, there are also contemporary craft and design businesses that have achieved great success in recent years such as Sheila Fleet Jewellery in Orkney.

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<sup>53</sup> The 2012 report estimated that there were 17,150 craft businesses in England and 3,350 in Scotland. Based on the 2012 populations of the two nations, there is one craft business per 2856 people in England and one per 1569 people in Scotland (Craft Scotland et al., 2012: 6).



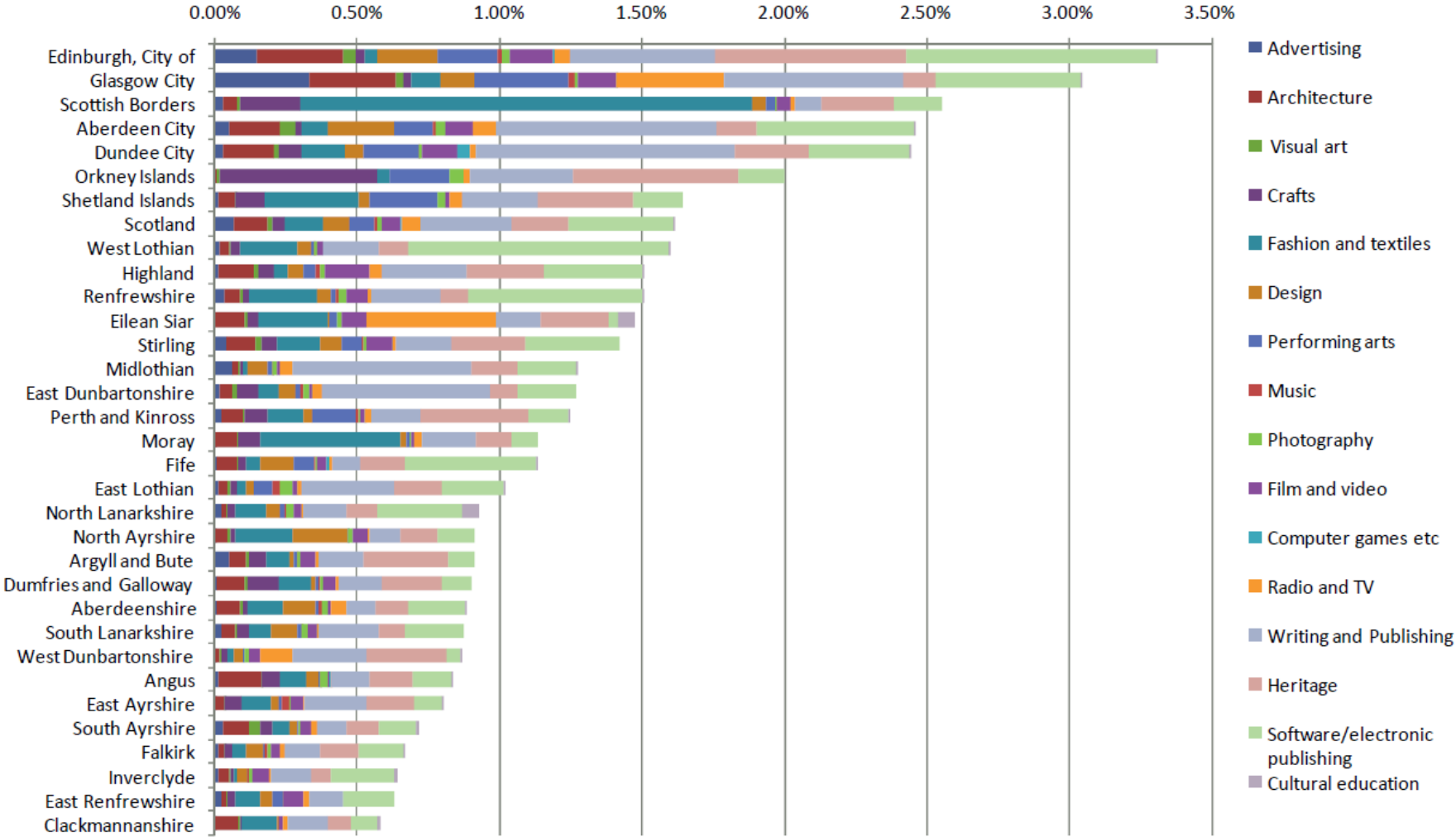


Figure 13 Arts and Creative Industries Employment Intensity across Scotland, 2010 (DC Research 2012, 38)

A professionally trained jeweller originally from Orkney, Sheila Fleet moved back to Orkney in 1977 after working with internationally renowned jewellery designer Andrew Grima. Fleet joined the then young Orkney company Ortak Jewellery as their first full-time designer. After her designs brought the business to a new international level she left to start her own business in 1993. In the 2002 SAC & Scottish Enterprise craft businesses study, Fleet's business was still seen as an up and coming new company (SAC and Scottish Enterprise, 2002: 15). Featuring a very strong Scottish Island identity, Sheila Fleet Jewellery is now a leading Scottish brand with the business valued at £2.3 million in 2010.<sup>54</sup> The company now employs over 50 people making it a major local employer, and with over 100 stockists in the UK and 6 abroad, making it one of Orkney's biggest exports.

Unlike some other regions, where established craft businesses carrying on traditional brands have either turned to machinery, such as Pringle of Scotland and other heritage knitwear brands started in Hawick, or continue with traditional craftsmanship, such as Harris Tweed, most jewellery businesses in Orkney, while influenced by the island's traditions, take a more contemporary approach and emphasise the designers/makers' aesthetics and philosophies. Beasant believes it is the strong link between high-quality creativity and the island's wider economy, as well as the balance between the high level practitioners, hobbyists and the audience, that creates the success of Orkney's creative industries (Beasant, interview with author, 20 October 2011).

In McAuley & Fillis's 2005 article *The Orkney based craft entrepreneur: remote yet global?*, a summary of the 'template' for craft businesses on the islands (Figure 14) shows the connection and progression between amateur hobbyist and internationally known Orkney designer brands.

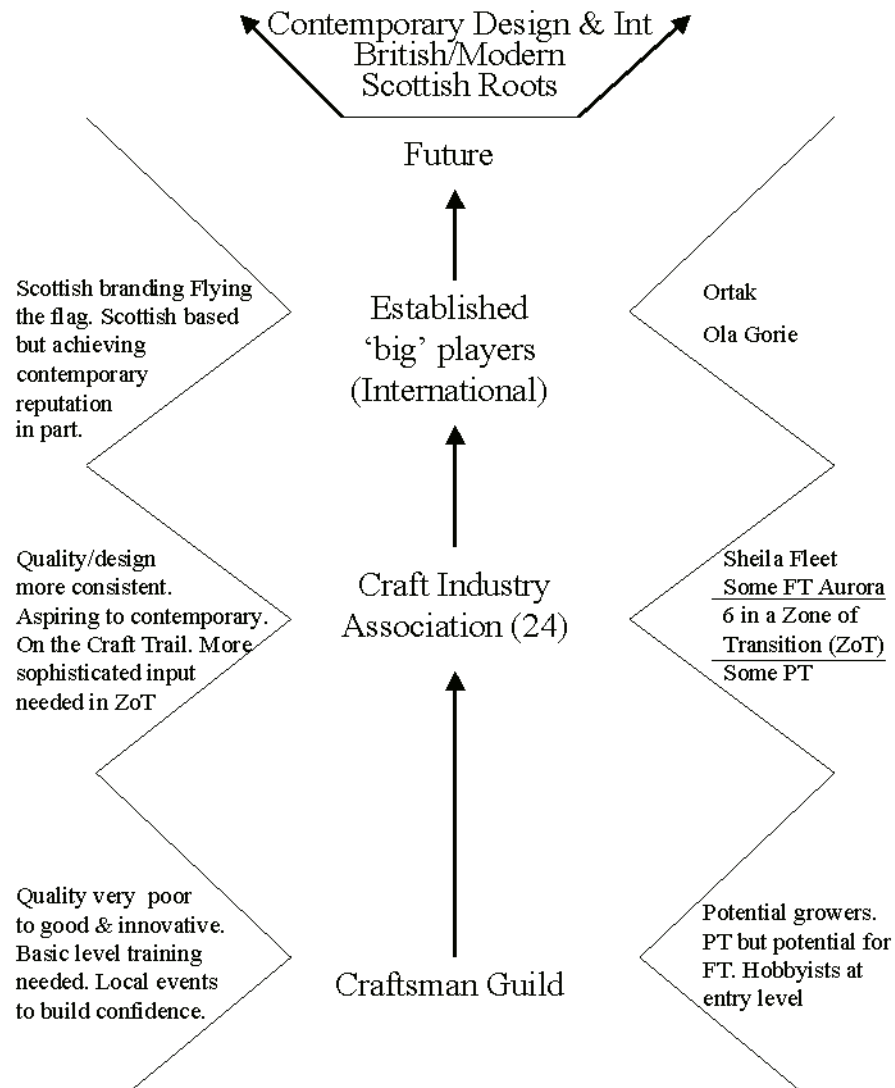
In addition to the direct economic contributions, creative businesses like the crafts also make an impact in the form of soft returns. It might not be the primary reason for most visitors to visit or for businesses to invest in the region, but it certainly makes a difference. As Hamilton states:

[The arts] is the key to keep businesses investing here, families to move here and young people to stay here, and this is how we keep people here, this is

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<sup>54</sup> Based on the company's 2010 accounts.

what make this place special and it is the only thing we have that is absolutely unique. Because techniques and other businesses [in the Highlands and Islands] are not going to compete with global companies such as Microsoft etc., it's people's ideas that you need. (Hamilton, interview with author, 19 October 2011)



*Figure 14 The Orkney Template for crafts business development (McAuley & Fillis, 2005: 21) ZoT: Zone of Transition.*

Many other participants in this research, particularly Arts Development Officers such as Coggins, Beasant and Shankland, have also identified the importance of craft and creative businesses in rural Scotland.

Although the importance of the arts in rural economy can be seen through the discussion above, and the economic significance of the Creative Industries was magnified by the UK Government as well as the Scottish Government in recent

years, the arts and its economic benefits remain a sensitive topic in the arts as mentioned in Chapter 1 and 4. Since the mid-2000s, there has been criticism of the instrumental expectations of the arts, with the expected 'economic impact' among the most controversial of subjects. Although many of the voices came from south of the border, they reflected the attitude from part of the sector that can be found in Scotland as well. In his 2006 article *A Business Solution for Creativity, not a Creative Solution for Business*, James Heartfield pointed out that the expectations and false evaluation of the arts under the New Labour government were concerning. The Department for Culture Media & Sport (DCMS) seemed to have mixed up 'two different things': one is the subsidised cultural sector, and the other is profit-making businesses. Heartfield believed that '[The profit-making businesses] are the "creative industries" that feature in the DCMS case for the economic contribution of the arts; but it is the former, subsidised sector that gets the benefit from the DCMS's proselytising'. He further argued that setting the 'Creative Sector' as a separate sector and concept is a representation of arrogance and 'Creativity' has become something of a mantra (Heartfield, 2006).

This raised a number of important issues, especially in urban areas, and it is true in Scotland also, that Creative Scotland has been trying to justify the value of the Creative Industries by using evidence from sectors that they did not support or take credit for (DC Research, 2012), although this could be attributed to the agency's new remit of research in Creative Industries, and prior to this, the SAC were doing the same only with less business-like language (SAC, 2008). However, those statements are not necessarily valid within the context of the arts and the local economy in rural Scotland. The indigenous approach and the initiative of individuals is a noticeable key factor that contributes to the strong connections that the arts in rural Scotland organically have with its economic context. As highlighted in the case study of Dumfries and Galloway, within the circumstance of a lack of direction and support from the central governance body or national/cross-region agencies, individuals and communities developed their own arts initiatives and infrastructure, responding to various economic and social circumstances. This, not only meant that the arts in rural Scotland were less influenced by central policy and national agencies, but also forged stronger connections between the arts and the local economy compared to those in urban areas.

Furthermore, in opposition to Heartfield's categorising of 'subsidised' and 'profit-making' as two completely different things, the subsidised sector and the profit-making businesses can be found sharing strong links together in rural Scotland. Understandably, there are less profit-making businesses of the kinds that Heartfield mentioned in his article: video gaming, popular music or media and publishing in rural Scotland. However, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, although creative businesses have different business models, many are inspired by local heritage or tradition just like non-profit arts and cultural organisations, and this subsequently links them closely to the non-profit part of the sector. On many occasions, the subsidised sector can also serve as inspiration for the profit-making businesses. Many public subsidised organisations, such as An Lanntair and Pier Arts Centre, mentioned in Chapter 5, are hubs for local artists and creative practitioners to gather and network, as well as to seek inspirations.

However, despite the importance and success of craft in rural Scotland, there has been little recognition and support from a higher level. The Scottish Enterprise, the HIE and LAs are normally the main supporters for craft in rural Scotland. In the SAC's 2002 report, only 31.5% of craft businesses in the whole of Scotland were receiving financial and business support from LAs, 31.2% from Scottish Enterprise and only 15.8% from the Scottish Arts Council in 2001. Based on the SAC's distribution of funding between rural and urban areas at the time, it would be safe to estimate that the percentage drops further in rural Scotland. The next part of this thesis will look closer at the support for artists and makers in rural Scotland.

### *Support for Artists in Rural Scotland*

Previous discussions have concluded that the arts in rural Scotland have been largely under-represented and under-served by the national agencies. This is no exception for the support for creative practitioners and businesses in rural areas, either financially or in other aspects. As is the case for all small businesses, a great amount of effort is needed when trying to establish a creative business. Although artistic products can be sold, most artists and practitioners' businesses are run as businesses that sell services rather than products. In any case, the individual business owners need to promote themselves in order to sell their products and their personal skills with aesthetics being the key value of the business. The local enterprises offices and LAs are helpful resources for support in the management

and running of businesses, but compared with the majority of other service-based businesses in rural places, artists and creative businesses have a much broader audience outside of their local regions and, in the case of established artists, normally sell their work nationally and internationally. There is a particular need in rural arts community for opportunities to promote the arts outside of their local areas and to network with artists, practitioners and other stakeholders in the arts, such as curators and collectors beyond the regions, to sustain and develop their practice.

As mentioned earlier in this part of the thesis, most professional artists currently working in rural areas have studied and/or worked as an artist before relocating to rural Scotland. Although many appreciate the art community in rural Scotland and how close and helpful artists and people in general can be, in terms of professional development opportunities, they still very much rely on their connections made outside of the region (Hamilton, interview with author, 19 October 2011). LAs and other national and local development agencies such as tourism boards have their own remits in developing local community, economy and tourism, therefore there are very few agencies that are able to assist the professional development of artists in rural Scotland. Festivals and tourism might bring in a wide range of seasonal audiences and short-term financial benefits to practitioners, but sustaining an artist's practice requires break through opportunities such as commissions by high-profile galleries, publicity in professional magazines, research trips, and residency opportunities to create new work in new environment. Because of the geographical barriers living in rural areas presents, those opportunities are less accessible for artists based there.

Although many of the leading organisations and events listed earlier in Chapter 5 provide key venues that the stakeholders in the arts visit, only eleven out of the 37 organisations and events promote works from locally-based artists as part of their main remit. The representation of locally-based artists, in particular visual artists and makers, is normally left to small commercial galleries in local areas or galleries in urban centres.

Although the key priority of the SAC prior to its transition to Creative Scotland was to provide support and opportunities for the artists, these support did not reach as many creative practitioners in rural areas as it did their urban

counterpart. Instead, among the three main funding bodies for creative businesses, LAs, the SAC/Creative Scotland and the Scottish Enterprise/HIE, the HIE was the pioneer in recognising and investing in creative businesses in rural Scotland. The position of a Head of Creative Industries at the HIE was setup in 2002 and aimed to showcase and increase the awareness of good arts practice in rural Highlands and Islands. Different from the Creative Industry remit of the Scottish Enterprise as mentioned in Chapter 6, which is more focused on the industry's more commercial aspects, the Creative Industries team created upscaled promotion of the arts in the Highlands and Islands and broadened the perspective of local practitioners by making partnerships in Scandinavia, Spain, the United States and Russia, to name a few (Hamilton, interview with author, 19 October 2011). Hi-Arts, initiated and funded by HIE, also played a particular important role in supporting the artist community in the region, most recently through their Craft Development and Audience Development programmes. LAs supported artists mostly through external influences such as the Creative Scotland Visual Art and Craft awards in LA areas, however the support from LAs often lacked consistency (Shankland, interview with author, 29 July 2011; Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011).

Besides the top-down programmes started by regional organisations such as Hi-Arts, creative practitioners in rural regions often start their own support and promotional networks from within their local community of artists. Promoters Arts Network (PAN) was a project started by individual arts promoters, and artist collectives such as North East Open Studios (NEOS) in the Northeast, Artmap Argyll and Text-Isles in Shetland, developed stronger marketing and audience development strategies for artists and practitioners.

Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, festivals and events like the St Magnus Festival as well as smaller festivals in rural Scotland, were also started by local artists to help broaden audiences for the local creative community (Matarasso, 2012). Many of these festivals are still not dependent on public funding (Shankland, interview with author, 29 July 2011). In the research on culture in Orkney conducted by Matarasso, he compared the income sources of the St Magnus Festivals to the Huddersfield Festival in Yorkshire:

	St Magnus Festival	Huddersfield Festival
Earned Income	23.5%	8.9%
Public Revenue Support	57.4%	88.0%
Sponsorship	5.3%	1.2%
Donations	13.7%	1.6%
Other Income	0.2%	0.3%

*Table 11 Comparison of income sources of St Magnus Festival, Orkney and Huddersfield Festival, Yorkshire in 2010 (Matarasso, 2012: 23)*

Similar to the Wigtown Book Festival mentioned in Chapter 6, it is obvious that the St Magnus Festival has a higher percentage of earned income and a much smaller percentage of public support compared to the Yorkshire festival, making the funding structure of St Magnus Festival more stable and independent. This level of self-help and independence in the circumstances of limited external support has made artists in rural Scotland more resilient to public policy changes and less dependent on single source public funding especially from national arts/cultural agencies.

In recent years, there have been some creative business development programmes in rural areas funded by the SAC/Creative Scotland such as the Hi-Arts craft development programme, Growing Audience North East (GANE) and the Creative Arts and Business Network (CABN) project in the South of Scotland. As highlighted in the previous chapter, after the reform from the SAC to Creative Scotland, although the new agency was heavily criticised by artists and practitioners, few complaints from the rural-based participants were found during this research. Some commented on the lack of clarity and the vagueness of Creative Scotland, but none have complained about the support for artists. Hammond has commented on the recent decentralisation when interviewed in October 2011, and in particular on the new Creative Scotland strategy, 'you could see [large scale flagship projects] happening on a local level now, outside of the central of Scotland. So that all seems very healthy at the moment, it's going in the right direction'. His comment echoes the support letter from the Dumfries and Galloway arts sector after the controversy around Creative Scotland in the autumn of 2012 mentioned in Chapter 6 (Agnew et al. 2012). Therefore contrary to what was seen as a reduction in the level of support for artists in urban centres, Creative



Scotland was found to have provided more support for the artistic community in rural places.

### **Conclusion**

Due to the success of the creative industries in Orkney and Highland, more reports and studies were conducted for those regions, while other parts of rural Scotland might be investigated less and remain under-represented. The level of independence and the financial structure of the arts and creative businesses in rural Scotland can be further explored and articulated if nationwide evaluations and surveys were conducted, this part of the thesis merely covers the points that stood out during this research. However, the discussions above demonstrate that a key driving force behind creative communities and businesses in rural Scotland is the input from individuals through an indigenous approach. Many individuals are not only closely connected with the arts agencies but are better connected to the wider economic context. This development model has undoubtedly made creative communities and businesses in rural Scotland more resilient to political changes.

In the discussions in Chapter 2, it was stated that during the Conservative administration in the 1980s, arts projects in Scotland, and particularly in Glasgow, were largely initiated by individuals or artist collectives through an indigenous approach. Although there were difficulties in terms of a lack of financial support or infrastructure, interviewees who worked in Glasgow during that period of time generally agreed that the projects that managed to secure funding from private sectors or other sources enjoyed a greater freedom both artistically and politically (Livingston, interview with author, 29 July 2011; Farquhar, interview with author, 05 September 2011; Harding, interview with author, 14 March 2012). During the previous two decades, public investment in the arts was indeed increased in both urban and rural areas. However, the investment came with more top level regulations and instrumental policies for organisations to follow.

Despite the arts in Scotland in general receiving more public investment than ever before at the end of the 'Golden Age', the lack of support from the public sector for the arts in rural places is obvious. Although there are very successful organisations and events that were established by using a top level approach, such as Spring Fling and Hi-Arts, the indigenous approach remains the most common way for organisations to establish themselves in rural Scotland. The indigenous

approach in rural Scotland shows similarities to that of Glasgow during the 1980s, but is also influenced by features specific to contemporary rural Scotland, which consider and deal with the role and position of the arts within the local economy very differently to the arts in urban regions

Firstly, because of their indigenous approach and lack of public investment, the arts in rural Scotland are largely supported by other local community resources such as trusts and foundations. On some occasions, local businesses also contribute greatly to the arts. Because of this diversified source of support and influence from the local economy, community and politics, this has made the arts in rural Scotland generally less reliant on a single source public funding, and more resilient to central public policy changes. As shown in the example of cultural tourism in Orkney, the connections and collaborations between the arts, culture, local businesses and local tourism also contribute greatly to the success of tourism in rural regions.

Secondly, the indigenous approach in rural Scotland has sometimes limited the potential arts audience, which can be attributed to its geographic environment. Starting from the ground up, many initiatives often do not have the resources or skills to promote at a national or international level. Many arts organisations also prioritise their roles within their local communities and are less strong in promoting themselves to those from outside of the region. However, the arts are still believed to be an important part of the tourist experience and are considered to hold great potential, especially for the up-coming national events such as the 2014 Commonwealth Games and Homecoming. The case study of Orkney, as detailed earlier in this chapter, despite its differences from many other rural regions in terms of size, is a great example for other rural regions in balancing the community, tourism and economic aspects of the arts.

And lastly, the contribution to the economy and tourism varies in different regions, with indigenous approaches limiting the connection between practitioners and the arts establishments beyond the region. The indigenous approach, often taking the form of sole traders and SMEs with very few employees, leaves the task of networking and partnership building down to individuals, who are normally not experts in business management and marketing. Subsequently, rural creative

communities have started their own networks and festivals to promote the arts in and outside of their local regions.

Regardless of its limitations, the indigenous approach plays an important role in arts development in rural Scotland and is likely to remain so for the foreseeable future. This has also started to gain better recognition from the national arts agency. Despite the controversy around Creative Scotland, the attention from the national agency paid to rural Scotland has increased since the reform through new investment programmes. As highlighted in Chapter 6, the Place Partnerships and the Creative Places Awards, although many administrative issues around the two programmes are still to be improved, did help establishing a raised national profile of arts in rural Scotland and building greater connections at national and sometimes international levels.

Although there is less pressure to demonstrate the economic impact of rural arts for the central government or national agencies, the need for the arts in rural Scotland to make the case of their worth to their own community is always necessary - whether it is economic or social. Most of those who work in the subsidised arts, also feel that they are obliged to demonstrate their worth. Claudia Zeiske, the Director of Deveron Arts in Huntly said:

I think art should have a use as any other thing. And I'm quite happy to state that. And I don't believe in when artist sometimes say 'as long I affected one person, it should be enough'. We're talking about public money. We're talking money coming often from very poor people who pay their taxes. I think art has its place in society. (Zeiske, interview with author, 26 July 2011)

The amount of community involvement in the arts that determines the value of the arts for the local community is crucially important for arts development in rural Scotland, an area that the next chapter will now examine.

## Chapter 8 The Social Impact of the Arts in Rural Scotland

The social impact of the arts and culture, as with the economic impact of the sector, were widely emphasised in British cultural policy in recent decades. As discussed in previous chapters, the New Labour administration in the UK substantially encouraged community engagement and the demonstration of social value of the arts through various policies and strategies. The government has also invested more than twice as much into the arts at the end of the administration compared with when the administration started (Selwood, 2013).

In addition to the terms of 'Creative Industries' and 'Creative Britain' being used to reflect and encourage economic returns from public investments in the arts and culture, terms such as 'evidence-based policy making', 'social inclusion', 'community engagement' and 'regeneration' are also often found in the Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) and national arts agencies' documents. In Scotland, as discussed at length in chapters 4 and 6, the nationalist government, the reform of the arts council and the formation of Creative Scotland have led arts policy in Scotland to also emphasise instrumental functions of the arts - such as the representation of national identity and the economic and social impact of the arts- which has caused controversy in the sector. In contrast with the intense arguments around the instrumentalism of arts policy both in the UK and in Scotland, the arts in rural Scotland has closer and more organic connections with the local communities and appeared to be much less affected by the national level policies.

This chapter will look at the roles of the arts within rural communities in Scotland by examining the connections between arts development, local governments and local communities. Starting with a review of the national level rural policies concerning community development and the challenges and realities facing local authorities, the first section of this chapter will provide a picture of the political context for arts development in rural communities. The chapter will then move on to analyse and discuss examples of community involvement in the arts and 'public art' as a special and specific form of public engagement in rural Scotland.

### Where are the Arts in Rural Development?

As mentioned in Chapter 2, the Scottish Government has a relatively strong rural development strategy and the current Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) 2007 - 2013, has a higher per capita budget than the RDPs in England and Wales. Higher education and research institutions has also contributed greatly to the rural policy, including the Scottish Agricultural College and its new merger the SRUC, Scotland's Rural College, which provided well developed research in rural policy and development, along with expert support for the rural communities.<sup>55</sup> However, the arts and culture are still rarely, if at all, mentioned in rural policy documents. Despite the phrase change from 'agricultural development' to 'rural development', indicating that the rural development bodies in Scotland are taking an interest in wider subjects relevant to rural community and economy, most of the rural development work remains focused on agricultural and environmental issues.

The key, if not only, point of connection between rural development and the arts in rural Scotland is community development. Rural community development is on both the national rural and arts development agenda and many arts projects based in rural Scotland receive funding from the European Commission's LEADER programme. Started in the early 1991, the LEADER Initiative was first available in deprived rural areas of less than 75% of the EU average GDP across the European Union, and later expanded to LEADER Programme which covered wider rural areas. The funding was distributed by Local Action Groups (LAGs) of representatives of local communities with mostly LAs as their accountable body. With its name originated in a French acronym: 'liaisons entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale' (links between actions for the development of the rural economy), LEADER aims to support projects which provide bottom-up solutions to local development needs using innovative methods that were not used before. Since 2007, LEADER Programme has been mainstreamed and replaced by LEADER Approach, and became a part of overall EU rural development policy and a part of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and subsequently part of the SRDP in Scotland. As of 2009, LEADER's 20 LAGs covered 95% of Scotland's rural areas and

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<sup>55</sup> SRUC is a merger of a few rural development/agricultural colleges in Scotland including Barony, Elmwood, Oatridge and Scottish Agriculture College. As well as researching in rural issues in Scotland, it also provides support for rural community through the SAC Consulting 27 Farm Business Services Offices and 8 Veterinary Disease Surveillance Centres around Scotland.

with a total budget of £58m in 2009 between them (Carnegie UK Trust, 2010). In rural development strategy, it is the only nationwide programme that is dedicated to supporting innovative and sometimes even experimental ideas. The supported projects range from the development of the local transport network to educational and training projects for young people.

Dumfries and Galloway was able to develop community projects supported by LEADER after the region's economy was affected badly by the 2001 outbreak of Foot and Mouth disease. dgArts, then still called Dumfries and Galloway Arts Association, took on some of the responsibilities of driving the local community out of the economic depression through a specific community development project. Additional funds were acquired from LEADER and the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) to establish a team of Community Co-ordinators. The last director of dgArts, Alan Thomson was one of the leaders of the project in 2002:

There was a real fear in 2002 that rural communities [in Dumfries and Galloway] just wouldn't get over the Foot and Mouth epidemic, and effectively all their social and cultural events were curtailed and a project was put in to place to make sure these things were kick started back into life. (Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011)

Thomson added that besides the work of a dedicated Fundraising and Business Development Officer, Foot and Mouth disease and the subsequent funding support, were the catalysts for the organisation's development. The success of the initial project led to a period of expansion for dgArts enabling the organisation to grow to a team of 14 staff members in 2009.

As of 2012, many arts organisations and projects with a community development remit are supported by LEADER and other European funding, for example, the building of the new arts centre in Lerwick, Shetland, Mareel had European Structural Fund as its second biggest funding source. Twelve out of the 37 organisations listed in Chapter 5 have LEADER as one of their main funders. At the same time practical issues of LEADER funding were shown through the feedback from these organisations. LEADER funding is distributed through a 'Spend and Claim' system. Supported projects/organisations have to spend part of the agreed funding from their own fund first, before claiming the amount back from LEADER quarterly. The administration process also normally takes up to two months

because of the strict criteria for claiming. As well as invoices and receipts of the funds that have been spent, the projects/organisations were also asked to submit evidence of publicity and community engagement - normally sign-in sheets for participants and attendees of the events and activities requiring information of the attendees' gender, age group and address. This data is then fed to the Scottish Government as part of the regional evaluation of LEADER before it is forwarded to the European Commission as the national evaluation of the programme. As reflected by Rebecca Coggins, Principal Arts Officer (Nithsdale), Dumfries and Galloway Council and Anna Vermehren, Development Director of Timespan, this claim/evaluation process has been proven to be difficult for many arts organisations and projects with limited resource and especially when the events are not ticketed, such as a craft market or an open drop-in event (Coggins, interview with author, 14 July 2011; Vermehren, interview with author, 19 November 2012). The LEADER programme is currently under review by the LEADER working group who acknowledge these practical issues (McGrath, 2012).

Besides the LEADER programme, there is no other national initiative in the SRDP 2007-2013 that directly supports the arts and culture as part of community development.

### **The Challenges for Local Authorities**

Because of the lack of consistent support from the national agencies as discussed in previous chapters, LAs normally play an important role in providing arts and cultural activities to the local community. However, to deliver those services in rural Scotland is often a very challenging task. As examined in Chapter 5, many of the arts development teams in LAs in rural Scotland are understaffed, for example, there is currently only one member of staff overseeing the library and cultural development for the whole region of Argyll and Bute, one full time post for Eileanan Siar and Orkney and only two in Highland. The only LA areas with relatively healthy numbers of arts development staff are Aberdeenshire and Shetland - the two wealthiest and most economically resilient regions in rural Scotland in terms of average incomes and their recoveries from recession, as pointed out in the same chapter.

In the understaffed arts teams, all arts related tasks and objectives of the LAs are expected to be achieved by the work of one or two persons while they cover all art forms in the geographic region.

Cathy Shankland, Exhibition Officer at Highland Council/High Life Highland identified the difficulties of engaging the community because of the geographic features of the region. The Highland Council has three galleries outside of Inverness, however, they are all in the east of the region. Independent organisations such as Timespan in Helmsdale and North Lands Creative Glass in Lybster are also in the east, meaning that there are demands for more access to arts in other parts of the region which are not fulfilled by the council's arts team. Furthermore, prior to the setting up of High Life Highland, marketing was also a big problem when trying to distribute information to communities that are further away. Additionally the LA did not allow access to social networks, due to workplace regulation to prevent its employees using public resource for private use, which has set obstacles for the use of social media as an inexpensive marketing tool by council owned arts venues and events.

It is also a challenge for Arts Development Officers (ADOs) to work across all art forms. Despite her primary role of curating exhibitions in the council's visual art venues, Shankland has a multi-artform role:

The programme is so varied, and .... It's ridiculous really, we are doing film casting one day, amazing craft stuff the next, then we just have to be all things to all people really because there isn't anything else. (Shankland, interview with author, 29 July 2011)

The Highland Council/High Life arts team resolved to hire people on a temporary basis when the arts development officers feel they do not have the expertise to develop certain projects.

Practically, the arts team are normally required to share office space and other resources with other leisure or tourism services of the LA which often reduces the efficiency of both teams. For example, when the only remaining Arts Development Officer in the Moray Council, Nick Fearn was interviewed for this research in July 2011, the arts team (of one) was sharing an office with the Sports service team - which is better staffed with four or five team members. The sports staff were out



of the office for the afternoon, but because the arts and leisure service team share the same phone line, the telephone kept on ringing on Fearn's desk with public members enquiring about information for sporting events making the original 45 minute interview last for more than an hour. In addition, when the arts team of the Highland Council became part of an independent trust High Life Highland along with the LA's Sports and Leisure services, the branding of the new organisation became more commercially appealing to people to use the sports facilities, which was believed to be less appealing to the arts and gallery audience (Shankland, interview with author, 11 November 2012).

By having a team of 1 or 2, the arts services of the LAs are also influenced by the officers' personal expertise as well as that of the existing arts venues and traditions in the region. Although the arts officers make the effort to achieve some balance between art forms, the impact of their lack of knowledge and expertise on certain areas of the programme is inevitable. For example, the Argyll and Bute Council and the Moray Council's arts teams are stronger in theatre and performing arts and most of their significant projects are performing arts projects,<sup>56</sup> whereas the Highland Council and Eileanan Siar arts teams have developed and supported more projects in visual arts and crafts.<sup>57</sup> Although this limitation can be improved by bringing expertise from outside of the LA, or work with other local establishments, with very few arts organisations established in those regions, particularly in Argyll and Bute and Moray, this restricts the ways to engage the wider local community.

### **Community Involvement in the Arts**

As discussed in Chapter 2, rural communities are seen to be closer and the connections between groups within the communities more organic compared with communities in urban areas. In addition to those funded by the LEADER programme, most arts organisations and projects in rural Scotland have strong community remits with many having been started by local communities and/or run by local communities. Among the 37 organisations and events listed in Chapter 5 and Appendix II, only Spring Fling Open Studios (Spring Fling), Hi-Arts and NEAT (North

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<sup>56</sup> Argyll and Bute: Brought in Puppet Animation Festival, and community theatre productions. Moray: the visits of RSC to the region and open theatre projects.

<sup>57</sup> Eileanan Siar: Made in the Outer Hebrides: Visual Arts and Crafts Guide. Highland: Art and Craft exhibitions at Council Venues.

East Arts Touring) were started by a top-down approach, with influence from the artistic and general community. The rest were all started by individuals in local communities, community groups or formed out of strong community demand/influence.

Existing studies also show great community involvement - often voluntarily in the arts and other non-profit sectors in rural Scotland. The Third Sector, voluntary and community sector including the non-profit arts sector, is seen as key to delivering services and building communities (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012: 56). There are a greater number of charities per head based in rural areas of Scotland compared to more urban areas, for example, Shetland Islands and Eileanan Siar both have more than triple of the charities per 10,000 population in Glasgow (Scottish Agricultural College, 2012: 58). Particularly for charities that are committed to 'Advancement of the Arts, Heritage, Culture or Science', there are approximately 2.2 charities per 1000 population in remote rural areas while only approximately 0.2 in large urban areas of Scotland. Scottish Government's *Scotland Rural Key Facts 2011* document also shows that 47% of people living in remote rural Scotland engaged in formal volunteering (2009 - 2010), compared to 37% in accessible rural Scotland and 27% in the rest of Scotland (Scottish Government, 2011b). Moreover, Hamilton and Scullion's research into rural arts touring in 2004 highlighted the significance of volunteering in touring rural arts and furthering the development of performing arts in rural Scotland (Hamilton and Scullion, 2004a).

All organisations and events listed in Chapter 5 have some level of community involvement with the exception of HICA, the Highland Institute for Contemporary Art, which is solely focused on contemporary art exhibitions and research. In particular, many renovation and regenerational arts projects were started by local communities, from Eastgate Theatre in the Scottish Borders to Taigh Chearsabhaigh in Eileanan Siar.

Similarly to those in urban centres, many rural-based organisations involve the local community through traditional forms of educational programmes such as workshops and classes, partnerships with local schools and other non-for-profit organisations and charities. A programme of activities including workshops, classes, school trips and tours would be created responding to the main on-site programme

of exhibitions/performances. However, because of the strong community nature of the rural organisations, when compared with those in urban centres, the ways to involve the community are diversified and many organisations. While providing high quality contemporary arts, many still see engaging the local community as one of its key remits.

Most of the venue-based arts organisations in rural Scotland also function as a community hub for its local area. Roddy Murray the Director of An Lanntair on the Isle of Lewis, believes that although not all residents would appreciate the art on display as the artists and the curators intended and they would visit the gallery as normally as they visit the café (Murray, interview with author, 20 November 2012).

An Tobar on the Isle of Mull is a good example of a 'by community for community' organisation that provides a quality programme. The project started with a group of local people campaigning and fundraising to save a local school building in 1993. The steering group raised the funds required to keep and renovate the building which was transformed into a leading multidisciplinary arts centre in the region in 1997. As well as providing a very high quality visual art and music programme including family friendly activities, it also supports and presents off-site public-engaged arts projects in partnership with other local groups. Many of its projects are also centred on the community. Like many rural based arts venues, An Tobar also runs a Café which has become a popular meeting point and a leisure hub for people to gather.

The awareness and willingness of giving ownership to the community is often part of the ethos of organisations like An Tobar. Gordon MacLean, the artistic director of An Tobar since it opened in 1998, said in an interview with Kenny Mathieson in 2009 that he sees An Tobar as an artist support project, where the team always tries to build-in some local connection through both commissioned work and the organisation's artist/musician residency programme - which frequently involves artists/musicians working directly with local community - as an important part of the programme. Most of the time people become involved not because it is art, but because it is interactive and it is relevant to the local context (Mathieson, 2009). For example, in 2010, the organisation led a national conversation for Mull - The Mull Manifesto which intended to be a communal document coming out from a series of discussions amongst local communities, declaring the principles and

intentions for a future cultural project that will be responsive to the values, knowledge and experiences of Mull's people.

The 'by community for community' model is not only reflected by the projects and organisations started by the general public in local areas, but also by the large number of previously mentioned organisations started by locally based artists, art professionals and art enthusiasts. For example, Deveron Arts was started by a group of locally based art professionals and enthusiasts including its current director Claudia Zeiske. Originally from Austria, Zeiske first relocated to Aberdeenshire after a successful career as an economist and later arts fundraiser. Soon bored of life with limited access to the arts, she persuaded the Moray-based whisky distillery Glenfiddich to start an international artist residency programme. She managed the programme as well as setting up Deveron Arts in the town of Huntly in 1997 with a group of friends with a shared interest in arts. After over 10 years of development, Deveron Arts became flexibly-funded by Creative Scotland, and an annual client after the end of their initial Flexible Funding period in 2013. It was also the driving force for Huntly to win the Special Prize at the Creative Places award in 2012. The organisation's socially-engaged artist residency programme follows the principle of 'The Town is the Venue' and aims to achieve their 50/50 goal - 50% of each project is contributed by the residency artist and 50% from the local community from shops to churches, schools to the Old Service Men's club (Zeiske, interview with author, 26 July 2011).

Unlike An Tobar, Deveron Arts does not run a public venue, hence there are limitations when engaging the public. Local residents were involved in its programme largely through working with the artists in the broadest sense or interactions at events. With many of the residencies exploring both social and local issues, from feminism and the environment to local historical figures, Zeiske also suggests that the local participants are not normally involved because these are art projects, but because there was something they found interesting. Deveron Arts projects receive good publicity in the town's newspaper the *Huntly Express*, and most of the time, they are not promoted as pure art projects because of their strong community nature, and sometimes 'it's better not to emphasise the word "art" and just say it's culture. People might be intimidated by the word "art"' (Zeiske, interview with author, 26 July 2011).

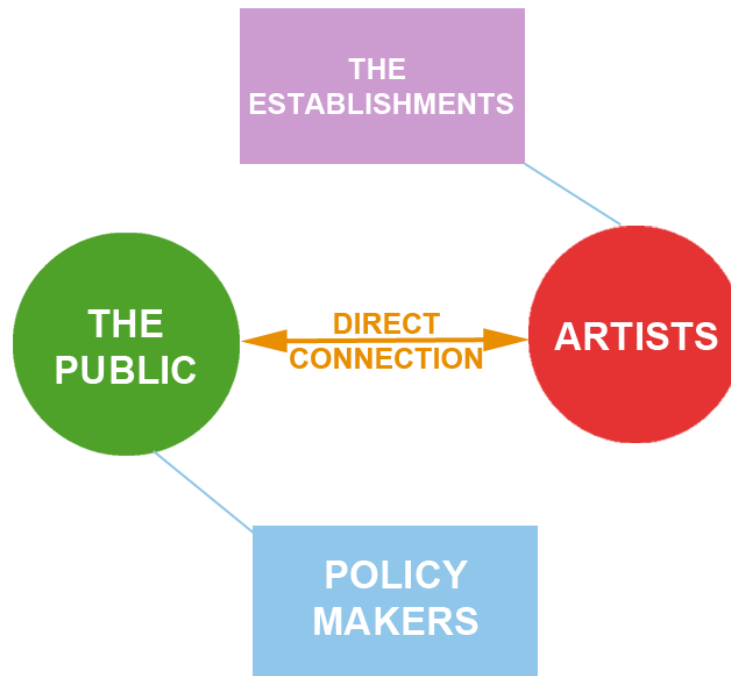
Although this might sound like a careless marketing strategy, it represents the inseparable link between the arts and local culture in rural Scotland. Local culture is one of the key elements that holds the organic connection within the community and as a number of studies shown, it is seen as an important element in building community cohesion and pride (EKOS, 2008; Hamilton and Scullion, 2004b; Hamilton, 2007). Thus the statement made by Zeiske is not merely a casual solution to make people become interested, rather, it was made based on the practice of making and curating the arts within the rural communities and the understanding that the arts, like other elements of culture such as language/dialect and local history, should be part of the culture that is made with its people and something that people feel comfortable with, intrigued by and proud of. It is not something that is separate from and above people. The details of Deveron Arts' programme and creative ways of engaging local audiences will be discussed further in the latter section of this chapter.

#### *The Community and Artists as Leaders*

It is evident that the arts in rural Scotland have robust connections with their local communities. The staff issues in most of the rural LAs have left many aspects of arts development to local community and individuals who, on many occasions, have set up and developed arts organisations which are now integrated into the communities. Distinctively different from the element structure that shapes the arts presented in Chapter 1, where the arts is primarily dominated by the establishments and the policy makers, the influence of the high profile establishments is minimal in rural Scotland.

As mentioned earlier, venues and institutions such as An Lanntair and Pier Arts Centre are highly regarded and artists who opened solo exhibitions in many of these venues would be recognised as an artist of distinction in the wider artworld. However, compared with their urban counterparts, they are less powerful in making a name or a project, and this is not necessarily their intention either. The institutions in rural Scotland, despite their high profiles, often maintain a community purposes in their nature. Therefore, they would not fit exactly into Danto's definition of the artworld as an establishment. The arts establishments and their current value, although having some influence on artists in developing their practice, is not the element that actually creates arts development in rural Scotland. Rather, it is the public and the artists.

Another significant feature of the arts in rural Scotland is the conversation between the public and the artists, and also most remarkably the conversation between different groups within the community (or communities) and artists of different art forms and aesthetics.



*Figure 15 Elements in Making the Arts in Rural Scotland*

Firstly, not only because of the more organic connections between rural residents in general, artists in rural places, especially those who have made the place their home, are often integrated into their local communities and are seen as part of it. Communities have a sense of ownership for locally-based arts projects and organisations, and many of those projects and organisations aim to connect the community with the artists and often involve the community in participatory practices. This will be discussed further in the next section. There is a sense that in rural communities, artists are still very much part of the public, and they are equal to each other. Although debates, disagreements and misunderstandings between artists, organisations and other groups within the communities still exist, the conversations are always on-going. For example, the Scottish Sculpture Workshop (SSW) in Lumsden, Aberdeenshire, one of the highest regarded residential programmes in Scotland that encourages cutting-edge practice in sculpture, has a very strong community purpose despite its primary purpose of researching and providing opportunities for artists to develop their work. There is

a 'Communities Room' in the SSW, which the organisation's Director, Dr Nuno Sacramento, deliberately changed from the 'Community Room' to 'Communities', to create an idea that the organisation is not only for one community but for many different communities and thus welcomes ideas from different groups of people. In the Communities Room, the SSW does not only hold events where the public can attend as an audience, but also as a space to encourage the local community to become actively involved:

Instead of having [the artists] producing and the community listening, we want the community to be producing as well. And we're not sure where that's going to take us, but that will lead to an institution that listens. ... We had this event last week (organised with the local action group), there were about thirty or forty people there,<sup>58</sup> and these are not arts people... there is a sense of ownership. We've got people in the community coming back constantly just because they don't feel alienated. That for me is very, very important. They also feel that they are bringing something into it, their own skills as farmers or as people in general. (Sacramento, interview with author, 18 October 2011)

Sacramento explains that the organisation believes in 'a dialogue system' of education, where the process of connection between the arts and artists and the local community is not a one way process, but a dialogue where artists and curators should be negotiating between what they have and what the community has. It should allow an egalitarian proposition and believe that what the community says matters.

Secondly, as stated before, different groups within the community are often closer together in rural Scotland. In Hamilton and Scullion's research on rural touring, they summarise that there are tensions between 'incomers' and the 'indigenous population' within the rural community in rural Scotland. They suggest that this could lead to a sense of division and friction, because 'people who go to things tend to be people who have come to live here' (Hamilton and Scullion, 2004a: 81). Although the differences between incomers and the 'indigenous population' and the needs of 'the young' and 'the old' were seen in this research, these are not necessarily conflicts or obstacles. None of the interviewees for this research from

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<sup>58</sup> Lumsden is a small village with only 300-400 population, so 30 - 40 people is a very good turnout and would have filled the room.

artists to local arts officers, has always lived and worked in the region they are currently working in and many came from outside of the region - some within recent years and others decades ago. Therefore, it is hard to draw a line between 'incomers' and 'indigenous population' as many current local residents have studied or worked elsewhere as well. It is arguable that Hamilton and Scullion's suggestion is difficult to apply to contemporary rural society. Many incomers' contributions are valued and welcomed into the 'indigenous population' and many others have tried to be part of and have a purpose in the community. As mentioned in Chapter 7, using the example of artist members of Spring Fling, a majority of them were from outside of the region. On Spring Fling's weekly Q&A, when asked the question 'Are there any benefits to living and working in Dumfries and Galloway?', many artists mentioned the welcoming and supportive networks of locally-based artists and local community in general.<sup>59</sup>

Hence, it is not viable for organisations in rural Scotland to only aim at benefiting part of the community. There are rare examples such as Cove Park in Argyll and Bute, an organisation that is financially supported by Creative Scotland but almost purely exists for the purpose of providing spaces for artists of different backgrounds and disciplines to develop their practice. It has a very limited impact on and connection with the local community. The foundation of Cove Park was very personal and it is still largely funded by trusts, foundations and individuals, many of them are outside of the region. It almost serves as a rural utopia for artists and allows them to step back from the complication of an urban reality, and therefore, neither the artists, nor the organisation would necessarily need to build a connection with the local community. When mentioning Cove Park, Kevin Baker, the Library and Culture Development Officer in the Argyll and Bute Council said bluntly:

I don't really know whether it plays any important function as far as Argyll is concerned or not. I mean, it's nice and they get money from Creative Scotland and the prestige and all that. I mean, I don't think it actually does anything (for the local community) as far as I'm concerned. (Baker, interview with author, 10 January 2013)

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<sup>59</sup> Q&A articles can be found <http://www.spring-fling.co.uk/blog/li-lo-qa/>. Accessed 12 August 2013.



Cove Park is the only example among the key institutions discussed in this thesis which might have created a division between the ‘incomers’ and the ‘indigenous population’. However, it is hard to say that temporary residency artists should be seen as incomers.

There is no doubt that incomers are likely to bring new ideas, new demands and new solutions to communities. Organisations like Deveron Arts and events like the Papay Gyro Nights Art Festival were set up by new residents in the area who aim to be part of the indigenous community and not just provide entertainment for the founders themselves. This has been the key element for the organisations’ success. Many other projects, such as CatStrand, the Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival and the St Magnus’s Festival are the results of the efforts of the community, including those who are incomers and those who are part of the indigenous population. When speaking of the setting up and campaigning for CatStrand, Cathy Agnew, the former chair of the organisation, who was an incomer, dismissed the idea of the division between ‘incomers’ and the ‘indigenous population’:

Of course in every community you would have people who are more interested in the arts, and others who are not, those who are more open-minded and those who are a little harder to persuade. But it is nothing to do with whether you are an incomer or not... CatStrand is a result of a whole community’s effort. It might not have pleased everyone, but it would have been impossible without involving people from different groups of the community in the decision making. (Agnew, interview with author, 3 July 2013)

Originally from Kent and admitting that many of ‘movers and shakers’ in the local community, not just in the arts, are incomers, Baker related to his personal experience when he first moved to Argyll and became the new librarian:

[The] guy that drove the mobile library in the area, he was driving around and he said to somebody:

‘We’ve got a new librarian.’

‘A’right!’

‘He’s English.’

‘Oh dear...’

‘But he’s living in a tent.’

‘Oh, that’s all right then.’

...That accurately illustrates: so if you’re coming in, buying a big house and trying to turn it in to ‘Englandshire’ then people aren’t keen. If you’re coming in and you’re playing an active part in the community and you haven’t got two sticks rubbed together, you’re fine. [Laughter] But you mustn’t appear to be on some sort of conversion mission. (Baker, interview with author, 10 January 2013)

Baker sees the incomers, if they are genuinely settling in the local area, as people who are making up the population and new dynamic that the rural community lost to urban centres when young people went out to study and work. With their ‘higher expectations’, they should enhance the community and not divide it.

Last but not least, within the rural artist communities themselves, artists of different disciplines and aesthetics are also closer together. Often in urban centres there are clusters of artists who have different beliefs in art and even in visual art alone. There is sometimes a division between fine art and applied art, and even between painters and those who work with contemporary installations. In contrast, artists using different media, and with different backgrounds, with or without a degree, often they find themselves in the same room with each other in rural Scotland. There are occasional lone wolves amongst artists, but many are involved in building and supporting a community of artists. There are many artists’ collectives, events and trails of different levels throughout Scotland in visual arts alone, from Crossing Borders in the Scottish Borders to North East Open Studios in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray and Text-isle in Shetland, all aiming to build a support network for local artists who work in different ways. Many high profile institutions also make exhibition places available or hold annual open exhibitions to involve local artists allowing them to share the resource with internationally renowned artists.

The nature of rural organisations and that of closer and inclusive communities have given rural arts organisations a very strong remit of community engagement. At the same time, the geographical features of the rural regions, as well as the rural community’s perception of the arts, have also led to the diversified and creative methods of working with the community which made many arts organisations unique in the Scottish art world.

*Community Engagement through Public Art and Socially Engaged Practice*

The engagement of the local population in the arts in rural Scotland is not only represented through the public's involvement in the setting up and operating of the organisations or in the fringe activities and events of the organisations' curatorial programmes. The development of alternative forms of public art by rural-based organisations has started a new era of public art and socially engaged practice.

In her 2006 article *Who owns public art?*, Josie Appleton criticised public art projects developed during the in 1990s and 2000s, and challenges how effective public art is in achieving the policy maker and funder's expectations in regeneration. The current funders of public art including 'the local authority, the arts councils, the National Lottery, development corporations and arts consultancies' were identified as 'the regeneration industry' in the article. An industry that expects public art to 'help regenerate communities, by forging new connections and public identities, and improving local economies'. (Appleton 2006, 54) Appleton argues:

...today's public art is not really the expression of community values or desires: it's driven by officialdom, and its spirit springs from the policy specifications of bureaucrats. Such art is about officialdom's image of the public, not real communities of living, working men and women. It's anodyne, New Labour art: offering a soothing kind of participation and the affirmation of local identities. Just because an artist has proved to the Arts Council that he or she has consulted a community about a sculpture, that doesn't mean that it genuinely represents that community. No wonder that many of these new artworks go almost unnoticed. They are often local curiosities, obstacles that pedestrians have to navigate like a lamppost or a tree, but rarely the focus for public passion. (Appleton, 2006: 54-55)

Appleton continued to list a number of issues present in public art development using examples and evidence mostly from the traditional form of public art - permanent sculptures works based in urban centres or larger towns - and accused most public artworks of being products of elitism where the public are not involved in the decision making. She also claimed the artworks were self-justifying and only benefited the artists and the regeneration industry itself. The article ended

with some hope by praising the work of Antony Gormley, particularly his ‘Another Place’ in Sefton.<sup>60</sup> Appleton sees Gormley’s work as a rarity and as a successful example of artists creating public artwork because ‘he doesn’t make phoney attempts to create public identity. He does work that is both personally meaningful and keys to the zeitgeist’.



*Figure 16 Another Place by Antony Gormley (1997) in Sefton*

It is correct that traditional public sculptures or instrumental commissions without genuine consultation with the local residents are false practices, and that the products are often of low quality and ‘go unnoticed’. However, Appleton’s arguments are not necessarily applicable to all public art projects today now that permanent public sculpture is no longer dominant in public art, especially the kind that is dropped into towns and cities for regeneration reasons. In England’s public art think tank ixia’s annual survey 2012, it states that ‘[l]arge-scale permanent or temporary public art projects remained of interest, but were less common than art and architecture, events-based activities and socially engaged practice’ (ixia, 2013).

Also contradictory to Appleton’s claim that public art should be accountable to the public and be socially useful - ‘to express a community’s hopes, values or anxieties’, Gormley’s ‘Another Place’ is not directly or exclusively relevant to the local community in Sefton. The work responded to the land/seascape and, as Appleton put it, ‘captures the state of today’s psyche: reaching upwards, trying to fly, but as yet unable to take off’, which might be sympathised by many but can hardly be seen as ‘a community’s hopes, values or anxieties’. The same can

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<sup>60</sup> Appleton did not indicate the name of the work in her article, but referred to the work as ‘Gormley’s recent works - a series of human figures standing on the beach’. Although the work was made in 1997, Another Place is the only one of Gormley’s work that fits the criteria.

apply to other large scale public sculpture of the artist, from the internationally renowned 'Angel of the North' and earlier 'Iron: Man' in Birmingham.

Appleton claims that the differences, between successful and failed public art is that the successful are more relevant to and considerate of people who have to live and work around it day-to-day, and that the failed are merely a shallow representation of local features and full of bureaucracies and elitism. However, the key factor that makes the difference between the work by Gormley and other successful landmark projects such as the 'Cloud Gate' by Anish Kapoor, is actually down to project management, budget and time scale. Not every city or every town in the UK can afford to have renowned artists such as Gormley and Kapoor who can take the lead to be creative as well as relevant in the process of producing the artwork. The 'Angel of the North' and 'Another Place' are both part of major regeneration projects. The budgets for these were big enough to accommodate Gormley's ideas and as an internationally successful artist, Gormley had the confidence to put in the layer that is 'personally meaningful' into his public artwork. The 'success' is also achieved through the pride they brought to the local community because of the national and international profile these work have generated. Smaller towns however, such as Whitehaven as mentioned in the article, were only able to approach more affordable artists which usually means a very limited time and budget scale for the artist to research and consult the local residents and to produce the work - a process that is often not enjoyed by the artists or the commissioner either.

This does not mean that lower budgets equals failed public art projects. In rural Scotland, it is very common to work with a lower budget, the most important factor is how this budget is put to use and managed. The discussion on other forms of public art and examples from rural Scotland will be returned to in the latter part of this chapter.

As for her recommendation and conclusion, Appleton suggests that public art funding should go back to public subscription, where artists appeal to the public to gain support instead of 'pressing the right buttons' at the arts council. She also believes public art funding should be voluntary - 'If companies fund art, they should do it because they want to - not because they have to'.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the practice of visual art in Scotland, especially under the influence of Glasgow School of Art and Edinburgh College of Art, was heavily influenced by Joseph Beuys' Social Sculpture concept, where art can potentially achieve social changes through practice itself, particularly through interdisciplinary and participatory practice. This concept was the foundation for the development of community arts projects and socially-engaged projects in recent decades.

Many community-focused art projects in rural Scotland are participatory and interactive. The Inverness Old Town Art (IOTA) project, although based in Inverness city and aiming to contribute to the regeneration of the city, were mentioned by both Cathy Shankland, Exhibition Officer of Highland Council and Robert Livingston, then Director of Hi-Arts during the research as a successful example of engaging the public through both permanent and temporary public artwork (Shankland, interview with author, 29 July 2011; Livingston, interview with author, 29 July 2011).

Curated by lead artist Matt Baker, the project featured a series of permanent and temporary artworks in Inverness town centre, of which the public were involved in various stages of its production. Permanent works such as 'Three Virtuals', have become popular meeting places in the city centre. Shankland commented on this project and a few other permanent works by the IOTA: 'it's good for the community and places that used to be run down and not very pleasant now have people hanging about around it' (Shankland, interview with author, 29 July 2011).



*Figure 17 Three Virtuals, by Matt Baker in Inverness Town Centre*

The most significant signature piece would be ‘Imagining the Centre’, where 15 highland-based artists worked together and ‘took over’ the Inverness city centre for a day with temporary and event-based participatory artwork in 2006. Public comments collected on the day include:

*I really don't understand what is going on, but I like it!*

*This is excellent and there should be more. This is the Highland Capital. Innovation, that's what we need.*

*I like to see art you can understand. You can see that's a bird. I don't know where some of these artists get their ideas from. I think they must be on drugs!<sup>61</sup>*

The variety of the artwork represented enabled the IOTA to engage with a variety of different people, whether they were based in Inverness, people who went to Inverness for weekly shopping or visitors to the city. However unlike Inverness, the capital of Highland, permanent public artwork is less to be seen in more rural parts of Scotland. While there are a few high-profile permanent public art projects such as Andy Goldsworthy's ‘Striding Arches’ in Dumfries and Galloway, the majority of public engagement has been carried out through temporary and event-based socially engaged projects.

This section of this chapter analyses the cases of public art in Aberdeenshire, particularly not only because the local authority still maintain a Public Art Officer post (although currently covered by another ADO), but because of the pioneering roles of organisations such as Deveron Arts and the SSW in the region in bringing socially engaged art into rural communities.

The existence of a Public Art Officer post in the LA arts team is not necessarily a direct reflection on how important or influential public art is in local arts development. As Jan Hogarth, the director of Wide-Open mentioned, public art development in Dumfries and Galloway was integrated into dgArts instead of the Dumfries and Galloway Council because of its controversial nature. Aberdeenshire Council's arts team was the first rural council to establish a Public Art policy and a Public Art Officer post in 2005. Despite being a rural area, the diversity of the

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<sup>61</sup> Information from IOTA website: <http://www.invernessoldtownart.co.uk/imagining-the-centre-2006.asp> Accessed 11 February 2013

local economy in Aberdeenshire is identified by both Saskia Gibbon, Arts Development Officer (North) & Acting Public Art Officer, Aberdeenshire Council and Anthony Schrag, an artist based in Edinburgh who worked extensively in the region (Gibbon, Interview with Author, 27 July 2011; Schrag, interview with author, 6 August 2011). The Public Art policy started with a LA initiated public art project in Peterhead - one of the most deprived towns in the region - and the establishment of the Planning Gain and Per Cent for Art schemes in Aberdeenshire. The project in Peterhead at the time was a partnership between the Commission on Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), the arts, businesses and the public art<sup>62</sup> services within the council. The project and the Percent for Art scheme together led to a two-day public art conference and eventually the setup of the public art policy. The economic growth and migration influx to Aberdeenshire in the past decade due to the increasing number of commuters and the development of the North Sea oil industry, as indicated in Chapter 2, led to the growing number of new developments and investments in the region. Every new development in the region was required by the local authority to contribute to community development through the Planning Gain Scheme. As part of the scheme, Per Cent for Art, where investors contribute part of their investment to new public art projects, has been one of the most popular options, and public art development has subsequently benefited from local economic growth directly.

In addition to the direct economic contribution to Aberdeenshire, the North Sea oil industry has also led to an increase of the middle class population. Many migrant families have chosen to live in Aberdeenshire and raise their families in the region. The Director of Deveron Arts, Claudia Zeiske, moved to Huntly in Aberdeenshire after a successful international career for this purpose.

Deveron Arts, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, is specialised in developing socially engaged art projects that are closely linked to the town Huntly, where the organisation and most of its activities are based. Deveron Arts began in 1995, when Zeiske and a group of friends decided to bring artists in to the town to make life more interesting. Similar to many other projects in rural places, the reasons for starting such a project can be very personal:

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<sup>62</sup> The public art service at the time was part of the Planning Department.



We all had lived in cities for quite a long time where we felt that there was little going on in terms of cultural life and we wanted to improve that. We wanted to have a bit more interesting life ourselves here in the town. (Zeiske, interview with author, 26 July 2011)

Zeiske went on to say that if she was living in a city, she would never have started Deveron Arts. A similar scenario was also described by Gibbon, who also had a successful career in PR management in Northern England before moving to Aberdeenshire: 'I think the force driving [the arts in Aberdeenshire] is probably if you live here and you experience it, this is how you react to it.'

Deveron Arts started to have artists-in-residence in 1997. The organisers found that the residency was a more interesting way to work with an artist rather than bringing 'ready-made art', and since then the organisation has focused on public-engaged artist residency projects. Zeiske insists that the success of Deveron Arts is because it is not just about art and that it is primarily about the town. Well-known for her skills in fundraising in the arts, Zeiske agrees that her professional background has contributed to securing growing funding and investment for the organisation. However she also believes that the nature of the project, the fact that her approach of curating is based on the issues raised indigenously, is the key to the diverse financial resources for the organisation (Zeiske, interview with author, 26 July 2011).

Although she has been working with various arts clients as part of her fundraising career and widely recognised as a curator for her work with Glenfiddich and Deveron Arts, Zeiske does not come from an arts, but an economics and anthropology background. She pointed out that the recognition of Deveron Arts as a professional arts organisation and not only just a community group is very important for the organisation, and sometimes something they still struggle with, especially with the mainstream arts establishments. Many of Deveron Arts' projects have very strong themes based on the heritage and current events in the town of Huntly, such as the 'Empty Shop/Modern Monument' (2003) led by artist Eva Merz. This project responded to the opening of big supermarkets around Huntly which drove local businesses to closure. 'Place of Puzzle' (2009) led by the Utopia Group inspired by Huntly-born Sinologist James Legg and 'Real Life Gordons of Huntly' (2011) led by artist Ross Sinclair explored the history and stories of

Huntly's Gordon Clan. Zeiske sees the town as an important part of the organisation's project, and has brought forward the 50/50 concept, where the local input and engagement should be equally important as the artistic and curatorial practice in each and every Deveron Arts Project. Although achieving this balance is challenging even when working with artists who share similar ethos in their practice, Zeiske believes that a socially engaged practice gives more meaning and contributes more to the local community when compared with an establishment such as a gallery:

If I [had] a gallery here it would only drain economics, because it's quite expensive to have a good gallery and people locally wouldn't go. But let's say if [I] managed to be Saatchi and really have super interesting artists here, so that other people would travel all the way to come here, then maybe there is something. These places exist, I have seen one in France, they are in the middle of nowhere, their impact on their locality is minimal, but they made a success of it. It's because their economic impact is actually more for their own purse, so you can make a success with a gallery, but not for the community...

What most people do, whether it's rural or not rural, is they think of the art first and gallery and all that, and then they think what they can do now to bring the local people to it. Whereas I start from the opposite, I start with the local people... the community is my starting point. Actually the starting point is a topic, but the topic is given by the community. (Zeiske, interview with author, 26 July 2011)

It is evident that the work of Deveron Arts has interested and impressed Creative Scotland greatly, not only as Deveron Arts has won the Creative Places award twice - once as a Special Prize in 2012 and as a mid-sized settlement in 2013 - the organisation was also encouraged by the national body to 'roll out' their practice to other locations. In response to this, Zeiske thinks it will need someone who lives in the local community and who cares for the local community to lead these projects. She considers her own life in Huntly as 'the backbone' of the methods of Deveron Arts, which as part of the local community fits in with the wider local community development agenda (Zeiske, interview with author, 26 July 2011). This is another evidence that, although they might be inspired by their own interest or experience, the 'incomers' are not setting up events merely for

themselves as argued earlier in this chapter. Similarly, Gibbon also identified the connections between the community and the wider rural development agenda. Although there is a Public Art Policy within the council, Gibbon suggests that while it is challenging to fit in with other agendas, it is important not to push the arts agenda out of or above the context, 'it's not about what we do, it's to understand your place in the communities and society' (Gibbon, interview with Author, 27 July 2011).

Returning to Appleton's article, which implied artists were the cause for the failures of public art projects and suggested that the public should and would have the best judgement on what kind of public art to have, in practice in rural Scotland it is very rare for a public art project to be initiated by a single artist's proposal for a permanent public sculpture.

Elsie Mitchell, ADO of Eileanan Siar, has given a few examples of public art in the region most of which were started by local communities with others created or commissioned by local arts organisations and occasionally the LA (Mitchell, Interview with author, 20 November 2012). Saskia Gibbon, one of the ADOs and currently the acting Public Art Officer for Aberdeenshire Council, mentioned that she had to persuade local community groups and council departments when a local group or business tries to commission a new piece of public art through the Percent for Art Scheme, that public art is not just permanent sculptures:

It's a daily thing, it's still an internal lobbying thing with communities. Never assume people know what public art means because there are still so many people that think, 'It's a sculpture, it's something that's permanent.' But no, it can be festivals; it can support what you're doing already and then build on that and enhance it. Don't just introduce public art because, 'Oh, well there might just be some Percent for Art monies in our area that we can spend, and it's got to be a permanent thing.' (Gibbon, interview with author, 27 July 2011)

Gibbon said that a large part of her role as the Public Art Officer is to provide guidance and keep the community informed when making decisions on commissioning public art, and also encourage community groups to be open-minded and give artists creative freedom. Angus Farquhar, Director of NVA also said:

I think there's a lot of tension around the idea of community-led design, and sometimes as a result it means that the end results are more banal, more predictable because they can't be challenged within that process because the idea is that community-led projects should take very, very strong fiscal and governmental responsibility very early on the process of making of a piece of work. (Farquhar, interview with author, 5 September 2011)

In Deveron Arts' case, although it was started by 'local residents', when the project first began the founders were new residents to the area and, similar as for any group of people working together, there were disagreements within the organisation regarding the direction the organisation was heading in. With Zeiske's experience of working with arts and cultural organisations and her strong belief in her curatorial concept, she eventually took the lead of Deveron Arts, the organisation itself was not exactly an idea that came from the local community - but there is little doubt that its projects are. Although it could have been because the residents in rural regions are less informed or up-to-date with contemporary public art practices - a concept rejected by artist Anthony Schrag, well known for his work on various socially-engaged projects in both urban and rural Scotland (Schrag, interview with author, 6 August 2011), it is hard to imagine, that the residents of Gateshead or Sefton would have voted to invite Anthony Gormley to create sculptures that would cost £800,000. It is also an unrealistic and unfair recommendation by Appleton to suggest that artists should appeal to the public and ask for private investment themselves without any financial backing or endorsement from the 'regeneration industry'.

Most ADOs, curators and practicing artists interviewed for this research work with small budgets, and with this kind of budget, they do hope to encourage more cutting edge practices and not just 'another statue of a fisherwoman on the pier' (Gibbon, interview with author, 27 July 2011). NVA, the biggest and most successful public art development agency in Scotland, never worked with permanent public sculpture in its 20-year history.

Even when public artwork commissions are more permanent, it is preferred that there are some participatory elements to it. When asked about the impact of her work, Jan Hogarth, who manages Wide Open, a public art development agency in the south of Scotland, thinks the success of commissioned high-profile permanent

projects such as the *Striding Arches*, a series of Sculpture by Andy Goldsworthy in Cairnhead Forest which became a popular site to visit, is not only about the quality of the commissioned art work, it is also about the years that arts organisations and other organisations such as Cairnhead Community Forest Trust spent working together and giving the work a community purpose and a public engagement aspect. The project contributed to community building in the forest with many sites that became popular activity locations for local schools as well as must-see sites for visitors.



*Figure 18 Striding Arches, by Andy Goldsworthy in Cairnhead Forest*

Through the brief examination and discussion of public art and socially engaged practice in rural Scotland, it is obvious that it is, or can be, very different to what Appleton described in her article. This is not to say that traditional and conservative approaches to public art and regeneration do not exist in rural Scotland, as there are still permanent sculptures commissioned every year in rural Scotland, but rather that the socially engaged and event-based forms of public arts are increasingly popular, and are welcomed ways to enhance the connection between the arts, the artists and the community. The key factor for integrated public art, whichever form it might take, is the establishment of a connection between the local community and the arts project itself based on the needs of the community, and therefore making it not only relevant to the local community through its format but also through its content and process.

## Conclusion

The discussions around the arts in community development in rural Scotland and engaging communities in the arts in this chapter have revealed the realities and challenges facing the arts as well as highlighted some of the successful examples in rural communities in Scotland. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, in recent decades there has been an increased expectation of the arts to positively influence society. Social inclusion, regeneration and community development are amongst the key expected outcomes of the arts. However, through looking at the relationship between the arts and rural communities in Scotland, the rural community's influence on the arts is equally, if not more, visible and significant compared to the impact the arts has on the community. This influence is often bottom-up rather than top-down. The lack of top-level guidance in rural community development policies and shortages of staff in LAs in supporting the arts have largely left arts development to local communities themselves. Many organisations and events were initiated by local communities out of a need or a crisis. Besides the projects mentioned earlier in this chapter, examples of this can also be found in the case study of Dumfries and Galloway in Chapter 6 as well as the list of organisations in Appendix II.

The examples of public art as a way of engaging the local community also demonstrated that whether it was a community initiated project or not, building arts projects in local context with local people is an important factor for arts development in rural regions. The success of Deveron Arts, and also the SSW in Aberdeenshire is not to be separated from the engagement with locality in their programming. As Zeiske has stated, what Deveron Arts has achieved is not just because of her own fundraising ability, but because its programme is rooted in the context of the local community. Many interviewees in this research have identified that engaging rural residents in the arts can be very challenging (Schrag, interview with author, 06 August 2011; Vermehren, interview with author, 09 November 2012). It is not difficult to believe that to interest rural audiences with a local issue or in a part of local history would be an easier and more consensual approach, than to make uninterested people develop an interest in the arts, which Vermehren referred to as 'forcing art on people' (Vermehren, interview with author, 09 November 2012). Taking this as a starting point is important for arts projects to engage the local community effectively. The approach of Deveron Arts:

researching the local first and then developing the arts programme based on the local community, rather than setting up the art programme first, and then trying to find ways to engage the locals, is proven to be an innovative and also effective way to develop a high-quality programme that is relevant to its context and its local community.

However, as said in Chapter 5 by Robert Livingston, the Director of Hi-Arts, the SAC traditionally held a dismissive attitude towards projects started indigenously among rural communities (Livingston, Interview with author, 29 July 2011). Although Creative Scotland has started to take first steps in recognising the importance of these projects, there are still questions about how practical this would be with new Chief Executive Officer appointed in 2013 and with many uncertainties about the national agency. It has always been a challenge for rural organisations and events, especially for those that are set up by the community, to gain recognition as arts organisations instead of as community projects. The SAC/Creative Scotland's investment in and recognition of Deveron Arts is less because the organisation's engagement with the local community, than the international connections it built and the high-profile artists such as Dalziel & Scullion and Hamish Fulton who were subsequently brought in. Meanwhile, projects like Spring Fling and NEOS which focus on benefiting locally-based artists recognised by local communities are less favoured by the national arts agency. It is not difficult to identify the disconnection between top-level policies and agendas and the reality of indigenous development of arts in rural Scotland.

As Venu Dhupa, former Development Director of Creative Scotland has said, historically the SAC has been championing the arts sector in Scotland, while the social value of the arts were merely seen as a burden or instrumentalism. Creative Scotland was going to put the arts back into its social and economic context (Dhupa, interview with author, 30 July 2012). In the context that the arts have always been situated well within its social and economic context in rural regions, it would fit with Creative Scotland's new agenda, and as mentioned previously, many who were interviewed agree that Creative Scotland was heading in the right direction, and from the interviewee's point of view, the new agency might have faced much less criticisms if the transition was better executed and communications was clearer.

So, has New Labour's policy from the 2000s gone too far in trying to prove the social worth of the arts as Selwood (2006) and Belfiore (2007) argue? Or even over-invested in the arts? The answer might be yes. After the New Labour years, over-investing can be demonstrated by the brutal funding cuts made by the Arts Council England and LAs. The collapse of various arts organisations brought us to the harsh reality: 'The Golden Age' was only made possible by public (over)spending, without which, many arts organisations can barely survive, let alone develop. In contrast, arts organisations in rural Scotland, especially those not dependent on one large sum of public subsidised funding were found to have been much more resilient.

Has instrumentalism, started by the Thatcher government and enhanced by New Labour in the past decades, worked to the benefit of the arts? Has the value of the arts been proven? No. Although the instrumental values of the arts were key to New Labour's arts policy, in most cases, it failed to establish a real connection between the arts and the community and foster trust, belief and value for the arts within the community. Consequently, when the economic crisis of 2008 came, one of the first sectors that suffered was the arts. This is a sign that the effort to prove the worth of the arts to society over the past decades was not focused in the right direction and did not result in public belief in the arts. In the meantime, the organic connections between the arts and communities in rural Scotland became much more robust, and despite the severe funding cuts in rural councils, the majority of the organisations survived.

However, this does not necessarily mean that the arts development in rural Scotland is free of issues and crises in its current condition. The concluding chapter will bring together the key issues and discussions in this thesis and relate to the latest developments in the UK and Scottish arts politics to present what can be learnt from the arts in rural Scotland, what is greatly needed for arts development in rural Scotland today, and what needs to be improved for policy making and the relevance of rural arts in today's political landscape.



## Chapter 9 Beyond the Location

In order to answer the primary research question, ‘Where are the rural arts in Scottish arts policy and politics?’ the question has been expanded. This thesis has analysed the recent transition from the Scottish Arts Council (SAC) to Creative Scotland and its immediate impact, and mapped out the arts in rural Scotland in Chapters 4 and 5, which articulated the current status of the arts in rural Scotland. The key findings concluded that rural councils are largely under-staffed in their arts and culture divisions, many arts organisations and events in rural Scotland were initiated indigenously and many still receive very limited support from the SAC or Creative Scotland.

In Chapter 6 the thesis went on to explore the relationships between the key players in the formation of an arts infrastructure for a rural region, including national agencies, regional arts development agencies, local authorities and individual organisations, through the case study of Dumfries and Galloway. The case study found that although many rural arts organisations were able to develop without significant financial or other forms of support from the SAC or Creative Scotland, top-level support and guidance is still important, if not essential, in continuing development on a larger scale and encouraging collaborations within, between and beyond rural regions.

The findings from Chapters 4, 5 and 6 laid the foundation for Chapters 7 and 8 and provided an overview of the influence of the SAC’s transition to Creative Scotland on rural regions. It also highlighted Creative Scotland’s new remit and priorities that were considered more suitable and helpful for addressing arts in rural Scotland than before.

To explore the status of the arts in rural Scotland further, this thesis looked at the connections between the arts in rural Scotland and their wider economic and social context, particularly within the context of the government’s increased need to demonstrate the value of the arts through their economic and social impact from the 2000s onwards. A key finding was that the indigenous approach adopted for the foundation of rural arts organisations and events, along with the fact that many of these organisations and events were initiated in response to the social and economic circumstances of its local communities, demonstrated and further

enabled a closer and stronger connection between the arts, communities and rural economies. This connection became an important contributor to where the arts in rural Scotland is today.

Although not originally intended, this research followed the journey of the arts in Scotland between 2010 and 2013, a period in which many changes occurred. Thus, the current economic recession and the reform of the national arts agency with its new policies and programmes, form much of the context for this research. Even at the time of writing, as public and private funding challenges continue, and where over 200 arts organisations have closed between 2010 and 2013 in the UK, it is increasingly important for stakeholders in the arts to find healthier and more sustainable ways to work, and work together. Furthermore, within this financially precarious climate, the arts in rural Scotland, despite having been often neglected by academia, policy makers and the establishments, can present innovative ideas and models that contribute to arts development beyond rural regions.

### **The Indigenous Approach**

The features brought by the indigenous approach to arts infrastructure development were discussed throughout in this thesis and formed part of its key findings. To date, many organisations and projects are still setting up as a result of an indigenous approach in both urban and rural Scotland. However, the indigenous approach is different between urban and rural Scotland. Chapter 6 pointed out that the foundations of three of the most successful projects in recent years in Dumfries and Galloway - the Wigtown Book Festival, Spring Fling Open Studios and CatStrand - lie in the needs of the local economy and local community. Additionally, one of the most successful new initiatives, the Stove in Dumfries, although led by artists in the region, also has a strong remit to be part of the regeneration of Dumfries town centre. Although some indigenous arts development in urban centres had a strong social remit, such as the establishment of Third Eye Centre and The Tron, which contributed to addressing the deprivation in Glasgow in 1980s, very few urban projects have begun indigenously for social reasons in recent years, instead, many were set up for the development of the practice or providing opportunities for the creative community.

The two different sets of motivations have brought about two different sets of results. As discussed in Chapter 8, the close and organic relationships between the

arts and their wider economic and social contexts in rural Scotland not only led to the high impact of the arts on rural economies and communities, but also the impact that rural economies and communities have on the arts. This close connection was further confirmed by the number of rural arts organisations that have survived and developed within the past four years, many because of the sustainable and diverse funding sources, as well as the keen public remit of, and the public involvement in, these organisations. In comparison, many urban organisations rely heavily on a single source of income - in many cases, the SAC/Creative Scotland, and hence are sensitive to the policy changes of the national agency. This was demonstrated in the reflection and responses from the arts sector to the transition of the national agency in Chapter 4 and further in the discussions on the controversies around Creative Scotland in the year 2012 in Chapter 6.

This research does not aim to suggest which approach is better, but only to illuminate the circumstances and implications of the indigenous approach in rural Scotland. However, through the crisis and national agency restructure between 2010 and 2013, it is evident that the arts in rural places are more resilient and adaptive to change. The author believes that it is the time for arts organisations around Scotland, especially public-subsidised organisations, to reconsider what their foundations are, and to build on or enhance their relationships with their wider economic and social contexts and re-consider their position in relation to the communities they serve. Instead of merely measuring the social and economic impacts as promoted in the 2000s, organisations should be encouraged to find their own innovative way to reconnect with their wider context.

However, the indigenous approach in the arts development in rural Scotland is not without its limitations. With many projects and organisations started because of the needs of specific local communities, difficulties for organisations to gain recognition and to collaborate with others beyond its locale were seen during the course of this research. In order to overcome these obstacles, appropriate and effective infrastructures that can bring smaller organisations together are needed in rural regions.

## The Non-venue-based Infrastructure

When talking about arts development, infrastructure often means the ‘hardware’, or more generally venues: theatres, art galleries, museums, music venues, etc.. The discussions in Chapter 5 and 6 have demonstrated a lack of established venues in rural Scotland, partially because of the use of an indigenous approach, however, a venue-based infrastructure is also not necessarily the right solution for rural issues.

There is no doubt that sometimes the lack of facilities and purpose-built venues led to limitations in arts development in rural places, and as pointed out in the studies by Hurson and Matarasso mentioned in Chapter 1, many venues in rural places are multipurpose and the use of community halls and other purpose-built venues for the arts was frequently found. Among the 37 organisations listed in Chapter 5, only 20 are venue based, including two residency organisations. Most of these venues were also established through an indigenous approach and had limited facilities before the organisations grew and became more financially supported, such as An Lanntair and Pier Arts Centre. Others developed out of community campaigns. Only a few venues were built through a top-down approach, the best examples being the Shetland Museum and Archive and Mareel in Lerwick, Shetland. These venues definitely contribute to the cohesion of the local arts communities by being the hubs and central meeting places, and many would agree that it is still desirable to have high quality venues that raise the profile of the arts in the region and also provide a must-visit year-round attraction for visitors. The new artist network in Dumfries & Galloway, The Stove, now occupying a long unused building in the centre of Dumfries, has also benefited from having a location that enables it to be in direct contact with the public, which is particularly useful when much of the network’s work is off site.

However, do venues provide the answer to rural issues such as the lack of recognition? The answer is not exactly yes. Firstly, looking at the existing venues in rural Scotland, larger venue-based organisations in rural Scotland often face the challenge of balancing presenting work of a high-standard and of great diversity to the local audience with promoting local artists and productions to visitors. Although these two types of programmes definitely have crossovers, with limited slots available in programmes, it is often difficult to find a balance, especially when publicly-funded venues are so few and each is so integrated into

its local community and inevitably involved in local politics. From the author's own experience working closely with Gracefield Arts Centre in Dumfries, a local authority visual art venue, the centre's programme has been half filled with local commitments such as the local Fine Arts Society's annual exhibition and the Spring Fling annual exhibition, making it difficult for the arts officers to guarantee enough slots to show new and exciting artworks. This is particularly challenging for independent organisations who receive their programme funding from the SAC/Creative Scotland, and thus have to prioritise promoting high quality over local productions, because that was traditionally more encouraged by the national agency. This is especially true for visual arts venues, which are often more reliant on national agencies because of the cost of running a building and not being able to charge admission, even more so for those with capacity to host only one exhibition at one time. Some venues such as An Lanntair have strategic solutions such as showing more local productions and locally themed work during the summer months when there are more visitors and more diverse programmes in the winter months for the local audience. Nevertheless, with local communities feeling such a sense of ownership over their venues, even the slightest favouritism can be met with criticism.

Secondly, the comparison between the arts on the Orkney and Shetland Islands in Chapter 7 further highlighted that although grand new venues have been built in Shetland, it did not necessarily result in better recognition of the arts or a bigger tourism economy. The contrast between the tourism industries in the two regions was clear: Orkney's only larger venue, Pier Arts Centre, has gone through many years of development from a small building to what it is today, while the St Magnus Festival still uses mostly community venues for its events, and arts activities happens throughout the year in small venues such as private galleries and cafes. This is also not unique to Orkney, as Thomson, the then director of dgArts, said it is the selection of 'small things happening in small places' that makes the visiting experience unique for tourists (Thomson, interview with author, 14 July 2011).

Lastly, the conflicts and competitiveness between different areas can often be found in rural regions. Chapter 6 highlighted the more extreme case of Dumfries & Galloway, but this can be found at different levels in other rural regions as well. Therefore, it is also challenging to find the right location for the creative and general communities to agree on for developing new venues. This is also the key

reason why most independent venues were developed indigenously from small to large and some secured funding from the SAC/Creative Scotland at their later stages of development, whose funding decisions are less political and controversial at local levels compared to the local authorities' funding decisions. However, being funded by the national agency then led to the dilemma between bringing high quality productions from outside or local productions mentioned in the first point and the risk of losing their strong community connections for the venues.

Although the research saw the first steps of a change in attitude of the national agency after the transition to Creative Scotland, changes are still occurring and their long-term effects on arts venues in rural Scotland are yet to be seen. However, it is clear that an appropriate and effective infrastructure for arts development in rural Scotland is not necessarily a venue-based one, and most positively not one that would demand brand new buildings and millions of capital investment on one project. Instead it should be a combination of, and collaboration between, venues - often small or started small, events, arts development agencies and facilities. Agencies and networks that enable effective collaborations and clear communications between organisations are key for the development of the infrastructure.

### **Beyond Regional or Cross-Region Arts Development Agencies**

Although it has been mentioned throughout this thesis, the phenomena, causes and aftermath of the closures of dgArts and Hi-Arts were not specifically discussed. It is regretful to see both organisations, which have contributed greatly to arts development in the regions they served, close down during the course of this research. These incidents coincided with many LAs' decisions or consideration to divide their cultural and leisure services from the councils - such as the separation and establishment of High Life Highland from the Highland Council - which sent out messages and warnings of changes across the board within regional arts development strategies. Specific issues were seen to have contributed to the closures of dgArt and Hi-Art, voices opposing their ways of operation were heard in the final years or months of their over 20-year histories. Chapter 6 elaborated on the issues voiced by the sector in Dumfries and Galloway, such as the hope for the wider artistic community to be more involved in the decision-making for arts funding. As for Hi-Arts, because the remit of the organisation was so wide - both geographically and disciplinarily - there has also been dissatisfaction from within

the sector about how the investment and support was distributed. As mentioned in Chapter 6, Kevin Baker, the Library and Culture Development Officer for the Argyll and Bute Council, when interviewed just a couple of months before the announcement of the closure of Hi-Arts, reflected that both Hi-Arts and HIE strategies had been very 'Highland centric' (Baker, interview with author, 10 January 2013). A debate regarding funding decisions by Hi-Arts also broke out on the internet in late 2011 (Gunn, 2011; Livingston, 2011).

Although the importance of regional or cross-region development agencies in developing arts infrastructures in rural regions was highlighted in this thesis, the above indicates that the format and function of the agencies should evolve from their original arts development roles. Throughout this research, a few key weaknesses of arts development in rural Scotland can be identified and can be improved with support from higher-level agencies or network.

Firstly, as highlighted in Chapter 6, there is often little communication between organisations, even within the same region. The community focus of many of the rural arts organisations has, at times, limited their potential to collaborate with other organisations that were not serving the same community - this is a result of both the indigenous approach and the geographic spread of rural areas. This was the same, if not worse, when it came to cross-region communication and collaborations. Regional or cross-region agencies can help improve the communication and make sure projects are collaborating and not duplicating or competing unnecessarily.

Secondly, while many rural-based arts organisations and events are establishing relationships with the business, tourism and cultural/heritage sectors, many of these relationships were established using their own connections and initiatives. An arts agency could benefit and enhance these connections by representing the arts sector as a whole in dealing with the agencies of other sectors. The majority of the other sectors have their regional representatives or networks such as the Chamber of Commerce, business collectives, tourism boards or heritage trusts, and in dealing with larger scale cross-sector partnerships, an arts agency or representative would be more practical. It would aid in reversing the lack of collaboration between national agencies at a local level.

Lastly, as highlighted in Chapter 7, although the arts in rural Scotland have developed greatly in the past decades, the marketing of and achieving recognition for rural arts organisations and events from the mainstream establishments are still proving to be an issue, as is the ability of rural locations to provide opportunities for artists and creative practitioners to develop their careers beyond the region.

During this research, organisations such as the Promoters Arts Network (PAN) (now The Touring Network) and Hi-Arts Crafts Development, currently part of Emergents after the closure of Hi-Arts, continued to be supported by Creative Scotland and other public funders. A new regional organisation was also formed as a result of the partnership between the Mull Theatre and An Tobar in Argyll and Bute. The new organisation, Comar, hopes to be ‘a creative hub for Argyll and Bute and will produce and deliver high quality professional theatre, music, dance and visual arts activities locally, regionally and nationally, as well as developing a wide-ranging community participation and education programme’.<sup>63</sup>

Different from dgArts and Hi-Arts, these organisations and networks are not regional or a cross-region arts development agency. The key value they contribute to the regions they serve is something that has proven to be difficult to achieve by a single organisation - joint/collaborative marketing and career development opportunities beyond its own location.

Therefore, there is still a need for a region-wide or cross region arts agency or network to exist, but not in the form of an arts development agency that programmes arts activities across regions. As many locally-based organisations have already developed and delivered programmes with their own expertise, it should instead be an agency or a network that represents, supports and connects the organisations and/or individual practitioners within and beyond their geographic regions.

What role should Creative Scotland play in addressing those issues? Looking back to Chapter 1 one of the key differences discovered between arts development in rural Scotland and England is that regional arts development agencies similar to Regional Arts Associations (RAAs) and later Regional Arts Boards (RABs) in England

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<sup>63</sup> Press Release on the Mull Theatre website: [http://www.mulltheatre.com/press\\_comar.html](http://www.mulltheatre.com/press_comar.html). Accessed 17 July 2012.



were never as popular in Scotland, and thus the SAC/Creative Scotland never had regional offices. The model of the Arts Council England (ACE) might be suitable for arts development in rural England, with many RAAs established as early as the 1960s, but it would not be suitable for the arts in rural Scotland. The arts in rural Scotland, although with very limited top-level support, have already developed hugely over the past decades, and many organisations and events became established with national and international reputations. Although top-level guidance, recognition and support is still needed for the development of the arts in rural Scotland overall, it is not difficult to see that many have developed their own ways to sustain and develop themselves while maintaining their local connections. Thus the instigation of regional branches of a national body might only cause interference and controversy. An example from history is the case of VisitScotland, as mentioned in Chapters 5 and 6 where, despite the national tourism agency having set up offices covering different regions, the tourism sectors in some regions have decided to cut their ties with VisitScotland and have subsequently set up their own partnership or network. However, if Creative Scotland is to commit to locality, diversity and rurality, it will need a level of expertise in arts development in different regions, whether it is through advisory roles or formal employment offered to people with demonstrated experience and knowledge in arts development in different rural areas.

### **A National Strategy**

It has been repeatedly stressed throughout this thesis that while the indigenous approach is key to more sustainable support for the arts, in order to achieve greater success, stronger collaboration and wider recognition for rural arts within, between and beyond rural regions, understanding, support and guidance from a national-level policy makers are essential. In other words, the absence of a national culture strategy since 2003 is a large underlying issue for arts development in both urban and rural Scotland.

As illustrated in Chapters 4 and 7, the national agencies have strong intentions to promote Scotland to the world through tourism and cultural/arts activities as a nation to visit, to enjoy and to live in and such promotion is largely influenced by the nationalist government's strategies. The examples of cultural tourism in Orkney and Shetland in Chapter 6 highlighted the crucial role that collaboration between different sectors can have in building a reputation for a rural location.

However, although both Creative Scotland and VisitScotland emphasise this in their campaign strategies, there is a limited and discontinuous connection and collaboration with other important parts of the cultural sector such as the heritage and museum sectors.

At the same time, despite the fact that Creative Scotland's strategy has shown the national agency's intention to give greater recognition and support to the arts in rural places, the lack of collaboration with the culture, heritage and tourism sectors at a higher level places obstacles in the path of implementing their strategies. As this research has highlighted, the arts in many rural regions are often closely connected with their heritage, historic and natural, and culture, and thus the fact that Creative Scotland has not demonstrated any commitment to constant partnerships with the heritage and other cultural sectors is highly problematic. While the author is not suggesting that the arts, museums and heritage should be managed under one agency, as was the case when the ACE assumed the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's (MLA) functions in 2011,<sup>64</sup> the disconnection between the arts and museums in Scotland is obvious, despite similarity in their goals as indicated in both the *Creative Scotland Corporate Plan* (Creative Scotland, 2011) and the latest national strategy published by Museums and Galleries Scotland (MGS, 2012).<sup>65</sup> Both documents place the other agency as a potentially important partner, however there are only few mentions of the National Museums in the Creative Scotland document and no mention of 'arts' at all in the MGS strategy.

This disconnection is particularly disadvantageous for arts development in rural places not only because of the afore-mentioned strong connection they share with heritage and culture, but also the existing structures in most rural LAs. As pointed out in Chapter 5, in rural LAs, arts development and other cultural functions such as museums and libraries are often dealt within the same department and have the same service manager, if not carried out by one person.

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<sup>64</sup> The museum, library and archive sector faced the risk of getting lost within the ACE. With many libraries closed down due to local authorities' funding cuts since the take-over, thirty of them reported by the Guardian, the strength of the ACE's support for the museums, libraries and archives has become questionable.

<sup>65</sup> Both documents presented the sectors' international ambition, enterprising/economic potential, public value and collaboration as their priorities or aims.

In Chapters 5 and 6, the importance of a top-level strategy for local authorities was emphasised: the author believes that a national cultural strategy would therefore be more relevant than strategies that focus on arts, museums, libraries and heritage separately. A national culture strategy that is applicable not only to the arts, but also to the wider cultural and heritage sectors, with a vision to work in partnership with the tourism sector, and that takes the geographic and demographic diversity of Scotland into consideration, is greatly needed to lead the nation's cultural development.

While most of the material used supporting this research was dated before January 2013, and with Creative Scotland and its new director hosting various 'Open Sessions' within core groups of key organisations as well as with anyone who has an interest in the arts, to help form the agency's new strategy, arts policy and politics in Scotland are still changing at the time of writing in February 2014. In January 2014, Creative Scotland announced the names of the 12 organisations which were awarded the capital development fund, a programme that was shortlisted and has been pending since 2012. Amongst them 4 projects are based in rural regions included in this thesis: the redevelopment of Woodend Arts in Aberdeenshire, the redevelopments of Cove Park, Dunoon Burgh Hall and the creation of a new arts venue using the disused St Peter's Seminary in Argyll & Bute. Looking further ahead, the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games' cultural programme, cited as 'proper art, not a tourism-led add on' by the Scotsman Arts Editor Andrew Eaton-Lewis (McLaughlin, 2013), along with the forthcoming Scottish independence referendum, will no doubt also impact the arts and cultural politics of Scotland. At this time when the only certainty about the future of arts policy in Scotland is the uncertainty, this research hopes to offer strong and fair representation and advocacy for the arts in rural Scotland during this significant period within the history of Scottish arts and culture policy.

As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, limitations were predicted for this research in terms of the ability to cover all rural regions and arts forms. Despite focusing on certain regions and issues, there are many points that have come out of the fieldwork but not explored further in this research due to limited resources, such as rural events and festivals and their role in rural economic and community development; and a further examination of and discussion surrounding public engagement through different arts forms, in addition to public art and

participatory art as discussed in Chapter 8. Furthermore, although this research aims to provide a comprehensive picture of the arts in rural Scotland, as the first piece of research in this specific subject, it is inevitable that gaps and limitations will be found and investigated further. For example, Perth and Kinross was excluded from this research because of the reasons highlighted in Chapter 2, however, as this research has developed and the features and differences between rural regions further explored, it has become apparent that the uniqueness of Perth and Kinross and its arts development would be an important subject to be included in further research in this field. Lastly, it was also noted in Chapter 4 that the screen industries were not presented in this thesis, despite the fact that many rural cinemas have been shut down over the past decades. A recent resurgence in the numbers of screen focused organisations and businesses appearing in rural places as communication technology has developed presents excellent opportunities for further research to investigate this field and provide a fuller picture of the creativity in rural places.

## Appendix I List of Interviews

People who agreed to be interviewed for this research are listed here. Job titles given refer to roles at the time of interview.

Cathy Agnew, Development Director, Peter Pan Moat Brae Trust. 3 July 2013

Kevin Baker, Library and Culture Development Officer, Argyll and Bute Council.  
10 January 2013

Matt Baker, Artist. 22 June 2013

Ruth Barker, Producer, Public Art Scotland. Artist. 7 July 2011

Pam Beasant, Arts Officer, Orkney Islands Council. 20 October 2011

Rebecca Coggins, Principal Arts Officer (Nithsdale), later Principal Officer Arts & Museums (Nithsdale), Dumfries & Galloway Council. 14 July 2011 & 18 December 2012.

Venu Dhupa, Director of Creative Development, Creative Scotland. 30 July 2012

Carol Dunbar, Education Officer, Pier Arts Centre. Artist. 21 October 2011

Angus Farquhar, Director, NVA. 5 September 2011

Nick Fearn, Arts Development Officer, Moray Council. 27 July 2011

Neil Firth, Director, Pier Arts Centre. 21 October 2011

Leigh French, Editor, Variant. 15 March 2012

Saskia Gibbon, Arts Development Officer (North) & Acting Public Art Officer,  
Aberdeenshire Council. 27 July 2011

Iain Hamilton, Head of Creative Industries, HIE. 19 October 2011

Rik Hammond, Artist. 20 October 2011

David Harding, Artist. 14 March 2012

Jan Hogarth, Creative Director, Wide Open Ltd. 12 October 2011

Carol Leathley, Principal Arts Officer, Aberdeenshire Council. 10 August 2011

Robert Livingston, Director, Hi-Arts. 29 July 2011 & 19 November 2012

Kate Martin, Freelance Curator. 1 March 2012

Elsie Mitchell, Arts Development Officer, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. 20 November 2012

Roddy Murray, Director, An Lanntair. 20 November 2012

Stephen Palmer, Development Officer, Creative Scotland. 30 July 2012

Nuno Sacramento, Director, Scottish Sculpture Workshop. 18 October 2011

Anthony Schrag, Artist. 6 August 2011

Cathy Shankland, Exhibition Officer, Highland Council / High Life Highland. 29 July 2011 & 19 November 2012

Diana Sykes, Director, Fife Contemporary Art and Craft. 13 March 2012

Alan Thomson, Transition Director, dgArts. 14 July 2011

Anna Vermehren, Development Director, Timespan. 19 November 2012

Julian Watson, Manager, The Mill in the Fleet. 12 December 2013

Claudia Zeiske, Director, Deveron Arts. 26 July 2011

## **Appendix II List of Arts Events and Activities included in the SAC Taking Part 2008 Report**

Arts and cultural activities included in definitions of attendance and participation:

### **Q3a) Event/ activities attended**

Plays

Ballet

Contemporary Dance

Scottish traditional dance

Culturally specific dance

Other style of dance

Pantomime or variety Show

Opera/Operetta

Experimental theatre (including visual and digital)

Puppetry

Jazz Music

Scottish traditional/ Scottish folk music

Culturally specific music

Orchestral Music

Chamber Music or recitals

Country and Western Music

Rock or Pop Music

Experimental/electronic music

Literary or Poetry Event

Cinema

Musicals

Arts Festivals

Carnival/circus (not involving animals)

Video/Multi-media/ performance art

Contemporary illustration

Contemporary drawing

Contemporary painting

Contemporary printmaking

Contemporary sculpture

Contemporary photography

Contemporary computer generated/digital art

Moving image (viewing artists film and video)

Contemporary installation

Contemporary crafts

Traditional crafts

Live art

Outdoor art/ performance/ street art

Art Galleries

Museum

**Q4a) Activities participated in**

Drama

Opera or light opera

Singing in a choir



Scottish traditional dance

Culturally specific dance

Ballet

Contemporary dance

Experimental theatre (including visual and digital)

Puppetry

Other style dance

Playing a musical instrument

Scottish traditional/Scottish folk music

Culturally specific music

Experimental/electronic music

Writing poetry

Writing stories or articles

Reading books

Buying a work of fiction or poetry

Buying any other types of book

Painting or drawing

Printmaking

Sculpture

Photography (other than family or holiday snaps)

Knitting/other textile crafts

Wood crafts

Any other crafts

Making films (apart from video)

Filming on video (apart from 'family' life or events)

Computer generated/digital art

Buying a work of art or craft object (SAC 2008, 2009a)

## Appendix III List of Key Organisations with Details

Information below is based on data collect in December 2012. European Union's LEADER programme has since entered its review phase before it will be available again. Therefore data in 2013 would not represent the importance of this European funding to arts development in rural Scotland.

### Dumfries & Galloway

#### CatStrand

An arts and community venue in New Galloway, CatStrand started as a renovation project that turned an old school in disrepair into a new arts centre by The Glenkens Community & Arts Trust. The Centre opened in 2007 and became the hub of the community, providing a wide range of arts, community and training activities for the residents of the Glenkens as well as being a tourist attraction for visitors to the region.

Funders: Arts & Business, Dumfries & Galloway Council, Creative Scotland, Big Lottery Fund, LEADER, other funding from private companies and foundations.

#### A' The Airts

A decade-long project to open an arts, crafts and cultural centre in Sanquhar started by the local community. The centre opened in winter 2010 and has developed a programme of arts and cultural events for the community in Upper Nithsdale

Funders: Big Lottery Fund, Dumfries and Galloway Council, LEADER, The Holywood Trust

#### The Mill on the Fleet

An historic house in Gatehouse of Fleet, the Mill was restored and partly refurbished by the local council and opened as an exhibition venue and visitor centre in the 1980s and it has been registered as a charity and company limited by guarantee since 1991. It is now a visitor centre, event venue and runs an exhibition programme throughout the year.

Funders: VisitScotland, Dumfries and Galloway Council

Dumfries & Galloway Arts Festival

May each year.

Started in 1979. Festival is focused on performance art: drama, comedy, music, dance but normally includes some arts exhibitions in the programme. The region-wide festival aims to bring world-class performances to towns throughout the region.

Main Funders: LEADER, Dumfries & Galloway Council, EventScotland, Creative Scotland

Spring Fling Open Studios

Spring Each Year

Started in 2003 by the council's arts team and became an independent Community Interest Company in 2008, a region-wide art and craft open studio event. Spring Fling also supports and promotes local artists throughout the year.

Main Funders: Dumfries & Galloway Council, LEADER, The Hollywood Trust, Creative Scotland

Visitor Number: over 10,000 (2012)

Big Burns Supper

January Each Year

Started in 2011, Big Burns Supper is the newest festival in the region. In 2012, the festival hosts performance art, film and some visual arts events in 50 venues in the region's capital town Dumfries.

Main Funders: Scotland.org, Burns Night Winter Festivals, Dumfries & Galloway Council, Creative Scotland, Holywood Trust

Wigtown Book Festival

Autumn Each Year

Started in 1998 as a weekend event, the Wigtown Book Festival is the second biggest book festival in Scotland after the Edinburgh Book Festival. Promoting Wigtown as the nation's book town and with The Telegraph as its media partner,

the festival attracts most media attention among the local festivals. Wigtown was also awarded the Creative Place Award by Creative Scotland in 2012.

Main Funders: Creative Scotland, Dumfries & Galloway Council, Baillie Gifford (investment bank), EventScotland.

Visitor Number: 11,000 (2011)

### **Scottish Borders**

#### *Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre*

Opened in 2004 and located in Peebles, Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre is the leading performance arts space in the region. The centre runs a year-round programme of films, theatre and music, and occasionally visual art and literature events.

Main Funders: Creative Scotland, Cruden Foundation, Gordon Fraser Charitable Trust, Scottish Borders Council, LEADER and private sponsorships from McCarthy & Stone Retirement Living.

#### *Crossing Borders*

August/September Each Year

Started in 2008, Crossing Borders is a new art and craft trail across the regions of Scottish Borders and north Northumberland. Happening across two continuous weekends, the project was initiated and run by a group of local artists voluntarily with support from the council. The event website also serves as an information database of artists and makers in the two regions.

Funders: Scottish Borders Council, LEADER, Northumberland County Council, Big Lottery Fund

#### *Borders Book Festival*

June each year

Started since 2004, the Borders Book Festival is not as big in scales as the Wigtown Book Festival in Dumfries and Galloway, but it has become increasingly successful. It also hosts the £25,000 Walter Scott Prize, sponsored by the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch.

Funders: Creative Scotland Lottery, Scottish Borders Council and private sponsorships from businesses (Brewin Dolphin, investment bank) and trusts.

Visitor Number: approximately 10,000 (2012)

## **Highland & Islands**

### *HIE & Hi-Arts*

There are few doubts that the HIE and Hi-Arts play a very important part in arts development in the region. The HIE replaced the Highlands and Islands Development Board in 1991, and is now an economic, social and cultural development agency for Highlands and Islands. The HIE has its own department of Creative Industries as well as supporting Hi-Arts. The support for the arts from the HIE was originally more focused on community development until the Head of Creative Industries post was created in 2002. The Creative Industries service in the HIE has since then become responsible for the economic and business development of the Creative Industries and supports both commercial/non-commercial creative businesses and projects. The head office of the HIE is in Inverness.

Hi-Arts was started and fully funded by the HIE as early as 1990 and it was created to have the flexibility to be able to receive sponsorship and other funding from outside of the HIE. Hi-Arts became a foundation-funded organisation by the Scottish Arts Council in 2006. In the 2013 funding review, Hi-Arts failed to secure further funding from the HIE or Creative Scotland and closed in early 2013. Although based in Inverness, Hi-Arts also had staff members based in locations around the Highlands and Islands, and the organisation mainly develops region-wide projects and projects outside of Inverness. Because the HIE's priorities lie in the development of fragile areas, Hi-Arts developed work in most of the islands and the west and north coast of northern Scotland. Hi-Arts also had a very strong remit for supporting artists and practitioners in the region.

Its last projects in 2012 were focused on Argyll and the Islands (Argyll and Bute), Skye craft development and audience development in the North East. It also facilitated the early research and development for ATLAS.

Funders: HIE, Creative Scotland

Promoters Arts Network (PAN) / The Touring Network

Formed in 2001 and based in Inverness, the PAN is a support network for organisers of arts events in Highlands and Islands. The organisation is currently undergoing a series of changes and was on tour around the region in 2012 to enhance the organisation's reputation and impact in the region. Its projects in 2012 included: developing an Online Platform to promote arts events; Cultural tourism focuses on domestic market; and a Young Promoters project to provide training for 16-26 year-olds to work in events promotion. It also went through an organisational change and became 'The Touring Network' in 2012. It is in partnership with Comar and Argyll and Bute Council to deliver a programme of performing arts in the region.

Funder: Creative Scotland

***Argyll and Bute and Eileanan Siar****An Tobar, Argyll and Bute*

Based in Tobermory, An Tobar is a venue for Visual Arts and Music. The project started as a community's attempt to rescue the derelict school in 1993, and with supports from various sources including the National Lottery the renovation work started in 1995. The project is also the first arts project in Scotland to receive National Lottery funding. The Centre opened in 1997 and runs a year-round programme of visual arts and music. An Tobar received the Scottish Arts Council Foundation Funding for 2007 - 2012 and has then been replaced by Comar, a new arts hub formed by the partnership of An Tobar and the Mull Theatre - a local theatre company that is in the process of moving into a new building.

Main Funders: PRS for Music, The Robertson Trust, Argyll and Bute Council, Creative Scotland

*Comar, Argyll & Bute*

A new organisation on the Isle of Mull developed in partnership with An Tobar and Mull Theatre. It aims to maximise the impact of the arts in Argyll and Bute by providing high quality theatre, music, dance as well as visual arts events and activities locally, regionally and nationally with a community and educational

programme. It replaces An Tobar as a foundation-funded organisation by Creative Scotland.

Funders: Argyle & Bute Council, Creative Scotland.

Cove Park, Argyll & Bute

Founded in 1999 by a couple on the Rosneath peninsula, Cove Park runs a year-round art, crafts, literature and performance arts residency programme involving artists from Scotland and around the world. It also holds open day events open to everyone to meet the writers and artists in residence. The organisation is currently receiving flexible funding from Creative Scotland and in September 2012 was selected with 16 other projects in Scotland to be a finalist of Creative Scotland's capital development programme, and will be awarded a further £621,633 if successful.<sup>66</sup>

Funders: Creative Scotland, Henry Moore Foundation, Jerwood Charitable Foundation

Campbeltown Picture House, Argyll & Bute

The oldest purpose-built cinema in Scotland still showing films based in Campbeltown on the Kintyre peninsula. The cinema is an important community venue and is owned by the local community. It was once closed in 1986 due to falling attendances but reopened in 1989 thanks to the efforts of Campbeltown Community Business. It is also one of the finalists for the Creative Scotland's capital development programme, and will be awarded £430,000 if successful.<sup>67</sup>

Funders: HIE, LEADER

Mount Stuart, Argyll & Bute

Mount Stuart is an historical house and a key visitor attraction in Isle of Bute. The original house was built in 1719 by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Bute and has since been renovated numerous times. The house opened to the public for the first time in

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<sup>66</sup> It was announced in early 2014 that Cove Park was awarded the grant applied - the highest award made to organisations in rural regions included in this research.

<sup>67</sup> It was announced in early 2014 that the Campbeltown Picture House was not successful for the capital development fund, however, in addition to the grant made to Cove Park, £480,000 was awarded for the refurbishment of Dunoon Burgh Hall and £500,000 to NVA for the development of an arts venue at St Peter's Seminary in Cardross.



1995, and in 2001, the 7<sup>th</sup> Marquess of Bute opened its new visitor centre and started its contemporary visual arts programme. Each year an installation or exhibition is presented to the public during Mount Stuart's summer season, artists took part in the programme include Turner Prize-nominated artists Christine Borland and Nathan Coley.

Funders: Mount Stuart is self-funded through its commercial activities and by the Bute Family, but the visual arts programme is also supported by public funders including the Argyll & Bute Council, Creative Scotland - the funders vary each year.

*An Lanntair, Eileanan Siar*

Based in Stornoway, An Lanntair has been developing a programme of visual arts, performance arts, music events and activities since 1985. The new building was opened in 2005 on Stornoway Sea Front after 10 years of fundraising. As of 2012/2013, it is receiving foundation funding from Creative Scotland.

Funders: Creative Scotland, Eileanan Siar Council, LEADER, HIE, and other trusts and foundations.

*Taigh Chearsabhagh, Eileanan Siar*

A museum and arts centre based in Uist, Taigh Chearsabhagh was developed by the partnership between two voluntary organisations Comann Eachdraidh Uibhist a Tuath (North Uist Historical Society) and the Uist Art Association in 1993. The centre runs a programme of visual arts exhibitions, historic exhibitions, education and outreach events. Alongside An Lanntair, Taigh Chearsabhagh is one of the only two foundation-funded organisations by Creative Scotland in Eileanan Siar.

Funders: Creative Scotland, Eileanan Siar Council.

*Hebridean Celtic Festival, Eileanan Siar*

July Each Year

Hebridean Celtic Festival is a traditional and contemporary music festival which happens in Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis. The festival is largely organised by volunteers since it started in 1996 and has grown over the years. In 2009 it was voted 'Event of the Year' at the Scot Trad Music Award.

Visitor/Attendance Number: approx. 14,500 (2011/2012)

Main Funders: Creative Scotland, Eileanan Siar Council, HIE

### ***Highland***

#### *HICA (The Highland Institute of Contemporary Art)*

HICA is an artist-run experimental art-space approximately 10 miles south of Inverness. Started in 2008, HICA runs a programme of exhibitions as a platform for discussions and research in contemporary art.

Main Funders: Creative Scotland, The Henry Moore Foundation.

#### *Highland Print Studio*

Established in 1986 in Inverness, Highland Print Studio is an open access workshop with facilities for printmaking and digital imaging open to professional artists as well as the general public. It serves as an important facility for professional artist, holds classes in its venue and also provides classes and events for community groups and the schools throughout Highlands and Islands. It is currently one of the flexible-funded organisations by Creative Scotland.

Funders: Creative Scotland, The Highland Council

Other arts organisations in Highland receiving Foundation or Flexible funding are:

*Fèis Rois*: a Ross-shire based tuition festival for Children and Young People celebrating the Gaelic language music and song culture. Started in 1986 by the local community and then managed by the local authority from 1991 - 2008 and is now a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. Other funders include: Highland Council, LEADER, HIE, the Robertson Trust.

*Fèisean nan Gàidheal*: Founded in 1991 as an independent umbrella association of the Fèis movement, and tours around the Highlands and Islands. It also supports local theatre and other Fèis including Fèis Rois. Other main funders include: Bòrd na Gàidhlig, HIE, The Highland Council, Argyll and Bute council and Eileanan Siar Council.

*Moniack Mhor*: Established in 1993, Moniack Mhor is a creative writing centre based in Teavarran. The centre provides courses to students from around the world. Other main funders: Arvon Foundation.

Timespan

Based in Helmsdale in northeast Highland, Timespan was founded in 1986 and the building went through a significant redevelopment in 2007. Being a venue for both arts and creative heritage events, Timespan emphasises the connection between the arts and heritage in its remit and develops a year-round programme of projects and events for artists, researchers as well as the community to achieve this goal.

Main funders: HIE, Highland Council, Creative Scotland

North Lands Creative Glass

North Lands Creative Glass is a centre of excellence in the art of glass-making founded in 1995 and inspired by Robert MacLennan, the then Member of Parliament (MP) for Caithness and Sutherland. Based in Lybster in Caithness, it aims to be an internationally renowned centre for glass-making and encourage cross-disciplinary collaboration. It runs a programme of courses, workshops, residencies and family events.

Main funders: Creative Scotland, HIE, LEADER

ATLAS

ATLAS was formed in 2010 as a result of research commissioned by SAC/Creative Scotland. The organisation runs a non-venues based visual arts programme of outdoor exhibitions/installations and events in Isle of Skye; it also builds local and international networks for arts.

Main funder: Creative Scotland

Events in Highland

Following the demise of *Highland Festival* in 2003, the *Isle of Skye Music Festival* only ran from 2005 to 2007. *Rockness*, a commercial music festival, has achieved great success since it started in 2006.

Many leading arts festivals in Highland are based in Inverness including: *Inverness Music Festival* in February; *Hi-Ex* in April; and *Inverness Book Festival* in August. With many festivals in music, dance, films and literature, there is currently no visual arts festival in the region.

***Orkney & Shetland******The Pier Arts Centre, Orkney***

The Pier Arts Centre was founded in 1979 to preserve the important collection donated to the Islands by author, activist and philanthropist Margaret Gardiner in Stromness. Besides displaying part of the collection, the Centre also runs a year-round programme of temporary exhibitions and events for the local community and artists. The centre reopened in 2007 after a £4.5 million Lottery-funded redevelopment of the building and its facility. The redevelopment successfully combined the original listed building and pier and the new contemporary developments. The building won the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland's Andrew Doolan Award for the Best Building in Scotland 2007. The Centre is currently foundation-funded by Creative Scotland and is the only organisation receiving foundation funding in Orkney and Shetland.

Main Funders: Creative Scotland, Orkney Islands Council

***St Magnus International Festival, Orkney***

June/July Each Year

The St Magnus Festival started in 1977 by composer Sir Peter Maxwell Davies and has grown to be a well-known and highly regarded music festival. In recent years, the festival has also encompassed drama, dance, literature and visual arts events. The festival is currently the only organisation in Orkney and Shetland receiving flexible funding from Creative Scotland.

Visitor/Attendance Number: approx. 17,000

Main Funders: Orkney Islands Council Creative Scotland

***Shetland Arts***

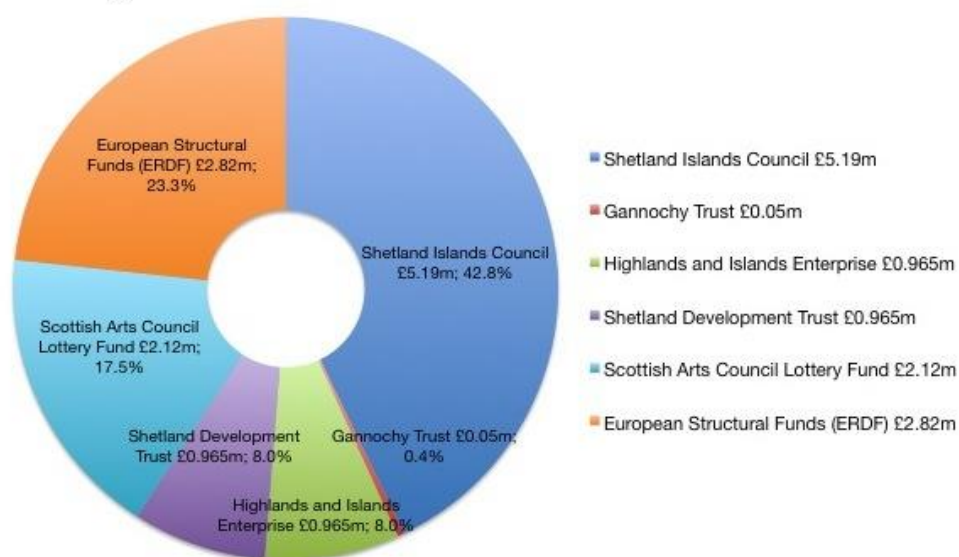
As mentioned above, Shetland Arts is an independent arts development agency with no direct relationship with Shetland Council but carries out the arts development function in the region. Based in Lerwick in its newest development Mareel at the quayside, Shetland Arts also manages two other venues: Garrison Theatre in Lerwick and Bonhoga Gallery in Weisdale. It has a team of 14 members of staff - the biggest regional arts development team in Rural Scotland with

specialist in each of the art forms it supports which are: Literature, Drama, Visual Arts, Craft, Music, Film and Theatre. Shetland Arts also operates the Shetland Arts Fund, provided by Shetland Charitable Trust, with Shetland Council's Grants Unit.

*i. Mareel*

Mareel is the newest development and the UK's most northerly music, cinema and creative industries centre. The development work has just finished in 2012 and the centre opened in July. It provides a year round programme of film, music and performance arts events and is also used as a hub for the creative community in Shetland and beyond. It also runs a programme of events and activities that involves local community. The funding sources for the development of Mareel are shown in Figure 19.

Funding secured for Mareel = just over £12.1m. Here's where it is all coming from:



*Figure 19 Funding Sources of Mareel development projects*

*ii. Bonhoga Gallery*

Bonhoga Gallery is the first purpose-built visual and applied art gallery in Shetland and is one of the key early projects by the Shetland Arts Trust. Opened in 1994 in the west side of Shetland, the gallery runs a programme of contemporary art and craft exhibitions. It also provide a touring exhibition programme showing in different locations around the islands.

iii. *Garrison Theatre*

Shetland Arts started to run the theatre in 2006 taking over from the council. Based in Lerwick's old town, the theatre provides a year-round programme of performance events and shows by both professional performers and local community.

**The Northeast: Aberdeenshire & Moray**

*NEAT (North East Arts Touring)*

Founded in 1985, NEAT was a partnership between Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils to bring professional touring performances to the regions in a wide range of venues. It underwent a series of review in late 2000s and became incorporated in 2010 as North East Arts Touring Ltd. It has been a flexible funded organisations by Creative Scotland since then.

Funders: Creative Scotland

*Scottish Sculpture Workshop (SSW)*

Founded in 1979 by Fred Bushe OBE in the town of Lumsden, the SSW is now recognised as a centre of excellence for UK-based and international visual artists. It runs a year round residency, training and exhibition programme as well as projects to engage local community in the making of artwork. The workshop has recently redeveloped its building and embrace the idea of 'Communities Room', the SSW is currently receiving flexible funding from Creative Scotland.

Funders: Creative Scotland, Aberdeenshire Council, LEADER

*Deveron Arts*

Deveron Arts was founded in 1997 by a group of local residents including its current direct Claudia Zeiske, who was a successful arts fundraiser before moving to Huntly. With the tag line, the Town is the Venue, It runs a year round residency programme by bringing artists from around the world to work not only in the community but also with the local community. Deveron Arts in currently receiving flexible funding from Creative Scotland and have been awarded £220,000 in October 2012 for its programme beyond the flexible funding period. Deveron Arts

was also the driving force for Huntly to win the Special Prize at Creative Scotland's Creative Places Awards.

Funders: Creative Scotland, Aberdeenshire Council. Projects sponsored by a wide range of trusts, foundations and businesses.

*Woodend Arts Limited (formerly Woodend Arts Association)*

Woodend Arts manages and operates the Woodend Barn, a performance arts venue including an art gallery. The company runs a diverse arts programme as well as builds a network of different arts initiatives. The Barn hosts music, dance, comedy performances, films and art and craft workshops. It is also home to North East Arts Touring (NEAT) and Growing Audiences North East (GANE). Woodend Arts is currently receiving Creative Scotland Flexible Funding.

Main Funders: Aberdeenshire Council, Amb:IT:ion Scotland, Creative Scotland, Leys Estate, NEAT, PRS for Music, Regional Screen Scotland and Senergy and sponsorships from other bodies.

*Moray Art Centre*

Started by local artist Randy Klinger in the late 90s with new building opened in 2007, Moray Art Centre is an Eco-friendly Arts education centre near Findhorn. It runs a programme of exhibitions, events and classes for the community. It also offers artist studios for rent. It remains the region's only purpose built art centre.

Main funders: European Rural Development Fund.

Another Flexible Funded organisation in the region is:

*Sound*, North East Scotland's Festival of New Music.

Region	Name of Organisation	Discipline	Venue Based?	Time of the Year (for festival and events)	Location	Year of Est.	Project Started By
Dumfries and Galloway	CatStrand	Performing Arts, Visual Art	Y		New Galloway	2007	Local Community (General)
Dumfries and Galloway	Mill on the Fleet	Visual Art; Historic Building	Y		Gatehouse of Fleet	1980s	Local Authority
Dumfries and Galloway	Dumfries and Galloway Arts Festival	Performing Arts	N	June	Region-wide	1979	Local Community
Dumfries and Galloway	Spring Fling Open Studios	Visual Art and Craft	N	May/June	Region-wide	2003	Local Authority
Dumfries and Galloway	Big Burns Supper	Performing Arts	N	January	Dumfries	2011	Local Community (General)
Dumfries and Galloway	Wigtown Book Festival	Literature	N	September/October	Wigtown	1998	Local Community (General)
Scottish Borders	Eastgate Theatre and Arts Centre	Performing Arts	Y		Peebles	2004	Local Community (Artists)
Scottish Borders	Crossing Borders	Visual Art and Craft	N	August/September	Region-wide and North Nothumberland	2008	Local Community (Artists)
Scottish Borders	Borders Book Festival	Literature	N	June	Melrose	2004	Local Community (General)
Highlands and Islands	Hi-Arts	Visual Art and Craft, Performing Arts	N		Region-wide	1990	HIE
Highlands and Islands	Promoters Arts Network	Performing Arts	N		Region-wide	2001	Local Community (Artists)
Argyll and Bute	An Tobar	Visual Arts and Music	Y		Tobermory	1997	Local Community (General)



Argyll and Bute	Mull Theatre	Performing Arts	Y		Druimfin, Tobermory	1966	Local Community (Artists)
Argyll and Bute	Comar	Performing Arts and Visual Arts	N		Region-wide	2012	Merger of An Tobar and Mull Theatre
Argyll and Bute	Cove Park	Visual Art and Craft, Literature	Y		Rosneath peninsula	1999	Individuals
Argyll and Bute	Campbeltown Picture House	Films	Y		Campbeltown	1989 (reopen)	Local Community (General)
Argyll and Bute	Mount Stuart	Visual Art	Y		Rothesay	2001 (for visual arts)	Individuals
Eileanan Siar	An Lanntair	Visual Arts; Performing Arts	Y		Stornoway	1985	Individuals
Eileanan Siar	Taigh Chearsabhaigh	Visual Arts; Museum	Y		Uist	1993	Local Community (Artists)
Eileanan Siar	Hebridean Celtic Festival	Music	N	July	Stornoway	1996	Local Community
Highland	HICA	Visual Arts	Y		Nr Inverness	2008	Individuals
Highland	Highland Print Studio	Visual Arts	Y		Inverness	1986	Local Community (Artists)
Highland	Fèis Rois	Gaelic Language Music	N		Ross-shire	1986	Local Community
Highland	Fèisean nan Gàidheal	Gaelic Feis	N		Region-wide	1991	Local Community
Highland	Moniack Mhor	Literature	Y		Beauly	1993	Individuals
Highland	Timespan	Visual Arts and Heritage	Y		Helmsdale	1986	Local Community
Highland	North Lands Creative Glass	Craft	Y		Lybster	1995	Local Community / Politician

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Highland	ATLAS	Visual Arts	N		Isle of Skye	2010	Local Community / Enterprise Office
Orkney and Shetland	The Pier Arts Centre	Visual Arts and Craft	Y		Stromness	1979	Local Community / Private Donation
Orkney and Shetland	St Magnus International Festival	Music	N	July	Region-wide	1977	Individuals
Orkney and Shetland	Shetland Arts	All Art forms	N/A		Region-wide	2006	Local Trusts
Aberdeenshire and Moray	NEAT (North East Arts Touring)	Performing Art	N		Cross-region	1985	Partnership
Aberdeenshire	Scottish Sculpture Studios	Visual Art	Y		Lumsden	1979	Individuals
Aberdeenshire	Deveron Arts	Visual Art	N		Huntly	1997	Individuals
Aberdeenshire	Woodend Arts Limited	Performing Art; Visual Art	Y		Banchory	1996	Individuals
Aberdeenshire	Sound	Music	N	October/November	Banchory	2005	Local Community (Artists)
Moray	Moray Art Centre	Visual Art	Y		Findhorn	1990s	Individuals

## Appendix IV Interview Questions

The list below includes merely the essential questions asked at the interviews, additional questions were asked based on current events happened at national and local levels as well as the answers to the essential questions in order to gain further insights.

Questions for all interviewees:

- Could you tell me a little more about yourself and your role within your organisation?
- How do you feel about the recent changes within the Scottish arts policies? Do you feel that the local arts development is sensitive to those changes?
- In your opinion, what would be the biggest differences between the arts policies for rural areas and urban centres?
- If it is not the nation-wide politics, what do you think are the key factors influencing your organisation/team and the arts in your region?
- And what influence do you think your organisation/team make? (For the community, local economy, tourism, locally-based artists or the region's profile in the wider arts scene)
- Which, do you find, are the best ways to make the positive influences that your organisation/team aims for? Please give us some examples if possible.

For interviewees working for independent organisations:

- When and how was your organisation founded? What is its current role? How is it currently funded?
- How would you describe the relationship between your organisation, the national agency and the local authority?

For interviewees working in rural regions:

- How would you describe the arts in the region? Is there a cultural or arts strategy?
- What are the key issues of delivering arts projects in rural settings?
- And what are the advantages of delivering arts projects in rural settings and particularly in your region?
- What do you think about...? (The interviewees were asked about their knowledge and opinion towards other organisations and services in the same region)

## Glossary

ABAAG Argyll and Bute Arts Action Group

ACE Arts Council England

ACGB Arts Council of Great Britain

ACRE Action with Communities in Rural England

ADO Arts Development Offer

CABN Creative Arts Business Network

CAP Common Agricultural Policy

CCPR Centre for Cultural Policy Research

CEO Cultural Enterprise Office

COSLA Convention of Scottish Local Authorities

DCMS Department for Culture, Media and Sport

DD&G Destination Dumfries & Galloway

DEFRA Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

EAFS Environmental Art Festival Scotland

FMD Foot and Mouth Disease

FO Foundation Funded Organisation

FXO Flexible Funded Organisation

GANE Growing Audience North East

HICA The Highland Institute for Contemporary Art

HIE Highlands and Islands Enterprise

IOTA Inverness Old Town Art

LA Local Authority

LAG Local Action Group

LEADER Liaisons entre actions de développement de l'économie rurale (links between actions for the development of the rural economy)

MLA Museums, Libraries and Archives Council

MP Member of Parliament

MSP Member of Scottish Parliament

NEAT North East Arts Touring

NEOS North East Open Studios

NESTA National Endowment for Science Technology and the Arts

NVA Nacionale Vitae Activa

OIC Orkney Islands Council

PAN Promoters Arts Network

RCF Rural Cultural Forum

RSIF Rural Scotland in Focus

SAC Scottish Arts Council

SCT Shetland Charitable Trust

SCVO Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations

SRDP Scottish Rural Development Programme

SRUC Scotland's Rural College

SSW Scottish Sculpture Workshop

SNP Scottish National Party

UK United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

WBF Wigtown Book Festival

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