



D'ARTS ANNUAL REPORT 2017/2018

Disability Arts in Exeter



Much has happened during the past year and D'Arts continues to flourish and grow whilst maintaining its small and friendly style. All involved have worked in the background to enable us to survive and keep our head above water financially.

The Creative Saturdays continue to attract many longstanding members, as well as a few new friendly faces. Our fundraising activities and grant applications have raised enough money to continue the Saturdays and to fund our annual festival D'ArtsFest.

Creative Saturdays

We continue to run these at Exeter Community Centre, which has a vibrant atmosphere with several groups using the centre on a Saturday. It is a clean, warm space with supportive staff.

Since October last year we have had Saturday sessions on Singing, Printmaking, Zumba and Dance, Drumming, Indian Art and Indian Drama. In the early summer we ran Saturday sessions under the title of Get Involved Project (funded by Awards for All Big Lottery) to make resources for D'ArtsFest 2018. These included Flagmaking, Creative sign making, and Dance workshops to prepare for a performance on the big stage at the festival.

We have an average of 15 people attending each Saturday, and have maintained our £10 fee to make it accessible to all. The sessions are well run with a variety of arts practitioners leading the sessions. We have a fantastic team of volunteers and support workers, which enables everyone to participate as fully as possible. Everyone enjoys catching up and socialising over lunch and tea and homemade cakes(thanks to Liz's generosity and baking!)

D'ArtsFest 2018

Our fourth festival, 7th and 8th July, was as brilliant as ever, and our hottest one yet! We again enjoyed glorious hot sunshine in Easterbrook field at West Town Farm. Our Get Involved Project meant that many of our participants were involved in the planning, making resources, volunteering and performing at the festival this year. Publicity was good and we attracted new people and groups. We even had a slot to promote the festival on Radio Devon. Judy Spiers officially opened D'ArtsFest 2018, which was great. Local groups such as Magic Carpet Arts, Samba Roc, Soundwaves, Roc Creative, Turning Tides, Organic Arts, Get Changed Theatre Company, Roc Active, James the Magician, June Beale Dance School, Glory of the West Morris group, and The Rockeries ran workshops and performed. We also had workshops in key ring making and sign carving, printing bags, Flamenco and Bollywood, Zumba, face painting, fireside activities, headdress making, cup cake decorating, skittles, a photo booth, Pamper tent, cards and beads for sale, as well as food, fish and chips, pizzas, a bar and lashings of Ice cream! We enjoyed music from Dave Ward, Bolyne, Mark Travis, In4Red, and the Alley Katz. 155 people with learning disabilities attended the festival, as either festival ticket holders (92), or performers, in addition to parents and carers. More people camped this year, many enjoying this experience for the first time.

West Town Farm staff members were as supportive as ever helping us to set up and being there to ensure a smooth running weekend. WHS ambulance service

was there throughout, to cover all emergencies and offer support. Many volunteers worked tirelessly before, during and after the festival...and a huge thanks to them all.

We had generous support from The Norman Family Trust, Sir John and Lady Amory's Charitable Trust, The Anderton Foundation, National Lottery Awards for All, Exeter Mencap,, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Devon Contract Waste, The Exeter Brewery and several individuals who lent us equipment and made cakes. This year our profit margin increased and we made a profit of £1,932.

We are taking a festival break next year and our fifth D'ArtsFest will be in 2020.

Fundraising

We held our February Music Night by kind invitation of St Thomas Social Club, and raised £466 towards D'ArtsFest 2018. Musicians very generously played for free and we danced the night away to 29 Fingers, Mark Travis and Bolyne. A raffle and good time was had by all. A big thanks to Emily Wilson for organising the raffle prizes.

The Big Lottery Awards for All awarded us a grant for £4,523 to fund the Get Involved Project and to fund some Festival Organiser hours and the cost of West Town Farm.

The Clare Milne Foundation grant finished in May 2018, and that was a great support for our Creative Saturdays.

We were awarded £500 from The Anderton Foundation, a local charity, and much of that grant went towards D'ArtsFest.

We have secured a Yapp Charitable Trust Grant for £2,000 a year for 3 years towards our Saturday programme, and some development costs. This is great news.

Smaller donations from individuals have been gratefully received and make a real difference.

The Annual Accounts, prepared by Exeter Community Accounting, are attached.

D'Arts, as a small local charity, continues to thrive even in these hard financial times. As we do not need great reserves to continue we are fortunate enough to be able to request smaller amounts of money from funders, and this has been to our advantage this year as we have been successful with our bids.

We have now secured some funding, through Yapp, to work with volunteers and participants on deciding what the next 5 years should look like, and to develop a plan to fit in with local needs and to work in partnership with other local arts groups to find new exciting ways forward. D'Arts would not continue making an impact on people's lives without the support and hard work of trustees, support workers, volunteers, parents, arts practitioners, and sponsors...Thank you.