

DCMS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY: SECTORS

ARTS

As a countryside worker I was quite cynical when I started the arts project, because I was from a traditional environmental background... but I've seen it can change attitudes, and people can get benefits from it... *quoted in Use or Ornament, Francois Matarasso, 1997*

CURRENT POSITION

Enjoyment of and participation in the Arts is fundamental to the core of successful sustainable development, a good quality of life. The Arts have always been used to engage and inform as well as entertain, and using imagination and creativity encourages attitudinal change, as well as social and environmental transformation, all of which are necessary to make truly sustainable development possible.

For example:

Community Renewal

- The regeneration of **Brixton Village's** famous covered market is an on-going project which has been assisted by a grant from **Arts & Business**. The aim is to uplift the area through improving and brightening the environment, working with local artists and creative companies, and via the staging of community events. In February 2003, a poem donated to the project by Maya Angelou was installed on giant banners throughout the market, plus new metal artwork on the gates and entrance created by local artist, Heather Burrell. There was also an exhibition about the project in a local gallery.
- **Tees Valley Community Online website** is a community website contributed to by 7 ex-steel communities from the Tees Valley area. It contains 13 sections including history, art, poetry, people, drama, music, places, digital memories and sport. There are pictures of performances and music by local people singing and reminiscing about their community. There is an online local history magazine and local children have scanned their artwork online. People are developing community awareness and developing ICT skills while enjoying themselves.
- **Kandu Arts for Sustainable Development** has worked with young people, local government, social services, Youth Offending Teams, NDPBs, educational institutions, businesses, Non-Government Organisations, a whole range of community groups and marginalised groups. Using forum theatre, and inviting audience participation, Kandu's players vividly illustrate the connections of sustainable development to everyday life by setting their improvisations in pub or shop backgrounds. Their thought-provoking and entertaining performance was one of the highlights at DCMS' Sustainable Development conference at the Science Museum in April 2002.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT VISION

DCMS wants to see the arts organisations contribute increasingly to sustainable development, by:

- Ensuring the sustainability of arts projects in terms of funding and resources
- Consideration of sustainable development related lottery bids
- Developing their own corporate social responsibility strategies and green housekeeping schemes
- Realising the potential in large projects, like the refurbishment of the South Bank, to include innovative design solutions which incorporate sustainable development principles, aesthetically and environmentally
- Utilising the ability of the arts to communicate and motivate people about sustainable development

FUTURE ACTION

DCMS aims to achieve this by:

- Encouraging Arts Council England and other arts organisations to consider how their corporate approaches to sustainable development fit with this strategy.
- Supporting arts organisations who plan to introduce sustainable development strategies, and work with them to introduce these;
- Encouraging arts organisations to work with one another, and other NDPBs, within the planned DCMS sustainable development forum
- Encouraging arts organisations to use their communicative abilities to raise both public and internal awareness of the interconnections between the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development