

# Arts Needs Survey for Eastleigh Borough 2011



# Contents

<b>1.</b>	<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Facility Analysis</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1.	Update on capital needs reported in 2006	7
2.2.	Directory of community facilities by local area	8
2.3.	Capital needs reported in 2011	22
2.4.	Facility user ratings	25
<b>3.</b>	<b>Survey of 1,000 Citizens</b>	<b>27</b>
3.1.	Demographics and survey sample	27
3.2.	Attendance at arts activities	28
3.3.	Participation in arts activities	29
3.4.	Popular newspapers and websites	30
3.5.	Participation in workshop activities	31
3.6.	Knowledge of local arts venues	32
3.7.	Knowledge of activities at The Point, Eastleigh	34
3.8.	Knowledge of and attendance at local festivals	34
3.9.	Popular activities and preference for activity times	37
3.10.	Modes of transport and maximum journey times	40
3.11.	Attendance at arts activities outside of the Borough	40
3.12.	Factors affecting attendance	41
3.13.	Interest in short courses	42
3.14.	Interest in specialist classes	42
3.15.	Requests for classes	43
3.16.	Requests for facilities	44
3.17.	Qualitative comments	44
3.18.	Additional information	46
<b>4.</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix I	Creative Industries in Eastleigh Borough	
Appendix II	Sample survey questionnaire	

# 1. Executive Summary

## Introduction

This is the fourth survey of its kind undertaken in the Borough of Eastleigh aimed at gathering information about levels of interest and participation in arts activities and to provide data to help assess the Borough's existing arts provision. Work on the first Arts Needs Survey began in late 1995 and the report was completed in May 1996. The reports for the second and third Arts Needs Surveys were completed in 2001 and 2006 respectively.

The Borough of Eastleigh as it is today was created in 1974 and stretches from Chandlers Ford, north of Eastleigh Town, to the south of the Borough where the River Hamble meets Southampton Water. Geographically the local authority area is in close proximity to the Hampshire cities of Southampton and Winchester and for many years it was assumed that the regional arts centres and facilities outside of the Borough would provide adequate arts provision for local people. However during the early 1990s following discussions between council officers, local arts groups, education providers and local people it became clear that there was a need for more local provision.

In 1990 Eastleigh Borough Council employed a single part-time arts officer. Soon after a number of arts related posts were required and the Arts Unit was established as a dedicated department within the local authority. The Arts Unit has since continued to grow in response to local needs and recently repositioned itself as the Culture Unit in 2009. The same year the Culture Unit launched *Eastleigh's Cultural Strategy* which outlines how the department will take a leading role in delivering an innovative cultural agenda. Since the first Arts Needs Survey in 1996 local arts provision and the cultural infrastructure within the Borough has undertaken a substantial evolution. The Borough of Eastleigh is now fast becoming recognised as a cultural centre and an emerging hub for new artistic talent and the creative industries in Hampshire and the wider South East Region. Information on creative industries in the Borough has been included at the end of this report (appendix I).

The Arts Needs Survey 2011 followed the format of those previous by obtaining the views of local arts groups on the facilities available to them, by reviewing the capital and equipment needs of the Borough's community venues, and also by assessing levels of interest and participation in the arts by surveying 1,000 citizens selected demographically across the Borough's local areas and across age groups.

## Aims

- To identify areas of capital need in the Borough for arts related facilities.
- To enable citizens to express their views on local arts provision to the Borough Council.
- To analyse the extent and range of arts activities in the Borough.
- To assess the impacts of The Point and the new Creative Learning programme.
- To provide base data to inform the development of the Council's Arts Strategy.
- To provide information for Local Area Committees about the arts in their areas.

## Research methodology

The facility analysis involved a review of built community facilities across the Borough including community centres, village halls, church halls and other facilities that are available for local arts groups to hire. This part of the research aimed to gather information about these community facilities, to analyse their use by local arts groups, and to assess any capital needs. The methods used to obtain the data for this part of the Arts Needs Survey involved personal visits to the community centres, informal interviews with management and users, postal and electronic questionnaires, and telephone follow-ups.

The second part of the research process was the survey of 1,000 citizens of Eastleigh Borough. This involved a sample of the resident population selected demographically across the Borough's local areas and across age groups. The participants were asked to complete a questionnaire, most of which were completed face to face but with some postal questionnaires (appendix II). The aims of the survey were to establish the range and number of arts activities attended and participated in over the past 12 months, to find out how far the participants would travel to attend arts activities, what modes of transport they use, and what factors might affect their attendance. The survey also asked the participants which venues and arts festivals they knew of in the Borough and surrounding areas, what media they use for information about local arts events, and what creative learning activities might be of interest to them or other members of their household. The participants were also invited to make qualitative comments about their views on local arts provision and to make suggestions of any facilities that they would like to see developed in the Borough.

### Eastleigh Borough's local areas

BIFOHH	Bishopstoke, Fair Oak and Horton Heath
BHH	Bursledon, Hamble and Hound
CFH	Chandlers Ford and Hiltingbury
EAST	Eastleigh
HEWEB	Hedge End, West End and Botley

### Summary of findings from the Facility Analysis

The first Arts Needs Survey found that many of the Borough's community facilities supported a broad range of arts related activities. Now, 15 years on, there are very few that do not support some level of arts usage. However despite the high levels of arts related hires at the time of the first survey not one of the venues was suitable in its design, construction or facilities. In 1996 none of the venues had theatre lighting or sound equipment for community performances, few had blackout capability, and most had solid flooring which is impractical for dance workshops or fitness classes. A handful of the community venues had stages, but the majority with no wing space, backstage area, or dressing rooms to support this. Many were in a poor state of repair and had no access or toilet facilities for disabled users. There have since been substantial improvements to the basic structure of many of these buildings and all are now accessible to disabled users, the majority have improved toilet facilities and many have hearing loop systems. It is also positive to note that some of the venues have made attempts to better cater for local arts and community groups and a number of

them have invested in portable stages or stage blocks and others have new flooring, lighting, sound equipment and extensions to the existing buildings.

New facilities also continue to be developed with the arts in mind. The 2006 survey referred to the Pilands Wood Community Centre which was built with a sprung wooden floor and Bursledon Village Hall that had been refurbished with a stage and a projector for film screenings. The Village Hall has also since had stage lighting installed and a rostra to vary the shape of the stage. Since the last survey new community venues have been built including the Pavilion on the Park in Eastleigh which opened in 2008 with a sprung wooden floor and a portable stage and The Hilt in Chandlers Ford which opened in 2009. There are also plans to develop a new multi-purpose community facility on the site of the existing Bursledon Community Centre, a new community venue will be developed on the Dowd's Farm estate in Hedge End, and Velmore Church in Chandlers Ford is to be refurbished into a church and community facility.

The 2006 survey highlighted significant improvements to local infrastructure developed on school sites. These included The D.@rt Centre, a digital arts facility at Wildern School, and a purpose built concert hall at Thornden. Both schools achieved specialist school status in 2000/01; Wildern in arts and technology and Thornden in music. All of the Borough's schools and its two further education colleges offer thriving arts courses. The last survey also noted that Wildern and Thornden schools both offer GCSE Dance and Barton Peveril College offers A Level Dance in collaboration with The Point. Barton Peveril also offers A Level courses in Fine Art, Drama and Theatre Studies, Film Studies, Music, Music Technology, Photography, Sculpture and BTEC Performing Arts. Eastleigh College offers BTEC Dance and Performing Arts and BTEC Art and Design.

In 2006 investigations began into the possibility of building a theatre on the Wildern School site to compliment Eastleigh's primary arts facility at The Point and the wider outreach programme. In 1996 many people in Hedge End travelled to Southampton for their arts and leisure needs which was drawing resources away from the local economy and making it difficult to establish a fully rounded community in the new town development. A theatre, together with new local facilities including The D.@rt Centre, The Wave and Wildern Leisure Centre would deliver high quality local facilities to Hedge End and central parts of the Borough. The Berry Theatre opened this year bringing a new arts and performance venue within walking distance of thousands of people in a town where many residents had expressed a desire for further arts and leisure facilities to be developed. The new theatre is set to become a regional platform for inspiring professional drama, a cultural hub for the local community, and a centre of excellence for professional work with, for and by children and young people. The new venue, which has been successfully delivered against the backdrop of a difficult economic climate, runs a programme of theatre, comedy, children's theatre, film and also hosts a variety of workshops and classes. Many of the schools in the Borough now have space available for community hire which together with the specialist facilities at Wildern and Thornden supports the development and sustainability of the arts and provides important local facilities in densely populated areas.

The Point also opened a substantial new development in 2009 converting the old town library into a state of the art Creation Centre providing opportunities for the development of new work, supporting local, national and international companies and creating more opportunities for people to experience, participate and be inspired by the arts in Eastleigh Borough. The Phase 3

development has helped to raise the profile of The Point and Eastleigh Borough as a leading cultural hub in the South East and the Creation Centre has also helped towards raising the profile of The Point on an international level.

Previous surveys have highlighted that there are less arts and community facilities in the south of the Borough. This is a problem that continues to be exacerbated by poor public transport links to the central and northern parts of the Borough where the major arts facilities are located. But with new community developments and refurbishments planned to existing facilities in the south some improvements are being made. Furthermore the Greyladies Chapel in Bursledon was restored in 2006 to provide a high quality contemporary art space for the local and wider communities.

There are still many community facilities throughout the Borough which remain unsuitable for arts related activities despite being hired regularly by local arts groups. Many of people that manage these facilities have expressed their desire to make improvements, but failure to secure funding is the common barrier. However it should still be noted that community facilities overall have greatly improved over the past 15 years. As with previous surveys some community hirers and arts groups have expressed their need for more specialist arts related facilities including lighting and sound equipment, dance barres and mirrors and improved seating for their audiences at community venues. With the improvements that have been made there are now more spaces available than ever before but with a growing creative community in Eastleigh Borough further suitable and affordable space remains an important need for local people. A number of visual arts groups have also expressed their need for studio and exhibition space.

The venues that were rated particularly high by their community users included The Point, Wildern School and The D.@rt Centre. Those which received the lowest user ratings included St. Francis Church Hall in Eastleigh and the Age Concern Centre in Chandlers Ford. A directory of community facilities has been included in this report.

### **Summary of findings from the Survey of 1,000 Citizens**

Before The Point opened in 1997 the people of Eastleigh had to travel outside of the Borough for professional performances and to patronise the arts. Nine years later in 2006 when asked to list arts venues in the local area 50% of people participating in the survey named The Point. In 2011 when asked the same question this has increased to 70% and when prompted 89% recognised The Point. Many of these people also demonstrated a good understanding of the activities that take place at the venue with the majority stating theatre, dance and film screenings. Overall The Point was the most recognised local arts venue followed by Vue Cinema which opened as part of a new leisure facility at the Swan Centre in 2009. A number of the participants when asked to list local arts venues also named Thornden Hall and some even named The Berry Theatre which was still under construction during the period that the interviews and postal questionnaires were taking place. This along with qualitative comments such as 'great to see a new theatre being developed in the area' and 'looking forward to The Berry Theatre opening' is representative of the excitement among local people leading up to the opening of this new cultural landmark.

The first Arts Needs Survey in 1996 showed that cinema was the most popular arts activity patronised by all sections of the population. This was perhaps reflective of the number of screens available in the region but also reflects nationwide trends in cinema going. The 2001 survey showed

that many participants attended film screenings at The Point and many also travelled to cinemas outside of the Borough. However all of the previous surveys have shown a strong demand for a dedicated cinema in Eastleigh and in 2009 the nine-screen Vue Cinema opened its doors to the public. With Vue and The Point in the north, the new Berry Theatre in Hedge End has also brought digital film screenings to central parts of the Borough.

Over the past 12 months 87% of people have attended or participated in an arts activity which is an increase of 14% since the last survey. In 2006 professional theatre was a very popular spectator activity with many people attending professional theatre and dance performances at The Point and at other venues outside of the Borough. In the past 12 months cinema screenings have been the most frequently attended arts activity followed by professional theatre. Live music events, exhibitions and amateur dramatics performances have also been popular and The Point continues to support a number of community performances each season. In 1996 dance and fitness activities such as yoga, tai chi and dancercise were the most popular participatory activity. The surveys that followed including the 2011 survey have all shown high levels of participation in dance and movement classes across all ages. The Point remains highly rated as a dance venue and currently holds approximately 25 dance classes every week. Other popular participatory activities include music, drama and art and crafts. The visual arts have always proved to be a popular art form and since the Beatrice Royal closed in 2003 there has been demand for an art gallery in the Borough. The Point and The Berry Theatre now programme small professional exhibitions, however a number of qualitative comments have been made about the need for a new gallery space. Eastleigh Music Festival is the most recognised local arts festival followed by Eastleigh Mela and the Isle of Wight Festival. The Point's Dance Festival was also well recognised.

Many of the people that participated in the 2011 survey support local arts activities as well as events in Southampton and Winchester. A small number of the participants also regularly travel to Portsmouth to the New Theatre Royal. When asked to name local arts venues those most frequently named outside of the Borough were the Mayflower Theatre, the Nuffield Theatre and Odeon Cinema in Southampton and the Theatre Royal in Winchester. Since 1996 each survey has shown that people are prepared to travel further to attend arts activities which reflects a greater commitment to the arts. In 2006 42% of the participants were prepared to travel up to 40 minutes to attend an arts event. In 2011 this was similar at 38%, with 18% prepared to travel for up to an hour and another 18% prepared to travel for more than one hour. When the participants were asked if they attend activities outside of the borough 66% said that they did. This is actually a decrease of 10% since the 2006 survey. However with a 14% increase overall in attendance and participation one could interpret this to suggest that more people are now attending arts activities within the Borough. Of those participants that attend events outside of the Borough only 4% attend weekly and 16% monthly with the majority attending outside events either every six months or annually.

The main mode of transport used to reach arts activities and events is the car and therefore good signage and parking facilities nearby to venues is important. A few comments were made about the lack of a car park for The Point even though the venue does have a number of car parks within a short walking distance. However free parking in Eastleigh town centre remains limited. In 1996 it was suggested that the public transport infrastructure needed to be improved to encourage greener travel and help improve connections between the north and south of the Borough. Bursledon and Hound were the two areas that had the lowest levels of attendance and participation in arts

activities in the past 12 months and this could be in some part due to the distance and poor transport links between these areas and the Borough's major arts facilities. Reliance on public transport is still a common barrier to attendance affecting the young and the elderly in particular. However those barriers to attendance that were mentioned most frequently across the complete sample included lack of time, the cost of tickets and knowing what's on. It is positive to note that only 13% of the participants said that the reason they did not attend arts activities was because they are not interested in the arts. This corresponds with the high levels of attendance and participation across the Borough.