Art of Regeneration:

Evaluating the impact of the arts in a disadvantaged community

Barnardo's

GIVING CHILDREN BACK THEIR FUTURE

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2005

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Published by Barnardo's
Tanners Lane
Barkingside
Ilford
Essex
IG6 1QG

Registered Charity No. 216250

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 1-904659-23-3

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Acknowledgements

We wish to thank all the children, young people, parents, community members and activists, artists and tutors who took time out to talk to us. Sincere thanks go to all AoR staff members who welcomed us and made this evaluation possible. We would also like to thank Mike Hughes, Tony Newman, Justine Blundell, Melissa Jones and Helen Mills at Barnardo's for their advice, co-operation and support.

1. Introduction

Art of Regeneration (AoR) was an arts-based community development and educational initiative funded primarily through a four-year Single Regeneration Budget 6 grant from 2000 – 2004. The programme was based on the belief that 'unlocking a community's potential can be achieved by developing and harnessing its members' creativity'. It targeted children and young people in areas of high deprivation in South East London, particularly those who were 'underachieving, disaffected and at risk'.

The vision of AoR was an ambitious one. Creativity was envisioned as a catalyst – both within and outside mainstream education – for developing young people's key skills, their aesthetic appreciation and their sense of community. It was hoped that adults, including parents/carers, artists and teachers who worked with young people would enhance their own skills through training, collaboration and networking, building an infrastructure of creative professionals whose expertise would cascade through the education system and community provisions to the benefit of subsequent cohorts. Last, but not least, the programme intended to revitalise the centre of its catchment area by regenerating the Albany Arts and Community Centre in Deptford, South East London.

Summer Arts College getz youth off da streetz!!! Plez do a next one – u made my summer!
AoR Participant

1.1 The partnership

The Art of Regeneration partnership consisted of:

- The Royal National Theatre Education and Training Department as the lead body
- London Borough of Lewisham Directorate for Education and Culture as the accountable body
- London Borough of Greenwich
- Lewisham College
- Goldsmiths College
- The Albany Arts and Community Centre.

1.2 The funding

The programme was primarily funded through a four-year Single Regeneration Budget 6 grant of approximately 2.5 million pounds. Other funding contributions came from:

- The New Opportunities Fund (NOF)
- Private sector/non-public sector (including Lloyds TSB, Trusts and Foundations)
- Public sector (including the London Arts Board, the London Development Agency and the Arts Lottery Capital).

1.3 The programme structure

The Art of Regeneration programme comprised five strands, each of which stood alone, but all of which were interrelated and intended to contribute to the achievement of the programme's overall aims.

- **In-school** (primary and secondary schools) – supported the delivery of the National Curriculum through creative workshops, performances and storytelling in local partnership schools

- **Out-of-school** (primary and secondary age groups) – focused on providing workshops, performances, training and advocacy groups for children and young people at the Albany. Opportunities to work with professional artists in a range of different art forms were offered during term time and holidays

- **People infrastructure** – worked on capacity building within the community by offering educational and training opportunities within the arts to young adults, artists, teachers and creative businesses

- **Digital arts and media** – provided specialist skills training and technical support to the community, aiming to bridge the digital divide

- **Arts animation (the arts infrastructure)** – refurbished the Albany and developed an audience base to which a new creative programme of plays, shows, concerts and events could be promoted.
  (See Appendix 1 for more details on AoR's programme activities).

The delivery of the programme was the responsibility of the AoR staff team, headed by two part-time Creative Directors, who were answerable to the AoR Board. The AoR Board comprised representatives from the various partners, as well as those from stakeholder groups, including young people, artists, teachers and parents/carers.

2. Programme origins

Since the beginning of the community arts movement in the 1960s it has been claimed that the arts are able to facilitate a wide range of social changes. Most frequently, a role for the arts has been identified in relation to strengthening such things as community identity and co-operation by increasing individual and collective insight, enjoyment, communication and participation (Williams, 1997). Art is widely regarded as being able to trigger 'the best in people', and therefore as a means of improving social cohesion and quality of life, but also as generating 'creativity' in the form of social and economic activity (Landry and Matarasso, 1996). Over the last 25 years evidence has accumulated which lends some support to such claims. In 1988 the Policy Studies Institute published *The Economic Importance of the Arts in Britain* (Myerscough, 1988), demonstrating that economic returns from artistic investments were substantial. At the turn of the century a series of governmental reports were published summarising the evidence for the arts playing a key role in neighbourhood renewal and having the potential to affect health, education, employment and crime rates (Chelliah, 1999; Policy Action Team 10, 1999; Allin, 2001; Kay and Watt, 2000). The impact of the arts was seen to occur at three levels: those of the individual, community and economy.

[Not just] do the work in schools... but actually look at this whole 'virtuous circle': whether you could actually create this feeling of working with the artists, the same artists in the same area as the young people, as their parents...
Creative Director

Such an understanding of the relationship between art and society underpinned the development of AoR. More specifically, the initiative arose from a review of the Royal National Theatre's programme of educational work, and the desire to undertake a more strategic approach to such work in order that its impact might be maximised and measured:

[Sir David Hancock] said, look I can see that you are doing a whole range of work all over the place, all over London, all over the country and I can hear that a lot of it you think is effective but there is nothing on paper, there is no proper evaluation and you are having no effect on policy or strategy and you can go on doing this forever, but I want you to be more strategic and I would like you to think about putting segments of your work down in one place and thoroughly evaluating them. Creative Director 1

A lot of it was to do with previous London-based work, but wanting to focus it on a particular area, so to really pull it down and refine it and place it in a particular area and see whether it was really effective. [[Not just] do the work in schools, and some of the work we had done out of schools, but actually look at this whole 'virtuous circle': whether you could actually create this feeling of working with the artists, the same artists in the same area as the young people, as their parents …] Also the whole thing about the Albany and the venue, that was something quite

different that we hadn't done … I suppose the other two things that came on board that we hadn't done before were the CASE trainees programme and the Head for Business because they were the extension of that 'circle' in order to create people who had their capacity built in that particular area [of London] … really developing them for a particular area and for a particular client group.
Creative Director 2

Interest and opportunity quickly converged, and planning the delivery of an ambitious programme of work, supported by £2.5 million of Single Regeneration Budget funding, overtook any more detailed exploration of the precise relationships between individual and social outcomes, artistic quality and project activities. This is not at all an unusual occurrence in the development of social interventions. Indeed it could be argued that the AoR funding bid is considerably more outcome-focused than many such documents. Certainly SRB funding requirements, while stipulating the necessity of external programme evaluation, are, internally, focused almost entirely on the monitoring of outputs (see section 2.1, *Methods and tensions*). Stakeholders from various perspectives recognised that the nature of the funding programme restricted and limited the potential effectiveness of AoR almost as much as it enabled it:

[I'm] not blaming anybody, … it's the way it goes. You write the application, you get it in, you get the money, you have got to hit the ground running and get things out as quickly as possible and it is that lack of planning at the beginning, that lack of clarity in terms of accountability that I think has led to a large number of the challenges that are faced.
Local Authority Stakeholder

Some stakeholders identified the nature of SRB funding, as much as the planning and delivery of the AoR initiative itself, as mitigating against a clear focus on long-term outcomes:

I think it fitted SRB very well, but then SRB in terms of delivering sustainable regeneration I think is [itself] dubious because it works well in terms of the output focus, in terms of the programme strands, that each of those areas are easy to manage, easy to monitor, easy to explain in terms of the SRB context, but were limited by the fundamental issue of its short-term nature. It's not sustainable, but it works as an SRB. Does it work to deliver what it should do? I'm not sure if it does, no.

It aspires to [long-term community regeneration] but I don't think in this case … You have got an SRB that is providing roughly £700,000 worth of revenue support on an annual basis. That is as much as we give to the entire rest of the voluntary sector arts in Lewisham. We are doing it effectively for three years of work and then it is going away again. That is not sensible and that does not make sense.
Local Authority Stakeholder

The National Theatre's educational work prior to AoR was informed by a widely shared belief that creative work – and drama in particular – could provide disadvantaged young people with some of the academic and personal skills which their families, schools and networks did not provide:

We always thought that it did support basic skills. If a kid was very fragile in terms of his or her reading, if they had to cope with a script, we knew that by the end of that period, they would feel a lot more confident about reading, about speaking and listening, about working in teams, about doing their own research, about how to work in a very mixed ability group with kids … but other things as well in terms of being able to be fit for life.
Creative Director 1

This workshop has been excellent to come to and taught me to be confident about myself.
Summer Arts College Participant

However, AoR was intended to be much more than a concentrated, localised dose of the NTs previous educational work. Although an in-school programme in Lewisham and Greenwich (evaluated separately by researchers from the Institute of Education) formed one strand of AoR's work, and despite the fact that it was originally assumed that this would provide the broad base of young people upon which the community superstructure would be built, the relationship between work in the schools and the rest of the programme proved to be the weakest link in AoR's hypothesised progression route (see section 6.4, *Gateways and pathways into the arts*):

I mean the theory was, if you were able to work across all sectors, so from primary into secondary, … and then 16-24 year olds and their parents and their siblings, in theory you should be able to have a progression route. If you could create enough ways for say an 8 year old to be working with the project both in school and out of school, and then being able to do things in holidays, and perhaps with his or her older brother, then parents could get involved and then parents could bring children to see things, and then older brothers and sisters could do training …

Then [also] there would be a wider range of creative activities than we can do [as NT], so a key area was digital stuff because we realised … [it] is absolutely fundamental to young people these days. So developing digital work, developing a wider range of … not just the performing arts, not just live art, whether it is music, dance, drama, but a much wider range. Could you just begin to open up those progression routes? And then did it need a sort of centre where a lot of this could happen and people could come and interact and use resources? When we started at the beginning of Art of Regeneration we had no concept of that. Then it gradually became apparent that we couldn't run it all from the National Theatre. Then it became well why don't we try and regenerate the Albany? So that was our very idealistic [vision of] that progression: if you can put all those jigsaw bits together, all those building blocks, and our term was, it should be ultimately at the end of six

years, some sort of 'virtuous circle'. So any one family could use all different aspects of the programme, and if they did, if a lot of families did, then it would have an effect on the whole community.
Creative Director 1

... it is a variety of programmes of work...I think I've always been impressed with a large amount of the out of school work, particularly the Summer Arts College, I think [it] is an excellent model, works extremely well...
Partner-Stakeholder

The vision was for at least six years, but SRB funding was for four, a factor that has impacted profoundly on AoR's ability to focus on outcomes rather than immediate outputs. Again this is a problem common to many community development initiatives. It is rare for funders to think, or fund, beyond a three-year commitment, while community workers and residents are aware that the changes they have in mind are more likely to take a decade. In many communities with a long history of disadvantage and failed initiatives, much preliminary work is necessary to develop participation and self-confidence. The advantage of the Theory of Change evaluation model adopted for AoR is that it makes possible the appraisal of progress made at any point in the process. By having clear interim outcomes that relate to stages on the journey towards ultimate goals and by evaluating achievement against these outcomes, it can provide assurance that the intervention is 'on course'.

However, the lack of detailed theorisation of the precise relationship between activities and intended outcomes at the outset, was acknowledged by the programme's directors and identified as a deficit by other stakeholders:

I think if I am fair and honest, it took me quite some time to unpick what all of it actually meant, because it is not a programme of work, it is a number of different strands of work. They don't necessarily all connect and I think when I got my head around it, it isn't a programme, it is a variety of programmes of work. … I think I've always been impressed with a large amount of the out-of-school work, particularly the Summer Arts College, I think [it] is an excellent model, works extremely well. … I found it more difficult to get a handle on what is happening in the schools and how much of that is responding to the area, and how much of that is effectively buying in the National Theatre.
Partner-stakeholder

2.1 Methods and tensions

The more detailed articulation of the intended outcomes of AoR became one of the key tasks of the programme evaluators during the first year of funding. Ideally evaluators would work with programme designers, and a broad range of stakeholders, to agree an outcomes framework prior to the development of a suitable programme of work intended to achieve the identified outcomes. As is often the case in the real world, this was not entirely possible. (One common

difficulty is that the staff delivering a programme are key stakeholders who must fully own the intended outcomes if there is to be any chance of achieving them, but staff are only recruited once funding is in place.) However, evaluation was not an afterthought for the architects of AoR. As we have described above, the desire to investigate the effectiveness of the NT's educational work was a major springboard for the development of AoR. In addition, a review of the evidence base for positive social outcomes being achieved as a result of arts-based initiatives in local communities was commissioned prior to the commencement of the programme. This review, undertaken by Barnardo's research staff (Newman et al, 2003), was positive. It concluded that while most extant evaluations shared the methodological weaknesses common to evaluations of community-based interventions, and relied heavily on self-report, indications of positive change were present, and often substantial, across the majority of studies reviewed and in relation to personal, community and economic factors. AoR was not entering entirely uncharted territory; there were lessons to be learned from previous initiatives – most of which were far smaller in scale than AoR – which could increase the likely impact of the programme.

The key lessons for the development of AoR identified in the review were as follows:

- Successful programmes address the stated needs and aspirations of those involved
- Aims and motivations must be clear and transparent
- Effective partnerships based on shared objectives are crucial to sustainability
- Factors clearly associated with effectiveness included community consultation, involvement and ownership
- More support is needed to gain and retain young people's involvement in comparison to that needed with adults
- Without carefully targeting provision, disproportionate levels of involvement may be enjoyed by the least disadvantaged
- Programmes must include a capacity building strategy to ensure sustainability once a particular funding scheme is over
- Specific strategies need to be developed in order to ensure that diversity and inclusiveness are valued
- Successful programmes are often those embedded in the existing local heritage and culture
- Commitment to excellence of process and product is crucial to maximising impact.

To what extent and in what ways AoR was able to take these 'lessons from the literature' on board will be discussed in the relevant sections of this report.

There were also messages for the design and conduct of the evaluation, some of which were coterminous with the lessons for the programme itself:

- External evaluation, and the process that implies, should be integral to the programme
- Criteria against which success is judged should be clear, and defined as far as possible by the potential beneficiaries
- Evaluation methods need to reflect the creative values of the arts
- Involving artists and beneficiaries – particularly young people – in the conduct of evaluations is valuable
- Long-term impacts and benefits should be measured
- Evaluators should strike a balance between paying attention to evidence of social and economic outcomes, while not neglecting the potential enrichment of the quality of life of those enabled to participate in the arts.

In the course of our research review we identified a central challenge of the evaluation as being how we would address the dissonance between 'social' and 'artistic' goals (art in the service of community regeneration as opposed to art for art's sake). Our theoretical response to this dissonance, which is often mirrored in the tension between empirical models of evaluation and creative processes, was as follows:

Rather than attempt to force arts evaluations into conventional methodological frameworks, the challenge is to develop methods of evaluation that both respect and acknowledge the unique quality of artistic endeavour, while ensuring that the returns from participation in arts based projects can be subject to a robust but fair appraisal. (Newman et al, 2003)

This report attempts to practice what, as evaluators of AoR, we have frequently preached: that evaluation is merely a formal extension of reflexive practice. In the course of this report we therefore address how far we have, as evaluators, met the methodological challenges of arts evaluation as distilled from our initial research review.

2.2 An evaluation model

The evaluation design was based on the Theory of Change model (Connell and Kubisch, 1997) which Barnardo's had previously applied to the evaluation of its Anti-Poverty Strategy (Traynor et al, 1998). The Theory of Change model is

concerned with the relationship between practices and intended outcomes. The approach has been described as 'a systematic and cumulative study of the links between activities and outcomes' (Connell and Kubisch, 1997: 21).

The Theory of Change model begins with defining the ultimate intended outcomes of a programme. Ideally this should involve members of staff, service users, the local community and other stakeholders working with an evaluator. Working backwards from this point, short- and medium-term outcomes should be defined and strategies developed to achieve these. Evidence is collected that corresponds to the outcomes at each stage of the programme and then analysed to assess progress made.

Importantly, a theory of change specifies 'how' activities are expected to lead to interim and longer-term outcomes, and identifies the contextual conditions that may affect them. This helps to strengthen the case for attributing subsequent change in these outcomes to the programme's activities. In other words, the particular theory of change is a 'testable hypothesis'.

Like most 'real world' initiatives AoR did not conform to the ideal type. Its original aims and the specification of some fairly long-term outcomes were written by the authors of the SRB 6 funding application.

Overall aims:

- To enhance the employment prospects, education and skills of local people
- To address social exclusion and entrance opportunities for the disadvantaged
- To promote sustainable regeneration.

Some intended outcomes:

- Disadvantaged young people will have better key skills (ie literacy, communication, problem solving and teamwork)
- Disadvantaged young people will have increased aesthetic appreciation and sense of community
- Individual and community self-esteem will be enhanced
- A network of creative professionals will be in a position to cascade through the education system
- The Albany will become a locally 'owned' and lead centre providing opportunities for creative and social activity and community learning.

One of the first things that evaluators are often required to do when they join the programme team of a complex community initiative is to help specify the theory underlying the intervention and, thereby, 'unpack' the intervention itself. It is not that such interventions are ever 'theory-less', rather the theory is implicit and needs to be brought to the surface, articulated and aligned. It is a commonly identified difficulty that designs are underspecified at the outset (Kubisch, Weiss, Schorr and Connell, 1995). With this in mind the tasks of the evaluation team were specified as follows:

- To work with stakeholders in the definition of short-term, medium-term and long-term outcomes related to regeneration
- To evaluate the performance of the programme in relation to these targets
- To negotiate revision of the outcomes during the programme, in the light of interim findings
- To disseminate the findings of the study.

It was clear that some of the outcomes written into the funding bid lacked specificity and measurability and were not time-sensitive. We needed to get people to think in terms of SMART outcomes[1] and to be realistic about what stage in the journey towards their ultimate goals was likely to have been reached at the end of the four-year SRB funded programme.

The definition of outcomes sounds straightforward, but can be an enormously complex, highly political task which often uncovers not one but multiple, sometimes competing, theories of change. In the case of a complex, multi-stranded programme like AoR, the initial challenge for the primary researcher was to untangle the strands and work with the different stakeholders involved with them to bring to the surface and articulate the implicit theories underpinning their delivery. The additional challenge was to undertake this task in the context of an arts-based programme in which many stakeholders were puzzled by, or resistant to, the language and process of evaluation. Some staff were uneasy at being asked to think in terms of social outcomes and preferred to evaluate their own work purely in terms of its artistic merit. Many found it difficult to articulate the benefits for young people of involvement in the creative arts despite their passionate commitment to achieving this.

A primary researcher was based full-time at the Albany for the first year of the programme, and worked alongside staff developing and delivering the programme. During this period 90 per cent of AoR output consisted of in-school and out-of-school workshops (including Summer Arts Colleges) and the focus of the evaluation mirrored this. These workshops for young people were the 'gateways' to the 'progression route' of AoR's theory of change. The

[1] SMART is the acronym of Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-based outcomes.

researcher worked with staff and workshop leaders using a range of methods to enable the articulation of the early outcomes they hoped would be achieved by the workshop programme.

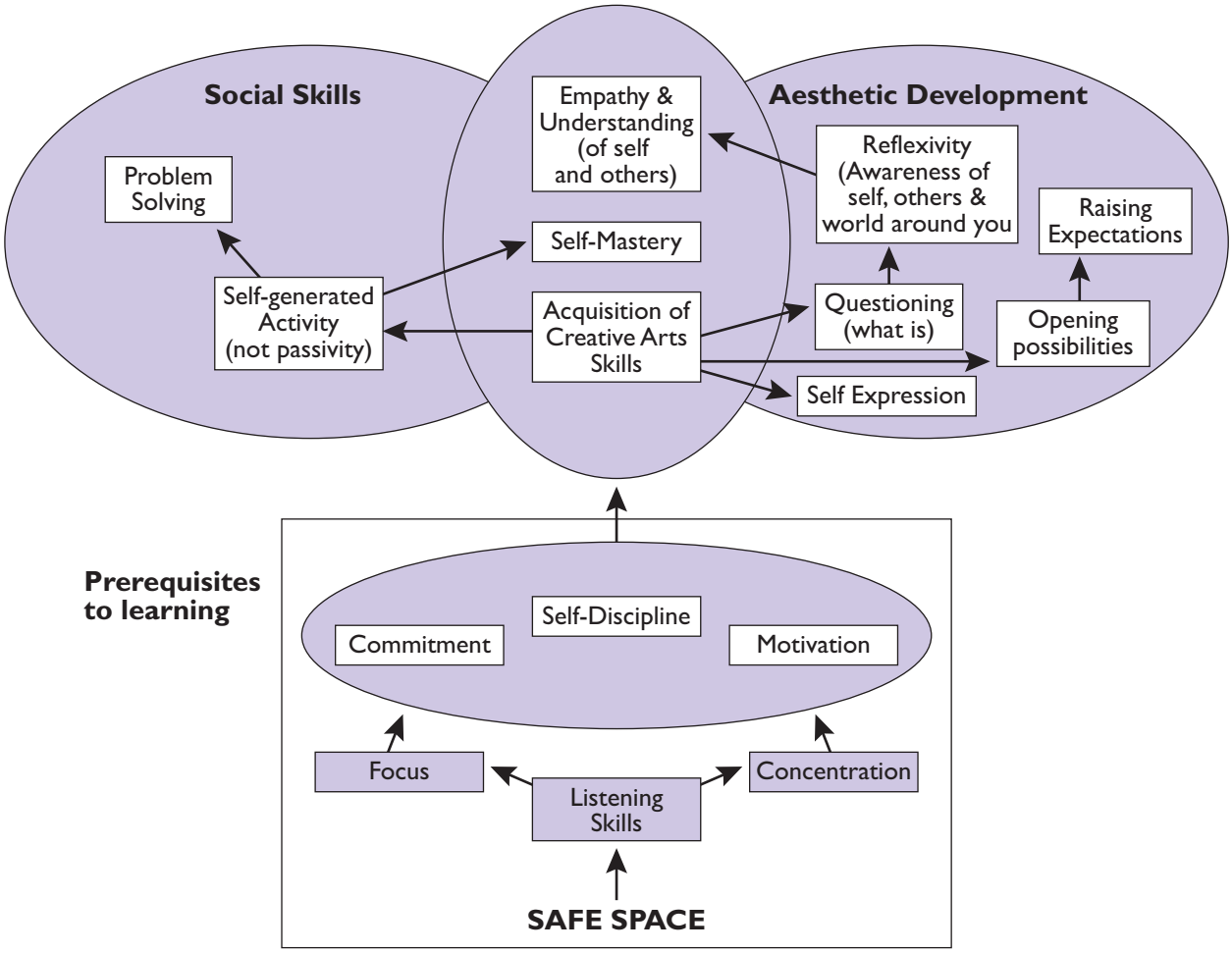
These early outcomes were that young people would have enhanced:

- communication and interpersonal skills
- confidence and self-esteem
- ability to work supportively and co-operatively with peers
- commitment
- motivation
- listening skills
- focus and concentration
- self discipline
- respect for/empathy with others
- problem-solving skills
- participation and initiation
- self-expression.

These were considered to be the early outcomes that would enable some young people to pursue both creative and participatory pathways over the next five years. Extensive participant observation and group and individual interviews were undertaken with workshop participants, and it was found that the most successful workshops enabled considerable progress in relation to the first three of these outcomes. The other outcomes did not emerge as significant themes in the evaluation data. This implies that they were not amongst the 'real', working objectives of workshops. Some of them might represent 'higher level' outcomes which are only likely to be reached through more intensive, long-term training.

Figure 2.1 represents the 'working theory of change', showing how AoR staff understood the progression route they hoped to enable. The theory, which was developed through interviews, informal conversations and participant observation at staff meetings and in workshops, was that participation in creative workshops can, through enabling the acquisition of particular social and creative skills, develop individuals as potential artistic entrepreneurs and creative community participants and leaders.

Figure 2.1



A major problem of this theory of change for the AoR programme was its very long-term nature. In its first year of operation a large number of young people were achieving the first few outcomes – those that represent some of the prerequisites for learning. However, most of the intermediate outcomes for some of the individual teenagers undertaking introductory level workshops were unlikely to be achieved in three years,[2] and would therefore occur beyond the SRB funded programme. Even if the hypothesised progression route for individuals occurred, evidence of any consequent outcomes for the community was unlikely to be available for a further couple of years.

However, there were narrower gateways into AoR for young adults and adults, including those with already established interests in the arts, and in relation to which the timescales for achievement of AoR outcomes were shorter.

[2] Although funding was for four years, it was only possible to deliver services for three years.

The gateways for young people:

Creative workshops
(In- and out-of-school and
Summer Arts College)

▼

Advanced workshops/youth theatre
Young People's Forum
Digital Arts training
Mentoring (by Art of Regeneration
associate artists)
CASE Arts administration training
Head for Business[3]

The gateways for adults in the community:

Audience @ the Albany
Children's involvement in creative workshops
Family Sundays

▼

Albany membership
Parents' Forum

The gateways for artists:

Performance @ the Albany
Digital Arts
Head for Business
Associate Artists

▼

Artists' network
Mentoring
Albany membership
MA in Cross-Sectoral and Community Arts

[3] For a description of the CASE and Head for Business programmes, see Appendix 1.

The wisdom of AoR's plan to maintain such a wide gateway for young people, through the provision of large programmes of school- and community-based workshops over a three-year period, was questioned in the interim evaluation report. At that point there was little evidence of any progression route between in-school and community-based activities, and the next steps to lead young people from the consumption of introductory classes to higher level skills and active participation and ownership were clearly underdeveloped. The report therefore suggested that plans for the final year of the programme needed a clear focus on core outcomes and the activities which might best promote these.

Eighteen months into the programme the Steering Group approved a paper summarising the overall AoR theory of change, and confirming the outcomes against which the programme's success should ultimately be evaluated. This may seem rather late in the day, but it should be remembered that producing a plausible, doable and testable theory of change is a major accomplishment for any complex community initiative, especially given the many other demands placed on stakeholders as the initiative is getting underway.

2.3 Art of Regeneration's Theory of Change

Long-term outcomes

- To enhance the employment prospects, education and skills of local people
- To decrease social exclusion and increase entrance opportunities for disadvantaged people to the arts
- To promote sustainable regeneration.

Penultimate outcomes

- Community-run creative facilities and programmes
- Self-sustaining creative businesses
- Pathways of creative participation leading to education and employment for local people – including the most disadvantaged groups.

Intermediate outcomes

- Participation of local people in developing facilities and programmes
- Local use of editing and broadcasting facilities
- Completion of training in arts administration and editing and broadcasting skills and employment arising from these

- Audiences representative of the local community – including the most disadvantaged people
- Young people's increasing progression from involvement in schools and Summer Arts College to ongoing classes and performance
- Young people's development of 'higher level' creative skills.

Early outcomes

- Increase in young people's access, confidence and basic creative skills
- Involvement of local people in AoR forums
- Recruitment to arts administration training.

Initial activities

- Establishment of a creative workshops programme (in and out-of-school)
- Establishment of arts administration training
- Establishment of business start-up
- Refurbishment of the Albany
- Development of programming at the Albany.

3. The community context

Art of Regeneration specifically targeted eleven wards in North Lewisham and West Greenwich, four of which fall within the ten per cent most deprived wards in the UK.

Art of Regeneration specifically targeted eleven wards in North Lewisham and West Greenwich, four of which fall within the ten per cent most deprived wards in the UK.

3.1 Lewisham

The London Borough of Lewisham is a residential area on the edge of the Thames Gateway and covers 14 square miles. The current population in Lewisham is approximately 250,000 (2001 Census), with over 200 different languages spoken. Roughly 30 per cent of this population is made up of black and minority ethnic (BME) groups. The Borough's economy is one of the smallest in London and is significantly driven by the public sector, which is the largest employer (Lewisham, 2002).

Approximately 66 per cent of the Borough's population are of working age. Despite strong economic growth in London, the Borough's overall unemployment rate has remained high at 10 per cent, being about 40 per cent greater than the rate for Greater London and twice the rate for Great Britain (National Statistics nomis, 2005a). The 2004 *Indices of Deprivation* listed Lewisham as the seventh highest of all Greater London local authority areas in the unemployment rankings (Department for Trade and the Regions 2004). In 2003/04, 46 per cent of pupils achieved five or more GCSE grades A*- C compared to 53.7 per cent in England as a whole (National Statistics, [2005a]).

Of all London boroughs, Lewisham is one of the least wealthy after comparing household income levels (National Statistics nomis, 2003). Just over half of all children living in Inner London are living below the poverty line (Department for Work and Pensions, 2005) and four electoral wards in Lewisham (two of which were targeted by AoR) are in the worst 10 per cent of wards nationally in this domain according to the *2000 Indices of Deprivation*. Lewisham also has one of the highest levels of teenage pregnancy in England.

Lewisham's *Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy 2002-2005* stated that, 'a third of the population of Deptford and New Cross is under 19', that young people 'constitute 80% of victims of robbery' and that 'young people lack safe places to go'. It also mentioned that Evelyn – one of the wards targeted by AoR – 'ranks in the worst 2% of wards against education performances nationally (Lewisham Local Strategic Partnership, [2002]).

3.2 Greenwich

Greenwich has a population of over 223,000 (National Statistics, [2005b]). According to the *Index of Local Deprivation 2004* Greenwich was ranked as the 41st in terms of overall deprivation in England. Like many boroughs in London, Greenwich experiences a significant contrast within its population in terms of household income, with three wards falling into the 30% wealthiest and nine into the 10% of poorest wards, according to the *Index of Local Deprivation 2000*.

- Approximately 36 per cent of households are single person households and 10 per cent are single-parent households (National Statistics, [2005b])
- Greenwich has a very high proportion of households with young and large families (Greenwich Partnership, n.d.)
- Nearly 15 per cent of the population is of school age (National Statistics, [2005b])
- The Borough has a male unemployment rate of 9.7 per cent compared to a London average of 7.3 per cent (National Statistics nomis, 2005b)
- Nine of the 36 wards in the Borough were recognised as among the most deprived wards in England in the *Index of Local Deprivation 2000*.

3.3 The Albany

The regeneration of the Albany Arts and Community Centre was a core element of the AoR programme. The Albany itself has a long history as a focal point of community activity[4]. In 1894 the Deptford Fund, which went on to establish the Albany Institute, was launched. The Duchess of Albany became president of the fund until her death and it is through her that the Albany got its name.

In 1899 the Albany was opened on Creek Road, and by the 1920s it was modernised and saw the opening of a boys' club, clubs for mothers, grannies and granddads, mixed singing classes, an orchestra and a penny bank. In 1928 the Albany launched a poor man's legal service, which offered advice to those earning less than £2 per week. A physical training centre was opened to try to keep unemployed men from becoming unfit and demoralised.

The Deptford Fund's objectives at the time were to raise and improve, the poor part of the population of Deptford, religiously, intellectually, morally and socially. AoR embraced a secular 21st Century versions of these objectives, continuing a long humanist tradition that assumed that 'the arts of all kinds elevated the mind and spirits, and produced more refined people and sensibilities' (Landry et al, 1995).

[4] For an in-depth history of the Albany see John Turner (2003).

If AoR has done one thing, it is [to] change the building, it is buzzing now, the place is warm and welcoming.
Community Worker

In the 1960s the Albany was re-born as a community development and action centre. This new direction included a successful application for one of the first grants offered to set up community arts events and a change of focus towards the arts saw The Combination appointed as resident theatre and arts development company. In 1969, the Albany's brief was to offer an environment in which Deptford residents could 'realise their full potential abilities and where they could seek advice and support' (Steele, 1993: 201).

By the late 1970s Deptford had a large population of black and minority ethnic groups living in the area. During this period the Albany held 15 'Rock Against Racism' gigs, a three-day 'All Together Now' festival, a benefit to scrap the 'suss' laws and a highly successful anti-racist show called 'Restless Natives'. On 14 July 1978 the Albany was gutted by fire and while Greenwich police insisted that the fire was not arson, there is some evidence to suggest that the fire was started by a fascist organisation.

The new building in Douglas Way, where the Albany still stands, opened in 1981 and was a joint venture between the Albany, Lewisham Council and the Greater London Council (GLC). The role of the new building was to 'combine the social, recreational and welfare roles' and housed a welfare rights unit, basic bookkeeping classes and writers' workshops for black women. The Combination left the Albany in 1990 and the Albany was re-launched in 1993 after a three-year closure:

In the late 1980s and 1990s the Albany was a liability and an embarrassment. With massive and rising debts, a terrible burglary record and internal squabbles which dragged its atmosphere and its reputation into the dust, the Albany came very close to total breakdown. It was held from complete isolation by a small group of people who kept the faith that such an expensive and central resource must somehow be saved. Now a City Challenge 'flagship', removed from the control of the Combination Theatre and with a new management committee and staff, the Albany has a chance to try again.
(Steele 1993: 204)

By the late 1990s it was felt that the Albany once again needed direction and that the local community should be actively involved in providing this. In 1999 a new General Manager was appointed and a Steering Group established. The next step was to encourage community involvement in the governance of the building and a local activist managed to persuade 14 people to stand for election on to the Albany Council of Management.

3.4 Regeneration History

Once an area has been identified as 'deprived', a variety of 'regenerating' government initiatives may be set up to address this. There are, and have been, a number of regeneration agencies working in the area, including four Sure Start

schemes, a Single Regeneration Budget 5 and New Deals for Communities. Huge amounts of public money are being channelled into the 'regeneration' of Deptford, and these form probably the largest concentration of public money in any UK inner city area.

Deptford's history of regeneration initiatives shows that over the last decade there have been more than 16 regeneration agencies spending up to £250 million, and yet statistics indicate that the community had not 'regenerated'. However, a different community perspective has been provided by Matthew Scott at Voluntary Action Lewisham. He suggested that while statistics indicated that expensive regeneration strategies had 'not worked', it was possible that the £250m may have served to ensure that the local community had at least not got any worse. This is also echoed in Lewisham's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy 2002-2005:

Deptford and New Cross have experienced 15 years of public sector regeneration schemes, spending some £220m. These have made a positive contribution to the physical fabric of the area and attracted additional investment in business and housing. But the life prospects of most local people remain limited and the area remains in the 'league tables' of deprivation.

The Art of Regeneration SRB bid was composed during a very short time span, which severely limited the time and resources for pre-consultation with the community. In 1998 Magpie, a local group, together with Gap research and Deptford Community Forum, consulted with the local community to find out what they wanted from new regeneration programmes in the area and developed the following recommendations:

- Time and investment is needed to ensure that the community sector is able to participate in regeneration, **before** each agency arrives
- Statutory partners should provide grants to develop and support networks **before** the agencies arrive
- Urban regeneration should not be driven by deadline, and the pre-bid process needs to be firmly based in the community, however long it takes.

Magpie heeded its own advice and worked for almost two years establishing community priorities (centred around childcare, traffic and environmental concerns) before making a successful SRB bid entitled *Get Set for Citizenship* in the same round as AoR was funded.

What people told us was that they didn't want us to go off and write a bid, they wanted to be involved in writing the bid. So Set for Citizenship carried out that investigative side of things, to find out what local people want to change and then to try and address that … all projects were what local people had told us that they wanted. Quite ironically AoR were given funding at the same time. They were doing

exactly the opposite of what the community had recommended to us, so having worked for 18 months about pre-bid consultation, they [AoR] were parachuted in having done no consultation with the community … and after all we are the ones who will still be here when they leave again.
Magpie's General Manager

Uncertainties about the National Theatre's role within the AoR programme and its intentions for the Albany (was the Albany, for example, to become an NT satellite theatre?), may also account for some of the initial hostility towards the AoR programme. The importance of clear aims and intentions by partner organisations was one of the key lessons identified in the literature review. It pointed out that successful regeneration programmes were more likely to be clear and transparent about what they wanted to achieve and why. As a result of the antagonism towards the 'outsiders', expressed both by the local community and by the Albany, the National Theatre eventually chose a much less visible role within the partnership than it might otherwise have done.

However, not all within the community shared this perspective. Another long-standing community worker pointed out that resentment and anger towards people 'parachuting in' to deprived communities were inevitable. In Deptford there have been local community groups fighting 'on the front line' for more that 20 years and to believe that there would be no hostility directed at those who had not been a part of that would be naïve.

It's easy to criticise … I think a lot of people didn't realise that the [Albany] building may not have been open if it had not been for AoR getting its bid. … if the Art of Regeneration hadn't come along you'd probably have been looking at the Albany being bulldozed or totally commercialised.
Community Activist

It is nevertheless within this complex community context that AoR began pursuing its vision and work to achieve community regeneration.

Summary of findings

- Local attitudes towards Art of Regeneration were affected by the Albany's long history in Deptford.
- Art of Regeneration inherited an ambivalent relationship between parts of the local community and the Albany.
- A number of community activists believed Art of Regeneration was insufficiently rooted in the locality, and that the National Theatre was 'parachuting cultural troops into the Deptford desert'.

4. The regeneration of the Albany

Art of Regeneration aimed to regenerate the Albany physically and to transform this 'neglected community facility into a focal point for learning, creativity and social activity' (SRB bid).

4.1 The refurbishment of the Albany

There is little doubt that the physical refurbishment of the Albany has been successful. The building has been restored to its original 1980 condition and basic facilities such as the toilets are now functioning again. The Albany, which in 2000 was unable to obtain a licence for public performances because of its run-down facilities, now houses a vibrant theatre and studio space suitable for professional and community events, performances, live concerts and film projections. While there are still concerns about funding for the second phase of the refurbishment to replace the central heating boilers and carry out other essential repairs, the Albany has once again become a functioning community resource.

Summary of findings

- The physical refurbishment of the Albany has been highly successful, transforming the building into a vibrant space suitable for professional and community events. The Albany now houses excellent facilities and resources that enable it to develop its central position as a community arts centre.
- Undertaking the physical transformation of the building, while simultaneously delivering the first 12 months of a multi-faced community arts initiative was ambitious and caused some difficulties for staff and participants.
- The Albany and its facilities are well used on a daily basis by a range of local people, including local disability and arts organisations.

4.2 Capacity building

The regeneration of the Albany was not simply about refurbishing the building itself, but also about the Albany's place within the community. Following the success of the SRB 6 bid, the AoR's staff team was in place by spring 2001 and –

as they reported – 'hit the ground running'. Given the time constraints of the SRB funding there was a real pressure on the AoR team to begin – and to continue – to deliver creative workshops, even when the builders were literally taking the Albany apart.

Within six months of the AoR team arriving, the Albany was in difficulties, both in terms of its finance and management. The General Manager of the Albany was struggling to keep the organisation afloat. To those working in the building it appeared that the café was dysfunctional, the phones were not working or not answered, the lavatories were regularly blocked and that there was a chronic confusion about who was responsible for what. The Albany itself was in the process of transferring governance from a board of trustees to a new Council of Management, and while the trustees were still in place and technically governing the Albany, there was also a Council of Management elected and representing the local community. Without a clear timetable for the transfer there appeared to be a real uncertainty about who was running the Albany.

By the summer of 2002 the situation had reached crisis point. The Borough of Lewisham had hired a consultant to work with the Council of Management to develop a business plan. A month later the General Manager went off on long-term sick leave and was never to return to the Albany. While it was clear that the capital refurbishment was having major benefits for the building, the huge influx of resources without additional capacity building and extra staff was leaving the Albany unable to deliver. With the departure of the General Manager it became clear just how serious the situation was. The Albany lacked a clear management structure, which meant that most staff had no line managers organising their work. The box office staff, for example, mostly casuals, organised their own rotas and consequently only they knew who was supposed be on duty. The Albany was in a poor position to submit any major funding bids and with no money coming in, a limited management structure and a board unable to specify roles and responsibilities, it is no surprise that staff morale was low.

The AoR team, who were trying to programme the theatre and run creative workshops for children and young people, experienced Albany staff as unwilling or unable to do the jobs that the programme required of the Albany. For example, to run a theatre one must have staff working in the evenings, but Albany staff did not want to work evenings and correctly pointed out that it was not in their job descriptions. Another contentious issue was the new computer software aiding the box office and room booking. Although Albany staff did receive basic training, this was initially insufficient to operate the box office smoothly. The AoR team found this frustrating as they felt they were losing money, time and face as a result. Seen from the Albany's perspective, staff had

been employed to work in a community centre, as community centre workers, and were worried about the Albany's new identity as an arts centre and its links to the National Theatre. The only reason many of them stayed was due to their incredible commitment to the Albany. However, this growing tension between the two organisations did nothing to improve the overall situation.

I love the venue and the local vibe.
Audience Member

In Autumn 2002 the tertiary coordinator in the AoR team was temporarily employed as the General Manager of the Albany, supported by another external consultant. While this was a temporary measure it was an acceptable solution for all partners, and in many ways initiated the slow journey towards recovery. Some pressure was placed on the Albany's Council of Management to rethink its community-focused structure.

[The Albany's] management was incredibly democratic, which made it accountable in some ways but didn't make it a particularly robust governance vehicle, because the people who were elected on to it didn't necessarily have all the skills that are needed to run a very complex voluntary sector organisation.
Local Authority Stakeholder

Following a skills audit of the Council of Management, an external consultant began seeking new board members and found it surprisingly easy to attract highly skilled and motivated individuals with a passion for the arts and an interest in the Albany to join the board. Additional money was also located by AoR to increase the salary of the General Manager, allowing it to employ someone with the seniority and experience needed. The new chief executive of the Albany came on board in May 2003, while a front of house manager was employed during the summer of 2003. These positions gave the Albany extra capacity to raise funds for future development and to deal with internal management issues. As a result of these changes, the Albany was in a better position to manage the building, which again meant that the café began making a profit and that rooms were hired out on a regular basis.

Although it was known that the SRB funding would run out in March 2004, AoR was to the very end optimistic about finding funding to continue, and hence never developed an exit strategy. This 'we will continue as we are' strategy meant that the Albany's newly-agreed business plan was developed on the basis that the revenue that AoR was generating for the Albany would continue. It was not until Christmas 2003 that it became widely recognised that AoR would be unable to secure any funds as substantial as the SRB funding in order to continue in its present form. In effect this left the Albany with a very short timeframe to replace AoR funds, as well as to fund future developments.

It is unclear to what extent these problems could have been predicted earlier and hence prevented. On one hand, the Borough of Lewisham recognised that the Albany was failing financially and in its mission when it suggested that the Albany was included in the AoR partnership. The Albany, as the weak partner within the AoR partnership, was unable to negotiate additional resources for capacity building during the pre-bid stage. On the other hand, Lewisham Borough representatives did not always listen to AoR's concerns regarding the Albany's organisational ability to deliver and were hence slow to recognise and respond to the critical situation that the Albany was in.

Lessons from the literature review highlighted that programmes must include a capacity-building strategy to ensure sustainability once a particular funding scheme is over. While capacity building within the Albany was mentioned in the SRB bid, it failed to attach a budget line to this. As an external consultant pointed out, the General Manager of the Albany was initially earning approximately £23,000 per annum – a wage no experienced person capable of running a complex voluntary organisation like the Albany would accept. The consultant furthermore suggested that had an extra £100,000 over three years been including in the original SRB budget for capacity building and to create extra posts on the ground, this might have prevented some of the problems that potentially could have jeopardised the AoR programme delivery.

Summary of findings

- A history of disadvantage and failed regeneration initiatives in the area meant that much preliminary work had to be undertaken by Art of Regeneration to gain acceptance within the community.
- The successful refurbishment of the Albany encouraged positive associations with Art of Regeneration, and some local residents and activists who in 2001 were highly critical of AoR expressed far more positive views in 2004.
- The relationship between Art of Regeneration and the Albany has been problematic and at times the two organisations competed rather than co-operated.
- Respective responsibilities of AoR and the Albany were not clearly delineated at the outset of the partnership.
- Other AoR partners overestimated the structural, organisational and financial ability of the Albany to 'host' such a complex regeneration programme. The near organisational collapse of the Albany in 2002 could have jeopardised AoR's programme delivery and hence its ability to deliver some of its longer-term outcomes.

- Art of Regeneration never developed an exit strategy. Maintaining a 'we will continue as we are' position affected the Albany's ability to replace AoR revenue.
- Despite the capital investment and improved facilities, the Albany continued to be financially vulnerable directly after the SRB funding period came to an end. However, it significantly increased its annual turnover in 2004-2005.
- Some projects within the AoR programme, such as Summer Arts College, Head for Business and the Youth Theatre are still ongoing, as new sources of funding have been generated.

4.3 Programming at the Albany

One of the key issues in terms of programming for the Albany Theatre was who to cater for – the local community, an external audience or both. The majority of community members argued that the Albany should cater mainly for them:

You have your baseline audience and your baseline audience are your regulars that are going to come time and time again to lots of different things that you are putting on … and if you don't capture that local audience so that they feel there is something in the programme for them, then it doesn't really work because most people who perhaps go to the theatre go to the West End and only if there is something particular on in this little hub in Deptford will they travel to it. So basically, you want to build a programme for this community … and everybody else is kind of the cherry on the cake.
Professional Community Member

People are scared to walk out of Deptford station. You are never going to have people coming here, because of the streetlights, the crime. The Laban [Dance Centre] is having that problem now … people are telling them 'I would love to see that but I am not walking down Creekside at night' … The Albany relies on its appeal to the local community.
Professional Community Member

Others highlighted that the Albany needed a varied audience, of locals and non-locals, for the theatre to be financially viable.

So has AoR with its programming for the Albany managed to combine the two and attract a varied audience?

Case study: Hubble Bubble

Hubble Bubble was a Middle Eastern club night that regularly took place in other London clubs. While new to the Albany, Hubble Bubble quickly built up a reputation as an entertaining, successful and well-attended club night, with attractions such as live bands, belly dancing, trapeze artists and Turkish food. Given that Hubble Bubble was an established club night in other London venues, it managed to attract a wide range of people from all over England and London to the Albany. Nevertheless, as approximately one in four people lived within close vicinity of the Albany, Hubble Bubble also appealed to local people.

I love the venue and the local vibe (Hubble Bubble Audience Member)

The Albany was generally described by the Hubble Bubble audience as a welcoming place that caters for everyone and consequently, the majority of people said that they would like to come again.

Case study: Family Sundays

Family Sundays was a series of high quality theatre events offered to children of different ages and their families at the Albany. Professional children's theatre companies were engaged to perform plays mainly based on new and traditional English stories, such as 'Jack and the Beanstalk'.

Family Sundays were seen as a 'day out' by families interviewed for the evaluation. With the Albany café open, many families would arrive early to have a coffee before the performance. Children would furthermore play with the toys provided in the café area or in the garden, while adults would chat and read the Sunday newspapers. Parents highlighted that Family Sundays were very good value for money, an enjoyable experience and something for them to do together as a family.

Audience data from the Albany box office (2004-2005), suggests that the largest proportion of users live in Lewisham (31 per cent) and the neighbouring borough of Lambeth (12 per cent). However, while Albany audiences derived mainly from South East London, a survey of Hubble Bubble highlighted that a significant number of people travelled from other parts of London (32 per cent) and England (20 per cent).[5]

Family Sundays provides a useful example of how AoR visualised one gateway into the 'virtuous circle'. By attending Family Sunday, parents, artists and children would be introduced to other aspects of the AoR programme, children would find out about workshops and parents would get involved, which again would have an impact on the whole community.

You bring your children along to a performance and they are engaged in a particular sort of way. First of all you see how much they enjoy both the listening, watching and maybe learning. You probably see a different side of them to what you do if you are sat at home with them in a quite constricted sort of place … You also get to talk to other parents and lots of people are very isolated even in those so-called close knit communities. A lot of young parents are always feeling quite sort of isolated, so maybe that gives you a chance to talk about what is happening at school, what's happening in other ways, what sort of other opportunities there are for classes … for the little ones or what other kind of events you can go to, things like that. So I think that it does begin to open people's eyes perhaps to the possibility of change and also to see their children in a different context …
Creative Director 2

While Family Sundays clearly fulfilled a huge need for high quality and entertaining children's theatre, as most of the shows were completely sold out, it is doubtful whether it managed to target the most deprived families within the community –

[5] The audience of Hubble Bubble was surveyed in February 2004. 283 people attended the event (including staff) of whom 112 people completed a two-page questionnaire.

despite the concession price available. The vast majority of families who attended were white, and while ethnicity does not directly link to household income, it does give some indication. The audience – both children and adults – was furthermore smartly dressed and many had expensive pushchairs.

This area is very varied. There are some parents who are … well middle-class and who will take their children to the theatre anyway, they will do things with their children whatever, but then there are some very poor parents who have never been to the theatre themselves and their kids might watch TV all day Sunday. They [AoR] never gave four tickets to the nursery [based within the Albany building] and said have a raffle among your parents to get them in, they never did that.
Professional Community Member

However, the Albany's box office data (2004-2005) suggests that this is only a partial picture, as a significantly high number of black and minority ethnic people used the Albany (over 40 per cent), something which was confirmed by the Hubble Bubble survey. Predominately black and minority ethnic audiences attended certain performances, such as gospel choirs.

Summary of findings

- Performances organised by Art of Regeneration for the Albany Theatre were attended by both local people and a wider London-based audience
- A high number of black and minority ethnic people regularly attended performances at the Albany. However, the children's theatre was mainly attended by a white audience
- Audiences generally described the Albany as a welcoming place that caters for everyone.

4.4 The Albany as a community-owned resource

The Albany and its facilities are well-used on a daily basis by a range of local people, including local disability and arts organisations. Since early summer 2003 the Albany has been busy with people using the café, room hiring and other facilities. As mentioned earlier the building looks stunning, and despite some initial community hostility towards AoR, most users now agree that it has had a positive impact on the building.

I was called to a meeting here [at the Albany] where they [AoR] told us that they were planning to bid for. I was very opposed to it at that meeting, but I could also see that something needed to give with the Albany – the place was dead – something had to be done to the building. And if AoR had done one thing it is change the building. It is buzzing now, the place is warm and welcoming. The food used to be dire, now they have a good chef and the café has shown that people will pay more for good food. Some say it is too expensive, but it is busy at lunchtime. Sometimes you can't get a table at lunchtime – so that is good.
Community Worker

However, from early on it was recognised that AoR not merely had to refurbish the building, but more importantly get people, especially local people, to utilise the space. As one community member pointed out when interviewed in 2001 at the beginning of the AoR programme:

The staff here has got to be a staff team that's welcoming, warm and it's not like, 'this is our space and we're so prissy and look at how nice the new space is, because it's been refitted – don't touch please'. It's got to be open arms because this relationship has to be built back with the community first.
Community Activist

The out-of-school programme organised by AoR at the Albany, in many ways aided this process of developing community attachment to the building among children, young people, their parents and tutors. Creative workshops during term time and intensive holiday courses gave young people regular access and reason to be in the Albany. On many occasions, such as Summer Arts Zone and Summer Arts College, the Albany was practically taken over by big groups of children and young people, which brought the place alive and made the Albany relevant to them. Showcases of children's work in the Studio and in the Theatre were also always well attended by their parents.

The Albany and AoR did, however, have very different perspectives on the involvement of children and young people. For AoR they formed the very core of

its programme and without their active involvement AoR would fail to meet its objectives. To the Albany, they were merely one group in the community that it was serving, and the Albany did not have a strong tradition (at least not in recent years) of engaging children and young people directly. In the early months when AoR was setting up, young people, especially young males, were perceived as trouble makers and following a couple of situations where young men (non-AoR participants) did cause some vandalism to the building and where the police had to be called, the Albany backed away from any encouragement of young people into the building. (This may partly have been an issue of capacity and resources.) However, this impacted severely on AoR's Youth Forum, as they were in the process of making the Albany their space. The Youth Forum wanted to organise youth-led nights in the café area; however, their suggestion of running a monthly youth café was turned down by the Albany management (at the time). The Youth Forum instead proceeded to organise a mobile youth café, aimed at visiting local youth clubs, but as it was not what they really wanted to do, it failed to get off the ground.

We got this idea for the Mobile Youth Café, because the Albany wasn't really suited for young people. We thought we could organise a monthly talent show, have DJs coming, perhaps some food and refreshments to bring in young people to the Albany. But the Albany didn't want that, so it wasn't allowed. Instead we thought well we will take it out of the Albany … we got funding to do it, but we haven't done the project yet.
Youth Forum member

Even though the Albany's approach to young people has changed dramatically since the arrival of a new chief executive, it was AoR which initiated an organisational culture that welcomed children and young people into the building by inviting them to participate in arts activities.

Having been given the opportunity to use the building, some young people continued to make use of the Albany independently, outside AoR's workshops. A small number, especially those involved with AoR's Youth Forum, practically 'moved in' to the Albany and daily used the facilities and resources available to them through AoR's office. AoR's youth support worker conducted, as part of her academic studies, a research project on young people's participation in arts organisations, specifically using AoR's youth forum and CASE trainees as case studies. Looking into the young people's level of attachment it was concluded that:

- the young people are extremely 'attached' to the Albany and AoR, they visit often, spend a great deal of time there and know the people in the office. They know the AoR programme and its history and they live locally
- they feel safe at the Albany and that the building is welcoming. However, they feel staff could be slightly more friendly

- the young people feel a sense of investment in the future of the Albany and would be willing to volunteer and work there. (Gardener, 2003)

This attachment to the Albany, AoR and members of staff was exactly what Wozzy Brewster (Director of Midi Music) used to feel when she was a volunteer in the Albany almost 20 years ago, an experience which initiated a successful career in the voluntary arts sector. She furthermore pointed out that this is precisely the kind of utilisation by local people, including local young people, that encourages community ownership.

Without that strand [the out-of-school strand] it's just another capital project isn't it? And we know what happens to some of those lottery white elephant buildings – they are empty and close down.
Wozzy Brewster

At the end of the SRB funding the Albany neither looks nor feels like a white elephant, as the community overall has embraced the building and is using it. However, the Albany – while regenerated – is still vulnerable in terms of future funding and in terms of consolidating community attachment and use, but at the very least it has been given another chance to do so.

Summary of findings

- AoR's creative workshop programme for children and young people encouraged community familiarity, use and ownership of the resources available to them at the Albany
- AoR established an organisational culture that welcomed children and young people into the Albany
- A small number of children and young people developed a high level of attachment to and ownership of the Albany.

5. The demographic profile of participants

One in three children and young people who used AoR lived in the ten per cent most deprived wards in England.

Art of Regeneration aimed to reach children and young people in some of the most deprived wards in London, especially those who are marginalised within the education system or excluded from it (SRB 6 bid). The programme did so by targeting eleven disadvantaged wards in Lewisham and Greenwich, through its in-school and out-of-school workshops.

By the end of August 2004, AoR held information on 2,447 individual young people on its database. The entries represent all the children and young people who had been in contact with the AoR's out-of-school programme, either on its mailing list, as term-time workshop participants, Summer Arts College participants, Youth Forum members, CASE trainees or young people attending auditions for the *Albany Interactive* youth theatre. A range of personal information was stored on the database, including postcodes, school attendance, ethnicity, gender and age. It furthermore gave details of all the courses and workshops that children and young people had participated in.

Unfortunately, this database was not set up to generate statistical information. This meant that much of this work had to be done manually. To make the task more manageable a sample of 294 individuals (12 per cent of the 2,447 entries) was randomly generated using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). For more details see Appendix 3.

However, approximately 25 per cent of children and young people in this sample did not actually take part in arts activities organised by AoR (this will be discussed further in section 6.4.1 *Level of involvement*). Consequently, only 222 children and young people, who took part in one or more AoR activities, were included in the demographic analysis.

5.1 Boroughs and wards

Looking at children and young people's postcodes (n=222), 67 per cent lived in the borough of Lewisham, while 17 per cent lived in Greenwich and 10 per cent in Southwark. The remaining six per cent lived in a range of other boroughs, such as Lambeth, Bexley, Croydon, Bromley, Dartford and Tower Hamlets. One explanation for the distinct distribution favouring the borough of Lewisham, may be the geographic location of the Albany within Lewisham, as

the highest number of individual children and young people within one ward lived in Grinling Gibbons, the ward where the Albany is situated. It is furthermore likely that the Albany has a higher profile in Lewisham than in Greenwich, as children and young people travelled geographically further within Lewisham to get to the Albany.

75 per cent of participants were black, minority ethnic or dual heritage.

AoR specifically targeted five disadvantaged wards in Lewisham and six wards in Greenwich.[6] In total 44 per cent of the sampled young people – those who attended arts activities with AoR – lived within these wards (n=222). More specifically 36 per cent lived in the targeted Lewisham wards of Grinling Gibbons, Evelyn, Drake, Marlowe and Pepys, while only 8 per cent lived within the targeted Greenwich wards of Greenwich West, St. Alfege, Vanbrugh, Ferrier, and Kidbrooke (no young people attended from the sixth Greenwich ward of Rectory Fields). Nine other wards, of which eight are in Lewisham and one in Southwark, hosted 19 per cent of the young people. In total the AoR programme attracted children and young people from 74 wards, ten of which were target wards.

In terms of deprivation, two of the targeted wards (Evelyn and Grinling Gibbons, both in Lewisham) fall within the top ten per cent of most deprived wards in England, according to the *Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000*.[7] However, looking at all the wards where children and young people resided, 35 per cent lived in wards that ranked within the 10 per cent of the most deprived wards, while as many as 79 per cent lived in wards ranking within the 20 per cent most deprived in England.

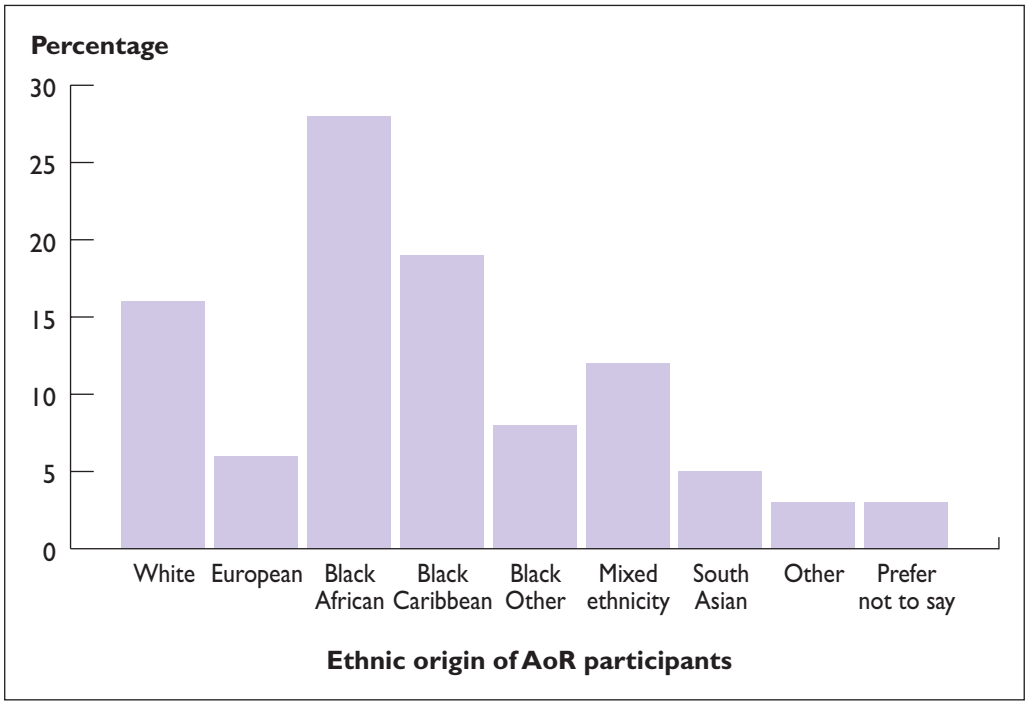
5.2 Ethnic origin

When completing AoR's enrolment and registration forms, children and parents themselves chose whether to report the child's ethnic origin. This means that in 26 per cent of cases there are no data relating to ethnicity in the sample. The distribution of children and young people who did supply their ethnic origin or selected the option 'prefer not to say' (n=165) is illustrated in Figure 5.1.

[6] Due to ward boundary changes in 2002, these are now four wards in Lewisham and three in Greenwich.

[7] There are 8,414 wards in England. The most deprived is given a rank of 1, and the least deprived ward is given a rank of 8414 (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000).

Figure 5.1



This shows that over half (55 per cent) of participants were of Black (Black African, Black Caribbean and Black Other). White children and young people accounted for 16 per cent, while 6 per cent were European. In total, 75 per cent of participants were black, minority ethnic or dual heritage. These statistics were confirmed by observational data at workshops and young people's performances.

Consequently, AoR appears to have attracted a significantly high percentage of black and minority ethnic children and young people, well over the percentage that lives within the borough of Lewisham and Greenwich (respectively 30 per cent and 20 per cent according to Neighbourhood Statistics).

5.3 Gender and age

In terms of gender, AoR attracted a significantly higher number of females than males, as 66 per cent of participants were female and 34 per cent were male (n=210). This means that for every two girls only one boy attended.

At the time when the database was sampled in August 2004, the vast majority (78 per cent) of children and young people involved with AoR's out-of-school programme were teenagers (n=205). In terms of AoR's division between primary, secondary and tertiary age groups, 18 per cent were aged 7-11,

33 per cent were aged 12-15 and 49 per cent were 16 years or older. It should be pointed out that children and young people obviously grew older during the lifespan of the programme, so many who were in the younger age group at the beginning of the programme are now teenagers.

It was DOPE, do it again nxt year!
Summer Arts College Participant

AoR worked with a number of children and young people with special needs or physical impairments. Although no data is available for this analysis, AoR recorded that five per cent of young people attending Summer Arts College in 2004 had special needs. This is the same percentage as the number of disabled children and young people living in England.

5.4 Schools attended

Children and young people in contact with AoR's creative programme attended over 150 different schools, the majority of which were located in the boroughs of Lewisham and Greenwich. Looking at the randomised sample (n=162), a number of AoR participants attended secondary schools such as Deptford Green (11 per cent) and Addy and Stanhope (5 per cent) that are located close to the Albany.

5.5 Discussion

The fact that almost half of all the children and young people lived within the eleven wards specifically targeted by AoR, suggests that it was very successful in attracting young people from those wards. In terms of ward deprivation, one in three children and young people who used AoR lived in the ten per cent most deprived wards in England, while approximately 75 per cent were of black, minority ethnic or dual heritage.

However, while the statistics suggest that AoR reached a high percentage of disadvantaged children, it would be a mistake to assume that because you are young, black and live in Lewisham, you are automatically underachieving and at 'risk' of educational exclusion.

It should be noted that, except for specific initiatives such as Boom and Bounce,[8] the profile of the typical young person we work with is not that of 'underachiever' or of somebody who is 'excluded' in more than a relative sense … it could be said that any young person from our part of South East London fits a theoretical certain level of deprivation, those that we work with tend to be fairly well motivated, and/or supported

[8] Boom and Bounce was a workshop that specifically targeted young people with moderate learning difficulties or special educational needs.

by their parents, and/or aware of possible career paths and opportunities …
AoR staff member

The literature review commissioned by the National Theatre (Newman et al, 2003), highlighted that without specific targeted provision, organisations will tend to work mostly with the least deprived of any population.

Summary of findings

Of the children and young people who participated in Art of Regeneration's creative workshops, courses and arts activities:

- One in three lived in wards that fall within the ten per cent most deprived wards in England.
- Almost half lived within the eleven wards in Lewisham and Greenwich which were specifically targeted by Art of Regeneration.
- Approximately 75 per cent of children and young people were of black, minority ethnic or dual heritage.
- Two thirds of participants were girls and one third boys.
- AoR participants attended more than 150 schools, mainly located within the boroughs of Lewisham and Greenwich.
- However, the typical Art of Regeneration participant was not at risk of school exclusion or significant underachievement.

6. Children and young people's involvement with the arts

Case Study: Street Dance Workshops

The most successful ongoing workshop in the AoR programme, in terms of attendance, was Street Dance. The workshop was run by one of AoR's CASE trainees and had a high demand for places. This workshop fulfilled all the criteria for success identified in the analysis. When interviewed, the tutor/artist clarified the teaching process:

- The workshop series begins with a 'chat' about what is required of the young people, setting up clear ground rules such as what clothing is appropriate and what sorts of behaviour will and won't be tolerated
- The tutor insists on professionalism, for example, people must leave their likes and dislikes for others outside the door and learn that a good working relationship is different from, and not dependent on, a good personal relationship
- 'Time-out' is facilitated when the group is finding something difficult and time is taken to talk through the problem and explain the purpose and aims carefully
- The tutor understands that different strategies and tactics need to be adopted for different participants
- Excellence is expected and practice outside of sessions is encouraged. The tutor makes participants aware of the fact that she herself practices every day.

The workshop was clearly structured in a way that made it easier for the young people to learn the creative skill. The young people who attended also appeared to have developed trust and the ability to work supportively – evidenced during their final performance.

Creative work with children and young people was a core element in AoR's vision for community regeneration. By offering access and pathways into the arts, AoR aimed to improve children's key skills and artistic appreciation, and consequently improve their education and employment prospects.

6.1 Criteria for success

The interim evaluation report (Blundell and Scott, 2003) dealt in some detail with the process and outcomes of AoR's creative workshops. A thematic data analysis was conducted based on information provided by various stakeholders, including teachers, parents/carers, artists and tutors and young people. Three overall themes were derived from this analysis, clarifying what constituted a successful workshop:

- Clarity of process (in terms of pedagogic style, skill and structure)
- Perception of care (being respected and listened to)
- Social outcomes (working with others, socialising and making friends, and gaining confidence).

These themes were subsequently used as criteria for success, against which workshops were evaluated.

When fulfilling the criteria for success the workshops encouraged certain conditions, such as safe space, trust, support and mutual respect that were found to be prerequisites to learning. However, many of the intended outcomes formulated by the AoR team, such as 'self expression' and 'active initiation' were too ambitious to be achieved by a short

series of workshops (for a detailed analysis of AoR's workshop programme, see Blundell and Scott, 2003).

One of the objectives of the AoR programme was to provide a safe space within which young people could be encouraged to stretch themselves, express themselves, broaden their range and depth of experience, increase their expectations and open up to new possibilities and opportunities for self-development. At the time of the interim report there was, not surprisingly given the early stage of the AoR programme, only a few young people ready to take on these challenges. However, it was identified that AoR needed to differentiate between workshops that were fulfilling the 'safe space' criteria and those which were doing that and more, as it would be possible to target particular individuals within the programme who had acquired the necessary skills and who would benefit from being encouraged into workshops that were more demanding. In many ways, this was what the refocus of the AoR programme served to do in Spring 2003.

We bought our harsh reality to life and captured it so that everyone could see what it was like for us...we'd done it...That videotape was our story.
AoR Participant

6.2 The refocus of AoR's in- and out-of-school programmes

Barnardo's interim evaluation report, however, was not the only factor that influenced the refocus. Budget constraints within the programme directed a number of decisions, such as to increase participants' fees and reduce the number of in-school workshops available to the secondary cohort, while a new tutor pay scale resulted in some popular AoR tutors and artists resigning. However, the two most significant changes that occurred as a result of the refocus were the narrowing of art forms offered and a shift from process-based workshops to product-based productions.

The refocus meant that, except for Summer Arts College, which continued to offer the full range of art forms, AoR only offered theatre, such as musical and physical theatre, and circus skills during the final year of service delivery, while other art forms, most significantly the urban arts, were discontinued. Although some of these decisions, such as ending the in-school work with secondary schools, made sense in terms of AoR's overall strategies, the purpose of the refocus was not clearly communicated to young people and their parents (as will be discussed further in chapter 7).

However, the gender, ethnicity and level of motivation of the young people participating tend to be influenced by the types of art forms available. Based on attendance and observational data collected during Summer Arts College 2004

66 per cent of participants were female and 34 per cent were male.

it emerged that young people, as well as choosing workshops along traditional gender lines (females choose dance, while males choose computer courses), also chose according to ethnicity. While the vast majority of participants at SAC04 were of black and minority ethnic origin, a few specific courses had a noticeable majority of white participants. Such courses were 'In search of Shakespeare', 'Be in a band' (which required intermediate skills and that young people bring their own musical instruments) and skateboard making. While overlaps obviously occurred, it was clear that young white people tended to choose the traditional theatre arts, such as musical theatre and drama, while black and minority ethnic young people were more likely to choose the urban arts, including DJing and street dance. This observation is purely based on young people's individual choices (how they would like to spend their summer holiday), and is not to suggest that given certain encouragement the young people would not choose differently. However, it does suggest that young people's cultural heritage, and how they identify themselves, play an important role when choosing what creative arts activities to participate in. Consequently, the narrowing of art forms offered within the AoR programme affected the profile of young people attending.

The second significant change that the refocus initiated was the shift from process-based workshops to more product-based productions. AoR had experienced, especially with the secondary school cohort, that skills-based workshops where the focus was on learning a creative skill, were less successful in sustaining the young people's attendance over a period of time. Consequently, during the last year of the programme, the secondary out-of-school programme focused exclusively on providing product-led activities where young people worked towards an end product. The *Albany Interactive* youth theatre produced a number of director-led plays, following the format of auditions, weekly rehearsals and a final performance in front of an audience.

While this enabled AoR to offer more demanding and challenging creative experiences to those young people who already had the prerequisite skills, the audition process simultaneously excluded those who did not have such experience, without offering them an alternative (open access) opportunity to develop such skills.

The consequence of these decisions was that AoR tended to work with those individuals who were already doing relatively well.

… It is apparent that the comparatively well-motivated young people gravitated towards the performing arts, and that we lost the less well motivated when Street Dance and DJing sessions were discontinued.
AoR staff member

6.3 Working with children and young people

Considering that AoR aimed, as stated in the SRB 6 bid, to 'target young people aged 7-26 from areas of high deprivation … particularly those who are underachieving, disaffected, at risk and with special needs', it is problematic that the development of a child protection policy did not begin until two years into the programme. While many procedures, such as health and safety, fire evacuation, First Aid and risk assessments were extant, it is uncertain whether AoR developed a child protection policy beyond draft stage. This is a concern for an organisation that intended to work with potentially vulnerable children, and employed a large number of adults to work directly with young people on a short-term and temporary basis. While staff and sessional tutors and artists had enhanced disclosure through the Criminal Records Bureau towards the end of the programme, it is doubtful whether a disclosure procedure was in place for all adults, including volunteers, working with AoR during the first two years of operation. This is a serious oversight by AoR, as senior management and the AoR Board should have been aware of the importance of formally safeguarding children and young people.

One complaint will be the time of the course, could have been longer, etc. 6 hours a day and for 2 weeks. I LOVE OUR TEACHERZ
Summer Arts College Participant

This oversight was mirrored in other practical aspects of the AoR programme. Although the SRB bid predicted that AoR would work with approximately 2,000 children and young people a year, via its community-based arts projects, the programme failed to address how it intended to supervise and support all these underachieving young people without a team of skilled youth workers. For the first year of the out-of-school programme, the primary and secondary coordinators were responsible for planning and establishing the in- and out-of-school programmes, recruiting suitable tutors and artists, targeting schools and recruiting participants – as well as supervising and registering workshop participants when they arrived (outside office hours) at the Albany, ensuring that refreshments were available during breaks and escorting younger children to the toilet. The primary researcher (who was CRB checked) was frequently 'roped in' to assist with such practical tasks. Only 18 months into the AoR programme did it employ a youth worker, who was responsible for providing practical and youth work support to workshop participants.

While the AoR vision was clear, the programme seemed to lack a basic knowledge about the needs and requirements for working with children and young people in a voluntary setting.[9]

[9] The AoR programme originally intended to target children and young people aged 7-26, without realising that projects need to be registered with Ofsted when dealing with under 8s. Consequently, AoR only engaged with children aged eight or over.

Summary findings

- Creative workshops that led to positive outcomes for children and young people were well-structured, with clear ground rules, run by skilled tutors who provided reliable and respectful instruction. Taken together these factors ensured the provision of 'safe spaces', a precondition for the development of children's and young people's creative and social skills.

- Children and young people who attended Art of Regeneration's creative workshop programme at the Albany displayed high standards of behaviour, with no recorded episodes of vandalism or anti-social behaviour.

- Children's and young people's selection of creative workshops was influenced by their gender, ethnicity and levels of motivation. When Art of Regeneration refocused its activities and subsequently discontinued the urban arts in 2003, this impacted on the profile of participants in AoR's creative programme.

- Observations by AoR staff and evaluators highlighted that despite referrals from local Youth Offending Teams and Connexions for specific courses, AoR did not actively target the *most* deprived, underachieving or at-risk children and young people in the community, and hence overall worked with those who were already relatively 'doing well'.

- Art of Regeneration did not begin to develop a child protection policy until two years into the programme, during which time staff employed were not routinely checked via the Criminal Records Bureau. This was a serious oversight for an organisation that employed a large number of adults to work directly with children and young people.

6.4 Gateways and pathways into the arts

One of the more developed hypotheses AoR tested was that by working with children, young people and their parents, it would create a progression route of involvement through the programme that would eventually generate a 'virtuous circle' of community regeneration. The 'gateway' into the progression route was available specifically to children and young people though the in-school and out-of-school programmes. The following section will look at the involvement children and young people had with the AoR programme and the extent to which the in-school programme provided a gateway to the 'virtuous circle'.

59 per cent of children and young people who were involved in activities within AoR took part in one course or workshop only.

6.4.1 Level of involvement

The sample of AoR's database was used to determine the level of involvement children and young people had with the AoR programme. The main reason for this was to investigate whether AoR's success in offering wide gateways into the arts was leading to pathways.

Using the randomised sample (12 per cent of 2,447 entries on AoR's database) it was possible to pinpoint the number of courses and workshops that participants had taken part in (See Appendix 3 for more details). It should be noted that an analysis is only ever as accurate as the data on which it is based, so if courses or workshops were not added to individual children's names on the database, they have not be included in the analysis. However, it is the evaluators' impression that the database was habitually updated when new courses and mail-outs were developed, primarily because the database was an important working tool for the AoR team.

Approximately 25 per cent of the children and young people in the sample (n=294) did not take part in any courses or workshops organised by AoR. Some may have been on the mailing list, while others may once have enquired about a course, but never took up the offer to participate. Looking at the demographic profiles of attendees compared to non-attendees, there seems to be no significant difference in terms of gender, ethnicity or wards. Although this group of non-attendees form a large proportion of the children and young people that AoR was in contact with, it highlights the intensive outreach work that is required to attract sufficient numbers of children and young people to creative activities. For the first Summer Arts College in 2001, AoR distributed 15,000 brochures and 5,000 postcards to fill 255 workshop places. This is a common problem encountered by new organisations or projects setting up community-focused activities. Unless a programme is established, known and trusted within the population it is trying to attract, a significant amount of outreach work has to be undertaken (Newman et al, 2003).

28 per cent of participants took part in two or three courses or workshops.

Looking at the children and young people who did take part in AoR's arts activities, workshops or courses (n=222), 59 per cent of children and young people in the sample took part in one workshop or course only. The majority of these young people attended Summer Arts College (SAC) for one year, but did not continue with other AoR workshops during term times or return to the following year's Summer Arts College.

Twenty-eight per cent were what could be termed 'lightly' involved with AoR's creative workshop programme, by taking part in two or three courses or workshops. Many of these lightly involved participants took part in two Summer Arts Colleges and perhaps one other course during the year.

Eight per cent were 'moderately' involved by attending four or five courses, while five per cent were 'intensively' involved by doing six or more courses over the duration of the AoR programme. The maximum number of courses that any young person took part in was 14, but only one person in the sample did that.

6.4.2 The progression route from in-school to out-of-school

Following the introduction to the arts while at school, participants were intended to 'progress' from being 'passive consumers' of in-school workshops to becoming more active users of out-of-school workshops at the Albany, by actively *choosing* to take part in arts activities in their spare time and independently of teachers and classmates. To meet this end, AoR developed a number of partnerships with both primary and secondary schools in Lewisham and Greenwich.

However, looking at the randomised sample of 222 children and young people (who had taken part in activities) it is evident that this progression route did not take place on a large scale. Children and young people who were registered on AoR's database attended over 150 different schools, of which 71 are represented in the sample. Given that children attended so many different schools, the actual number attending each school is low. Nevertheless, of the 22 primary schools that AoR worked in partnership with, no children were recorded coming from 10 of them (n=162). This means that 45 per cent of primary schools that worked in partnership with AoR did not generate any children for the out-of school workshops at the Albany (some children from these schools were recorded on AoR's database, but did not actually attend any courses). Even when looking at the partnership schools that, according to AoR staff, worked closely with the AoR programme, this lack of progression route was marked. Eight primary schools accepted four or five of the five arts projects offered by AoR. Three of these close partner schools generated no children for the out-of school programme, while a further two generated a very low number.

One reason for this may be the different conditions under which the in-school programme operated compared to the out-of-school programme. Because workshops took place during school hours, children and young people in reality did not have a choice whether to participate or not. Children, especially the younger ones, furthermore did not have to rely on their parents taking them to the Albany and paying for the workshops, as the in-school programme was open to children attending partnership schools.

As a consequence, there was little evidence that this first step on the progression route from in-school to out-of-school engagement took place on a large scale. Although it did occur in a few individual cases, it was fairly random and never proved to be the rule. The difficulties AoR staff encountered trying to attract in-school participants to more community-based arts activities, can also be illustrated by the four responses AoR staff received on one occasion, having dispatched 200 letters to in-school participants inviting them to take part in an out-of-school workshop at the Albany.

There are, nevertheless, a few examples of workshops that worked as AoR originally intended. One such example is AoR's Boom and Bounce group. This workshop was introduced by the Special Needs Coordinator to young people at a local secondary school. In collaboration with AoR, she organised taster sessions to specifically nominated young people who required additional educational support, some of whom had behavioural problems. Following taster sessions in the local secondary schools the young people began attending drama

Case study: Summer Arts College

Summer Arts College (SAC) was a three-week summer holiday scheme that offered young people aged 13 to 17 the opportunity to take part in creative courses. A variety of art forms were offered, including visual arts, performance, dance, media and new media, music and theatre. The scheme was first held in 2001 and took place yearly after that.[10]

The courses generally lasted a week with students attending five hours daily, but most young people took part in all three weeks. A team of peer motivators, aged 16-20, were recruited and trained prior to SAC. The peer motivators took part in courses, but were also available to help tutors with practical issues, such as registration and photocopying, and to motivate students and act as an intermediary between tutors and students. The peer motivators would register students twice a day, and parents of students who failed to turn up would be informed accordingly. Workshops were based at three different sites,[11] at the Albany, Lewisham College and Goldsmiths College, and AoR staff were available at each site to offer practical and student support to tutors, peer motivators and students.

The courses would begin each week at the Albany with Monday morning registration and finish with a 'sharing' on Friday afternoons. As part of the registration AoR staff stressed that this was not school and that young people were there because they had chosen to be there and because SAC had chosen to have them, and students who disregarded the rules would be asked to leave.

At the end of each week, all groups presented what they had been working on. Presentations included dance performances, short plays, reading of film scripts and digital work. The excellent technology available in the refurbished Albany Theatre made 'sharings' look cutting edge and incredibly professional, using contemporary music and film projection that appealed to young people. The atmosphere at SAC was usually buzzing with excitement, and yet supportive, and there were no reported episodes of vandalism or anti-social behaviour.

[10] Summer Arts College is one of the projects that has continued following the end of the SRB funding.

[11] In 2001 the refurbishment of the Albany was underway and SAC took place only at Lewisham College, in 2002 SACs were based at the Albany and Lewisham College, while Goldsmiths College came on board in 2003 and 2004.

workshops held on a weekly basis at the Albany. Boom and Bounce ran for approximately two years, with some of the participants attending from the very beginning. AoR staff suggested that the active involvement of the Special Needs Coordinator and the proximity of the Albany to the participating school were important factors for the success of this group.

All 56 young people interviewed during Summer Arts College 2003 said they would like to come again next year.

6.4.3 One-off participants

Fifty-nine per cent of children and young people who were involved in activities within AoR took part in one course or workshop only. The majority of these one-off participants attended Summer Arts College for one year only. In 2004, 75 per cent of the young people who took part in Summer Arts College were first time attendees, while 25 per cent had been before. Of the 69 people who had been before, only 30 per cent (21 young people) had also taken part in other AoR activities, such as *Albany Interactive* youth theatre, term time workshops or the youth forum.

All 56 young people interviewed during Summer Arts College 2003 said they would like to come again next year.

As the young people who participated in SACs overall gave very positive feedback during the evaluations of Summer Arts College,[12] it was surprising that so few participants returned in the following years.

The evaluation team addressed this issue during the SAC02 evaluation by following up the young people who had been interviewed for the evaluation in 2001. Of these 28 people, 20 had not returned in 2002. When contacted over the telephone,[13] 18 young people gave two reasons for not returning: either that they were 'otherwise engaged' by holiday or work commitments, or simply that they were unaware that Summer Arts College was running again. None of the young people said that they had not returned because they had not enjoyed Summer Arts College.

This may suggest that for many young people AoR's workshops and courses were not perceived as a gateway into an AoR pathway or a career in the arts, but as an enjoyable leisure facility that was available to them at a particular time.

As AoR wrote in the SRB 6 bid:

During my research into the local community, I discovered young people were always being told 'Say No' to crime, drugs and sex and they requested, 'Give us something to say Yes to'.

[12] All four Summer Arts Colleges were evaluated by Barnardo's Policy and Research Unit.

[13] Participants were only contacted if they had given their consent when interviewed in 2001.

Summer Arts College, for example, was something positive, exciting and stimulating for young people to 'say yes to', which enabled them to meet other young people and enjoy their summer holiday. One-off participation in such activities could therefore be seen as a positive childhood experience that all children and young people should have equal access to, rather than a failure on the part of AoR to encourage young people to develop pathways into the arts.

Dis workshop was HEAVY and I enjoyment. SAFE. BIG UP.
Summer Arts College Participant

Besides enjoyable, one-off experiences with specific art forms, the arts may also impact on participants, without them subsequently wanting a career within the arts. One such example is the film *Somebody Someone*, a product of an in-school project with one of AoR's secondary partnership schools. A group of young people who had consistently been targeted by bullies, were given the opportunity through AoR to produce a video about their experiences. Having written, planned, filmed and edited the video, their written feedback highlighted its importance:

We made 15 minutes of how we really felt. 15 minutes of not having to believe that school days are ALWAYS the happiest days of your lives. We brought our harsh reality to life and captured it so that everyone could see what it was like for us … We'd done it … That videotape was our story. It's title Somebody Someone cries out in the same way that we did. We hope that it may cause some change or just open some people's eyes to how hard it can be being an individual …
AoR participants

While the experience of making this video was obviously a significant one, none of the young people involved subsequently took part in other arts workshops or courses available to them through the AoR programme. Presumably, in this case, making a film was not an end in itself, but a medium that enabled them to express their views and opinions about a topic they felt strongly about.

6.4.4 The accumulation of workshops into an arts pathway

Approximately 13 per cent of the sample who took part in AoR activities (n=222) was what could be defined as 'moderately' or 'intensively' involved with AoR, by participating in four or more courses over the duration of the programme.

Case story: Isaac, 17 years

Isaac was 13 when he first became involved with Art of Regeneration. He lives in Deptford and remembers the Albany from when he was younger. He previously attended another local drama group, but says that before AoR there was very little for younger teenagers to do. Isaac eventually took part in all four Summer Arts Colleges, trying out a huge range of arts activities, including script writing, TV production, henna art, singing and web design. The opportunity to experience different art forms was for Isaac one of the best things about AoR. Isaac also became a core member of AoR's Youth Forum and spent much of his free time at the Albany. When AoR advertised for young people to take part in a play, he auditioned and was given a role in two plays, both performed at the Albany. During the final year of AoR, Isaac was busy taking his GCSEs and therefore scaled down his involvement. Now at college, Isaac is thinking about becoming a journalist, as he loves writing. 'I am a very creative person, but at the same time I'm not the kind of person who is going to paint a masterpiece.' Isaac's younger sister turned 13 just before Summer Arts College 2004 and had, according to her older brother, been waiting to try it out for herself.

When we take into account that some CASE trainees only took part in one course, but that their particular course was a year-long intensive full-time course, it can be estimated that in total approximately 150 children and young people were 'intensively' involved with the AoR programme over the duration of the programme. Approximately a further 200 children and young people were 'moderately' involved by taking part in four or five workshops over AoR's lifespan.[14]

While the level or intensity of involvement with AoR is a complicated issue, workshops were – for the majority of AoR users – something that they enjoyed once but did not wish to develop. However, for a few young people it was an opportunity to develop 'higher level' creative skills. In terms of the progression route of involvement, these findings highlight that the majority of AoR's participants never went beyond the gateway and only a few 'followed' the pathway.

Summary of findings

- Art of Regeneration organised a range of successful arts workshops in partnership schools and at the Albany. These were warmly appreciated by the children and young people who took part.
- Children and young people who encountered Art of Regeneration in a school setting did not often become involved in community-based arts activities at the Albany. No children were recorded as attending AoR out-of-school workshops from half of the partnership primary schools. The creation of a progression route from school to voluntary community participation was not as effective as had been hypothesised.
- Almost half of the children and young people that AoR worked with were one-off participants as they attended, and overwhelmingly enjoyed, one course only. This suggests that many children and young people did not perceive arts activities as an entry point to the Art of Regeneration pathway or a career in the arts, but as an enjoyable leisure opportunity that was available to them at a particular time – eg during a summer holiday.

[14] This estimate is based on the assumption that the randomised sample is representative of the full database.

- Approximately 13 per cent of children and young people became 'moderately' or 'intensively' involved with the Art of Regeneration programme by participating in four or more courses over the duration of the programme. These were the young people who saw Art of Regeneration as an opportunity to expand their horizons and develop skills for the future.

I'm not always that forward, but now if I walk into a room of people that I don't know I will go and talk to them...
Peer Motivator

6.5 Early outcomes for individual young people

The interim evaluation report focused specifically on the outcomes that children and young people gained as a result of attending weekly workshops. It concluded that some of the intended outcomes articulated by AoR staff and tutors were often too ambitious to achieve during a short series of workshops and that some skills were more likely to be acquired once a number of prerequisites were in place. Outcomes such as 'self expression' and 'problem solving' (see list of outcomes in section 2.2) were more likely to represent 'higher level' objectives, which were reached through more intensive long-term training.

Figure 2.1 (in section 2.2) shows the process of individual development to which AoR was committed. It illustrates how participation in creative workshops can, through the acquisition of particular social and creative skills, develop individuals as artistic entrepreneurs and creative community leaders and organisers. While it is still too early to say whether this theory was workable in the long term, it is possible to explore some of the early outcomes, and the extent to which young people have achieved these as a result of their involvement with AoR.

The peer motivator scheme during Summer Arts College provides one example of a group of young people who were involved with AoR over a period of time. Of the 21 young people who were peer motivators in 2004, only three had had no prior contact with AoR. They had either been to SAC before or attended weekly workshops, and many had done both. Of the 2004 peer motivators, five first attended SAC in 2001. It can therefore be said that overall peer motivators have worked more intensively with the AoR programme than other SAC participants. Two peer motivators (one in 2001 and one in 2002) also went on to complete an NVQ level 2 qualification with the CASE trainee course.

Essential to the peer motivator scheme was the expectation that young people showed a high level of commitment, both in terms of hours spent involved with SAC, and in the way they conducted themselves while there. The peer motivators had specific roles and responsibilities, such as doing the Monday morning registration and assisting AoR staff with student packs, certificates and

goodie bags. However, more importantly they assisted tutors while on the courses and were there to motivate students.

To become a peer motivator young people went through an interview and training process, which involved obtaining references from teachers or employers, before being accepted as peer motivators. The young people were expected to attend training sessions and to volunteer during all three weeks of Summer Arts College. In return for their time and effort they received the Millennium Volunteers Award,[15] having completed over 100 hours of volunteering.

The 2004 peer motivators were interviewed to find out what they had learnt as a result of this role.[16] While a few young people mentioned specific creative skills or art forms that they had developed, most highlighted social skills such as being more patient or more confident around people not previously known to them.

The level of responsibility that the position of peer motivator required was also mentioned by half of the peer motivators. For those who had attended Summer Arts Colleges before as students, this new feeling of responsibility was particularly marked.

[As a student] you could get away with it. If you are a student you can argue with them, but as a peer motivator you have to set a good example and not argue with them.
Peer Motivator

Many stressed that they had had to alter their behaviour and be more patient with the students than they would otherwise have been:

… You do have to have patience, you sort of have to analyse a situation before you speak, because if say I argue with my mum or a friend you basically say what you are thinking, but here you have to kind of setting an example and stop to think about what you are going to say.
Peer Motivator

A number of peer motivators had experienced difficult situations either with students, tutors or other peer motivators. While no serious incidences occurred during SAC04 the peer motivators had to deal with small arguments and disruptive and unruly students. Being calm and respectful towards students, as well as talking to them on their level, was mentioned by the majority of peer motivators as important when dealing with such situations.

[15] The Millennium Volunteer Programme was launched by the Government in 1999 and provides young people aged 16-26 with a recognised award in return for doing voluntary work that benefits local communities.

[16] 18 peer motivators were interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide during the last days of SAC04.

More than half of those interviewed said they felt more confident now than before they were peer motivators. For those who felt more confident, this was exemplified by feeling more confident in front of an audience or a classroom, or being less nervous when meeting new people.

I like to meet friends, but … I'm not always that forward, but now if I walk into a room of people that I don't know I will go and talk to them, 'Hi, I am Nancy [name changed], what's your name?' I wouldn't do that before, but now yeah …
Peer Motivator

The increased level of confidence also appears to be directly linked with improved communication skills. Being able to communicate better with a wide range of people that they did not know beforehand meant that peer motivators were able to act, as well as feel, more confident.

If I was in a classroom … and a group of people were distracting the class I would be more confident in asking them to stop and listen, where before I would have waited for the teacher to say something.
Peer Motivator

This analysis of the outcomes gained by peer motivators as a result of the training and involvement with Summer Arts College illustrates that many of the early outcomes that AoR anticipated were achieved. While the extent to which the selection process influenced these outcomes is unknown, young people themselves said they had enhanced their communication and interpersonal skills, their confidence and their ability to work co-operatively with a range of people, including AoR staff, tutors and other young people. They furthermore showed a high level of motivation, commitment and self discipline. This suggests that young people gained important social skills as a result of their involvement with the peer motivator scheme.

6.6 Longer-term outcomes for young people following the pathway

The development of creative pathways was intended to have a positive impact on 'the employment prospects, education and skills of local people' and to address 'social exclusion and entrance opportunities for the disadvantaged'.

The long-term nature of community regeneration forms a particular problem for evaluations of such programmes. While AoR's early outcomes have been achieved by a number of young people, as demonstrated in the previous section, intermediary and long-term outcomes for individual young people were

Case story: Chantelle, 24 years

Chantelle was a peer motivator with Summer Arts College in 2001 and 2002. She enjoys acting and mainly chose AoR's performing arts workshops. In 2003 she was offered a place on AoR's one-year trainee course, which gained her an NVQ level 2 in Arts Administration. As a trainee Chantelle had a number of placements with AoR staff and with other arts organisations. In the evenings she worked as an usher for the Albany Theatre to supplement her trainee allowance. Chantelle was also very active with AoR's youth theatre and had a role in all of the plays produced by Albany Interactive. Following her NVQ qualification Chantelle got a full-time job as a trainee project administrator with an arts and disability organisation where she did her placement. Getting a job is something Chantelle is particular pleased with and she highlights that 'I have learnt that I can do mostly anything'.

unlikely to occur within the timescale of the SRB funded programme. There were, however, narrower gateways into AoR for young adults and adults, for whom the timescale for achieving AoR's outcomes is shorter. One such gateway into the creative pathway was the CASE work-based training scheme.

The traineeship aimed 'to provide a mechanism to "turn around" the lives of young people who are interested in the arts and have achieved some success in education, but who have been unable to develop a career because of lack of direction and/or lack of personal and financial support' (SRB bid). By providing pathways into the creative industries, the CASE scheme intended to improve young people's job or educational prospects.

It was recognised that the targeted young people may have personal issues that would affect the programme.

The programme is flexible enough to deal with individual skills, personalities and experiences. There is a reason why these people are doing what they are doing now. … You have to take on board that all of them, in their own way, will have some [issues], whether it's their attention span or personal circumstances … This is the reason why [the programme] has to be small and intimate.
AoR staff member

Summer Arts College was good this year but it needs to be promoted more. Big up (looking to be a peer motivator next year).
Summer Arts College Participant)

The drop-off rate reflects this, as some young people changed career plans (eg to youth work), while others experienced health problems or had issues with time keeping and commitment which made them unable to complete the course. For those who completed the year-long course, there is little doubt that it increased their artistic appreciation and understanding of the creative industries.

The distinctive combination of administrative training and practical work experience within the arts sector was intended to supplement young people's skills base. By training participants in administrative skills such as taking minutes, answering telephones and using IT and databases, the trainees gained valuable skills that were transferable to other industries. The majority of young people, however, perceived the administrative training and the NVQ qualification as secondary to the practical work experience. Most displayed little interest in arts administration, but saw it as a useful back-up in case their careers as practising artists were not successful.

I know that if everything goes wrong and I don't get any work designing … then I can get a temp job quite easily and perhaps get paid a little bit more because I got an NVQ, so I know that financially it was sensible – but it wasn't fun.
AoR Trainee

Working with AoR and Albany staff in a variety of placements ranging from marketing to workshop facilitating, provided trainees with broad experiences and an understanding of what work in a busy arts centre entails. A few trainees were able to utilise their creative skills and create a niche of work, such as Djing or street dance workshops, both with AoR's creative out-of-school programme and with other arts organisations. However, the majority of participants wanted to become professional artists, especially actors and actresses, and perceived work such as facilitating workshops for children, as something to tide them over while establishing their careers. Many highlighted that they had gained invaluable contacts in the business as a result of working with AoR.

While the long-term outcomes of the trainee scheme have still to be shown, it is at present possible to highlight that half of the trainees immediately improved their educational and employment opportunities, by taking up job or educational offers, while the other half are still hopeful that they will do so in the near future.

It gave many people opportunities to pursue their career and I thank [AoR staff member] for that .
AoR Trainee

However, not everyone involved in the AoR partnership saw the creative industries as necessarily a desirable pathway for young people to follow, and were anxious that it could lead them into economic instability rather than employment and education.

Case study: The CASE (Co-ordinating Arts, Shows and Events)

CASE was AoR's work-based training programme that targeted young people aged 18-26. The one-year training course offered participants the opportunity to gain an NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) level 2 in Arts Administration, while getting work experience in a range of areas within the Albany and Art of Regeneration. The first course began in July 2002 with eight participants and the second in September 2003, also with eight participants.

The 30 hours a week course was offered in partnership between AoR, the Albany and PDA (Personal Development Associates) in Lewisham. The trainees attended PDA, acting as the NVQ training provider, every Friday for five hours, where they received specific training in a range of subjects such as health and safety and IT. Individual placements with AoR staff and the Albany offered trainees hands-on experience within marketing, box office, front-of-house, room bookings, arts education and the digital department. The placements generally lasted six weeks, but given the small-scale nature of the course, the type and length of placements were flexible in order to cater for individual trainees' interests and skills.

The NVQ assessment was based primarily on practical tasks, rather than theoretical examinations. Witness statements of tasks performed, such as answering the telephone or operating the photocopier, were presented as evidence in an individual portfolio of work. At the end of the course external NVQ assessors assessed the portfolio and awarded the qualification.

A total of 16 young people enrolled on the scheme, of whom eleven completed the year-long course and seven gained their NVQs.

… I think there are only a finite amount of people with real talent in the arts and there are probably an awful lot more people who have got quite a lot of wasted general intelligence and ability … I commute from East London every day and I see trains full of people … going off to make really quite decent livings … probably earning something like thirty grand a year and I think anyone in Deptford could get on the DLR and be in Canary Wharf in ten minutes, I sort of think, well are we sidelining people into things which are quite fun, quite attractive, never going to make them any real money when we could be mainstreaming people into those opportunities which are on the doorstep and which they never seem to access – but that is a much wider regeneration issue … my other worry is that there is a very inexplicit, only half thought out, racially biased agenda to it which is, we have a large black community here, lets push them into things like music and dance, don't know if it is there at all … it is just an easy route … because that is an area where black people are obviously successful already and also it is easy for them and when you are working with young people role models in music and dance are much more attractive than role models in banking …
Partnership stakeholder

Summary of findings

- One-off participants achieved positive outcomes in terms of increasing their social networks, improving their confidence and their ability to work in groups. The majority of children and young people said they enjoyed the opportunity to try something new, socialise with other children and young people and work in teams.

- Young people who engaged with AoR over a longer period, generally strengthened their communication and interpersonal skills, their motivation and commitment, and their ability to work co-operatively.

- Some of the hoped-for individual outcomes identified by Art of Regeneration were too ambitious to be achieved during a short series of arts workshops. Outcomes such as 'problem solving' and 'self expression' represent 'higher level' skills which may be developed through more intensive long-term creative training. However, the short-term funding made such longer-term outcomes difficult to achieve.

- Young people who engaged intensively with Art of Regeneration's traineeship increased their aesthetic appreciation and understanding of the arts. While most were pursuing a career within the creative industries, trainees also developed administrative and computer skills transferable to other sectors.

- For some young people, following the Art of Regeneration pathway improved their access to education and employment immediately, while others are still hopeful that it will do so in the near future.

7. Community participation, partnership and sustainability

Summer Arts College is GRIMY!!! Can't wait til next year!!!
Summer Arts College Participant

The Art of Regeneration's relationship with the local community was intended to be one of 'mentoring' rather than 'marriage', and hence the sustainability of the initiative relied on AoR's ability to transfer skills and provide information and encouragement in order to develop community participation and ownership.

7.1 Partners and stakeholders

To ensure that all partners had a voice in the development of the programme, each of the partnership organisations had a representative on the AoR Board. In addition to this, the Deptford Fund was represented by the Chair, Russell Profitt, who later also became a member of the Albany Council of Management (CoM). The Chair of the CoM also had a place on the board. Representatives of AoR's forums (the artists and tutors, parents/carers, teachers and young people), as stakeholders, were also represented. While a place was available on the Board for a young person's representative no one person took on the responsibility of attending Board meetings (see Appendix 4). The Board oversaw the delivery of the programme and was responsible for 'approving the Delivery Plan, approving delegated projects and monitoring scheme performance' (Delivery Plan, 2001/02). A Steering Group was responsible to the Board and was made up of representatives of the partnership organisations who were experts in the fields of the arts, education and regeneration (see Appendix 4). The role of the Steering Group was to provide advice and information to the AoR staff team, to consider proposed projects, and to decide which to reject and which to take before the Board for approval.

Probably the most important partner in the AoR programme was the Albany itself. However, as pointed out earlier, it was a relatively weak player within the partnership, which made it difficult for it to sustain its key-partner position both during the pre-bid stage and the programme delivery stage.

Overall the partnership worked smoothly and effectively, although it was well into the programme that more co-operative projects developed (eg between Goldsmiths College and Art of Regeneration). Some partners described their initial perplexity at the scale of the programme, and expressed some scepticism about how certain areas of activity could contribute to Art of Regeneration's longer-term regeneration outcomes. Lewisham's Excellence in Cities team developed a positive and sustained partnership with AoR, and it still initiates and funds work at the Albany beyond the life of the SRB funding.

7.2 Participation and community ownership

Important to AoR's vision of community regeneration was the community's involvement and participation in the programme. While AoR's understanding of participation was underdeveloped and often felt like a late addition to the five main programme strands, the initiative nevertheless intended to develop four stakeholder forums targeting different participants in the programme. The proposed forums were the Youth Forum, the Parents'/Carers' Forum, the Artists'/Tutors' Forum and the Teachers' Forum.

The very essence of arts development is participation. If there are no participants there is no programme. Participation in cultural activity is at the heart of the programme.
(SRB 6 bid)

It's great that someone's doing something for the teenagers so they are off the streets. Thanks
Parent

It has, however, been suggested that AoR saw participation at a level of 'taking part', rather than as an opportunity for stakeholders to shape the programme and influence the overall strategy of community regeneration. Furthermore, while the forums formed a core part of the bid, their exact role and responsibilities were never clearly established. Representatives of the forums were offered a place on AoR's board, to bring the relevant issues from their particular community to the attention of those with the power to initiate changes to the programme. However, besides this being a potentially overwhelming experience for young people and their parents, board meetings were also not the place where discussions regarding the future directions of the programme took place, but rather where proposals were agreed. Such discussions and debates took place in more 'informal' circumstances, such as AoR staff meetings, team awaydays and discussions between the Creative Directors.

From an outcome-focused viewpoint, community participation in AoR was essential both in order for the community to sustain the programme beyond the SRB funding period, and in order for users to influence the direction of the programme. However, essentially structures were not developed which could ensure that the views and opinions of the forums fed into AoR.

Besides this structural inability of the forums to have any genuine involvement in the decision making process, there was also a lack of resources in place to encourage and support forum development. AoR only employed a dedicated Community Participation Coordinator for the first six months of the programme. While in post, the Coordinator succeeded in establishing the four forums. However, when the Coordinators' temporary contract expired, responsibility for the forums was delegated to other AoR staff members, who because of other duties were unable to prioritise that work. Forum members interpreted this as a lack of commitment to the forums on AoR's part.

Case study: meeting the Parents' Forum

Six parents (five mums and one dad) were meeting for the second Parents' Forum in January 2002. At the meeting they were joined by AoR staff members and the primary researcher. The parents had just learned that the AoR's Community Participation Coordinator was leaving, because it was a temporary post:

Mum 1: This is quite an important issue for the forum, we as parents are saying that in terms of this group and continuing, and indeed other groups that [AoR] is hoping to raise – there needs to be a key [worker]…

Mum 2: … an experienced person that people feel they can trust and count on, those are essentials if these groups are meant to be the backbone of Art of Regeneration and the community's voice … it won't work unless they have it …

Mum 1: … and with an unpaid worker it won't happen …

Mum 3: … No … You actually need a dedicated person, because it's time consuming and a skill …

Mum 2: ... and about building up relationships … because it isn't just about the different groups, it is about linking those groups to all different agencies

Mum 4: … it needs a worker to be meaningful.

Mum 1: They have fallen into the same old trap. 'Great idea', but they haven't really put the foundation for it to happen and it won't happen.

[The parents decide to raise this issue at the next board meeting]

Mum 1: It is not a setting up process, it is a continually. It just look like there is no real commitment if you just do a few months, 'that will sort them out' – that is what it sounds like to me …

As a result of the Coordinator leaving, both the Parents' Forum and the Youth Forum faltered and died away without the sustained input of a worker (one parent continued to represent the Parents' Forum at AoR Board meetings, but in effect the forum did not continue). Given that AoR aimed to bring about community regeneration in a community that already felt sceptical towards regeneration agencies and their agenda, this failure to resource its forums properly was important.

The subsequent appointment of a youth worker in summer 2002 revived the Youth Forum and it managed to attract new members. While the Youth Forum, renamed Youth Vision Arts, wanted to do its own projects, it also strove to be the voice of young people using AoR. Much preliminary work was done by the youth worker to ensure that the views put forward by the Youth Forum were representative of all young people, rather than just their own. The Youth Forum became responsible for evaluating Summer Arts College in 2003, something it successfully did together with Barnardo's Peer Research group (see Appendix 5 for evaluation postcard).

Nevertheless, the Youth Forum was not utilised by AoR to gain the views and opinions of young people, a fact illustrated by the refocus of AoR, during which some of the most popular workshops were discontinued. The Youth Forum members felt particularly alienated by this, partly because they had not been consulted about what *they* wanted to change, but more significantly because the Youth Forum knew nothing of the changes until their peers began asking them why Street Dance had been stopped. This was strongly expressed during an evaluation meeting called by the Youth Forum in December 2003:

Youth Forum member: We were asked to do the SAC [2003] evaluation and the information just hasn't been used – I mean most of the popular courses were dropped.

Creative Director 1: That decision was made because of funding …

Youth Forum member: That is fair enough, but [the Youth Forum] was not consulted. We just opened the programme and it was dropped. We didn't even know it was happening. The communication broke down somewhere …
Youth Forum evaluation meeting

The forums were intended to engage community members in AoR and to ensure that voices from the community informed the development of the programme. However, this was only the first step in the empowerment process which was meant to result in community ownership of the programme. But as shown above, the AoR partnership failed to develop a structure which allowed community stakeholders to enjoy any genuine influence and partnership in the programme, and consequently sustain the programme beyond the short-term funding.

Summary of findings

- A participation strategy was not prioritised by Art of Regeneration. Participation was largely seen at the level of 'taking part' in arts activities, rather than an opportunity to shape the overall programme. Some respondents believed senior staff were worried that too much community influence and control would distort or dilute their vision of Art of Regeneration's potential.

- The establishment of four forums (parents, young people, teachers and artists) was key to the potential development of community ownership and the sustainability of the Art of Regeneration programme. However, the forums' exact role and responsibilities were never clearly formulated, and structures and resources to ensure that the views and opinions of those involved fed into the Art of Regeneration partnership were underdeveloped.

- Short-term funding runs the risk of raising community expectations, while failing to generate sustainable, long-term improvements.

8. Conclusion

At the end of its SRB funding period, has the Art of Regeneration achieved its objectives? Does the AoR theory of change: *that community-based opportunities for participation in the creative arts can be a catalyst for sustainable regeneration*, look likely to be borne out in the longer term?

The vision of AoR was ambitious. This was to use the arts as a catalyst for community regeneration, and specifically to:

- enhance the employment prospects, education and skills of local people
- address social exclusion and entrance opportunities for disadvantaged people
- promote sustainable regeneration.

The vision was for at least six years, but SRB funding was for four, a factor that has impacted profoundly on AoR's ability to look beyond immediate outputs and keep its gaze focused clearly on the outcomes which the outputs were, in time, intended to achieve. This is a problem common to many community development initiatives. In many communities with a long history of disadvantage and failed initiatives much preliminary work is necessary to develop participation and self-confidence, but the four-year timescales of funding initiatives make no allowance for this. In such a timeframe it is impossible for an evaluation to identify and measure tangible outcomes except in the most tentative way. Instead, what we have sought to assess is the extent to which AoR has achieved its outputs and the likelihood of these eventually contributing to the longer-term changes set out in its vision.

The key lessons for the development of AoR identified in the Barnardo's literature review at the outset of the programme were as follows:

- Commitment to excellence of process and product is crucial to maximising impact
- Successful programmes are often those embedded in the existing local heritage and culture
- Specific strategies need to be developed in order to ensure that diversity and inclusiveness are valued
- Programmes must include a capacity-building strategy to ensure sustainability once a particular funding scheme is over
- Without carefully targeting provision, disproportionate levels of involvement may be enjoyed by the least disadvantaged

- More support is needed to gain and retain young people's involvement in comparison to that needed with adults
- Factors clearly associated with effectiveness include community consultation, involvement and ownership
- Effective partnerships based on shared objectives are crucial to sustainability
- Aims and motivations must be clear and transparent
- Successful programmes address the stated needs and aspirations of those involved.

AoR embraced many of these lessons:

- The commitment to artistic excellence was wholehearted across a large, diverse staff team: there was a powerful sense that nothing less than the best was good enough for Deptford

- The initiative bedded down in the Albany and drew on the history of an institution at the heart of its community. AoR was however, regarded as more 'parachuted in' than home grown

- AoR's programming strategy successfully attracted culturally diverse audiences and participants

- Although the relationship between AoR and the Albany was often problematic, and the capacity of the Albany infrastructure to support such a major initiative was certainly overestimated, capacity was built in a number of important respects. While a formal exit strategy focused on sustainability may have been desirable, the legacy of AoR to the Albany has clearly been significant. AoR saved the Albany for its community and breathed into it new life and energy

- The additional support needed by young people was recognised across the staff team and ultimately acknowledged in the youth work post

- The AoR strategy for targeting the least advantaged children in its catchment area relied upon the school and community link in the hypothesised progression route. In practice this turned out to be the weakest link and no alternative strategy was able to be developed so late in the programme's life

- The AoR partners were committed and specific partnerships developed strongly over time

Dis thing wos heavy! Thanx xxx *Summer Arts College Participant*

S.A.C. has been great – learnt loads, met new people. C ya next year.
Summer Arts College Participant

- Despite some initial local fears that AoR represented the National Theatre taking over the Albany, the aims and motives of the programme and its staff were widely understood and supported

- Audiences and participants vote with their feet. So despite the lack of conventional consultation in the development stage of AoR it is clear that needs and aspirations were frequently known and met. The demise of the Street Dance workshops was an unpopular decision that failed to acknowledge the self-articulated interests of participants. The forums as a means of ensuring community participation and ownership were not adequately developed.

There were also messages for the design and conduct of the evaluation, some of which were coterminous with the lessons for the programme itself:

- External evaluation, and the process that it implies, should be integral to the programme

- Criteria against which success is judged should be clear, and defined as far as possible by the potential beneficiaries

- Evaluation methods need to reflect the creative values of the arts

- Involving artists and beneficiaries – particularly young people – in the conduct of evaluations is valuable

- Long-term impacts and benefits should be measured

- Evaluators should strike a balance between paying attention to evidence of social and economic outcomes, while not neglecting the potential enrichment of the quality of life of those enabled to participate in the arts.

In the evaluation of AoR we have attempted to ensure that the process of evaluation was well integrated with the real, creative life of the programme. At times our relationship to the programme has mirrored aspects of AoR's relationship with the local community or with the Albany. With a full-time research officer based at the Albany with the AoR team in the first year of the programme, a huge amount of familiarity was gained – but the externality necessary to critical reflection was sometimes lost. In the second and third years a much more part-time presence was maintained, and supplemented by specific evaluation strategies using peer researchers, audience research and interviews with key informants.

By utilising a Theory of Change model we were able to work with stakeholders to bring to the surface and articulate the hypothesis underlying the initiative, and then to identify outcomes at stages in the life of the initiative which would suggest whether the work was 'on track' to achieve at least some of its ultimate intended outcomes and thereby validate the hypothesis.

As an evaluation team we paid considerable attention to the fact that this was an arts-based initiative in which a key 'outcome' was the enrichment of individuals' lived experience as well as one which it was hoped would result in social and economic gains for the local community. We tried to devise methods which were not only young-people friendly but were congruent with the creative focus of the work. Some of these were more successful than others. We hope this report reflects our learning from evaluating such a large, complex and creative 'experiment' in encouraging community regeneration through the arts.

This workshop has been excellent to come to and taught me to be confident about myself.
Summer Arts College Participant

So, what is our assessment of the achievements of AoR?

There is good evidence that AoR has achieved many of the early and interim outcomes it sought to achieve. The Albany has been regenerated and there is now a busy arts centre at the heart of Deptford. A local audience for a wide range of productions and events has been established and maintained. This is a significant achievement which, if sustained, will have a long-term beneficial impact on the community.

Approximately 13 per cent of the young people who have been involved in AoR activities have taken significant steps along the progression route, developing confidence, artistic skill, aesthetic appreciation and their sense of a creative community to which they are active contributors. It is not however surprising that most of these young people were not the most disadvantaged, disengaged and disenchanted of the deprived boroughs in which they lived. For individuals to achieve so much in a couple of years they had to be highly personally motivated, with reasonable self-esteem, and most had supportive families. Motivating and involving young people with poorer personal resources, educational attainment and assurance is a much slower and more uncertain business. AoR certainly provided a safe space for many such young people to experience and enjoy creative activities, but the leap from 'consuming' to 'participating/producing' is one that the *most* disadvantaged young people are least likely to make.

This may be less significant in terms of longer-term community regeneration if other parts of the imputed changes occur. If the relatively more advantaged young people who have travelled furthest on the AoR pathway remain in the area into adulthood, one aspect of the 'virtuous circle' will have been achieved.

In addition, the development of businesses and community arts initiatives, the attraction of investment to an area with a vibrant 'creative hub', young people growing up and becoming parents more likely to be active in the community than their own parents were, will all have their own trickle-down effects.

I think it was heavy and I thank u for all the help.
Summer Arts College Participant

It was great and taught me plenty.
Summer Arts College Participant

The Art of Regeneration was a vision for unlocking the creativity of a community operationalised as a three-year experiment in one of the most deprived areas of South London. Its successes are impressive: the Albany theatre has been transformed, and over a four-year period hundreds of children and young people have enjoyed high-quality creative arts experiences. Art of Regeneration has reached young people from some of the most materially and culturally underprivileged neighbourhoods in England, while maintaining the highest pedagogic and production standards.

However, no initiative on this scale is without its difficulties and challenges. Winning the trust of local communities and ensuring long-term sustainability and participation, is something that takes time and continued effort well beyond a four-year project. AoR can pride itself on putting some key building blocks in place. Whether its vision is realised in the longer term is a question to be addressed in the years to come.

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Appendix 1: The AoR programme structure and its development

The AoR programme comprised five strands, each of which stood alone, but all of which were interrelated and intended to contribute to the achievement of the programme's overall aim and objectives.

In-school (primary and secondary schools)

This strand aimed to support the delivery of the National Curriculum through workshops, performances and storytelling in local partnership schools in Lewisham and Greenwich. Artists, such as actors, storytellers, musicians, directors and filmmakers, led workshop sessions with children and young people using creative activities. Through the in-school strand, schools were encouraged to watch professional shows performed either at the National Theatre or at the Albany. Children and young people were also given opportunities to develop and perform their own shows at the Albany. This strand furthermore provided INSET training days for teachers and artists in order to enable adults to support and develop creative learning in schools.

The primary in-school programme[17] ran from September 2001 to March 2004, focusing on classics such as Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Marlowe's *Dr Faustus* and a storytelling programme called *Word Alive*. AoR worked with 22 primary partnership schools. It was expected that some of the schools would continue to benefit from NT Education's projects after the end of the AoR programme.

The secondary in-school programme began in January 2002 and ended in July 2003. Throughout the programme it was significantly harder to engage and develop links with secondary schools than with primary schools. With a few exceptions, relationships were often weak and harder to sustain because of the pressures schools face and the shifting population of teachers. Following a refocus of the programme in Spring 2003, AoR practically ceased its in-school work with secondary schools in July 2003.

[17] The Primary In-school programme was evaluated independently by a team of researchers from the Institute of Education and is therefore not covered in this evaluation. The final report is available on www.ioe.ac.uk. The rest of the AoR's programme was subject to evaluation by Barnardo's Policy and Research Unit.

Out-of-school (primary and secondary age groups)

The out-of-school programme focused on providing workshops, performances, training and advocacy groups for children and young people at the Albany. The creative workshop programme offered children and young people opportunities to work with artists in a range of different art forms, including circus skills, visual arts, dance, musical theatre, digital media, drama and singing. The workshops were run either during term time, after school and at weekends or in the school holidays. The out-of-school strand was split into *Act Tiv Zone* for the primary school cohort (aged 7-11)[18] and into the *Albany Interactive* for the secondary cohort (aged 12-18).

The primary age group were again significantly easier to engage than the secondary age group. AoR developed and sustained a regular cohort of children that came to a multitude of different arts workshops. Act Tiv Zone ran from January 2002 to December 2003, offering more than 30 term-long workshops as well as workshops during most holidays.

Albany Interactive, which ran from September 2001 to August 2004, targeted the older age group and hence had to adapt to their specific needs. Initially the programme focused exclusively on workshops teaching young people a creative skill, such as Djing or dance. However, the drop-off rate of these term-long workshops was often high and the take-up low. This was to some degree explained by the high pressure on the young people during the school year, in terms of homework and parents' expectations. Nevertheless, AoR also found that a process-focused approach, such as skills-based workshops, was often less successful in sustaining the young people over a period of time, than a more product-focused approach where the young people worked towards an end product. Consequently, in the last year of the programme, *Albany Interactive* focused mainly on the productions of plays, with auditions, weekly rehearsals and a final performance in front of an audience.

Besides term-time activities the out-of-school strand also included:

Summer Arts College, a three-week scheme of intensive arts courses for young people (aged 13-18) that ran for four summers, while the equivalent week-long *Summer Arts Zone* for younger children (aged 8-11) ran three times in the summers of 2002, 2003 and 2004.

AoR's Youth Forum, which renamed itself Youth Vision Arts, ran from summer 2001 to December 2003.

[18] In reality Act Tiv Zone only offered workshops to children between eight and eleven, because organisations have to be registered with Ofsted in order to provide services to under 8s.

People infrastructure

The people infrastructure strand focused on building capacity within the community by offering educational and training opportunities in the arts to young adults, artists, teachers and creative businesses. Individual programmes within this strand were:

- Work-based training: *CASE* (*Co-ordinating Arts, Shows and Events*): an NVQ level 2 practical training course in Arts Administration. The course targeted 18-26 year olds and offered them hands-on experience of working in all departments of a busy arts centre. A total of 16 young people enrolled on the programme (eight per year), of whom eleven completed the year-long course and seven gained their NVQs.

- *Head for Business*: provided business support, training and micro-loans to adults who wished to start their own creative businesses. The project targeted those with difficulties accessing mainstream funding or loans. Although Head for Business belonged under the AoR umbrella of programmes, the project was successful in gaining separate funding at an early stage and has continued independently since SRB funding came to an end.

- *MA in Cross-Sectoral and Community Arts*: this course began in 2003 and continues to offer practising artists the opportunity to develop their practical skills while gaining an educational qualification. The course was developed in partnership between AoR, NT Education and Goldsmiths College and is based within the PACE (Professional and Community Education) at Goldsmiths College.

Arts animation (the arts infrastructure)

This strand focused on the refurbishment of the Albany, 'transforming a neglected community facility into a focal point for learning, creativity and social activity' (SRB bid). This included the development of an audience base to which a new creative programme of plays, shows, concerts and events could be promoted. The first phase of the refurbishment was completed in October 2002 with the reopening of the theatre space. Since then the Albany Theatre has hosted a varied programme, with visiting productions from NT Education, shows commissioned by AoR, *Albany Interactive Youth Theatre* and community events. Examples of productions hosted by the Albany include: Family Sundays (performances for children and adults), Hubble Bubble (a multicultural club night) and Bringing the House Down (poetry reading). In addition to bringing NT productions to the Albany, this strand also encouraged local residents to take advantage of AoR's partnership with the NT by offering discount tickets for certain performances at the National Theatre, South Bank.

Digital arts and media

It was initially intended for the digital arts strand to be delivered in partnership with PaxVision, a local arts organisation. However, this partnership broke down approximately six months into the AoR programme, as there were issues over value for money and the type of resources proposed. AoR instead took control of the strand and has since developed a digital arts suite that allows film editing and sound recording. This strand focused on specialist skills training and technical support to the community, by bridging the 'digital divide'. It furthermore developed wireless access for laptop users using the Albany, in addition to a recording studio that allows for recordings of performances in the theatre.

Other activities undertaken by AoR

Participation played an important role in AoR's bid and although it did not form an individual strand, four forums were developed more or less successfully.

- The Youth Forum (supported by the out-of-school strand)
- The Artists' Forum
- The Teachers' Forum
- The Parents'/Carers' Forum

National Theatre activities undertaken by AoR

- NT Shell Connections programme: youth theatres all over the country participate in this competition to perform at the Royal National Theatre. As a regional partner, the Albany hosted a week-long regional showcase in 2003 and 2004, where respectively 16 and 13 youth theatres, including the *Albany Interactive Youth Theatre*, performed their plays at the Albany.

Towards the end of the SRB funding AoR was actively seeking further funding to continue its work. While overall funding for the core cost of the programme was hard to obtain, AoR did generate funds for individual projects that did not fall within specific strands. Such projects included:

- Ucre8: a pilot accredited on-line/off-line learning programme for young people involved in performance and the creative industries. This pilot was developed in partnership with Connections and Collage Arts
- NESTA Digital Project
- Next Generation: Youth Music.

Appendix 2: Methodology

Long-term outcomes	Methods used/ Data collected
To enhance the employment prospects, education and skills of local people	■ Interviews/focus groups with CASE trainees
To decrease social exclusion and increase entrance opportunities for disadvantaged people to the arts	■ Interviews with community members and activists ■ Albany Box Office data
To promote sustainable regeneration	■ Interviews with local community members and activists
Penultimate outcomes	
Community-run creative facilities and programmes	■ Interviews with Albany staff and tenants ■ Interviews with community members and activists ■ Interviews with artists and tutors
Self-sustaining creative businesses	■ Attendance data from the business training course ■ Analysis of evaluation forms ■ Interviews/focus groups with CASE trainees
Pathways of creative participation leading to education and employment for local people – including the most disadvantaged groups	■ Analysis of AoR's database of children and young people ■ Interviews/focus groups with CASE trainees ■ Interviews with peer motivators ■ Interviews with community members and activists ■ Intermediate outcomes
Participation of local people in developing facilities and programmes	■ Interviews with community members and activists ■ Interviews with CASE trainees ■ Interviews with external consultants ■ Interviews with AoR steering group and board members

Local use of editing and broadcast facilities	■ Questionnaire to users and clients of digital facilities: no data forthcoming
Completion of training in arts administration and editing and broadcasting skills, and employment arising from these	■ Interviews/focus groups with CASE trainees ■ Personal outlook questionnaires CASE trainees ■ Attendance of AoR staff meetings ■ Interviews/informal conversations with AoR staff members ■ Questionnaire to users and clients of digital facilities: no data forthcoming
Audiences representative of local community – including the most disadvantaged	■ Audience survey of Hubble Bubble ■ Albany Box Office data ■ Participant observation at Family Sundays ■ Attendance of AoR productions
Young people's increasing progression from schools and Summer Arts College into ongoing classes and performance	■ Analysis of AoR's database of children and young people ■ AoR team written documents Interviews with children and young people ■ Postal questionnaire for parents/carers
Young people's development of 'higher level' creative skills	■ Participant observation in workshops ■ Evaluation of Summer Arts College in 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 ■ Interviews with SAC participants ■ Interviews with peer motivators ■ Postal questionnaire for parents/carers

	■ Attendance of *Albany Interactive* youth theatre performances ■ Interviews with Albany Interactive youth theatre members ■ 'Spidergrams' by workshop participants ■ Creative evaluation methods (eg graffiti boards, poster questionnaires) ■ Training AoR's Youth Forum in evaluation methods and supporting their creative evaluation of SAC03 ■ Interviews with artists and tutors
Early outcomes	
Increase in young people's access, confidence and basic creative skills	■ Evaluation of Summer Arts College in 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 ■ Interviews with SAC participants ■ Interviews with peer motivators ■ Interviews/focus groups with CASE trainees ■ Personal outlook questionnaires CASE trainees ■ Postal questionnaires for parents/carers ■ Interviews with artists and tutors ■ 'Spidergrams' by workshop participants ■ Participant observation in workshops ■ Creative evaluation methods (eg graffiti boards, poster questionnaires) ■ Discussion groups with workshop participants (using drama to generate data)

	■ Training AoR's Youth Forum in evaluation methods and supporting their creative evaluation of SAC03 ■ Attendance of Youth Forum meetings
Involvement of local people in AOR forums	■ Attendance of Youth Forum meetings ■ Attendance of Parents' Forum meetings ■ Attendance of Artists' Forum meetings/events ■ Establishment of a web-based chat room for the Teachers' Forum ■ Interviews with forum members ■ Attendance of Albany Membership Association meetings and events
Recruitment to arts administration training	■ Attendance of AoR staff meetings ■ Interviews/informal conversations with AoR staff members ■ Interviews/focus group with CASE trainees ■ Personal outlook questionnaires from CASE trainees ■ AoR team written documents
Initial activities	
Establishment of creative workshops programme (in and out of school)	■ Participation observation in workshops ■ Analysis of attendance data ■ Interviews with young people ■ Interviews with artists and tutors ■ Interviews with teachers

Establishment of arts administration training	■ Attendance of AoR staff meetings ■ Interviews/focus groups with CASE trainees ■ Personal outlook questionnaires CASE trainees
Establishment of business start-up	■ Attendance of business training courses ■ Analysis of evaluation forms ■ Interviews/informal conversations with AoR staff members
Refurbishment of the Albany	■ Participant observation ■ Attendance of Albany Membership Association meetings and events ■ Interviews with external consultants
Development of programming at the Albany	■ Attendance of AoR productions ■ Audience survey of Hubble Bubble ■ Interviews with community members and activists

Appendix 3: Data analysis and storage

Art of Regeneration used a database called EDNA to store its contact details. Contacts were stored under a number of different categories (eg arts organisations, media and press, tutors and artists).

For this analysis the contact details saved in the category 'individual young people' were copied and transferred into SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) in August 2004. A range of personal information was available, including postcodes, school attendance, ethnicity, gender and age. It furthermore gave details of all the courses and workshops that children and young people had participated in.

The data contained within this file was cleaned by removing duplicate names, names of organisations and entrances without names attached. Following the cleaning of the data the file consisted of 2,447 entries. A sample of 15 per cent was selected randomly using SPSS (n=367). To ensure that the sample contained a high number of entries with personal information, the data was cleaned again, removing entries without full postcodes or without any personal data. This process generated a sample of 12 per cent or 294 entries. This was further reduced by removing details of the children and young people who were on the database but did not actually take part in any activities organised by AoR. The final sample of 222 children and young people was used to investigate:

- The demographic profile of children and young people in contact with AoR's out-of-school programme.
- The number of children and young people in contact with AoR's out-of-school programme who attended AoR's partnership schools.
- The level of involvement that children and young people had with AoR's out-of-school programme.

Appendix 4:
AoR Board and Steering Group

AoR Board 2002 – 2004

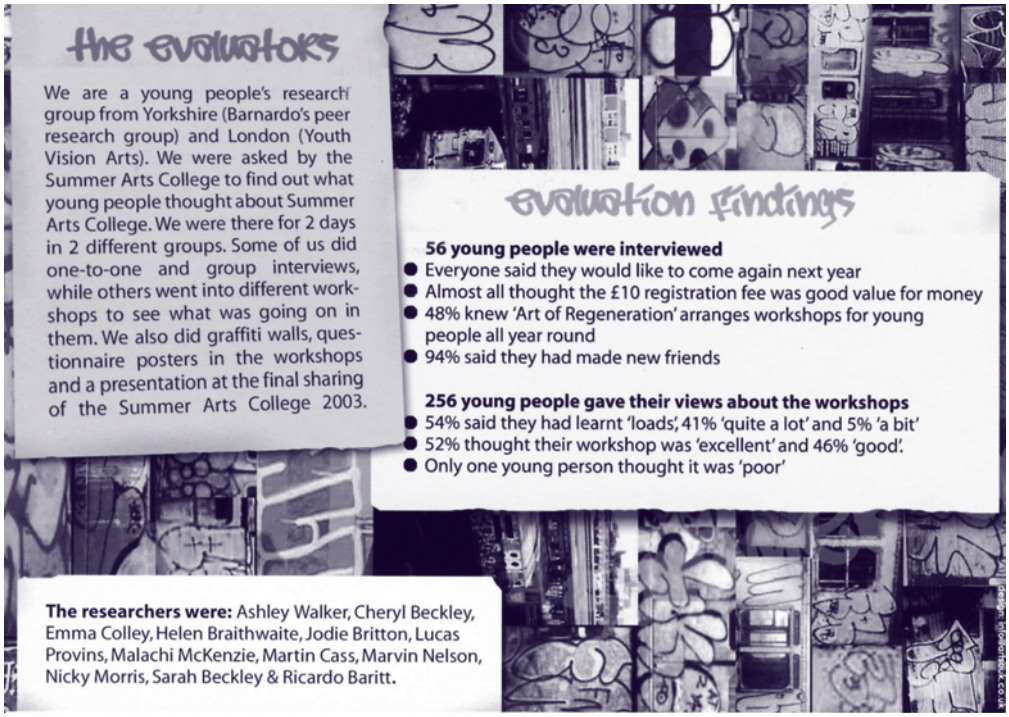
Cllr McGarrigle	*LB Lewisham (Chair)*
Menna McGregor	*National Theatre*
Cllr Adefiranye	*LB Lewisham*
Russell Profitt	*Deptford Fund*
Mark Dakin	*National Theatre*
Julian Rudd	*(Chair) Albany Association*
Cllr Grant	*LB Greenwich*
Lindel Salu	*AoR Parents' Forum*
Liz Leek	*Lewisham College*
Kay Stables	*Goldsmiths College*
Pauline Lyons	*AoR Teachers' Forum*
Ben Thomas	*AoR Artists' Forum*

AoR Steering Group 2002 – 2004

Gavin Barlow	*Albany Chief Executive*
Richard McVicar	*Deptford Youth Forum*
David Brownlee	*LB Lewisham*
Jeremy Peyton-Jones	*Goldsmiths College*
Aileen Buckton	*LB Lewisham*
Gordon Pope	*Excellence in Cities*
Andy Cooper	*Albany Association*
Pete Pope	*Deptford Community Forum*
Al Dix	*LB Greenwich*
Hilary Renwick	*LB Lewisham*
Mike Hickie	*LB Greenwich*
Beverley Rose	*Albany Association*
Derek Hilyer	*Goldsmiths College*
Melanie Sharpe	*Art of Regeneration*
Sally Manser	*Lewisham EiC Action Zone*
Sara Scott	*Barnardo's*
Marjorie Mayo	*Goldsmiths College*
Joyce Wilson	*London Arts*

Appendix 5: Evaluation postcard

An evaluation postcard written and produced by young people attending AoR's Youth Forum (Youth Vision Arts) and Barnardo's Peer Research Group, based on their evaluation findings of Summer Arts College 2003



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