

# **Report of the Strategic Director - Place to the meeting of Keighley Area Committee to be held on Thursday 26 March 2020**

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## **Subject:**

Keighley Creative Space

## **Summary statement:**

This report gives an update on the work of Keighley Creative Space and in particular the Keighley Arts & Film Festival 2019.

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**Portfolio:**  
**Neighbourhoods & Community  
Safety**

**Overview & Scrutiny Committee:**  
**Corporate**

## **1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report gives an update on the work of Keighley Creative Space and in particular the Keighley Arts & Film Festival 2019.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Appendix A gives a summary of the work of Keighley Creative Space and in particular the Keighley Arts & Film Festival 2019.

## **3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 Keighley Creative Space (KCS) was formed 5 years ago when a national charity, East Street Arts, was asked by the Co-operative Society to take over a two storied department store in Keighley.
- 3.2 Over the last four years (until October 2019) the Co-op have paid East Street Arts a small annual retainer to manage the building and to find individual artists to rent small areas within the ground floor of the building, which have been temporarily walled off to make studios, at a very low rent per month, to encourage people to become self-employed, and/or to start to promote, show and sell their work.
- 3.3 Two and a half years ago there were enough artists in residence (from the initial 2 to 8) to form a Community Interest Company in their own right. In the last 18 months however things have significantly changed and accelerated for KCS and the number of artists' studios housed in KCS has expanded to 17 with a couple more studios currently being built.
- 3.4 In June 2018 KCS became the organising hub for a collective of over 40 different community groups and grass roots arts organisations who came together to try and develop and deliver the first ever Keighley Arts and Film Festival (KAFF). This was successfully delivered in October 2019, with numerous community participation events held over several months prior to the KAFF long week-end (e.g. with young people to make lanterns for the parade, with people with disabilities to write and perform a play). Over 40 different events and activities were held featuring over 100 performers (many who were performing for the first time - such as Flash Mob dancers, community choir, poets).

## **4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

- 4.1 Not applicable.

## **5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES**

- 5.1 No significant risks.

## **6. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

- 6.1 There are no known legal implications.

## **7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

7.1.1 No implications.

### **7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

7.2.2 No implications.

### **7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

7.3.1 No impacts.

### **7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

7.4.1 No implications.

### **7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

7.5.1 No specific implications.

### **7.6 TRADE UNION**

7.6.1 None.

### **7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

7.7.1 The information provided in this report is relevant to all Wards within Keighley Area.

### **7.8 AREA COMMITTEE WARD PLAN IMPLICATIONS**

7.8.1 The actions contained within this report impact on some aspects of Ward Plans.

## **8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

8.1 None.

## **9. OPTIONS**

9.1 This report is presented primarily for information.

## **10. RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 Keighley Area Committee notes the work undertaken by Keighley Creative Space and the success of the Keighley Arts & Film Festival 2019.

## **11. APPENDICES**

11.1 Appendix A – Keighley Creative Space – Report to Keighley Area Committee

## **12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

12.1 None.

## Appendix A

### KEIGHLEY CREATIVE SPACE

Report to Keighley Area Committee on 26/3/20

#### ***Our history to present***

Keighley Creative Space (KCS) was formed 5 years ago when a national charity, East Street Arts, was asked by the Co-operative Society to take over a two storied department store, which they had vacated a few years earlier, and had laid empty since.

The Co-op had the building on a lease from a property company for many years previously, and the lease still had around eight years to run. The Co-op were responsible for 100% Business Rates, so it was in their interest to get a charity to take over the running of the building so the rates bill reduced by 80%.

Over the last four years (until October 2019) the Co-op have paid East Street Arts a small annual retainer to manage the building and to find individual artists to rent small areas within the ground floor of the building, which have been temporarily walled off to make studios, at a very low rent per month, to encourage people to become self-employed, and/or to start to promote, show and sell their work.

Two and a half years ago there were enough artists in residence (from the initial 2 to 8) to form a Community Interest Company in their own right. In the last 18 months however things have significantly changed and accelerated for KCS. During the last 18 months the number of artists' studios housed in KCS has expanded to 17 with a couple more studios currently being built.

The biggest change has been from a predominantly inward looking focus on individual artists to an outward facing, mass community engagement focus.

#### ***BIG Shift 2018: The Festival (and more!)***

In June 2018 KCS became the organising hub for a collective of over 40 different community groups and grass roots arts organisations who came together to try and develop and deliver the first ever Keighley Arts and Film Festival (KAFF). This was successfully delivered in October 2019, with numerous community participation events held over several months prior to the KAFF long week-end (e.g. with young people to make lanterns for the parade, with people with disabilities to write and perform a play).

Over 40 different events and activities were held featuring over 100 performers (many who were performing for the first time - such as Flash Mob dancers, community choir, poets). KCS was the host venue for several of the film and performance events; others were held in community buildings, shopping centre, and public parks and open spaces. Altogether around £60,000 was raised by KCS from a range of different funders for KAFF 2019, and in addition we helped two other local community projects raise an addition £15,000 each from Arts Council to contribute additional participatory events and activities during the KAFF long week-end.

Parallel to the KAFF organising process, KCS was also successful in securing an Arts Council grant of £15,000 to build a display gallery and small community cinema in the

upstairs area of the former department store. With voluntary effort we have also built a community and children's reading library and a performance space (which currently hosts an open mike poetry and prose performance space, regularly attracting 15 or so performers and an audience of around 60 on a monthly basis for example) and an Education Room (currently home to a weekly arts and crafts group for people living with dementia and their carers for example). All of these new developments bring in a wide range of individuals and community groups keen to participate. Nine artists (including two local community arts groups) have been supported by a KCS Curator to display and promote exhibitions in our gallery area, open to all the people of Keighley and visitors to the town to come in and enjoy.

## **How are people and communities involved with your project?**

People are involved in a range of different ways:

### ***As arts studio holders***

These are often people who have changed direction in life (such as through redundancy or mental health challenges) and are renting one of the 14 (soon to be 17) studios to develop their art hobby into a business, or a social enterprise. We also house established artists who need big physical spaces for their work and/or to hold community groups and classes.

### ***Our group of directors and transition towards a charity***

We have four Directors of our existing Community Interest Company structure. However as we are in transition to becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation we have recently recruited seven new people from a range of backgrounds to take over as Trustees as soon as the Charity Commission approve our bid. The Trustees are all very experienced people in running organisations, managing finances and taking forward larger scale change.

### ***Volunteers***

We have a number of volunteers who do practical tasks such as basic building upkeep and fundraising. We house Keighley Cat Rescue and their charity shop in their small shop, a part of our building which is totally reliant on volunteers. For the Keighley Arts and Film Festival (KAFF) in October 2019 we had over 20 volunteer stewards working throughout the week-end.

### ***As participants and performers***

We have held and will hold numerous workshops in preparation for different aspects of the KAFF, for example in 2019 this ranged from workshops in schools to produce paper sculptures for the Keighley 'Little People' trail, to open drop-in sessions in the shopping centre for making lanterns for the giant lantern parade, to dance rehearsals for the shopping centre 'flash mob' performance. All together 700 people of all ages and backgrounds were involved in our pre-festival workshops and subsequent performances, events and activities over the Festival four days.

### ***As audiences***

During KAFF, we had over 800 people from our community, mostly families with children, attending our Festival opening night lantern, fire, giant sculptures and musical parade. We had many times that number in total attend the 20 plus events and performances over the

Festival long weekend. In tandem, we held 6 exhibitions in our Arts Council funded gallery over summer 2019, with large audiences for our opening nights, and then throughout the weeks each exhibition was on display. In total over 1000 members of the public visited the gallery. Exhibitions were developed through our community links, for example, we collaborated with a young local art graduate and Dementia Friendly Keighley to mount a month long exhibition of work inspired by the artist's grandmother who was living with dementia. Our opening night was attended by many local people living with dementia and their carers.

Over the last 18 months we have had meaningfully engaged with more than 3,500 local Keighley residents, businesses and other community group workers and participants. Our four-day inaugural Keighley Arts and Film Festival in October 2020 alone attracted over 2,000 participants, many of them as very hands on participants, not just 'audiences'.

### ***Current change***

Based on the successful expansion of the work of KCS in the last 18 months, the Co-op now want to transfer the remainder of the lease (3 years) to KCS from April 2020 (it is currently on an insecure basis with a 28 day notice period). KCS would have responsibility for the whole building, with no retainer from the Co-op, but all rates paid and rent free for the three years. East Street Arts have been clear they want to withdraw at that stage.

Thus, KCS has now submitted an application to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (in November 2019). We were also successful that month in bid for £5k to CBMDC for an Interim Director post for 2 days a week up until end of April 2020 to get the organisation ready for taking over full use of and responsibility for the whole of the two floor large building from April 2020. This includes setting up and training a new Trustee Board to run the Charity.

The 'arts' is not something it is known for either by its residents nor externally. However, the last four years has seen the gradual growth of self-employed artist based in the Keighley Creative Space (KCS) start-up, low rent studios, and the explosion of community engagement and participation in a wide range of arts mediums including:

- photography
- sculpture
- painting and drawing
- music and dance
- poetry
- street performance and drama

This has been brought about by KCS's shift to outward facing community engagement work, including its key role in coordinating and delivering the four-day inaugural Keighley Arts and Film Festival (KAFF) in October 2019.

This has been further expanded through expanding use of our building including the opening of the KCS gallery, cinema, community library, performance space, education room and community drop-in events (such as the Maker's Market). During the last 18 months we have worked with over 40 local community, voluntary and business organisations, and literally hundreds of local residents of all ages, cultural backgrounds and genders via these new initiatives. Our evaluations for funders and sponsors of these show a great tide of enthusiasm for more of everything people have tasted and enjoyed so far.

## ***Our key aims is to make a difference***

Having a staffed, accessible, well-promoted community arts centre at the heart of the town, with outreach and engagement work to take the arts to communities in order to bring them into the many events, activities and opportunities the building itself offers, will be a real boon to the reputation of the town, to community integration, opening up the arts and creative industries as potential hobbies, and also as potential careers for young people and adults who are out of work or looking to change career paths.

Our aims:

- To take 'the arts' to 'the people' in whatever ways excite or interest them as initiators participants and/or as audiences
- To outreach to and engage all the Town's diverse communities
- To build inclusivity and diversity into all aspects of our work
- To widen opportunities for new experience and open up opportunities for residents of all ages to experience new/diverse arts and film mediums
- To inspire potential new artists, musicians, writers and other creative talent
- To widen skill, training and employment opportunities both in the arts and creative industries
- To stimulate opportunities for existing arts and film initiatives and individuals to network and collaborate and strengthen inter-connectivity
- To support and strengthen the growth of Keighley's existing arts and film businesses and initiatives
- Bring more financial backing into arts and film initiatives in Keighley to enable new initiatives and widen access and reach
- To deliver an annual Keighley Arts and Film Festival (KAFF) to bring together the community to experience and participate in art, music and film performances

## **Where we fit into the local and District Strategic Picture**

We work with a range of strategic initiatives and with key partners:

- Keighley Town Fund bid (we were invited to the initial stakeholder meeting and have applied for a place on the Board)
- Bradford 2025: we have met with the Director and are making a video focusing on creative initiatives in Keighley (our own and others) for the bid
- Leap (creative people and places):
- Community Led Local Development (CLLD): we have been working with Airedale Enterprise Services for over six months to try and release some of the European funds for supporting self-employment potential of the arts and creative industries: unfortunately we keep hitting match funding hurdle requirements so far
- CBMDC Culture and Tourism Strategy: we have met with Nicola Greenan and will be organising for her to meet others in Keighley
- Bids going in the Arts Council for KAFF2020 and extended gallery and education work
- Bid gone into Big Lottery for a range of posts over 3 years.

HOWEVER...despite all the above, we are still struggling with little finance, huge amount

of voluntary commitments and time investment and everything remains very vulnerable until we can secure funding.