

# Arts in rural England

Why the arts are at the heart of rural life



Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts in England. Between 2005 and 2008, we are investing £1.7 billion of public funds from Government and the National Lottery. This is the bedrock of support for the arts in England.

Our vision is to promote the arts at the heart of national life, reflecting England's rich and diverse cultural identity.

We believe that the arts have the power to transform lives and communities, and to create opportunities for people throughout the country.

Cover: DanceEast commissioned dancers from Richard Alston Dance Company to perform in front of Alison Wildings' *Migrant* sculpture at Snape Maltings concert hall in Suffolk as part of the National Lottery 10th birthday celebrations. Photo: Paul Nixon

# Contents

|                                   |    |   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|---|----|
| <b>Foreword</b>                   | 2  | <b>Rural communities</b>                    |    |
|                                   |    | Social networks                             | 17 |
| <b>Introduction</b>               |    | Community development                       | 18 |
| Rural England                     | 5  | Consultation and communication              | 19 |
| Rural change                      | 5  |   |    |
| The arts reflect                  | 6  | <b>Rural cultures</b>                       |    |
| The arts respond                  | 6  | Rural issues                                | 21 |
|                                   |    | Rural environments                          | 22 |
| <b>The arts and rural England</b> |    | Rural connections                           | 23 |
| The range                         | 7  |   |    |
|                                   |    | <b>Looking forward</b>                      |    |
| <b>Rural economies</b>            |    | Our commitment to<br>people in rural areas  | 25 |
| The creative economy              | 9  | Getting involved                            | 25 |
| Rural festivals                   | 10 |   |    |
| Cultural tourism                  | 11 | <b>Further information</b>                  |    |
|                                   |    | Arts Council England<br>rural working group | 26 |
| <b>Rural regeneration</b>         |    | Getting in touch with us                    | 27 |
| Market town regeneration          | 13 | Websites                                    | 28 |
| Farm diversification              | 15 |   |    |

# Foreword

New theatre, music from every part of the world, challenging visual art festivals and events – the artistic life of rural areas could scarcely be more creative or diverse. Not enough people have realised this.

The arts reflect the rapid changes happening in rural areas, and are responding to that change in many practical ways. They are at the heart of rural regeneration in market towns and villages. They are part of farm diversification and the extension of tourism. They are supporting education and youth work, helping village organisations to thrive and encouraging community cohesion.

In 2004 we looked at all of our policies, programmes and investment streams to make sure that we were meeting the needs of the arts in rural areas. That work included one of the largest consultation exercises undertaken by Arts Council England, with more than 400 artists, creative people, agencies and communities participating in regional and national meetings.

We learned more about some of the extraordinary and innovative work that artists are doing in rural areas, and about their contribution to the country's economic, social and environmental regeneration. However, we also found that this work was largely unrecognised by rural agencies and government departments, critics and journalists, and even within our own organisation.

At a time when the Government is undertaking a fundamental rethink of its relationship with the countryside, we want to make sure that the arts are at the heart of its thinking and decision-making.

This publication, and a series of case studies on our website, aim to raise the profile of this neglected pool of talent. We want the arts to be recognised for what we have discovered they are – an essential tool in creating vibrant and sustainable rural communities.

**Sir Christopher Frayling**  
Chair, Arts Council England  
November 2005



*Nest in the crab apple tree: willow by Laura Ellen Bacon at Harley Gallery, Nottinghamshire 2004.*  
Photo: Laura Ellen Bacon



# Introduction

## Rural England

'This green and pleasant land': rural life has always been the heart of England. Although nine out of 10 people now live in towns, the countryside remains a foundation of our culture and a source of nourishment in every sense.

Many of our greatest artists have come from the country, and many have made it the subject of their work. The worlds they have imagined and represented are as varied as the countryside itself, ranging from spectacular natural beauty to simple domesticity.

Today, rural England encompasses prosperous tourist centres, down-at-heel market towns, industrialised farming and the original cottage industries. Its communities are pre- and post-industrial, suburban and remote, wealthy and poor. The countryside is endlessly diverse; so are the interests and needs of its inhabitants, in the arts as in everything else.

## Rural change

Change is a constant. It is driven partly by a restructuring of farming so deep that some speak of a 'post-agricultural society'. As subsidy shifts from food production to land management, the rural world is evolving. Shops, post offices, garages and schools close while new cultural and service industries bring work: the patterns of rural life are transformed.

Each year, about 100,000 people move to the countryside. They bring new investment and energy but at the cost of higher property prices and other pressures; they also have different expectations, not least about the arts. Rural communities with long traditions of coexistence and cooperation find themselves negotiating new settlements over identity, values and culture.

Left: *Epidermis* by Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva, salmon skins and skeletons suspended from nylon threads at Berwick Gymnasium Art Gallery, Northumberland.  
Photo: courtesy of Commissions North

The arts are how people imagine and express themselves. As rural communities adjust to new ways of life, artists have a vital role in reflecting on the changes, and in responding to them with equally new ideas.

### The arts reflect

Artists have always reflected what surrounds them. Many are now concerned with the transformation of the rural landscape and the lives of its inhabitants. The foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) crisis in 2001 gave this work urgency and momentum, and arts projects helped farming people express and, in some cases, begin to come to terms with, a traumatic experience.

Commemoration of those events is the most visible instance of the arts' capacity to reflect on rural change. But there are many other examples, such as *Four Star*, a photographic elegy to rural garages by Jenny Graham; *On The Edge*, Kate Bellis's visual record of hill farming; and *Bowled a Googly*, a play about village friends by New Perspectives and Oxfordshire Touring Theatre Company.

The arts have a unique and historically important role in recording change. Artists

create symbols, metaphors and experiences that open hearts and minds, and focus questions, debate and action. Above all, art creates opportunities for people to articulate and define their own lives – to be the subject, and not only the object, of change.

### The arts respond

The arts also respond directly and creatively to change, as the examples in this publication illustrate. In the diversification of the farming industry, the arts are creating new businesses in former farm buildings, or adding value to food retailing. They are enriching the tourism economy, especially where there are fewer natural attractions for visitors.

The arts are also strengthening voluntary organisations, and supporting community development. They are creating new opportunities for young people and supporting education. They are bringing people together in community events and reducing isolation. They are forging partnerships with health and social services, with local authorities and with businesses.

The arts are at the heart of rural communities' future.

# The arts and rural England

## The range

Art in Britain has become more visible and more confident in recent years, especially in cities where the idea of creative industries and cultural quarters is well established. But that emphasis on urban culture can be misleading. Rural England has seen a similar growth in arts activity – in market towns, villages and even wildernesses.

The days when the phrase ‘rural arts’ suggested bucolic stereotypes should be long gone, but the quality and variety of the arts that thrive in the countryside are still under-appreciated. Here is a snapshot of what rural areas offer:

- internationally recognised centres of excellence as varied as Snape Maltings (music), Yorkshire Sculpture Park and the Arvon Foundation (literature)
- regional theatre companies, such as those which form the Pride of Place

network and have commissioned 95 new plays in the past five years

- award-winning public art commissions, including the programme at Kielder Forest in Northumberland and Andy Goldsworthy’s *Sheepfolds* in Cumbria
- a network of 3,000 village hall promoters, bringing national and international performers to rural audiences, without which a third of their audiences would not otherwise see the arts
- arts programmes, like North Yorkshire’s Connecting Youth Culture, which give young people growing up in rural areas vital creative and social opportunities
- regional dance agencies like South West Dance that involve thousands of people in classes, and create performances on beaches and in heritage sites
- festivals, from Glastonbury to Glyndebourne, which are the backbone of local economies



The quality and variety of arts work in rural areas is outstanding, and fully comparable to what our cities offer. But it is not the same. The facilities tend to be multi-purpose or borrowed. The practical obstacles to putting it on, and seeing it, are often much greater. The interests of rurally based artists, and their audiences, are often different. And that is the point: artists in rural areas offer something other than their urban peers, something distinctive and uniquely valuable that enriches the artistic life of the whole country.

It may be the intimacy and risk of a village hall performance, or the way a work connects with its site. It may be the participation of local people

in its creation, or the way that time becomes part of the experience. It may be the engagement with agriculture or environmental issues. It may be any of a thousand influences of the land, the people and their interaction.

What matters is that this work can only happen in rural areas, with rural communities: that is their unique contribution to the arts in England today. Whatever your ideas of rural arts, expect to have them challenged by some of the most lively, exciting, and contemporary work to be seen anywhere.

Above: Brekete African dance and drumming ensemble at the Live & Local *Baby Big Top* 2002 in Hunningham, Warwickshire. Photo: courtesy of Live & Local and the Leamington Courier

# Rural economies

## The creative economy

The arts are an important part of the rural economy. Across the country, arts venues create jobs, support local businesses and attract visitors. **Cumbria**, for example, has 21 theatres, each contributing to local cultural, social and economic vitality. In **Keswick**, the lottery-funded Theatre by the Lake is the town's second-largest employer, creating 80 jobs and bringing £2 million each year to the local economy.

Many artists run businesses in rural areas, working in fine art, craft, design, advertising, music and digital media. Research in the **South West** – where 47 per cent of the population lives in rural areas – identified at least 5,000 craftspeople, most of them working from home in villages and small towns. Crucially, this research also showed that, between 1998 and 2002, regional employment in visual arts and crafts rose by 37 per cent, while turnover increased by 11 per cent. In the South West and other rural areas, the creative industries are a cornerstone of a strong rural development strategy.

## Case study:

### **Art Connections**

Art Connections was developed by Chrysalis Arts to help North Yorkshire artists market their work, and provide business support. Established with support from local authorities, Yorkshire Forward, Arts Council England, the Countryside Agency and the Small Business Service, the project offers an information service, mentoring scheme and a website promoting the work of selected artists. A pilot business cluster with 12 members has generated over £150,000 of new business, and £100,000 of orders for suppliers.

*Other examples* Cheshire and Warrington Creative Industries Network, Cumbria Cultural Skills Partnership

## Rural festivals

The movement restrictions imposed during the FMD crisis highlighted the importance of tourism and leisure to the rural economy. The arts bring visitors to the countryside. Annual festivals, from international events such as the **Three Choirs** to local ones like **Rye Festival** (East Sussex), bring thousands of artists and audiences, giving a valuable boost to the local economy. Three quarters of the people who come to **Buxton Festival** (Derbyshire) live outside the town. The event contributes £1.3 million to the town's economy each year – and only 10 per cent of the festival's annual turnover comes from public sources.

Lantern parade at the Bolsover winter festival, Derbyshire.  
Image: V Point TV



Case study:

## Cumbria festivals

The Cumbria Rural Regeneration Company is working with Arts Council England, Cumbria Tourist Board and the county council to support over 60 festivals with a substantial arts element. The programme includes new education work, research, publishing information resources and a £450,000 Festivals Fund, through the North West Regional Development Agency. One early outcome is the planning of the Cumbria Biennale in ?????????????? that will build on the county's strengths in visual arts.

*Other examples* British Arts Festivals Association, Bergh Apton Sculpture Trail

## Cultural tourism

While festivals attract large numbers of visitors for a short period, the arts are important to regular tourism in rural areas. Public art programmes and venues such as sculpture parks, craft centres, galleries and artists' workshops attract millions throughout the year.

Commercial arts activity, including galleries, bookshops and antique centres, is an important part of the rural economy, helping regenerate market towns and large villages across England.

Innovative ideas from the arts sector have built new platforms for work and created new audiences. Links with the heritage sector have been especially fruitful, with contemporary art shows at sites like **Belsay Hall** (Northumberland) becoming very popular. In **Nottinghamshire**, the county council organises church concerts under the title *Music in Quiet Places*, bringing people to some of the county's finest but little known buildings.

Case study:

### **Kielder visual arts programme**

Kielder Forest, in Northumberland, is the largest in England. Since 1995, the Kielder Partnership has managed an innovative visual arts programme of commissions and residencies, resulting in a collection of work by artists such as Angus Watts, Andrea Wilkinson, James Chinneck and Uta Kogelsberger. Kielder has also commissioned architects like Softroom, David Adjaye and Nick Coombe to create award-winning work that explores new ideas in building and design. The programme has attracted thousands of new visitors to this remote part of the county, helping to sustain the natural environment and support local communities.

*Other examples* Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Grizedale (Cumbria), Artsway (Hampshire)



# Rural regeneration

## Market town regeneration

Market towns have faced big challenges in recent years, with the decline of traditional industries and shifts in patterns of retailing and commuting. But in many places, artists have played an important part in regeneration, bringing new ideas and finding unexpected opportunities. They have taken over redundant buildings, started new enterprises and launched festivals that have re-energised communities. The responses are always different, because artists find solutions that interest them and meet local needs and strengths. These examples illustrate the range.

- In **Stroud** (Gloucestershire), an artist-led initiative supports the re-use of redundant buildings as studios, with an IT and equipment resource
- In **Fakenham** (Norfolk), sculptor Simon Watkinson worked with North Norfolk District Council on town centre improvements, including a cast iron paving inspired by the former local printing industry
- In **Box** (Wiltshire), Real World Studios is one of several examples of agricultural buildings converted for music and sound engineering. Oasis' *Definitely Maybe* was recorded in a former mill in Cornwall
- In **Sleaford** (Lincolnshire), a new contemporary craft centre, the Hub, is a cornerstone of the town's regeneration strategy

Dennis Herdman and Paschale Straiton of Cartoon de Salva in *The Sunflower Plot*, co-produced by Third Space, at West Street allotments in Farnham, Surrey.  
Photo: Luke Beresford



*Jewel for the Landscape*: water sculpture of knitted and beaded wire, wool, cork and fishing weights by Jan Truman, at *Response to Eden*, 2004. The exhibition was organised by South West Textile Group with Exeter Phoenix and the Eden Project. Photo: Theo Moye/Apex

### Case study:

#### **Wirksworth Now**

Wirksworth is a small market town in the Derbyshire Dales which has experienced a slow decline in employment, particularly in farming, quarrying and textiles. At the same time, it has attracted a thriving community of artists. They have converted premises into studios and developed a successful festival. Need and opportunity have coincided with the formation of a Regeneration Board that

aims to revive the town's fortunes as a centre for the arts, leisure and tourism. The heart of this strategy is a vision of the town as a 'multi-site arts centre', hosting a year-round programme of arts festivals and events, and building on its flourishing creative industries sector.

*Other examples* Stroud Valleys Artspace (Gloucestershire)

## Farm diversification

Agricultural diversification has grown rapidly as farmers move away from mass food production, and the arts provide new opportunities to add value, for instance in marketing organic foods or in environmental initiatives. Artists' studios are being developed in redundant farm buildings while farms themselves are becoming sites for events and exhibitions. At **Middle Rocombe**, in Devon, a dairy farm and ice cream factory has become an 'art farm', where, each September, up to 50 artists show their work. In 2003, the event attracted over 3,200 visitors and produced sales of £13,000. Elsewhere, farms are used as sites for painting holidays, learning about traditional crafts and galleries.

Earth and Fire National ceramic fair at Rufford Country Park in Nottinghamshire. The craft centre is housed in former stables and includes an exhibition space for contemporary craft and a permanent ceramics gallery. Photo: Alan Fletcher



Case study:

### **Shute Farm Studios**

At Green Farm, near Shepton Mallet in Somerset, the family has converted unused buildings into fully accessible studios for arts teaching and production. There is a focus on stone sculpture and bronze casting and, importantly, on the links between art and agriculture. Short courses last from one day to a week, and include evenings and weekends, with participants staying in local bed-and-breakfast accommodation. Visits to the dairy farm are included and links have been made with urban schools and organisations to foster an understanding of farming.

*Other examples Rocombe Art Farm, Coombe Farm, Lower Yetson Farm (all Devon)*

# Rural communities



## Social networks

The changing character of rural communities can leave both older and more recent residents feeling isolated, even within their own villages. The arts are an enjoyable way for people to work together on projects and strengthen a sense of community. Whether it is through professional or voluntary arts organisations – and they often work together in rural areas – the arts strengthen social networks and support community development. They help people meet and can span divides between age, background and interests.

**Bergh Apton**, in Norfolk, shows how the arts can strengthen community cohesion, developing this small village's social life. The arts group has developed a unique sculpture trail which takes over the village every three years. They install the work of up to 50 artists in gardens and sites across the parish, opening for visitors on three weekends in May. In 2002, the event attracted over 8,000 people, raised money for local good causes and sold over £45,000 of sculpture. Other villages in Norfolk, such as Welborne, have been inspired to develop their own summer arts festivals and activities, supported by the county's arts development agency, Creative Arts East.

Caroline Wood reading at the *InPrint* touring exhibition, funded by Creative Arts East, at Welborne Festival, Norfolk in 2003.  
Photo: François Matarasso

Case study:

## Animation station

Young people growing up in rural areas have particularly limited access to services and out of school social opportunities. Many also face problems arising from disability or disadvantage and they can often feel isolated.

The Animation Station in north Oxfordshire uses new technology in multimedia projects to create projects for disadvantaged young people. Working with four schools for disabled children, they produced cutting edge digital animation films with young people. This pilot project has since been followed by a programme of 10 new animation projects, aiming to overcome isolation among young people in the district.

*Other examples* Forest  
Community Radio  
(Gloucestershire)

## Community development

Open studios programmes in Dorset, Somerset, Oxfordshire and elsewhere are typical of the integration of arts and community activities in rural areas. They work in mutually supportive ways, not least because professional artists living in villages are also members of the community.

Arts Council England also recognises the importance of volunteers in rural areas, and has worked with local authorities and professional organisations to support their work.

Rural touring schemes bring professional theatre, dance, comedy and music into village halls, using a network of more than 3,000 promoters across England. Volunteers put in long hours to book and market a show, and act as local advocates of the arts. They may also take a financial risk. For many village halls and community groups, the events are valuable fundraisers and essential community celebrations. They are an excellent example of an innovative and thriving rural service, with the number of performances growing by 71 per cent between 2000 and 2003.

Case study:

### **RANY & Terrington Arts**

Rural Arts North Yorkshire (RANY) is an arts development agency working with rural communities across the county. The support they have given to the small village of Terrington, in Ryedale, is typical of their long-term approach to partnership. From an embroidery project to create hangings for the village hall, the work has blossomed to include promotions, community arts projects, oral history, amateur theatre and adult education classes. Terrington Arts developed from this activity and is now an important local voluntary group, with about a quarter of the parish among its members. The impact on the local community has been profound, especially in helping to bring together the original residents and new arrivals.

*Other examples* Creative Arts East (Norfolk), Take Art (Somerset), Artsreach (Dorset)

## Consultation and communication

Artists working in rural areas have been quick to take up new technology, not least as a way of overcoming the problems of rural isolation. Community radio and webcasting were used during the 2001 FMD outbreak to link people during periods of travel restrictions, to document their experiences and develop oral history work. In the **Forest of Dean** (Gloucestershire), a new community radio project was launched in April 2005 to involve people in the arts and develop community links. From its five dispersed studios, it has involved 5,000 people in producing local programmes for an estimated 20,000 listeners.

The arts have also proved their value in rural consultation. In the **East Midlands**, New Perspectives commissioned six artists to work with different communities on art projects that expressed local needs. The open and creative approach of artists proved very successful in widening participation in debate, and producing unexpected ideas.

Music in a Wiltshire pub. Photo: François Matarasso

Case study:

### **ARC (Arts in Rural Consultation)**

Bridgnorth, Oswestry, and Shrewsbury and Atcham councils, with Arts Council England, support ARC in developing arts-based approaches to community consultation. The project aims to include groups that are under-represented in local planning, including teenagers, carers, disabled people and those aged over 70. Four communities have been matched with artists who are helping local people turn some of their ideas into action.

*Other examples* Creative Consultation, New Perspectives (East Midlands)





# Rural cultures

## Rural issues

Many artists work with rural communities on the critical issues that confront them directly – change in farming people's lives, the decline in rural services, the ethics of food production, the uses of land, the pressures of tourism and local development. The Rural Media Company, based in **Herefordshire**, creates projects through which young people and travellers, among others, use digital media to make work that reflects their lives and concerns. As a result, people whose voices are little heard can express their views of their situations and lives.

Regional theatre companies are a major source of new writing, much of which is directly concerned with the rural experience. In the autumn of 2002, Blaize produced *New Life*, a play about the FMD crisis by Maureen Lawrence. It toured to village halls, pubs and auction marts across the north of England. They worked with agencies concerned with rural stress, ensuring that advisors and information were present at performances and subsequent discussions.

Suki Chan performing *Shadow Song*, part of Green Room's Method Lab initiative for emerging performing artists in the north west. Photo: Dinu Li

## Case study:

### **Littoral**

Littoral is an arts trust based in rural Lancashire, working on projects that respond to issues of social, environmental and cultural change. Its work has focused on, among other things, the pressures faced by hill farming communities, the culture of food, new ideas in the use of wool and contemporary willow crafts in the context of sustainability. A main area of its work has been documenting the experience of FMD in 2001. Littoral is also involved in research and policy, and has organised important conferences that have helped shape the debate about art and agriculture.

*Other examples* Rural Media Company (Herefordshire), Connecting Youth Culture (North Yorkshire)

## Rural environments

Artists have always been concerned with nature, and their imaginations have shaped how people see the world and their connection with it. Today, artists are as active as ever, working alone or with communities to create work that reflects current changes and raises vital cultural, social and ethical questions.

The relationship between art and landscape is being explored in many areas to engage local people and visitors. The **Blackdown Hills** Rural Partnership, in Somerset, has run many arts projects, including guided photography walks, public art and a youth programme. This has led to the £2.7 million Neroche Forest project, conserving a valuable natural area and providing a central role for the arts in its interpretation.

In **Cornwall**, The Works agency commissioned Motionhouse Dance to create a remarkable community performance on the beach at Watergate Bay. The project was supported by Creative Partnerships Cornwall. Working over a year with local people, including many children who had never been to the beach, the project culminated in a spectacular celebration of the beach culture and environment, involving 14 separate performances.

Case study:

### **Living Earth Sculpture**

The Living Earth Sculpture was a unique temporary public artwork created by Janette Porter in consecutive years between 1997 and 1999. Using 10 acres of set-aside land on a Lincolnshire estate, Janette created huge natural images, including a green man, inspired by the impact of the seasons on the appearance of the landscape. Local schools and community groups were involved in developing ideas and in planting different types of crops, grasses and wild flowers. The site was open to visitors 24 hours a day, and 12,000 visitors came over the period. The Living Earth Sculpture invited repeat visits, as the texture and colours of the work changed with the passage of time, opening up ideas around the value and use of land, food and the environment.

*Other examples* The Works (Cornwall), Creeping Toad (Derbyshire)

## Rural connections

The relationship between town and country has always been symbiotic and competitive. It is widely argued today that there is little understanding between the two, even about basic issues like food production. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has identified the need to strengthen the links between town and country.

Artists are an important bridge between these worlds. They foster links simply by doing what they do – performing to different audiences and showing their work in different places. Artists' work is an essential part of the national conversation, helping people see more of lives and values that may be very different to their own. Many artists work internationally, connecting people from across Europe and further away. The work of rural arts organisations is a case study of how to be local and global at the same time.

Case study:

### **National Rural Touring Forum**

The National Rural Touring Forum unites over 35 organisations involved in promoting professional arts in community spaces. Working with local people, they put on shows in villages that would otherwise not see live art from one year to the next. Their work is enormously varied, and gives rural communities a chance to see innovative physical theatre, South Asian or African dance, world music and edgy comedy, alongside family shows and regional theatre. It includes a strong element of international work, as well as the best that British cities can offer. For many of the audiences, it's a valuable way to feel connected with the cultural life of the rest of the country.

*Other examples* Pride of Place group, Third Space (Surrey)

# Looking forward

*Overlay*, paving slabs with collaged images of surrounding trees by Linda Gordon, 2005  
Sculpture Trail at Hebden Bridge, Yorkshire.  
Photo: Lisa Blezard



## Our commitment to people in rural areas

We make no distinction between urban, suburban and rural areas. Our ambitions for the arts are:

- supporting the artist
- enabling organisations to thrive, not just survive
- championing cultural diversity
- offering opportunities for young people
- encouraging growth

These are the priorities for our work in rural areas, as elsewhere. We recognise that, for many reasons, rural areas have particular needs and a distinctive arts ecology, and present a unique range of opportunities. We have therefore ‘rural proofed’ our organisation to ensure that people living in rural England have equal access to our support. We will:

- respond to the particular needs of rural areas
- support artists working in rural areas
- improve access for rural audiences
- build partnerships for growth
- campaign with rural arts organisations for recognition of their work

## Getting involved

But we cannot do any of this without our partnerships – with artists and arts organisations, with local authorities, with community groups and volunteers, with schools and colleges, with business, with regional development agencies and with many others. Rural areas present new opportunities for partnership: with the Countryside Agency and DEFRA, National Parks authorities, Natural England (replacing English Nature), English Heritage, the National Trust and farming organisations among others.

We hope that the ideas and the experiences sketched out in this document will have inspired you. If so, we’d like to talk about how we can work together to ensure that the arts fulfil their potential in every part of rural England. Please contact your Arts Council regional office, and let’s see what we can do – together.

# Further information

## Arts Council England rural working group

We set up a national rural working group in 2004 to 'rural proof' the organisation and review whether all our policies and programmes properly reflected rural as well as urban needs.

The group was chaired by Michaela Butter, Director of External Relations, Arts Council England, East Midlands (Michaela.Butter@artscouncil.org.uk) supported by Jennie Rhodes, Assistant Officer, Resource Development. Andy Carver, Executive Director, Arts Council England, Yorkshire was the link with our Executive Board.

## Rural working group members

**North West** Anthony Preston  
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**Yorkshire** Cluny Macpherson  
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**East Midlands** Jennie Rhodes  
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**National Office** Amanda Rigali  
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Each regional office nominated someone to connect to the main national working group. These included:

**East** Rachel Drury  
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**South East** Stephen Hackett (now left)

**South West** Rachel Sutton  
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**West Midlands** Clare Hudson (now left)

**London** Elizabeth Stern  
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## Getting in touch with us

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**North West** Manchester House  
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**South West** Senate House,  
Southernhay Gardens, Exeter EX1 1UG

**West Midlands** 82 Granville Street  
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**Yorkshire** 21 Bond Street  
Dewsbury, West Yorkshire WF13 1AX

**National office** 14 Great Peter Street  
London SW1P 3NQ

## Websites

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Art Connections                                    | <a href="http://www.art-connections.org.uk">www.art-connections.org.uk</a>           |
| Artsreach (Dorset)                                 | <a href="http://www.artsreach.co.uk">www.artsreach.co.uk</a>                         |
| Artsway (Hampshire)                                | <a href="http://www.artsway.org.uk">www.artsway.org.uk</a>                           |
| The Arvon Foundation                               | <a href="http://www.arvonfoundation.org">www.arvonfoundation.org</a>                 |
| Kate Bellis  | <a href="http://www.katebellis.com">www.katebellis.com</a>                           |
| Blaize   | <a href="http://www.blaize.uk.net">www.blaize.uk.net</a>                             |
| British Arts Festivals Association                 | <a href="http://www.artsfestivals.co.uk">www.artsfestivals.co.uk</a>                 |
| Buxton Festival                                    | <a href="http://www.buxtonfestival.co.uk">www.buxtonfestival.co.uk</a>               |
| Creeping Toad                                      | <a href="http://www.creepingtoad.org">www.creepingtoad.org</a>                       |
| Commissions East (Falkenham)                       | <a href="http://www.commseast.org.uk">www.commseast.org.uk</a>                       |
| Connecting Youth Culture                           | <a href="http://www.c-y-c.co.uk">www.c-y-c.co.uk</a>                                 |
| Coombe Farm  | <a href="http://www.rileyarts.com">www.rileyarts.com</a>                             |
| Creative Arts East                                 | <a href="http://www.creativeartseast.co.uk">www.creativeartseast.co.uk</a>           |
| Cultural Documents of the<br>Foot and Mouth Crisis | <a href="http://www.footandmouthdoc.com">www.footandmouthdoc.com</a>                 |
| Forest Community Radio                             | <a href="http://www.fodradio.org">www.fodradio.org</a>                               |
| Andy Goldsworthy, <i>Sheepfolds</i>                | <a href="http://www.sheepfolds.org">www.sheepfolds.org</a>                           |
| Jenny Graham                                       | <a href="http://www.jennygraham.co.uk">www.jennygraham.co.uk</a>                     |
| Grizedale  | <a href="http://www.grizedale.org">www.grizedale.org</a>                             |
| The Hub (Sleaford)                                 | <a href="http://www.thehubcentre.org">www.thehubcentre.org</a>                       |
| Kielder Forest                                     | <a href="http://www.kielder.org/visart.htm">www.kielder.org/visart.htm</a>           |
| Littoral   | <a href="http://www.littoral.org.uk">www.littoral.org.uk</a>                         |
| Lower Yetson Farm                                  | <a href="http://www.dartvalleyartholidays.co.uk">www.dartvalleyartholidays.co.uk</a> |
| National Rural Touring Forum                       | <a href="http://www.nrtf.org.uk">www.nrtf.org.uk</a>                                 |

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|----------------------------|--|
| Pride of Place Festival    | <a href="http://www.prideofplace.org.uk">www.prideofplace.org.uk</a>                                     |
| Rocombe Art Farm Project   | <a href="http://www.artfarmproject.co.uk">www.artfarmproject.co.uk</a>                                   |
| Rural Media Company        | <a href="http://www.ruralmedia.co.uk">www.ruralmedia.co.uk</a>   |
| Rural Arts North Yorkshire | <a href="http://www.ruralarts.org">www.ruralarts.org</a>   |
| Rye Festival               | <a href="http://www.ryefestival.co.uk">www.ryefestival.co.uk</a>   |
| Shute Farm Studio          | <a href="http://www.shutefarmstudio.org.uk">www.shutefarmstudio.org.uk</a>                               |
| Stroud Valley Artspace     | <a href="http://www.sva.org.uk/">www.sva.org.uk/</a>   |
| Take Art                   | <a href="http://www.takeart.org">www.takeart.org</a>   |
| Terrington Arts            | <a href="http://www.terrington.com">www.terrington.com</a>   |
| Theatre by the Lake        | <a href="http://www.theatrebythelake.com">www.theatrebythelake.com</a>                                   |
| Third Space                | <a href="http://www.farnhammaltings.com">www.farnhammaltings.com</a>                                     |
| Three Choirs Festival      | <a href="http://www.3choirs.org/">www.3choirs.org/</a>   |
| Simon Watkinson            | <a href="http://www.commseast.org.uk/cstudy/fakenham.html">www.commseast.org.uk/cstudy/fakenham.html</a> |
| Wirksworth Festival        | <a href="http://www.wirksworthfestival.co.uk">www.wirksworthfestival.co.uk</a>                           |
| The Works                  | <a href="http://www.dancesouthwest.org.uk/cornwall/">www.dancesouthwest.org.uk/cornwall/</a>             |
| Yorkshire Sculpture Park   | <a href="http://www.ysp.co.uk">www.ysp.co.uk</a>   |

More examples of good practice in rural arts development can be found on the Arts Council England website at:

[www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)

*Arts in rural England* was written by François Matarasso on behalf of the Arts Council England rural working group.

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