

Shaftesbury Arts Centre At-A-Glance

- ❖ **Shaftesbury Arts Centre has been at the heart of the community of North Dorset for over 50 years, providing a place of entertainment for the area and a resource for the community to develop, pursue and promote their artistic and cultural interests.**
- ❖ **The Centre hosts a varied and lively year-round programme of theatre and live performances, drama for all ages and abilities, films, art, photography, craft exhibitions, dance and other group activities.**
- ❖ **Shaftesbury Arts Centre is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is run wholly by volunteers drawn from its membership.**
- ❖ **The Centre breaks even on its operational activities but because it receives very little public subsidy it relies on internal fundraising and the generosity of our patrons, sponsors and supporters to help fund major capital projects that keep the centre running and developing.**

In recent years the following funding bodies, trusts, local organisations and companies have directly contributed to the fundraising efforts at the Centre:

Rutters Solicitors – Philip Proctor & Associates – Shaftesbury Town Council – Hall & Woodhouse – Shaftesbury Charitable Trust – Shaftesbury Rotary Club – Shaftesbury Trinity Trust – Valentine Charitable Trust – Joyce Fletcher Charitable Trust – William Williams Charity – Foyle Foundation – Donhead Art Group – Melbury Abbas & Cann Women's Institute – Shaftesbury & District Chamber of Commerce – Shaftesbury Carnival Committee – Shaftesbury Flower Arranging Group – United Churches Charities Fund – Barkshire Trust – IR Gift Aid Scheme – Swans Trust – Waitrose Ltd

In addition hundreds of donations from private individuals who have wanted to support these efforts have been received. The SAC's directors and volunteers extend their heartfelt thanks for this support and apologise that there is not room to acknowledge everyone by name.

The Board of Directors

14 December 2009

THE WAY AHEAD

Development Strategy 2005-2015

INTRODUCTION

This document is a revision of the original document produced between July and October 2005 and formally adopted at Shaftesbury Arts Centre's 2005 Annual General Meeting on 16th November 2005. It was revised between July and October 2009 and is produced as a direct result of a request at the Centre's AGM in February 2009 for it to be updated to take account of developments since 2005. Not least among these developments has been the acquisition of No 11 Bell Street, the building next door to the original premises, and the consequent achievement well ahead of schedule of many of the plans that were only aspirations when first set out in 2005.

The 2005 document was itself a successor to an earlier strategy for the Arts Centre for the years 1991-1993 produced by Lorna Dolan, with Joanna Morland, and published in 1991 by the then-management committee. The management committee had decided in 2005 that the targets set out in that earlier document having been achieved it was time to develop a revised and expanded strategy for a longer 10-year period, viz 2005-2015. It was further agreed that this strategy pay particular heed to the changing demographic, social and political movements within the town and surrounding area, especially the development of the Shaftesbury Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2005-2020 by the newly-formed Shaftesbury Community Partnership run by Shaftesbury & District Task Force Ltd. This plan, published in January 2006 with considerable public financial and administrative support from local and regional authorities in Dorset and the South West, was considered to have the potential to have a significant impact on the success and development of the existing Centre.

Much of the underlying community involvement thinking in the CSP to do with the arts was an echo of a report carried out for the Arts Centre during 2003-4 by South West Arts Marketing and paid for principally by North Dorset District Council. That pointed up areas in which it was felt the Centre could improve its organisation, promotion and marketing as well as its community involvement. All the recommendations in that report were acted upon to varying degrees but the two documents together encouraged the 2005 management committee in the belief that a proactive strategy for at least the next 10 years would be an essential prerequisite for the successful development of the Arts Centre in the years immediately ahead, not least in acquiring the necessary funding.

This 2010 revised version of that 2005 document considers the progress made in the last five years and reviews the Centre's targets and aims for the next five years - up to 2015 - in relation to the latest local and regional policy and infrastructure developments, including the first official Dorset Cultural Strategy document published in October 2009. The Board considers it offers a realistic as well as imaginative vision for the Centre that promises it a viable and exciting future.

John Cadmore
Chairman of the Board

14 December 2009

PART 1: WHERE WE ARE

TOWN AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Town Shaftesbury is a small and ancient hilltop market town in north Dorset on the boundary with Wiltshire and in close proximity to both Hampshire in the east and Somerset to the north west. It grew up around the 9th century foundation by King Alfred the Great of a major Benedictine Abbey for nuns - though it is believed to have had an even earlier history as a Celtic stronghold. It is at the intersection of two main routes, the north-south A350 and the east-west A30. Its population has risen from 5,700 in 1986 to almost 7,000 in 2009. This is due to rise to some 9,000 by 2015 with the planned development by Persimmon Homes of around 700 homes on the eastern side of the town up to the Wiltshire boundary.

The Community Recent years have seen an influx of retired or semi-retired people from areas such as London and the Home Counties, but the growth of information and communications technology has also brought younger families who can combine commuting and working from home. The age profile of Shaftesbury is surprisingly close to the national average as a result. Shaftesbury School and Sports College, with a large sixth form, brings in pupils from a wide area, including from south west Wiltshire, and has been the subject of a recently-completed multi-million pound expansion, including a new arts and music block. In 2009 it also reclaimed the Shaftesbury Leisure Centre annex closed by North Dorset District Council in April 2009.

The Economy There is no large industry in the area and it remains predominantly rural. Despite the near-collapse of large-scale agriculture in recent years there has been a resurgence of smaller scale farming producing local food linked to farm shops and farmer's markets. Shaftesbury itself is the main centre for tourism in the area, largely as a result of its hilltop position and iconic Gold Hill of Hovis TV ad fame.

Tourism Tourism in Shaftesbury is still mainly of the passing-through day-out variety, as it was when a primary staging post until the early 19th century, with a smaller number of visitors staying the night or a weekend. Visitors come mainly to see Gold Hill and the remains of its abbey but also to shop in its many independent shops. The town has a growing reputation for arts and crafts headed up by Swans Yard Crafts Centre and, of course, Shaftesbury Arts Centre.

Neighbouring facilities In the surrounding area, within an almost equi-distant 20-mile radius, there are professional theatres as well as commercial cinemas in Salisbury, Yeovil and Frome. Further afield are the larger centres of Bath, Bristol, Bournemouth and Poole, also with theatres and cinemas as well as a wide variety of private and public entertainment centres. Dedicated music centres at nearby Port Regis and St Mary's private schools built since 2000 provide good support for a strong local tradition of musical societies, groups and choirs. Gillingham School opened a purpose-built creative arts centre in September 2005 with a performance studio area to be made available for outside use (by touring groups etc) containing retractable raked seating for 120. Since 2001 the neighbouring towns of Gillingham and Sturminster Newton have each developed plans for large (300-seat) multi-use arts and community facilities supported by public funds. Gillingham's plans are still at the development stage but The Exchange in Sturminster Newton opened in July 2007 at a cost of £3 million. Its website describes it as 'a multi-purpose building offering a high degree of flexibility for a wide range of uses: a community centre, an arts

centre and a learning centre offering great potential for community, leisure and entertainment activities' and as delivering 'a business-orientated dimension'. Its main hall has a proscenium stage with retractable raked seating for 300. In October 2009 Shaftesbury School also underwent a refurbishment and upgrade of its main hall/theatre (with proscenium stage) to include similar retractable raked seating as Gillingham but larger at 184, with maximum seating capacity of 250.

Challenges Currently 'The Exchange' offers the single biggest challenge to Shaftesbury Arts Centre in terms of competition for audiences and resources. In 2008, despite the existence of both the Shaftesbury Arts Centre and Shaftesbury School facilities, a challenge arose ironically within Shaftesbury when the town's community partnership began trying to develop plans for a similar facility as The Exchange for Shaftesbury, ie a 'community hub' proposing to offer entertainment and recreation facilities as well as conference, training and business facilities. There is little evidence of wide public support for this proposal and, with a price tag of some £4-5 million needing to be raised locally, it faces its own challenge to get off the ground. In December 2009 this scheme was officially on hold.

CENTRE PROFILE AND PURPOSE

Foundation Founded in 1957 out of the Shaftesbury & District Arts Club started in 1949, Shaftesbury Arts Centre celebrated its half-century in 2007. It has been in continuous use throughout that period with the exception of a short break between 1965-7 when it was rebuilt after a fire.

Status The Centre changed status in 2005 after 48 years as a voluntary association to become a not-for-profit limited company with charitable status - ie a charitable company - with the principal aim of improving its viability and efficiency and to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Membership Current members come from a wide area from every part of the community and from all socio-economic groups and surveys have shown the Centre is well liked and supported by them. Largely for these reasons the Centre was described by one Shaftesbury councillor in 2005 as 'easily one of the most significant community groups in Shaftesbury'. Membership has not significantly moved in the last four years, with a regular turnover of new members replacing those who have not renewed. At 31 August 2005, the end of its 2004-5 year, membership stood at 530, with 58 junior members. Figures for 31 August 2009, for 2008-9, were almost identical. These totals represent an estimated 7-8 per cent of the resident town community against a 2005 target of at least 10 per cent (700 members).

Purpose and Vision The purpose of the arts centre remains basically the same today as when the centre was first established and as expressed in its constitution, namely 'to promote, maintain, improve and advance the education of the public in the arts and science of music, opera, ballet, drama, film, photography, literature, painting, drawing and sculpture by the presentation of concerts, performances, exhibitions and other activities.' In 2004, following the South West Arts Marketing report, this was refined by the management committee at that time into a new 'mission statement' thus: 'The mission of Shaftesbury Arts Centre is to secure for the Shaftesbury district community opportunities to experience and take part in high standard and diverse creative arts.'

In 2005 these aspirations were further revised on the recommendation of the strategy working group to take account of the changing economic, political, social and cultural situation locally (see 'Introduction') and encapsulated in the following vision for the next 10 years:

'Shaftesbury Arts Centre will take the lead in seeking to optimise opportunities for the community of Shaftesbury and the surrounding area to experience and take part in a high standard of the widest range of the creative arts.'

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Centre was incorporated as a charitable company limited by guarantee in 2005 replacing the association that ran it up to that point. However it remains managed and run by unpaid volunteers drawn from its membership as before. The membership elects trustee-directors of the charitable company who are responsible for meeting the requirements of Companies Acts and the Charity Commission and form the management Board of the company. During 2009-10 the Board consisted of a total of 12 trustee-directors, including a chairman, vice-chairman, company secretary, and honorary treasurer. All directors, including officers, were appointed to take responsibility for one or more of the centre's activities (*see below*). Centre activities are run by volunteers in each of the groups as the volunteers see fit. Some, such as the film society and music and drama groups, elect their own committees that operate independently of the Board while subject to overall Board control on Centre policy and finance. Activities necessary to support the Centre such as stage management, buildings, marketing, fund-raising, and programme development have their own working groups and all are represented on the Board by a nominated director.

For 2009-10 the officers and directors of Shaftesbury Arts Centre and their responsibilities were:

Chairman	John Cadmore	<i>Also responsible for: Stage, Technicals</i>
Vice-chairman	Bob Truscott	<i>Buildings, maintenance, health & safety</i>
Company Secretary	Richard Lloyd	<i>Administration</i>
Hon Treasurer	Denis Scott	<i>Finance & Fundraising</i>
Directors (in alphabetical order)		
	Sue Cadmore	<i>Art Group, Fundraising, Catering</i>
	Bryan Farrell	<i>Camera Club, Music & Drama Group</i>
	Pam Goodall	<i>Dancing & Keep Fit, Costumes/Wardrobe</i>
	Sheila Himmell	<i>Reading Group</i>
	Simon Hunt	<i>Membership, Publications, Marketing</i>
	Jenny Parker	<i>Gallery, Marketing, Box Office</i>
(Resigned Dec 2009)	Jerome Swan	<i>Music & Drama Group, Youth Theatre, Bookings</i>
	Richard Thomas	<i>Film Society, Marketing</i>

The Board also sends a Board representative to meetings of Shaftesbury & District Chamber of Commerce and Shaftesbury & District Tourism Association and is intending to send a representative to meetings of the Shaftesbury Community Partnership (Shaftesbury District Task Force Ltd).

THE PREMISES AND FACILITIES

The Centre is at Nos 11 and 13 Bell Street in the town centre. Until 2007 it consisted of No 13 Bell Street only but the acquisition that year of No 11 Bell Street allowed the Board to almost double the floor space of the Centre during 2008-9 (*see below*).

No 13 Constructed in the shell of the former town market hall, No 13 was purchased freehold by voluntary subscription from the then Shaftesbury Borough Council in 1951. Built originally in the 19th century in the characteristic local green sandstone, the building has a category II* listed frontage (an impression of it is the Centre's official logo) as well as being within the designated town centre conservation area. Although the frontage is narrow the building has considerable depth. Access is by a single main entrance at the front of the building – the entrance to the original market hall - and a rear emergency exit approached through an archway between nearby buildings not part of the Centre. Listed status and being within the town's conservation area imposes some constraints on development, but internal improvements inside the building between 2001 and 2004 considerably upgraded the standard of lighting, seating and technical equipment.

No 11 In 2006 the project began to acquire the adjoining property at No 11 Bell Street. Originally discussed in the late 1990s, the project started after the Centre had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to purchase No 11, previously occupied by a furnishings company. The two-part purchase of the freehold was completed in April and December 2007. The extended and refurbished premises were formally opened in September 2009, virtually doubling the size of the Centre and considerably adding to the facilities on offer. The extended premises provide:

- A meeting/function room for 60 seated and 100 standing (**The Rutter Room**)
- A conference and storage room-cum-reference library seating 20 (**The Proctor Room**)
- A drama/dance/art studio taking 20 (**The Green Room**)
- Five new toilets including two for the disabled
- A new lift specially designed for the disabled
- A refurbished and expanded box office
- A retail shop - currently let to a tenant to generate income.

These facilities complement the original Centre facilities, the main feature and focus of which is:

The Theatre The theatre consists of a proscenium-arch stage with fixed raked 'tip-up' seating for 161 (refurbished and repaired in 2004). Although the back stage area is currently limited for space the theatre is well-equipped for a largely amateur theatre of its size, with computer-controlled lighting, high specification sound equipment, and a hearing loop. The theatre is popular not only with professional touring groups, who visit regularly, but also with Dorset Drama League that has chosen it as its permanent venue for the first round of the annual All-England Theatre Festival.

The Gallery The Gallery is between the theatre and the entrance and is where arts and crafts exhibitions are mounted throughout the year. It is the only dedicated art gallery in the town and immediate area and as such is a much sought-after venue, almost continually booked throughout the year and contributing some £6500 a year to the Centre's income. The area also doubles as an interval space for audiences during theatre productions and film showings.

The Phoenix Room on the first floor provides a space for rehearsals, other centre group activities, meetings and social events as well as the main interval area during theatre productions and film showings. It is licensed for 100 standing and 60 seated and has its own sound equipment and projection screen as well as a bar and a well-fitted kitchen. The Centre is licensed under the new Licensing Act 2003.

The Box Office Situated close to the main entrance, this is manned entirely by volunteers under the direction of a Centre director. The box office is open for two hours every morning from Monday through Saturday from 10.30-12.30. Volunteering is proving popular enough to allow the box office to open longer hours and in October 2009 the Board agreed to trial doubling opening hours on Thursdays (market day) from 10am-2pm. The box office was considerably enlarged during the 2008 refurbishment programme and now has the space and volunteer capacity to accept both bookings and payments online in keeping with latest practice but does not yet have the computer facility to do so. The team is working towards installing a computer in the box office as its top priority to enable it not only to be able to receive bookings and membership applications online, and to be able to monitor ticket sales, but also to print tickets and have a seat plan on display for every show. The box office is also the location for a video screen showing current and forthcoming productions and events at the Centre to passers-by. (Contact Jenny Parker 01747 854321.)

The New Facilities Both main rooms – the 60-seater Rutter Room and the 20-seater Proctor Room – are being offered for hire to outside bodies at competitive rates to add to the facilities (theatre, gallery and Phoenix Room) that are already for hire. Discussions have taken place about creating a Centre reference library in the Proctor Room with printing/scanning/copying facilities linked to a high specification computer that could be used for the design and production of Centre publications and publicity material as well as a small editing suite for film/video-making (*see also 'New Activities' p11*).

Phase 3: Development to the Rear of No 11

In September 2009 the Board agreed to start the process of initiating the third and final phase of the development of the Centre by building a further 'shell' extension to the rear of No 11 Bell Street on vacant land owned by the Centre and currently housing temporary storage sheds. The plan is to provide extra room for the backstage area, to include a workshop and storage for set building as well as an art and craft studio and for painting and crafts such as pottery and clay modelling. The cost of such an extension was provisionally estimated (in 2009) at £150,000.

SUMMARY The Centre functions first and foremost as a place of entertainment for the community and as a resource for members to enable them to develop, pursue and promote their particular artistic and cultural interests as well as to meet socially and exchange ideas and interests with others like-minded. But it is now increasingly being seen as a vital and energetic centre for all, contributing significantly to the quality of life of the town and surrounding area generally as well as taking the fun and enjoyment of the arts out to the wider community. For example, the Board is continuing to explore ways in which the Centre can work increasingly with schools, in taking the arts out into the surrounding villages, and in working in partnership with existing complementary facilities nearby such as Swans Yard Crafts Centre and Higher Green Farm Arts.

THE ACTIVITIES

At 31 August 2009 the following activities were being carried on at the Centre:

- Music and drama, including youth theatre
- Film
- Art and crafts
- Photography
- Reading
- Keep Fit and Dance

In autumn 2009 there were also proposals for:

- Creative writing group
- Film-making group
- Crafts Group

MUSIC AND DRAMA

Music and drama is organised mainly through the **Music and Drama Group**, an amalgamation in 2004 of the Drama Group with the Light Opera Group. The group produces a core of five shows a year. These include a winter pantomime in January, a summer and Christmas musical in July and December, and a spring and autumn drama production. (In 2009 the musical was replaced with 'In Dreams', an original revue written in-house.) In addition the group contributes at least one one-act play to the Dorset Drama League Festival in March each year. In 2009 a cabaret group was formed as 'The Cabaret Club' and after a successful inaugural night is becoming a regular event. There is also the intention of introducing Standup Comic Nights for amateur comedians.

Outside the Centre the group has taken an active part in wider community activities including community plays with schools and other groups, eg 'On The Green Rock' in 2000. It has also toured abroad in association with Shaftesbury Town Twinning Association, eg The 'Tempest' to Lindlar in 2007. As well as being immensely popular with audiences and participants alike, the events generate a surplus that provides essential core-funding for the Centre. Performances are also arranged regularly for the elderly and people with special needs. The group is run by a committee of nine (15 possible under its constitution) elected by its members plus two junior representatives of the youth group who attend on an ad hoc basis. Two committee members are MAD designated directors on the Centre's Board and also represent the youth theatre group. The group had some 75 Centre members active at 31 August 2009, the same as in 2005. (Contact Jerome Swan 07717 772969.)

Music and drama for the under 16s is promoted and carried out by the Junior Drama and Youth Theatre Groups. The **Junior Drama Group** is for six to 13 year-olds and such is the demand, with a waiting list, that in 2009 it was divided into one group for six to 10-year-olds and another for the 10-13 years. The **Youth Theatre Group** is for young actors aged 13-16 after which they may graduate into the senior (Music & Drama) group. The groups meet once a week and training is given in speech, mime, acting, dance and backstage skills by experienced members of the Centre. The young people perform short productions reflecting the term or year's work, take part in Centre productions and have entered plays, with some success, in the annual Dorset Drama League Festival. Notable productions in 2009, for example, included the original works 'Shake

Ripple and Roll' and 'Round the World in Light', both well attended and supported. In November 2009 a production of 'Noah's Deluge' included members from all three groups. Each group is about 15-strong, with total membership of all three groups in October 2009 some 45, all active. Each group is run by two adult members. There is no formal committee. While not formally connected to the youth drama group a hugely successful **Summer School** for aspiring young actors was run in July 2008 and 2009 by members Charles and Sammy Upton and both activities cooperated to their high mutual benefit. However in October 2009 youth drama organisers warned of a challenge looming in 2010 with the loss of two key volunteers and the announcement that the Uptons would not do another summer school themselves. They also highlighted that an extension of the UK's child protection laws (officially known as the 'vetting and barring scheme' overseen by The Independent Safeguarding Authority) mean it is increasingly unlikely that suitably qualified and dedicated people will come forward as volunteers. (Contact under 13s Rosie King 01747 840864, over 13s – until July 2010 - Barbara Arnold 01747 811084.)

Wardrobe/Costumes The Centre's large costumes wardrobe was digitally catalogued over the winter of 2009/10 to be available via a computer database. There has been discussion over some years of expanding wardrobe into commercial hire. This is not being considered for the present because there are not the resources to operate it on the businesslike basis it would require. (Contact Myra Wood 01747 828098.)

FILM

Film shows are organised through the **Film Society** The society is an integral part of the Centre and one of its most popular activities, with membership regularly at or near its 200 capacity (183 in 2008-9). The society is run by a committee (up to 15 under its constitution) elected by members at its AGM and has a designated director on the Centre's Board. Society members pay a supplementary subscription that entitles them to attend a programme of 17 high quality films of international stature shown from September through to May each year, usually on a Friday and/or Saturday evening. Special showings are also arranged at other times in the week for children and senior citizens and fundraising. Films are selected by the committee in June and a members' poll of suggested titles is taken into consideration. The society publishes its own programme of films annually as well as appearing in the Centre's own quarterly programme. It is a member of the British Federation of Film Societies and affiliated to the British Film Institute and the United Kingdom Film Council. Committee members also help to run 'Moviola' community village hall shows in the area and provide advice and support, including equipment, to other local film societies. (Contact Paul Schilling 01747 853224; www.bffssouthwest.org.uk)

ART

The interests of artists are catered for by the **Art Group**. The group meets every Monday afternoon (2-4pm) in The Phoenix Room to follow a programme of work produced by the committee to meet the wishes of the membership, including some meetings conducted by invited tutors, demonstrations, outdoor painting sessions, and visits to galleries. It is also responsible for organizing two open exhibitions a year in the Centre's gallery, one in the spring and one in the autumn, in which members are encouraged to exhibit along with other artists both professional and amateur. The group is run by a committee of five members elected annually (currently chairman Ron Homes, secretary Unity Sparrow, programme secretary Marise Woollard, exhibitions secretary Margaret Kilgour, and treasurer Jan Roe). At 31 August 2009 the group had

15 active members. The group encourages new recruits and membership is open to all levels of ability but because space and facilities are currently limited the group considers it is difficult to accommodate many more regular attendees than the present 10-15. (Contact Unity Sparrow 01747 852202.)

THE GALLERY

The purpose-built gallery is an integral part of the Centre and provides local artists and art groups, craftspeople and crafts groups, professional and amateur, with a venue in which to show and sell their work to the general public. It is also available for in-house groups to display their activities. It is run by a gallery 'manager' who supervises and records the bookings and hires it out for one or two week periods for a booking fee plus commission on sales (in-house groups are not charged the booking fee). (Contact: Eric Bailey 01747 850657. From 1 January 2010: Sandy Roberts 01747 852227.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography, that increasingly means digital photography, is organised through the **Camera Group**. The group meets at the Centre weekly between September and May and attracts new members every season with a published programme of activities that includes competitions, both internal and with other clubs, and distinguished visiting speakers – including a well-known professional (such as locally-based Charlie Waite) for a 'Star Night' event in the main theatre. The group also holds practical events such as digital workshops, an annual exhibition of members' work, and several smaller themed exhibitions, summer photographic 'field trips', local projects and assignments for the Centre itself, especially Music and Drama Group productions. During its 2008-9 season the group organised more than 50 such activities and events. Meetings are held weekly on Tuesday evenings in The Phoenix Room and digital photography workshops are held on some Thursday evenings. The group describes itself as run by an 'enthusiastic, experienced and dedicated' committee of nine members elected annually at a general meeting in May. In May 2009 it had 42 members. (Contact David Lampard 01747 828764 or Lavinia Phillips 01747 853122.)

READING

The interests of readers of both fiction and non-fiction are catered for by the **Reading Group**. This is an informal group, started in 1999, run without a committee by a single coordinator (Viv Rudd) and is open to 'anyone who enjoys reading and sharing ideas about books.' Members must, though, be members of the Centre. There are currently 18 members of all ages, some dozen of whom regularly attended its meetings. In October 2009 the group was all female but men are not excluded. The group meets in The Phoenix Room on the third Thursday of every month except August to discuss the book read in the previous few weeks. Books to be read are suggested by members and a short-list for the coming year drawn up each June. The group has a borrowing arrangement with Shaftesbury Library and has shared book events with them as well as being listed in the 'Literature Alive in Dorset' bulletin. There are also links with the Dorset Literary Network and it is developing new links with the Mere Literary Festival in Wiltshire. The group contributes to fundraising for the Centre by running a monthly book sale on a Saturday morning coinciding with the Centre's 'Souper Saturday'. (Contact Viv Rudd 01747 851619.)

KEEP FIT and DANCE

Keeping fit is organised by the **Keep Fit Group**. The group is for 'active over 50s' and meets most Wednesday mornings (10-11am) in the Centre's The Phoenix Room to 'exercise and have fun'. It is run informally, without a committee, by Pam Goodall who is a trained and qualified instructor registered with the Keep Fit Association. The group had 18 regular 'keep-fitters', all female, during 2008-9 and it states demand is currently increasing due to the rising cost of similar courses offered by public bodies such as Dorset Adult Education. In 2009 Pam introduced dance as an 'add-on' option for those interested. (Contact Pam Goodall 01747 830712.)

PROPOSED NEW ACTIVITIES

Creative Writing Group Offshoot of a short story-writing competition held in autumn 2008 that resulted in the publication of 'A Box of Chocolates', a book of short stories towards the Centre's fundraising (copies still available at Oct 2009 at £7.99) contributed by some 30 local authors, including several who were members of the Centre. Although many of the authors featured in the book expressed an interest in being involved in such a writing group none have so far offered to take a lead in running it and the project remains dormant for the present.

Film-making Group Several members have shown an interest in the Centre having its own film-making and editing facilities and being involved in such a unit when set up. It is proposed to base it in a part of the Proctor Room and to combine it with design and publication facilities. The cost of the equipment needed (camera, sound and computer-based film editing and printing) to be able to do this adequately was estimated in 2009 at about £8-10,000 and requires a dedicated fundraising effort to achieve it. To date (Oct 2009) that has not happened due to other projects being the funding priorities. (Contact Richard Thomas 01747 850072.)

Crafts Group Crafts exhibitions are a regular feature of the gallery programme throughout the year and, again, several members have expressed an interest in learning skills such as pottery and clay modelling. The Centre has close connections with local crafts centres such as Swans Yard in Shaftesbury and Higher Green Farm Arts at Twyford but currently has no facilities itself for the teaching and practice of 'dirty' crafts. Such facilities may be included in the plans for the Stage 3 extension to the Centre on land behind No 11 (see 'Premises') but at present a putative Crafts Group exists under the coordination of Des Alner, director of High Green Farm Arts. (Contact Des Alner 01747 812593.)

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Membership to the Centre is by annual subscription and the Centre attracts a regular, albeit fluctuating, subscription membership of around 500. At 31 August 2009 total paid-up membership was 520. In 2008/9 the Board instituted a 'rolling' system of membership whereby an individual could join and renew at any time of the year. Previously renewals were always on 1 September each year. This change was made possible by a comprehensive membership database maintained by a voluntary membership secretary who undertakes to monitor it on a regular basis for fluctuating numbers and to encourage membership renewals that have lapsed. The database provides names, addresses, telephone numbers, membership types, subscriptions, dates joined/renewed and email addresses. Other details - e.g. group involvement - will be able to be

recorded when the box office is computerised. In December 2009 the Board approved the handing over of the membership database to the honorary treasurer and his appointment as the membership secretary. As with his predecessor (membership secretary since 2005) the database is maintained on his home computer and provides a regular printout to the box office that distribute the membership cards. A proposal to further computerize the box office to enable the database to be maintained in-house and/or that it be made available on the Centre's website to authorised directors and/or volunteers is under active consideration in December 2009. The Centre's Marketing Group has also proposed using the database for market research purposes to find out more about who the Centre's members are, where they are from, why they join, why they lapse, what they like and don't like and so forth. These latter issues were also under active exploration at December 2009. (Contact Denis Scott 07879 883987.)

MARKETING AND PUBLICITY

Until 2009 this important function was largely handled by two individuals doing virtually everything including producing publications. In 2009 a new six plus-strong Marketing Group was formed under the direction of a main Board director and has begun making strides in considerably improving the approach and delivery of the Centre's marketing, promotion and sales with the help of a member who is a professional market researcher. The Group, led by Jenny Parker, intends that by marketing the Centre and its activities more effectively it will help the Centre become not only better financed with more members but also establish it much more strongly as an attractive creative community cultural centre for everyone in the town and surrounding area.

The current (2009-10) aims of the Marketing Group are to:

- Increase membership
- Increase attendances
- Attract new and different types of attendees
- Attract existing members to more activities and
- Provide everyone with an increasingly attractive, welcoming and comfortable venue.

It aims to achieve these by:

- Creating a recognisable image through 'corporate branding'
- Improving advertising around the town and in the press
- Improving the website
- Using modern computer and other technology for more effective communications
- Welcoming would-be members better
- Making the outside and entrance of the Centre more visible and inviting
- Further improving the appearance and attractiveness of the inside of the Centre.

Progress at December 2009 included:

- **Branding** Agreement reached on the creation of a new uniform brand for use on the website and all printed and published material, eg posters, tickets, stationery, press releases, reports.
- **Advertising** Upgrading the design of the regular 'Events' advert in the *Blackmore Vale Magazine* and setting up a network of poster boards in members' gardens and displays for current shows in empty shops.
- **Website** Redesigning and upgrading the website to allow online subscribing and members/

participants feedback.

- **‘Welcome Group’** Formation of ‘Welcome Group’ to make all newcomers and anyone interested feel welcomed by and at the Centre. (Initial information is taken through the box office and a member of the Welcome Group contacts the interested person so nobody feels ‘left out’.)
- **Room hire** Production of a brochure giving details of rooms available for hire.
- **Building** Installing twin banners and flood lighting on the entrance façade.

From October 2009 the Marketing Group began the initiation of the following:

- **Email** all members regularly with show promotions and special offers.
- **Streamline** methods of membership renewal via the website (see ‘Membership Development’).
- **Improve** the entrance to the Centre still further to create a cleaner, stylish, more welcoming, and visually pleasing entrance with consistent signage and attractive displays. One suggestion, for example, has been to replace the 50s-style front doors with full-length plate-glass doors.
- **Conduct** much more market research via the membership database, website, surveys and focus groups to establish answers to such vital questions as: who uses the Centre and why? What do people like and not like? What would they like to see at the Centre that the Centre does not already provide, and how can it improve or should change the facilities and activities it does provide? Who comes into the Centre and why? Where do they come from and why?

Publications

The Centre publishes a thrice-yearly members newsletter ‘SAC News’ and full-colour DL-size ‘Programme of Events’. Both are compiled, designed and produced by volunteer members and printed by local printers. Both have evolved over time and are considered to have reached a high standard, especially the all-important programme. This became full colour in 2008-9 and has met with universal approval. However the change to full colour led to greater expense and with advertising revenue in October 2009 only achieving about 50 per cent of printing cost the programme requires subsidising. It is presently, and since Jan 2003, designed and produced on his home computer by a main Board director who converts the files for additional use on both the Centre’s front window display and the website.

FINANCE AND FUNDING

Through careful and prudent management the Centre has maintained a stable financial performance over many years and has returned a surplus in all but one of the last 10 years despite substantial spending on improvements to the Centre. [The (small) loss-making year was 2003-4 and was the combined result of a legal requirement to remove all asbestos from the Centre and a major refurbishment of the theatre seating and problems that resulted from it, all successfully resolved.] The Centre’s main revenue stream is generated from ticket sales, gallery commissions and membership subscriptions.

Since 1995 annual turnover has risen from £20,000 to £66,000 with expenditure rising from £20,000 to £60,000 per annum, producing surpluses in most years. Productions by visiting professional companies often run at a loss. In the past these losses were mitigated to some extent by grants for the promotion of more esoteric art forms from the likes of North Dorset District Council, Dorset County Council and the former South West Arts but these grants have now ceased as both councils and other statutory funders have cut back on spending.

The Centre's main preoccupation in 2009 was to repay the debt it incurred as a result of its purchase (in two parts, in April and December 2007), conversion and refurbishment of No 11. In total this expansion cost almost £500,000 and was achieved by a combination of fundraising and grants, a 20-year mortgage, a 20-year bank loan (both with HSBC), and five-year interest-free short-term loans from private benefactors. Mortgage payments are covered by the rental paid by the tenant for the retail premises at the front of No 11. Fundraising and grants enabled the Board to complete all outstanding refurbishment work by the end of 2009, including a new central-heating boiler system for Nos 11 and 13. The company's tax year ends on 30 September.

A summary of the Centre's balances at 30 September 2009 is as follows.

Fixed & Current Assets	£839,465
<u>Liabilities*</u>	<u>£283,726</u>
Balance	£555,739

*Bank loans outstanding	£254,780
<u>Other loans & creditors</u>	<u>£28,946</u>
	£283,726

Fuller details are at Appendix A.

Fundraising

Fundraising is carried out by two distinct volunteer committees: The Fundraising Committee and the Capital Fund Committee.

The Fundraising Committee plans and executes all Centre activities that raise funds for capital projects and revenue support. In 2008-9 the team raised more than £20,000 from such diverse events as 'Souper Saturdays', raffles, bric-a-brac sales, bingo nights, special supper evenings with music or plays, a chocolate festival, film specials, 200 Club, themed evenings, Smartie tube collections, and the summer drama school. The committee is always grateful for enthusiastic volunteers. (Contact Rosie King 01747 840864 or Sue Cadmore 01747 828333.)

The Capital Funding Committee is responsible for securing major capital funding from national and local funding bodies and trusts, as well as the 'Make a Donation', 'Sponsor-a-Seat', 'Corporate Sponsor' and 'Leave a Legacy' initiatives. In 2008 this committee raised a further £20,000. (Contact Denis Scott 07879 883987.)

SUMMARY

The Centre has proved itself to be viable and self-sufficient over many years and the Board are confident it will continue to be so in future. However even with efficiencies and greater revenues from greater use the Centre's regular income is really only sufficient to maintain the premises and its equipment and to cover modest improvements. Larger modifications, extensions and development work – such as the £500,000 purchase and conversion of No 11 and the planned £150,000 expansion to the rear of No 11 - require major fund-raising and grants from external public and private funding bodies.

The Board's immediate need (October 2009) was to pay off the Centre's bank loan and complete work to No 11 as quickly as possible to maximise revenues.

Dorset Cultural Strategy 2009-2014

In September 2009 the Dorset Strategic Partnership (DSP), led by Dorset County Council, published its first five-year cultural strategy for Dorset. It stated its 'vision and ambition' was to see Dorset 'lead the world in placing culture at the heart of quality of life' valuing 'Dorset's local distinctiveness in land and seascapes, our traditions and history' and seeking 'to build on our international links and world status.' It claimed the strategy was written 'after lots of discussion, listening and research, recognising the unique strengths of the county' led by the DSP Culture Theme Group. This included a Citizens Panel Survey in April 2009 that concluded that

- 78% of Dorset's residents agree that access to cultural activities helps to make Dorset a better place to live, and
- 77% agree that engagement in cultural activities contributes to an improved quality of life.

Despite the attendance of three members of the Board, led by chairman John Cadmore, at the DSP Culture Theme Group workshop in April, there is no mention of Shaftesbury Arts Centre or its local importance in the document although other centres such as Walford Mill and Bridport and Dorchester Arts Centres do get mentioned. On the contrary, and of significance for Shaftesbury Arts Centre, the document seems to place more importance on local community partnerships for leadership in the planning and provision of cultural activity in this area.

Shaftesbury Community Strategic Plan 2005-2020

The 15-year Shaftesbury Community Strategic Plan (CSP) 2005-2020, published in February 2006 by Shaftesbury & District Task Force Ltd on behalf of the Shaftesbury community partnership, mentions the possibility of a new multi-purpose community education and arts facility in Shaftesbury – the so-called 'community hub'. But, as yet, it mentions no identified connection with Shaftesbury Arts Centre. At December 2009 the Centre is not yet represented on Shaftesbury task force charged with revising the local CSP and there has been little evidence to date that those leading the discussions on plans for the 'community hub' are showing much appreciation of the role already played by the Centre in delivering arts and entertainment to the local community or the effect any rival facility will have on the viability of the existing Centre. Thus, in the view of the Board, there is a paramount need for the Centre to take a lead in the community in promoting and developing the arts in the area focussed on the existing Centre and to ensure that any other facility, if developed, complements rather than competes with the existing Centre and acknowledges what it has achieved and represents in the local community. *This one proposal presents very real and significant challenges to the future of the Centre that needs very careful monitoring if it is not to undermine the viability of the Centre.*

It is The Board's general consensus therefore that in order for the Centre to meet its aspirations and to remain fully financially, socially, and economically viable it needs to be thoroughly outward-looking as well as inward and to continue to improve on catering successfully for as wide a cross section of the community's cultural needs as possible.

Part 2 is the Board's proposals (January 2010) to meet that challenge over the next five years.

--- NOTES ---

PART 2: WHERE WE WANT TO BE

TARGETS AND SCHEDULES

'Shaftesbury Arts Centre will take the lead in seeking to optimise opportunities for the community of Shaftesbury and the surrounding area to experience and take part in a high standard of the widest range of the creative arts.' – Mission statement.

This section sets out precisely how Shaftesbury Arts Centre proposes to meet the above vision by defining a schedule of actions over 10 years designed to meet the following two key objectives:

KEY OBJECTIVES

1. **To improve and develop all existing facilities and activities and develop new ones where there is a perceived need or demand in whatever location is most appropriate.**
2. **To increase the opportunity for more people of all ages and abilities to take part in as wide a range of activities as possible to as high a standard as possible and in as an accessible a way as possible, both within the existing Centre and outside in the wider community.**

NOTE 2009: The 2005 document set out the Centre's strategy to achieve these two objectives via targets for one year, 5 years and 10 year periods, ie in the short and long term. Both one year and five-year targets are historic in 2009 but they are retained in this document to show outcomes (results) and for comparison and completeness. The key section is the final section, coloured green, covering the period 2009 to 2015.

FIRST YEAR TARGETS (2005-6)

IN 2005 Shaftesbury Arts Centre aimed to have achieved the following by the end of 2006.

[Note 2009: As these year one targets are four years old they have been classed as 'cold', hence the colour blue.]

General

To move the Centre towards resolving any obstacles to its forward development and instituting whatever studies, surveys or research necessary to resolve next steps, including full participation in and providing a lead for discussion on plans for a new purpose-built mixed-use community-cum-cultural-arts centre on the east side of Shaftesbury contained in the Shaftesbury Area Community Strategic Plan 2005-2020 published in January 2006.

OUTCOME: This target was met by SAC deciding in 2006/7 to expand into the premises next door (No 11) by acquiring the freehold and absorbing the building into No 13. This almost doubled the existing space available and promised to allow SAC to become a cultural centre in its own right without the need for other premises elsewhere.

Music & Drama Group

Continue to promote the group's image in the locality, to reach a wider audience and to attract new members by:

1. Completing the run of 'Educating Rita' as a studio production in the Phoenix Room and as a touring production, and in formulating a strategy for measuring the success of the venture.
2. Continuing to build links with local schools.

OUTCOME: Targets largely met. The notion of touring productions in the wake of 'Educating Rita' was not followed up but was revived in 2009 in the form of a possible touring cabaret. However no strategy for measuring the success of the venture was ever formulated. Links with local schools continued successfully and are reflected in the large numbers who attend the youth and drama groups, both of which have waiting lists.

Youth Theatre Group

1. In general, to continue to develop the confidence and experience of the young people in the group and to encourage others from the wider community to join in.
2. To maintain current levels of membership within the two groups, with the progression of junior members to the senior group coupled with new junior and senior members.
3. To develop the continued participation of youth theatre members in the main (adult) music and drama productions throughout the year where appropriate, ie developing the notion of the group being a 'junior training course' for the Music and Drama Group.
4. To develop a 'tiddler' group for the 3-5 year olds.

Note In order to plan the development of youth drama at the Centre the group requested more space. Senior youth theatre (over 10s) had already had to change from a Saturday morning because of limited access to the auditorium during set-building and restriction on the use of the Phoenix Room to three Saturdays a month. It also needed to be able to break the very large senior group up into two or three groups to work effectively. More space was considered vital to the continued success of the youth drama programme.

OUTCOME: Targets 1-3 met. More space available and youth group broken down into three smaller sections by age due to demand. Target 4 not met. Leaders state the reason for this is that there are no volunteers for this, but also that they believe this need is largely met by Emma House which runs a music therapy session for babies at the Centre once a week. They say this has an excellent following and is a great asset to the Centre.

Film Society

To achieve 50 extra attendees at film shows.

OUTCOME: Achieved.

Notes:

1. Since 2001 the number of film shows at SAC (that the committee itself staffs) has increased by 15% to a total in the Sept 05-May 06 season of 41 showings. The film society wishes it to be understood that the following targets are set in spite of the restriction on increased numbers

imposed by the capacity of the present auditorium. Allowing for some guest ticket availability, this restriction imposes an effective membership limit of 200. However the Society is prepared to offer these targets in recognition of the significant population increase (c2,000) due in the Shaftesbury area over the next 10 years.

2. It has sometimes been suggested that the society becomes involved in film-making but there is no provision for this under the society's constitution and any activity in this direction would have to be under the auspices of an entirely separate group with its own organising team.

Art Group

1. To introduce an annual *closed* exhibition where members can show the work done at the meetings (this might prove to be a good recruiting activity).
2. To campaign for the provision of more storage space and equipment so that the following are always available on the premises:
 - versatile lighting for the subjects being painted
 - heaters for life models
 - variety of larger objects for still life, vases, draperies etc
 - easels and large drawing boards

OUTCOME: Targets achieved (nb Target 2 campaigned for only).

Camera Group

Plans for the development of the Camera Group over the next ten years have three specific objectives in keeping with the overall objectives of the Arts Centre as a whole:

- Increased membership
- Greater involvement and integration with the Centre
- Development of our activities with the aim of greater community involvement.

It has appointed a special 'select committee' to monitor progress and to adapt objectives to changing circumstances.

In year one the Group will aim to implement the following:

1. Expand its new website to include more links with the wider community and other photographic institutions, and to use it as a vehicle for ticket sales for our 'Star Night'.
2. Provide Shaftesbury Tourist Information Centre with programmes and information about the group.
3. Hold more fund-raising raffles for the Centre. Target: £200 per year.
4. Encourage a greater 'two way' exchange of communication and information between the group and other Centre groups by actively encouraging all members to support other activities within the Centre (it is recognized that some members look upon the Centre simply as a venue for meetings and overlook the importance of the all-embracing community aspect) and by inviting members from other Centre groups to attend some of its meetings to give information about their various activities and/or to call for volunteers for a particular project.
5. Carry out a feasibility study into the possibility of holding two 'Star Nights' in some seasons (*nb* the group's ability to do this will depend upon the availability of the theatre and well-

known speakers. Extra help will be needed for this but the group sees it as a very worthwhile initiative that can generate quite significant income for the Centre.)

OUTCOME: Targets 1-3 achieved. Targets 4 and 5 not achieved. The select committee (see 'objectives' above) no longer exists.

Reading Group

1. To continue to be as all-inclusive as possible without losing the intimacy of the group.
2. To consider introducing a second group during the day for those who cannot make evenings.

OUTCOME: Target 1 achieved, target 2 not.

Keep Fit Group

To increase numbers, possibly adding a second weekly class.

OUTCOME: Target not achieved.

SUMMARY

TO COMPLETE between the date of the adoption of this strategy and 31 August 2006 whatever preparatory work necessary to instigate the expansion of the Centre to accommodate development moves already started by most groups. Crucially, this will need to involve a strategic decision on whether or not to develop the existing Centre building or move elsewhere or both.

OUTCOME: Target achieved. Decision made to expand into No 11 Bell St next door.

5 YEAR TARGETS (2005-10)

Shaftesbury Arts Centre aims to achieve the following by the end of 2010.

[Note 2009: These targets are current and therefore 'hot', hence the colour pink.]

General

To draw up, cost and fund plans to allow the expansion and development of the Centre that the Centre's members decide are necessary in year one, if any.

OUTCOME 2009: Target met and exceeded by two years.

Music & Drama Group

In 2005 the targets were stated as:

1. To revive cultural links with Shaftesbury's German twin town of Lindlar, culminating in taking a production there.
2. To develop a stronger base of personnel (ie directors, musical directors and heads for all production departments) who will take the leading responsibilities in productions.
3. To support management in establishing a temporary solution to address the need for more space, in particular dressing-room space for larger productions.
4. To continue to investigate ways of promoting ourselves in and to the wider community.

OUTCOME 2009: Targets 1, 3 and 4 achieved. Target 2 is ongoing. The Group comments on target 2 that there is a constant turnover of personnel, which is normal. A list of volunteers is being created to address this target.

Youth Theatre Group

In 2005 the targets were stated as:

1. To continue to develop year one targets.
2. To enable the group's leaders to access and attend relevant courses, including up to LAMDA standard, to assist in the furthering of quality provision of youth drama in the area.
3. To introduce a Youth Theatre production into the production calendar to enable group members to perform on a larger scale than at present, to extend their experiences of performance and to attract a new and wider audience to the Centre.
4. To involve more members of the Centre in the running of the group to provide a greater knowledge base for the group to learn from.

OUTCOME 2009: Targets 1 and 3 achieved. Targets 2 and 4 not achieved. Leaders state that they continue to link with local schools as much as possible, particularly through the very successful Summer School for youngsters and 'any suitable productions'. With target 2, leaders state relevant courses are not available and in fact not currently needed because all leaders in fulltime employment in education and so are already well

practised. With target 4 they state volunteers ‘are not very forthcoming’ and that the extra space promised through the fundraising ‘has not yet been released to youth drama.’

In 2009 the targets of the Youth Drama Group for the next five years were re-stated as:

1. To continue to build on the huge success of the last five years (resulting in a waiting list to join all junior drama groups).
2. To get dedicated space in the extended Centre to youth drama groups.
3. To get more volunteers for all levels of youth drama, especially those who have experience in teaching and drama, and who are suitably trained and Criminal Record Bureau (CRB)-checked.

Film Society

In 2005 the target was stated as:

To achieve 150 extra attendees at film shows

OUTCOME 2009: Achieved – largely as a result of extra film shows for fundraising.

In 2009 the target for the next five years is unchanged.

Art Group

In 2005 the targets were stated as:

1. To reinstate the open-air exhibition on Park Walk.
2. To introduce an annual arts lecture with an invited speaker and tickets on sale to all.
3. To introduce more evening groups and classes.
4. To campaign for a three-hour parking option in the town centre in order to give a clear two-hour working period in the afternoons, thus eliminating the current late arrivals and early departures problem.

OUTCOME: Targets not met. (There is now a four-hour parking option in the Bell St car park opposite the Centre but this was incidental to any request from the Art Group or SAC.) The group states it is unable to expand, partly because of the wish of present members to meet by day rather than in the evening, which obviously excludes people in fulltime work, but also because of what it states as ‘too small a pool of talent and volunteer commitment.’ The group also states that while its need for storage space has been recognised present arrangements are unclear. It is seeking a permanent locked store for its exclusive use for lighting, heating, props, materials etc. Finally, it states that evening classes might become a valuable revenue-earner if, as seems likely, funding for local authority-run evening classes diminishes. The Centre could then become a valuable facility for Shaftesbury in offering arts and crafts-based evening classes.

In 2009 the targets were re-stated as:

1. To continue to offer a full year’s programme to members, with a variety of tutors, subjects, models and media that will allow experiment and development for all levels of ability.
2. To ensure our need for permanent, exclusive and secure storage space is met so that lighting, heating, props, materials etc required for the group’s programme can be kept on the premises and made easily accessible.

3. To continue to provide instruction and opportunities for practice of painting, drawing etc in accordance with requests and suggestions made by members.
4. To continue to organise a twice-yearly open art exhibition while considering whether any changes to its nature could benefit members or widen its appeal.
5. To consider whether the introduction of an evening class, lecture or working group would fill a gap for people in fulltime employment, and if so to explore this possibility, perhaps for an initial trial period.

Camera Group

In 2005 the targets were stated as:

1. Continue to develop its programme and implement the targets set out in year 1 (*eg* digital photography has attracted a significant increase in membership in recent years and this trend is expected to continue.)
2. Explore the possibility of holding two ‘Star Nights’ in some seasons (*nb* the group’s ability to do this will depend upon the availability of the theatre and well-known speakers. Extra help will be needed for this but the group sees it as a very worthwhile initiative that can generate quite significant income for the Centre.)
3. Attract new members from newcomers to the area by holding more exhibitions of members’ work both within the Centre and outside it (*eg* Gold Hill Fair, Christmas Fairs, doctors’ surgeries, hospitals, schools, and libraries etc.).
4. Include more practical demonstrations and instruction/lectures/presentations by experienced members for the benefit of beginners. Local schools and colleges will also be approached to see if they are interested in members’ services.
5. Offer an advisory service, perhaps for a modest fee, to anyone who would like to buy a digital camera (retailers now report that 90% of new cameras being bought are digital). It would be advertised on the group’s website and also in schools, colleges, local libraries and tourist information centres.

OUTCOME: Targets 1, 3 and 4 partly achieved. Targets 3 and 4 achieved by increasing the number of practical evenings, but attendances have been significantly lower on such evenings. Targets 2 and 5 not achieved.

In 2009 the targets were re-stated as:

1. Continue to develop the programme and implement the targets set out in year 1 (*eg* digital photography has attracted a significant increase in membership in recent years and this trend is hoped to continue.)
2. Attract new members by aiming to improve the high quality of the existing annual exhibition.
3. Include more practical demonstrations and instruction/lectures/presentations by experienced members for the benefit of beginners.

Reading Group

In 2005 the target was stated as:

To continue to develop as in year one, introducing a daytime meeting as soon as possible.

OUTCOME: Target not achieved.

In 2009 the target was re-stated as: To continue as is with evening meetings only on the basis that the need for daytime meetings in Shaftesbury is now being met by U3A and others.

Keep Fit Group

In 2005 the target was stated as:

To increase numbers, possibly adding further weekly classes.

OUTCOME: Target partly met. There has been an increase in numbers and an increase in demand but a further increase in classes or numbers is not possible because of the limit on space available and the ability of the leader (Pam Goodall) to do more than she is.

In 2009 the target was re-stated as:

To add dance to keep fit as an adjunct to existing classes by extending the class by another hour to make it two hours in total, starting autumn 2009.

SUMMARY 2005-2010

In 2005 the overall targets were to:

- Decide between 1 September 2006 and 31 August 2010 the plans needed – if any - for the expansion of the Centre to accommodate development moves that will be well under way by 2008 by most groups but likely to be frustrated by the lack of physical space in the existing building
- Secure the funding
- Start all work
- Engage the wider community through a variety of initiatives outside the Centre building itself.

OUTCOME: Targets largely met ahead of schedule. Wider community involvement is a target for the next five years.

10 YEAR TARGETS (2005-15)

Shaftesbury Arts Centre aims to achieve the following by the end of 2015.

General

In 2005 this target was stated as: To fully implement the plans (if any) for the development of the Centre. **The initial target having been achieved six years early the 2009 target is:**

To complete the stage 3 development of land to the rear of No 11 to create extra backstage and set-building facilities and a possible arts/crafts and design studio.

Music & Drama Group

In 2005 these were stated as:

1. To have increased membership by 30% on 2005 levels (ie to 100) and to continue working to attract new members with a range and variety of productions open to all ages and abilities.
2. To continue to offer a full and varied programme of full-length plays and sketches while exploring the possibility of a more diverse range of activities including experimental theatre.
3. To support the Centre's plans for a permanent extension to solve the problem of the general shortage of space, particularly for larger productions.

In 2009 the Group commented that with current MAD membership at 102 and continuing to offer a programme of full-length and one-act plays along with cabaret evenings and using the Phoenix Room for one-act and small-cast plays it has already reached its 2015 targets. Its targets for the next five years were therefore re-stated as:

1. To maintain the profile of the Group in the wider community by continuing to provide an attractive range of musical and dramatic activities in terms of both audience and participation.
2. To continue the liaison between adult and junior drama through the medium of inclusive productions, thus affecting a smooth transition and assimilation of junior drama members into the senior group.
3. To facilitate the induction of new members, by liaising with the 'Welcome Pack' strategy of the Marketing Committee and to make sure that new members are nurtured and encouraged and that all enquiries are followed up.
4. To continue to develop music and drama, such as revue and cabaret, with a view to taking these to venues outside the centre.
5. To continue to develop the Phoenix Room as a venue for smaller and less formal productions.
6. To continue increasing membership by 30% by 2015.

Youth Theatre Group

In 2005 the targets were stated as:

1. To continue to develop year 1-5 targets.
2. To offer coaching for LAMDA examinations for those who aim to teach drama or apply to drama schools or colleges.
3. To increase the number of youth theatre sessions available and have specialized workshops throughout the term.

It was pointed out in 2005 that these targets are very much dependent on an increase of working space available within the Centre (to allow continuity for any increase in the number of sessions offered) and an increase in the number of members prepared to 'teach' on a regular basis.

In 2009 the targets of the Youth Theatre Group for the next five years were confirmed as:

1. To continue to build on the huge success of the last five years (resulting in a waiting list to join all junior drama groups) including the Summer School.
2. To get dedicated space in the extended Centre to youth drama groups.
3. To get more volunteers for all levels of youth drama but especially those who have experience in teaching and drama and who are suitably trained and Criminal Record Bureau (CRB)-checked.

Film Society

In 2005 the target was stated as: To achieve 250 extra attendees at film shows.

In 2009 the target for the next five years is unchanged.

Art Group

In 2005 the targets were stated as:

1. To broaden the remit of the Group so that sculpting, modelling, pottery activities and so on can be followed.
2. To achieve the creation of a purpose-built studio within the back development with bench and deep sink etc to cater for the above. (The Group considers that such a building would also serve as a workshop for making and painting small props for the theatre productions thereby getting the groups working together.)

In 2009 the targets for the next five years remain unchanged. But the group states that the achievement of target 1 is dependent on target 2, ie the building of a purpose-built studio for art and crafts. It comments: 'It would be encouraging to be shown that space has been set aside [in the Phase 3 'back' development] and plans outlined for a future studio of reasonable size.'

Camera Group

In 2005 the targets were stated as:

1. To have increased numbers to 70-75 and achieved an average regular attendance of 60 (*nb* greater numbers might be possible but will become limited by the seating capacity of the Phoenix Room).
2. To have achieved all or most of the stated objectives.
3. To be at maximum strength and operating as a fully integrated unit of the Centre.

In 2009 the targets for the next five years were re-stated as:

1. To have increased numbers to 50-55 and achieved an average regular attendance of 40 (*nb* greater numbers not possible due to the seating capacity of the Phoenix Room).
2. To continue operating as an integrated unit of the Centre.

Reading Group

In 2005 the target was stated as: To continue to develop as outlined.

In 2009 the target for the next five years was re-stated as: To continue with evening meetings only but also for members to become involved in other literary events inside and outside SAC, especially the Mere Literary Festival.

Keep Fit Group

In 2005 the target was stated as:
To increase numbers, adding further weekly classes.

In 2009 the target for the next five years was re-stated as: To remain more or less at the current level, ie no further increase, as the group will be operating at capacity from October 2009.

SUMMARY 2005-2015

In 2005 the target was stated as:

TO SEE between 1 September 2006 and 31 August 2015 the successful completion of all construction work needed for the expansion of the Centre, if agreed, and the smooth integration of all groups into the new accommodation and for the wider community to be fully aware of and engaged in the work of the Centre and the groups and activities in it and for that work to be relevant to, and those groups fully involved with, the wider community.

OUTCOME 2009: With the completion of the expansion into No 11 Bell Street the initial building target is achieved and integration of groups into the expanded premises is taking place. It is not clear that the targets have been met of making the wider community more aware of what activities go on inside the Centre or that the wider community finds the Centre's activities appealing to it. Research into both areas is needed.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

In 2005 it was stated: It is clear that without exception all groups active within Shaftesbury Arts Centre are popular, thriving, meeting a need and performing a vital and much-needed role in supporting the quality of life of the community it serves. To continue in this role all activities need to expand and more space within and/or outside the Centre is therefore urgently required.

In 2009 this summary still held but without the urgency for more space - although more space is needed for a variety of existing and possible new functions. The Board has determined that - subject to planning permission and funding - that expansion will take place by 2015 on land to the rear of No 11 Bell Street in the freehold of the Centre.

It was also clear in December 2009 that much more research is needed into who uses the Centre, where they come from, why they use the Centre, what they use it for, what the Centre can provide that it does not already provide or does not provide well enough to attract a wider audience and/or participation in its many activities, and indeed why people do not use it. Further building expansion and market research are therefore main priorities.

TARGETS FOR 2010-2015

On the basis of the above, the Board decided in December 2009 that its targets for the five years 2010 to 2015 are as follows:

1. To recruit 100 more members a year to bring total membership to 1000 by 2015.
2. To greatly increase the awareness of the Centre by the wider community and its acceptance and use by them by carrying out research into the community's likes and wants and by making the Centre as attractive, edifying and user-friendly as possible.
3. To provide new arts activities and facilities that appeal to a new and wider number of people and marketing them and existing activities and facilities effectively.
4. To complete the building expansion programme to the rear of No 11.
5. To repay all short-term members loans.
6. To establish the Centre on a fully viable and self-funding basis and to begin to make serious inroads into paying off its HSBC loan and mortgage as quickly as possible.
7. To take more events and activities out into the community as well as those at the Centre.
8. To attract more suitably qualified and CRB-checked volunteers to continue the outstanding work of the youth drama groups and the Summer School programme.
9. To create a small team to produce all publications and other publicity and printed material in-house on the Centre's own computer printing system (to avoid over-dependence on any one individual). (*See also 'New Activities' Part 1, page 11*).
10. To employ a fulltime centre manager and/or part-time caretaker.

BY ACTIVITY

1. BUILDINGS & INFRASTRUCTURE

To complete the expansion of the Centre to the rear of No 11 Bell Street and make maximum use of all the space in Nos 11 and 13, to fit out and furnish the whole to a standard to reflect the best artistic and creative endeavour as defined in the Centre's mission statement, and to make it all as attractive and inviting as well as energy-efficient and administratively effective as possible, including the creation of an arts reference library and full computerisation for membership data and improved sales and marketing, including an in-house design and publications facility.

2. SALES & MARKETING

To complete extensive market research into centre users and members and act on the results of that research, including introducing new activities as required, and to confirm the Centre as the cultural focus for Shaftesbury and the surrounding area.

3. MEMBERSHIP

To double membership to at least 1000.

4. VOLUNTEERING

To double the level of volunteering in all areas and activities.

5. FINANCE

To repay all short-term member loans and begin to make serious inroads into paying off its other borrowings as quickly as possible in order to become completely self-funding to the extent of being able to employ a fulltime Centre manager and/or a part-time caretaker.