

The Story So Far end of project report October 2015

Headlines

Positive results:

- Bringing a broad range of statutory, community, charitable, small and large scale arts and cultural organisations, venues and projects was a key success of the project.
- The cross sectoral partnership opportunity brought the best out of the partners, combining our strengths.
- Lasting relationships have been established.
- High profile launches at either end of the borough created positive expectations about the project.
- Better ways of working across the sectors have been created.
- Clear lines of communication have been established.
- The project successfully reached new audiences.
- We engaged successfully with the 'hard-to-reach.'
- Increased library visitors and membership were achieved.
- Broadened the range of literary arts & culture in Ealing libraries.
- Arts organisations (small and large) appreciated the additional publicity the project supported.
- Mapping the arts was useful for venues, organisations and those wishing a 'one-stop-arts-focus' for the Borough.
- The project was tailored to the local niche environment.
- Grassroots delivery was an important feature, empowering creatives on their doorstep.
- Throughout the project people continued to get involved.
- We supported more events than originally commissioned as the passion was there.
- The project has forged new links, built new relationships.
- Developed constructive ways of working to our different strengths, and reaching new audiences.
- Celebrating the input of local literary and arts individuals/organisations.
- Incredibly positive feedback from participants and partners alike.

Challenges:

- One-off workshops sometimes proved difficult to recruit participants for.
- In terms of outreach, identifying the right school contact was difficult at times.
- The closing of Ealing Councils Small Grants programme impacted on the match funding we had expected.
- We faced challenges with exhibiting art in the libraries. Acton Library is listed and couldn't have anything hung on the expansive walls; and Southall library lacked the wall space.
- The response to call for commissioned work was incredible. Unfortunately we could not accommodate all of the work.
- Some of the named literary authors / storytellers we had planned to work with at the outset were unavailable.
- Not taking on more than is practically possible.
- Whilst library managers and key library staff were fully involved and informed of the project, all library frontline staff needed to be involved and 'own' the project.
- Bookable space in the libraries was sometimes problematic (in that they often don't have any!)

- Remoteness of the spaces within the Acton Centre impacted on attendance (on the third floor, only the determined found the event).
- Whilst we utilised a broad range of communication methods, it's never enough to reach all.

Lessons:

- Build on the positive foundation established.
- Support partnership working.
- Fewer 'one-off' events.
- More regular timetabled library partnership activities.
- Flexibility in achieving our goals (e.g. when authors / storytellers were unavailable, we worked with others).
- We held planning meeting in different library settings to ensure all staff were involved in the project roll out.
- Creative use of alternative community spaces was needed to overcome some of the logistical venue problems. Those spaces with easy public access were particularly successful e.g. W3 gallery
- Where we faced obstacles, we found alternative routes to achieving the desired outcomes.

Reporting

Following the successful launch events back in January and February 2015, the Arts Council partnership project 'The Story So Far' continued with a programme of literary inspired events. We were pleased to feature some of the best of Ealing's creative talent who shared their expertise, skills and passion for the arts throughout the projects duration. Literary readings by authors, poets and literary performances accompanied by music have been revitalising a literary culture in Ealing, establishing the Dominion and Acton Library as new stop-off points for book tours and supporting the development of a vibrant arts sector.

This partnership project is between Ealing Council, libraries (managed by Cultural Community Solutions), Acton Arts Forum and the local arts sector. This joint venture hasn't been undertaken in the Borough before, and is reaping benefits for all of those involved. We are fortunate in that all partners have brought something new and different to the creative table, and as such the benefits have been felt widely.

'The Story So Far' had the overarching themes of giving life to books by using different art forms, interpreting story themes and sharing core stories across communities such as creation stories and family narratives. The project fostered greater engagement of arts and culture by creating a high-profile programme of activities and exhibits of visual and literary arts. It successfully developed the arts in Ealing by fostering partnerships between artists, arts organisations and libraries. The project supported opportunities for artists to create and share new works. In so doing we widened audiences for the arts in Ealing through new venues and contexts.

Public engagement took many forms including at the launch events; by building up partnerships with arts and cultural organisations; via the Arts Trail, website, digital and physical promotions; through the open nomination of favourite books and stories; involving local people that have established literary initiatives; linking to existing initiatives including the Summer Reading Challenge, World Book Day and CityRead London; and fostering a wider arts and culture network which took forward the project sustainably.

As part of the project we created an 'Arts & Story Trail' programme of events and sites across Ealing from the project anchors in Southall and Acton libraries. The evolving trail can be seen on the website (<http://actonartsforum.org/thestorysofar>)

We have helped towards establishing Acton Library and Dominion Centre & Library Southall as flagship community/cultural hubs and centres for artistic and cultural excellence, accessible and engaging to all residents. We did this by piloting a consortium approach, working together in new ways, providing arts in new contexts and redressing the lack of arts venues in the Borough by taking advantage of libraries as key assets. The project also integrated libraries into town centres as cultural community anchors, expanding their offerings, attracting new users and reaching new audiences.

The Art hits the Streets and visual arts elements developed the work of local artists through opportunities to create, share and exhibit new work. We took art to unusual venues across the Arts Trail, as well as dedicated exhibitions at W3 gallery and at Ealing Libraries. Numerous artists and illustrators got involved. We held many public events including book launches, poetry readings, art tasters, childrens expressive illustration workshops, 'pass on a poem', storytelling et al.

The Story So Far planning meetings took place monthly between November 2014 & October 2015 at different library venues across Ealing with representation from all of the partners, with attendance of 25+ organisation representatives. Outreach linked with key literary and arts venues. Mapping Ealing arts venues also numbered 25 at the first reach out. Arts and cultural organisations that we engaged with reached more than 70. Media coverage was excellent from the start with all partners utilising their shared spheres of influence.

Across Ealing we worked towards maximising the contribution that arts, cultural activity and heritage can make to the vibrancy of Ealing. More generally 'The Story So Far' has helped build a thriving arts and literary culture in Ealing that reflects the vibrancy of Ealing's multicultural diversity. We delivered a diverse programme of high quality arts exhibitions in and out of traditional spaces.

The project reached new audiences, engaged people to participate dynamically in a diverse, wide-ranging programme of high quality arts activities. Local residents took up opportunities that encouraged creativity, community learning and artistic skills development as a means of creative expression, and trying something new.

Branding:

Branding for the project was a key priority at the outset in order to unite a broad range of arts across the borough. Publicity and marketing included the project logo design, interactive website development and media coverage.

	<p>Website: Acton Arts Forum, The Story So Far Link: http://actonartsforum.org/thestorysofar</p> <p>Facebook Page: thestorysofarealing Link: www.facebook.com/thestorysofarealing</p> <p>Twitter Page: @ssfealing, #thestorysofarealing Link: https://twitter.com/ssfealing</p>
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Flags. Banners at Acton Library with Dance Carib drummers. World Book Night.

We were pleasantly surprised at the enthusiasm with which the project was received. Organisations across the sectors from individual artists through to large arts organisations actively engaged with the project.

"I just thought I'd drop you a line to say thanks for including us in this really exciting project and also that I was really impressed by the efficiency and clarity evident in the meeting yesterday. Combined with natural warmth and great vibes it was a pleasure to be involved. I look forward to a really positive and mutually beneficial working relationship between our respective organisations both now and in the future." Kind regards, Anthony Shrubsall, Artistic Director, OPEN Ealing Ltd

"It has been great working with you and the planning team on this project and I look forward to working with you on future projects please keep me in the loop." Rico Allison, Dominion Centre

"Rachel great talking to you. I would love for us to get involved with this collaborative project. Warm regards, Hina." (Ealing Housing for Women)

"...Questors Choir, which is based at St Martin's church in Hale Gardens, West Acton. We rehearse at St Martin's but until this year, our concerts have been in West Ealing. We've now decided to hold our concerts at St Martin's too... As well as singing, I do publicity for the choir, and I wondered whether it would be appropriate to link up with Acton Arts Forum to publicise." Richard John, Questors Choir

"To you Rachel and all the Team, Thank you so much for all you have done and continue to do in the community.

You have all been working towards giving the community years of social interaction, with your team of dedicated workers and supportive volunteers, who gave their free-time and energy.

You have transformed South Acton and the attitudes of people, you have connected with the Poet, the painter, the word smith, the dancer, the mother, father, brother and sister. You have left a local historical memory for the new generation to yet to be born. You have brightened up the turning corner with unexpected murals. You have informed the playing child to question a ceramist couch.

The story so far is the continued shearing of ideas, the coming together and the breaking of bread.

To all the team... Thanks. Tuup" (Storyteller)

Launching

We held 2 launch events. One in January at Southall Library, the other in February at Acton Library. Both events involved performance, poetry readings, taster sessions & workshops, arts & cultural presentations & stalls. Each had its own flavour, relating to the area in which they took place, the creative organisations actively participating, as well as audiences. At the Southall launch there were 11 performances, 5 workshops & 16 stalls with some 300 visitors. At the Acton launch there were 13 performances, 5 workshops and 18 stalls with 400 visitors including Ed Vaizey the Minister of State for Culture.



Ed Vaizey with Ealing MP, Councillors, Ealing Council, Carillion & Acton Arts Forum representatives at Acton Library.

Department for Culture Media & Sport

Dear Carole

I just wanted to thank you and your team for a truly inspirational visit to Acton Library on 7 February to help celebrate National Libraries day.

From the joyful welcome of the drummers in the reception through to the packed out story time in the library it was a pleasure to see and be involved in such a dynamic use of an historic building. The numbers and range of people using the amenities was really encouraging and it is a shining example of what can be done by bringing a wide range of services together in one location.

I very much enjoyed the 'Story so Far' programme and seeing the various cultural activities that are available. It also helped to highlight the importance of the library as a central place where the community can engage with their past, present and future. I hope the rest of your day was as successful and I look forward to returning in the future to use my new library card and try out some of the other facilities on offer.

Ed Vaizey MP. Minister of State for Culture and the Digital Economy



Shavanarthanalayan Indian dancer. Poetry open mic night. Sheila Moylans Irish folk stories

Participating organisations:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. 40:20 Art Group | 28. Green Prospects |
| 2. A 4020 Transport exhibition | 29. Gunnersbury Park Museum |
| 3. A&A Photography | 30. I Goddess Creation |
| 4. Acton Community Forum | 31. Kathakali Dancers |
| 5. Acton Health | 32. Milad Yousofi & Suleiman Omar musicians |
| 6. Acton History Group | 33. Occident meets Orient |
| 7. Acton Library | 34. OPEN Ealing |
| 8. Acton Muslim Walks | 35. Pitshanger Poets |
| 9. Acton Poets | 36. Pitshanger Pop Up |
| 10. Afghan Academy | 37. Ragavan Mahandran Keyboard |
| 11. Alison Lumb, Artist and film-maker | 38. Rastamouse with Michael de Souza |
| 12. Amar Ahmad sufi-jazz music & words | 39. Questors Theatre |
| 13. Anthropomorphism: when humans go wild | 40. Shavanarthanalayan Indian dance |
| 14. APPLE play | 41. Sheilas Irish lyrical harp & folk |
| 15. ARK space | 42. Society Dance |
| 16. Arunas Tapestry Weaving | 43. South Acton Imagination Library |
| 17. Carillion Badge making | 44. Southall Library |
| 18. Carl Gabriel carnival arts | 45. Stories in the Street |
| 19. Constellations Poets | 46. Storyteller Inderjit Puaar |
| 20. Dance Carib | 47. The Refügees |
| 21. Danny Butcher, Photography & graphics | 48. The Rick Yard |
| 22. Dhol2Dhol | 49. University of West London |
| 23. Dominion Centre | 50. Vishvam Atul Tabla |
| 24. Ealing Autumn Festival | 51. W3 gallery |
| 25. Ealing Chinese Mandarin School | 52. W5 Productions |
| 26. Ealing Council | 53. Westside Radio |
| 27. Everyone Active Acton Centre | 54. Writing, Acting & Publishing Project for Youngsters |
| | 55. Zaid art |

"Greetings All, Thank you WAPPY writers ... for your new poems. You are all an inspiration!" Young poet performers



Story teller Richard Neville.

WAPPY young author reading.

Acton Poets

"The Story So Far was wonderful today. Wonderful attendance of local groups. Made a lot of contacts particularly for the Somali Oral History project. Lots of people from my past. Great opportunity to look around the building in action. Foyer looks very lively. As did the library. Thank you." Launch participant

".... [We] enjoyed meeting you both at the Acton Town Hall launch on Saturday of 'The Story So Far'. It was a brilliant event with a lot of interesting stalls and people." Guy Fiegehen, Chair of Governors, Acton High School

The Story So Far programme

Plotting the Arts & Literary Trail continues to be updated. We began with the 2 new libraries as the anchors on the map, and then 'joined the creative dots.' the project saw the evolution of the map of arts and literary venues and organisations across Ealing. There was a lot of interest in being a part of this and bringing the disparate arts activity in the borough under one umbrella. 25 different arts events attracting 2,813 participants. A wide range of literary and arts workshops, readings, tasters, performance and creative expression have taken place since launching, with a dynamic programme with something for everyone including:

THE STORY SO FAR PROGRAMME						
DATE	MONTH	FULL NAME OF EVENT	LIBRARY/VENUE	AGE GROUP	DESCRIPTION	ATTENDANCE
31	Jan	Southall Library Launch event	Southall Library & Dominion Centre	All	Opening event	300
7	Feb	Acton Library Launch event	Acton Library & Acton Town Hall	All	Opening event	400
5	Feb	Anthropomorphic	W3 gallery	All	Exhibition of book illustrations. Exhibition & opening event. 5th-22nd Feb	55
7,14,21	Feb	Anthropomorphic workshop	W3 gallery	All	Childrens illustration workshops	12

28	Feb	Chinese New Year Celebration	Ealing Central Library	All	Chinese cultural event	60
11	Mar	Sc-fi adventure novels for teenagers.	Acton Library	Teenagers	Author Philip Webb will talk about where ideas come from & what it's like to be a writer.	5
26	Mar	Inspiring Change exhibition	W3 gallery	All	Gender Agenda exhibition and literature	38
28	Mar	Afghan New Year celebration	Ealing Central Library	All	Community story telling & celebration	60
8	April	Banner making with APPLE arts.	Acton Library	6 +	Half-term Art workshop. Banner making with APPLE artist Sharon Walters.	8
16	April	Poetry night	Dominion Centre Community Suite	Adults	Poets, poetry & their inspiration.	8
23	April	Unpacking that Trunk & unleashing our stories.	Acton Library	6 - 16 yrs	A storytelling WAPPY workshop with Akuba	18
23	April	World Book Night Author Event.	W3 gallery	Adults	Re-imagining WW2 Authors Ben Fergusson, Jason Hewitt and Jane Thynne discuss their novels set around the time of WW2.	10
25	April	Vaisakhi festival	Jubilee Gardens Library,	All	Community story telling & celebration	65
	May +	Art Hits the Streets.	Across Ealing.	All	Visual arts at venues throughout Ealing including Libraries, Community Centres, Art spaces & Street Art.	1,000
13	May	The Adventures of the Crying Boy	Dominion Centre Community Suite	Adults	The Entire Theatre Co - Sherlock Holmes, The Adventure of the Creeping Man & an original drama The Adventure of the Crying Boy	9
21	May	Poetry night	Acton Centre	Adults	All with a love of poetry!	12
4	June	Global Dimensions.	W3 gallery	Adults	An evening of music, culture & discussion	48
16	June	Occident meets Orient	W3 gallery	Adults	East meets West in a musical conversation	36
26	June	Visual Prattle.	W3 gallery	All	Visual Memoirs	33
1st	July	Visual arts exhibition opening event	W3 gallery	All	1st-21st July exhibition by artists responding to stories, fables & myths. Opening event with readings, poetry, live music et al	120
14th	July	Poetry open mic	W3 gallery	Adults	Poetry open mic night	15
4th	July	Unpacking that Trunk & unleashing our stories.	Southall Library & Dominion Centre	6 - 16 yrs	A storytelling WAPPY workshop with Akuba	26
7th	July	Sc-fi adventure novels for teenagers.	Dominion Centre Community Suite	Teenagers	Author Philip Webb will talk about where ideas come from & what it's like to be a writer.	15
9th	July	TUUP Storytelling	W3 gallery	Adults	Tuup story telling	10
26th	Sept	The Story So Far Celebration event	Ealing Central Library	All	Closing event	450
The Story So Far Total participants						2813

Visual Arts & The Story So Far

The visual arts element of the project began with 'Anthropomorphism: when humans go wild' exhibition and workshops at the W3 gallery exploring the theme of book illustration, stories and fantasy.

"Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living, it's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope, and that enables you to laugh at life's realities" - Dr. Seuss



Illustrator Misha Zaccours exhibition



Anthropomorphic workshop

The Inspiring Change exhibition took place in March also has a literary strand including the work of **S R Jimmy**'s installation 'Birds', is an installation work made by 3 books written by Simone de Beauvoir (*The Second Sex*), Sylvia Plath (*Selected Poems*) and Virginia Woolf (*A room of one's own*). The 3 writers whose books will be used for the installation are very significant from the feminist perspective. They have given the women 'a subtle kind of space to fly'.



S R Jimmy 'Birds'



Marcella Reardon 'No Hollies'



Ben Walker 'Prosnítcelélèto'

We put the call out for 'The Story So Far' art work exploring stories, myths and legends held in July at the W3 gallery. The range and content of submission was extraordinary. The Art Selection Panel met to choose which pieces would form the visual arts exhibition. Finally, 28 artists were invited to participate. What we witnessed was one of the best W3 gallery

exhibitions with a wide range of genres from sculpture, to film, painting, photography, print making, interactive installations, text and multimedia work. We also held literary and spoken word events throughout the duration of the exhibition.



Book reading by Tony Rickaby



Deputy Mayor & her Consort open the exhibition

Activities and Events:

25 events with 2,813 participants between Jan & Sept 2015.

(*Please see accompanying Activities Report)

1. Launch in Southall (Jan)
2. Launch in Acton (Feb)
3. Anthropomorphism exhibition and children's illustration workshops (Feb)
4. Chinese New Year celebration (Feb)
5. Sc-fi adventure novels for teenagers x 2 (March & July)
6. Inspiring Change (Mar)
7. Afghan New Year celebration (March)
8. Banner making with APPLE arts (April)
9. Poetry night x 3 (April in Dominion, May in Acton Centre, July in W3)
10. Unpacking that Trunk & unleashing our stories x 2 (April in Acton, July in Southall)
11. World Book Night Author Event (April)
12. Vaisakhi festival (April)
13. Art Hits the Streets (May)
14. The Adventures of the Crying Boy (May)
15. Global Dimensions (June)
16. Occident meets Orient (June)
17. Visual Prattle (June)
18. TSSF Visual arts exhibition (July)
19. Tuup Storytelling x 2 (July & Sept)
20. Closing Celebration (September)

Ealing's cabinet member responsible for culture, libraries, arts and museums, Councillor Ranjit Dheer said about the project: "Ealing is one of London's most vibrant and diverse boroughs and has so much to offer when it comes to culture. I would encourage people to join the celebration and find out more about Ealing's history of culture, art and music."

Library membership and use

The increase in library usage is testament to the success of the project. The new members' statistics show a positive increase as follows:

	2015	2014
Acton	2094	1862
Dominion	2479	1938

<p>New members</p> <p>Acton:</p> <p>13/14 14/15</p> <p>Jan 175 270</p> <p>Feb 159 250</p> <p>Southall:</p> <p>13/14 14/15</p> <p>Jan 189 298</p> <p>Feb 194 363</p>	<p>Visits</p> <p>Acton: 14/15</p> <p>Dec- 8180</p> <p>Jan - 11477</p> <p>Feb - 12457</p> <p>Southall: 14/15</p> <p>Dec- 14658</p> <p>Jan- 21441</p> <p>Feb- 21149</p>
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Library Visits

Acton						Southall					
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16		2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Apr		9546	14420	4305	12133	Apr		7500	7710	9201	17286
May		11146	14791	13281	11316	May		7500	9009	9650	16903
Jun		8479	14082	20777	11553	Jun		7500	7963	8106	19981
Jul		12172	12415	11262		Jul		7500	7899	5016	
Aug		11244	12941	12125		Aug		7500	8178	1500	
Sep		11586	13615	10509		Sep		7500	8233	12707	
Oct		11274	13700	11255		Oct		6500	8998	7250	
Nov		14870	13700	10784		Nov		6500	8136	16766	
Dec		9997	10962	8180		Dec		6500	8999	14658	
Jan		15006	15857	11477		Jan		6899	8957	21441	
Feb		14400	16410	12457		Feb		6998	8900	21149	
Mar		14531	10916	11656		Mar		7263	8933	23206	
Totals	0	144251	163809	138068	35002	Totals	0	85660	101915	150650	54170

Book issues

Acton						Southall				
	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
					Apr	8428	8248	7975	6175	7972
Apr	8217	7847	7206	2282	May	8637	8262	7299	5888	8631
May	10565	7748	6975	6852	Jun	7570	7777	6828	4320	7449
Jun	9814	7537	5895	6340	Jul	8124	8698	7278	4211	
Jul	9546	7816	6569	7353	Aug	9651	9200	7791	3391	
Aug	9294	8333	6688	8190	Sep	9256	8427	6514	8252	
Sep	8948	7528	6391	8206	Oct	9209	8818	7229	9028	
Oct	9848	8094	7069	8250	Nov	8016	7448	6401	7724	
Nov	8190	7200	6795	7170	Dec	6720	5269	4693	6016	
Dec	6928	5459	4434	5255	Jan	9064	7985	6707	8191	
Jan	8392	7381	6516	7755	Feb	8652	6867	5980	8104	
Feb	8223	7047	5962	7410	Mar	8939	7700	7115	8205	
Mar	8793	6888	3889	6880	Total	102266	94699	81810	79505	24052
Totals	106758	88878	74389	81943						

actonartsforum.org/thestorysofar



THE STORY SO FAR

Launching on
31st Jan 2015
11 am - 4 pm

fb.com/thestorysofarealing
#thestorysofarealing

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

CCS



W3 Gallery
Presents

THE STORY SO FAR

1st - 21st July 2015
185 Acton High Street, W3 9DJ

A mixed media exhibition exploring
Fairytale, Folklore, Legends, Myths and Stories.

www.w3gallery.co.uk

In Partnership With:

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND, THE ARTS FORUM, W3 GALLERY, CCS

actonartsforum.org/thestorysofar



THE STORY SO FAR

Closing Event

Saturday 26th September 2015,
11am - 3pm
Ealing Central Library
103, Ealing Broadway Shopping Centre,
The Broadway, London W5 5JY

"An afternoon of storytelling,
art workshops, music
& performances"

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#thestorysofarealing

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