

## Council of Ministers Paper No: 19/235

### End of Year Two of National Development Strategy for Culture and the Arts Progress Report

#### Summary

The Action Plan that accompanies the National Development Strategy for Culture and the Arts 'Arts, Culture and Creativity for Everyone' outlines actions which should be achieved or started in Year Two by the Isle of Man Arts Council and Culture Vannin. This second annual report gives a summary of actions achieved and in progress submitted to the Council of Ministers and includes an update to Year One actions.



#### YEAR TWO ACTIONS

##### 1&2) Develop new arts and cultural engagement programmes

In the light of various statistical issues surrounding the first cultural engagement survey - perhaps arising from general Island survey fatigue and suspicion - a second more focused survey is expected and results would be presented comparatively. We have used feedback from artistic and cultural communities as well as from festivals and events to shape some new engagement programmes.

Both organisations embraced the Year of Our Island celebrations, and worked with the Cabinet Office, in particular to focus on innovation and creativity in May, July as culture month, festivals in September, and artisans in December.

The Isle of Man Arts Council partnered with Year of Our Island and focussed, in May 2018, on innovation and creativity. Two of the featured events were the island wide Creative Network's Isle of Man Art Festival, including an art trail, and Oie Voaldyn (Fire Festival) in Peel helping to showcase Manx creativity and design.

For culture month Culture Vannin produced an engagement booklet and developed a family treasure hunt around St John's, teaching adult beginners the tin whistle. We also worked with Manx Radio to hold the inaugural Manx Music Day devoted to the diverse range of original music produced here. From breakfast to bedtime, listeners tuned in to hear contemporary Manx rock, pop, rap, blues, jazz and classical music, as well as Manx Gaelic language songs and traditional Celtic music. We partnered with uTalk to produce download cards and codes for free online lessons in Manx which were given out on Tynwald Day and throughout July.

Celebrating festivals in September came very naturally to us, as we both provide annual funding for various festivals and events, and the cultural and artistic communities take part in other Government-led initiatives such as the Food and Drink Festival. This year, a new world music festival emerged, and we made sure that Manx culture formed part of the celebrations, both through the family day and through musical performances, some of which were in Manx. We are looking at ways to work with other Departments to ensure that festivals which have become an established part of our Manx calendar receive the support they need.

Culture Vannin also worked with the Cabinet Office to make sure that Hop tu Naa could be celebrated more widely, collaborating over a leaflet with children's activities, and the production of stickers and banners.



December celebrated our artisans. The Isle of Man Arts Council supported several popular events across the island highlighting an abundance of Manx artisan talent. Grenaby Studios and the Keird Collective held Christmas markets throughout the month and the Isle Contemporary Gallery organised a Christmas art crawl across various locations in the west of the island. This market-style art trail event took place in the House of Manannan, the Pilates Isle of Man studio on Peel Harbour, Isle Contemporary at Tynwald Mills and at the picturesque PineWood Studio Furniture at Bishop’s Court, Kirk Michael. Such events are becoming a firm fixture on the calendar as attendance continues to grow.



Christmas Arts Crawl



Karolina Pawlowska’s Loaghtan Sheep  
on Castletown Town Hall

### **Isle of Man Arts Council (“IOMAC”):**

Year Two of the Strategy has seen a rise in applicants for funding to the Isle of Man Arts Council (“IOMAC”) which illustrates the continued growth and development of arts and creativity in the Isle of Man.

IOMAC has further broadened access and new opportunity for arts engagement with:

- The launch of the IOMAC free annual lecture in March 2019 with internationally renowned photographer Martin Parr as inaugural lecturer;
- Development of the free Summer Music Series of concerts in the Villa Marina Arcade, to 38 concerts from July to September including local bands and choirs, soloists and the Wurlitzer and which also offers come and play opportunities;
- Free access to public art with the placing of Rob Jones’ sculptures in the Arboretum and IOMAC Loan Collection artworks hung in public buildings such as Central Government Offices, the Courts and most schools.

IOMAC funding has also supported new events and venues throughout the year broadening access and opportunity, for example:

- Hospice Wallaby Project: island wide community art trail with current unlocks on the Wallaby App at 52,305 at the time of writing this report;

- New support for non-traditional venues such as Mother T's in Laxey and Compton Vaults in Castletown, bringing the arts to a different demographic;
- Support for the painting of new public murals: Castletown Commissioners, in particular, take a pro-active approach to public art, and with IOMAC support, developed the public art on the Town Hall by Karolina Pawlowska depicting a Loaghtan Sheep. This proved innovative and popular within the community, resulting in further art on public buildings such as the police station. Greater public engagement is also leading to the development of ideas with the Castletown Commissioners for public performance space within the town.

### **Culture Vannin:**

We have experienced an increased ask in terms of grant applications, including applicants who contribute annually to the established cultural calendar in terms of festivals and events, as well as new ideas, skills development, research and publications. Our funding awards include:

- Vikings of Mann school workshops,
- Visiting tutors for Ellan Vannin Pipes and Drums
- Underwriting for a new Manx music Christmas show 'Manannan's Winterfest'
- New devised theatre piece based on Manx folklore at the Edinburgh Fringe
- Repairs to Rushen Parish Church organ
- Film projects including the Brig Lily, The Lost Wife (from *Manx Fairy Tales*)
- Publications on circuses in the Isle of Man, internment and poetry
- Exhibition catalogue for the Archibald Knox Forum



### **3) Taking arts activities into communities: Isle of Man Arts Council**

Over the last year, IOMAC and the Arts Officers have met with Commissioners and other bodies around the Island to assist, advise and fund to develop art and creativity within our local communities, inspiring grass roots activity. The value of public art is increasingly being welcomed.

During Year Two of the Strategy, such partnerships, amongst other initiatives, have resulted in:

- Willow Lantern workshops with Douglas Development Partnership;
- Artistic plans for the cultural area on Douglas promenade with DOI - My Prom;
- Public art in Castletown and plans for Port St Mary, working with the Commissioners in both towns;

- Support for “The Sound of Stories” all-island primary schools concert at the Villa Marina (see photo);
- Support for Grenaby Studios, the Creative Network, the Keird Collective for pop-up artisan fairs and the Isle Gallery for workshops and initiatives such as the Christmas Art Crawl;
- Venue support at The Hub in Port Erin and Earroo Nane in Jurby where art, sewing and creative writing workshops have not only been successful in growing attendance but have proven to be a benefit to community and individual wellbeing;
- Support for the recent visit of the Grenadier Guards Band to QE2 High School to provide a workshop for young instrumentalists on an all-island basis and also a general marching skills workshop for local brass bands;
- Live screenings around the island: access to live international professional theatre, dance and music at venues such as The Studio Theatre, Erin Arts Centre and the Northern Theatre Experience;
- The visit of QDOS dance specialists who gave workshops in local schools and in residential homes;
- Support for new literature such as “M is for Manx Cat – an Isle of Man ABC” written and illustrated by local writers and artists;
- Continuation of the amateur rate subsidy at the Gaiety Theatre enabling local societies and performers to continue to perform there to the highest standard;
- Working with the Year of Our Island team, being instrumental in bringing the Illumaphonium to the Island for the closing events;
- Open days at the Engine House in Castletown for potential funding applicants to meet the Arts Team;
- Culture Vannin and IOMAC film celebrating the national development strategy in cinemas:



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRP\\_gBjuBJw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRP_gBjuBJw)

- IOMAC and Culture Vannin work to support on-Island festivals such as Dark Horse, the Great Manx Shindig, IOM Flower Festival, Oie Voaldyn, Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering, Shennaghys Jiu, Theatrefest, Manx Litfest, Mindful Mann, the Creative Network’s Art Festival and Peel Carnival, and many more. Events such as these often

offer free activities and workshops and which attract engagement from the youngest to the oldest.

IOMAC and Culture Vannin are now progressing projects identified in the successful application for funding from the Bona Vacantia fund. In the next few months, this will see the Conrhenny Public Shelter and Creative Toilet initiatives being announced in partnership with DEFA and Ramsey Commissioners respectively. The "Have A Go Roadshow" project will be included in the March 2020 Visit Agency "On Your Doorstep" weekend.

Across the two organisations, our grants reached over 60,000 people in terms of festival and event attendees.

#### **4) Taking cultural activities into communities: Culture Vannin**

Much of our development and grant-giving work focuses on taking cultural activities into communities. Some of this year's newly developed or enhanced activities include:

- A new 'Oie Fillym' – film night – to showcase the Culture Vannin films and to celebrate in particular a new commission charting the path of the Cornaa River from its source to the sea with new original music from Mera Royle and timelapse photography from Brook Wassall. As well as being an opportunity to view the films on the big screen, it was an opportunity for those not able to access online materials to come together to enjoy the footage, enabling dialogue between the general public and the Manx creative talent behind the films.
- Supporting all ages through Manx language lessons, events and resources including ten short films 'Manx for Parents' to help families include the language in the home setting. One new focus for the year was the creation of 'comprehensible input' resources to support intermediate adult learners.
- Working with Manx student and musician, Isla Callister, to bring her trio to perform in schools to share excellence and inspire younger performers:  
<https://vimeo.com/346854597>
- Organising of the Manx Folk Awards in conjunction with DESC, involving almost 1,250 students aged 4-18.
- Participating in the MNH Heritage Open Days with a Sophia Morrison walking tour and held an open day as part of the Visit Agency's 'On Your Doorstep' scheme, offering a folklore tour of St John's which proved incredibly popular.
- We engage with the community by giving talks to heritage trusts, WI and other groups.



## **5) Participation in the International Edinburgh Cultural Summit**

Last August Minister Cregeen and Professor Ronald Barr, Chief Executive of DESC, attended the Edinburgh International Cultural Summit which brings together Ministers with responsibility for Culture from around the world to meet artists, thinkers, academics and arts leaders.

At the event the Minister and Professor Barr were impressed by a presentation made by Professor Assal Habibi who was looking at the use of music and the creative arts to help children with challenging behaviour patterns in schools and have therefore commissioned Professor Habibi and her team from the Brain and Creativity institute at University of Southern California to work with our Educational Psychologists and Education Sport Service team to work on a project entitled "Education Curriculum, Children Well-being, and Success Later in Life". The aspiration of the Department is to become leaders in the use of the Arts to help children with particular patterns in our schools while providing key staff in this area the opportunity to work with global leaders in the field from USC.

We have also been in conversation with Sir Jonathan Mills the prominent Australian born composer and festival director who is currently the Director of the Edinburgh Cultural Summit about how we might be able to show case the work that has been done on island to develop the Manx language at a future Summit.

## **6) Explore potential to attach cultural artistic programmes to international sporting events at which the IOM is represented**

We are currently talking to IOM Sport to explore possibilities relating to representation off-Island as well as for future international meetings such as the Island Games on the Isle of Man. We believe there is great potential to develop programmes which will appeal to young visiting athletes in particular, as a way of sharing some of the highlights of our arts and culture scene.

Culture Vannin were approached by the Ellan Vannin football team to provide cultural support for their team (language learning, music, etc.) who planned to take part in the ConIFA meetings, but unfortunately they were not able to secure funding.

Both organisations are regularly approached by sporting events, most recently in relation to the Island Games Gymnastics event, to provide performers for opening ceremonies.

## **YEAR ONE ACTIONS – update**

### **Review Communications**

The IOMAC has seen its online communication channels grow stronger over the course of Year Two. Grainney Sheard, as the Arts Engagement Officer, has continued to develop and expand the online following through the publishing of regular news articles on the website that are shared in a monthly newsletter and across a number of social media platforms on a weekly basis. There has been a noticeable increase in post engagement with approximately 2,500 reach per post on the Facebook page alone.

Furthermore, a number of Facebook groups have been developed that cater specifically to the IOMAC's key customer segments: Funding Applicants, Audience Members and the Arts Community at large. These address the specific needs of each group and see good engagement from the local arts community.

The IOMAC's presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram is stronger than ever with a following that steadily increases every week. The monthly newsletter communicates both IOMAC news as well as news from the arts community. The IOMAC also supports a weekly podcast, Spotlight (broadcast every Wednesday on Manx Radio).

Culture Vannin's online presence is well-established but constantly developing – our most popular short film during this year had over 30,000 views and our most popular video on YouTube is almost at 500,000 views. We added 145 videos to YouTube during the year which were watched 342,000 times. There was a 42% increase in Likes on our main Facebook page and we now have almost 1.5 million impressions on Twitter. A continued effort to increase 'free to use images' on Flickr is an important way of making photographs of the Island accessible to all in order to increase re-posting of quality images. We released 160 new audio files on SoundCloud, twice as many as the previous year.

### **Establish a Legacy Bursary Charity**

The IOMAC legacy bursary charity Arts Aid, formally incorporated in July 2018, received a number of funding applications and all applicants were interviewed. Consideration was given to many factors, but fundamental was the perception of exceptional ability, potential, appropriateness of the course and financial need.

Each of the successful applicants is currently enrolled in a course of study in the arts. One is enrolled in a one-year diploma course in musical theatre, one in a diploma course in film and TV acting, one is studying music at a specialist music school and the fourth is enrolled in a foundation course in the performing arts. Feedback to date from each of the recipients has been extremely positive. The directors of Arts Aid are highly encouraged by the success achieved so far. The total amount of grant funding committed in the first year was: £16,200. Interviews for the 2019 academic year are being held in August.

### **Celebrate the importance of arts and culture to our UNESCO Biosphere status**

Culture Vannin has partnered with Biosphere IOM on various projects, most notably the IOM Poetry Map [https://www.culturevannin.im/poetry\\_map.html](https://www.culturevannin.im/poetry_map.html), and making presentations at the EuroMAB conference in Dublin.

We are currently interviewing for the first graduate intern who will work on a project relating to Manx culture and the Biosphere, based at Culture Vannin. An important part of our development work focusses on commissions that ensure we take Manx culture forward through the creation of new expressions and interpretations.

IOMAC continue to support and fund arts and culture celebrating the Biosphere status such as filmmaker Brook Wassall creating timelapse films on Manx landscapes and the night skies and outdoor events for example concerts in Groudle Glen and the Shakespeare in Peel Castle, outdoor sculpture at Grenaby and the Hospice Wallaby art trail.

Together, IOMAC and Culture Vannin have prepared a design brief for a public shelter/art installation in Conrhenny Community Woodland in celebration of Biosphere IOM. The opportunity is scheduled to be advertised in August 2019.

### **Investigate potential for international representation and exchange**

Culture Vannin has developed a Breton-Manx musical collaboration which was premiered at Yn Chruinnaght Celtic Gathering festival in July and which will lead to international performances and a possible recording. Short live videos can be found here: [www.facebook.com/CelticGatheringIOM/](http://www.facebook.com/CelticGatheringIOM/) and further videos relating to the project will

appear on the Culture Vannin Vimeo channel in due course:

<https://vimeo.com/culturevannin>

Culture Vannin's young harp group, Claasagh, took Manx music to the prestigious Edinburgh Harp Festival.

Culture Vannin welcomed many visiting researchers and students including those from SOAS, University of London. We helped to host a visit of the Council of Europe's Committee of Experts relating to minority and lesser used languages and we assisted DESC in hosting a visit of BIC officers from the minority and lesser used languages workstream, giving a talk about our work and about the development of the Manx language.

Culture Vannin's officers were involved in various BBC radio programmes (on both Radio 3 and Radio 4) including 'Notes from a Musical Island' and 'Tongue and Talk: the dialect poets'. Our Online and Educational Resources Officer gave an invited lecture at the International Celtic Congress in Newquay.

Once again IOMAC has supported representation by Island artists and creatives at national and international events throughout the year, with awards made totalling approximately £28,427. In partnership with Culture Vannin, support is once again provided for the Isle of Man representation at Europe's largest Celtic festival in Lorient, Brittany in August via the Isle of Man pavilion and stage, which is a showcase for performers and artists (paid for by the festival itself) as well as for Manx food, drink, merchandise and tourist information.

IOMAC support has also seen Manx dancers attend the Cwlwm Celtaidd Festival in Wales, World Championships in Eindhoven, the International Festival of Dance and Performing Arts in Paris, actors participating at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival and musicians performing at Superbooth Berlin and the Henningsvaer Street Festival in Norway.

### **Open a cultural centre at St John's**

We continue to update our cultural centre at St John's and have developed educational material to enable us to work more formally with schools. The centre is multi-use – during weekdays it houses our offices and an exhibition, allowing access to our cultural community, to the general public and visitors alike. In the evenings and at weekends, it is used as a teaching and rehearsal space.

### **Launch Manx Language Strategy**

The strategy is now online bilingually together with updated action plan. Discussions with partner organisations in Scotland, Ireland and Nova Scotia to celebrate a year of Gaelic languages in 2021 to coincide with the Year of the Manx Language.

### **To support DESC delivery of Manx curriculum**

Some examples of continued work for Culture Vannin with the Advisory Teacher for the Manx Curriculum are dance instruction films and Manx hero signage in playgrounds, as well as continued support for the Feddan whole class music teaching in primary schools.

### **Provide opportunities for lifelong learning**

Culture Vannin Manx language development work has included the production of a new two year structure course for learners which is followed by supported independent learning through the production of new resources.

IOMAC launched its new Student Bursaries in 2019. Three bursaries were available to students, each for £10,000. The standard of application was high and the 2019-20 recipients are:

- The Jonathan Gollow Bursary for Music and the Performing Arts: Saroja Lily Ratnavel (MFA Professional Acting at LAMDA)
- The Norman Sayle Bursary for Visual Art and Literature: Kipenzi Thomas (BA(Hons) Fashion and Technology – Menswear) at Manchester Metropolitan University
- The Isle of Man Arts Council Bursary: Callum Rowe (BMus(Hons) Popular Music – Royal Northern College of Music)

### **Representation at DfE’s Creative Industries stakeholder group**

Both IOMAC and Culture Vannin contribute regularly to reporting to British Irish Council by the Department for Enterprise.

### **Support island-wide opportunities for live screening of arts events**

Live Screening continues to be supported by the IOMAC around the Island at the Studio Theatre Ballakermeen, Northern Theatre Experience, the Erin Arts Centre and Kings Court Theatre at KWC. Audiences continue to grow with some offerings, such as Everybody’s Talking About Jamie, selling out in advance and being repeated several times at the various venues.

### **PLANNING AHEAD**

Culture Vannin’s Manx Music Development Officer was successful in securing funding from Celton Manx to develop performances in Manx care homes, a programme that will be developed over 2019/20.

IOMAC will be bringing the Hallé Orchestra to the Island in 2020 with guest soloist, cellist Sheku Kanneh Mason. A Come and Play/Sing with the Hallé concert will also be staged inviting young singers and instrumentalists.

IOMAC will also be focussing its funding for 2020/21 specifically on Year Three strategy Aims.

### **Summary of Year Two Actions:**

Develop new arts engagement programmes	GREEN
Develop new cultural engagement programmes	GREEN
Take arts activities into communities	GREEN
Take cultural activities into communities	GREEN
Participation in the International Edinburgh Cultural Summit	AMBER
Explore potential to attach cultural and artistic programmes to international sporting events at which the IOM is represented	GREEN

Colour coding:

GREEN: Project progressing to plan

AMBER: Project may need assistance in the future; currently handling within the project team but management team: be aware

RED: Escalation: project team need help to resolve a problem

BLUE: Action is completed or superseded and has been closed

**Summer 2019**