



Strategic Plan 2015-2018

*Arts for All uses the arts to develop a more cohesive, confident and creative community in North
Belfast...*

Foreword: Valerie O'Brien Chair

Over the past fourteen years Arts for All (AfA) has been at the forefront of devising and delivering community arts in north Belfast. Throughout this time the organisation has witnessed many changes as the area has responded to a rapidly changing political and economic climate. Throughout, AfA has remained focussed on delivering with the local community offering the opportunity to experience and participate in community arts, being open to all who wish to enjoy arts in all its forms. Presently, both north Belfast and AfA are facing challenges; political stalemate, austerity, poverty and on going funding cuts to the voluntary sector and the arts offers a very challenging environment to any organisation committed to access and inclusion. AfA is confident that it will continue to be relevant, serving the community, building from its base in York Road, reaching out to work in partnership, open to all.

Introduction: Heather Floyd Coordinator

The development of our new strategic plan has offered AfA the opportunity to critically assess its role and contribution within north Belfast and reaffirm its commitment to delivering for the local community .While recognising the very difficult environment, AfA has enjoyed a period of growth in terms of its programmes, developing new partnerships and the establishment of its new base within the **John Luke Gallery**. The challenge is to build upon its track record, responding to the environment while seeking to continue to deliver effectively and seek new opportunities and participants. Subject to funding, AfA is confident that it may be able to enhance its gallery base, secure adequate levels of funding to maintain its staff levels and develop new partnership opportunities enhancing its offer to the local community.

The Strategy Development Process

The development of a new Art for All (AfA) strategic plan was an iterative process undertaken over a period of months in 2014, involving a range of interested parties, critical to the success and development of the organisation. The backdrop to the new plan was provided through a review of the policy context and the implications for AfA and a review of the current plan highlighting areas of success and challenges. An online survey was undertaken with past participants and stakeholders informing the discussions at the subsequent workshops involving participants, artists, tutors, community partners, and board and staff members. Individual meetings were also held with funders. The intention and approach throughout was to ensure that AfA was mindful of its place within the community and its contribution while being open to new circumstances and new opportunities. The intended outcome was a strategic framework and action plan which would guide development and be sufficiently flexible enough to allow AfA to respond to changing needs and circumstances.

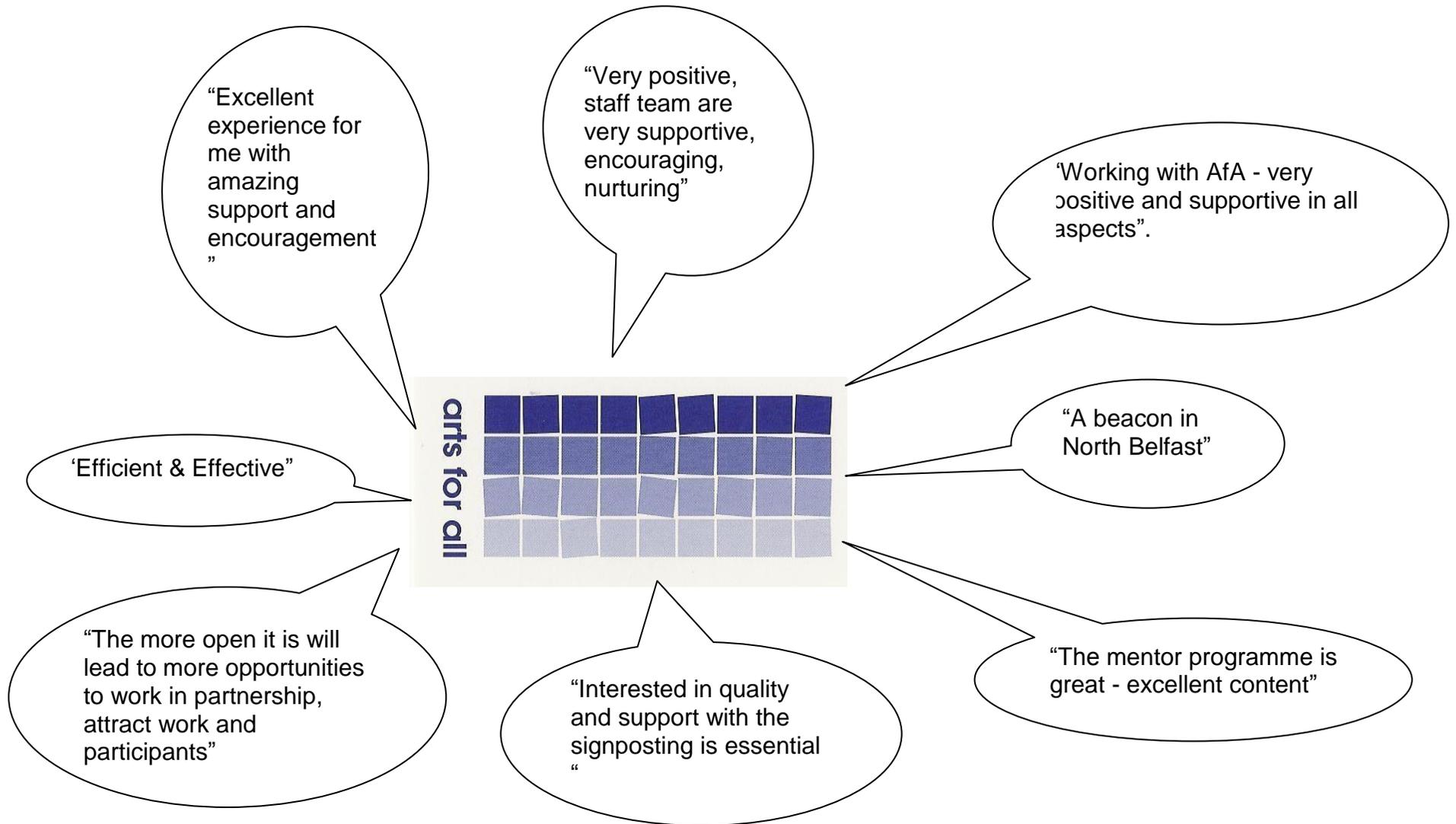
Building upon Success

During one of the team workshops the information gained through the on line survey and external workshops and interviews was presented in some detail. In terms of the development of the organisation a number of common themes emerged which are summarised as follows;

Common Themes

Based upon the consultation process a number of themes have emerged:

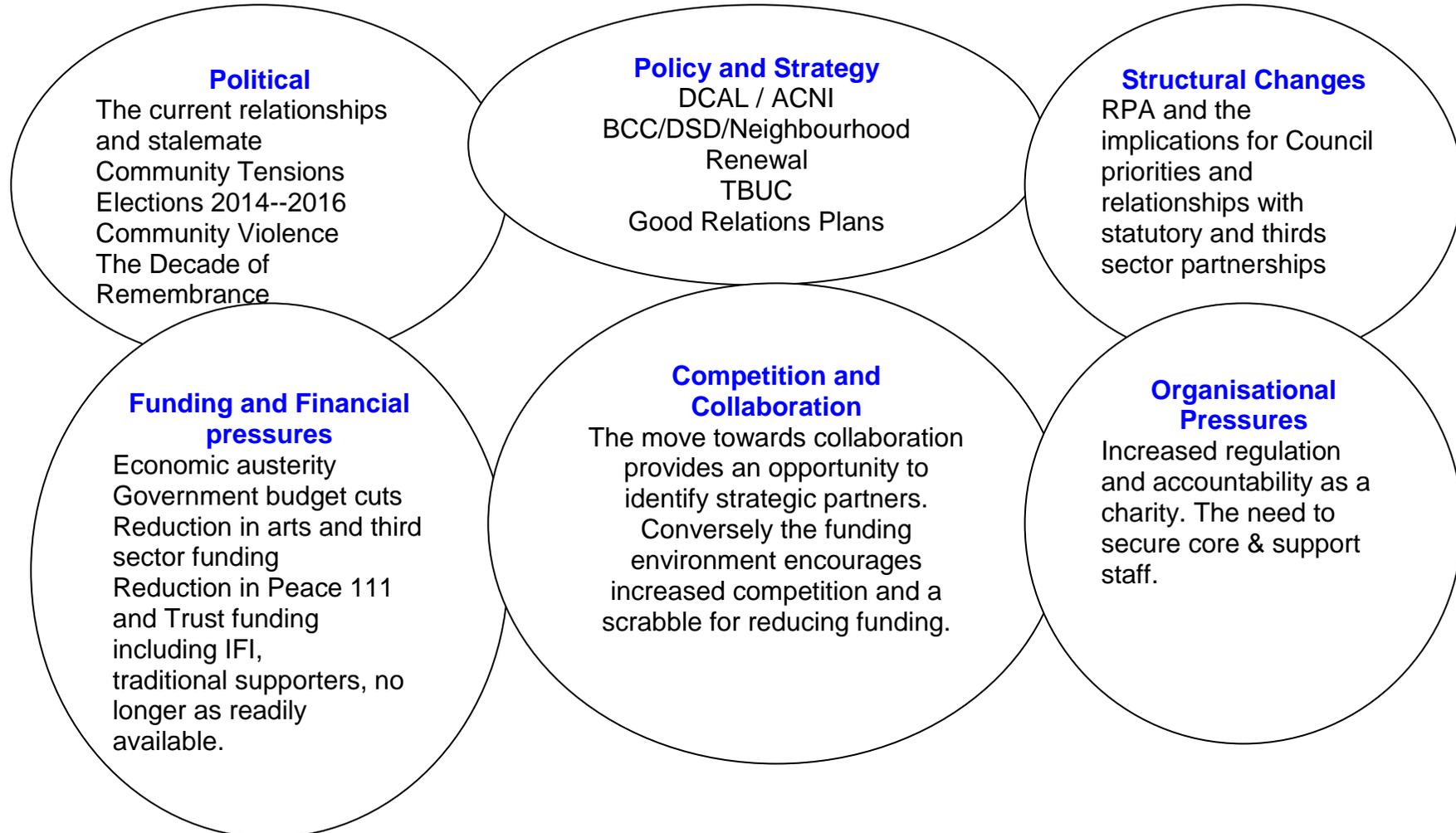
- AfA is perceived in a very positive light by its core funders, participants, artists and delivery partners
- The organisation is known for its quality of work, its attention to detail and delivering programmes that are well thought out.
- The quality of work and product is of a very high standard
- AfA is trusted as a delivery body that takes care of its participants, partners and artists.
- AfA has its home in north Belfast, acting as an “anchor” and “beacon” for community development through the arts. In tandem with his strong local identity, AFA is *open to all an anchor and beacon* in north Belfast



The challenge facing the board and staff team is building upon a successful and unique track record, mindful of a difficult funding and increasingly competitive environment. Part of this challenge is to remain anchored within its locality of north Belfast serving the local community but mindful of the need to reach out and engage in partnerships.

The Changing Environment and Implications for AfA

Summary of Internal and External Influences



Priorities Going Forward

Re-engagement with the vision and mission

Through the review process the current vision /mission statement was revisited and reaffirmed as defining the purpose of the organisation,

“Arts for All uses the arts to develop a more cohesive, confident and creative community in north Belfast..”

Core Focus

The core area of interest and focus of attention remains north Belfast, with AfA open to creating access to the arts for all within this geographical area.

Key Themes /Priority Areas of Work

The core themes identified were as follows:

Capacity Building

Work here will include an emphasis on reaching out to the local community and new target groups (older people, youth, minority ethnic groups, children, pre-school age, disability groups and men) offering a tailored menu and taster modules and possibly more art forms e.g. singing and drama. Within this theme there is a commitment to exploring progression and skill development utilising the potential of OCN accreditation, supported by the on going mentoring and skill development programmes. The programme has a strong focus on creating access to the arts in audience cold spots.

Utilising the Cultural Hub

The successful development of the ***John Luke Gallery*** has encouraged an application to the Social Investment Fund (SIF). If successful, this will allow a greater use of the gallery and a possible refurbishment, if SIF funding becomes a reality .Meanwhile there are opportunities to make the current space more accessible and welcoming.

Building Partnerships: Internal and External

There is a need to look proactively at partnership opportunities e.g. through T: BUC funding, working with ArtsEkta and youth and community providers such as Artillery, the North Belfast Partnership, Small Steps, Northern Visions and the Duncairn Community Centre, engaging with the Festival Forum, the Neighbourhood Renewal Forum, the Cathedral Quarter Trust, the University of Ulster community engagement group for the new campus and theatre groups. A strand of this engagement will include cementing the positive relationship with artists and facilitators, recognising their role as ambassadors for AfA. Other opportunities may be to look at local connections such as that offered by the success of Carl Frampton, capitalising on the link with the local boxing club.

Building and Sustaining the Organisation

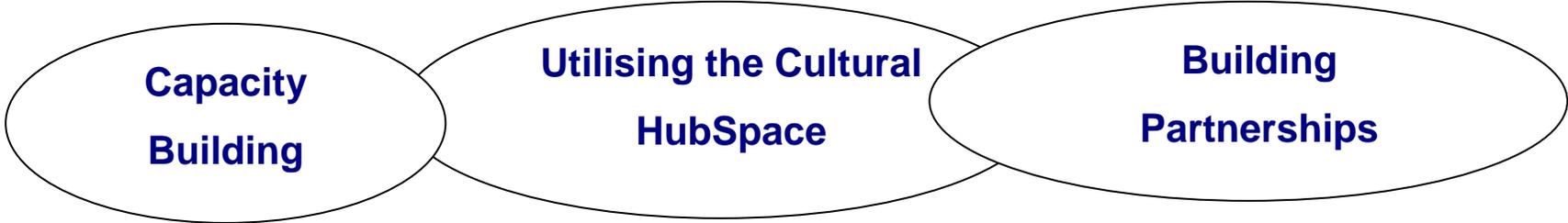
- **Funding:** An ongoing pursuit of funding opportunities including: Heritage Lottery, Peace IV, T:BUC and direct to the Arts Council, seeking to explore income generation opportunities, management fees, rental from tenants in the building, the sale of art and Awards for All.
- **Governance:** There is a need to consider the skills available to the board and the need to add additional members as required. Coupled with this is a need to ensure all relevant policies and procedures are up to date.
- **Profile:** Building upon the new website there is a need to raise AFA's profile and engagement using social media through twitter and Facebook, combined with traditional methods such as a leaflet drop. Part of the profile initiative has included development of a new logo. In tandem with this, it was agreed that board members would support additional engagement with local politicians and political parties.
- **People:** Key to the above will be the need for appropriate staff resources required to deliver. Mindful of the pressures it was agreed that new funding opportunities such as Peace IV may offer the opportunity to secure additional staff. Related to this are opportunities to pursue volunteer and project staff, undertaking specific tasks e.g. leaflet drops and social media. Building the team can also involve creating opportunities for informal contact with the board e.g. lunch, Christmas and team building.

Strategic Framework

Vision
Arts for All uses the arts to develop a more cohesive, confident and creative community in North Belfast...

Values and Principles
Inclusive, Welcoming and Creative

Core Themes



Sustaining and Building the Organisation



Draft Operational Plan 2015--2016

Strategic Aim 1: Capacity Building

Objectives		Outputs	Targets	Achievement against targets 2015/2016
1.1 To undertake capacity building arts programmes as the core of AfA work	1.1.1	To deliver community arts workshops with community groups and schools, developing the capacity of the north Belfast community, creating access to the arts in areas with poor access.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 650 participants • 25 artists • 20 groups • 8 schools • 100 workshops Per annum	
1.2 To develop and undertake a mentoring programme	1.2.1	To develop an innovative mentoring programme which is becoming a flagship programme for north Belfast	To pair up to 25 emerging north Belfast artists with up to 20 established artists per annum, transferring skills and supporting emerging artists	
	1.2.2	To develop and deliver accredited training in partnership with the OCN focusing upon mentors and mentees	To explore delivering one pilot accredited mentoring training course	

Strategic Aim 2: Utilising the Cultural HubSpace

Objectives		Outputs	Targets	Achievement against targets 2015/2016
2.1 To promote the <i>John Luke Gallery</i> as a Cultural Hub	2.1.2	To deliver an annual programme of artists exhibitions	Deliver up to 15 exhibitions per annum	
	2.1.3	To develop and deliver a local artist in residents programme	Programme developed and delivered	
	2.1.4	To ensure the gallery space is open and accessible to local people	Raise the profile of the gallery with the local community. Work with partners such as local community groups and schools to promote the gallery in audience cold spots	
	2.1.5	To explore a long-term partnership with the Gerard Dillon Gallery	Partnership being developed	

The development of this theme will in part be dependent upon the outcome of the application under the SIF programme which is awaiting a final decision. If successful, this will open up the second floor, creating a large workshop space and a space for mentees. It will also improve the artist-in-residence space on the third floor, creating space for further artists to use the space as a residency. The Hub will act as the centre of operations and as catalyst to encourage and foster community arts in North Belfast.

Strategic Aim 3: Building Partnerships

Objectives		Outputs	Targets	Achievement against targets 2015/2016
3.1 The development of intercultural and cross community projects	3.1.1	The development and delivery of: the port and docks of Belfast: imagined through textiles. This programme will develop quality textile panels celebrating the rich heritage and history of the port and docks and their contribution to the city, in particular women's contribution.	Programme developed in partnership with ArtsEkta involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 participants • 2 artists 	
	3.1.2	The development and delivery of an arts for peace building programme - a range of arts workshops with up to ten north Belfast groups aimed at using the arts to explore legacy of the conflict issues in a variety of art forms including visual art; drama; music; writing and photography. These will focus on addressing sectarianism which is still a major issue across north Belfast. They will promote mutual understanding and reconciliation between and within communities and amongst different traditions. Art forms will be varied and include street art, visual art, drama, circus skills and dance.	All groups and schools will be located in areas of disadvantage. The programme will engage with older people's groups, youth groups, women's groups, and groups working with disabled people and minority ethnic groups and individuals. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 150 participants • 10 groups • 10 artists 	
	3.1.2	The development and delivery of an intercultural training programme, building on a pilot delivered during 2014. This will involve a two day training programme and an artists' networking event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 participants • 2 artists 	

Strategic Aim 4: Building and Sustaining the Organisation

Objectives		Outputs	Targets	Achievement against targets 2015/2016
4.1 To provide and ensure effective management and governance standards are in place and delivered	4.1.1	To develop and review an annual operational plan and review quarterly	Annual operational plan with quarterly review and update	
	4.1.2	Produce and review an annual year rolling budget and projected cash flows related to operational plan.	Annual update with quarterly review of cash flows	
	4.1.3	Update policies and procedures as required	Annual review of policies and procedures including annual risk assessment	
	4.1.4	Commission an annual financial audit	Audit undertaken and reported on to the board	
	4.1.5	Hold an annual AGM	AGM held within specified time	
	4.1.6	Hold an annual team building and forward planning event	Team building event held	
	4.1.7	Maintain an effective Board and staff team	Staff resources and competencies reviewed as a part of the annual appraisal and staff development planning process identifying skills and gaps.	
	4.1.8	Establish an annual board and staff development programme based on identified needs	Development schedule agreed and implemented.	
4.2 To actively pursue funding opportunities to build the sustainability of the organisation with adequate resources	4.2.1	To develop an annual target of external funding required and opportunities e.g. Heritage Lottery, Peace IV, T:BUC and direct to the Arts Council	Annual target established related to annual budget	
	4.2.2	Development of commercial and third sector partnerships to generate income	Partnerships and tendering opportunities actively pursued	

Objectives		Outputs	Targets	Achievement against targets 2015/2016
4.3 To raise the profile of AfA	4.3.1	The development of a new AfA logo	Logo designed, signed off and utilised on all media	
	4.3.2	The development of a new AfA website and Facebook account and related Twitter presence	Website and related media designed, signed off and utilised	
	4.3.3	Local community leaflet drop promoting AfA and its menu of programmes	Leaflet drop undertaken and followed	
	4.3.4	Annual Open Day	Open Day held	
	4.3.5	Targeted series of engagement meetings with local and city politicians and relevant government officials and ministers	Scheduled list of meetings drawn up and followed through, with the support of the board	
4.4 To secure adequate staff resources	4.4.1	To ensure the core staff complement can be retained	Core team retained	
	4.4.2	To ensure additional staff may be secured	Additional staff secured	
	4.4.3	To proactively seek to develop an AfA volunteer pool	Volunteers secured and engaged	

The AfA Team

Board Members		Staff	Volunteers and interns
Muriel Bowyer	Treasurer	Heather Floyd Co-ordinator	Vicki Maguire
Jim Crothers	Director	Jill McDermott Office Manager	Nikki Turner
Valerie O'Brien	Chair		Lucy Kelly Desmond
Jennifer Crockard	Director		Ephy McConnell
Rosie Mulvenna	Director		

Sponsors and Supporters

Arts for All would like to thank the following organisations and people for their continuing support throughout 2013-2014:

- Arts Council of Northern Ireland
- Belfast City Council
- Department of Social Development/BRO North Team
- Lloyds TSB
- Department of Foreign Affairs
- Arts for All participants
- The many artists who have worked with Arts for All
- Mentees
- Groups and community workers who have worked with Arts for All
- Elected representatives past and present