



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure

OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Inquiry into Inclusion in the Arts of Working-class
Communities: Crescent Arts Centre, Belfast

3 April 2014

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

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Members present for all or part of the proceedings:

Miss Michelle McIlveen (Chairperson)
Mr William Irwin (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Dominic Bradley
Mr David Hilditch
Mr William Humphrey
Ms Rosaleen McCorley
Mr Michael McGimpsey
Mrs Karen McKeivitt
Mr Oliver McMullan
Mr Cathal Ó hOisín

Witnesses:

Dr Keith Acheson	Crescent Arts Centre
Ms Ann Feely	Crescent Arts Centre
Ms Deepa Mann-Kler	Crescent Arts Centre

The Chairperson: Good morning. We have Keith Acheson, who is the director of the Crescent Arts Centre. We met him at the centre. You are very welcome. Will you introduce your team?

Dr Keith Acheson (Crescent Arts Centre): Yes. With me is Deepa Mann-Kler, the recently appointed chair of the Crescent Arts Centre, and Ann Feely, our outreach officer.

The Chairperson: Thank you very much. You may like to make an opening statement, and members will follow up with questions.

Dr Acheson: Certainly. I thank the Committee for allowing us a further opportunity to engage with the inquiry. We fully recognise its importance and hope that we can demonstrate in greater detail the breadth of work that the Crescent does already in ensuring that all members of society, especially those from marginalised communities, have an opportunity to access arts provisions.

To begin, I will give a very brief introduction to the Crescent Arts Centre. I will touch on activity within the building that relates to the inquiry and then move on to our community outreach work that is directly linked to the main issues outlined in the terms of reference.

First and foremost, the Crescent Arts Centre is a community arts centre with seven key delivery areas. First, we programme approximately 800 classes and workshops every year in all art forms. Our pricing structure, including concessionary rates and early bird offers, represents what, we feel, is

excellent value for money. Though they are facilitated by many schoolteachers, lecturers and professional artists, our classes are not accredited, thus relieving students of any pressure to attain a specific exam mark, which encourages participation. Currently, we have approximately 2,500 students, 30 weeks of the year.

Secondly, through our dedicated outreach and education officer, we provide access to arts activities to a wide range of marginalised groups that, otherwise, may have difficulty in accessing arts activity. This year, we have delivered 100 projects, which have reached 3,106 individual participants who have taken part in 637 sessions. Most weekends, we also function as a venue for a wide range of live performances from music and dance to film and theatre, and, in many instances, we encourage performers to engage with our outreach programme. A recent example of that was the visit of Graffiti Classics, a comedy string quartet from London, which gave a free workshop to 285 schoolchildren before performing in the centre.

We are currently home to seven arts-related organisations that have a dedicated and subsidised office and desk space and with whom we have been able to partner on various projects, specifically in our outreach programme. We also curate a visual arts space that is used by community groups and professional artists alike. Sixthly, we are home to two annual festivals, the CityDance festival and the Belfast Book Festival, both of which have extensive outreach programmes, all completely free at the point of delivery. Finally, we hire out space to community and corporate groups for meetings, conferences etc.

The Crescent is a registered charity. It is a company limited by guarantee. Currently, we have eight non-executive directors, and enshrined in the constitution are the following objects. First is the advancement of the education of the public through promoting artistic activities, including art exhibitions, live performances and tuition in a range of arts subjects. Secondly, we encourage and facilitate the participation in and appreciation of artistic activities by people from all sectors of society who do not normally participate in such activities, with the purpose of developing their sense of achievement and full capacity as members of society, so that their conditions of life may be improved. Third is the promotion of a diversity of art forms and high standards in community arts activities; and fourth is the preservation and improvement of an historic building to be enjoyed by all. Further to that, for almost 35 years, the Crescent has enabled access for all of the community to participate in the arts actively and as an audience; has encouraged the conception, production and promotion of the arts to the highest level; and has enabled participation and a sense of personal achievement in artistic endeavour.

We continue to deliver our funders' objectives for encouraging people to engage with the arts. The expansion of fully accessible facilities has enabled the number of participants, audiences and visitors to flourish and continues to allow an increased range of activities to be offered, thus giving more opportunities for people to take part in the arts. Those opportunities are offered across all age ranges, including toddlers and students through to older people, and to participants who come from an extensive range of geographic, cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. The location of the Crescent, accessible from all surrounding communities and by train and bus, offers an attractive and easily accessible centre, situated in close proximity to the lower Ormeau, Donegall Road, Donegall Pass and Sandy Row. The Crescent draws a proportion of its users from those areas, and it provides activities in those communities. We aim to bring people from all sections of the community together, to promote integration between communities and to create an ethos of understanding among diverse cultures.

I turn specifically to our community outreach and education activity. The Crescent has one of the longest track records in the delivery of community outreach projects across Belfast. The approximately 100 projects that take place right across the city each year help to connect people to their city; its stories, places, arts and heritage. That is achieved by creating projects that are tailor-made for the individual communities, dealing with local issues, and communicated via storytelling, reminiscence, drama, visual arts, music and dance. While taking place in marginalised communities, the centre has also encouraged and enabled groups to come together and share their experiences in the safe and supportive environment of the Crescent by providing travel assistance. Our participants include children, young people, older people, inter-generational groups, black and minority ethnic (BME) groups, and people with various physical and mental health issues.

Our aims are to promote community arts work and offer professional support to community groups and organisations across Belfast and the greater Belfast area; and to continue to build a relationship-oriented programme of events with various group from all sections of the community to create a cohesive network, thus strengthening and highlighting Belfast's ever-growing rich diversity. A third aim

is to focus on areas of deprivation. Our projects are aimed at groups that do not have easy access to participating in the arts for a multitude of reasons. Those barriers include high unemployment levels, low income, higher than average instances of physical and mental health issues, religious division, transport difficulties and lone-parent families and the knock-on childcare issues. Of course, those barriers can be present in any community, but they are magnified in marginalised communities. A fourth aim is to deliver creative, high-quality and efficient programmes of events; and a fifth is to be inclusive and promote equality and access for all, through offering programmes based on experience and knowledge of the community and educational arts sector.

The Crescent helps to positively alter behavioural patterns by encouraging social interaction from all sections of the community and contributes towards a more sustainable community by encouraging collaborative and interdependent activities among all age groups, abilities and communities. The Crescent has a long-held ethos of inclusivity, and that is a strength that we continually try to build upon and to develop. We firmly believe that participation in the arts allows individuals to develop various social skills, for example communication and teamwork, which are transferable across all facets of life. Those skills encourage people to develop more rounded personalities, and it gives participants the opportunity to meet a more diverse group of people. The performing arts can also provide physical benefits and mental stimulation as well as being a socially interactive activity and, most of all, fun for all ages and abilities. Through enabling the public to become involved in activities that they may not have had easy access to, encouraging creative expression and building confidence and self-esteem, the Crescent aims to play its part in building a society that promotes active citizenship, tolerance and, ultimately, mutual respect to the benefit of all.

The Chairperson: Thank you very much. How is the Crescent Arts Centre funded?

Dr Acheson: We are funded mainly by the Arts Council, to the tune of £226,800, and Belfast City Council, to the tune of £38,000. Everything else is earned income, and we have a turnover of approximately £600,000.

The Chairperson: OK. I ask because you mentioned in your paper that a number of your projects are free at the point of delivery.

Dr Acheson: That is right. Basically, all our outreach programmes are free. We push approximately £30,000 of our finances into our outreach programme, and we also work in partnership with community groups, so that any funds that they may have supplement and help to increase the impact of those outreach programmes.

The Chairperson: Where you are located, you have quite a broad catchment. That said, you are located in south Belfast and very close to Donegall Road and Sandy Row. What focus have you in that particular area?

Dr Acheson: Do you mean with respect to the locale?

The Chairperson: Yes, the locale and engagement with those who live in that area.

Dr Acheson: Historically, we have worked with the local community centres. Recently, we worked with the Donegall Pass Community Centre.

One of the interesting aspects is that, when we were going through our refurbishment, we relocated for two years. Our operations did not stop, and we operated on the Ormeau Road, and so we were able to develop networks in that area. We worked with An Droichead and used it as a centre to provide more of our arts programme.

Ann probably knows more about the specific projects that we are currently working on in those areas.

Ms Ann Feely (Crescent Arts Centre): We work very closely with the Ballynafeigh Community Development Association. It has a community house, and we have delivered many projects with it in the last 12 months, including the CityDance festival, which it actively took part in. Keith mentioned the Donegall Pass Community Centre. We have a great relationship with it, and it also took part actively this year in CityDance.

This year was the first in the history of the CityDance festival in which we went out into the heart of communities, and, in doing so, we delivered 40 free dance taster sessions, all completely free at the point of delivery for everybody, at 10 community centres across Belfast. Those community centres, which included Donegall Pass, were in hard-to-reach areas. As part of that, people were also asked to take up the opportunity to attend the Crescent Arts Centre to see professional performances and community-led performances there over the weekend period. We aimed to provide access for those people by providing free transport and free tickets. Basically, that is how it happened, and we got quite a few people, over the weekend, to the Crescent. So, it is not just about reaching out to the communities within our immediate area; it is also about getting them to take part and encouraging them actively to come to the Crescent to experience other events.

The Chairperson: Obviously, the term "arts" is very broad. You have mentioned dance, but what have you found to be the most successful projects? Has engagement been through music, dance or something else?

Dr Acheson: There are three main areas. Dance has been very popular. A lot of people see the positive health benefits of dancing. We also do a wide range of literary activities through the Belfast Book Festival. We have set up 10 community book clubs right across Belfast in 10 community centres, including Ardoyne, Shankill, Donegall Pass, Ligoniel —

Ms Feely: And Duncairn.

Dr Acheson: We also brought those groups together, to the centre, to have a massive — what was it called again?

Ms Feely: The Giant Belfast Book Club.

Dr Acheson: That worked by everyone reading one book by a well-known author and then meeting that author in the centre. It was very interesting to hear the groups discuss the various issues represented in the books. You could see a lot of commonality in people's reactions to authors. Glenn Patterson was one of the authors.

Ms Feely: He is from east Belfast.

Dr Acheson: I cannot remember —

Ms Feely: There were a few other artists, but the main point of the project was to deliver those projects in high-deprivation areas, and then, in seeking that, we brought them all together into the Crescent, which is a well-known neutral environment and neutral cultural space, to the one place where they could meet. Indeed, friendships have been created from those experiences. Because of the success of the Belfast book club, we have been able to continue with those book clubs in the community, and that has been running for nearly two years now. So, it is quite a high impact project. If we had more money, we could deliver even more, but we are very proud of what we have been able to achieve so far, because we can see, on the ground, the positive effects that it has on communities and individuals' sense of being part of the community, part of arts and being actively involved in it. Providing that is what we are all about.

The Chairperson: It is positive that it is not just a one-off engagement but is sustained.

Dr Acheson: Absolutely. Ideally, we would love all our projects not only to be sustainable but to be led by the groups themselves, so that we can step back and let them flourish on their own. The legacy is very important.

With the Sing for Life choir, we have found that music has played a hugely positive role in the work that we have been doing. That is a project that we set up with Cancer Focus Northern Ireland, and the choir is directly aimed at people who are suffering from cancer and their carers and relatives. We now have a regular attendance of 80 participants in that choir and have given public performances. We get a lot of feedback from the members, and people have said that, prior to the choir, they were housebound and did not have the confidence to step out of their home, but now they have found another family where they can discuss the issues, or not. People also find positive health benefits from group singing. Many studies have shown that lung capacity can increase and general self-esteem and confidence can increase as a part of being involved in group singing.

The Chairperson: You mentioned a number of the barriers, and you have initiatives in place to try to overcome some of those. Which do you find the most challenging barriers?

Dr Acheson: I will defer to Ann.

Ms Feely: We face many different barriers but the most prevalent in the experience of outreach is not about promoting the work — we are very good at promoting the work — but trying to encourage particular individuals to take part and to get over that initial hurdle. We find that once they get over that initial hurdle, they actively take part. However, we need somebody to be out on the ground much more often. We need somebody who is face to face constantly. Part of my job as the Crescent's outreach and education officer is to be on the ground, but, with so many projects, which is fantastic for the public, and because there is just me, we also need somebody to be more face to face. It takes time — six to 12 months minimum — to gain the trust of some communities. Some are more independent than others, and some just need a little help in gaining a wee bit of self-confidence so that they can take part. There are different barriers such as social barriers, health issues, low educational performance, high unemployment and all the mainstream barriers to deal with. However, the biggest one that I find is getting people to have a wee bit of confidence in themselves to get over that first hurdle and to come. We do that through various measures such as free transport, free tickets and free events. All our services in the outreach department are free of charge at the point of delivery, and it takes quite a lot of time, effort and money to run those programmes and events. Doing that is great because we are getting a lot of take-up on those, but we could always improve on that in future.

Dr Acheson: One very simple barrier is even the term "arts". That can be a barrier in itself and can be deemed elitist. However, we find that, if you work with community groups and various organisations, you can tailor the projects specifically to those groups. We do not bestow a project on a group. As Ann said, we work for six to 12 months to build trust and engagement and to really find out what groups want in their area. That is a range of things. For example, we are working on a hip hop project in the Grove area and have set up a hip hop crew who performed at Crusaders' football ground at half-time. That was broadcast on Sky —

Ms Feely: That was a cross-community event as well. It was at a Crusaders versus Cliftonville match. So, it was a great opportunity.

Dr Acheson: So, it is really about having long discussions and making sure that we deliver exactly what those groups want.

Mr McGimpsey: Thanks for the presentation. I support your activities. When I was Minister, I looked hard to find the money to refurbish the whole building. I never could get it, but I am glad that it was found in the interim. You have a magnificent, fit-for-purpose building there.

Dr Acheson: Thank you.

Mr McGimpsey: I represent the area that the community arts centre is in. I am familiar with Donegall Pass, Sandy Row, the Village, Annadale and so on. I have to say that I read your submission and see where each of those areas features, but the impression that I get is that your impact in those communities is small. I do not necessarily mean that as a criticism, because I am always looking to see how we can reinforce that with the groups in, for example, Donegall Pass, such as the Donegall Pass Community Forum, the community groups and so on. Donegall Pass is featured in your submission, but I was not aware that, in the past, you have held dance classes in the community centre there. Did you run those in the community centre or in the Crescent Arts Centre?

In Sandy Row, you have the book club. I am interested in what the take-up is for that, because, as you rightly identify, it is the lack of take-up that is the issue. You do these things and, very often, get incredibly small numbers. People come along and say, "Oh gee, why did we not get involved?" This is very worthwhile, but it is very hard to get a response. That is the case not just for your organisation but for organisations in all such areas. A lack of enthusiasm and response is universal in disadvantaged communities.

I am interested to know what response you are getting in, for example, Donegall Pass, Sandy Row, the Village, Annadale, the Ormeau and Markets areas and so on. What sort of numbers are you getting? What sort of response are you getting, and how do we improve that response?

Dr Acheson: I will ask Ann to give you some figures on that. Before I do, I will say that a lot of these projects have peaks and troughs over the course of a number of years. So, we could have a lot of activity in one term and that could dip to no activity in another. It varies from term to term. A lot of activity that we try to bring to communities takes place at an even further distance from the centre. However, hopefully, Ann will be able to give you some figures.

Ms Feely: Thank you for the question. Basically, in those immediate areas that you are talking about, we have delivered around 20 projects in the past 12 months alone. We have worked with Donegall Pass Community Centre, Ballynaveigh Community Development Association, the Spectrum Centre for the community book club —

Mr McGimpsey: The Spectrum Centre is on the Shankill. I am talking about south Belfast.

Ms Feely: South Belfast. OK. We have done work with Shankill Women's Centre — sorry.

Mr McGimpsey: Sorry, I am specifically asking about south Belfast as it is my area. There are several communities in that surrounding area, including Donegall Pass, Sandy Row, the Donegall Road, the Village area, Lisburn Road, the Markets and the lower Ormeau.

Ms Feely: In Donegall Pass, we delivered four free dance taster sessions as part of the CityDance festival.

Mr McGimpsey: What sort of take-up did you get? I am interested in the attendance you got because that will replicate throughout.

Ms Feely: The figures? OK. We had nine participants in the first class, 11 in the second, five in the third and 12 in the fourth. Those are quite good figures —

Mr McGimpsey: That is actually not bad for Donegall Pass.

Ms Feely: — considering that, in most of our classes, we normally allow for up to 15 participants with a tutor. I agree with you that it is sometimes hard to get numbers to avail themselves of it, but the Crescent works really hard to make access as easy as possible.

Mr McGimpsey: How do you get the message out to communities?

Ms Feely: We have a marketing budget that we use in the funding of our projects. Our marketing is done via Facebook, Twitter and pop-up stands. We also have flyers and posters delivered. This year alone, as part of CityDance, we had 10,000 flyers delivered around the heart of the communities, particularly the area in south Belfast that you mentioned. We use our website and publicise our events on kiosks and public transport. Our massive list of contacts also helps to get word round. We have loads of partnerships with key stakeholders, community groups and schools and colleges. We rely heavily on them to help us with promotion, which they do because they love the work that we do.

Mr McGimpsey: What percentage of your activities is specifically for young people of school age and school leavers?

Ms Feely: That is a good question. We try our best to make our output as equal as possible among all age ranges. We gear at least 25% of our funding towards children and young people, including schools and community groups.

Mr Irwin: I live in a rural area. What has the centre done to increase accessibility for rural working-class communities?

Dr Acheson: The bulk of our activity is in Belfast.

Mr Irwin: I understand that.

Dr Acheson: The bulk of our money from Belfast City Council is used on our outreach programmes and so has to stay within the confines of the city. However, on occasion, — for example, with the choir — we have performed across Northern Ireland. We performed in Antrim and Ballymoney, and

that, again, is to promote our idea, which is to work with cancer groups to set up similar choirs in centres across Northern Ireland. However, because our money comes from Belfast City Council, the bulk of our activity takes place in the city.

Mr Irwin: Do you feel that to target working-class communities in rural areas, you would need to have centres outside the city?

Dr Acheson: Exactly.

Mr Humphrey: Thank you for your presentation. The Committee inquiry is into the inclusion, or otherwise, of working-class communities in the arts. Given your geography, between the Malone Road and Botanic, I suppose —

Mr McGimpsey: Sandy Row and Donegall Pass.

Mr Humphrey: Indeed. It is clear that you have done some work reaching out, and it is good that you have reached into my constituency of North Belfast through the Spectrum Centre, the Wellbeing Centre and so on. How do your staff, management committee or board reach out by reflecting the communities that abut your centre? Given that you receive public money, in the form of taxpayers' money from the Arts Council and ratepayers' money from Belfast City Council, are places set aside on the centre's board and management for people from the surrounding working-class communities that Mr McGimpsey described?

Ms Deepa Mann-Kler (Crescent Arts Centre): I joined the Crescent Arts Centre last February and recently became its chair. We are looking to expand board membership. Our traditional approach has been based on skill sets. You pose an interesting question, and I would like to take that back to the board and have a discussion on representation at board level.

Mr Humphrey: It is understandable that you go down the road of having people with particular skill sets. I appreciate that entirely. However, to get the maximum buy-in for your facility or organisation, if people from those communities were stakeholders and had a say at the management table, it would, I think, be good for them and strengthen your role there.

Ms Mann-Kler: I will commit to looking at that in a meaningful way.

Mr D Bradley: Good afternoon. I am sorry that I missed the beginning of your presentation. Do you engage with the local primary schools in the area that Mr McGimpsey outlined?

Dr Acheson: Yes, we do. Again, I will defer to Ann.

Ms Feely: Yes, and we have also worked with Fane Street Primary School. Unfortunately, our budget means that we cannot work with every single primary school in the area, although we would love to. However, we reach out to every single primary and secondary school in our immediate area and beyond. Keith spoke earlier about reaching out across Belfast and the greater Belfast area. When promoting events, including community events, all those schools get letters and emails to enable them to take part. We encourage them constantly, throughout everything that we do, to come along.

Mr D Bradley: Do you run any events directed specifically at primary schools?

Ms Feely: Yes. The most recent one, if you do not mind my mentioning it, was with Cranmore Integrated Primary School in Finaghy. We reached out to over 300 primary-school children there. We ran a 16-week programme teaching children in P6 and P7 traditional Irish and Scottish dancing and other types of dancing.

Mr D Bradley: Was that directed at one particular primary school?

Ms Feely: Yes, that was directed at a particular primary school that had a need —

Mr D Bradley: I was asking whether you run any events, activities or competitions that would attract a cross-section of primary schools.

Ms Feely: Yes. Last year, the Gruffalo exhibition reached out to many primary schools. We cannot make primary schools partake, but a number of those in the area came along to the event. We created different events for them to take part in, including children's quizzes based on an exhibition at the Crescent.

Mr D Bradley: I did not get a chance to tour the centre when the Committee had its meeting there because I had to leave early, but I presume that you have a performance space there.

Ms Feely: Yes, we do.

Mr D Bradley: Do the primary-school children get a chance to perform in that space?

Ms Feely: Certainly, and they are very welcome to do so. It depends on the nature of the project that we are delivering. Not all projects need that space, but —

Mr D Bradley: I was just thinking in terms of the scope of the inquiry. Often, participation in the arts can be seeded at primary school. People's experience of drama, music, poetry or whatever at primary school impresses them and gives them a way into the arts later in life. Possibly, it is a constant experience throughout primary school, post-primary school and so on. It is very important that, especially in hard-to-reach areas, a centre like yours provides children with those opportunities. Often, when such opportunities are located in a specific space such as the one you have at the centre, children can be quite impressed by that.

Ms Feely: Absolutely, I completely agree with you. The primary-school age range is one of the most important to get to participate in the arts. We strive to do that constantly, and we will certainly look at that again and try to deliver more programmes for younger children.

Dr Acheson: Even outside our outreach work, our box office stats show that, for our paid classroom workshop programme, people come from all postcodes. We have people coming from as far afield as Enniskillen, Armagh and Derry/Londonderry for our classes and workshops. So it is not just about our outreach work; people see our product, including the classroom programme, which is very reasonably priced, taking place in the centre, and they travel to engage in that.

Mr D Bradley: My point was that you have an important role to play in engaging with communities in harder-to-reach areas and especially with younger people. Thank you very much.

The Chairperson: What relationship do you have with the likes of the MAC, the Lyric, the Opera House and, perhaps, the Ulster Orchestra?

Dr Acheson: We team up quite a bit with other venues. During the week-long book festival, we run 80 events, and, obviously, not everything can take place in the centre. Historically, we have teamed up with No Alibis bookshop, the Lyric Theatre, the Grand Opera House, the Baby Grand and the Linen Hall Library.

The Chairperson: Is that for venue space as opposed to their expertise or artists in residence?

Dr Acheson: In teaming up to use the venues, we also gain an enhanced marketing ability. If, for example, we programme something in the Lyric, it will promote that and vice versa. Organisations are always collaborating; it is a sign of the times that organisations have increased relationships, and our funders certainly encourage that.

The Chairperson: Those organisations will have certain expertise. It is easy to identify, for example, the skills in the Ulster Orchestra. Do you work with it specifically?

Dr Acheson: The most recent project that we ran with the Ulster Orchestra was a music theory class. We were able to team up with the orchestra, which offered us free tickets for the class participants. For a music appreciation class, a couple of years ago, we were able to bring students to the regular orchestra concerts. That was a very positive experience, and I know that the students got an awful lot out of it. Many of them had never attended an orchestra performance before and were blown away by it.

The Chairperson: This is not a criticism of you, but we were looking at the people you have on your books, for want of a better term, and the engagement that you have. Rather than some of the other organisations having to go out and start from scratch, you have already built relationships with them and broken down some of the barriers. I suppose that I would like to see a better working relationships with some institutions that are regarded, perhaps, as much more middle-class. Perhaps they create their own barriers, and there is a perception among some that they do not want to go to these places.

Dr Acheson: I am sorry, but what was the question?

The Chairperson: I am saying that you have already breached similar barriers with some communities and, therefore, you have that engagement there. Has the Ulster Orchestra or another institution opened their doors and made welcome those with whom you already work?

Ms Mann-Kler: Do you mean more joined-up working?

The Chairperson: It was a long way of saying that, yes. You have established relationships there. So it would be easy for them to engage with those communities, given that you have already done some of the hard groundwork

Dr Acheson: Yes, absolutely. As I said before, our funders are always keen on cross-collaboration, whether on venues or organisation. Historically, that Ulster Orchestra project was very successful. We aspire to developing more collaboration and more projects on which we could work with other organisations, but the time factor is important. We have a very small team at the centre: we have eight core staff, and, for what we deliver, we believe that we give very good value for money. Of course, we always want to continue to grow.

The Chairperson: I appreciate that, and you are doing a fantastic job. It is just about whether closer working relationships with others might maximise what you do.

Dr Acheson: It will always be positive when we work with other organisations.

The Chairperson: Thank you very much for coming today and sharing with us the positive work that you do. I hope that we will keep in contact.

Dr Acheson: Thank you.