
**SOUTHWARK THEATRES' EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP (STEP)
ANNUAL REPORT
Year ended 31 March 2011**



Reference and Administrative Details:

Registered Charity Number: 1121201
Date of Registration: 15 October 2007

Company Number: 6069864
Date of Registration: 26 January 2007

Principal Office: c/o Theatre Peckham, Havil Street, London SE5 7SD

Staff (April 2010/March 2011):

Beccy Allen ~ Creative Director (April 2010 – March 2011)

Directors (April 2010/March 2011):

Andrew Dewdney (Professor of Arts and Human Sciences, LSBU) ~ **CHAIR**

Martin Ridley ~ **VICE-CHAIR**

Chris Lawrence (Coordinator, London Drama) ~ **TREASURER**

Rebekah Jones (General Manager, Jasmin Vardimon Dance Company)

Advisory Group (April 2010/March 2011):

Suzy Smith (Executive Director, Theatre Peckham)

Nina Birch (Drama and Literacy Consultant, Southwark Children's Services Arts Team)

Coral Flood (Arts Manager, Southwark Culture Service)

Catherine Greenwood (Learning and Participation Director, Unicorn Theatre)

Kate Jamie (Southwark Community Projects Manager, Shakespeare's Globe)

Fionnuala Lynch (Counsel, Reed Smith)

Sarah Nunn (Director of Programmes, Creative Elements)

Adam Annand (Associate Director, Creative Learning, London Bubble)

Lucy Williams (The Charter School)

Glyn Hawke (St Mary Magdalene Primary School)

Martine Jean-Baptiste (Harris Academy Bermondsey)

Rebecca Benjamins (Bessemer Grange Primary School)

Chair's Report:

The annual Festival remains the most visible result of the STEP Year-Long Programme of promoting high quality drama and theatre work with young people in Southwark and it continues to grow and develop in scale, breadth and engagement. By common consent of the STEP partners the annual Festival remains the hub of STEP's work providing a significant focus for drama and theatre work with and by young people in Southwark. This year the Festival involved more young people than ever before and in these straightened financial times it is a reflection of how important and necessary drama and theatre work is to the lives of young people.

This year's Festival demonstrated again the considerable commitment of the STEP workers and the willing and enthusiastic participation of the partners and teachers. It has often been remarked by those who know STEP that it achieves a great output from a very small resource base and Beccy Allen, the Creative Director of STEP, has often joked, that she is known as 'Beccy Step'. This reflects the significant and large input she makes to the organisation.

The Board is very well aware that the demand for STEP's services accedes the limits of one part-time director and it was with great pleasure and relief that Cheryl Gallacher joined STEP in September 2010 on a part-time basis as an administrator. Cheryl has been a necessary support to the Director and a great benefit to the organisation, allowing it to systematise its marketing and develop its web presence. The website has now become a central tool for the dissemination of information with regular e-bulletins and a more than healthy response rate. As well as a key marketing tool, the website is now a valuable source of information including archival material on past projects.

Three years ago, in discussion with the Creative Director, the Board set out to develop STEP as a proactive arts agency dedicated to building a sustainable network between schools, youth and community arts groups and theatres. Looking at the work of STEP over this last year it is heartening to see just how much that strategy has paid off and how much it has developed. This is reflected in a number of new developments including schools signing up as official STEP Education Partners from September 2010 onwards. Also of note was the official launch of SCAS which has increased our relationship with primary schools. STEP also initiated two new programmes, which it intends to take further in 2011-2012: the Practitioners' Skills Sharing Programme in which freelance practitioners and permanent staff from partner theatre companies meet to share practice and expertise; and the Schools' Showcase in which GCSE Drama students perform their practical exam pieces to one another. Both were further great successes for the organisation.

As part of future planning the Board has decided to move to a residency model for the hosting of STEP and from the start of 2012 STEP will be based at London Bubble Theatre Company. This move brings to an end a long and productive relationship with

Theatre Peckham and the Board would formally like to record its thanks to Suzy Smith for all her support for STEP and the Director over the past five years.

As we take stock of the year we see an organisation that has matured and is thriving, with its services in demand and its portfolio of activity expanding. But this has been achieved against the grain of political and economic policy changes, leading to cuts, which have been forced upon arts funding within local government. This year STEP applied for and received transitional funding from Southwark for the coming year, given that STEP had suffered a significant reduction in its previous allocation. The organisation has been able to continue only with this funding and the necessary additional support of its business partners.

The Board has been aware for some time that if STEP is to survive a different business model is required, one that marries greater co-operative sharing amongst local voluntary sector organisations, coupled with greater efforts to increase income from the private sector. In principle this is not as it should be for an organisation which is providing such a necessary public service. Realistically the Board recognises that in the 200th year of Dickens' birth, these are indeed Hard Times, but nevertheless is determined, as this year's Festival evaluation meeting agreed, with the sentiment that the arts in the community will 'thrive and survive', which has always been the cornerstone of its culture of collaboration.

Objectives and Activities:

STEP – Aims and Objectives

STEP aims to equalise, extend and deepen the theatre and drama experience of all young people living in Southwark through the development of strategic partnerships between schools, youth and community groups, theatres and performing arts organisations. STEP aims to encourage young people to achieve their full potential through the creative force of theatre and performing arts activities.

STEP's objective is to work closely with Southwark schools, youth and community groups, theatres and performing arts organisations to develop creative approaches to learning and provide innovative projects which stimulate children and young people's personal development and contribute to their educational attainment.

STEP is a development agency which:

- Promotes the work of Southwark theatres and performing arts organisations to the education/youth and community sector;
- Develops and extends partnerships between theatres and performing arts organisations to maximise resources and build on the skills base within the borough;
- Engages in audience development;
- Develops educational partnerships between performing arts organisations and formal and informal provision;
- Works with Southwark Children's Services and schools to embed performance arts in the curriculum, with an emphasis on the Every Child Matters outcomes and Enjoy and Achieve and on the creative development of teachers;
- Works with Southwark Culture Service to improve individual life choices for young people through enjoyment and experience of the performing arts, with an emphasis on the Cultural Olympiad and celebrating cultural diversity;
- Works with partners to be at the forefront of innovation in the development of performing and live arts for young people;
- Aims to be a replicable model for strategic educational performing arts development.

Financial Review:

STEP's income for the year 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2011 was £105,804 and STEP finished the financial year with a surplus of £29,416, of which £23,152 is allocated and restricted for the Southwark Costumes and Artefacts Service (SCAS), Reserves and the forthcoming Festival. Expenditure was in line with the level of activities, with the main expenditure being the Festival (28.8%) and Year-Long Programme (10%) and salaries (27.7%).

STEP recognises the need to have in place sound and robust systems to secure STEP's medium and long-term financial viability. STEP has adopted a Reserves Policy which is specific to the risks and needs of the delivery of the STEP Programme and is in line with the Charity Commission suggestions. However, for 2011-2012, the designated reserves stand at £10,000.

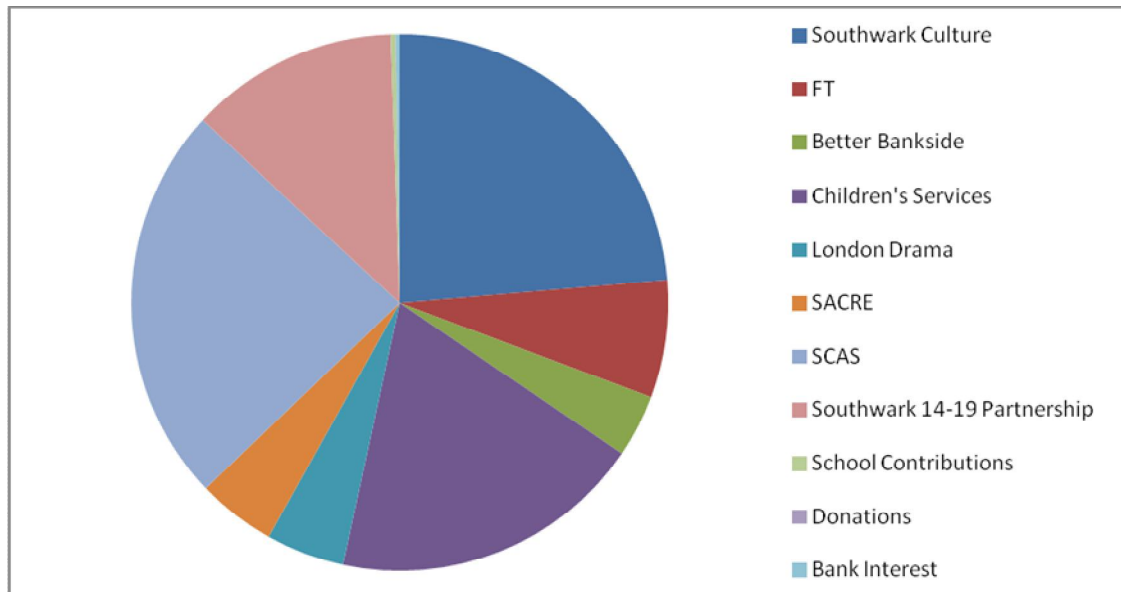
Funding for STEP from 1 April 2010 – 31 March 2011 included contributions from: Better Bankside, Financial Times, Southwark Children's Services, Southwark Culture Service and Southwark 14-19 Partnership. Income also came in in the form of School Subscriptions to SCAS.

The plans for the future include ensuring full cost recovery for projects, securing funds for core costs and developing projects which will generate interest from a range of corporate funders. In line with its application for Transition Funding, STEP will also develop new models of working to equip the organisation to be responsive to, and more sustainable in, the current climate. The Creative Director will also facilitate income generation through management of projects, both for the Council and for partner organisations. STEP will continue to review its financial management policies on a regular basis, ensuring all transactions follow due process with integrity, allowing transparent accounting systems for the organisation and the STEP Board.

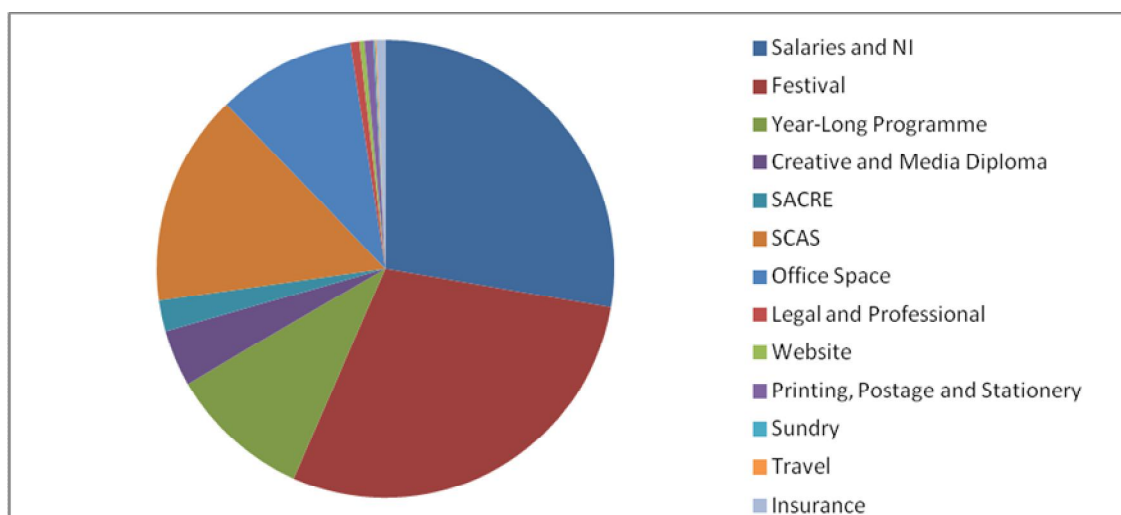
More detailed financial information in the form of the STEP Reserves Policy, STEP Financial Controls Policy, Accrual Accounts and a Balance Sheet is available on request



STEP Income 2010-2011



STEP Expenditure 2010-2011



Achievements and Performance:

STEP Festival 2010

The *STEP Together* Festival ran from 15-26 November 2010 and was STEP's seventh annual Festival, celebrating theatre created by, with and for young people. The *STEP Together* theme was chosen to enable Southwark's young people to work in partnership with different schools and companies, creating opportunities for sharing with other young people. The theatre and performing arts activities scheduled across the Festival fortnight enabled over 2500 of Southwark's young people to collaborate with others of different ages and experiences; this forged new partnerships and created a sense of togetherness and shared understandings.

During the Festival, 26 theatre and performing arts partners delivered 27 projects which involved 100 school classes/groups in 234 STEP-funded workshops. 58 educational institutions took part including four Nurseries/Early Years Centres, three institutions of special provision (one of which was new to STEP), 39 primary schools (one of which was new to STEP) and 11 secondary education institutions. 15 projects took place over more than one day, delivering longer-term learning objectives than a one-off activity. Seven schools participated in more than one project during the Festival reflecting a more sustained relationship with STEP and a chance for the school to experience a wider variety of provision across the school.

In total **2455 young people** participated in the *STEP Up and Tell* Festival, 65% of which are of an ethnic background other than White British. 31 educational institutions involved in the STEP Festival 2009 participated again in 2010 showing a commitment to STEP and its work and demonstrating that STEP offers meaningful, effective and quality projects to schools.

Key Areas established for Development included:

- * STEP should consider more performance opportunities at the end of projects to enable parents to be more involved in their children's achievements
- * STEP to continue to help partner organisations work in schools which have hitherto not developed meaningful relationships with performing arts organisations
- * STEP to provide opportunities for practitioners to develop new practice in more challenging educational settings
- * STEP to consider extending the Festival to a month-long event

STEP Year-Long Programme

STEP Youth Theatre Programme

The Youth Theatre Programme unites several STEP out of school projects and provides a platform where young people can share their performances and experiences of theatre in order to highlight their achievements. The STEP Youth Theatre Programme helps to develop participants as performers, observers and producers of theatre. The projects included in the Programme are:

Youth Theatre Showcase: a chance for young people from Southwark youth theatres to come together to share their performances with one another

Young Comperes Programme: a chance for young people to learn the skills to comperes an event

Young Critics Programme: a chance for young people to review professional performances

Youth Forum: a group of young people who organise youth theatre performances and take part in specialist workshops which feed back into the Youth Theatre Programme

STEP into Drama School: events and workshops focused on ensuring young people are fully equipped to apply for Drama School

STEP Website

STEP has been working extensively through its website and social media sites for the last year and has consolidated its online presence as a consequence. These channels have become an online resource for STEP to disseminate information to young people, practitioners and interested parties about the work of STEP, partner organisations and the wider theatre community.

STEP will continue to build on its marketing strategy over the next year which has the website at the centre of plans to extend STEP's reach in Southwark.

Programme areas recommended for development

STEP is bringing together practitioners and core theatre staff from across the partnership to create a **Practitioners' Skills Sharing Programme** to extend the work that STEP does to maximise the provision for young people in Southwark.

Southwark Costumes and Artefacts Service

STEP will continue to work in partnership with Southwark Children's Services to deliver the Southwark Costumes and Artefacts Service (SCAS) which is a rich resource of costumes and artefacts available to all schools in Southwark to enrich the curriculum and extend creative learning.

STEP Strategy

STEP is now in its eighth year and is going from strength to strength. It has developed from a two-week Festival led by Southwark Council into an independent charitable organisation with a much broader year-round programme of events and projects, which are enabling long-term sustainable partnerships between the theatre community and schools in Southwark. As an independent arts organisation STEP has the ability to manage its own forward strategy with continued support from the Council.

STEP continues to implement its long-term strategy in order to solidify its work already happening across the borough. STEP's partnership work is intrinsic to this strategy. STEP will continue to work as a partnership with Southwark's theatres and performing arts organisations in order to develop a meaningful and cohesive programme of work and maximise resources and professional skills across the borough.

A copy of STEP's Business Plan (2008-2011) is available on request