

tasc

ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Including Accounts 1st Nov 2012 to 31st Oct 2013



Traditional Arts Support in the Community (tasc)
Registered Charity 1042144

Introduction

Funding for the arts seems to have been a regular topic in our annual reports and this year is no exception. The simple truth is that the arts are 'soft targets' when standing alongside education, health and social care. In a way that gives organisations like TASC an even more important role in society, as we have to do more with less.

During the last year we have thought hard about rising to this challenge, and we have looked at more cost-effective ways of 'delivering'. A good example is our new website, which is a rapidly growing folk music resource with video learning, tune books and audio clips, and it is very encouraging to see our members putting it to good use.

In these straitened times we are more grateful than ever to the Community Regeneration Team at Powys County Council who have supported TASC for the past 10 years. TASC emerged from a long hibernation, following the demise of the May Festival, into a tentative revival in 2004. Its subsequent flourishing is thanks in large part to the continuing support of Powys.

A great personal pleasure for me always is getting out and about, meeting people and hopefully sharing a tune or two with them. It has been a great pleasure to see one of our projects evolve into a self-sustaining band (DiEnw) and currently I am enjoying the company of musical friends in Montgomery. I hope you will all be able to get to some of our many events, and when you do please come and have a chat with me or any of the trustees. We are always keen to find out what ideas you have, what you would like to see TASC do.

The next year promises present further funding challenges, but we are lucky to have a stalwart band of volunteers who make things happen. Anyone who was at our Twelfth Night celebration in January will vouch for that! To them, and our small but perfectly formed band of trustees, I extend my heartfelt thanks.



John Messenger
Chair



Developing Skills: BEYOND FOLK POWYS

The FOLK POWYS project, which originated in workshops for young people in partnership with the Music Service, has resulted in a band called **DiEnw** which is organised largely by the parents of the initial participants.

In some ways this mirrors work of the Newtown Children's Ceilidh band which was set up

by Kitty Greenwood. While that band proved relatively short-lived, the band that was organised for the parents, *Ffonic*, continues as a community band which welcomes young people.

The main difference between the approach of a community band and the groups that TASC has set up is that the bands do not have a paid leader, but develop their own skills and learn by doing. This is because TASC believes that this autonomy more truly reflects the folk ethos, and is potentially more robust in these straitened times.

There is, of course, a gap between theory and practice, and TASC continues to keep an eye on its bands and supports where it can - and where necessary. The most valuable thing for the participants is having opportunities to play, and that is also one of the reasons for creating them, to provide a resource for the local community.



Using the lessons learned from the Folk Powys project a new venture has begun in Montgomery. This is the **Montgomery Community Ceilidh Band** which is meeting regularly with the aim of giving its first performances in May and June 2014.

The workshops are concentrating on playing together and the sessions are led by the TASC trustees - Pete Damsell, John Messenger and Philip Freeman. They are open to all, though restricted in practice to those who feel comfortable with the pace of the sessions. Little or no instrument teaching is involved.

A new innovation has been to teach how to 'call' dances. This is the practice of teaching the dances to those attending the dance, and of explaining some of the movements and steps. This is a neglected skill in the community, and if this is successful TASC is considering holding further workshops elsewhere to develop these skills.

aims

TASC aims to encourage individuals to become involved in traditional and tradition-based folk arts, and to support the use of traditional folk music, song and dance in forms appropriate for the 21st century.

Traditional Folk Art is both a living tradition and a repository of materials and techniques. The challenge is to try and understand what makes it distinctive; the better to ensure that nothing vital is lost in its continuing evolution.

TASC's annual programme aims to provide a seasonal gathering, a small programme of events, tuition, and usually a more ambitious and experimental longer-term project.

Supplementary work has included developing new skills in sound engineering, production and performance as well as continual research and networking. The website is regularly updated with items of interest.

The key factors are

- developing skills
- contact with excellence
- building audiences
- researching material



Traditional Dance & Music: WALES, BRITTANY, FRANCE

The folk music of Britain did not develop in isolation. In the same way that England, Wales, Ireland and Scotland borrowed heavily from each other's musical ideas - while retaining their own flavour - influences from mainland Europe are present in many tunes and dances popular today.

This has been even more so in the last twenty-five years where the pioneering work of bands such as *Blowzabella* brought French and Breton traditions to a greater audience than before (and incidentally, revived some of the mediaeval music that underpinned common musical traditions across Europe).

TASC is fortunate in having outstanding musicians among its trustees. **Pete Damsell** plays not only English and American folk music, but also French and Breton, particularly with the band KANTREF.



Kantref play regularly at festivals in Britain and Europe and it was decided to hold a day of French and Breton dance in Llandrindod Wells with the band. This would include afternoon workshops to teach the dances.

In Brittany the local dance or *Fes Noz* is very much a social gathering, so it was decided to try and create something of the same feeling by including an early evening supper at the Herb Garden. The event was a great success, and will be repeated in Llanidloes in 2014.

The event was held at the Dance Centre in Llandrindod Wells under the title *Bal d'Ithon* and with the support of *Powys Dance*. A video of one of the dance workshops can be seen on the TASC website <http://www.tradartsupport.org.uk/vid.html>

TASC has not neglected native traditions, and a lively *Mari Lwyd* Parti played its part in the Twelfth Night festivities in January 2014. This is an old custom where an animated horse figure, accompanied by a singing party, goes from house to house engaging in a singing contest to gain entry.

This *Mari Lwyd* appeared in the Village Hall where it joined more French & Breton dancing, a step dancing trio, Wild Angels Community Choir, Sue Harris on hammered dulcimer and a group of musicians from the old Llandinam Village Band.



As usual the event began with a concert in St Llonio's Church, and then processed to the Village Hall where the Village Hall bar staff and the women of the WI helped the evening to be a highly enjoyable one.

Handing it On: THE NEXT GENERATION

At the centre of the folk tradition is the idea of each new generation re-fashioning the material for its own use while keeping true to the values, what Martin Carthy (who received an OBE for services to folk music) calls *the heart of the matter*.

And that doesn't only apply to the performance and participation aspects. Equally as important are the organisational skills: the folk club organisers and concert promoters of tomorrow are the linchpin of the continuing tradition.

TASC already gives advice on these matters, though usually in a very informal fashion. Whether that should be made more formal is debatable. Most people attracted to the world of folk music like its informality, but there is also a part for more structured teaching.

However these skills are passed on, doing so is a pressing need for the future, and one the trustees are very mindful of and intend to address in the coming year.



Online: FACEBOOK & WEBSITE

One of the ways that ideas can be passed on is on-line. In the past year TASC has developed its facebook presence, which is managed by the chair, **John Messenger** (pictured above), and he has also contributed extensively to the website.

The site now contains over two hundred tunes, with about twenty of them accompanied by midi files which means that inexperienced players can get an idea of how the tune goes, and it is constantly being added to.

A new addition for 2013 has been instructional videos. Only a handful are on there at the moment, and they also will be added to in the coming months.

TASC has a strong network of folk performers it works with, and who support in different ways the work we do. To make that network semi-formal we have added a section to the website called **Associate Artists**. The idea is to provide a directory of those we have worked with and in return the artists will contribute material to our website.

It is doubtful whether on-line information can replace face to face contact but it is an invaluable adjunct to it.

Both the DiEnw and Montgomery Community Band use tunes that TASC places on its website, so that new members can familiarise themselves with the repertoire, and get reassurance that the material is not going to be too difficult for them.

Joe le Taxi, Associate Artists



Research: PARADISE LOST

As is mentioned frequently, TASC adopts an experimental approach, trying to push the boundaries in different ways.

The problem, if problem it be, with an experimental approach is that sometimes the experiments fail. Or don't succeed.

It has been a key part of TASC's belief that the context of performance is a crucial element. This goes back to the days of the Mid Wales May Festival, where the differences between music for street, pub session, concert and ceilidh were in evidence.

In 2013, partly inspired by the success of Twelfth Night, the Trustees set out to discover what might be done in very different locations such as Powis Castle and Montgomery Castle. Accordingly contact was made both with the *National Trust* and *Cadw*.

There was some initial interest from Powis Castle, but the trail has subsequently gone cold, and finding the right person at Cadw to discuss ideas with has proved elusive. No doubt a degree of reorganisation of Cadw is partly to blame, and we're still pursuing the idea. We also hope to get some feedback from Powis Castle as to why our ideas might not be the sort of activity they're looking for.

All this followed the ideas of 2012 where a project with Laurel Swift was developed but failed to secure funding, and a projected collaboration with *Vagabondi Puppets* never quite got off the ground either.

From time to time ideas do run into a blind alley, and it might be that we have been unlucky, or conceived inappropriate ideas and that 2014 will be different.

On the other hand, the hard times that are upon us, and the uncertainty it engenders is as much to blame as anything else. It's not only direct funding that suffers, as our chair refers to in his introduction, but a general disruption that makes planning difficult. In Wales this is hitting us a year later than in England, and one of the reasons for the Laurel Swift project faltering was the difficulty of finding suitable partners over the border in the midst of their own uncertain futures.

All this isn't as gloomy as it might sound. Folk music is very resilient. In its very DNA is the idea of making music with minimal resources. And as well as exciting and difficult projects TASC continues doing the simple things: playing together, passing on information and contacts, meeting for impromptu playing - such as at the Easter Fair in Broneirion - and encouraging people to start playing, singing and dancing, at whatever level.

We are currently developing a Resource Pack that should allow any kind of community to have a go, with or without TASC's active assistance, and part of which will be on the TASC website. The future for folk music is still promising, and it will still be thriving once we have gone, much as it has done for several millennia already.



Philip Freeman, TASC Administrator

Structure & Governance

Administrator

The day to day running of TASC, along with financial management, members' e-news, website updates and artistic direction is carried out by an Administrator who is appointed at the AGM each year. The Administrator is always one of the Trustees and so the appointment is carried out after the election of the trustees.

Trustees

The Trustees elected in 2013 were:

John Messenger, Chair
Pete Damsell, Vice Chair
Kathleen Freeman, Secretary
Linda Ward, Human Resources
Philip Freeman, Administrator & Artistic Director

Meetings

Trustee meetings were held in April, August and November in 2013 and in January 2014.

Training

Trustee training is offered to trustees. Induction is provided for new trustees. In addition to the governing document (constitution) TASC has adopted policies on the the following for its guidance:-

- Equal Opportunities
- Welsh Language
- Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults
- Recruitment of people with a criminal record
- Secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosures and disclosure information
- Procurement Policy
- Project Development Protocol

In addition risk assessments are carried out for all TASC events and projects.

Membership

Membership is open to all who support TASC's aims. Membership runs from 1st November each year, which coincides with the financial year. The annual fee is currently kept very low with correspondingly few benefits as the members engagement with TASC activities can vary significantly. The introduction of an Associate Artists category in 2013 is an attempt to reflect the network that is at the heart of how TASC operates in the community.

Planning

The wide-ranging consultation planned for 2013 did not place as the Associate Artists idea was felt to be a better way of engaging, and a consultation would work better once that process is fully established.

Accounts

The accounts are to be found on the following pages. The turnover falls below the level required for a full audit and so the accounts are independently inspected. This was last done by Mr John Huninik BSc, ACEA, ICPA of Selective Accounting Limited, Oswestry in March 2013.

TASC has a reserves policy of holding £2,000 as a contingency which is estimated as the cost of running the organisation for one year without any major projects. Cash flow problems meant this was dipped into during 2013 but is now back to the agreed level of £2,000.

The bank account is held at:-

HSBC
The Cross
Newtown
Powys
SY16 2LX

Finances

TASC Receipts & Payments Account

1st November 2012 to 31st October 2013

INCOME

	2012-13	2011-12
Events		
Twelfth Night **	261	58
Bal d'lthon	50	313
		35
	<u>310</u>	<u>406</u>
Projects		
Folk Powys	150	28
	<u>150</u>	<u>28</u>
Sales		
Llandinam books***	12	35
Severn Suite		36
	<u>12</u>	<u>71</u>
General Income		
Membership	65	50
Donations	100	11
	<u>165</u>	<u>61</u>
Grants		
ACW	0	0
PCC: Community Fund ****	6800	0
PCC:Music Fund		0
	<u>6800</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	7437	565

Surplus on Year **2750**

TOTAL FUNDS 31st October 2013

Balance at HSBC	4261
Paypal Account	75
Cash in Hand	200
	<u>4536</u>

EXPENDITURE

	2012-13	2011-12
Events		
Twelfth Night	500	
	<u>500</u>	<u>695</u>
Projects		
Folk Powys	209	533
	<u>209</u>	<u>533</u>
Capacity Building		
Music Books	45	
Research & Training	18	150
	<u>63</u>	<u>150</u>
General Expenditure		
Marketing	120	842
Commission on sales	6	5
Website	60	
Affiliation Fees	90	
Insurance	50	50
Llandinam Books***	16	17
Misc	46	3
	<u>388</u>	<u>917</u>
Admin		
Postage	11	25
Stationery	10	
Trustee Expenses	147	1324
Adminstrator Fees*	3000	2814
Adminstrator Expenses	359	109
	<u>3527</u>	<u>4273</u>
TOTAL	4687	6568

FUNDS AVAILABLE 31st October 2013

Unrestricted Funds	2536
Restricted Funds	
Reserves****	2000
	<u>4536</u>

Balance Sheet As at 31st October 2013

	2012	2011
FIXED ASSETS		
Original Cost		
Less Depreciation	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Stock	442	442
Cash at HSBC	4261	1633
Cash at Paypal	200	89
Cash in hand	76	64
	<u>4978</u>	<u>2228</u>
	4978	2228
ACCUMULATED FUND		
Brought forward	2228	8211
Surplus/Deficit in Year	2750	-6003
	<u>4978</u>	<u>2208</u>

NOTES

* The Administrator is responsible for Financial Management, Project Development and Delivery as well as administrative matters
 ** Twelfth Night has a large number of participants attending so actual ticket income is low.
 *** Books that are sold via TASC website
 ***** The grant from covers the period 2011-12 as well as 2012-13
 ***** Due to cash flow problems caused by the delay in receiving the grant from Powys, the Reserves were reduced to £1,000 in 2012. They have now been brought back to £2,000 in line with TASC's policy.