

# Thrive! poetry project: strategic development report

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Arts Council England's Gfta-Thrive programme was launched as a pilot programme in 2007 to give participating arts organisations the opportunity to test ambitious new operating models. In all, twenty one projects were included in the programme, involving over one hundred and thirty separate arts organisations nationally.

Planet Poetry was established by a consortium comprising the Poetry Society, Poetry Book Society, Poetry School and Apples and Snakes in response to the Thrive! funding opportunity. It was awarded Thrive! funding with the aim of creating a framework for collaboration within the poetry sector, particularly between the founder organisations.

In autumn 2008, Planet Poetry's board, staff and project facilitator – as well as directors of the consortium organisations and Arts Council England – concluded that, while the possibility of collaborative organisational development in the poetry world was well worth exploring, Planet Poetry was unlikely to result in an implementable business case. It was consequently decided to end Planet Poetry earlier than originally intended and to focus on capturing and evaluating the learning to date, in order to make different arrangements for investing the remaining Thrive! funds for the benefit of the poetry sector.

Following the decision to cease the operation of Planet Poetry, BOP Consulting was tasked with:

- Completing an evaluation of Planet Poetry, which is summarised within a separate report prepared for Arts Council England.
- Consulting a wide range of figures within the poetry sector on the scope for strategic and collaborative organisational development within the sector in future, with particular consideration of themes or types of activity that might be supported through the allocation of the remaining Thrive! funding.

This report sets out the results of BOP's consultations and its recommendations for the Thrive! funds, as well as for the longer term development of the poetry sector.

To prepare this report BOP reported to a steering group drawn from Arts Council England and Planet Poetry staff. Steering group members are listed in Appendix A.

## 1.2 Consultations

BOP invited a total of 91 consultees to take part in an interview or focus group. The consultees were prominent figures within the poetry sector and were identified by Planet Poetry staff and the steering group. The intention was, as far as possible, to represent the full scope of the poetry 'production chain' including poets, promoters, publishers, booksellers and critics.

63 responded to BOP's invitations to take part in an interview or focus group. BOP subsequently completed 21 interviews and four focus groups, as well as various follow up e-mails and conversations. A full list of participants is included in the Appendix.

**Figure 1: Summary of consultations and response rates**

Consultees	Contacted	Took part	Responded positively but unable to take part	No response	Response rate
Interviews	26	21	2	3	88%
Focus groups	65	31	9	25	62%
Total	91	52	11	28	69%

The questions posed to consultees within the interviews and focus groups were developed by BOP and the steering group. They reflected the priorities for sectoral development identified by Planet Poetry, exploring themes of:

- The state of the poetry sector (both its structure and activities)
- Current and potential future collaboration and organisational development
- Poetry audience profiles, trends and audience development initiatives
- Working with young people and the education sector
- Digitisation
- The role of Arts Council England

A minority of the interviews were with people who were directly involved with Planet Poetry: for these interviews a slightly different set of questions was used in order to also capture their views on Planet Poetry, to inform BOP's evaluation. The results are within 'Planet Poetry Final Evaluation Report' prepared by BOP for Arts Council England

## 1.3 Caveats and thanks

The tone of the consultations was positive. All participants shared their views frankly and openly, and the focus groups yielded substantial and energetic debates between participants and with the BOP facilitators. BOP wishes to thank all those who gave their time within the interviews and focus groups, as well as those who subsequently submitted written comments.

The poetry sector benefits from multiple viewpoints and opinions on the best way forwards. This report articulates the majority view within the themes discussed. Not everyone who took part will agree with every point as expressed, but all agree it is necessary to reach a consensus on action.

It should also be noted that the observations and recommendations made in this report are based on BOP's consultations as described above. They do not claim to be comprehensive or to represent the 'final word' on the development of the sector. Strengthened sectoral dialogue and research are key recommendations of this report.

## 2 The state of the sector

### 2.1 Poetry at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century

Everyone, regardless of their role within the sector, believes that high quality poetry is being written and performed and can identify poets who they regard as promising new talent. Inevitably, there is a variety of opinions on which poets are the best.

Poetry writing is increasingly popular, with growing numbers of creative writing and related courses offered by universities, colleges, private and voluntary sector organisations.<sup>1</sup> The quality of much of the ensuing poetry generates debate within the sector on the merits of supporting the 'many' versus the 'best'. Journal and book publishers have differing views on the quality of the unsolicited poems they receive – whether they merit publication, and if so, what proportion.

The ways in which poetry is delivered are increasingly diverse. In particular the quality and popularity of live events, festivals and online content seems to be growing. Cross-sector and cross-discipline work is also on the rise. Online content is seen as important, alongside and complementary to existing media and activities. The sector perceives it has been slow to adopt digital media, although there are a few successful initiatives such as Poetry Archive, and it is enthused by the potential of online video content.

The present diversity of activity within the poetry sector exceeds the traditional understanding of what constitutes 'poetry'. Opinions differ on whether performance poetry and other spoken word forms typically presented live, pop and hip-hop lyrics, and even advertising copy should be considered to be related to 'traditional' poetry, or merit being presented and discussed alongside traditional poetry. A few voices even suggest that initiatives that aim to reach out to younger or new audiences might use a different brand – not 'poetry' as it is associated with too narrow a range of activities.

While nobody claims this is a golden age for poetry, there seems to be considerable energy and optimism across the sector. Many believe that this could be a 'critical moment' for rebuilding poetry's profile and popularity, and wonder about the potential to reproduce the massive growth of interest in contemporary visual art over the last decade. The sector is aware that similar moments of resurgence have happened before (for example in the late sixties/early seventies with the Liverpool poets) and recognises that it is important to establish a deeper and truly sustainable understanding of poetry.

### 2.2 Fragmentation and points of connection

The sector is largely driven by the considerable energy of committed individuals with a passion for poetry, many of whose principal source of income is not poetry. Much of the activity in the sector appears to happen at a 'grass-roots' level and to depend on individual entrepreneurialism rather than structured or consistent funding or support.

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<sup>1</sup> Many consultees believe this to be true, while acknowledging at present it is hard to know exactly what courses are being provided and the way in which poetry features within them.

Changes within the poetry sector are such that many question the traditional primacy of publishing and the significance attached to becoming a 'published' poet and the critical and popular success of ensuing publications. At present, a poet's significance might be judged by one or more of: publication in collections, publication of individual books or CDs, invitations to perform, size of live audiences, and prizes received.

Linkages across and between the different strands and niches of the sector are poorly understood and documented. However everyone is quick to point out that they do collaborate in many ways. Their collaborations span public/private sector, large/small organisations and traditional/new forms, and are underpinned by a strong entrepreneurial culture. They feel that these collaborations are organic and productive, meaning that they have tended to evolve in order to deliver or enhance a specific product or activity – and therefore they offer a more suitable base for sectoral development than any new structure imposed from above.

There is no forum or group that brings together the majority of poetry organisations or figures. However those involved with Friendly Literature Organisations (FLO), which provides a forum for leaders of six literary organisations to regularly meet and discuss issues and opportunities, spoke warmly of it.

International partnerships and exemplars were barely raised in discussions, which is probably attributable to the consultation's focus on the internal workings of the sector.

## 2.3 The established order

Many believe that at present there is an 'establishment' comprising a small number of poets and organisations with close personal connections to each other, which tends to dominate funding, publishing, media coverage and prizes. This 'establishment' is felt to:

- Not represent the full diversity of practising poets or of poetry activity today
- Not at present be the most effective leaders for the sector – with particular concerns that the Poetry Society and Poetry Book Society are no longer clear about their roles, with gaps and overlaps
- Not demonstrate the very best practice or be at the leading edge of the sector

There is frustration on three counts over Arts Council England's support for this 'establishment'. First, continued support fails to incentivise the organisations concerned to improve. Second, by supporting the status quo, Arts Council England is not providing the best possible support for the development of the sector as a whole. Third, less resource is available to reward newer and more innovative organisations and work.

Having said this, many within the poetry sector readily acknowledge the influence and potential impact of the organisations and individuals that make up the 'establishment'.

As in other parts of the arts sector, there is tension between London's role as the national cultural capital and the need to recognise and support activity across the country. Even the largest poetry organisations struggle to reach all parts of the country.

Arts Council England's Gfta-Thrive! fund was set up to develop the organisational performance of arts organisations and build their capacity to navigate 'a rapidly changing environment'. It was hoped that Planet Poetry would improve the performance of the participating organisations and act as a catalyst for wider sectoral development.

## 2.4 Reaching out to audiences

The sector is quick to point out that poetry, for all its potentially wide appeal, is a relatively 'difficult' art form that rewards sustained engagement. As a consequence the sector is keen that new audiences are exposed to poetry and encouraged to build their relationship with it, in an appropriate manner. Most feel that an appropriate manner means not denying or diluting poetry's complexity, and yet not giving the impression that poetry is only suitable for highly educated and dedicated enthusiasts.

Everyone believes that positive experiences at school are believed to be important to laying the foundation for lifetime engagement with poetry. Also, that current teaching of poetry at school yields too few such positive experiences. The sector attributes this to insufficient time and flexibility within the curriculum to encourage unpressured exploration and appreciation of poetry, and many teachers not feeling confident with poetry (although some teachers are praised as excellent). The poetry programmes designed to support schools, most prominently Poets in Schools and National Poetry Day, are valued. However there is felt to be a lack of coordination and consistency, with no robust or universally applied frameworks for delivery, with a consequent impact on quality.<sup>2</sup>

There is a widely acknowledged need for more 'critical space' to present and debate contemporary poetry in particular, and the issues it raises. Academia is thought to give insufficient attention to contemporary poetry although the small number of specialist conferences and events on offer are popular.

The broadsheets' relative lack of interest in poetry, with the notable exception of the Guardian, is regretted. The BBC's relatively modest coverage is appreciated by the sector and by the sizeable audience for programmes such as 'Poetry Please'. The sector feels that the BBC's choices of material tend to be conservative but recognises that its power to influence this is limited.<sup>3</sup> In January 2009 the BBC announced a Poetry Season spanning television, radio, online and the BBC's nations and regions, in partnership with the Poetry Society, the Poetry Archive and National Poetry Day. The reaction of the poetry sector (and the general public) is not yet clear.

## 2.5 Lack of evidence

Linkages between the different strands of the poetry sector as well as the wider arts, media and education sectors, are acknowledged to be poorly understood and documented. This is expressed in various ways: some advocate mapping the 'ecology' of the sector, others the 'production chain' or the 'economic flows' within the sector.

Likewise there is very little recent data available on the consumption of poetry. Individual players within the sector may have data, or more likely feel they have an informed view, on their own market but there is no overview to bring this information together and make clear the extent of poetry consumption, the profile of consumers, and overlaps between

<sup>2</sup> The views on poetry in schools expressed in BOP's consultation echo the findings of 'Poetry in schools: a survey of practice 2006/7' (Ofsted, 2007) and 'Teaching Poetry in the Secondary School: an HMI view' (DES/HMSO, 1987), which is concerning given the age of the latter report.

<sup>3</sup> The Radio 4 poetry hour on Sundays, including programmes such as 'Poetry Please', 'Open Book' and the 'Josephine Hart Poetry Hour' attract an average audience of 478,000 (Radio Joint Audience Research, cited in 'Mapping Poetry', prepared for NESTA by Rick Rogers, 2008).

different mediums. Attitudes and barriers to consumption, and latent interest in poetry, are much discussed but at present this reflects little more than speculation.

It is thought that writers form an important part of the audience for live events, particularly events that include an 'open mike' format. Also, that the growing number of writers is not translating into growing book sales. The Department for Culture Media and Sport's Taking Part survey indicates that 3.8% percent of adults write poetry, which compares favourably to writing stories or plays (3.1%) and writing music (2.7%).<sup>4</sup> Taking Part does not track attendance at live poetry events or poetry book sales / consumption, but:

- Taking Part found that 5% of adults attend a book or writing event per year
- A Book Marketing/TMS consumer survey in 2005 concluded that 1% of adults buy poetry books<sup>5</sup>

This seems to support the view that the growing number of writers is not translating into book sales. There is some contention over the apparent low level of book sales: some believe that the book charts mislead as they are based on bookshop sales and miss sales direct from the publisher (including online) and at live events.

## 2.6 The challenge of leadership

The sector is concerned about leadership. The debate tends to revolve around three issues. First, there is no clear vision that is shared across the sector; and there is not thought to be a clear vision for the part of the sector supported by Arts Council England.

Second, there are concerns that certain prominent poetry organisations are not at present the most effective leaders for the sector – as discussed under section 2.3.

Third, almost everyone agrees that leadership skills are low across the sector, and that skills in general need increasing within the sector. However there are opposing views on the qualities that are needed. Some want more private sector business acumen while some see appreciation (and preferably, practice) of poetry as the priority.

<sup>4</sup> Taking Part data for 2006/07, as published on the Arts Council England website.

<sup>5</sup> Both figures cited in 'Mapping Poetry', prepared for NESTA by Rick Rogers, 2008.

## 3 Proposals for sectoral development

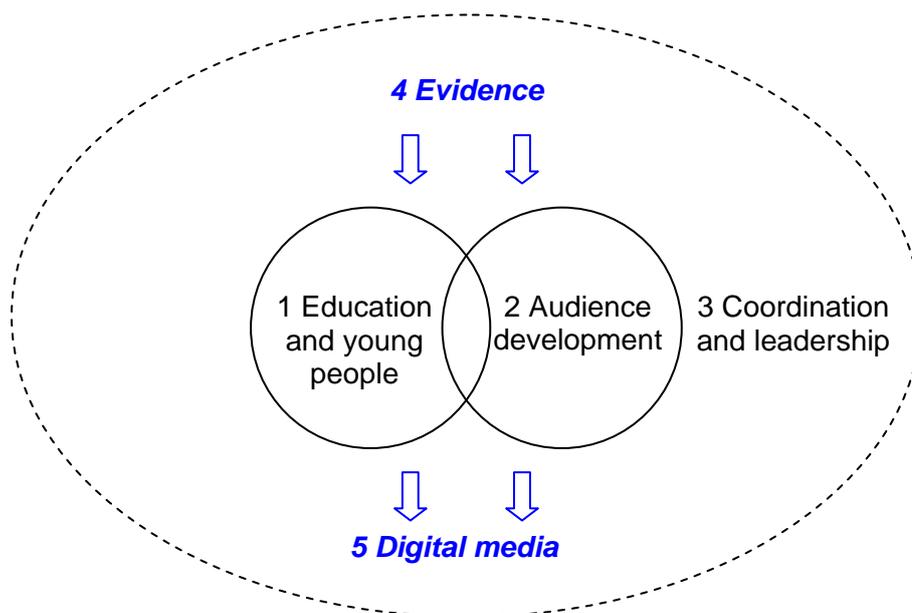
### 3.1 Five themes

In the consultations, BOP tested and found consensus around five themes to focus sectoral development:

1. Education and young people – working more effectively within and alongside the education sector
2. Audience development – reaching out to new audiences
3. Coordination and leadership across the sector
4. Evidence – understanding current and potential poetry consumption
5. Digital media – making the most of new opportunities for distributing poetry

These themes reflect and expand upon the three priorities of digitalisation, audience development and education, which were identified by Planet Poetry for its proposed implementation phase. There is also a significant overlap with the recommendations made by Rick Rogers within 'Mapping Poetry' (NESTA, 2008).

The five themes can be considered related and mutually supportive, as illustrated below. More effective working with and alongside the education sector will engage young people and increase demand for poetry: likewise efforts to drive up adult poetry audiences is likely to uplift demand for creative writing and other courses. Both themes require guiding by stronger evidence on the current audiences for poetry and on education and digital activity: and the realisation of both themes will be supported by a drive to produce more and better digital material. Achieve all of this requires greater coordination across the sector, and stronger leadership within its individual parts as well as at its head.



The following sections list the sector's ideas for activities under each of the five themes, as described in consultations with BOP. Each set of ideas is accompanied by BOP's assessment of possible actions within the short to long term (defined as within up to five years). BOP formulated these actions based on its assessment of:

- Degree of support across the sector and by key individual players, as indicated within BOP's consultations
- Relevant activity underway that has potential to be enhanced or broadened in scope
- Potential for significant return on time / resource invested

A further priority was the ability to provide a suitably cohesive theme for spending the remaining Thrive! funds, rather than dividing the funding between a plethora of small projects that might individually and collectively have a lesser impact.

## 3.2 Education and young people

### 3.2.1 Sector's ideas

- Work with the Department for Children, Schools Families (DCFS), Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and other relevant bodies to improve poetry's role within the school curriculum and within creative learning programmes such as Find Your Talent and Creative Partnerships
- Coordinate and ensure consistency among poetry sector education programmes including National Poetry Day, the Children's Laureate and poets in schools
- 'Teach the teachers' by:
  - Better integrating poetry within new teacher training courses
  - Supporting existing teachers to be more comfortable teaching poetry
- Understand and capitalise on the growth in creative writing and related courses
- Encourage greater recognition of contemporary poetry among academia

### 3.2.2 Possible actions

This theme generated the single greatest consensus within the consultation. Furthermore the rationale, and to a certain extent the means, for improving and better supporting poetry teaching in schools is clearly set out in reports by Ofsted, Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the UK Literary Association and others. The current Secretary of State for Culture is enthusiastic about poetry, and key figures within the poetry sector are interested in supporting a drive to improve poetry in schools.

The start point would be to establish a structure for bringing together DCMS, DCFS, QCA, Arts Council England and representatives of the poetry sector. This might:

- Revisit the curricular issues presented within the Ofsted and related reports, and devising a programme of improvement. This is a complex area and the programme would no doubt have to identify opportunities for the short, medium and long terms

- Work with existing initiatives and groups that aim to support English teachers such as UKLA's *Teachers as Readers* and QCA's *Partnerships in English*
- Aim to maximise the impact for poetry of creative learning programmes including Find Your Talent and Creative Partnerships. A potential partner is the Cultural Learning Alliance proposed by the Culture and Learning Consortium<sup>6</sup>
- Map related poetry sector education resources including National Poetry Day, the Children's Laureate, Poets in Schools organisations and poets, and the key teaching materials available including online. At present National Poetry Day is working up proposals to conduct a similar exercise and is a potential partner
- Deliver a better coordinated and more consistent poetry sector offer to schools

A secondary focus might be to research and assess the place of poetry within creative writing and related courses, and the implications for the sector.

## 3.3 Audience development

### 3.3.1 Sector's ideas

- Increase poetry's public profile across England, including in the media and public realm, via a national promotional campaign
- Understand and capitalise on the growth in live event and festival audiences
- Focus development of new audiences on arts attendees who are not yet engaged with poetry, or on reading groups (rather than trying to reach everyone at once)
- Aim for depth as well as breadth: support those with a fledgling interest in poetry to develop a deeper appreciation
- Present contemporary poetry alongside the popular / recognised historic canon, especially at live events and in the media (where copyright allows)
- Encourage greater critical space to debate poetry and the issues it raises

### 3.3.2 Possible actions

There is consensus around addressing the lack of research that has long limited the sector's ability to plan and deliver targeted initiatives. Given the potential scale and cost of mapping the entire real and virtual footprint of poetry, the immediate focus might be capturing sufficiently robust data to inform audience development and work with young people. This implies creating a snapshot of supply, consumption and demand within the newer and growing poetry activities including live events, festivals and online – and the crossover between audiences for such activities and more traditional parts of the sector.

Research into latent demand for poetry, and barriers, could focus on arts and literature audiences as the most likely sector to yield new audiences for poetry.

<sup>6</sup> The Consortium brings together the leading funders, trusts and foundations in the cultural sector, including Arts Council England. It proposes a Cultural Learning Alliance to “develop and advocate for a coherent national strategy for cultural learning”.

Another relatively inexpensive and potentially useful task might be to interrogate performance indicators and other data submitted to Arts Council England by its clients, to identify trends within this part of the sector.

Informed by this research, the sector could devise a limited number of flagship projects that generate new audiences for poetry and can be the focal points for an audience development drive across the sector. In BOP's view it would be best to base such flagship projects on established and high visibility poetry 'brands' and activities including:

- Larger festivals such as Aldeburgh, Ledbury and Poetry International
- Key digital projects such as Poetry Archive and Poetcasting
- Larger, established poetry organisations and prizes

Developing established 'brands' and activities is more likely to be fruitful than a promotional campaign devised 'from scratch' – particularly when the consensus is there is no clearly definable new product (i.e. group of poets, or movement) to promote.

## 3.4 Coordination and leadership

### 3.4.1 Sector's ideas

- Make the most of the ability of the most prominent and respected individuals within the sector to lead the development of the sector and to front specific initiatives
- Involve a wider cross-section of poetry organisation directors in developing a shared vision for the sector – or at least in agreeing a common direction of travel
- Encourage greater coordination and collaboration at an operational / delivery level between the various parts of the sector, possibly through an online calendar, directory of resources or community of practice
- Address concerns around the under performance of the poetry 'establishment'
- Research leadership skill needs within the sector and encourage take-up of Cultural Leadership Programme and Clore Leadership Programme courses, etc.

### 3.4.2 Possible actions

To inform – and enable the implementation of – the proposals above, a forum might be established bringing together the directors of the leading poetry organisations (perhaps up to twelve, initially). The forum could aim to represent the full diversity of poetry written and presented today, including established alongside up and coming organisations, live event promoters alongside publishers, and traditional alongside new media. The forum should be as formal or informal, frequent, and short or long term as the directors agree it needs to be. Its initial priorities are suggested as:

- Feeding into the forthcoming Arts Council England literature strategy
- Advising the audience development drive proposed above, and link to the wider sector
- Advising the education drive proposed above, and link to the wider sector

- Researching sectoral leadership needs and agree short term and long term support

The forum could also discuss with Arts Council England and other funders how to encourage greater connection and collaboration at an operational level between the various parts of the sector. In practice much can probably be achieved by establishing and servicing at a modest ongoing cost the following online resources for the sector:

- Comprehensive upcoming event calendar to enable joint programming
- Directory of resources available including contacts, services, training and funds
- Communities of practice for example around marketing, education and technology

## 3.5 Evidence

### 3.5.1 Sector's ideas

- Map and understand the different strands of the poetry sector and the way they interrelate – the 'ecology' of the poetry sector
- Map and understand poetry consumption including:
  - Relative size and profile of consumer markets for books, online content, live events, amateur writing, book clubs and discussion groups
  - Crossover potential between different markets
  - Demand and barriers among non-consumers
- Focus research on the areas likely to yield greatest value for investment or of greatest value to sectoral development activities

(Possible actions for evidence are included within the proposals for audience development, education and coordination and leadership.)

## 3.6 Digital media

### 3.6.1 Sector's ideas

- Map and understand the current 'digital ecology' of the poetry sector including:
  - The extent to which the poetry sector has so far engaged with digital media and successes and difficulties encountered
  - The number and profile of visitors to leading online resources within the poetry sector (such as the Poetry Archive) and outside it (such as relevant sections of the BBC and Guardian websites)
  - Copyright issues relevant to digital media
- Investigate the motivations driving internet access to poetry – from education to entertainment – and consequent patterns of demand for different digital media (e.g. downloadable learning materials versus podcasts)

(Possible actions for digital media are included within the proposals for audience development, education and coordination and leadership.)

## 4 Thrive! funding priority: Young People and Poetry

The consultation produced many interesting ideas and, equally importantly, revealed the sector's willingness to work with Arts Council England to address structural weaknesses and capitalise on opportunities. **In BOP's view, all the actions described in the previous section have merit and might reward further development and support.**

However, focusing on the remaining Thrive! funding, it is clear from the consultation and discussions with the steering group that dividing the remaining funding into many pieces would not provide the foundation for the 'step change' that both the sector and Arts Council England desire. BOP therefore proposes a single focus for the remaining Thrive! funding: Young People and Poetry.

### 4.1 The concept

In distilling the results of the extensive consultation process, three main points emerged:

- The sector wants real organisational change to bring about a new leadership capable of delivering better value for the investment (by Arts Council England and others). Importantly, the call is for a re-think about how best to deliver leadership for the sector to better coordinate and capitalise on the range of new opportunities.
- The sector believes that the remaining Thrive! funding must be spent on an initiative that brings benefits for the sector as whole, with individual organisations recognising that this may only produce direct benefit for them in the longer term.
- While there are many and various needs and investment opportunities in the sector, it was agreed that some uniting initiative must be directed at sustaining the current surge of interest and growing new consumers and participants as well as increasing understanding of the form in all its aspects – written, read and performed.

**The single greatest consensus arising from the consultation (including the research work undertaken by Planet Poetry) is around young people and their opportunity to experience and learn about poetry, which will provide sustained growth in the sector.** The majority of organisations in the poetry sector are engaged with young people to a greater or lesser degree, and all recognise the importance of supporting and providing opportunities to develop new audiences and participants resulting in the long term sustainability of poetry.

### 4.2 Aims

The aims of the Young People and Poetry initiative are proposed as:

- To create new opportunities for young people to participate in poetry through reading, writing and performing.

- To transform and champion young people's experience of poetry – as writers, performers and readers.
- To deliver a project that is consistent with Arts Council England objectives (both Literature department and Thrive!).
- To raise awareness of and celebrate poetry and its importance in education both formal and informal
- To begin to address some of the underlying weaknesses in the poetry infrastructure through developing models that deliver effectively and efficiently
- To ensure a sustainable legacy through on-going 'light-touch' evaluation.

## 4.3 Actions

In order to realise the aims it is proposed that Arts Council England allocates the remaining Thrive! funding to a major national initiative directed at Young People and Poetry. This will achieve positive momentum for the sector (following the demise of PP) as well as providing opportunities for organisations to benefit through tendering to deliver some aspects of the programme.

Young people are a major priority for government and most Arts Council England departments have specific schemes directed at participation and/or education, formal and informal. There is nothing of a similar scale in poetry however and while there are many schemes run by a wide range of Arts Council England funded organisations (and many that aren't), there is a need to examine how best to coordinate these and ensure best practice.

It is proposed that the initiative is led by a Young People and Poetry Review Group who will be charged with developing a range of initiatives rooted in existing and emerging best practice in the sector and challenging and better coordinating existing schemes.

Given the sense in the sector that Planet Poetry failed to deliver benefits either in terms of the stakeholder organisations or for the sector as a whole, it is paramount that this proposal is able to achieve both immediate direct investment to poetry organisations alongside testing out new ways of engaging young people and making sure that initiatives and organisational structures – old and new – are fit for purpose.

All activities will be subject to on-going evaluation to draw out lessons about what works well and less so in order to inform and support individual organisations and Arts Council England in future planning.

**BOP's suggestions for actions to the end of 2010 are as set out in Appendix B: together these constitute an outline development plan for the Young People and Poetry initiative.**

## 5 Appendix A – consultees and steering group

### 5.1 Consultees – interviews

First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Role
Andrew	Motion		Poet Laureate
Chris	Smith	Wordsworth Trust	Chair
Chris	Hamilton-Emery	Salt Publishing	Publisher
Chris	Holifield	Poetry Book Society	Director
Gary	McKeone		Consultant, ex-Arts Council England
Geraldine	Collinge	Apples & Snakes	Director
Jean	Sprackland	Poetry Archive	Coordinator
Jules	Mann	Poetry Society	Director (outgoing)
Kelly	Pettitt	Planet Poetry	Project Manager
Liz	Sich	Colman Getty	Director
Maura	Dooley	Goldsmiths	Academic/Poet
Melanie	Abrahams	Renaissance one & NALD	Director
Robin	Robertson	Cape	Editor/Poet
Robyn	Marsack	Scottish Poetry Library	Director
Ruth	McKenzie	DCMS	policy advisor
Ruth	Borthwick	Planet Poetry	Director
Saradha	Soobrayen	Planet Poetry	Administrative Assistant
Sue	Horner	QCA	Head of English, Languages and the Arts
Tim	Dee	Broadcaster	
Will	Carr	Poetry School	Director
William	Sieghart	National Poetry Day	Founder

## 5.2 Consultees – focus groups

First Name	Last Name	Organisation	Role
<b>Focus group 1: 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2008, Jerwood Centre</b>			
Chris	Meade	IF Book	Co-Director
Graham	Henderson	Poet in the City	Director
Judith	Chernaik	Poems on the Underground	Director
Judith	Palmer	Poetry Society	Director
Robert	Potts	Times Literary Supplement	Literary Editor
Stephen	Stuart-Smith	Enitharmon Press	Editor
Tony	Frazer	Shearsman Books	Editor
<b>Focus group 2: 5<sup>th</sup> December 2008, Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining</b>			
John	Stammers		Poet, conference organiser
Jonathan	Barker	British Council	Senior Literature Consultant
Martha	Kapos	Poetry London	Editor
Naomi	Jaffa	The Poetry Trust	Director
Richard	Price	The British Library, Modern British Collections	Head
Shirley	Dent	Institute of Ideas	Communications director
<b>Focus group 1: 8<sup>th</sup> January 2009, Manchester Art Gallery</b>			
Andrew	Forster	Wordsworth Trust	Literature Officer
Cathy	Bolton	Manchester Literature Festival	Festival Director
Jo	Bell	National Poetry Day	Coordinator
John	McAuliffe	Centre for New Writing Manchester University	Co-Director
Simon	Thirsk	Bloodaxe Books	Director
<b>Focus group 1: 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009, Jerwood Centre</b>			
Alex	Clark	Granta	Editor
Chloe	Garner	Ledbury Poetry Festival	Director
Claire	Malcolm	New Writing North	Director
Chris	McCabe	Poetry Library	Librarian
Emma	Bravo	Picador	Head of Publicity
Fiona	Sampson	Poetry Review	Editor
George	Szirtes		Poet
Jacob	Sam La-Rose	Metaroar	Poet /Editor
John	Holden	Demos	Associate
Jonathan	Davidson	Midland Creative Projects Ltd	Director
Julia	Bird	Poetry School	Coordinator
Martin	Colthorpe	Southbank Centre	Senior Programmer Literature
Tom	Chivers	Penned in the Margins	Director

## 5.3 Steering group

This report was prepared under the direction of:

- Antonia Byatt, Director of Literature Strategy, Arts Council England
- Ken Elvy, Director of Organisational Development, Arts Council England
- Nick McDowell, Head of Literature, Arts Council England (London)
- Ruth Borthwick, Director of the Arvon Foundation and former Director of Planet Poetry
- Zoe Graham, Arts Council England

## 6 Appendix B – Young People and Poetry development plan

BOP's suggestions for actions through to the end of 2010 are as set out below. They constitute an implementation plan for the Young People and Poetry initiative. BOP's suggestions should be tested and refined over the first months of the initiative.

### 6.1 Proposed Project Organisation

#### June 2009 – December 2009

Arts Council England and partners should appoint a Young People and Poetry Review Group (YPPRG) comprising of a Chair and a group of high powered members to create and advocate a new vision which leads change and empowers the poetry world. This will be supported by a Communications Strategy that makes sure that the stakeholders and wider audiences are regularly updated and have the opportunity to input.

The immediate tasks for the YPPRG will be to:

- Set priorities for ambitious pilots to enrich poetry provision for young people
- Identify ways to include and engage young people in developing a vision for poetry for the future
- Build partnerships between commercial and broadcast sectors and the poetry sector to explore new ways of collaborating to commission and distribute poetry and build new young audiences
- Identify effective ways to embed poetry in Find Your Talent so that it is a vital part of the offer for young people and work with CCE/Arts Council England to achieve this

### 6.2 Draft Action Plan

#### Jan 2010 – December 2010

Arts Council England and the YPPRG should:

- Identify and negotiate with a 'host' organisation' to handle the financial and administrative matters
- Recruit members of the YPPRG and look to second a small team comprising a project manager and administration support
- Deliver a programme of activities to achieve the aims and objectives
- Map, review, assess and understand existing funded infrastructure including Regularly Funded Organisations (RFOs) and through Grants for the Arts
- Draw up an agreed set of ambitions, values and standards between main stakeholders around delivering poetry resources and opportunities for young people

- Recommend and champion good practice in measuring and judging success of these ambitions and values and develop a bank of knowledge about poetry audiences for the sector
- Produce a (3 year) action plan for poetry based on the evaluation of the programme and engage stakeholders and funders to make it happen

Throughout, the process should empower the sector and inform future Arts Council England investment strategy for poetry.