

Networks and consortia

When we asked local organisations
how they might like to work with us,
in general, they would say
they'd like to do an arts project with us
or something leading to an exhibition
and that was how we were
funnelling that conversation
but, when we didn't funnel it
in that direction, we got some different results.
So when we approached local artists and said,
"What would you like to do with us?"
"Yes!" they said, "We'd like more exhibitions
in The Lightbox," and so on
and that's happening but, more importantly, they said,
"What we'd really like is for you, The Lightbox,
to facilitate the setting up of a network."
And this became Woking Arts Hub,
which is a networking organisations
for artists and arts organisations
across the borough.
We have nearly 100 members now.
We are an advocacy organisation
for the arts and artists in the borough.
Now, up until now, I've chaired the Woking Arts Hub.
The Lightbox has done the administration.
But we're in the process of handing that back to the community.
So we've done our job, really, by facilitating it
and we'll still be involved, I hope,
in a fairly major way,
because we're a major arts organisation
for the borough, but who says that we have to be
in the middle running it?
Well, nobody.
And it's actually much more healthy, I think,
for it to be run by other organisations together.

The other network is more of a consortium in fact.

It has a networking element,

but more of a consortium.

We did the large project. An exhibition: 'Skyscapes',

with organisations working with adults

with learning disabilities and, after that, we said,

"So what should we do next?"

And they said, "Well, not a project, an exhibition, at least not initially.

Instead, what we'd like to do is learn,

ourselves, how to do fundraising,

how to put applications together,

how to make this sustainable."

So that's what we've done.

So, as a group of organisations

we've undergone fundraising training,

we've put together an application, together, ourselves

and we're waiting for the reply to that.

And, hopefully, that will lead

to that group of organisations

having a more sustainable future in terms of arts work.

Rather than always relying on The Lightbox.