

City Bridge Trust

Creative philanthropy



Annual Review 2011

Registered Charity 1035628

Introduction

Stories of the year

Grant funding



Since 1995 we have helped make 104 national, regional and local arts venues in London fully accessible. Our total support amounts to over £7 million. We know that many disabled Londoners are all too often excluded from enjoying cultural experiences because of inaccessible venues.

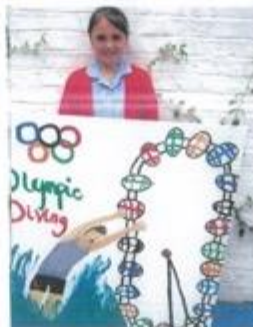
Over the years we have helped improve access to landmark buildings such as Shakespeare's Globe, the LSC's Discovery Project based in a Hawkhurst Church on the edge of the City, St John's, Smith Square and Circus Space in Holborn. All challenging, but now fully accessible. However, perhaps our most unusual challenge followed a request for funding from the Couper Collection.

The Couper Collection
The Couper Collection Public Trust is a remarkable art and education spin-off, housed amicably in a permanently moored fleet of eight barge-boats, converted Thames barges in Battersea. The Collection exhibits work by its founder, London artist Max Couper and includes a permanent 'Museum of Post Art' featuring work by London artists up to the age of 18. It also hosts a range of educational programmes, events and workshops for all ages. The historic Thames barges, also known as lighters, were major contributors to the prosperity of the capital but became redundant with the advent of containerisation. The barges were recycled and are the only facility on the Thames where the public and school children can enjoy art and culture in the natural environment of the Thames and at the same time experience London's last remaining fleet of barges still at their ancient moorings. Now that is truly creative!

The challenge
In 2007 we awarded a grant for an access audit to make the barges as inclusive as possible. We knew that this would be a challenge. The total nature of the Thames combined with the task of fitting eight separate barges, was to make this project one of the most complex that we had ever funded. But with the benefit of constant advice from our Access and Sustainability Advisor at the Centre for Accessible Environments, the Collection was ready to proceed to the next stage in 2011.

Two birds with one stone
Our grant of £25,000 is helping with the installation of ramps and walkways, to be built on floating pontoons which will rise and fall with the tides. All areas will become accessible including the two barges: accommodating the permanent collection, the workshop and studio barge, an art installation barge and exhibition barge, the children's workshop and a barge providing a Sculpture Garden space. As City Bridge Trust is also London's largest charitable environmental funder, we were delighted to learn that a last-mooring sanctuary has been built between the barges and the river. Creative learning at its best.

Making big waves



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Over the years we have helped improve access to landmark buildings such as Shakespeare's Globe; the LSO's Discovery Project based in a Hawksmoor Church on the edge of the City; St John's, Smith Square; and Circus Space in Hoxton. All challenging, but now fully accessible. However, perhaps our most unusual challenge followed a request for funding from the Couper Collection.

The Couper Collection

The Couper Collection Public Trust is a remarkable art and education space, housed amazingly in a permanently moored fleet of eight large-scale, converted Thames barges in Battersea.

The Collection exhibits work by its founder, London artist Max Couper and includes a permanent 'Museum of First Art' featuring work by London artists up to the age of 18. It also hosts a range of educational programmes, events and workshops for all ages.

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In 2007 we awarded a grant for an access audit to make the barges as inclusive as possible. We knew that this would be a challenge. The tidal nature of the Thames combined with the task of linking eight separate barges, was to make this project one of the most complex that we had ever funded. But with the benefit of considerable advice from our Access and Sustainability Advisor at the Centre for Accessible Environments, the Collection was ready to proceed to the next stage in 2011.

Two birds with one stone

Our grant of £85,000 is helping with the installation of ramps and walkways, to be built on floating pontoons which will rise and fall with the tide. All areas will become accessible including the two barges accommodating the permanent collection, the workshop and studio barge, an art installation barge and exhibition barge, the children's workshop and a barge providing a Sculpture Garden space.

As City Bridge Trust is also London's largest charitable environmental funder, we were delighted to learn that a bird-nesting sanctuary has been built between the barges and the river. Creative learning at its best.