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The Bodhrán Makers will be a major cultural event in the history of the Irish Community in London.

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The Bodhrán Makers is a first rate story created by Ireland's leading popular author and playwright, Seamus Heaney. With both humour and affection it raises issues of cultural identity, the role of the Church, issues important to the Community today. Adapted for the stage it provides an opportunity for a genuine integrated Arts project on an unprecedented scale.

Introduction

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The Bodhrán Makers is WRITEN, a tradition in which groups of musicians and dancers process and perform through town and country to raise money for the St Stephen's Day WRITEN BALL, a festive occasion where passions and spirits run high, and life is celebrated in full. During the first Act the audience will encounter the Writen, while in the second they will be guests at the WRITEN BALL with opportunities to join the celebrations, that is until all is brought to a premature end by the arrival of the mighty Canon Tait.

The Bodhrán Makers

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Profiles

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The Bodhrán Makers will be staged in a large warehouse, with the village of Durrabeg and its surrounding area (including a prominent audience with provision for elderly and differently-abled members of the community). The audience will be part of the action, at one moment savouring the Bus Bar and at another, part of the Canon's Congregation, being guided from place to place by Donal Halliary who, in his pony and trap, moves quietly between town and country. The Bodhrán Makers is an exciting, funny, and extraordinary event of the like of which you not have been seen before.

Aims and Objectives

8

Equal Opportunities Policy

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With a company of over 300 local people as actors, musicians, technicians, set builders, costume makers, etc., it will be a huge event, playing each night for two weeks to audiences of over 5,000, with wide National and Local media coverage. The Productions team will be led by ROBERT RAE, an experienced director whose previous large scale community plays have received critical acclaim, and helped reinvigorate the genre. He will again partner ROBERT McVEY, Ireland's leading composer and arranger for the theatre. Rod will create a new score for an orchestra of over 50 Irish musicians!

Monitoring/Evaluation

11

Expenditure

12

Performances are scheduled for December 1993. Rehearsals will begin in September, and a continuous programme of workshops in Drama, Music, Theatre Writing and Design will begin in March. These will be open to all the community (please see Equal Opportunities Policy), and non-Irish people will be made most welcome. It is proposed to hold workshops at a variety of venues, so ensuring access to all contributory boroughs. A full-time Play Co-Ordinator will be in post in January 1993 to ensure that the project is accessible to all who are interested. Funding has been secured for this post in this financial year.

Income

13

APPENDICES

The project is based on CRICKLEWOOD, for decades the heart of London's large first and second generation Irish Community. Once prosperous it has been particularly hard hit by the recession in the building industry, and by the earlier decline of manufacturing. Homelessness, particularly amongst the large numbers of young people in the area, is acute, and we hope to offer them, as well as unemployed, unwaged and retired people a way into our community that is positive and contributory.

Appendix 1

Flowchart 1992-93

Appendix 2

Legal Status

INTRODUCTION

The Bodhrán Makers will be a major cultural event in the history of the Irish Community in London.

The Bodhrán Makers is a first rate story created by Ireland's leading popular author and playwright, John B Keane. With both humour and affection it raises issues of cultural identity and the role of the Church, issues important to the Community today. Adapted for theatre it provides an opportunity for a genuine Integrated Arts project on an unprecedented scale!

The story revolves around THE WREN, a tradition in which groups of musicians and dancers process and perform through town and country in order to raise money for the St Stephen's Day WREN BALL, a festive occasion where passions and spirits run high, and life is celebrated in full! During the first Act the audience will encounter the Wren, while in the second they will be guests at the Wren Ball with opportunities to join the celebrations, that is until all is brought to a premature end by the arrival of the mighty Canon Tett.

The Bodhrán Makers will be staged in a large warehouse, with the village of Dirrabeg and its surrounding farms encircling a promenading audience (with provision for elderly and differently abled members of the community). The audience will be part of the action, at one moment eavesdroppers in the Bus Bar and at another, part of the Canon's Congregation, being guided from place to place by Donal Hallapy who, in his pony and trap, moves quietly between town and country. All in all it will be an enchanting, funny, and extraordinary event, the like of which will not have been seen before.

With a company of over 200 local people as actors, musicians, technicians, set builders, costume makers, administrators and ushers, it will be a huge event, playing each night for two weeks to audiences of over 6,000, with wide National and Local media coverage. The Professional team will be led by ROBERT RAE, an experienced director whose previous large scale community plays have received critical acclaim, and helped reinvigorate the genre. He will again partner ROD McVEY, Ireland's leading composer and arranger for the theatre. Rod will create a new score for an orchestra of over 50 Irish musicians!

Performances are scheduled for December 1993. Rehearsals will begin in September, and a continuous programme of workshops in Drama, Music, Theatre Writing and Design will begin in March. These will be open to all the community (please see Equal Opportunities Policy), and non-Irish people will be made most welcome. It is proposed to hold workshops in a variety of venues, so ensuring access to all contributory boroughs. A full-time Play Co-Ordinator will be in post in January 1993 to ensure that the project is accessible to all who are interested. Funding has been secured for this post in this financial year.

The project will be centred on CRICKLEWOOD, for decades the heart of London's large first and second generation Irish Community. Once prosperous it has been particularly hard hit by the recession in the building industry, and by the earlier decline in manufacturing. Homelessness, particularly amongst the large numbers of young Irish arriving in the area, is acute, and we hope to offer them, as well as unemployed, unwaged and retired people a way into our community that is positive and contributory.

Cricklewood is divided at its centre into three London Boroughs, Barnet, Brent and Camden. As a result of this Arts, Leisure and Welfare provision in the area is poor and virtually non-existent. Yet despite its history of relative neglect, Cricklewood retains a strong sense of identity, particularly amongst its large Irish Community. As its extended families have grown-up and spread into the surrounding suburbs, Cricklewood has retained its position at the heart of the Community. Many of those deeply involved in the project are second generation Irish people who despite having grown up in London have also grown up surrounded by and immersed in Irish culture. Unrecognised as an Ethnic Minority and assumed to assimilate, their need to celebrate their own cultural identity as London-Irish has often been overlooked and denied. The Bodhrán Makers aims to make up for that in a big way.

Since its inception on 6 June 1992 the Association has raised nearly £2,000. Our Christmas Ceili was extremely well attended, and as well as raising money generated wide interest and enthusiasm, being particularly successful in bringing people over 60 into the project. Other activities have included an evening of Traditional Irish Music and Dance, a large Jumble Sale and a Car Boot Sale.

The Association currently has three active, skilled and enthusiastic Committees, the Steering, the Finance and the Fundraising. All meet regularly making careful and detailed plans, as well as monitoring and evaluating our work. At the General Meeting we will initiate a Publicity and a Marketing Committee.

Funding has already been secured for the project from London Borough of Brent (John Roseveare), and London Borough of Barnet (JoAnne Hawley). We have met with London Boroughs Grants Committee (Bramwell Osula) who have expressed interest in the Project, and are willing to talk to other potential funders. Dan Shaw of the London Borough of Camden has been enthusiastic and has offered practical support. Support for the project has been wide and strong, for example amongst our Patrons we include both local MPs John Marshall (Conservative) and Ken Livingstone (Labour), and our Board includes a local Parish Priest and Headmaster.

The Play will be officially launched in March 1993 and to mark the occasion John B Keane will come over to talk about his life and work, an event that will attract wide media coverage. Already the project is building social networks and empowering people. We hope that you will recognise the care and attention that has gone into the production of this pack as a demonstration of the high level of skill, commitment and energy that The Bodhrán Makers is generating, all of which will ensure that the project reaches the very highest artistic standards with the widest possible impact.

"The book has everything, humour, romance and tragedy. There is an abundance of rich characters. John B Keane can paint the real-life picture of rural Ireland just as Thomas Hardy captured English rural life." (Andersonstown News)

Set in the 1950s and told through the eyes of Irish people settling in Cricklewood at that time, it explores some of the tensions as well as delights of rural Ireland. Much of the story is set around The Wren, when a group of musicians and dancers would join together to march from house to house, pub to pub to raise money for the traditional St Stephens Day Wren Ball.

THE BODHRAN MAKERS

(3)

PROFESSIONAL

Canon Peter Pius Tett rules the presbytery with an iron hand and expects to rule the lives of everyone in the parish in the same way.

Donal Hallapy is desperately poor; he moves between Dirrabeg and Trallock, a strange but generous man driven to rebel.

Nora Devane is the Canon's ears and eyes; she has an uncanny ability to smell the slightest whiff of potential scandal.

Fred and Minnie Halpin are proprietors of the Bus Bar, a haven of relaxation from the tensions of the town.

Monty Whelan is a thorn in the Canon's side; he teaches at Dirrabeg School but shows a marked reluctance to bow to the Canon's authority.

Bluenose Herrity's hands are no longer steady but he is still the best bodhran maker of them all.

The people of Dirrabeg live in dread of the 'clan of the round collar' until the Canon goes too far and provokes a revolt.

"This powerful and poignant novel provides John B Keane with a passport to the highest levels of Irish literature ... An important and valuable book which must be read by all who love Ireland" (Irish Press)

"The book has everything, humour, romance and tragedy. There is an abundance of rich characters. John B Keane can paint the real-life picture of rural Ireland just as Thomas Hardy captured English rural life." (Andersonstown News)

Set in the 1950s and told through the eyes of Irish people settling in Cricklewood at that time, it explores some of the tensions as well as delights of rural Ireland. Much of the story is set around The Wren, when a group of musicians and dancers would join together to march from house to house, pub to pub to raise money for the traditional St Stephens Day Wren Ball.

Around this polished professional core is the community involvement, with more than 100 performers of all ages throughing the action - six actresses play Fanny at different times of her life. Their collective energy is both thrilling and moving."

(Robin Thornber, The Guardian, 13 May 1991)

PROFILES

(4)

PROFESSIONAL

Robert Rae - Director

Robert has been resident in Cricklewood for over ten years and has two children. He trained and worked as a teacher, a drama-therapist and director. After four years working through drama in a West London Special School, Robert joined 7:84 Theatre Company (England). Having joined as their Community Liaison and Press Officer he was promoted to Projects Manager and produced a number of large scale shows for them, including 'SIX MEN OF DORSET' and 'THE GARDEN OF ENGLAND', the latter playing to audiences of over two thousand per night in City Halls.

Robert returned briefly to teaching while gaining his Masters Degree and then trained as a Theatre Director, spending time at Central School of Art and Design, Rose Bruford College and the National Theatre. His first professional production in 1989 was 'THE TASK' by Heiner Muller for Red Shift Theatre Company and The Gate Theatre:

"... with an imaginative force that holds you spellbound Robert Rae's production is highly theatrical"

(Michael Billington, The Guardian, 23 June 1989)

Robert then worked with the Marillac Theatre Company in West Belfast, a company drawn exclusively from young women who had grown up on the Falls Road. He directed two plays for them 'THE DONKEY'S REVENGE' and 'MA HAT, MA COAT AND THE GANDHI GIRLS' at the Belfast Opera House, before touring large venues throughout Ireland.

"MA HAT, MA COAT AND THE GANDHI GIRLS mingles poetry and the colloquial and uses metaphor to highlight the many changes of emotion and meaning from pathos to humour, from pettiness to generosity ... the cast form into constantly changing patterns, running the gamut from high spirits to despair, frenzy to calm. The control is astonishing, especially at moments of absolute stillness that keeps the whole audience in spellbound silence. This is a triumph indeed for any company; it is also a triumph for the director Robert Rae and for the music composer and director Rod McVey."

(Ray Rosenfield, Irish Times, September 1989)

The production was also seen at the National Theatre in 1990, and was the subject of the BBC TV documentary 'DAUGHTERS OF THE FALLS'.

Robert has also directed large scale Community Plays, most recently 'GO SEE FANNY DEAKIN' by Joyce Holliday for the Silverdale Community Play Association.

"It is a powerful tale, powerfully told in this promenade production directed by Robert Rae; Rod McVey's music makes good use of the proper tunes of the period."

Around this polished professional core is the community involvement, with more than 100 performers of all ages thronging the action - six actresses play Fanny at different times of her life. Their collective energy is both thrilling and moving."

(Robin Thornber, The Guardian, 13 May 1991)

STEERING COMMITTEE

"As the struggles and stories develop in the superb ensemble work of Robert Rae's promenade production, the action becomes more and more compelling. Seven good actresses play the seven ages of Fanny, and when eventually they appear together, the tableau and their song is inspirational. 'GO SEE FANNY DEAKIN' is as good advice as it ever was."

(Jeffrey Wainwright, The Independent, 15 May 1991)

His most recent productions have been 'THE DANCER' for PitProp Theatre Company and 'THE BANNISTERS OF WEM' for Public Parts, which has just embarked upon a nationwide tour. He is currently directing the Old Bull Arts Centres (Barnet) Community Christmas show 'BEAUTY AND THE BEAST', which opens on 26 December 1992.

Rod McVey - Composer/Musical Director

Rod first worked as Resident Musical Director at the Arts Theatre Belfast, during which time he was involved in a large number of productions including GODSPELL, JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR and ZORBA THE GREEK. Rod then went to the Lyric, Belfast where he was Musical Director on ANNIE and OLIVER, then to the Mercury Theatre, Colchester for their production of OKLAHOMA, PIAF and ANNIE for a second time. Around this time he began to take more of an interest in composition of original music for the theatre, including TWELFTH NIGHT at the Regents Park Open Air Theatre. In 1989 he was commissioned to write the music for MA HAT, MA COAT AND THE GANDHI GIRLS at the Belfast Grand Opera House, and then for the large scale Community Play GO SEE FANNY DEAKIN for the people of Silverdale

Rod has also composed a large amount of incidental and theme music for television and is very much involved with the recording and producing scene in Ireland, in particular with the singer/song/writer Andy White. Touring work has also included stints as keyboard player and/or musical director with a number of leading Irish performers including Maura O'Connell, Dolores Keane and with Van Morrison on his UK 90 tour.

John B Keane - Author of the Bodhrán Maker

A native Kerryman, he is one of Ireland's most popular humorous authors and is recognised as a major Irish playwright. He has written many bestsellers including Letters of a Matchmaker, The Bodhrán Makers, Sive and The Field - now a major film by Jim Sheridan.

STEERING COMMITTEE

Anita Geaney (Treasurer) was born in West Hampstead and lives in NW2. As a well known local artist, she has exhibited her work at the Brent Show and the Brent Visual Arts Festival 1992, and is a founding member of the Brent Artists' Register. Her involvement in the community has included running art workshops in local schools, teaching art to adults in Kilburn College, and working in a psychiatric day hospital as an art therapist. She has a daughter aged three and a half years.

Bernadette Hourigan (Play Co-ordinator) was born and brought up in Cricklewood where she now lives. She trained as a nurse and midwife, spending 2½ years on VSO in Africa, and now works locally as a Health Visitor. As a talented musician on the fiddle and tin whistle, she is a familiar figure in Irish music sessions around London.

Mary Hourigan (Chair of Steering Committee) was born in Cricklewood where she now lives. She works as Head of Special Needs in a large local comprehensive school. A mother of two, she is a founding member of Cricklewood Young Peoples Theatre.

Kathryn O'Connell has lived and worked in Cricklewood for the past 14 years as a teacher in a local school. She participates on the local Irish music scene and plays the concertina and banjo. She is a regular at local Irish set dance ceilis:

Maurice Quirke (Chair of Finance Sub-Committee) was born in Kilburn and has lived in Cricklewood for six years. He works as a teacher of English and Drama in North London. His previous theatre experience includes two years' professional work as an actor and four years working with community theatre groups in Buckinghamshire. He is a founder member of the Kilburn Set Dance Association.

Róbert Rae (Artistic Adviser) - see Professional Profile.

Eileen Rudkin was born in Kilburn and has been resident in Cricklewood for 19 years. She is the proud mother of two children. Eileen works at Hampstead School where she has been the NUPE representative for 13 years and an active member of the community throughout this time.

Marie Ryan (Secretary and Board Director) was born in Kilburn and now lives in Queensbury. She works as a personal assistant to an Executive of Marks and Spencer, and her involvement in the community includes voluntary work and the Barn Hill Conservation Group. Marie is another active participant in the local Irish music and dance scene and plays the banjo.

Jackie Warlaw was born and brought up in Dublin. She has an MA in Celtic Studies from Galway University and is a fluent Irish speaker. She has lived in Cricklewood for two years and is a well known figure on the Irish music and dance scene, particularly for her fine traditional sean nós singing. Her involvement in the community also includes initiating and presenting an Irish language programme on Irish Festival Radio 1992. She works in Advertising Sales for Europe on a leading international magazine.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

(7)

TRUSTEES

- Fr Matt Kennelly

- Brian McCloone

- Marie Ryan

- Kathryn O'Connell

PATRONS

- Ken Livingstone MP

- John Marshall MP

- Mustapha Matura, Director of Tricycle Theatre and Playwright

- Brendan Mulkere, Artistic Director of Aras Na nGael, Brent Irish Cultural Centre

- Fr Herbert Haines

- The Federation of Irish Societies

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

(8)

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS - SHORT AND LONG TERM

1 An increase in our personal understanding of our cultural, historical, political and social identity.

AIMS

2 An exploration and development of our abilities and potential across a broad range of activities.

- 1 To offer the Irish Community in Cricklewood an opportunity to celebrate and affirm its cultural identity.
- 2 To facilitate and present a community event in the shape of a theatrical and musical production of outstanding quality and design.
- 3 To socially enrich peoples lives in Cricklewood and enhance its sense of community.
- 4 To generate an interest in the arts.
- 5 To reach out and welcome all people interested in the project, and to be non-sectarian, non-politically aligned, non-profit making and welcoming to all people regardless of race, age, religion and ability.

The participation in the project creates the enjoyment of art, its demands, disciplines and rewards to the people of Cricklewood, as most importantly it will be they who will be artists for themselves.

OBJECTIVES

- 1 The preparation, administration, production, marketing and fundraising of the project will be done by the community. This will develop new skills as well as utilise those already present. The funds received will be channelled into the community for its access to, development and enjoyment of the arts.
- 2 The utilisation of some professional skills (local, when appropriate) in order to skill share, facilitate a richer experience, and ensure the very highest production standards, so important to the community's sense of self worth.
- 3 The building of a base for future Community Arts initiatives in response to long term neglect in Arts provision in Cricklewood to date.
- 4 Through the production and the provision of workshops in music, dance, drama, costume, set and prop making, and theatre technology we will generate an interest in the Arts, broadening access to the Arts throughout the community.
- 5 The provision of opportunities through fundraising activities, social events, informal meetings, workshops and committee meetings to create networks of friendships and enhance our sense of community.

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS : SHORT AND LONG TERM

- 1 An increase in our personal understanding of our cultural, historical, political and religious identity.
- 2 An exploration and development of our abilities and potential across a broad range of fields.
- 3 Stimulation of a desire for personal participation in present and future arts provision.
- 4 Excitement and enjoyment of being in a large scale production.
- 5 Development of new skills.
- 6 Provision of purpose and opportunity to meet and befriend other local people, thus building and enhancing a sense of community.

In order to put this policy into practice we intend to :

The participatory nature of the project extends the enjoyment of art, its demands, disciplines and rewards to the people of Cricklewood, as most importantly it will be they who will be creating it for themselves.

Encourage the participation of the local community on the various committees of the Association.

Monitor participation in the Project from different parts of the community at regular intervals and review our effectiveness in providing as wide access as possible.

Follow procedures of joint decision making in the formulation of administration and artistic policy so as to maximize members' participation and influence in the direction of the Project; and to demonstrate equality of personal value irrespective of previous experience in the Arts.

Focus the community play's themes on power relations and divisions such as those mentioned above to stimulate discussion and reflection in the community.

Provide a variety of opportunities (eg through workshops, rehearsals, fundraising activities, classes, meetings, social events) for people from different backgrounds and walks of life to share ideas and work together creatively for a common objective.

Increase the number of local people actively involved in the Arts and to encourage their continued involvement beyond the lifetime of this Project.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

(10)

This Project's commitment to Equal Opportunities is based on a shared belief that power relations and divisions based on race, class, gender, age, religion, sexuality and disability inhibit individual and collective creativity, and that the Arts should provide a means of dismantling barriers between people. Our commitment is also based on the principle of access for all to the Arts and that excellence should not mean exclusiveness.

In particular, it is the aim of this Project to raise the profile of the Irish community in North West London, to address some of the stereotyping and negative representation of Irish people in the Arts and Media, and to celebrate in a positive way Irish identity and the contribution Irish people have made to life in Britain.

Although the focus of the Project will have a distinctly Irish flavour, we will build on the good practice of local Irish music and dance projects in establishing open access to people from all backgrounds and cultures.

In order to put this policy into practice we intend to :

- Employ a Play Co-ordinator whose role it is to encourage participation from across the community in Cricklewood. The Co-ordinator will, as a specific priority, extend access to disabled people.
- Encourage the participation of the local community on the various committees of the Association.
- Monitor participation in the Project from different parts of the community at regular intervals and review our effectiveness in providing as wide access as possible.
- Follow procedures of joint decision making in the formulation of administration and artistic policy so as to maximise members' participation and influence in the direction of the Project; and to demonstrate equality of personal value irrespective of previous experience in the Arts.
- Focus the community play's themes on power relations and divisions such as those mentioned above to stimulate discussion and reflection in the community.
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- Increase the number of local people actively involved in the Arts and to encourage their continued involvement beyond the lifetime of this Project.

MONITORING/EVALUATION

(11)

In meeting our aims of presenting a theatrical production of outstanding quality and welcoming all people into the project in accordance with the principles of our Equal Opportunities Policy we will set up a variety of methods for monitoring the project:

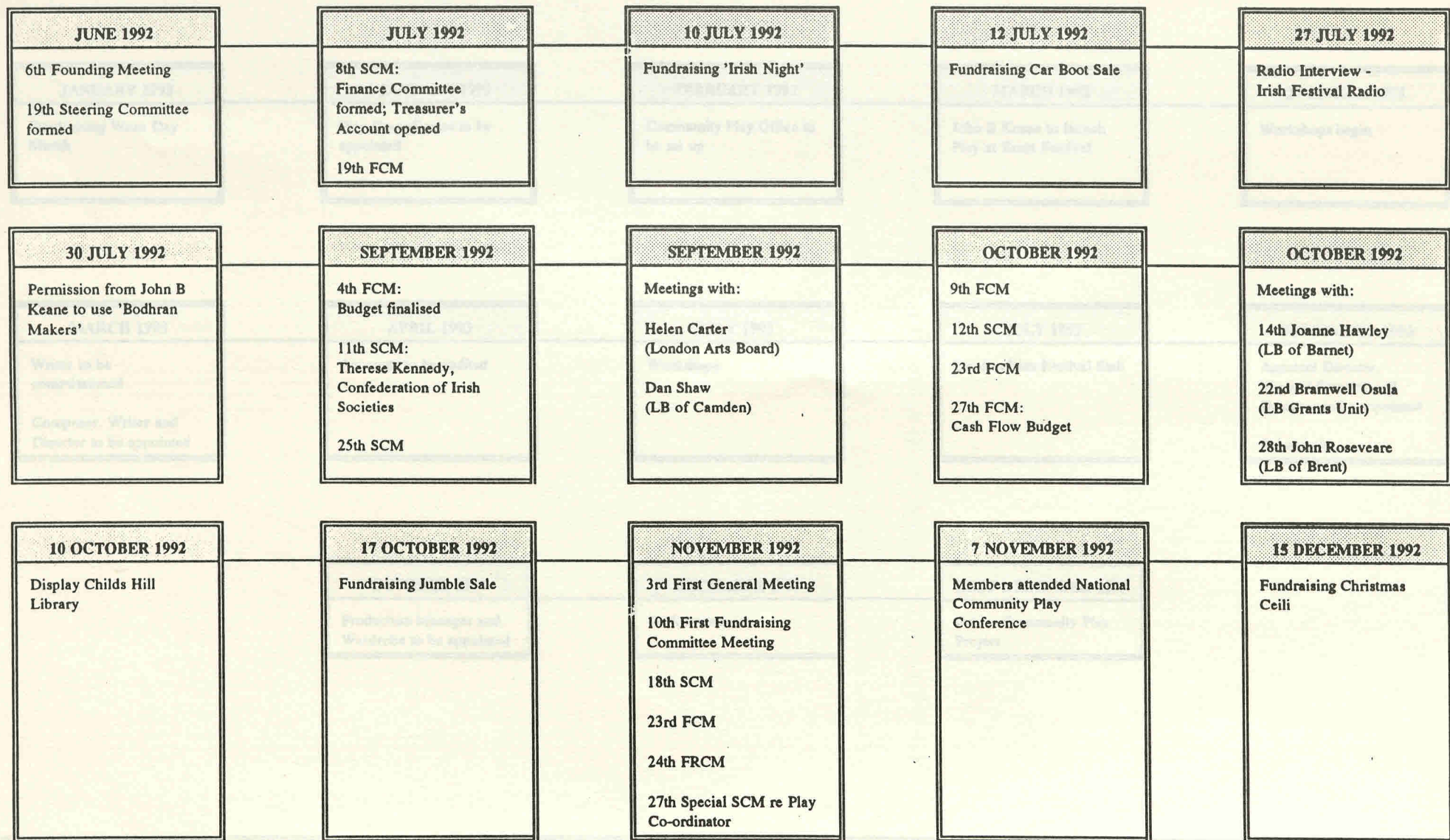
- 1 General Meetings will be held regularly to give all participants an opportunity to air their views and contribute to decision making processes.
- 2 One role of the Play Co-ordinator will be to act as a sounding board for participants' views to ensure that their opinions are given space in all areas of the project.
- 3 Time will be set aside at all Steering Group meetings for the Project Co-ordinator to report to the Group any concerns and views put to her by participants.
- 4 There will be a documentary record of the project in a variety of forms, eg
 - a record in photographs
 - diaries to be kept by six voluntary members reflecting the diversity of involvement (eg an older participant, a young participant, a musician, a performer, a backstage worker, a disabled participant, an Irish born participant, a second generation Irish participant, a non-Irish participant etc)
 - support is being sought to facilitate a video record to which all participants will be invited to contribute, giving them an opportunity to talk on camera about their involvement in the project.

This documentary record is to be overseen by the Play Co-ordinator.

- 5 Budgets will be reviewed and accounts updated every two months up to August 1993 and then every month up to the end of the project. Audited accounts will be presented in April 1993 and at the end of the project in December 1993.
- 6 A full report will be presented at the end of the project in December 1993 and available to all funders and supporters of the project.

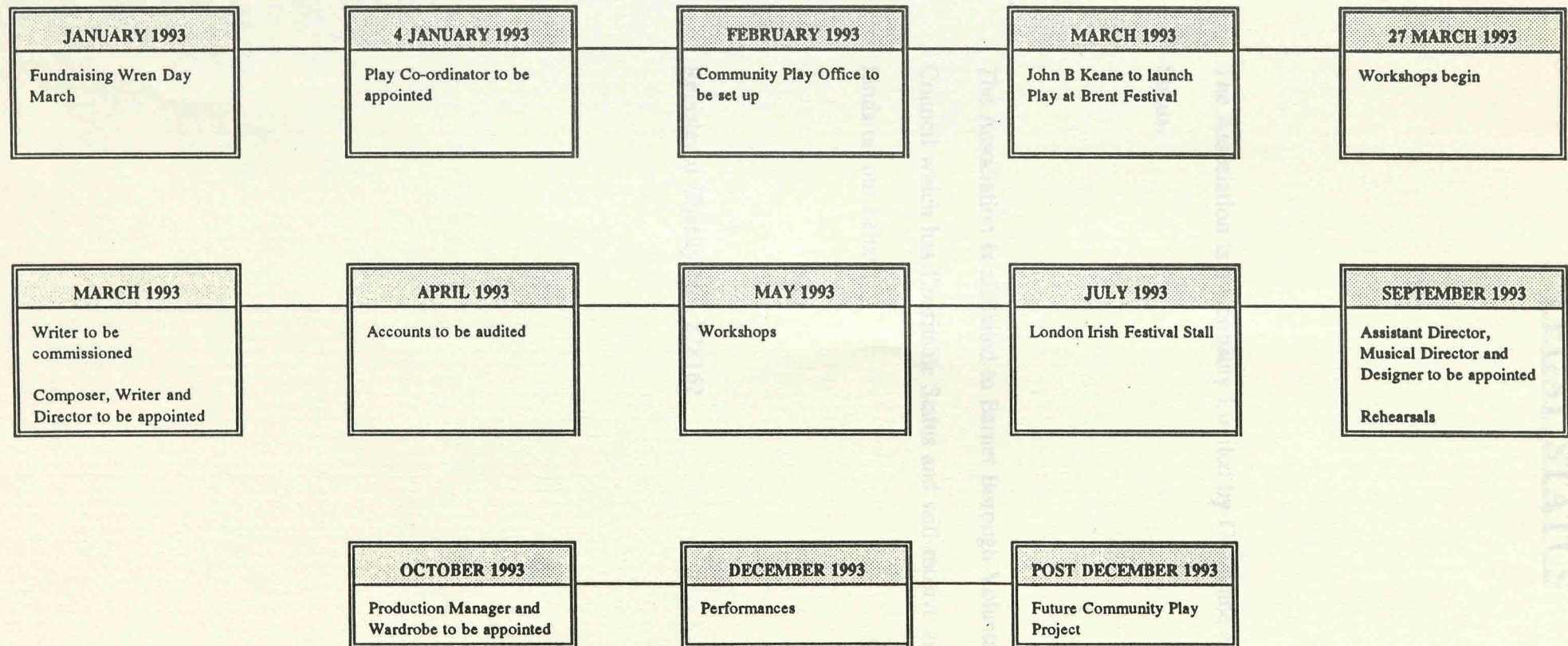
Cricklewood Community Play Association - 1992 Flowchart

APPENDIX 1



KEY		
SCM = Steering Committee Meeting	FCM = Finance Committee Meeting	FRCM = Fundraising Committee Meeting

Cricklewood Community Play Association - 1993 'Flowchart



KEY		
SCM = Steering Committee Meeting	FCM = Finance Committee Meeting	FRCM = Fundraising Committee Meeting

The Association is a Company Limited by Guarantee and has applied for Charitable Status.

The Association is affiliated to Barnet Borough Voluntary Services Council which has Charitable Status and will receive and administer funds on our behalf.

Registered Charity No. 278162.