

**Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme**  
**Final evaluation report**

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**Bigger Picture Research**  
*on behalf of the British Film Institute*

September 2013

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## Executive summary

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*The objective for the strategy is to bring the cinema experience to rural areas. [The] UK Film Council believes more can be done for communities that are outside the major metropolitan areas and has been working to develop a specific plan for rural cinema.*

**UK Film Council Rural Strategy, 2009**

### Background

The Lottery-funded Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme (RCPS) was designed to improve cinema provision in three rural areas between 2010 and 2013: North Yorkshire, Shropshire and Wiltshire. The Scheme was part of the UK Film Council's Rural Strategy, promoting access to film on the big screen in under-served areas.

The test bed locations were selected following research into cinema deprivation conducted by the UK Film Council in collaboration with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). In addition to below average cinema provision, all three counties share characteristics common to rural areas: their sparse populations are typically older and less ethnically diverse than the norm for England:

**Table E.1: Demographic summary**

	<b>N. Yorkshire</b>	<b>Shropshire*</b>	<b>Wiltshire**</b>	<b>England</b>
Population	601,200	307,100	474,300	53,107,200
Area (square km)	8,038	3,197	3,255	130,279
People per square km	75	96	146	408
Population aged 45+	50%	49%	46%	42%
BAME population (%)	3%	2%	3%	14%
Disabled population (%)	18%	19%	16%	18%

Source: ONS Census 2011, Bigger Picture Research analysis

\* Shropshire Unitary Authority

\*\* Wiltshire Unitary Authority

As a pilot exercise, evidence gathering was built into the Scheme from the outset. This final evaluation report follows on from the *Mid Term Review* commissioned by the BFI and delivered in June 2012. It describes in detail how each Pilot (and the Scheme as a whole) fared, and identifies the lessons of value to future initiatives.

The evaluation involved four evidence gathering strands: telephone and email interviews with those involved in delivering the Pilots; analysis of box office records held on the RCPS extranet; a review of documentary evidence; and selected case studies.

Scheme outputs were as follows:

- Between September 2010 and April 2013, the Scheme supported 3,920 screenings across 201 different venues, generating 209,563 admissions (Table E.2).
- Across the Pilots, average attendance at Blu-ray screenings during this period was 47, and at DCI screenings it was 58 (Table E.2).
- A total of 698 different film titles were programmed, 44% of which were specialised films according to the BFI specialised film database (Table E.3).
- Films were booked for DCI venues on average eight weeks after their theatrical debut, and 37% of such screenings took place within six weeks of initial release (Table E.3).
- The Scheme also supported 103 alternative content screenings over the period, which attracted 9,824 admissions with an average of 94 ticket holders per screening (Table E.4).

**Table E.2: Scheme summary statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

<b>Venues</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Unique venues</b>
Cine Yorkshire	9	59	59	36	<b>95</b>
Shropshire Screen	33	49	54	46	<b>59</b>
White Horse Pictures	32*	37*	12	4	<b>46*</b>
<b>Total venues</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>201</b>
<b>Screenings (films, archive &amp; alternative content)</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total screenings</b>
Cine Yorkshire	136	470	525	194	<b>1,325</b>
Shropshire Screen	94	483	891	344	<b>1,812</b>
White Horse Pictures	113*	368*	211	91	<b>783*</b>
<b>Total screenings</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>1,321</b>	<b>1,627</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>3,920</b>
<b>Admissions (films, archive &amp; alternative content)</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total admissions</b>
Cine Yorkshire	3,024	19,599	25,638	11,548	<b>59,809</b>
Shropshire Screen	3,596	24,824	60,991	26,548	<b>115,959</b>
White Horse Pictures	5,193*	17,373*	7,340	3,889	<b>33,795*</b>
<b>Total admissions</b>	<b>11,813</b>	<b>61,796</b>	<b>93,969</b>	<b>41,985</b>	<b>209,563</b>
<b>Average attendance per screening (Blu-ray)</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average attendance</b>
Cine Yorkshire	24	46	44	47	<b>45</b>
Shropshire Screen	39	44	47	39	<b>44</b>
White Horse Pictures	52*	84*	48	35	<b>60</b>
<b>Average attendance</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Average attendance per screening (DCI)</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average attendance</b>
Cine Yorkshire	16	35	45	64	<b>41</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	75	84	107	<b>88</b>
White Horse Pictures	14*	31*	32	53	<b>33</b>
<b>Average attendance</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>58</b>

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

Notes

\* includes Moviola venues, screenings and admissions

**Table E.3: Scheme film statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

<b>Film titles</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Unique titles</b>
Cine Yorkshire	31	181	174	64	<b>362</b>
Shropshire Screen	47	183	228	94	<b>436</b>
White Horse Pictures	20*	77*	124	55	<b>254*</b>
<b>Unique titles</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>698</b>
<b>% of screenings featuring specialised films</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average 2010-2013</b>
Cine Yorkshire	54%	37%	31%	30%	<b>35%</b>
Shropshire Screen	45%	50%	52%	44%	<b>49%</b>
White Horse Pictures	36%	46%	36%	63%	<b>44%</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Specialised film as % of all admissions</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average 2010-2013</b>
Cine Yorkshire	50%	39%	26%	35%	<b>33%</b>
Shropshire Screen	43%	49%	45%	37%	<b>44%</b>
White Horse Pictures	37%	67%	35%	60%	<b>55%</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Average number of weeks after first release, DCI</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average 2010-2013</b>
Cine Yorkshire	5	6	7	8	<b>7</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	9	10	9	<b>10</b>
White Horse Pictures	8	7	9	10	<b>8</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>% DCI screenings within six weeks of first release</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average 2010-2013</b>
Cine Yorkshire	82%	63%	57%	36%	<b>59%</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	33%	20%	17%	<b>21%</b>
White Horse Pictures	0%	38%	29%	**	<b>31%</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>37%</b>

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

Notes

\* includes Moviola venues, screenings and admissions

\*\* incomplete data

**Table E.4: Scheme alternative content statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

<b>Alternative content screenings</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total screenings</b>
Cine Yorkshire	2	10	27	11	<b>50</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	5	32	13	<b>50</b>
White Horse Pictures	-	-	-	3	<b>-</b>
<b>Total screenings</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Alternative content admissions</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total admissions</b>
Cine Yorkshire	224	1,108	2,694	1,122	<b>5,148</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	362	2,864	1,085	<b>4,311</b>
White Horse Pictures	-	-	-	365	<b>365</b>
<b>Total admissions</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>5,558</b>	<b>2,572</b>	<b>9,824</b>
<b>Average attendance per alt. content screening</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average attendance</b>
Cine Yorkshire	112	111	100	102	<b>103</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	72	90	83	<b>86</b>
White Horse Pictures	-	-	-	122	<b>122</b>
<b>Average attendance</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>94</b>

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

Notes

\* includes Moviola venues, screenings and admissions

Across the Scheme as a whole, British films with appeal to an older demographic dominated in terms of programming slots and box office performance:

- The majority of frequently programmed titles were British, led by *The King's Speech*, *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* and *Made in Dagenham*.
- British films also did well at the box office, accounting for 13 of the top 20 best performing titles, including the top three positions (*The King's Speech*, *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* and *Skyfall*). In comparison, only seven of the top 20 grossing films at the UK box office in the same period were British.
- Six out of ten of the most programmed titles were specialised films, as were half the top 20 performing titles.
- There was a bias towards English language titles in the list of most programmed specialised titles, which was again dominated by British films. *Untouchable* and *The Girl Who Played with Fire* were the only foreign language titles to appear in the top 20.
- No foreign language films appeared in the top 20 best performing specialised titles.

The rural cinema 'high season' in village and community hall venues traditionally runs from September to April (limited blackout facilities and lack of volunteers and audiences during the holiday period make summer more challenging for such venues). This seasonality is reflected in the spread of monthly admissions:

- Across both full calendar years of the Scheme (2011 and 2012), the highest proportion of admissions occurred in the period between February and April, and the lowest in May to August. In contrast, the summer months recorded the highest proportion of admissions at the UK box office over the same period.
- Screen averages also varied across the year: while there was a dip in the summer months it was not so large as to indicate audiences deserted rural venues at this time. A more likely reason is the impact of film supply on attendances: the summer fall off was more pronounced for specialised films, reflecting the relative lack of popular product during the summer blockbuster season (awards contenders that prove to be popular specialised film hits generally become available in winter and spring, coinciding with the awards season).

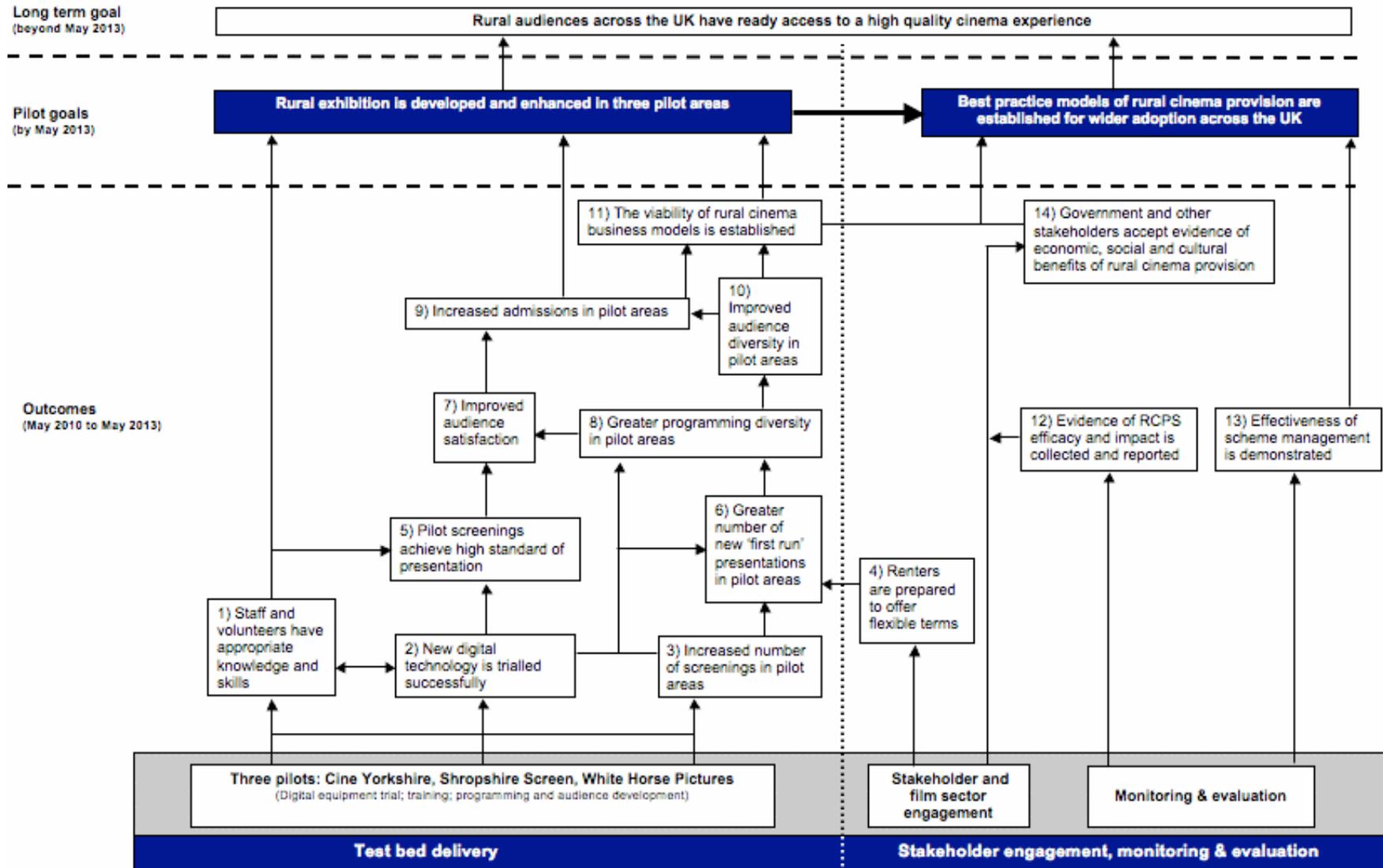
The RCPS extranet data also sheds interesting light on the impact of early release windows on the average number of admissions generated by screenings. Looking across all screening types, there is very little to separate the average performance of titles released up to six weeks after theatrical debut and those programmed between seven and twelve weeks after initial release, which suggests there is limited commercial advantage to be gained in securing very early releases

## **Outcomes**

Listed below are the fourteen outcomes used to evaluate the Scheme as a whole. In the diagram that follows, the outcomes are mapped to show how they contributed to achievement of the Scheme's goals.

1. *Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and skills*
2. *New digital technology is trialled successfully*
3. *Increased number of screenings in pilot areas*
4. *Renters are prepared to offer flexible terms*
5. *Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation*
6. *Greater number of new 'first run' presentations in pilot areas*
7. *Improved audience satisfaction*
8. *Greater programming diversity in pilot areas*
9. *Increased admissions in pilot areas*
10. *Improved audience diversity in pilot areas*
11. *The viability of rural cinema business models is established*
12. *Evidence of RCPS efficacy and impact is collected and reported*
13. *Effectiveness of scheme management is demonstrated*
14. *Government and other stakeholders accept evidence of economic, social and cultural benefits of rural cinema provision*

## Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme Outcomes Map



Judging the evidence across all three Pilots, the Scheme's most notable achievements were in the following areas:

- 'Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and skills' (outcome 1);
- 'Increased number of screenings in pilot areas' (outcome 3);
- 'Pilot screenings achieve high standards of presentation' (outcome 5);
- 'Greater programming diversity in pilot areas' (outcome 8);
- 'The viability of rural cinema business models is established' (outcome 11).

Progress was made against other outcomes, although the record of achievement was more mixed; these outcomes were either not achieved in full or the evidence was inconclusive:

- 'New digital technology is trailed successfully' (outcome 2)
- 'Renters are prepared to offer flexible terms' (outcome 4) and 'Greater number of 'first run' presentations in pilot areas' (outcome 6);
- 'Improved audience satisfaction' (outcome 7);
- 'Increased admissions in pilot areas' (outcome 9);
- 'Evidence of RCPS efficacy and impact is collected and reported' (outcome 12);
- 'Effectiveness of scheme management is demonstrated' (outcome 13);
- 'Government and other stakeholders accept evidence of economic, social and cultural benefits of rural cinema provision' (outcome 14).

In the case of new digital technology trials (outcome 2), a distinction needs to be drawn between conduct of the trials and their results. All three Pilots supported deployment of DCI technology in their areas, either as touring kit or fixed installations. However, results of the trials were mixed, notably with the premature demise of the touring model employed in Wiltshire. Nonetheless, valuable lessons were learned as a result of all the trials, whether successful or otherwise.

This evaluation found no evidence that audience diversity in Pilot areas improved under the Scheme (outcome 10). The limited evidence that exists suggests Pilots tended to attract audiences broadly matching the demographic profile of local populations.

The Scheme had two related goals: 'Rural exhibition is developed and enhanced in three pilot areas' and 'Best practice models of rural cinema provision are established for wider adoption across the UK'.

The first goal was achieved, although not to the extent originally hoped for in Wiltshire. The second goal is served by the findings from this report, including the case studies, although it remains to be seen whether the models developed under the Scheme will be adopted more widely.

Touring DCI was the only area where best practice was not fully established. With cheaper, more portable and robust DCI projectors now available, further testing of the touring model in rural venues is required.

Performance of the three Pilots against their intended outcomes is summarised in the following report cards (Tables E5 to E7):

**Table E5: Cine Yorkshire report card summary**

<b>Cine Yorkshire outcomes</b>	<b>Achieved?</b>
1. Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and skills	
2. New digital technology is trialled successfully	
3. Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation	
4. Greater number of early window presentations within 4-6 weeks	
5. Greater programming diversity and quality	
6. Improved audience satisfaction	
7. Increased admissions	
8. Improved audience diversity	
9. Viability of rural cinema business models is established	
10. Evidence of pilot efficacy & impact is collected & reported	
11. Councils & other key stakeholders accept evidence of benefits	
Goal 1: Rural communities in Yorkshire have ready access to an enjoyable, fulfilling, varied and high quality cinema experience locally Goal 2: Councils support rural cinema provision beyond the pilot	

**Key**

 = *the outcome has been achieved.*

 = *evidence indicates some success, but the outcome has not been achieved in full or evidence is incomplete.*

 = *the outcome has not been achieved or no evidence of achievement exists.*

**Table E6: Shropshire Screen report card summary**

<b>Shropshire Screen outcomes</b>	<b>Achieved?</b>
1. Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge & skills	
2. Increased number of cinema venues and screenings	
3. Greater openness and closer working ties between delivery partners	
4. County-wide audience development plan produced for under 19s	
5. Pilot has strategic fit with [...] agendas	
6. Venues & touring schemes have improved capacity [...]	
7. Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation	
8. Demand for early window releases is established	
9. Greater programming diversity and quality	
10. High awareness among rural communities of umbrella brand [...]	
11. Teachers have enhanced knowledge and skills [...]	
12. Improved audience satisfaction	
13. Increased admissions	
14. More young people, family audiences & disabled people [...]	
15. Evidence of rural cinema pilot efficacy & impact is collected [...]	
16. Viability of rural cinema business models is established	
17. Councils, [...] & stakeholders accept evidence of benefits [...]	
<i>Goal 1: The cinema experience is widely available and sustainable in rural areas of the county</i>	
<i>Goal 2: Investment and support is secured beyond the pilot</i>	

**Key**

 = the outcome has been achieved.

 = evidence indicates some success, but the outcome has not been achieved in full or evidence is incomplete.

 = the outcome has not been achieved or no evidence of achievement exists.

**Table E7: White Horse Pictures report card summary**

White Horse Pictures outcomes	Achieved?
1. DCI equipment is trialled successfully	
2. Flexible deals with distributors are achieved	
3. Greater programming diversity and quality	
4. Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation	
5. Volunteers have appropriate skills and knowledge	
6. Increased number of better equipped venues and screenings	
7. Wider audience diversity/ base	
8. Improved user experience and audience satisfaction	
9. Increased admissions	
10. Viability of rural cinema business models is established	
11. Dedicated schools programme supported by skilled teachers	
12. Young people have enhanced film programming skills	
13. Pilot is aligned with national, regional and Council strategies	
14. New relationships & partnerships are brokered [...]	
15. Pilot is improved by evidence-based learning	
<i>Goal: Everyone in Wiltshire has access to the cinema experience, and cinema is at the heart of the local community</i>	

**Key**

 = the outcome has been achieved.

 = evidence indicates some success, but the outcome has not been achieved in full or evidence is incomplete.

 = the outcome has not been achieved or no evidence of achievement exists.

**Lessons**

The Scheme yielded a number of tactical and strategic lessons for rural cinema delivery and support:

*Tactical*

- The Scheme demonstrated the importance of the **social aspect** of cinemagoing for rural audiences;
- **Particular approaches to promotion** are required in rural areas, using existing networks and gathering places (e.g. local shops, pubs, community groups);
- A **strong online presence** can raise awareness among partners and local media, and provide a reference point for promoters who may not have their own dedicated web site;
- **Use of social media** to promote specific screenings or events, rather than more generic profile raising, needs to be timely and requires consistent effort;
- The Pilots found that **special events** (e.g. launches, filmmaker Q&As, festival screenings etc.) serve to attract new audiences and raise the profile of rural cinema ventures;
- **Screen heritage** proved popular with audiences when tied into other arts or heritage events, and where content was tailored for the local area.
- **Alternative content** can regularly draw large audiences, thereby subsidising and helping to promote a venue's cinema offer.

- Many venues reported **limited demand for 3D screenings**, most probably a reflection of the older demographic of rural audiences and the tendency for 3D titles to be family films with younger appeal;
- **Mixed-use venues**, including those supported by Arts Council England, have shown interest in extending their programming into film, particularly when tied to the development of alternative content screenings;
- **Local authorities** are most likely to invest in DCI installations after market testing and audience demand has been demonstrated;
- A committed **project champion** is needed at executive level within the local council to help support DCI venues under local authority control;
- Cinema has to compete with other non-film offers for programming slots at mixed-use venues, and this can limit **programming flexibility**.

### *Strategic*

#### National co-ordination & local delivery

- There is a virtue in having a national body, like the BFI, either co-ordinate or stimulate support for rural cinema involving local delivery partners. Delivery by partners sensitive to the needs and circumstances of their local areas ensured the Pilots tailored their offer accordingly.

#### Licensing flexibility

- Film licensing is one area requiring co-ordinated intervention at national level, to improve flexibility in booking fees and product availability;
- Licence fees for single screenings, which include minimum guarantees, can be prohibitively high for smaller venues, and the cost of film licences can make programmers more risk averse and less likely to programme specialised titles beyond the most popular films with a proven audience;
- Indications are that audiences in village hall venues are generally more content to wait longer (though not too long) for new titles, while visitors to DCI venues are more likely to expect (and demand) early window releases, although over time expectations may change.

#### Supporting volunteers

- The vital contribution of volunteers to the Scheme cannot be underestimated.
- The most successful volunteer-run ventures play to the particular strengths of their team while taking steps to address potential weaknesses. Beyond keeping volunteers committed and engaged to a venture (always easier if it is successful), support and development opportunities offer a way to ensure the correct knowledge and skills are available to the team;
- When considering support and development opportunities for volunteers, it is important not to treat them as a homogeneous group. Evidence from the Scheme points to the existence of four broad volunteering categories ('catalyst', 'driver', 'provider' and 'helper'), and each has distinctive requirements.

#### Audience development

- The Pilots' experiences confirmed what has long been known: audiences take time to build. This appears true irrespective of the size of the venue, and applies equally to Blu-ray and DCI screenings;
- The skills required for audience development often exceed those available to volunteer teams, and market research and promotional activity can be expensive. As a result, external support is often necessary, though seldom available.

#### Data collection & evidence gathering

- The Scheme benefitted from some good examples of data collection and evidence gathering, but there were also significant shortfalls in practice, which hindered the evaluation process.
- These included not repeating audience surveys; lack of clear sampling strategies; use of non-standardised questions; limited analysis and reporting; failure to document spot visits and interviews; errors in RCPS extranet data entry and inconsistent updates; and a reactive rather than proactive approach to evidence gathering.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations build on these strategic lessons:

1. The cultivation of local rural cinema networks should be encouraged at national level, perhaps as part of the BFI's UK Audience Network comprising Hubs across the nations and regions, or through the proposed Community Venues Fund.

2. A fundamental review of film licensing terms is long overdue. Such a review requires leadership from a national body (e.g. the BFI) and should involve a partnership approach with rights holders (including Filmbank, distributors and producers), BFFS, ICO, trade associations like the FDA and other interested parties.

The review should examine scope for greater flexibility in:

- the cost of film licensing, including minimum guarantees;
- release windows for public screenings of film on Blu-ray.

3. A review is required of existing support available to volunteers and volunteer-run organisations operating in rural cinema settings, to identify and address gaps and develop new ways of working (including partnerships with third sector bodies) to improve volunteer recruitment, skills development, team building, retention and succession planning. Support needs to recognise the specific requirements of the different categories of volunteering identified in this research.

4. Funding for audience development, including market research, marketing and promotion activity, programming support and events, should be considered as important as capital funding, with adequate provision made to support rural cinema providers lacking the necessary skills and resources.

5. A cultural change is required within the funded film sector, placing greater emphasis on tactical and strategic decision-making rooted in evidence-based practice. This cannot be achieved without appropriate support, including sufficient resources to meet research costs and training to develop providers' in-house research capacity. Further to this, there is scope at national level for the promotion of best practice models (e.g. standardised audience surveys), and the merits of longitudinal research (measurement over time) need to be better understood and implemented. For future exhibition support schemes, there is considerable merit in collecting box office and programming data via an extranet provided some form of validation is in place at the point of data entry. Proper training and support should be provided to anyone responsible for entering data to the system.

# 1. Introduction

*We see quite often [...] capacity audiences, and not always for mainstream film [...] We can only assume the longer-term benefits that brings. [F]ilm is about our lives, culture and about other cultures from around the world. It's a way of learning about what it is to be a person in this world.*

**Joy Durrant, Arts Development Team, Shropshire Council**

## 1.1 Overview

The Lottery-funded Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme (RCPS) was designed to improve cinema provision in three rural areas between 2010 and 2013: North Yorkshire, Shropshire and Wiltshire.<sup>1</sup> The Scheme was part of the UK Film Council's Rural Strategy, promoting access to film and film culture in under-served areas.

The test bed locations were selected following research into cinema deprivation conducted by the UK Film Council in collaboration with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). As Table 1.1 illustrates, all three counties selected for the Scheme share characteristics common to rural areas: their sparse populations are typically older and less ethnically diverse than the norm for England:

**Table 1.1: Demographic summary**

	<b>N. Yorkshire</b>	<b>Shropshire*</b>	<b>Wiltshire**</b>	<b>England</b>
Population	601,200	307,100	474,300	53,107,200
Area (square km)	8,038	3,197	3,255	130,279
People per square km	75	96	146	408
Population aged 45+	50%	49%	46%	42%
BAME population (%)	3%	2%	3%	14%
Disabled population (%)	18%	19%	16%	18%

Source: ONS Census 2011, Bigger Picture Research analysis

\* Shropshire Unitary Authority

\*\* Wiltshire Unitary Authority

Building on preliminary findings of the *Mid Term Review* completed in June 2012, this report describes how each Pilot, and the Scheme as a whole, fared over three years, based on evidence collected for this purpose.

Beginning with a look at the background to the evaluation, the report examines the Pilots' achievements and considers the challenges they faced. A final chapter brings together the principal lessons learned and recommends ways to support rural cinema initiatives in future.

As in the *Mid Term Review* report, the three Pilots are here referred to by the names used at the time of writing: Cine Yorkshire (formerly North Yorkshire Digital Cinema), Shropshire Screen and White Horse Pictures (formerly Wiltshire and Test Valley Rural Cinema Pilot).

## 1.2 A brief history of the Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme

Film policy, and the public bodies that serve it, has long been concerned with the adequacy and breadth of film exhibition outside the UK's main metropolitan centres. Specifically *rural* provision first garnered attention in 1999, a year before the UK Film Council launched, with a report by Ron Inglis for the British Film Institute (BFI), East Midland Arts and Eastern Arts entitled *The Case for Rural Cinema*.

But it was only in 2008 that interest from different quarters coalesced into action. In June of that year, the MP for Ludlow, Philip Dunne, raised questions about public funding for rural cinema at a meeting of the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee:

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this report, 'rural cinema' is understood to be film screenings in rural areas (including market towns), normally in venues such as village and town halls, arts centres and other community spaces rather than purpose built facilities. It encompasses community and pop up cinemas, film societies and clubs, festivals and touring networks.

*Mr Dunne MP: One of the reasons why I am probing on this is that we have not got anybody here from the UK Film Council but I have had representations from bodies that are currently funded by the UK Film Council. One such organisation is called Flicks in the Sticks. It provides rural displays of films in village halls and on the Welsh Marches, including near my constituency, and they are very concerned because at the moment there is a significant amount of investment being made by the UK Film Council in providing digital installations, which is a good thing, but 100% of that is going into urban areas and the question for me, representing a rural area, is, where did that direction come from? Why are they not giving a proportion of that funding to provide digital access to rural cinemas?*

*Mr Holgate (Chief Operating Officer, DCMS): I think it is extremely unlikely that we would direct the UK Film Council as to where geographically it should put its investment other than the general presumption of trying to reach parts of the country which would not normally be reached.*

*Mr Dunne MP: In this particular case they are very definitely not reaching the parts of the country that in my view deserve to be reached.*

**(Making grants efficiently in the culture, media and sport sector: Forty–ninth Report of Session 2007–08, House of Commons Public Accounts Committee, November 2008)**

In response, the UK Film Council initiated a study of cinema deprivation in England, mapping exhibition data supplied by Dodona Research against geo-demographic information held by DEFRA. The exercise helped to identify three areas suitable for pilot projects, to test different approaches to supporting rural exhibition: North Yorkshire, Shropshire and Wiltshire and the Test Valley.

The UK Film Council then commissioned a scoping study to highlight specific opportunities for intervention in each area. The report, produced by Ron Inglis and Sue Todd, was completed in November 2008, and formed the basis of a Rural Funding Workshop hosted by the UK Film Council in December 2008, with participants drawn from existing rural cinemas providers, Regional Screen Agencies and others.

The UK Film Council next commissioned Tony Jones, Director of Cambridge Film Trust, to advise on equipment procurement. The report (*Rural Exhibition Strategy: Technical Solutions Research Report*, April 2009) presented various options including a 'true DCI portable system', a 'DCI compatible portable system' and an 'HD Video system'. Portable DCI systems were new to market at the time, and the report put the cost of a system employing the smaller Christie DLP (CP 2000M) projector at between £40,000 and £50,000.<sup>2</sup>

All these threads were then drawn together in the UK Film Council's Rural Strategy, at the heart of which lay the Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme. The Strategy favoured a consortium approach in each Pilot area, to avoid imposing a one-size-fits-all solution:

*[T]he UK Film Council has decided that any scheme needs to have the flexibility to accommodate regional differences in infrastructure and approach. In each of the three areas, the Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme will provide funding to a single organisation that represents a consortium of parties in each specific area that are active in rural cinema.*

**(Bringing cinema to rural communities: the UK Film Council's Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme, 2009)**

A call was issued for applications to a three-stage selection process, with the first deadline in August 2009. The Scheme offered Lottery funding totalling £1.2 million across the Pilot areas, in pursuit of the following objectives:

- *Develop and enhance rural cinema and provide the opportunity for more rural audiences to enjoy the 'cinema experience';*
- *Increase screenings and audiences in rural areas;*

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<sup>2</sup> DCI (Digital Cinema Initiatives): a film industry standard for digital cinema that ensures a uniform and high level of technical performance, reliability and quality control, as well as advanced content security. Most distributors will only supply venues with first run films in a digital format if they use DCI-compliant equipment.

- Increase the number of presentations of new 'first-run' films in rural areas;
- Improve the standard of cinema presentation in rural venues;
- Trial new digital technologies for delivering films and content including through 3D and satellite transmissions;
- Develop sustainable business models for rural cinema;
- Increase access and attendance to rural cinema amongst audiences who may be currently excluded from rural cinema e.g. younger audiences and older audiences; and
- Provide data, evidence and information on the scheme to inform all stakeholders and the wider film sector on how to improve best practice and establish if there is a case for additional public intervention in this area.

**(Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme Guidelines For Applicants, UK Film Council, July 2009)**

There were two categories of eligible costs under the Scheme:

- (a) Capital purchases, of approximately 75% of the total award (for projection, satellite and digital 3D equipment; ADSL/ broadband systems; and site surveys);
- (b) Other costs to meet local needs for audience development activity (including marketing and promotion), training, touring DCI transport costs and monitoring activity.

Under the Scheme's procurement guidelines, consortiums were expected to meet two equipment specifications based on the Cambridge Film Trust report:

- **Standard A: Portable DCI**  
*'The portable DCI level digital projection system [...] has been selected because the UK Film Council believes that it will uniquely enable rural cinema to access new releases and, as a portable system, it will be able to be toured to multiple venues.'*
- **Standard B: Blu-ray projection<sup>3</sup>**  
*'[This] system is cheaper than the industry standard equipment and can be portable or fixed in a single venue. There are various projector solutions available for this and new models are frequently coming onto the market.'*

**(Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme Guidelines For Applicants, UK Film Council, July 2009)**

Shortlisted consortiums met with an assessment panel in stage two of the application process, and the final stage involved extensive consultation around fully budgeted three-year business plans submitted in early 2010.

As a result, three consortiums were awarded funding:

- 1). North Yorkshire Digital Cinema
  - Screen Yorkshire
  - Blaize Community Arts
  - National Media Museum (NMM)
  - North Yorkshire County Council
- 2). Shropshire Rural Cinema Consortium
  - Wem Town Hall/ Thomas Adams School (lead)
  - Borderlines Film Festival
  - Disability Arts in Shropshire (DASH)
  - Festival Drayton Centre
  - Flicks in the Sticks
  - Ludlow Assembly Rooms
  - Reels on Wheels
  - Strategic partners: Screen WM and Shropshire Council
- 3). Wiltshire and Test Valley Rural Cinema Pilot
  - South West Screen (lead)
  - BFFS SW Group

<sup>3</sup> Blu-ray: a high definition format using optical discs for playback via a dedicated player connected to a projector.

- Moviola
- Pound Arts
- Salisbury International Arts Festival
- Screen South
- Wiltshire College/ Arc Theatre
- Wiltshire Council

The Scheme got underway shortly after contracts were awarded; funding agreements were signed in summer 2010 and plans for monitoring and evaluation were agreed with the Pilots in October 2010.

At about this time (in July 2010) the new Coalition Government announced plans to close the UK Film Council as part of a programme to reduce the number of Non Departmental Public Bodies (known colloquially as 'quangos'). There was no immediate, direct impact on the Scheme, but uncertainty about the future direction and financing of film policy, and the additional workload as executives prepared to transfer responsibility to other bodies, was an unplanned distraction during the Scheme's formative stages. The UK Film Council continued to manage the Scheme until April 2011, when responsibility passed to the BFI.

Arguably of greater significance to the Pilots were changes wrought by the decision to shift regional funding for film in England from Regional Screen Agencies to a new body, Creative England. This led to closure of a number of RSAs, including South West Screen and Screen WM, strategic partners in their respective consortiums (Screen Yorkshire remained open but responsibility for film exhibition support passed to Creative England). One further change occurred later in the Scheme when responsibility for funding film culture moved from Creative England to the BFI, in April 2013.

Throughout the life of the Scheme, cutbacks in the wider public sector also had profound consequences. Local authorities began to reassess spending priorities from 2010 onwards, and arts and cultural services were often hardest hit. This forced many council-controlled venues to close, scale back their services and/or seek alternative revenue sources. Many (though by no means all) of the organisations involved in the three Pilots saw revenue funding decrease or cease altogether during this period. Funding cuts from bodies like Arts Council England further exacerbated the problem, and as a result some consortium partners were forced to leave the Scheme before it ended.

It is a notable achievement, in this context, that every Pilot leveraged significant investment in rural cinema from town and county councils. In the case of DCI installations in market town venues, this was in acknowledgment of the economic benefits that high quality rural cinema provision can deliver.

In recognition of the growing importance placed on rural exhibition, by public film bodies and local authorities, the BFI and Creative England hosted the UK's first ever conference dedicated to the topic in September 2012, and representatives of the three Pilots took part in the event.

### 1.3 About the evaluation

As a pilot exercise, evidence gathering was built in from the outset and planning for assessment of the Scheme began with development of an evaluation framework in October 2010. The framework included sections for each Pilot and the Scheme as a whole, and consisted of an outcomes map (marrying the Pilots' ambitions against their planned activity: see Appendix 1); a data collection plan (describing how the Pilots intended to measure progress and demonstrate achievement: see Appendix 2), and a list of founding assumptions (the ideas that guided their choice of approach: see Appendix 3).

It should be noted that this is an outcomes-led evaluation, not an external audit of the Scheme. A number of factors were taken as given and remain unquestioned in this report: namely the need for a Scheme of this nature, the choice of areas to host the Pilots and the cost-effectiveness of DCI technology.

This final evaluation report follows on from the *Mid Term Review* commissioned by the BFI and delivered in June 2012. The Review described the Scheme's progress from its start in 2010 to 31 March 2012, and was principally concerned with Pilots' evidence gathering methods, to identify any gaps in the data record and to recommend how to address these in the time remaining before the Scheme ended. The review made a number of recommendations for conduct of the final evaluation, chiefly:

- The need for Pilots to plug gaps in their evidence gathering to ensure the final evaluation had sufficient information to draw meaningful conclusions;
- Improved quality and standardisation of box office data entered into the Rural Cinema Pilot Data extranet ([www.ruralcinema.org](http://www.ruralcinema.org));<sup>4</sup>
- Commissioning the final evaluation to begin three months before the Scheme ended, to ensure appropriate data and information was collected before the trail ran cold;
- Including case studies in the final evaluation report, to provide concrete examples of good practice for wider dissemination.

Whereas the *Mid Term Review* concentrated on Pilots' data collection and reporting, with only a preliminary examination of performance against their outcomes, this final evaluation describes in detail how each Pilot (and the Scheme as a whole) fared, and identifies the lessons of value to future initiatives.

### 1.4 Methods

The evaluation involved four evidence-gathering strands, as follows:

#### 1 FIELDWORK

Telephone/ email interviews with:

- a). Pilot delivery partners (past and present);
- b). Stakeholders (including local authorities, other funders and interested parties);
- c). Pilot management teams.

Interviews took place between March and May 2013 and a list of interviewees is given in Appendix 5.

Every interview was recorded and transcribed, and quotes are reported verbatim in the sections that follow (or with minor editing approved by the interviewees).

#### 2 RURAL CINEMA PILOT DATA EXTRANET

Quantitative analysis of box office and programming data held on the RCPS extranet.

The data holdings as at 14 April 2013 were downloaded in .xls format for offline analysis. Additional information about each screening was added to the database, as follows:

- UK theatrical release date;

<sup>4</sup> Rural Cinema Pilot Data extranet: an online database housing programming and admissions records of every screening hosted by Pilot venues, developed by DDP for the UK Film Council in 2010. Pilot venues and project managers uploaded data to the system, and the platform enabled users to view reports online or download records for offline analysis. <http://www.ruralcinema.org/>

- Number of weeks after theatrical debut the film was screened by Pilot venues;
- Specialised/ mainstream film (films were classified as specialised if they appear on the BFI's Specialised Film Database, [www.http://industry.bfi.org.uk/specialisedfilmsdb](http://industry.bfi.org.uk/specialisedfilmsdb)).

### **3 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE REVIEW**

Review of other sources held by Pilots (including audience survey results, meeting minutes, venue spot check reports etc.). In early 2013 the BFI commissioned DDP to manage an audience survey with help from Pilot venues, and the results have also informed this evaluation.

The full list of documents and spreadsheets reviewed in the course of this research is found in Appendix 6.

### **4 CASE STUDIES**

Examples of successful Pilot delivery, based on desk research and interviews with those involved in the case study venues.

The case studies are presented in Appendix 7.

## **1.5 The Scheme in numbers**

We can learn a great deal about the Pilots' performance, and about patterns of rural cinemagoing and film preferences more generally, by analysing the box office data held on the RCPS extranet. The following points stand out:

- Between September 2010 and April 2013, the Scheme supported 3,920 screenings across 201 different venues, generating 209,563 admissions (Table 1.2).
- Over a quarter (27%) of Cine Yorkshire venues hosted a single screening during the Pilot period, compared with 13% of Shropshire Screen venues and 17% of White Horse Pictures venues.
- Across the Pilots, average attendance at Blu-ray screenings during this period was 47, and at DCI screenings it was 58 (Table 1.2).

**Table 1.2: Scheme summary statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

<b>Venues</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Unique venues</b>
Cine Yorkshire	9	59	59	36	<b>95</b>
Shropshire Screen	33	49	54	46	<b>59</b>
White Horse Pictures	32*	37*	12	4	<b>46*</b>
<b>Total venues</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>201</b>
<b>Screenings (films, archive &amp; alternative content)</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total screenings</b>
Cine Yorkshire	136	470	525	194	<b>1,325</b>
Shropshire Screen	94	483	891	344	<b>1,812</b>
White Horse Pictures	113*	368*	211	91	<b>783*</b>
<b>Total screenings</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>1,321</b>	<b>1,627</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>3,920</b>
<b>Admissions (films, archive &amp; alternative content)</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total admissions</b>
Cine Yorkshire	3,024	19,599	25,638	11,548	<b>59,809</b>
Shropshire Screen	3,596	24,824	60,991	26,548	<b>115,959</b>
White Horse Pictures	5,193*	17,373*	7,340	3,889	<b>33,795*</b>
<b>Total admissions</b>	<b>11,813</b>	<b>61,796</b>	<b>93,969</b>	<b>41,985</b>	<b>209,563</b>
<b>Average attendance per screening (Blu-ray)</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average attendance</b>
Cine Yorkshire	24	46	44	47	<b>45</b>
Shropshire Screen	39	44	47	39	<b>44</b>
White Horse Pictures	52*	84*	48	35	<b>60</b>
<b>Average attendance</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Average attendance per screening (DCI)</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average attendance</b>
Cine Yorkshire	16	35	45	64	<b>41</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	75	84	107	<b>88</b>
White Horse Pictures	14*	31*	32	53	<b>33</b>
<b>Average attendance</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>58</b>

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

\* includes Moviola venues

- A total of 698 different film titles were programmed, 44% of which were specialised films according to the BFI specialised film database (Table 1.3).<sup>5</sup>
- Films were booked for DCI venues on average eight weeks after their theatrical debut, and 37% of such screenings took place within six weeks of initial release (Table 1.3).

<sup>5</sup> Although there is no hard and fast definition, the BFI gives the following examples of specialised films: 'a foreign language film with subtitles; a documentary; a classic or archive film; hard to pigeonhole; a film that tells a story in an unconventional, challenging way; a film that is more experimental with cinematic techniques; a film that makes you think, that isn't purely for entertainment.' (<http://www.bfi.org.uk/film-industry/lottery-funding-distribution/specialised-films>)

**Table 1.3: Scheme film statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

<b>Film titles</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Unique titles</b>
Cine Yorkshire	31	181	174	64	<b>362</b>
Shropshire Screen	47	183	228	94	<b>436</b>
White Horse Pictures	20*	77*	124	55	<b>254*</b>
<b>Unique titles</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>323</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>698</b>
<b>% of screenings featuring specialised films</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average 2010-2013</b>
Cine Yorkshire	54%	37%	31%	30%	<b>35%</b>
Shropshire Screen	45%	50%	52%	44%	<b>49%</b>
White Horse Pictures	36%	46%	36%	63%	<b>44%</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>44%</b>
<b>Specialised film as % of all admissions</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average 2010-2013</b>
Cine Yorkshire	50%	39%	26%	35%	<b>33%</b>
Shropshire Screen	43%	49%	45%	37%	<b>44%</b>
White Horse Pictures	37%	67%	35%	60%	<b>55%</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>Average number of weeks after first release, DCI</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average 2010-2013</b>
Cine Yorkshire	5	6	7	8	<b>7</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	9	10	9	<b>10</b>
White Horse Pictures	8	7	9	10	<b>8</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>% DCI screenings within six weeks of first release</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average 2010-2013</b>
Cine Yorkshire	82%	63%	57%	36%	<b>59%</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	33%	20%	17%	<b>21%</b>
White Horse Pictures	0%	38%	29%	**	<b>31%</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>37%</b>

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

\* includes Moviola venues \*\* incomplete data

- The Scheme also supported 103 alternative content screenings over the period, which attracted 9,824 admissions with an average of 95 ticket holders per screening (Table 1.4).<sup>6</sup>

**Table 1.4: Scheme alternative content statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

<b>Alternative content screenings</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total screenings</b>
Cine Yorkshire	2	10	27	11	<b>50</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	5	32	13	<b>50</b>
White Horse Pictures	-	-	-	3	<b>-</b>
<b>Total screenings</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Alternative content admissions</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Total admissions</b>
Cine Yorkshire	224	1,108	2,694	1,122	<b>5,148</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	362	2,864	1,085	<b>4,311</b>
White Horse Pictures	-	-	-	-	<b>-</b>
<b>Total admissions</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>5,558</b>	<b>2,572</b>	<b>9,824</b>
<b>Average attendance per alt. content screening</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Average attendance</b>
Cine Yorkshire	112	111	100	102	<b>103</b>
Shropshire Screen	-	72	90	83	<b>86</b>
White Horse Pictures	-	-	-	122	<b>122</b>
<b>Average attendance</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>95</b>

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

\* includes Moviola venues

<sup>6</sup> Alternative content: a generic term for non-film content (including live transmissions) supplied to venues via satellite technology (or Blu-ray in the case of pre-recorded performances). The most common types of alternative content include stage plays, opera, concerts, ballet and sporting events.

The most commonly programmed, and the best performing, titles across the Scheme as a whole are presented in Tables 1.5 to 1.8, while Table 1.9 lists the highest grossing films at the UK box office over the same period, by way of comparison.

In line with prevailing wisdom about the kinds of films that perform well with rural audiences, British films with appeal to an older demographic dominated in terms of programming slots and box office performance:

- The majority of frequently programmed titles were British films, led by *The King's Speech*, *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* and *Made in Dagenham* (Table 1.5).
- British films also did well at the box office, accounting for 13 of the top 20 best performing titles, including the top three positions (*The King's Speech*, *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* and *Skyfall*) (Table 1.6). In comparison, only seven of the top 20 grossing films at the UK box office in the same period were British (Table 1.9).
- Six out of ten of the most programmed titles were specialised films (Table 1.7), as were half the top 20 performing titles (Table 1.8).
- There was a bias towards English language titles in the list of most programmed specialised titles, which was again dominated by British films. *Untouchable* and *The Girl Who Played with Fire* were the only foreign language titles to appear in the top 20 most programmed specialised films (Table 1.7).
- No foreign language films appeared in the top 20 best performing specialised titles (Table 1.8).

**Table 1.5: Top 20 programmed film titles, September 2010 to April 2013**

Rank	Film	Country of origin	Specialised	Screenings	Admissions	Screen avge
1	The King's Speech	UK	Yes	120	11,824	99
2	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	UK	No	96	10,450	109
3	War Horse	USA	No	70	6,182	88
4	Made in Dagenham	UK	Yes	61	4,261	70
5	Salmon Fishing in the Yemen	UK	Yes	58	4,302	74
6=	The Artist	Fra/Bel/USA	Yes	51	4,654	91
6=	Skyfall	UK/USA	No	51	6,600	129
7	Another Year	UK	Yes	46	1,683	37
8	The Iron Lady	UK	Yes	42	3,346	80
9	Jane Eyre	UK	Yes	41	2,782	68
10	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	UK/USA	No	39	1,902	49
11	The Help	USA	Yes	37	2,407	65
12=	Les Misérables	UK/USA	No	35	5,303	152
12=	My Week with Marilyn	UK	Yes	35	1,766	50
13	Anna Karenina	UK	No	34	2,727	80
14	Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy	UK	Yes	33	1,957	59
15	Ice Age: Continental Drift	USA	No	32	1,977	62
16=	The Ghost	UK/Fra/Ger	Yes	31	1,659	54
16=	Quartet	UK	Yes	31	5,231	169
17	The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey	USA/NZ	No	30	2,766	92
18	From Time to Time	UK	No	29	1,881	65
19=	Brave	USA	No	27	1,630	60
19=	Letters to Juliet	USA	No	27	1,296	48
20=	The Pirates! In an Adventure with Scientists!	UK	No	25	1,446	58
20=	Tamara Drewe	UK/USA	No	25	826	33

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

**Table 1.6: Top 20 performing film titles, September 2010 to April 2013**

Rank	Film	Country of origin	Specialised	Admissions	Screenings	Screen avge
1	The King's Speech	UK	Yes	11,824	120	99
2	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	UK	No	10,450	96	109
3	Skyfall	UK/USA	No	6,600	51	129
4	War Horse	USA	No	6,182	70	88
5	Les Misérables	UK/USA	No	5,303	35	152
6	Quartet	UK	Yes	5,231	31	169
7	The Artist	Fra/Bel/USA	Yes	4,654	51	91
8	Salmon Fishing in the Yemen	UK	Yes	4,302	58	74
9	Made in Dagenham	UK	Yes	4,261	61	70
10	The Iron Lady	UK	Yes	3,346	42	80
11	Jane Eyre	UK	Yes	2,782	41	68
12	The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey	USA/NZ	No	2,766	30	92
13	Anna Karenina	UK	No	2,727	34	80
14	Lincoln	USA	No	2,519	20	74
15	The Help	USA	Yes	2,407	37	65
16	Life of Pi	USA/Tai	Yes	2,257	20	113
17	Ice Age: Continental Drift	USA	No	1,977	32	62
18	Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy	UK	Yes	1,957	33	59
19	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	UK/USA	No	1,902	39	49
20	From Time to Time	UK	No	1,881	29	65

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

**Table 1.7: Top 20 programmed specialised film titles, September 2010 to April 2013**

Rank	Film	Country of origin	Specialised	Screenings	Admissions	Screen avge
1	The King's Speech	UK	Yes	120	11,824	99
2	Made in Dagenham	UK	Yes	61	4,261	70
3	Salmon Fishing in the Yemen	UK	Yes	58	4,302	74
4	The Artist	Fra/Bel/USA	Yes	51	4,654	91
5	Another Year	UK	Yes	46	1,683	37
6	The Iron Lady	UK	Yes	42	3,346	80
7	The Help	USA	Yes	37	2,407	65
8	My Week with Marilyn	UK	Yes	35	1,766	50
9	Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy	UK	Yes	33	1,957	59
10=	The Ghost	UK/Fra/Ger	Yes	31	1,659	54
10=	Quartet	UK	Yes	31	5,231	169
11	The Angels' Share	UK/Fra/Bel/Ita	Yes	23	840	37
12=	The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo	USA/Swe/Nor	Yes	22	1,598	73
12=	True Grit	USA	Yes	22	755	34
13	Life of Pi	USA/Tai	Yes	20	2,257	113
14	Midnight in Paris	Spa/USA	Yes	19	792	42
15	Hugo	USA	Yes	18	1,058	59
16	Oranges and Sunshine	UK/Aus	Yes	16	879	55
17=	Tortoise in Love	UK	Yes	15	446	30
17=	Untouchable	Fra	Yes	15	689	46
17=	The Way	USA/Spa	Yes	15	731	49
18=	Black Swan	USA	Yes	14	705	50
18=	The Girl Who Played With Fire	Swe/Den/Ger	Yes	14	295	21
18=	Senna	UK/Fra	Yes	14	474	34
19	Private Peaceful	UK	Yes	12	529	44
20	Shadow Dancer	UK/Ire	Yes	11	408	37

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

**Table 1.8: Top 20 performing specialised film titles, September 2010 to April 2013**

Rank	Film	Country of origin	Specialised	Admissions	Screenings	Screen avge
1	The King's Speech	UK	Yes	11,824	120	99
2	Quartet	UK	Yes	5,231	31	169
3	The Artist	Fra/Bel/USA	Yes	4,654	51	91
4	Salmon Fishing in the Yemen	UK	Yes	4,302	58	74
5	Made in Dagenham	UK	Yes	4,261	61	70
6	The Iron Lady	UK	Yes	3,346	42	80
7	The Help	USA	Yes	2,407	37	65
8	Life of Pi	USA/Tai	Yes	2,257	20	113
9	Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy	UK	Yes	1,957	33	59
10	My Week with Marilyn	UK	Yes	1,766	35	50
11	Another Year	UK	Yes	1,683	46	37
12	The Ghost	UK/Fra/Ger	Yes	1,659	31	54
13	The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo	USA/Swe/Nor	Yes	1,598	22	73
14	Hugo	USA	Yes	1,058	18	59
15	Resistance	UK	Yes	992	9	110
16	Oranges and Sunshine	UK/Aus	Yes	879	16	55
17	The Angels' Share	UK/Fra/Bel/Ita	Yes	840	23	37
18	Midnight in Paris	Spa/USA	Yes	792	19	42
19	True Grit	USA	Yes	755	22	34
20	The Way	USA/Spa	Yes	731	15	49

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

**Table 1.9: Top 20 grossing films at the UK box office, July 2010 to April 2013**

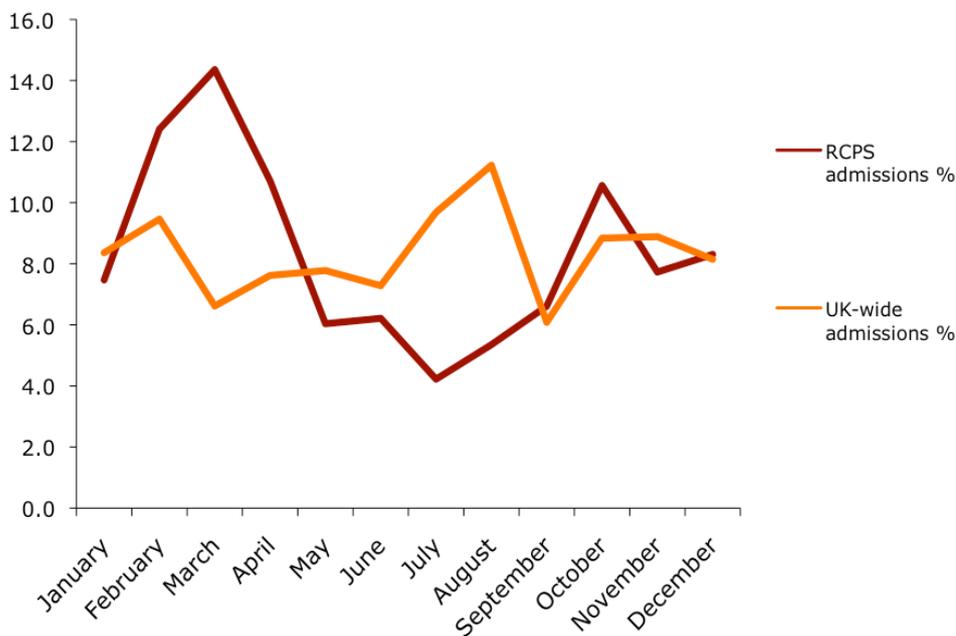
Rank	Film	Country of origin	Specialised	Box office gross (£m)	WPR*
1	Skyfall	UK	No	102	597
2	Toy Story 3	USA	No	73	569
3	Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows pt 2	UK/USA	No	73	584
4	The Dark Knight Rises	UK/USA	No	56	597
5	Harry Potter And The Deathly Hallows pt 1	UK/USA	No	52	581
6	The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey	USA/NZ	No	52	604
7	Marvel's The Avengers	USA	No	51	527
8	The King's Speech	UK	Yes	45	553
9	The Inbetweeners	UK	No	45	486
10	Les Misérables	UK/USA	No	40	600
11	Inception	USA	No	35	472
12	Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn,	USA	No	35	559
13	Pirates Of The Caribbean: On Stranger Tides	USA	No	32	569
14	The Hangover 2	USA	No	32	479
15	Shrek Forever After	USA	No	32	539
16	Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn,	USA	No	30	546
17	Ted	USA	No	30	517
18	Ice Age: Continental Drift	USA	No	30	551
19	Life Of Pi	USA/Tai	Yes	29	569
20	The Twilight Saga: Eclipse	USA	No	29	526

Source: RCPS Extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis  
 \* Number of screens at the widest point of release

The rural cinema ‘high season’ in village and community hall venues traditionally runs from September to April (limited blackout facilities and lack of volunteers and audiences during the holiday period make summer more challenging for such venues). This is reflected in the spread of monthly admissions illustrated in Figure 1.1.

- Across both full calendar years of the Scheme (2011 and 2012), the highest proportion of admissions occurred in the period between February and April, and the lowest in May to August. In contrast, the summer months recorded the highest proportion of admissions at the UK box office over the same period.

**Figure 1.1: Monthly distribution of all RCPS film admissions, January 2011 to December 2012**



Source: RCPS extranet, CAA, Bigger Picture Research analysis

- The pattern of monthly admissions for specialised films screened by the three Pilots experienced an even larger peak in February and March and a deeper trough in the summer months, as shown in Figure 1.2, reflecting the runaway success of *The King's Speech* in February and March 2011, and strong showings for *The Iron Lady* in February 2012 and *The Artist* in March 2012.

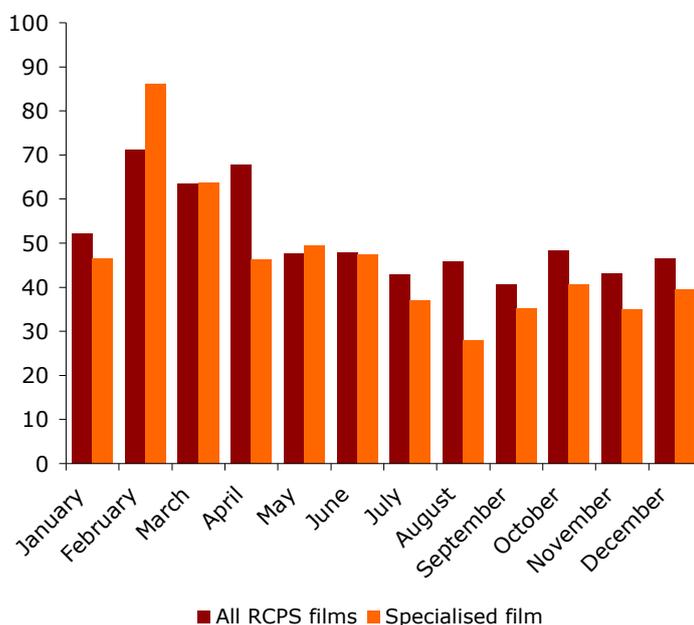
**Figure 1.2: Monthly distribution of RCPS specialised film admissions, January 2011 to December 2012**



Source: RCPS extranet, CAA, Bigger Picture Research analysis

Screen averages also varied across the year: while there was a dip in the summer months it was not so large as to indicate audiences deserted rural venues at this time. A more likely reason is the impact of film supply on attendances: the summer fall off was more pronounced for specialised films, reflecting the relative lack of popular product during the summer blockbuster season (awards contenders that prove to be popular specialised film hits generally become available in winter and spring, coinciding with the awards season).

**Figure 1.3: Monthly screen averages, September 2010 to April 2013**



Source: RCPS extranet, CAA, Bigger Picture Research analysis

Table 1.10 sheds interesting light on the impact of early release windows on the average number of admissions generated by screenings:

- DCI venues experienced very little difference in the screen averages of films programmed within six weeks of theatrical debut compared with those programmed between seven and twelve weeks after they premiered.
- The screen average was lower for those titles programmed by DCI venues between thirteen and sixteen weeks after their debut, but recovered for titles programmed seventeen or more weeks after initial release. This most likely reflects the fact that titles programmed later on in their run already had proven audience appeal, hence their selection.
- The pattern of screen averages for Blu-ray screenings suggests a strong, linear relationship between box office performance and release windows, with early releases performing better, on average, than later ones. On the face of it this contradicts anecdotal evidence about the willingness of village hall audiences to wait longer for titles to appear on Blu-ray, but closer examination reveals that standout titles, like *The King's Speech*, skewed the results. This title was available earlier than usual on Blu-ray in Wiltshire, courtesy of Moviola's deal with the distributor. Other evidence indicates that certain titles released on Blu-ray long after their theatrical debut are still capable of attracting sizeable audiences.
- Looking across all screening types, there is very little to separate the average performance of titles released up to six weeks after theatrical debut and those programmed between seven and twelve weeks after initial release, which suggests there is limited commercial advantage to be gained in securing very early releases (Table 1.10).

**Table 1.10: Screen average by type of screening and number of weeks after theatrical debut**

Weeks after debut	DCI screen ave	Blu-ray screen ave	All screen ave
Up to 6 weeks	58	81*	59
7 to 12 weeks	61	76	62
13 to 16 weeks	38	57	48
17+ weeks	53	44	45

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

\* The majority of these screenings involved *The King's Speech* and *From Time to Time* at venues programmed through Moviola, which secured early release copies of these titles on Blu-ray.

Finally, Table 1.11 provides an overview of the Scheme's income and expenditure, although it does not include match funding from local authorities, or the considerable *in kind* contribution of volunteers to each Pilot:

**Table 1.11: Scheme income and expenditure**

	Cine Yorkshire*	Shropshire Screen**	White Horse Pictures
Total income	£355,163.96 <sup>1</sup>	£413,000	£414,934
Total expenditure	£271,824.42 <sup>2</sup>	£413,000	£413,960
% of budget spent on equipment	60%	74%	52%

Sources: Cine Yorkshire, Shropshire Screen, White Horse Pictures/Creative England

**Notes**

Figures are as presented by the Pilots, whose accounting procedures may vary.

\*Figures do not include £15,000 grant from Creative England to Blaize to extend Cine Yorkshire model to East Yorkshire.

\*\*Does not include Shropshire Council capital investment of £200,000 in DCI equipment at Festival Drayton Centre, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Wem Town Hall and Kinokulture (match funding from the pilot is included in expenditure).

<sup>1</sup> As at 16 May 2013.

<sup>2</sup> £83k surplus is supporting the project into the next season until new funding is secured.

## 2. Outcomes

This section examines the Pilots' achievements against outcomes described in the *Evaluation Framework* (October 2010) and updated in the *Mid Term Review Report* (June 2012). It also considers the factors behind these achievements and the main challenges they faced.

Each assessment is presented in three parts: a brief description of the Pilots' supported activity, to help place the evaluation in context; a summary of what they delivered using quantitative indicators; and a detailed report card presenting evidence of performance against the outcomes each Pilot was working towards. The section ends by drawing all the evidence together across the Pilots to assess performance of the Scheme as a whole.

### 2.1 Cine Yorkshire

*The initial aim of the project was to increase cinema access and provision [...] Beyond that, I think there were a number of unknowns: Is there going to be an audience for it? Is there going to be ongoing interest in it, and if so can you make it sustainable?*

**Sally Joynson, Screen Yorkshire**

#### 2.1.1 Pilot overview

**Table 2.1: Demographic summary**

	North Yorkshire	England
Population	601,200	53,107,200
Area (square km)	8,038	130,279
People per sq. km	75	408
Population aged 45+ (65+)	50%	42%
BAME population (%)	3%	14%
Disabled population (%)	18%	18%

Source: ONS Census 2011, Bigger Picture Research analysis

North Yorkshire covers a large geographical area. Although it makes up 6% of England's total landmass, the area is home to only 1% of the population, equivalent to just 75 people per square kilometre. In common with other rural areas, the county's age profile is older than the national average and it has a relatively small proportion of people from Black and Minority Ethnic groups (3%). The proportion of disabled people in the population matches that of England.

At the start of the Pilot, existing cinema provision was confined to six full-time cinemas with 12 screens (in Richmond, Skipton, Thirsk, Harrogate, Malton and Scarborough); two part-time cinemas (in Scarborough and Helmsley); one mobile touring scheme (TRAMPS, based around Settle); and 13 film societies (in Appleton, Easingwold, Harrogate, Howarden, Hunmanby, Northallerton, Osmotherly, Pickering Ripon, Scarborough, Selby, Stokesley, and Whitby).

Inglis and Todd Consultancy's scoping report for the UK Film Council (*Rural Cinema Exhibition in England: Pilot research*, November 2008), described the challenges faced by existing providers:

"[T]he low population densities make sustainability [of rural cinema] hard to achieve although rural projects are generally good at securing additional resources to deliver activity. Partnerships with Arts Council England funded clients are generally successful but voluntary and funded projects don't get on well and networking can be hampered by local territorialism and historical rancour. Important areas of difficulty include the variable quality of programming skills and poor distribution of information and skills. Although not a universal problem, facilities tend to be of a lower standard than in larger urban areas."

Against this backdrop, the North Yorkshire Rural Cinema Pilot consortium, as it was originally known, drew up a three year Business Plan founded on three complementary strands of activity:

- 1) Support for a network of new community and village hall venues using Blu-ray equipment and led by Blaize Community Arts, based on their successful ArtERY Cinema model in East Riding;

*ArtERY Cinema was a precursor to the model adopted for CY 'local.' [Screen Yorkshire] initially asked if I'd provide names of contacts, that sort of thing, and then asked me to attend a couple of meetings. And then I was asked if Blaize would run the local village hall element.*

**Ellen Thorpe, Blaize**

- 2) DCI residencies lasting 5-6 months, to test the feasibility of digital cinema in high profile venues, led by the National Media Museum in Bradford.
- 3) A 'DIY' strand of providers acting independently but with support from NMM and benefiting from new Blu-ray equipment (these providers included TRAMPS, Northallerton Rotary, the Galtres Centre, Selby Globe and Screenwaves).

The DCI residency approach was favoured over a pure touring model for a number of reasons described in the Business Plan:

- High delivery costs of a touring model (including transport and van hire, training and managing freelance projectionists etc.);
- Logistical challenges, like providing secure storage for equipment;
- "Limited opportunities for evaluation and learning, given the diversity of the venues and localities involved."

The Business Plan concluded that "[t]he diversity of venues, and the unevenness in the facilities and infrastructure existing within them, poses a significant threat to our ability to secure new releases from distributors within the target 6-8 week window. Preliminary discussions with renters have revealed considerable resistance, founded on concerns around piracy, audience experience and low revenue expectations."

In terms of management and oversight of the pilot, Screen Yorkshire, the local Regional Screen Agency, acted as lead organisation, holding the contract with the UK Film Council and chairing consortium meetings. In addition to Blaize and NMM, North Yorkshire County Council was an enthusiastic partner at the time the Business Plan was drawn up, but dropped out of the consortium following a change in funding priorities (this did not signal the end of local authority involvement: both Scarborough Borough Council and Hambleton District Council were subsequently involved with the DCI strand).

A project manager, based within NMM, was recruited in June 2010 to coordinate day-to-day running of the Pilot and to manage the various partnerships involved.

*Although Screen Yorkshire was the lead organisation and the contract holder it was decided that National Media Museum would own the project arrangements and therefore the project manager. That was decided because the museum had the programming and technical expertise which could be used to the venues' benefit. The project manager would sit within the museum working with the museum technical and programme teams to deliver the overall project pulling in expertise from Blaize for the local rural delivery.*

**Kathryn Penny, National Media Museum**

Changes were made to the Business Plan during initial discussions with UK Film Council. For example, in August 2010 the decision was taken to base the DCI residency solely at the Whitby Pavilion and not the Evron Centre in Filey, due to the impracticality of transporting the equipment between the two venues and question marks over the availability of programming slots and audience reach at Filey:

*The initial idea was to tour DCI equipment. When we considered everything we realised the geography of North Yorkshire made it impractical [...] There would be a lot of stand-down time that wasn't cost-effective; technicians would be required; a vehicle and secure parking and storage – all sorts of practical issues and we ended up discussing modifications to the draft with [UK Film Council] and re-writing the bid.*

**Ellen Thorpe, Blaize**

The Business Plan originally anticipated a start date of April 2010, but in the event the Pilot launched on 1 July 2010, and the first screening supported by the consortium was hosted in September 2010, at Whitby Pavilion.

The North Yorkshire Pilot evolved constantly over the course of three years, in response to emerging opportunities, changes in the funding landscape, partners' capacity to contribute to the scheme, and in light of experience.

Changes to the Business Plan included:

- reducing the scope of the village hall strand managed by Blaize due to a lack of buy in;
- bringing forward plans to introduce alternative content screenings at the Galtres Centre (a 'DIY' partner venue originally intended to host touring DCI screenings);
- launching a web site for the Pilot as a whole (the original Business Plan stated: "There will be no over-arching website detailing all activity within the pilot. The geographic spread of activity, the number of existing local and national websites serving this purpose and the need to control costs all suggest this is not a good use of resources.")

Another change to the DCI strand took place when Whitby Pavilion, and later The Northallerton Forum, purchased its own DCI equipment with support from Scarborough Borough Council, becoming a permanent digital cinema and thereby marking a successful transition from the residency model.

In the course of the Pilot, satellite equipment for alternative content screenings was installed at the Galtres Centre, Selby Town Hall, Helmsley Arts Centre and The Forum, and the Galtres Centre hosted the first live event in October 2010.

In addition to developing regular screening activity across North Yorkshire, the Pilot supported a range of other types of provision, including:

- the first ever archive film festival in the region (Contrast/Brilliance Festival, delivered in autumn 2011);
- community cinema events hosted at the NMM in partnership with the British Federation of Film Societies (BFFS) in May and October 2012;
- support for 'DIY' promoters to attend the BFFS National Conference and ICO Screening Days.

As the Pilot moved into its final year, additional funding was secured from Creative England, Bradford City of Film and NW Vision + Media to extend activity into areas outside North Yorkshire (covering East Riding, Bradford and West Yorkshire, and the North West).

All these developments were reflected in a revised Business Plan for the period 2012-2015, issued in April 2012. The plan, carrying the Pilot's new 'Cine Yorkshire' branding, described five strands of activity developed from the original Business Plan:

- Cine Yorkshire Local (the community and village hall programme led by Blaize);
- Cine Yorkshire Digital (support for DCI led by NMM);
- Cine Yorkshire Live (support for alternative content providers);
- Cine Yorkshire Events and Outreach (encompassing other activity, like festivals);
- Cine North (the name given to extension of the Pilot to other areas in the North of England).

A summary of the final budget, including total income and expenditure, is given in Table 2.2:

**Table 2.2: Total income and expenditure, Cine Yorkshire, 2010-2013**

<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£355,163.96*</b>
<i>Government Funds (non GIA)</i>	£315,437.54
<i>Lottery Funds (NW Vision + Media)</i>	£5,000.00
<i>Donations</i>	£1,000.00
<i>Project Self Generated Income**</i>	£33,726.42
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£271,824.42***</b>
<i>Spend on equipment and materials</i>	£163,130.81 (60% of total)

Source: Cine Yorkshire

Notes

Figures do not include £15,000 grant from Creative England to Blaize to extend Cine Yorkshire model to East Yorkshire.

\*Committed as at 16 May 2013.

\*\* Local Authorities' DCI investment, Bradford City of Film, returning bonds from distributors, special events/festivals support.

\*\*\*£83k surplus is supporting the project into the new season until new funding is secured.

### 2.1.2 Cine Yorkshire in numbers

- Between September 2010 and April 2013, Cine Yorkshire supported 1,325 screenings across 95 venues, generating 59,809 admissions (Table 2.3).
- Average attendance at Blu-ray venues during this period was 45, and at DCI venues it was 41 (although it should be noted that average attendance rose strongly in DCI venues towards the end of the pilot) (Table 2.3).

**Table 2.3: Cine Yorkshire film statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	<i>Unique venues</i>
<b>Venues</b>	9	59	59	36	<b>95</b>
	2010	2011	2012	2013	<i>Total screenings</i>
<b>Screenings (films, archive &amp; alt. content)</b>	136	470	525	194	<b>1,325</b>
	2010	2011	2012	2013	<i>Total admissions</i>
<b>Admissions (films, archive &amp; alt. content)</b>	3,024	19,599	25,638	11,548	<b>59,809</b>
	2010	2011	2012	2013	<i>Average attendance</i>
<b>Average attendance per screening (Blu-ray)</b>	24	46	44	47	<b>45</b>
	2010	2011	2012	2013	<i>Average attendance</i>
<b>Average attendance per screening (DCI)</b>	16	35	45	64	<b>41</b>

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

- A total of 362 different film titles were screened, 35% of which were specialised films according to the BFI specialised film database (Table 2.4).
- Films were booked for DCI venues on average seven weeks after their theatrical debut, and 59% of such screenings took place within six weeks of initial release (Table 2.4).

**Table 2.4: Cine Yorkshire film statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	Unique titles
<b>Film titles</b>	31	181	174	64	<b>362</b>
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
<b>% of screenings featuring specialised films</b>	54%	37%	31%	30%	<b>35%</b>
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
<b>Specialised film as % of all admissions</b>	50%	39%	26%	35%	<b>33%</b>
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
<b>Average number of weeks after first release, DCI</b>	5	6	7	8	<b>7</b>
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
<b>% DCI screenings within six weeks of first release</b>	82%	63%	57%	36%	<b>59%</b>

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

- Cine Yorkshire also supported 50 alternative content screenings over the period, which attracted 5,148 admissions with an average of 103 ticket holders per screening (Table 2.5).

**Table 2.5: Cine Yorkshire alternative content statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total screenings
<b>Alternative content screenings</b>	2	10	27	11	<b>50</b>
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total admissions
<b>Alternative content admissions</b>	224	1,108	2,694	1,122	<b>5,148</b>
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average attendance
<b>Average attendance per alt. content screening</b>	112	111	100	102	<b>103</b>

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

- Table 2.6 shows that 60% of the most commonly programmed titles in the Pilot period were British films, and 40% were specialised films.
- Of the top ten performing titles, eight were British films (led by *The King's Speech*, *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* and *Skyfall*), and half were specialised films (all English language) (Table 2.7).

**Table 2.6: Top 10 programmed film titles, Cine Yorkshire, from September 2010 to April 2013**

Rank	Film	Country of origin	Specialised	Admissions	Screenings	Screen avge
1	The King's Speech	UK	Yes	2,520	32	79
2	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	UK	No	2,332	28	83
3=	Tangled	USA	No	844	19	44
3=	War Horse	UK/USA	No	1,477	19	78
4	The Iron Lady	UK	Yes	859	18	48
5	Salmon Fishing in the Yemen	UK	Yes	1,116	17	66
6=	Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked	USA	No	835	16	52
6=	Another Year	UK	Yes	178	16	11
7	Ice Age: Continental Drift	USA	No	785	15	52
8=	The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey	USA/NZ	No	1,259	14	90
8=	Made in Dagenham	UK	Yes	855	14	61
9=	The Help	USA	Yes	675	13	52
9=	Mamma Mia!	UK	No	517	13	40
9=	Rio	USA	No	265	13	20
9=	Skyfall	UK/USA	No	1,579	13	121
10=	Brave	USA	No	564	12	47
10=	Jane Eyre	UK	Yes	693	12	58
10=	Tamara Drewe	UK	No	231	12	19

Source: RCPS Extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

**Table 2.7: Top 10 performing film titles, Cine Yorkshire, September 2010 to April 2013**

Rank	Film	Country of origin	Specialised	Admissions	Screenings	Screen avge
1	The King's Speech	UK	Yes	2,520	32	79
2	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	UK	No	2,332	28	83
3	Skyfall	UK/USA	No	1,579	13	121
4	Les Misérables	UK/USA	No	1,493	10	149
5	War Horse	USA	No	1,477	19	78
6	The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey	USA/NZ	No	1,259	14	90
7	Quartet	UK	Yes	1,168	7	167
8	Salmon Fishing in the Yemen	UK	Yes	1,116	17	66
9	The Iron Lady	UK	Yes	859	18	48
10	Made in Dagenham	UK	Yes	855	14	61

Source: RCPS Extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

### 2.1.3 Cine Yorkshire outcomes

*[Achievements include] the establishment of two permanent, part-time cinemas in the DCI venues; at Whitby and Northallerton. The fact one of those is now completely self-sustaining - Whitby. I think the introduction of alternative content to venues with an appetite for it, but also less affluent areas such as Selby. I think the number and diversity of venues, and the fact that we've popped up at festivals and events in addition to the models we put in the business plan. I also think the Contrast/brilliance festival [was an achievement], the first ever archive film festival.*

**Kathryn Penny, National Media Museum**

Cine Yorkshire's principal achievements, examined from the perspective of the outcomes and goals agreed in the *RCPS Evaluation Framework* (October 2010) and revised in the *Mid Term Review* report (June 2012), were as follows:

- 'Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and skills' (outcome 1);
- 'New digital technology is trialed successfully' (outcome 2);

- 'Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation' (outcome 3);
- 'Greater programming diversity and quality (including alternative and satellite content)' (outcome 5);
- 'Viability of rural cinema business models (DCI and Blu-ray) is established' (outcome 9).

Progress was made against other outcomes in the evaluation framework, although the record of achievement was mixed or the available evidence was incomplete:

- 'Greater number of early window presentations within 4-6 weeks of theatrical debut' (outcome 4);
- 'Improved audience satisfaction' (outcome 6);
- 'Increased admissions' (outcome 7);
- 'Evidence of rural cinema pilot efficacy and impact is collected and reported' (outcome 10);
- 'Councils, local exhibitors and other key stakeholders accept evidence of economic, social, and cultural benefits of rural cinema provision' (outcome 11).

There was no evidence that audience diversity improved as a result of the Pilot (outcome 8).

Taken together, evidence from various sources shows good progress was made in pursuit of Cine Yorkshire's goal, with improved access to 'enjoyable, fulfilling, varied and high quality cinema experiences' across North Yorkshire and beyond. At this stage, the secondary goal, that 'Councils support rural cinema provision beyond the pilot', remains to be seen, although the prospect of continued local authority support looks promising.

The report card that follows details the evidence in full against each of Cine Yorkshire's outcomes.

#### Key

 = *the outcome has been achieved.*

 = *evidence indicates some success, but the outcome has not been achieved in full or evidence is incomplete.*

 = *the outcome has not been achieved or no evidence of achievement exists.*

## Cine Yorkshire report card

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>1. Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and skills</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p>	<p>A number of training sessions were supported by Cine Yorkshire and delivered by Blaize and the National Media Museum, addressing projection and technical skills, programming and marketing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The KPI Report for January 2013 states that 43 people were trained at five events as part of the Cine Yorkshire Local strand. A session in September 2010 delivered by Blaize attracted participants from eight venues, and the six feedback forms were positive about the benefits of training (see <i>Training Evaluation Forms - Analysis PJH 07 10 10.xlsx</i>). Training sessions for six more venues/providers were hosted by Blaize in September 2011 and January 2012 (see <i>Training Evaluation Forms - Analysis 2011 - 2012.xlsx</i>).</li> </ul> <p><i>'Lottery money from BFI has paid us to recruit and establish a circuit of venues, to service those venues, to deliver a programme with a menu and to deliver training and maintenance.'</i>  <b>Ellen Thorpe, Blaize</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seven volunteers at The Forum received training from the NMM projection team in July 2012, and according to feedback forms all reported the training to be 'satisfactory' or 'good'. Several additional areas of support were noted, including the need for shadowing and extra practice sessions (see <i>training-evaluation-july12.xls</i>). Another session was provided by NMM (date unknown), and the KPI Report for January 2013 notes that additional training in programming, marketing and technical aspects was due to occur in 2013.</li> <li>• Technical training by the NMM projectionist was held at Selby Town Hall and Helmsley Arts Centre in readiness for the start of satellite presentations (see KPI Report, January 2013 for details).</li> <li>• Under the DIY strand, two development events were hosted in partnership with BFFS and NMM in May and October 2012, and promoters were invited to attend BFFS and ICO screening days to further develop their familiarity with programming opportunities (KPI Report, January 2013). There is no record of the outcomes of these sessions on participants' knowledge and skills.</li> <li>• With extension of the Pilot to other areas in the North, including Bradford and East Yorkshire, Blaize delivered six more training sessions in late 2012 with funding from the Cine Yorkshire North strand.</li> </ul>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>2. New digital technology is trialled successfully</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p>A decision was taken early on by Cine Yorkshire not to trial a pure touring DCI model, instead basing its approach on short-term residencies to test the feasibility of digital cinema in high profile venues. The success of the residency model can be seen by the fact that Whitby Pavilion has since invested in permanent DCI kit, and The Forum followed suit, with local authority support in both cases.</p> <p>As observed in the <i>Mid Term Review</i> report (October 2012), the outcomes of digital technology trials were 'captured as we've gone along' (Project manager interview). A summary of technical issues across DCI, village hall and DIY venues was included in the <i>Cine Yorkshire Mid Term Report</i> (October 2011). The Hambleton Forum case study, in Appendix 6, describes some of the specific technical challenges they faced, including changing bulbs in a securely enclosed DCI projector, and sound proofing the projector using an enclosure designed by NMM.</p> <p>In addition, Cine Yorkshire recorded village hall promoters' feedback in a spreadsheet, including any technical problems encountered as new kit was put through its paces (see <i>Analysis NYDC 2010- 2011 PJH.xls</i> and <i>CY 2011-2012 PJH 10.01.12.xls</i>).</p> <p>Initial site surveys were conducted at the two DCI venues and three satellite venues, recording in detail the technical requirements of each venue. As noted in the <i>Mid Term Review</i> report, 'the project management team now has a good sense of the sort of questions to use in site surveys, and the range of options available to different venues.' (October 2012).</p>
<p><b>3. Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p>Audience surveys were undertaken at Whitby and The Forum DCIs, and at some village halls. Results indicate sound and auditorium quality were rated highly by the majority of respondents (see test screening survey, Whitby) and nearly all respondents rated 'projection &amp; sound' as high quality (see Screenwaves survey).</p> <p>The Forum audience survey conducted in March and April 2012 (64 respondents) showed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 78% described sound quality as excellent (48%) or good (30%);</li> <li>• 78% said the auditorium was excellent (30%) or good (48%);</li> <li>• 98% of respondents would recommend the Forum to others.</li> </ul> <p>Throughout the Pilot, screening visits were undertaken at a number of venues by the project management team. Informal notes were taken of visits, and feedback was broadly positive.</p> <p>Feedback from Cine Yorkshire Local promoters also indicates a high level of satisfaction with the standards of presentation achieved in village and community halls supported by Cine Yorkshire:</p> <p><i>'The wide screen gave the whole evening a proper cinema feel and the audience enjoyed the film immensely.'</i></p> <p><i>'[The] quality of the kit was especially appreciated and commented on by a the majority of the audience.'</i></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>4. Greater number of early window presentations within 4-6 weeks of theatrical debut</b></p>		<p>Over the course of the Pilot, the average number of weeks after theatrical debut that DCI venues booked new releases actually increased, from five weeks in 2010 to eight weeks in the first quarter of 2013. For the Pilot period as a whole, the average window for DCI bookings of first run films was seven weeks, which is just outside the four to six weeks window targeted. Nonetheless, 59% of first run DCI bookings occurred with six weeks of their theatrical debut.</p> <p>According to the KPI Report, January 2013, '[b]oth [The Forum] and [Whitby Pavilion] report continuing difficulties accessing titles inside 6 [week] window. Feedback from distributors relates to audience figures.'</p>
<p><b>5. Greater programming diversity and quality (incl. alternative &amp; satellite content)</b></p>		<p>The Programming Advisory Panel was not convened as planned. Nonetheless, the Cine Yorkshire project manager worked closely with the National Media Museum programmer and others (e.g. Reel Solutions) to inform programming decisions. Evidence of programming diversity and quality comes from analysis of records held on the RCPS extranet, and the findings were encouraging:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Across Cine Yorkshire supported venues, 362 unique film titles were programmed up to 14 April 2013, and 161 of these (44%) were screened only once. Just over one third (35%) of all titles were specialised according to BFI's definition.</li> <li>• As shown in Table 2.14, 60% of the most frequently programmed titles in the pilot period were British films, and 40% were specialised films.</li> <li>• Of the ten best performing titles, eight were British films (led by <i>The King's Speech</i>, <i>The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel</i> and <i>Skyfall</i>), and half were specialised films (all English language) (Table 2.15).</li> <li>• Satellite content was screened at four venues (Galtres Centre, Helmsley Arts, Hambleton Forum and Selby Town Hall), generating 5,148 admissions by 14 April 2013 (with an average audience size of 103 admissions).</li> <li>• Other programming diversity came from partnerships with arts and music festivals, and through Contrast/Brilliance, the archive film festival.</li> </ul> <p>Despite experimenting with different types of programming, the project management team recognised the importance of mainstream films for the commercial viability of rural exhibition:</p> <p><i>'[The] appetite from Cine Yorkshire audiences so far has been largely mainstream. [If] we can build an appetite for film in general [...] then we're developing an audience where we can test specialised film [...] but that will come in time. There's definitely an appetite out there for this project, but new venues are still going to want largely mainstream content.'</i></p> <p><b>Kathryn Penny, National Media Museum</b></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>6. Improved audience satisfaction</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p>It is not possible to gauge improvement over time in audience satisfaction, as audience surveys were generally not repeated and no baseline measures were established.</p> <p>However, there is evidence of good levels of audience satisfaction overall, derived from audience survey results and village hall promoters' feedback (see <i>Analysis NYDC 2010- 2011 PJH.xls</i>, <i>CY 2011-2012 PJH 10.01.12.xls</i>, and <i>Cine Yorkshire Audience Surveys - 19 12 2012.xls</i>):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The majority of respondents to the Cine North survey said the screening represented 'Good value', and all of those asked at one screening said they would attend again. Constructive comments about the screening experience were also recorded, including a few suggestions to improve seating and acoustics.</li> <li>• Nearly all respondents said they would like to attend another Screenwaves screening, and 87% thought the screening represented good value. 70% said attendance had 're-ignited their interest in film and cinemagoing'.</li> <li>• 19 out of 20 (95%) respondents to the Whitby test screening survey said they would recommend the cinema to others. Qualitative feedback was broadly positive.</li> <li>• Four Cine Yorkshire Local promoters ran surveys in 2012, with a total of 56 respondents. 100% said they would come to a screening again. Average audience satisfaction with the film was 89%. All respondents thought the screening represented good value.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7. Increased admissions</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p>Between September 2010 and April 2013, Cine Yorkshire venues attracted 59,809 admissions. It goes without saying that admissions increased in venues that started screening films for the first time through the Cine Yorkshire Pilot, and also in those venues that increased the number and frequency of screenings. For example, Whitby Pavilion recorded 7,495 admissions in 2011, rising to 8,526 in 2012.</p> <p>Screen averages for Blu-ray venues stayed a much the same level over the pilot period, but rose sharply for DCI screenings (from 35 in 2011 to 64 in the first quarter of 2013).</p> <p>Exactly how many new visitors attended screenings during the Pilot period is impossible to say, as the information was not collected, although some evidence exists. For example, the audience survey conducted by Hambleton Forum in July 2012 found that 31% of respondents were new to the venue, compared with 21% at the time of the Whitby Pavilion test screening survey and 42% of Screenwaves respondents.</p> <p>Anecdotal evidence suggests admissions have increased overall in Blu-ray venues supported by Blaize: <i>'Our numbers of screenings and audiences have increased. It's never going to be vast but in terms of engagement, if you count the number of villages and total audience, it's significant.'</i>  <b>Ellen Thorpe, Blaize</b></p> <p>One final source of evidence, the BFI/DDP <i>Rural Pilot Programme Audience Research</i> project (April 2013), reported that 84% of Cine Yorkshire respondents were now watching more films than the year before.</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>8. Improved audience diversity</b></p>		<p>Audience surveys conducted by Cine Yorkshire venues collected information about respondents' gender and age but no data was gathered about ethnicity or disability. As baseline metrics were not established, it is not possible to measure improvements in audience diversity over time.</p> <p>The only conclusion to draw from the evidence that exists is that audiences tended to reflect the older demographic found in North Yorkshire. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 76% of audiences for Cine North screenings were aged 50+, 19% were aged 25-50;</li> <li>• 71% of respondents to the Whitby DCI test screening survey were aged 49+;</li> <li>• 56% of Cine Yorkshire respondents to the BFI/DDP Rural Pilot Programme Audience Research (April 2013) were aged 45+.</li> </ul> <p><i>'It was interesting, when we did King Lear and it was sold out it came from the Donmar in London, [...] and one of [our audience] said "Have you noticed that the audience in London is between 25-35 and the audience here is between 65-85?" and that is pretty correct. We don't attract a lot of young people. We try to interest the schools, certainly the secondary school, and it's a waste of time, they're not interested.'</i></p> <p><b>Walter Rinaldi Butcher, Galtres Centre</b></p>
<p><b>9. Viability of rural cinema business models (DCI and Blu-ray) is established</b></p>		<p>A number of different models were tested, from DCI residencies, permanent DCI installations supported by local authorities, satellite installations, Blu-ray screening programmes in community and village halls supported by Blaize, pop-up screenings in non-traditional venues and festival-based events.</p> <p><i>'There are various models within the model, [and] that's a good thing. We have various ways of working we can adapt to each venue depending on what they've got already and what they want.'</i></p> <p><b>Kathryn Penny, National Media Museum</b></p> <p>In terms of DCI, Cine Yorkshire's <i>Mid Project Review report</i> (October 2011) noted that 'the establishing of a permanent digital cinema in Whitby [...] demonstrates the viability of the business model originally proposed; is sustainable in the long term without continued investment from Cine Yorkshire; has succeeded in gaining the direct support of the local authority.'</p> <p>For Blu-ray based models, some degree of external support is likely to be needed in the long-term. According to the project manager, <i>'this is a delivery model that needs to be done for reasons other than profit or sustainability [...] but it is never going to work without some sort of subsidy or sponsorship.'</i> As further evidence of business model development, the <i>Mid Project Review report</i> (October 2011) recommended drafting a business plan for the village hall programme, to explore income generation from 'paying environments such as independent schools, festivals and caravan parks.'</p> <p>Regardless of the financial sustainability of individual Blu-ray venues, there is strong demand for support to establish new providers: <i>'We have a waiting list [...] There's evidence of a hunger to have this activity in village halls.'</i></p> <p><b>Ellen Thorpe, Blaize</b></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>10. Evidence of rural cinema pilot efficacy and impact is collected and reported</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p>	<p>For advocacy purposes, evidence of Pilot efficacy and impact was gathered in various ways, including audience surveys, promoters' and venue managers' feedback, and box office reporting.</p> <p>Evidence of the value of rural cinema to individuals, and its wider economic and social benefits, was not collected in any great detail, although promoter feedback provided positive examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>'Most want the screenings to continue since many don't get the opportunity to go to cinemas - some are in their 70's, 80's 90's and don't drive and one person has Tourette's so hasn't been to a regular cinema since 1997.'</i></li> <li>• <i>'It was a great success because we promoted the film as the focus of a general village event – the local coffee shop provided 'nibbles, the Post Office sold tickets and the corner shop supplied bar stock.'</i></li> <li>• <i>'The film went well. It was successful because it was a social event for the village. Adults and children dressed up and we spent time talking afterwards.'</i></li> <li>• <i>'This event was a huge success for the school and for the PTA who organised it. Unlike other events, which are often aimed at generating funds for the school or local charities, the aim of this event was purely so that the children would have a good time.'</i></li> <li>• <i>'Excellent turnout. A social, cultural and financial success. Thoroughly enjoyed by everyone I spoke to.'</i></li> </ul> <p>The cultural value of satellite screenings at the Galtres Centre was described by Walter Rinaldi Butcher in the following terms:</p> <p><i>'The project, by bringing satellite shows, has made an enormous difference to the cultural aspect of Easingwold and district. This has certainly improved social activity especially with the older ladies and gentlemen of the area. Before to see these performances our audience would have to travel to York.'</i></p> <p>Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council's Business and Community Officer, spoke in interview about the positive impact of DCI screenings at The Forum:</p> <p><i>'Not only is it providing entertainment it is also fostering a great deal of community spirit and engagement. This is one impact that we hadn't fully anticipated from the cinema but has been very welcome as we have been working to establish a new community-led, not-for-profit company to operate the cinema and the venue that hosts it. The addition of the cinema has been a real boon to the local community and will significantly contribute to the venue's long-term sustainability.'</i></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>11. Councils, local exhibitors and other key stakeholders accept evidence of economic, social and cultural benefits of rural cinema provision</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p>	<p>As noted in the <i>Mid Term Review</i> report (October 2012), against a backdrop of local authority spending cuts, 'good working relations have been established with district, town and parish councils according to the project manager. Councils have been involved closely in DCI venue developments. Similarly, Selby town council has made financial and time commitments to the pilot.'</p> <p>Both Scarborough Council and Hambleton District Council made substantial investment in permanent DCI venues at Whitby Pavilion and The Forum, which is testament to their understanding of the benefits of rural cinema provision in high profile venues. This would not have happened without Cine Yorkshire involvement:</p> <p><i>'[G]oing into Whitby Pavilion and Hambleton Forum for a period of about a year, supporting them to set it up, attract an audience, programme, market, and then [the councils] said: ok we'll invest and support this model to run independently with our support.'</i></p> <p><b>Rachel McWatt, Cine Yorkshire</b></p> <p><i>'This project made it possible for local councils and other organisations to get involved in cinema provision fairly easily and without the risks involved with trying to do it themselves without the necessary background and resources. It allowed them to do something that might not have been top of their list of priorities. It demonstrated that there was an audience for film and that you could attract different types of audiences- families, young people, and fans of more specialist films.'</i></p> <p><b>Sally Joynson, Screen Yorkshire</b></p> <p>Convincing other local exhibitors of the Pilot's benefits was less successful, as one member of the project management team explained in interview:</p> <p><i>'We tried to consult [local exhibitors] and get them involved but we did have resistance from Richmond Station who blocked us setting up a screen at Catterick Garrison [...] They blocked that, it's completely understandable because we agreed we wouldn't compete with any existing provision but in my opinion it might have been a bit short-sighted. We also had some resistance from The Ritz at Thirsk, so managing relationships with the existing theatrical providers was a challenge.'</i></p> <p><b>Kathryn Penny, National Media Museum</b></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>Goal 1: Rural communities in Yorkshire have ready access to an enjoyable, fulfilling, varied and high quality cinema experience locally</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p><i>'North Yorkshire is the largest county in England, it's a huge area. What we've achieved with the project, particularly Cine Yorkshire Local (which I'm involved with), is significant. There was hardly any activity in rural North Yorkshire before and there is now.'</i></p> <p><b>Ellen Thorpe, Blaize</b></p> <p>Taken altogether, the evidence available to this evaluation paints a positive picture of increased film provision across North Yorkshire (and neighbouring areas), alongside the presence of diverse programming and high standards of presentation.</p> <p>As the Pilot period comes to an end, the project management team plans to use its reserves from self-generated income to present an autumn season and maintain the Cine Yorkshire Local programme until new funding streams become available. In particular they are looking to develop their model based on sharing Blu-ray kit among up to ten venues, to provide cost-effective support to community and village hall promoters.</p>
<p><b>Goal 2: Councils support rural cinema provision beyond the pilot</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p>It remains to be seen whether councils in North Yorkshire will support rural cinema provision once the Pilot has finished, but evidence suggests support is likely to continue for the DCI and satellite venues that already enjoy it.</p>

## 2.2 Shropshire Screen

*Shropshire is a very rural county and transport links are not all that healthy [...] Driving to Birmingham or Manchester, or going south to Hereford, isn't something you do often. But you're very happy to drive to the next village [...] So culture is finding its way to the people whereas before people were having to find their way to culture.*  
**Joy Durrant, Arts Development Team, Shropshire Council**

### 2.2.1 Pilot overview

**Table 2.8: Demographic summary**

	<b>Shropshire*</b>	<b>England</b>
Population	307,100	53,107,200
Area (square km)	3,197	130,279
People per sq. km	96	408
Population aged 45+	49%	42%
BAME population (%)	2%	14%
Disabled population (%)	19%	18%

Source: ONS Census 2011, Bigger Picture Research analysis

\* Shropshire Unitary Authority

Shropshire is a predominantly rural English county, smaller than North Yorkshire but sparsely populated with an older demographic and relatively low proportion of people from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds.

According to the Shropshire Screen Business Plan prepared in 2010, cinema provision at the start of the Pilot included three full-time cinemas with 12 screens (in the larger settlements of Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth) and two part-time screens (at the Festival Drayton Centre and Ludlow Assembly Rooms). In addition, 35mm projection had recently started at Wem Town Hall.

The Business Plan also identified five 'community cinema providers', including Flicks in the Sticks (a touring scheme run by Arts Alive, supporting a network of 29 venues in the county); Borderlines Film Festival; DASH (Disability Arts in Shropshire); Reels on Wheels (a commercial touring service using 35mm projection); and Bishops Castle Film Society.

Unlike in North Yorkshire, the presence of established rural operators like Flicks in the Sticks and Borderlines Film Festival provided a distinctive base upon which to build a consortium approach:

*While Shropshire has a level of cinema provision that is well below the English average, with very high pockets of deprivation in the north and around Oswestry, it does have a strong infrastructure of multi-purpose arts centres, touring circuits and an annual rural film festival, with most of the organisations reliant on committed and extensive volunteer input to deliver their services. Like most rural providers they struggle with limited revenue and capital funds, and therefore value and welcome this new investment into the county, seeing it as an exceptional opportunity to increase venues, screening activity and audiences.*

**Shropshire Screen Business Plan, January 2010**

Alongside Borderlines Film Festival and Flicks in the Sticks, the consortium included DASH, Festival Drayton Centre, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Reels on Wheels and Wem Town Hall. Thomas Adams School, which manages Wem Town Hall, acted as lead organisation and the consortium had two strategic partners: Screen WM (the local Regional Screen Agency at the time) and Shropshire Council.

*'We had a very different model compared to the other Pilots in that we were operating as individual cinema providers, touring providers, and a festival coming together. There wasn't a pre-established structure in the same way as for the other two Pilots that were led by the screen agencies. So there wasn't a hierarchy, and as a result the processes of decision making, especially in the early days, was very much about bringing consensus amongst the organisations.'*

**Naomi Vera-Sanso, Borderlines Film Festival and Shropshire Screen**

The original plan for Shropshire Screen involved a large scale programme of capital investment, boosting local infrastructure with the provision of touring DCI equipment, portable and installed Secureblu kit (a form of Blu-ray based on Sony PS3 technology, with additional security), satellite installations for alternative content and equipment upgrades in existing venues and village halls.

Technical training was proposed to complement the equipment upgrades, along with training in customer care and front of house duties (principally aimed at volunteers).

Audience development was to be delivered through a programme of film education for under 19s ('a distinguishing feature of our pilot', according to the Business Plan), including touring DCI kit to schools in the county based on Reels on Wheels's successful Staffordshire model. A strand of activity aimed at improving access to rural cinema for disabled audiences was also planned with DASH's involvement. Annual revenue funding through the Pilot period enabled Borderlines Film Festival to extend its profile and reach across the county. Drawing all these threads together, the Shropshire Screen web site offered 'a one-stop shop for rurally based cinemagoers in the county.'

Another characteristic of the Shropshire Screen Pilot was the opportunity it provided for partnership working on a larger scale than was previously possible:

*[T]his will be the first time that all the organisations have collaborated on a county wide project over such a sustained period. The pilot project will enable us to undertake joint programming and training activities, develop an umbrella brand for rural cinema in Shropshire, work together on audience development and film education activities, and market more extensively throughout the county using web-based and social media tools.*

**Shropshire Screen Business Plan, January 2010**

Unfortunately, the high proportion of consortium members in receipt of public money meant that Shropshire Screen was not immune to Government and local authority spending cuts. DASH was forced to depart the Pilot in January 2012 following loss of its ACE RFO status (Ludlow Assembly Rooms suffered similarly, but continued to participate with local authority investment in DCI). Meanwhile Flicks in the Sticks and Wem Town Hall saw their revenue funding decrease during the Pilot period.

*We've hit some very unstable economic times, with local authority cuts. [A]t the moment we haven't had much more than 10% [cut], whereas some very good organisations in the county have been cut altogether.*

**Ian Kerry, Flicks in the Sticks**

*We've placed the onus very much on consortium members to get on and deliver, and some of them have struggled because of the economic climate. DASH, for example, [...] felt they had to pull back from the Pilot. What's difficult is when the economic and funding climate is shifting so dramatically for some of the organisations [and] their priority has to be survival.*

**Sue Gainsborough, Wem Town Hall and Shropshire Screen**

Further turbulence was caused by changes in education funding and policy priorities, which affected Thomas Adams School's ambitions for the Pilot (and put paid to the planned Film Education Network), alongside Screen WM's demise with the reorganisation of Regional Screen Agency activity under Creative England.

Start of the Pilot was delayed by a longer than expected procurement process and it became clear that Secureblu was not a viable technology due to a lack of uptake by the major Studios. In the event, the equipment specification required by the UK Film Council was higher than anticipated, which meant that less high definition kit could be purchased for Flicks in the Sticks venues.

Originally scheduled for July 2010, there was a soft launch in September 2010 with the Blu-ray screening programme, followed in May 2011 by an official launch when the Shropshire Screen web site went live. Reels on Wheels began DCI screenings in January 2011, followed by Festival Drayton Centre in May 2011 and Ludlow Assembly Rooms in December 2011. Kinokulture, a new consortium member operating from The Attfield Theatre in Oswestry, started DCI screenings and live satellite performances under the Pilot in January 2013, followed by Wem Town Hall in February 2013.

Demand for DCI screenings in Shropshire schools proved weaker than anticipated, and there was no take up of the Reels on Wheels touring offer, which may have been due to the presence of Filmclub in the county:

*Because we do lots of work in schools, [...] they all said you'll be able to do the schools in Shropshire. We sent all the schools an email and said "This term we're going to show you X, Y and Z", but no-one wanted it in Shropshire. Not a single school. I think it's because of film clubs and the fact now that most schools have their own DVD so why pay us to come in when they could show a DVD illegally and no one knows they've done it? I think it's strange that we can do all the other counties, but in Shropshire nobody wanted it.*

**Robert Johnson, Reels on Wheels**

Despite this, a number of film education activities took place at Pilot venues, including screenings programmed by young people; filmmaking, animation and screenwriting workshops; and the Media Arts Fair. This activity was linked to funding from Creative England, First Light, Shropshire Council and the BFI rather than directly through Shropshire Screen, enabling the establishment of Adventures into Alternative Cinema (a season of events around specialised film for young people) and the involvement of Thomas Adams School/ Wem Town Hall in delivering the BFI Film Academy for the West Midlands.

*A distinctive feature of this pilot was the under 19's film education offer led by Thomas Adams School and Wem Town Hall, (previously the RSA's sub-regional film education hub). During the life of the pilot the many funding changes impacted significantly on the partnership's capacity to deliver (loss of specialist schools funding for media arts and loss of revenue support from RSA in particular). The programme has used its track record to continue to attract film education investment from Creative England, First Light, the local authority, etc. and has established new partnerships with a view to ongoing delivery.*

**KPI Report, May 2013**

In total, the Pilot invested in one touring DCI system with 3D capabilities operated by Reels on Wheels, which recruited ten new rural venues in the county; four permanent DCI installations; three touring Blu-ray kits operated by Flicks in the Sticks; equipment upgrades in a number of other community and village hall venues; and six satellite installations for alternative content.

Spending on equipment totalled £304,934 (excluding match funding), equivalent to 74% of the Pilot's total expenditure (Table 2.9):

**Table 2.9: Total income and expenditure, Shropshire Screen, 2010-2013**

<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£413,000</b>
UK Film Council Lottery	£385,000
Shropshire Council	£20,000
Flicks venues	£5,000
Screen West Midlands	£3,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£413,000</b>
Spend on equipment and site surveys	£304,934 (74% of total)

Source: Shropshire Screen

Notes

Does not include Shropshire Council capital investment of £200,000 in DCI equipment at Festival Drayton Centre, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, Wem Town Hall and Kinokulture (match funding from the pilot is included in expenditure).

## 2.2.2 Shropshire Screen in numbers

- Shropshire Screen supported 1,812 screenings between September 2010 and April 2013, across 59 venues, which generated 115,959 admissions (Table 2.10).
- Average attendance at Blu-ray venues during this period stood at 44, and at DCI venues it was 88, rising consistently throughout the Pilot (Table 2.10).

**Table 2.10: Shropshire Screen summary statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	Unique venues
Venues	33	49	54	46	59
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total screenings
Screenings (films, archive & alternative content)	94	483	891	344	1,812
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total admissions
Admissions (films, archive & alternative content)	3,596	24,824	60,991	26,548	115,959
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average attendance
Average attendance per screening (Blu-ray)	39	44	47	39	44
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average attendance
Average attendance per screening (DCI)	-	75	84	107	88

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

- A total of 436 different film titles were screened, and nearly half (49%) were specialised films according to the BFI specialised film database (Table 2.11).
- Shropshire's DCI venues secured film bookings on average ten weeks after their theatrical debut, and 21% of such screenings took place within six weeks of initial release (Table 2.11).

**Table 2.11: Shropshire Screen film statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	Unique titles
Film titles	47	183	228	94	436
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
% of screenings featuring specialised films	45%	50%	52%	44%	49%
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
Specialised film as % of all admissions	43%	49%	45%	37%	44%
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
Average number of weeks after first release, DCI	-	9	10	9	10
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
% DCI screenings within six weeks of first release	-	33%	20%	17%	21%

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

- Shropshire Screen supported 50 alternative content screenings over the period, which attracted 4,311 admissions with an average of 86 ticket holders per screening (Table 2.12).

**Table 2.12: Shropshire Screen alternative content statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total screenings
Alternative content screenings	-	5	32	13	50
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total admissions
Alternative content admissions	-	362	2,864	1,085	4,311
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average attendance per alt. content screening
Average attendance per alt. content screening	-	72	90	83	86

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

- Of the most commonly programmed titles, the majority were British and specialised films, led by *The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel* (Table 2.13).
- British and specialised films performed just as well at the box office, with healthy screen averages (Table 2.14).

**Table 2.13: Top 10 programmed film titles, Shropshire Screen, September 2010 to April 2013**

Rank	Film	Country of origin	Specialised	Admissions	Screenings	Screen avge
1	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	UK	No	7,559	63	120
2	War Horse	USA	No	4,180	45	93
3	Salmon Fishing in the Yemen	UK	Yes	2,899	37	78
4	The Artist	Fra/Bel/USA	Yes	3,838	36	107
5=	The King's Speech	UK	Yes	2,485	34	73
5=	Skyfall	UK/USA	No	4,536	34	133
6	Jane Eyre	UK	Yes	1,989	28	71
7=	Made in Dagenham	UK	Yes	1,699	26	65
7=	My Week with Marilyn	UK	Yes	1,427	26	55
8=	Anna Karenina	UK	No	1,794	23	78
8=	Les Misérables	UK/USA	No	3,625	23	158
9	Quartet	UK	Yes	3,813	22	173
10	Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy	UK	Yes	1,344	21	64

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

**Table 2.14: Top 10 performing film titles, Shropshire Screen, September 2010 to April 2013**

Rank	Film	Country of origin	Specialised	Admissions	Screenings	Screen avge
1	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	UK	No	7,559	63	120
2	Skyfall	UK/USA	No	4,536	34	133
3	War Horse	USA	No	4,180	45	93
4	The Artist	Fra/Bel/USA	Yes	3,838	36	107
5	Quartet	UK	Yes	3,813	22	173
6	Les Misérables	UK/USA	No	3,625	23	158
7	Salmon Fishing in the Yemen	UK	Yes	2,899	37	78
8	The King's Speech	UK	Yes	2,485	34	73
9	The Iron Lady	UK	Yes	2,159	20	108
10	Jane Eyre	UK	Yes	1,989	28	71

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

### 2.2.3 Shropshire Screen outcomes

*[T]here does seem to be something wonderfully random about going to a village hall in the middle of south Shropshire and watching a film about life in South America or another part of the world.*

**Joy Durrant, Arts Development Team, Shropshire Council**

Shropshire Screen's main achievements, judged against the outcomes and goals agreed in the *RCPS Evaluation Framework* (October 2010) and revised in the *Mid Term Review* report (June 2012), were as follows:

- 'Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and skills' (outcome 1);
- 'Increased number of cinema venues and screenings' (outcome 2);
- 'Pilot has strategic fit with Film: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Literacy, Screen Heritage, Cultural Olympiad and Big Society agendas' (outcome 5);
- 'Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation' (outcome 7);
- 'Greater programming diversity and quality (including first run films, 3D films and alternative content)' (outcome 9);
- 'Increased admissions' (outcome 13);
- 'Viability of rural cinema business models is established' (outcome 16);
- 'Councils, local authorities and other key stakeholders accept evidence of economic, social, cultural, health and educational benefits of rural cinema provision' (outcome 17).

Progress was made against other outcomes, although the record of achievement was mixed or the evidence was incomplete:

- 'Greater openness and closer working ties between delivery partners' (outcome 3);
- 'County-wide audience development plan is produced for under 19s' (outcome 4);
- 'Venues and touring schemes have improved capacity and infrastructure' (outcome 6);
- 'Demand for early window releases is established' (outcome 8);
- 'High awareness among rural communities of umbrella brand for rural cinema in Shropshire' (outcome 10);
- 'Teachers have enhanced knowledge and skills to develop film education offer' (outcome 11);
- 'Improved audience satisfaction' (outcome 12);
- 'More young people, family audiences and disabled people attend screenings' (outcome 14);
- 'Evidence of rural cinema pilot efficacy and impact is collected and reported' (outcome 15).

Considered in the round, evidence available to this evaluation indicates that rural cinema provision increased significantly in Shropshire, and viable business models were developed in DCI venues and those with satellite installations. The installation of high definition equipment in village hall venues reduced Flicks in the Sticks's running costs, enabling extension of the touring programme to more venues.

*In terms of delivering equipment to village halls [...] and making sure they're well equipped training-wise, confidence-wise, then all that has been a success without any shadow of doubt. Without it [...] we couldn't have afforded to tour to that many venues.*

**Ian Kerry, Flicks in the Sticks**

However, public spending cuts affecting key consortium members places in question the sustainability of co-ordinated provision enjoyed under the Pilot without additional, long-term revenue funding.

*[I don't feel optimistic] for culture generally. I think the pressure is so much on our councils and local government to trim back and trim back that now changing how services are looked at in their entirety might happen. And I suspect it's the same all around the country.*

**Joy Durrant, Arts Development Team, Shropshire Council**

The report card that follows details the evidence in full against each of Shropshire Screen's outcomes.

Key

-  = *the outcome has been achieved.*
-  = *evidence indicates some success, but the outcome has not been achieved in full or evidence is incomplete.*
-  = *the outcome has not been achieved or no evidence of achievement exists.*

## Shropshire Screen report card

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>1. Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge &amp; skills</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p>The project manager collected evidence for this outcome through consortium meetings, telephone interviews with partners and a staff/volunteer audit conducted by each venue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A spreadsheet was compiled listing results of the audit for each venue (see 'monitoring activity plan and audits.xls'). Staff/volunteer skills and knowledge were assessed in the following areas: operational, technical, health &amp; safety; customer services; equality and diversity awareness; programming; marketing; social media; and audience development.</li> <li>• Training sessions were subsequently delivered in response to the audit findings.</li> <li>• According to the project manager, informal feedback from venues about training was positive.</li> </ul> <p><i>'There were a lot of nerves at the start of the satellite screenings; things going wrong on the night. But we did a fair amount of training [...] we had some very good training sessions. Not just technical but customer care, which has really helped promoters and their confidence.'</i></p> <p><b>Ian Kerry, Flicks in the Sticks</b></p>
<p><b>2. Increased number of cinema venues and screenings</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p>Although the Pilot took longer than expected to begin operations, KPI reporting and analysis of records held on the RCPS extranet reveals a substantial increase in both the number of venues and screenings as a result of the Pilot. In total, 59 venues took part, programming 1,812 screenings to 14 April 2013.</p> <p>Of these, 14 were new screening venues (10 x Flicks in the Sticks, 4 x Reels on Wheels), while the remainder benefited from enhanced provision through DCI (touring and fixed), Blu-ray and satellite installations. As a result of expansion into new venues, there were 867 new screenings in Shropshire. These figures are higher than the revised targets agreed with BFI in October 2011. Take up of touring DCI by Flicks in the Sticks promoters would have been higher but some venues had difficulty getting the projector through their doors.</p> <p><i>'Through the bid we obviously got a fair amount of capital money [...] That's allowed us to install equipment into a number of our venues [...] We used to tour with a technician and equipment [...] and three or four venues had done quite well and we'd got some capital equipment mainly from Awards for All. [...] Putting that kit into those halls had made a big difference [to them] and to our running costs, because it's obviously much cheaper to provide film in a village hall with its own equipment. It's also enhanced a lot of screenings, so where we were only using stereo sound and perhaps a projector that wasn't quite up to the job [...] it has allowed us to do Blu-ray [so] it's a brighter, clearer picture. But the sound is the biggest [area of improvement]. And of course satellite, which has been a huge success in three of our venues.'</i></p> <p><b>Ian Kerry, Flicks in the Sticks</b></p> <p>Festival Drayton Centre offers a useful insight into the impact of Shropshire Screen investment, matched by funding from the local authority. Prior to the Pilot the Centre operated as a part-time cinema with 35mm projection. In the period between May 2009 and March 2011 (just before DCI screenings started) the venue hosted 182 screenings. This increased by 50% to 273 DCI screenings for the same period between May 2011 and March 2013.</p> <p>The KPI Report for May 2013 also notes, "Borderlines Film Festival screenings have significantly increased across Shropshire, raising the profile to audiences and future investors".</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>3. Greater openness and closer working ties between delivery partners</b></p>		<p>This outcome was added at the time of the <i>Mid Term Review</i> report (June 2012) in recognition of the importance placed by the Consortium on partnership working.</p> <p>According to the consortium members interviewed for this evaluation (Borderlines Film Festival, Wem Town Hall, Flicks in the Sticks and Reels on Wheels), good working relations were established for the most part.</p> <p><i>'[Involvement in Shropshire Screen] has strengthened our relationship with different venues [...] so we definitely have stronger relationships with Wem Town Hall, with KinoKulture [and] stronger links with Flicks in the Sticks. We also worked with Festival Market Drayton who we've not worked with before. And the fact that some market town venues have got DCI kits means [...] we can offer more current releases than just working on DVD and Blu-ray.'</i> <b>Naomi Vera-Sanso, Borderlines Film Festival and Shropshire Screen</b></p> <p>However, competitive tensions, notably between Reels on Wheels and Flicks in the Sticks, remained, and some degree of frustration was felt within the Consortium around information sharing by Reels on Wheels.</p> <p><i>'Legacy – relationships between promoters have improved with joint working and inter-organisation information, skill and resource sharing. Shropshire Screen will continue to operate as a network supporting film exhibition and film education. The terms of reference and make up of the project board will be revisited, and membership will be extended to all relevant organisations in Shropshire, not just those serving rural locations.'</i> (Shropshire Screen KPI Report, May 2013)</p>
<p><b>4. County-wide audience development plan is produced for under 19s</b></p> <p>and</p> <p><b>11. Teachers have enhanced knowledge and skills to develop film education offer</b></p>		<p>At the time of the Mid Term Review, the project manager noted that, <i>'[a]n outline plan was developed and we're having to completely revisit that. Funding priorities have shifted so significantly.'</i></p> <p>In the event, a county-wide audience development plan was never fully developed, although a number of initiatives aimed at under 19s were delivered through the Pilot, including Young Programmers; Filmmaking and Animation activity; Screenwriting workshops; Showcases, gallery based exhibition and screenings; Media Arts Fair; Special screenings, with guest speakers; Accredited learning activity developed with the Children's' University for Shropshire. There is no evidence of the impact these examples had on teachers' knowledge and skills.</p> <p><i>'I felt at the start it should be a straightforward process to develop the plan for under 19s but because of all the changes, we've had quite a considerable period of not quite knowing what's going on. [The] BFI just launched their under 19s offer, but I don't yet know the detail of that [...] There are definite players who want to work with us around film education for under 19s and that has certainly been influenced by the profile of Shropshire Screen. So whilst I feel a bit frustrated because the bigger picture has been shifting I'm feeling quite positive about the future.'</i> <b>Sue Gainsborough, Wem Town Hall and Shropshire Screen</b></p> <p>Looking beyond the Pilot, the May KPI Report notes that, <i>'Shropshire Screen intends to continue to operate as an umbrella organisation, in support of cinema exhibition and film education (open to all organisations, not just pilot consortium).'</i></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<b>5. Pilot has strategic fit with Film: 21st Century Literacy, Screen Heritage &amp; Cultural Olympiad and Big Society agendas</b>	●	<p>A case can be made for Shropshire Screen's strategic fit with these agendas, as indicated at the time of the Mid Term Review, but in every case the policy agenda has shifted so their continued relevance is questionable. Given the scale and nature of change within the wider funding landscape over the last three years, of greater significance is the Pilot's relevance within the context of the BFI's five-year plan <i>Film Forever</i>, and local authority agendas for market town and rural regeneration.</p>
<b>6. Venues and touring schemes have improved capacity and infrastructure</b>	●	<p>Evidence for this outcome is derived from the project manager's discussions with venues and touring schemes, captured in update reports to the BFI.</p> <p>The previous section described in some detail the local authority and Arts Council England funding cuts that affected a number of consortium members (chiefly DASH, Flicks in the Sticks and Wem Town Hall). Cuts to revenue funding had a marked impact on the capacity of organisations to deliver their planned contribution to the Pilot, and in circumstances beyond their control.</p> <p>Leaving revenue funding and overall capacity aside, capital investment in new and upgraded equipment has undoubtedly improved the rural cinema infrastructure in Shropshire, which was further enhanced by a programme of training and professional development.</p> <p><i>'In the village halls there's been this terrific uplift in the equipment that's available. The quality is hugely improved, most have their own equipment installed and so aren't incurring extra costs with technicians coming in with portable sets. They are able to participate as volunteers much more independently.'</i></p> <p><b>Naomi Vera-Sanso, Borderlines Film Festival and Shropshire Screen</b></p>
<b>7. Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation</b>	●	<p>Spot visits by consortium members were paid to 15 venues during the Pilot period, and observations were recorded in terms of 'Quality of Visuals', 'Quality of Sound', 'Customer Service', 'Seating' and 'Other comments'. All visits (recorded in <i>visits log.xls</i>) achieved good or excellent ratings. From the end users' perspective, results of audience surveys conducted by Wem Town Hall, Festival Drayton Centre, Ludlow Assembly Rooms and Flicks in the Sticks found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 94% of respondents rated their experience of a Flicks in the Sticks screening as good or excellent;</li> <li>• A few negative comments about the Flicks in the Sticks experience pointed to dissatisfaction with seating and sound levels in some venues, but overall the feedback was very positive (see <i>Selection of quotes from recent Audience Survey.pdf</i>). Good sound quality was found by the survey to be judged more important to enjoyment than picture quality;</li> <li>• 90% of Wem Town Hall respondents rated the visuals 4 or 5 out of 5 (5 being highest satisfaction), and 80% rated the sound quality similarly. In each case less than 5% of respondents gave the visuals and sound the lowest satisfaction rating;</li> <li>• 95% of Festival Drayton Centre respondents rated picture and sound quality as 4 or 5 out of 5 on the same scale, while 84% and 82% of Ludlow Assembly Rooms respondents rated picture and sound quality to the same high standard.</li> </ul> <p>Glyn Roberts, manager of Festival Drayton Centre, told the project manager in March 2013 that reaction to screening quality had been, "[v]ery positive from audiences, staff and volunteers who comment on high quality of sound and visuals, both of which have significantly improved with the DCI." Similar feedback was received from Tony Blench, Chair of Ludlow Assembly Rooms, in March 2013.</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>8. Demand for early window releases is established</b></p>		<p>One of the Pilot's founding assumptions was that audiences would prefer to see films close to their initial theatrical release date. As noted in the <i>Mid Term Review</i> report, audience survey work does not support this. Less than half (46%) of Wem Town Hall respondents said it was quite or very important to see a film close to its release, and this proportion was even smaller (20%) for Flicks in the Sticks audiences.</p> <p>However, the project manager noted that comparison with attendance at 35mm screenings at Wem Town Hall suggested demand for early releases remains strong among certain audience groups, particularly younger audiences.</p> <p>A survey conducted by Festival Drayton Centre found that demand for early window releases was greatest for blockbusters (79% rated it 4 or 5 out of 5 in importance) and family films (63% rated it 4 or 5). Demand for the early release of specialised films was much lower (43% rated it 4 or 5 out of 5 in importance), and was lower still for the early release of children's films (37%). A similar pattern was found by the Wem Town Hall audience survey, supporting the view that demand for early window releases varies according to the type of film in question and the target audience.</p>
<p><b>9. Greater programming diversity and quality (including first run films, 3D films &amp; alternative content)</b></p>		<p>Analysis of programming and box office data held on the RCPS extranet provides evidence of programming diversity, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of 436 unique film titles were screened by April 2013, and 41% of these were performed once.</li> <li>• Just under half (49%) of all screenings featured a specialised film title, and specialised film accounted for 44% of total admissions.</li> </ul> <p><i>'The [film] programme is a lot more diverse now than it was before. I do the website for Shropshire Screen so I see the films that go through.'</i>  <b>Naomi Vera-Sanso, Borderlines Film Festival and Shropshire Screen</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is not known how many screenings involved 3D presentations.</li> <li>• One in five (21%) DCI screenings occurred within six weeks of the title's theatrical debut (although this proportion fell during the Pilot period, from 33% in 2011 to 17% in 2013). Glyn Roberts, Manager of the Festival Drayton Centre, told the project manager that access to new releases had not improved following the move from 35mm to DCI, and Tony Blench, Chair of Ludlow assembly Rooms, echoed this view.</li> <li>• 50 satellite screenings took place before 14 April 2013, generating 4,311 admissions.</li> </ul> <p><i>'One of the benefits [...] has been the National Theatre Live, that has seen huge audiences in a number of our venues.'</i>  <b>Joy Durrant, Arts Development Team, Shropshire Council</b></p> <p>The April 2012 KPI report provided further evidence of programming diversity: DASH delivered the Disability Film Festival in November 2011, which comprised 29 screenings generating 624 admissions.</p> <p>Programming quality was addressed by the Wem Town Hall audience survey, which found that 84% of respondents gave the film programme a rating of 4 or 5 out of 5 (5 being the highest level of satisfaction).</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>10. High awareness among rural communities of umbrella brand for rural cinema in Shropshire</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p>The Shropshire Screen website went live in May 2011 with the Pilot's official launch, which generated a range of media coverage supported by flyers, pop up banner signposting, email and social media activity. The Pilot was subsequently profiled, 'by association through Radio 4 interviews with Flicks In The Sticks (Flicks), via all consortium members websites and marketing materials as well as via audience development activity, including Borderlines Film Festival, youth film productions and premiers.' (Shropshire Screen Marketing Statistics report, April 2013).</p> <p>Between its launch in May 2011 and April 2013, the website received a total of 24,894 visits from 18,800 separate visitors, and approximately one quarter of these were returning visitors.</p> <p>The <i>Shropshire Screen Marketing Statistics</i> report (April 2013) concluded that, '[o]rganic Google search, direct access (via the site's URL) and Twitter links are other significant factors driving traffic to the Shropshire Screen website. The site performs well on Google search, delivering top ranking on searches for 'Shropshire Screen', 'rural cinema Shropshire' and 'rural film Shropshire' and also scores well on 'rural cinema pilot'. Keyword indicators on Google Analytics show that the most popular searches are either for Shropshire Screen or for the names of venues or village halls.'</p> <p>The main web site acted as a signpost to consortium members' pages: in the period July 2011 to April 2013, ShropshireScreen.co.uk referred over 350 visitors to Flicks in the Sticks' web site, 74% of whom were new to Flicks site.</p> <p>Despite these usage statistics, evidence indicates low awareness of Shropshire Screen in the wider community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less than one third (29%) of Flicks in the Sticks survey respondents were aware that the Shropshire Screen web site advertises screenings across the county, while 26% of Wem Town Hall respondents knew of the site.</li> <li>• Two surveys conducted later in the Pilot period reported similar findings: 34% of respondents to the Festival Drayton Centre audience survey said they were aware of ShropshireScreen.co.uk, compared with 19% of respondents to the Ludlow Assembly Rooms survey.</li> </ul> <p>Some features of the web site were less successful than others, as the <i>Shropshire Screen Marketing Statistics</i> report notes (April 2013): 'The Disqus facility (to add comments) has hardly been used at all. Though the map features work well in displaying events, the integration with Twitter to display location-based Tweets has not materialised. Enabling location, particularly on the web as opposed to on smartphones, can prove convoluted and discouraging, as other consortium members have found.'</p> <p>Shropshire Screen also has an active profile on Twitter, with 677 followers at the time of writing. The <i>Shropshire Screen Marketing Statistics</i> report (April 2013) notes that 'Twitterfeed has been set up to transmit events and news items to the account according to various criteria in addition to regular Tweets. As indicated by Google Analytics, these do drive traffic to the website, particularly when retweeted.'</p> <p>Shropshire Screen was less successful in generating facebook 'likes', with only 39 at the time of writing: 'As with the Disqus facility it has been difficult to build up a community across consortium members and their audiences' (from <i>Shropshire Screen Marketing Statistics</i>, April 2013).</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>12. Improved audience satisfaction</b></p>		<p>Only one venue, Ludlow Assembly Rooms, repeated its audience survey to measure change over time, but the results of the first survey were not available to the evaluation due to staff changes.</p> <p>However, there is evidence of high levels of satisfaction overall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 93% of Flicks in the Sticks respondents rated their experience as good (38%) or excellent (55%);</li> <li>• The Wem Town Hall survey found that 82% of respondents rated customer service 4 or 5 out of 5 (5 being the highest level of satisfaction); 86% rated cost 4 or 5 out of 5; 86% rated screening times 4 or 5 out of 5; 77% rated refreshments 4 or 5 out of 5; 91% rated accessibility 4 or 5 out of 5; and 84% rated the What's On information 4 or 5 out of 5.</li> <li>• 82% of Ludlow Assembly Rooms respondents rated satisfaction with the film programme 4 or 5 out of 5, and 75% rated customer services highly. In addition, accessibility (69%), cost (73%) and screening times (76%) all scored highly in the ratings.</li> </ul> <p>Feedback in response to open-ended survey questions overwhelmingly supported these findings.</p>
<p><b>13. Increased admissions</b></p>		<p>Overall, there has been an increase in admissions across Shropshire Screen venues.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of box office data held on the RCPS extranet shows that Shropshire Screen recorded a total of 115,959 admissions to 14 April 2013, which includes attendances at new and existing venues.</li> <li>• According to the latest Shropshire Screen KPI report (May 2013), there were fewer <u>new</u> admissions than projected due to the delayed start of the pilot. A total of 47,438 admissions were logged as new by Shropshire Screen, which fell short of the target agreed with BFI in October 2011 (68,709).</li> </ul> <p>Performance at individual venues was encouraging: according to Festival Drayton Centre's own analysis, admissions rose over the course of the Pilot. Pre-pilot, from May 2009 to March 2011, the venue recorded 16,725 admissions to its 35mm screenings. This rose to 26,393 for the period May 2011 to March 2013, an increase of 58%. This is due to an increase in the number of screenings (which increased by 50%) but average admissions also grew, from 92 in the earlier period to 97. <i>'[A]udiences are travelling from further afield and more people have joined their mailing list since DCI and satellite installation'</i> (interview with Glyn Roberts, Manager of Festival Drayton Centre, by Shropshire Screen project manager, March 2013).</p> <p>The experience at Ludlow Assembly Rooms was more mixed: <i>'TB commented that he did not feel each screening attracted significantly larger audiences than was previously the case, although they now have more screenings. Initially audiences did increase but he felt this was largely to do with the available content (The King's Speech, for example). The satellite content is vital in developing new audiences and creates new access for rural audiences'</i> (interview with Tony Blench, Chair Ludlow Assembly Rooms, by Shropshire Screen project manager, March 2013).</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>14. More young people, family audiences and disabled people attend screenings</b></p>		<p>As audience surveys were not repeated, no baseline data was available to the evaluation to measure change in audience composition over time.</p> <p>The survey evidence that does exist gives a snapshot impression of audience composition, and reveals an older age skew (although this might be an artefact of the research methodology, which surveyed people attending single screenings and cannot, therefore, be taken as representative of the audience across different types of programming):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 73% of Wem Town Hall respondents were aged 46+ (35% were 65+), compared with 93% of Ludlow Assembly Rooms respondents (44% 65+) and 100% of Festival Drayton Centre respondents (58% 65+);</li> <li>• There are too few respondents in younger age groups and family audiences to draw any firm conclusions about their patterns of attendance.</li> <li>• In terms of disability, the Festival Drayton Centre survey found that 9% of respondents (44 in total) said they had a disability, compared with 7% in the Ludlow Assembly Rooms survey. Both these figures fall below the proportion of disabled people in the Shropshire population as a whole (19% according to the 2011 Census).</li> </ul> <p>However, there is anecdotal evidence that local screenings provided new opportunities for family audiences, as in this example from a Flicks in the Sticks audience member: <i>'This is a marvellous service that allows me to take my children to see films without travelling 25 miles to Shrewsbury or Chester. The ticket prices are also extremely reasonable, making cinema affordable. I can't get to evening screenings due to lack of childcare, but I am looking forward to being able to go when my children are older.'</i></p>
<p><b>15. Evidence of rural cinema pilot efficacy and impact is collected and reported</b></p>		<p>As noted in the <i>Mid Term Review</i> report, the Shropshire Screen Project Board used the evaluation framework on a regular basis, including as a reference point for reporting at Board meetings. This evaluation has been furnished with a wide array of evidence gathered over the course of the Pilot, and although notable gaps exist (for example, the lack of repeated audience surveys) the project manager is aware of these and has taken steps to address them (including scheduling further audience survey work in September 2013).</p> <p>The Shropshire Screen Assumptions Table in Appendix 3 illustrates how evidence has helped to challenge some of the Pilot's founding principles, leading to a better understanding of the requirements of rural cinema provision in the county.</p> <p>Less clear was by Shropshire Screen's role in disseminating its research evidence to interested parties like local authorities and delivery partners, although council investment in DCI suggests such advocacy was successful (see outcome 17).</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>16. Viability of rural cinema business models is established</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p>Shropshire Screen encompasses a variety of different models, from promoter-led Blu-ray screenings, to part- and full-time DCI venues and a touring DCI service. Some partners operate on a strictly commercial basis (e.g. Reels of Wheels), while others have distinct cultural aspirations (e.g. Borderlines Film Festival). This has enabled the Pilot to test a range of different approaches in a variety of rural contexts.</p> <p>The impact of DCI installation on the financial prospects of Festival Drayton Centre and Ludlow Assembly Rooms was especially marked: Glyn Roberts, Manager of Festival Drayton Centre, told the project manager, <i>'[t]he DCI has impacted immensely – and has significantly increased revenue, both cinema and satellite – improving the financial viability of both the cinema programme itself and the venue generally [...]. Since DCI install we have experienced significant revenue growth and film is now financially viable as a stand alone service, whilst satellite brings significant wins and has capacity to subsidise other aspects of the building and programme.'</i></p> <p>The view from Ludlow Assembly Rooms was equally positive: <i>'In addition to the improved customer satisfaction, the replacement of the 35mm system with DCI has made a significant improvement, to both the viability of cinema exhibition at LAR, and to the viability of the venue itself, through increased revenue of both cinema and particularly satellite screenings [...]. The new system affords far greater flexibility than working with 35mm. It is easier to respond with additional screenings in relation to increased audience demand – whereas previously a 35mm would have been returned to the distributor so we would miss the opportunity to benefit from increased demand.'</i> (Report of interview by Shropshire Screen Project Manager with Tony Blench, Chair of Ludlow Assembly Rooms, March 2013).</p> <p>It is not possible to draw any firm conclusions about the viability of individual Blu-ray venues, acting independently of Flicks in the Sticks or as a touring partner. Evidence suggests these enterprises are viable so long as energetic, motivated and willing volunteers are involved, and the single title film licence model only works if other costs associated with screenings (including marketing, venue hire, and equipment maintenance) remain low.</p>
<p><b>17. Councils, local authorities and other key stakeholders accept evidence of economic, social, cultural, health and educational benefits of rural cinema provision</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p>The project manager was in no doubt that the value of rural cinema provision has been successfully communicated to stakeholders:</p> <p><i>'I do believe a key success has been in demonstrating the value of cinema in a rural community, the value of it not only to the community in terms of social well-being but also economic well-being. Certainly the investment that came in from the local authority was from the market towns regeneration programme so the agenda was very much about stimulating footfall through market towns, training, stimulating economic growth to benefit the organisation itself.'</i> <b>Sue Gainsborough, Wem Town Hall and Shropshire Screen</b></p> <p>Aside from prima facie evidence of local authority support (Shropshire Council invested around £200,000 in DCI equipment in four Pilot venues), other evidence demonstrates Council support for Shropshire Screen. For example, Joy Durrant, of Shropshire Council's Arts Development Team, stated in interview that Shropshire Screen complemented other local initiatives: <i>'Certainly through projects that we've managed at Shropshire Council we've used film as a way of interpreting what's been achieved and being able to put it out to our audiences. So it complements the work that has been going on through Shropshire Screen.'</i></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>Goal 1: The cinema experience is widely available and sustainable in rural areas of the county</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p>	<p>Shropshire Screen increased the number of venues providing screenings, the number of screening slots and admissions over the course of the Pilot. As a consequence, film exhibition is now more widely available to local audiences than previously.</p> <p><i>‘The rural cinema pilot has delivered a number of benefits to Shropshire, the most significant of which has been the development of the cinema infrastructure. With the new and enhanced resources delivered through investment into installed and touring cinema equipment there has been significant improvement to the capacity of a number of organisations’ (Shropshire Screen KPI Report, May 2013).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two venues (Festival Drayton Centre and Ludlow Assembly Rooms) have successfully trialled fixed DCI and satellite equipment, increasing their annual admissions and revenues accordingly. On the available evidence, both these operations appear to be self-sustaining in the longer-term.</li> </ul> <p><i>‘The venues who have been operating DCI for over a year [...] have demonstrated improved box office and that cinema is and will remain part of their core offer for the future. Wem Town Hall and Kinokulture hope to experience a similar level of growth.’ (Shropshire Screen KPI Report, May 2013).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Touring DCI, operated on a commercial basis by Reels on Wheels, has proven capable of finding audiences in both new and existing venues, and the company remains optimistic about the future (while recognising that its 35mm service will soon become obsolete).</li> <li>• Revenue-funded organisations, like Flicks in the Sticks, Wem Town Hall and (to a lesser extent) Borderlines Film Festival, continue to need public investment to support and develop their operations. The capital funding provided by Shropshire Screen has enabled Flicks in the Sticks to expand its touring model to new venues while enabling existing providers to operate with greater independence.</li> </ul> <p><i>‘In the normal funding environment there isn’t really money for capital [...] So this was a huge opportunity, and especially at that juncture between 35mm disappearing and DCI coming up. So we leapt at it much more as “Lets get the money and use it as capital investment into Shropshire”. In terms of legacy that’s fantastic because money hasn’t really been spent on a project manager: it’s all gone into the village halls, it’s gone into the multi-arts centres and it remains to be used as a capital investment.’</i></p> <p><b>Naomi Vera-Sanso, Borderlines Film Festival and Shropshire Screen</b></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>Goal 2: Investment and support is secured beyond the pilot</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p>	<p>Looking to the future, several Consortium members plan to establish Shropshire Screen as a social enterprise, although individual partners are likely to require revenue funding from one source or another. Although supportive of the idea, financial support from Shropshire Council has yet to be agreed:</p> <p><i>‘One of the things we’re looking at is setting up Shropshire Screen as a social enterprise [...] I think for those that have a commitment to film education as well as cinema they’ve been very responsive to the idea of leaving a legacy of Shropshire Screen and setting up as an organisation that can support that on-going development and partnership working.’</i>  <b>Sue Gainsborough, Wem Town Hall and Shropshire Screen</b></p> <p><i>‘We are going to set up a social enterprise to concentrate on film education. We’ve stopped updating the website because there are no more screenings but we are going to keep it alive so it’s going to continue to exist to be used for [a] Shropshire Screen social enterprise. There are certain kinds of relationships that will continue and have been strengthened through the experience of Shropshire Screen.’</i>  <b>Naomi Vera-Sanso, Borderlines Film Festival and Shropshire Screen</b></p> <p><i>‘[Establishing Shropshire Screen as a social enterprise] seems to be a sustainable way forward. Something to be encouraged.’</i> <b>Joy Durrant, Arts Development Team, Shropshire Council</b></p> <p>As planning for the social enterprise is underway at the time of writing, the prospects for further investment and support beyond the Pilot remain unclear. Shropshire Council’s existing investment in DCI and the legacy plan provide a good basis upon which to build a funding case, whether it is addressed to the local authority (or town councils), Arts Council England, or the BFI’s Audience Network Hub for the region.</p>

## 2.3 White Horse Pictures

### 2.3.1 Pilot overview

**Table 2.15: Demographic summary**

	<b>Wiltshire*</b>	<b>England</b>
Population	474,300	53,107,200
Area (square km)	3,255	130,279
People per sq. km	146	408
Population aged 45+	46%	42%
BAME population (%)	3%	14%
Disabled population (%)	16%	18%

Source: ONS Census 2011, Bigger Picture Research analysis

\* Wiltshire Unitary Authority

Wiltshire is similar in size to Shropshire but is home to a larger, though still relatively sparse, population. In common with the other two Pilot areas, the population is older than the norm for England, and has a lower proportion of people from a Black and Minority Ethnic background. At 16%, the proportion of disabled residents in Wiltshire is slightly lower than the national average.

Originally the Pilot extended to the adjoining area of Test Valley in Hampshire. When Wiltshire became the sole focus of attention the name changed from 'Wiltshire and Test Valley Rural Cinema Pilot' to 'White Horse Pictures'.

An active and successful touring network run by Moviola served Wiltshire prior to the Pilot. As the Inglis and Todd Consultancy report commissioned by the UK Film Council identified in November 2008, 'the most important rural cinema activity in the South West is Moviola which serves over 130 village halls throughout Wiltshire, Hampshire, Somerset, Dorset and East Devon. Annual attendances are in the region of 50,000. Moviola operates with 6 teams of presenters who tour, set up and operate the equipment. The presenters are trained and get paid. They introduce the screening and at the end say goodbye to the audience as they leave. The high quality of the screenings (technical, programme choice, and personal presentation) is a vital part of the success of the scheme.'

Moviola served 28 venues in the county at the time the Pilot started. In addition, Wiltshire had five full-time and three part-time cinemas (including local independents in Chippenham, Devizes and Salisbury, and multiplexes in Swindon and Bath) along with seven film societies supported by the BFFS South West group (BFFS SW) (with three more in development). Pound Arts Centre in Corsham hosted a regular film night and the Arc Theatre in Trowbridge was developing a film programme for young people with Wiltshire College. So while Wiltshire benefitted from a range of different film offers, rural provision was uneven across the county, with particular gaps to the north and an opportunity to address under-served barracks communities around Salisbury.

In response to the UK Film Council's proposal to fund a Pilot in the region, South West Screen, the local Regional Screen Agency, convened a consortium of Moviola, BFFS SW, Wiltshire College and The Arc, Pound Arts Centre, Salisbury International Arts Festival and Wiltshire Council. Their Business Plan, submitted to the UK Film Council in February 2010, outlined five strands of activity:

- A touring DCI circuit led by Moviola, providing a full-time cinema programme of new releases, initially serving nine venues with one set of touring kit (in Calne, Durrington, Malmesbury, Melksham, Pewsey, Trowbridge [The Arc], Corsham [Pound Arts Centre], Stockbridge and Romsey) expanding to 14 venues by the end of the Pilot.
- A dedicated 'Young People's programme' within the DCI circuit led by The Arc/ Wiltshire College and Pound Arts Centre;
- Enhanced provision at existing BFFS SW and Moviola venues, with investment in new equipment (including roll down screens);
- New provision for under-served areas in the north of the Pilot area and barracks communities using Blu-ray technology available through BFFS SW, alongside training and networking opportunities;

- An outreach programme led by Salisbury International Arts Festival and involving Motivarts working with hard to reach communities (including disabled people).

A Steering Group, chaired initially by South West Screen as the Lottery award holder and latterly by Wiltshire County Council, managed the Pilot.

*We came in with capacity in terms of officer time to support the networking and setting up of things and to find ways to connect up different parts of the local authority structure [...] There needed to be a streamlined structure that could make decisions, look at information and that didn't have a financial interest [...] I took on the role of chairing the steering group meetings and liaising between the steering group and various parties in terms of implementing decisions.*

**Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council**

An Audience Development Officer, specially recruited for the task, managed day-to-day operations. They were also responsible for the web site, which served as 'the central marketing and audience development tool for the pilot' (*Wiltshire and Test Valley Rural Cinema Pilot Business Plan*, February 2010). A Programming Group, representing all consortium members, was intended to plan and coordinate film programming across the Pilot, but in the event it was never established. Instead, Patrick Bliss, a professional programmer, provided the Steering Group with programming support and the Independent Cinema Office was contracted to programme Melksham Assembly Hall during its first year as a permanent DCI venue.

Once the Pilot was underway, Swindon Film Society was invited to join the consortium, building on its successful track record of outreach work:

*[F]or a number of years we've been doing [...] outreach work [...] There was one area in particular – Cricklade – which we were starting to build up a programme in and so I contacted [White Horse Pictures] to say "Look we're here, we're actually doing some work in north Wiltshire, is there any way we can work with the White Horse Pictures project to help that along? In particular, is there a small pot of money that we could use to improve the equipment we're using in those towns and villages?" [T]here was an acknowledgement that although Swindon itself, the urban part, was going to be excluded [from the Pilot], [our outreach work] was relevant.*

**Barbara Hoffbauer, Swindon Film Society**

Blu-ray screenings under the Pilot banner began in September 2010 and the DCI circuit started fortnightly visits to three town council-run venues in December 2010 (Malmesbury Town Hall, Melksham Assembly Hall and Beversbrook Centre in Calne).

The DCI circuit faced a number of unforeseen problems from the outset and failed to develop in the ways envisaged by the Business Plan. The most significant consequence was Moviola's departure from the Pilot in March 2011, the possibility of which was first raised as early as October 2010.

It is important for this evaluation to capture the known facts of events leading up to the premature demise of touring DCI, and to acknowledge the main points of disagreement between the parties involved. The facts, insofar as it is possible to establish them after the event, were as follows:

- DCI procurement proved more expensive than budgeted, a problem that was compounded because VAT was not included in the original cost calculations.

*Quite a lot of money was spent [by UK Film Council] on scoping and it was completely, unrealistically budgeted [...] in terms of the equipment and logistics [...] It's not to say we didn't have enough money, but when you look at the original costings for capital outlay it wasn't anywhere near what it should be.*

**Shereene Amer, Creative England (and formerly of South West Screen)**

- This prompted the Steering Group to revisit the running costs associated with the touring model, including van hire, secure storage and the revenue sharing model between Moviola and the venues. The UK Film Council agreed to allow White Horse

Pictures to draw down money from the year two budget in order to meet the shortfall in year one.

*One of the overhead costs was that they were hiring a van, which for 13 days out of 14 was sitting in Melksham's yard. And on the 14th day a projectionist would come along, load the projector and bring it up to Malmesbury. With that sort of overhead, the scheme was never even going to break even.*

**Charles Vernon, Movies @ Malmesbury**

- The DCI equipment procured for the Pilot was neither as robust nor portable as hoped for touring purposes, and Arts Alliance refused to enter into a maintenance contract with the consortium while the kit was shared between venues.
- In the event, venues identified for inclusion in the circuit, like Pound Arts Centre, proved unsuited to hosting the touring equipment because it was bulkier, and its operation noisier, than anticipated.

*At the beginning of the project we all thought we'd bought the right touring kit and got the venues that we wanted [...] What became apparent was that the touring kit was not portable, the venues were not drawing in the audiences we would have hoped, and that it was all just a bit more hard work than we thought it might be. [T]hat kit simply wouldn't tour; we couldn't get insurance for it, the filters fell off, the balance went out [...] On reflection I wouldn't point the finger at anyone in the group, I wouldn't say it was anyone's fault, I think we were given some quite duff advice at the outset, particularly around the kit.*

**Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council**

- As indicated in the quote above, individual venues faced their own challenges in attracting audiences. For example, Beversbrook Centre in Calne struggled with a screen average of just 15 admissions:

*[Calne's Beversbrook Centre] is located out of town, if you're going to get in your car and drive to the cinema why not keep going and go to a multiplex? The experience in the venue was always compromised, there were issues with sound and lighting, the blackout wasn't that good, the sound in a sports space wasn't as great as it could have been. I think those issues were addressable but I think there was lack of capacity in terms of audience development, the venue did everything they could in terms of marketing but sometimes that's not enough.*

**Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council**

Behind the scenes, there was disagreement about branding and managing the DCI circuit. At a meeting with the Steering Group in November 2010, Moviola outlined its concerns: it wanted greater recognition of its contribution in promotional material and in the Service Level Agreement under negotiation at the time. Furthermore, Moviola asked White Horse Pictures to underwrite any losses incurred by the DCI circuit, to mitigate the risks of this new and untested venture. There was also the question of who should pay for diesel and insurance associated with transporting and storing the touring kit.

An agreement was reached and the Service Level Agreement with Moviola was issued in January 2011, which included provision for White Horse Pictures to underwrite DCI losses by up to £13,000 in the first year.

*We were prepared to underwrite [Moviola's involvement] because we realised they were taking a risk. But there were other things which we weren't prepared to accommodate. One was the fact they wanted everything to be Moviola [branded].*

**Sarah-Jane Meredith, White Horse Pictures/BFI (formerly of South West Screen and Creative England)**

At the end of February the parties met to discuss terms for year two but this time failed to reach agreement on how much White Horse Pictures was prepared to underwrite future losses. In view of the continued difficulties experienced with the touring model, and unwillingness to compromise on the fundamental points of difference between the parties, the Steering Group decided not to renew the Service Level Agreement with Moviola.

*Moviola [...] is really committed [...] to being open and to being supportive of any activity that can help make rural cinema flourish, and that's the basis we went into the project. We got disappointed by the way the project was going and that's why [...] we couldn't see any point in*

*continuing, particularly when [...] we were basically told they wouldn't continue to support our major contribution [...] From their point of view they may have said, "Well that's because you wanted to take it over and make it yours". And I think there's some truth in that. It was a way for us to get hold of DCI kit. If we had taken it over and made it ours it would have contributed more to the project than happened in the event [...] I feel very strongly the DCI is tourable and it would work over a period of [time and] would start to turn around and feed money back in.*

**Phill Walkley, Moviola**

With Moviola's departure, the Steering Group formulated a new plan for DCI, involving a fixed installation at Melksham Assembly Hall. The idea was to test the viability of a part-time digital cinema based in a prominent market town venue, which if successful could be rolled out to similar venues in the county. By the end of 2011 White Horse Pictures had wound up the touring model, and the DCI kit was installed in Melksham (Beverbrook Centre ceased DCI screenings in October 2011 and Malmesbury Town Hall followed suit in December 2011).

In March 2012, Malmesbury Town Hall rejoined the Pilot having purchased DCI equipment with support from Dolby, a locally based subsidiary of the multinational audiovisual technology company.

Although both run by local councils, the two fixed DCI venues operated along different lines. At the suggestion of White Horse Pictures, Melksham Assembly Hall entered into a programming arrangement with the Independent Cinema Office and alternative content was added to the offer in Spring 2013. In contrast, Malmesbury Town Hall benefited from an active group of volunteers who manage the cinema and make their own programming decisions.

Moviola's was not the only departure from the Pilot. In September 2011, Wiltshire College decided to close The Arc Theatre in Trowbridge and the venue's Blu-ray kit was redeployed for use by Swindon Film Society:

*At the outset we had Wiltshire College as a partner and as the project evolved beyond the setup and purchase it became apparent that they had some serious internal issues about the running of a venue facility from The Arc Theatre [...] The college took the decision to make all of their theatre staff redundant and to cease to operate the building as The Arc Theatre with a regular artistic programme. That decision meant the film strand of work we were looking to support ceased, which was very regrettable.*

**Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council**

During the Pilot period, six Blu-ray venues received funding for large roll down screens out of the ten originally planned, and the remaining money was invested in satellite installation. Blu-ray touring kit, managed by BFFS SW, was used to trial screenings in a variety of community and village hall venues including a school in Royal Wootton Bassett. These trials led to establishment of a new community cinema in Box (see the Panache Pictures case study for full details) and monthly screenings at Warminster Civic Centre (from Spring 2013).

White Horse Pictures also supported the Screen Me festival in November 2011 and the Global Village Film Festival in March 2012 (with additional support from Creative England). Use of touring equipment enabled Swindon Film Festival to extend its offer to villages in the north of the county in March 2012.

The plan to establish a regular programme of touring screenings serving barracks communities around Salisbury was never fully realised. Three test screenings (two Blu-ray and one DCI) generated only 19 admissions, so the offer was reworked to specifically target army families. This approach also failed to find an audience and the barracks programme was shelved.

*The offer that was being developed for military communities was a stretch. It was interesting, it created some contacts and there's some legacy work going on but there is no sustainable film offer. So that's an area that was disappointing, but you can't achieve everything. [I]t's not meant we're going to ignore the community when it comes to cinema but we're going to have to work out a better way of working with them.*

**Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council**

Despite ongoing commitment to rural cinema provision among the remaining consortium members, there are no plans to continue the White Horse Pictures brand once the Pilot has ended:

*We have been working on two operating models for the DCI. One model is based on the venue working independently, working with a group of volunteers. The other is programmed by the ICO. Both are set up in such a way that post pilot they are not reliant on the pilot for further core funding. Wiltshire Council will continue to play a role in developing these venues as part of its wider arts remit and will link them into council strategies, especially around joint marketing. It is envisaged that the brand of WHP will cease once the pilot has run its course. It is also envisaged that these venues will be members of the BFI hubs / networks.*

**White Horse Pictures KPI Report, January 2013**

A summary of the final budget for the Pilot, including total income and expenditure, is given in Table 2.16:

**Table 2.16: Total income and expenditure, White Horse Pictures, 2010-2013**

<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£414,934</b>
<i>Business Plan income</i>	£5,000
<i>UK Film Council Lottery</i>	£385,000
<i>Wiltshire Council for non-Moviola</i>	£7,500
<i>Wiltshire Council Youth Film Project</i>	£1,500
<i>Ticket Sales and Recharges</i>	£15,934
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£413,960</b>
<i>Spend on equipment</i>	£214,100 (52% of total)

Source: White Horse Pictures/Creative England

#### 2.4.2 White Horse Pictures in numbers

*Note: The RCPS extranet was not fully updated from the time the Audience Development Officer left the Pilot in January 2013, so the figures reported here are incomplete.*

- Across 46 venues (including Moviola venues up to March 2011), White Horse Pictures supported 783 screenings between September 2010 and April 2013, with admissions totalling 33,795 (Table 2.17).
- Blu-ray venues achieved an average attendance of 60 during this period (buoyed by exceptional performance in 2011, the year *The King's Speech* was released), while DCI venues saw 33 tickets sold on average per screening (the average rose to 58 in 2013 as the two DCI venues established themselves) (Table 2.17).

**Table 2.17: White Horse Pictures summary statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

	2010	2011	2012	2013**	Unique venues
Venues	32*	37*	12	4	46*
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total screenings
Screenings (films, archive & alternative content)	113*	368*	211	91	783*
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total admissions
Admissions (films, archive & alternative content)	5,193*	17,373*	7,340	3,889	33,795*
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average attendance
Average attendance per screening (Blu-ray)	52*	84*	48	35	60
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average attendance
Average attendance per screening (DCI)	14*	31*	32	53	33

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

#### Notes

\* includes Moviola venues, screenings and admissions

\*\* incomplete data

- A total of 254 different film titles were screened, and 44% were specialised films according to the BFI specialised film database (Table 2.18).
- DCI venues booked films on average eight weeks after their theatrical debut, and 31% of such screenings took place within six weeks of initial release (Table 2.18).
- Three alternative content performances were hosted by Melksham Assembly Hall in the Pilot period, which generated 365 admissions (with a screen average of 122) (Table 2.19).

**Table 2.18: White Horse Pictures film statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

	2010	2011	2012	2013**	Unique titles
Film titles	20*	77*	124	55	254*
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
% of screenings featuring specialised films	36%	46%	36%	63%	44%
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
Specialised film as % of all admissions	37%	67%	35%	60%	55%
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
Average number of weeks after first release, DCI	8	7	9	10	8
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-2013
% DCI screenings within six weeks of first release	0%	38%	29%	**	31%

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

Notes

\* includes Moviola venues, screenings and admissions

\*\* incomplete data

**Table 2.19: White Horse Pictures alternative content statistics, September 2010 to April 2013**

	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total screenings
Alternative content screenings	-	-	-	3	3
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Total admissions
Alternative content admissions	-	-	-	365	365
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average attendance
Average attendance per alt. content screening	-	-	-	122	122

Source: RCPS Extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

- Nearly half of the most programmed titles during the pilot period were British films (including the top six placed titles), and around a quarter were specialised (Table 2.20).
- Eight of out 10 of the best performing titles were British films, led by *The King's Speech* (which achieved a screen average of 126 admissions), *Made in Dagenham* and *From Time to Time*, while four were specialised films (Table 2.21)

**Table 2.20: Top 10 films programmed, White Horse Pictures, September 2010 to April 2013**

Rank	Film	Country of origin	Specialised	Admissions	Screenings	Screen avge
1	The King's Speech	UK	Yes	6,819	54	126
2=	Another Year	UK	Yes	1,184	23	51
2=	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	UK/USA		614	23	27
3	The Ghost	UK/Fra/ Ger	Yes	1,329	22	60
4=	From Time to Time	UK	No	1,500	21	71
4=	Made in Dagenham	UK	Yes	1,707	21	81
5	Letters to Juliet	USA	No	1,052	20	53
6	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1	UK/USA	No	293	10	29
7	Eat Pray Love	USA	No	505	9	56
8	Invictus	USA	No	347	8	43
9=	Black Swan	USA	Yes	409	7	58
9=	Fast & Furious 5	USA	No	84	7	12
9=	It's Complicated	USA	No	369	7	53
9=	Meek's Cutoff	USA	Yes	39	7	6
9=	Rise of the Planet of the Apes	USA	No	124	7	18
10=	Apocalypse Now	USA	Yes	16	6	3
10=	Hanna	USA/UK/ Ger	No	18	6	3
10=	Mr Popper's Penguins	USA	No	126	6	21
10=	One Day	USA/UK	No	58	6	10
10=	Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides	USA	No	261	6	44
10=	True Grit	USA	Yes	212	6	35
10=	War Horse	UK/USA	No	525	6	88
10=	Yogi Bear	USA/NZ	No	160	6	27

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

**Table 2.21: Top 10 performing films, White Horse Pictures, September 2010 to April 2013**

Rank	Film	Country of origin	Specialised	Admissions	Screenings	Screen avge
1	The King's Speech	UK	Yes	6,819	54	126
2	Made in Dagenham	UK	Yes	1,707	21	81
3	From Time to Time	UK	No	1,500	21	71
4	The Ghost	UK/Fra/ Ger	Yes	1,329	22	60
5	Another Year	UK	Yes	1,184	23	51
6	Letters to Juliet	USA	No	1,052	20	53
7	Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2	UK/USA	No	614	23	27
8	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	UK	No	559	5	112
9	War Horse	UK/USA	No	525	6	88
10	Eat Pray Love	USA	No	505	9	56

Source: RCPS extranet, Bigger Picture Research analysis

### 2.3.3 White Horse Pictures outcomes

*This project sits at the beginning of really interesting and exciting work [...] which the Council sees as massively important for the community.*

**Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council**

As noted in the *Mid Term Review* report, cessation of the touring DCI network and Moviola's departure as a delivery partner had a profound effect on the Pilot, necessitating operational changes that preoccupied the Steering Group and project management team for several months during the project's formative stages.

Effects of this were felt right across the Pilot, including in the approach taken to information gathering for monitoring and evaluation. Despite gaps in the data record, it is possible to build a picture of the Pilot's record of achievement and the main areas of success were as follows:

- 'Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation' (outcome 4);
- 'Pilot is aligned with national, regional and Council strategies' (outcome 13).

Progress was made against other outcomes, although the record of achievement was mixed or the evidence was incomplete:

- 'DCI equipment is trialled successfully' (outcome 1);
- 'Flexible deals with distributors are achieved' (outcome 2);
- 'Greater programming diversity and quality' (outcome 3);
- 'Volunteers have appropriate skills and knowledge' (outcome 5);
- 'Increased number of better equipped venues and screenings' (outcome 6);
- 'Improved user experience and audience satisfaction' (outcome 8);
- 'Increased admissions' (outcome 9);
- 'Viability of rural cinema business models is established' (outcome 10);
- 'New relationships and partnerships are brokered throughout the life of the pilot' (outcome 14).

There was insufficient evidence to conclude whether audience diversity improved in Pilot venues (outcome 7), and no evidence that a dedicated schools programme supported by skilled teachers was established (outcome 11), or whether young people enhanced their film programming skills as a result of the Pilot (outcome 12). The lack of a coherent and consistent approach to information gathering, dissemination and reflection means outcome 15 ('Pilot is improved by evidence-based learning') was not achieved.

Although some progress was made towards achievement of the Pilot's goal ('Everyone in Wiltshire has access to the cinema experience, and cinema is at the heart of the local community') the fact remains that Wiltshire's rural cinema offer is still largely dependent on providers like Moviola and BFFS SW affiliated community exhibitors, who were operating successfully before the Pilot began. Several venues benefited from equipment upgrades as a consequence of White Horse Pictures investment, but it would be difficult to claim this had any significant bearing on improving accessibility to the cinema experience in rural communities already served by local film societies and community exhibitors.

*During the course of the project I think sometimes the reports were implying that the work we were doing was happening because of White Horse Pictures, but I think it's fair to say it probably would have happened anyway.*

**Barbara Hoffbauer, Swindon Film Society**

The strongest claim for improvement resulting directly from White Horse Pictures intervention was in Melksham and Malmesbury, the two market towns now home to DCI-compliant digital cinemas. With Council support, cinema has indeed moved closer to the heart of these communities, and the models tested in this way are capable of application elsewhere:

*There's an unintended and really interesting outcome around new cinema offers coming through in Marlborough [...] They managed to achieve something using bits of our conversations, knowledge that didn't add into the project but had a significant impact outside of the project.*

**Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council**

The report card that follows details the evidence in full against each of the White Horse Pictures outcomes.

Key

 = *the outcome has been achieved.*

 = *evidence indicates some success, but the outcome has not been achieved in full or evidence is incomplete.*

 = *the outcome has not been achieved or no evidence of achievement exists.*

## White Horse Pictures report card

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>1. DCI equipment is trialled successfully</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p>	<p>Prior to December 2011, DCI equipment was trialled as touring kit in three venues but technical and logistical problems, coupled with Moviola's departure from the Pilot, ended the trial prematurely.</p> <p>DCI equipment was subsequently installed at Melksham Assembly Hall and Malmesbury Town Hall, and operated on a part-time basis. Although the two venues faced challenges building consistent audiences, both remain committed to digital cinema and have scored some notable successes with popular titles.</p> <p>Average attendance at DCI screenings rose each year over the trial period, increasing from just 14 in 2010 to 53 by 2013 (higher than the original target of 50 set for the outcome). In 2013, the screen average was higher at Malmesbury Town Hall (65) than Melksham Assembly Hall (38).</p>
<p><b>2. Flexible deals with distributors are achieved</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p>	<p>As reported by the <i>Mid Term Review</i>, the project manager described discussions with distributors as being <i>'really straightforward.'</i> Having transferred the film licence bonds held by Moviola to South West Screen in April 2011, the two DCI venues now deal directly with distributors and each has their own account (in the case of Melksham Assembly Hall film programming is managed by the Independent Cinema Office).</p> <p>In terms of deal flexibility, the average length of time after theatrical debut that DCI venues were able to programme new releases was eight weeks, which falls outside the targeted window of four to six weeks. Although an improvement on standard non-theatrical single title licence windows, this does not suggest any greater flexibility in film booking terms. Both DCI venues operate on a part-time basis (Melksham currently programmes on Friday through to Sunday, and Malmesbury on Fridays and Mondays) and this limits the scope for flexible terms with most distributors.</p> <p>Feedback suggests longer windows are not an issue for Blu-ray venues catering for older audiences: <i>'A lot of our audience comprises older people, and they are quite happy to wait four months to go and see Quartet, or whatever, in their local village hall. Many find the multiplexes too loud and confusing.'</i>  <b>Barbara Hoffbauer, Swindon Film Society</b></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>3. Greater programming diversity and quality</b></p>		<p>Baseline information on programming diversity and quality is unavailable, so it is not possible to draw any firm conclusions about improvement in this area. However, evidence suggests programming was relatively diverse during the Pilot period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• According to programming and box office data held on the RCPS extranet, 254 unique film titles were screened in Pilot venues up to 14 April 2013. Of these, 105 (41%) were screened only once.</li> <li>• Specialised titles accounted for 44% of all films programmed by Pilot venues and generated over half (55%) of all admissions (assisted by <i>The King's Speech</i>, which performed especially well across Moviola Blu-ray venues in 2011).</li> <li>• The Pilot also supported film festival activity, adding further variety to the programming mix. The Global Village Festival audience survey found that 98% of respondents rated the film they attended as 'excellent' or 'good'.</li> <li>• Alternative content was late arriving but showed early promise (the first performance at Melksham Assembly Hall was in October 2012 and Malmesbury Town Hall is due to start later in 2013).</li> <li>• 3D <i>'has been dropped from all discussions. There is very little interest amongst the consortium.'</i> (interview with the project manager)</li> </ul> <p>The audience survey conducted by Malmesbury Town Hall in March 2013 found little appetite for a broader range of programming: only 16% of respondents wished to see more 'world cinema' titles on the programme, and foreign language titles were favoured by only 11% of respondents.</p>
<p><b>4. Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation</b></p>		<p>There is only limited audience survey evidence available for the White Horse Pictures Pilot but the findings are overwhelmingly positive. The majority (86%) of respondents to the Malmesbury Town Hall survey (March 2013) said sound was 'good' or 'excellent' and 85% rated overall presentation just as highly. The Pound's Global Village Film Festival survey found that 91% of respondents rated the venue they visited as 'good' or 'excellent'.</p>
<p><b>5. Volunteers have appropriate skills and knowledge</b></p>		<p>Very little hard information exists to document the development of volunteer skills and knowledge, and anecdotal evidence presents a mixed picture. BFFS SW supported a number of venues (new and existing) and programming advice from Patrick Bliss and the ICO has proved helpful (see Melksham Assembly Hall case study for details; although the team at Melksham are not volunteers).</p> <p>Yet there does not appear to have been any co-ordinated activity directed at identifying skills and knowledge gaps and addressing them. Indeed, knowledge gaps are evident as this quote from Jo Crow of Panache Pictures demonstrates:</p> <p><i>'I wonder if I should be a company limited by guarantee with charitable status, then with a separate company that governs the hospitality part of what we do [...] I'm finding the whole thing complicated in terms of the commercial side, because I don't come from that background. I could have done with a bit more advice on that side.'</i></p> <p><b>Jo Crow, Panache Pictures</b></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes																								
<p><b>6. Increased number of better equipped venues and screenings</b></p>		<p>In total, 46 venues took part in the Pilot up to 14 April 2013, and they held 783 screenings during this period. The Pilot increased the number of venues using upgraded screening equipment (whether DCI or Blu-ray), although not on a scale sufficient to match the project's original ambition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The original Business Plan aimed for fourteen venues to be part of the DCI touring network at the end of the Pilot, and this was subsequently revised to three venues operating fixed DCI after Moviola's departure. Despite attempts, DCI never developed at Beversbrook Centre in Calne, and the equipment proved unsuitable for use elsewhere.</li> <li>• Two Moviola Blu-ray venues upgraded their screens (Monkston and Pewsey), and touring Blu-ray kit was used by Swindon Film Society in venues in the north of the county. The Pound benefited from Blu-ray installation after it was decided DCI was unsuitable.</li> <li>• BFFS SW Group conducted a survey of existing venues prior to launch of the Pilot, which identified very few equipment requirements (aside from a new screen for Bradford-on-Avon Film Society).</li> </ul>																								
<p><b>7. Wider audience diversity/ base</b></p>		<p>In the absence of baseline information it is not possible to say whether audience diversity widened as a result of the Pilot. In snapshot, audience survey evidence shows that respondents were generally older than the Wiltshire population. The two film festivals that conducted a survey attracted a higher proportion of people from BAME backgrounds than is found locally, but a lower proportion of disabled people:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="898 715 2040 890"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Swindon Film Festival</th> <th>Global Village Film Fest</th> <th>Malmesbury Town Hall</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>People aged 45+</td> <td>73%</td> <td>86%</td> <td>93%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Female</td> <td>58%</td> <td>71%</td> <td>72%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>BAME</td> <td>11%</td> <td>13%</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disabled</td> <td>7%</td> <td>3%</td> <td>N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>New visitors to venue</td> <td>N/A</td> <td>57%</td> <td>21%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Outreach involving barracks families and the young people's programme were both intended to bring new audiences to Pilot venues, but the failure of the former to attract audiences and a lack of concerted activity directed at programming for young people (due, in part, to Wiltshire College's withdrawal from the Pilot) meant no significant gains were made.</p> <p><i>'One of the great disappointments is right from the outset we got [DCI] for teenagers but we still haven't got them through the door [...] They want to see it the moment it is released, and they go off to Swindon to see it.'</i> <b>Charles Vernon, Movies @ Malmesbury</b></p> <p>The Screen Me festival, with its focus on minority ethnic communities, broadened the programming offer but the lack of audience survey evidence makes its impact on audiences impossible to substantiate:</p> <p><i>'Screen Me [...] ran in parallel to a community development project called See Me which celebrates the [BAME] community in Wiltshire. We programmed across all the different venues a variety of films and [...] we pulled audiences from Bristol and South Gloucester down to Salisbury and all across the M4 corridor [...] We realised a single piece of print was very effective and a good way to move audiences between venues.'</i> <b>Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire County Council</b></p>		Swindon Film Festival	Global Village Film Fest	Malmesbury Town Hall	People aged 45+	73%	86%	93%	Female	58%	71%	72%	BAME	11%	13%	N/A	Disabled	7%	3%	N/A	New visitors to venue	N/A	57%	21%
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Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>8. Improved user experience and audience satisfaction</b></p>		<p>Once again, the limited nature of the audience survey data available to the evaluation makes it impossible to properly assess levels of audience satisfaction, and the lack of baseline data means no comparison can be made over time. The slender evidence that does exist indicates a broadly positive picture, as the findings from the Malmesbury Town Hall survey demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 75% of respondents said the programme was 'good' or 'excellent';</li> <li>• 91% judged the venue's convenience as 'good' or 'excellent';</li> <li>• 69% found the refreshments on offer to be 'good' or 'excellent'.</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. Increased admissions</b></p>		<p>Pilot venues generated 33,795 admissions to 14 April 2013 according to box office records held on the RCPS extranet. Just under half of these were to DCI screenings (46%). Of the admissions to Blu-ray screenings, 12,359 were generated by Moviola venues in 2010 and 2011, equivalent to 69% of the total. These might well have occurred without involvement of White Horse Pictures, so their inclusion in the final tally for the Pilot is questionable, as Sarah-Jane Meredith pointed out in interview:</p> <p><i>'[W]hilst there were a number of Moviola venues at the beginning they were putting their figures in to White Horse Pictures and I think this was part of the problem [...] Moviola venues wouldn't have had much idea why they were part of the Pilot.'</i></p> <p><b>Sarah-Jane Meredith, White Horse Pictures/BFI (formerly of South West Screen and Creative England)</b></p> <p>Non-Moviola Blu-ray venues sold 5,657 tickets in the Pilot period, and The Pound in Corsham accounted for 59% of these sales.</p> <p>The original indicator for this outcome was for an average of 50 admissions per DCI screening and 60 per Blu-ray screening. In the event, DCI screenings achieved an average of 33 admissions to April 2013, while Blu-ray screenings achieved an average of 60. However, these totals mask considerable differences year-on-year and should not be taken at face value. Average attendance at DCI screenings actually rose from just 14 in 2010 to 53 in 2013, so there are grounds for optimism as the venues establish their programme locally. In contrast, the screen average for Blu-ray performances fell during the course of the Pilot, following Moviola's departure from the project, dropping to 35 in the first four months of 2013. This is also partly due to programming as the total in 2011 was buoyed by the performance of <i>The King's Speech</i>.</p> <p>The lack of marketing support generally, and audience development initiatives in particular, did nothing to assist venues in their efforts to build admissions over time, a point illustrated by the quote from Steve Gray of Melksham Assembly Hall:</p> <p><i>'[W]hat we perceive is you have to work at your cinema audience. [It] has to be proactive, getting out there, in front of people's faces. I think that degree of proactivity we struggle to get given our resources in-house. We do the social media thing, we've got Facebook, Twitter, the databases and we use things like dotMailer [...] But it's hard work and it would have been nice if we could have had the luxury of some central resource and support to really push and promote.'</i></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>10. Viability of rural cinema business models is established</b></p>		<p>Ultimately White Horse Pictures was unable to make a viable business case for touring DCI delivered by a third party provider. Two alternative models, based around fixed installation, were trialled with some success (and full backing of the town and county councils). As the project manager noted in the <i>Mid Term Review</i>, 'What we're finding with the DCI venues is we've got two very different business models working, so it's quite good to be able to review how that works [...] Both are working with town councils, but Malmesbury are very independent [...] Whereas Melksham aren't, as there's still a box office split with us and we work much more closely with them.'</p> <p>The Blu-ray model certainly appears to be viable when operated in a mixed arts venue like The Pound, and can make a good alternative to DCI where that technology is unsuitable for installation. But as Sarah-Jane Meredith noted in interview, it is hard to generalise about the viability of Blu-ray screenings in village and community hall venues because their operating models and track records vary so widely. The quality and drive of volunteers involved is crucial in this regard, and the key determinant of long-term viability. It is clear that the presence of local, rural cinema networks, like Moviola, and the model of peer support offered by BFFS SW Group, do much to strengthen the contribution of local promoters and volunteers.</p> <p><i>'I think it probably is [too early to say if the Blu-ray model is viable] [...] It's all down to individuals in the end, having enthusiasm and commitment in rural places. Jo [Crow, of Panache Pictures] came on the back of [Bath Film Festival] and she's got so much enthusiasm, she pushes it. With [the Festival's] connections they have interesting guest speakers. They're doing it that way rather than just having a screening [...] The BFI is developing its community venues strategy and if you don't have a group of really strong volunteers, or people who are committed to it, you're always going to be up against it [...] The Moviola model works very well, the BFFS is incredibly strong, so in terms of the Blu-ray model if there's enough people interested in the film I think it does work.'</i></p> <p><b>Sarah-Jane Meredith, White Horse Pictures/BFI (formerly of South West Screen and Creative England)</b></p>
<p><b>11. Dedicated schools programme supported by skilled teachers</b></p>		<p>There is no evidence that White Horse Pictures established a dedicated schools programme supported by skilled teachers.</p>
<p><b>12. Young people have enhanced film programming skills</b></p>		<p>As was the case at the time of the <i>Mid Term Review</i>, there was no formal evidence gathering around young people's programming skills, and none of the planned focus groups with young people took place. No firm judgement can therefore be made about this outcome, despite the fact that certain programming activity involving young people took place. For example, The Pound in Corsham ran monthly young people's screenings, programmed by young people, and the Screen Me festival included a young person's strand. In addition, the youth development team in Malmesbury, based at a youth club, programmed films at the DCI venue (<i>'In November 2011 WHP and the youth development team in Malmesbury, backed with funding from the local area board set up young people's screenings at Malmesbury town hall. These were programmed, promoted and run by young people and are held monthly'</i>, from <i>White Horse Pictures KPI report</i>, April 2012).</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>13. Pilot is aligned with national, regional and Council strategies</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p>	<p>Although the underlying principles remained constant, national and regional strategies for film shifted significantly throughout the life of the Pilot, with the UK Film Council's closure, South West Screen's incorporation into Creative England and, most recently, transfer of the latter's responsibility for funding film education and culture to the BFI. The Pilot was able to keep pace with these changes thanks to involvement of Sarah-Jane Meredith, who initiated the Pilot while based at South West Screen and subsequently moved to Creative England and then the BFI.</p> <p>In practical terms, alignment with Council strategies, at both town and county level, had the greatest significance for the Pilot. Once the touring DCI network ended, it was Malmesbury and Melksham town councils, with support from Wiltshire County Council, which enabled development of fixed DCI in venues they controlled. Peter Tyas's involvement as Chair of the Steering Group helped to ensure the County Council was behind the Pilot, and in tune with local needs expressed through Community Area Boards and Community Area Partnerships:</p> <p><i>'Undoubtedly the project has been very successful, the cinema offer in Melksham and Malmesbury is a direct outcome of the project and both of those cinema offers are high quality, new release films, pulling in audiences. There's alternative content at Melksham which is pulling in very large audiences, and community development activity happening around them so a real community spirit being built: luncheon clubs, shopping clubs and other things which a mainstream cinema just wouldn't do. Those are examples which the Council is very pleased with [...] Lots of our market towns said they want an arts facility and some form of cinema. [T]he town and parish councils were very keen to see solutions to provide access to cinema and so this project neatly slotted in to community ambitions.'</i></p> <p><b>Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council</b></p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>14. New relationships and partnerships are brokered throughout the life of the pilot</b></p>		<p>Not every relationship envisaged at the start of the Pilot worked out as planned. Moviola's departure from the project, Salisbury International Arts Festival's unsuccessful outreach programme to barracks communities and Wiltshire College's withdrawal from the consortium all came at the expense of close partnership working outlined in the original Business Plan. Many factors, often beyond control of the Steering Group, were responsible for these developments but in hindsight more could have been done to manage expectations:</p> <p><i>'[I]f there'd been more attention to start with in getting people to talk to one another and think through the possibilities [...] then we might be in a different position today.'</i> <b>Barbara Hoffbauer, Swindon Film Society</b></p> <p>Despite these setbacks, the Pilot benefited from a number of important relationships, which developed over time, most notably with Wiltshire Council, Melksham and Malmesbury town councils, The Pound, Wootton Bassett School, Malmesbury Youth Club, BFFS SW Group, the Independent Cinema Office and Swindon Film Society. In the case of Panache Pictures, the introduction to Bath Film Festival organisers brokered by White Horse Pictures proved especially significant (see the case study for full details).</p> <p><i>'One of the things the Pilot delivered as a legacy is a shared understanding across all the venues that we need to talk collectively about how we develop audiences for film and we need to look at which are the right projects for the consortium to deliver once the Pilot has ceased.'</i>  <b>Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council</b></p>
<p><b>15. Pilot is improved by evidence-based learning</b></p>		<p>There is good evidence, including in the minutes of meetings, that the Steering Group took decisions in good faith and in light of developments 'on the ground' as witnessed by those involved. Some of these decisions were informed by hard data (e.g. box office information).</p> <p>But for this outcome to be met, a more rigorous approach to information gathering was required, aligned with the data collection methods agreed by the project management team in the evaluation framework. In the event, White Horse Pictures undertook very little formal evidence gathering: few audience surveys were conducted and no baseline data was collected; site visits were not recorded (although there was some feedback at consortium and Steering Group meetings); focus groups with young people did not take place; and DCI venue management interviews were not recorded.</p> <p>In consequence, this outcome was not achieved. That is not to say lessons were not learned, just that formal evidence gathering played only a minor role in operational and strategic decision-making.</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>Goal: Everyone in Wiltshire has access to the cinema experience, and cinema is at the heart of the local community</b></p>	<p>●</p>	<p>As noted at the time of the <i>Mid Term Review</i>, access to high quality cinema provision in Wiltshire increased as a result of the Pilot, but nowhere near to the extent originally planned. A number of venues directly benefited from equipment upgrades; and the establishment of two DCI services in council-run venues increased the availability of first run features in previously under-served areas and brought other local benefits:</p> <p><i>'I think the economic impact of having new cinemas in two of our market towns is really beneficial.'</i>  <b>Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council</b></p> <p>It needs to be recognised, however, that rural cinema in Wiltshire is still largely dependent on established providers like Moviola and BFFS SW Group affiliated community exhibitors, who operated successfully before the Pilot began and who continue to maintain a higher profile than White Horse Pictures achieved:</p> <p><i>'White Horse Pictures didn't have that much of a profile locally, in this northwest corner of Wiltshire. I think very few people would have known it existed [...] Broad Hinton asked for our help during the course of the project but they didn't know about White Horse Pictures, they came to us because Moviola had said they were too far out of their area.'</i>  <b>Barbara Hoffbauer, Swindon Film Society</b></p> <p>Failure of the White Horse Pictures brand to establish itself is in part due to the web site's shortcomings. By January 2012, a consortium meeting concluded that the site, <i>'was not working and the best way forward would be to have links on the website to consortium members / relevant activity.'</i> As Steve Gray of Melksham Assembly Hall explained in interview, <i>'we could have done with a bit more online support but their website wasn't always up to date, wasn't always accurate.'</i></p> <p><i>'At the outset we had this idea that we would invest upfront in the creation of a one-stop digital platform that would draw together the cinema offer [...] It never really functioned quite as well as it could have done, the audience never really found it. [A]ll the functions we wanted to put into the single website are being delivered through website associates through the venues, which makes sense to the audience.'</i>  <b>Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council</b></p> <p>As for the future prospects of rural cinema in Wiltshire, Wiltshire Council's ambition is for existing providers to provide peer-to-peer support for new ventures:</p> <p><i>'I think in 5 years' time my hope would be that we've got thriving venues that are able to offer support to their neighbours to start something up [...] I think there's so much benefit to be had of giving ownership to communities when it comes to things like Blu-ray and digital arts platforms because of the skills gain, confidence people can get from being hands on involved in the mounting of the activity. I think that's really important, that training aspect that BFFS do in how to run a community cinema and how to run a community festival [...] That's something which should be offered to every community.'</i>  <b>Peter Tyas, Manager Arts and Archives, Wiltshire Council</b></p>

## 2.4 Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme

Performance of the Scheme as a whole has been judged using evidence derived from the three Pilots, and Appendix 4 maps Pilot outcomes against those of the Scheme to show how the information was collated.

In light of evidence across all three Pilots, the Scheme's most notable achievements were in the following areas:

- 'Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and skills' (outcome 1);
- 'Increased number of screenings in pilot areas' (outcome 3);
- 'Pilot screenings achieve high standards of presentation' (outcome 5);
- 'Greater programming diversity in pilot areas' (outcome 8);
- 'The viability of rural cinema business models is established' (outcome 11).

Progress was made against other outcomes, although the record of achievement was more mixed; they were either not achieved in full or the evidence was inconclusive:

- 'New digital technology is trailed successfully' (outcome 2)
- 'Renters are prepared to offer flexible terms' (outcome 4) and 'Greater number of 'first run' presentations in pilot areas' (outcome 6);
- 'Improved audience satisfaction' (outcome 7);
- 'Increased admissions in pilot areas' (outcome 9);
- 'Evidence of RCPS efficacy and impact is collected and reported' (outcome 12);
- 'Effectiveness of scheme management is demonstrated' (outcome 13);
- 'Government and other stakeholders accept evidence of economic, social and cultural benefits of rural cinema provision' (outcome 14).

In the case of new digital technology trials (outcome 2), a distinction needs to be drawn between conduct of the trials and their results. All three Pilots supported deployment of DCI technology in their areas, either as touring kit or fixed installations. However, results of the trials were mixed, notably with the premature demise of the touring model employed in Wiltshire. Nonetheless, valuable lessons have been learned as a result of all the trials, whether successful or otherwise.

A principal assumption underpinning the Scheme was that the two biggest challenges for rural cinema provision are found in the quality of presentation (which can vary from venue to venue) and the supply of content (with audiences having to wait for new releases to become available). This evaluation found that standards of presentation and content supply are important, but not the biggest challenges facing rural providers. Evidence suggests that community and village hall audiences have lower expectations for the quality of presentation, and therefore any improvements are unlikely to make any material difference to admissions numbers or viewer enjoyment. Equally, early access to content may be beneficial for DCI venues, but Blu-ray services are less affected by longer windows. Of greater significance is the size of minimum guarantees charged by distributors and the lack of flexibility in film booking terms.

This evaluation found no evidence that audience diversity in Pilot areas had improved (outcome 10). The limited evidence that exists suggests Pilots tended to attract audiences broadly matching the demographic profile of local populations, and perhaps this is understandable in the relatively short period of time most venues had to develop audiences following their adoption of new equipment.

The Scheme had two related goals: 'Rural exhibition is developed and enhanced in three pilot areas' and 'Best practice models of rural cinema provision are established for wider adoption across the UK'. The first was achieved, although not to the extent originally hoped for in Wiltshire. The second goal is served by the findings from this report, including the case studies, although it remains to be seen whether the models developed under the Scheme will be adopted more widely. Touring DCI was the only area where best practice was not fully established. With cheaper, more portable and robust DCI projectors now available, further testing of the touring model in rural venues is required.

The report card that follows details the evidence in full against each of the Scheme outcomes.

Key

 = *the outcome has been achieved.*

 = *evidence indicates some success, but the outcome has not been achieved in full or evidence is incomplete.*

 = *the outcome has not been achieved or no evidence of achievement exists.*

## Scheme report card

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>1. Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and skills</b></p>		<p>Evidence from all three Pilots indicates progress was made in assessing skills and knowledge gaps and addressing these through training, mentoring and other development opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 43 people were trained at five events as part of the Cine Yorkshire Local Strand; the NMM technical team delivered training for people from Hambleton Forum, Selby Town Hall and Helmsley Arts Centre; events were hosted with NMM and BFFS; and promoters were invited to attend ICO Screening Days.</li> <li>• Shropshire Screen conducted a skills audit at the start of the Pilot, and Staff/volunteer skills and knowledge were assessed in the following areas: operational, technical, health &amp; safety; customer services; equality and diversity awareness; programming; marketing; social media; and audience development. Training sessions were subsequently delivered in response to the audit findings.</li> <li>• In Wiltshire, BFFS SW Group supported a number of venues (new and existing) with advice and training, and programming advice from Patrick Bliss and the ICO was available to a number of venues. Panache Pictures benefited from mentoring by Bath Film Festival organisers and Paul Schilling of BFFS SW Group.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. New digital technology is trialled successfully</b></p>		<p>Every Pilot trialled DCI and Blu-ray technology as touring kit or fixed installations, in addition to satellite delivery and 3D screenings. On the whole these trials were successful, insofar as the equipment was found fit for purpose or technical difficulties were identified and addressed.</p> <p>The obvious exception to this is the trial of touring DCI, which was an important part of the Scheme's original vision. Only Reels on Wheels in Shropshire had any long-term success with touring the equipment (out of necessity, given the decline in 35mm print availability). Yet even Reels on Wheels experienced significant challenges with the kit, which was not as portable or robust as expected:</p> <p><i>'[In one venue] we had 420 people in there paying £20 a ticket, we wheeled the equipment in, built the screen, everything was perfect. Half an hour into it the picture started pixelating. Because the floor was [made of] stone slabs, as the projector was wheeled in it vibrated and one of the cards came out of the projector. Unlike 35mm, where you can get an elastic band or a bit of chewing gum, you can't touch a digital [projector] because you've got to be an engineer. Basically we lost the show.'</i></p> <p><b>Robert Johnson, Reels on Wheels</b></p> <p><i>'I think there's far more to touring the DCI than we conceived of at the time. It was a very early stage move in terms of the equipment and from what I understand the equipment has been difficult to work with at the village venues because there are too many barriers to getting them inside [...] The equipment itself is not at all robust so juggling and moving it around has been problematic.'</i></p> <p><b>Naomi Vera-Sanso, Borderlines Film Festival and Shropshire Screen</b></p> <p>Looking across all three Pilots there is good evidence from the various trials, documenting the lessons learned as a result of live testing in front of paying audiences. The conduct of site surveys led to a better understanding of the capacity and requirements of different types of venue, and this body of knowledge should prove useful in future.</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>3. Increased number of screenings in pilot areas</b></p>		<p>A total of 3,920 screenings took place in Pilot venues between the beginning of the scheme and 14 April 2013.</p> <p>As no baseline data exist, it is not possible to quantify the increase in screenings, but we can infer an overall increase from the fact that many existing venues were able to extend their film offer (particularly market town venues operating DCI), and new venues were established under the Scheme.</p> <p>While the outcome was delivered, performance in this area did not always match the expectations set out in the Pilots' original Business Plans. Lengthier than anticipated procurement and installation stages, the departure of key delivery partners and the shift from touring to fixed DCI all impacted on the scale of activity possible within the period.</p>
<p><b>4. Renters are prepared to offer flexible terms</b></p> <p>and</p> <p><b>6. Greater number of new 'first run' presentations in pilot areas</b></p>		<p>The Pilots reported good working relationships with the majority of distributors, and flexible terms were negotiated for particular films, venues or networks (e.g. <i>Moviola</i> and <i>The King's Speech</i> on Blu-ray).</p> <p>However, smaller venues booking films on 'non-theatrical' single title licences were still expected to honour minimum guarantees required by rights holders, and there appears to have been little flexibility in this despite the financial challenge it can pose in the case of poorly attended screenings.</p> <p>Distributors made no a special case for rural DCI venues, and licensing followed standards terms of business. This meant, for example, that venues with a low number of programming slots wishing to take titles for shorter runs were unable to secure the earliest window releases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The two DCI venues in North Yorkshire, Hambleton Forum and Whitby Pavilion, faced difficulties booking titles within 6 weeks of theatrical debut because distributors were concerned about relatively low audience numbers;</li> <li>• Festival Drayton Centre and Ludlow Assembly Rooms (Shropshire) reported no improvement in access to new releases following their move from 35mm projection to DCI;</li> <li>• Both DCI venues in Wiltshire operated on a part-time basis, limiting the scope for flexible terms with most distributors.</li> </ul> <p>Analysis of RCPS extranet data found that across the Scheme as a whole, DCI venues booked films on average eight weeks after theatrical debut, and 37% of titles were programmed within six weeks of first release. However, this window actually increased over the life of the Scheme: in 2010, the average stood at five weeks, rising to seven in 2011 and nine in 2012 and the first quarter of 2013.</p>
<p><b>5. Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation</b></p>		<p>Audience surveys conducted by venues across the Scheme (both DCI and Blu-ray) paint a positive picture of presentation quality. This evidence, combined with feedback from spot visits by project managers and others, demonstrates genuine improvement in sound and picture quality, and staff/volunteer training in customer care and front of house duties also had a beneficial impact on the audience experience.</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<b>7. Improved audience satisfaction</b>		As identified at the time of the <i>Mid Term Review</i> , there is only partial evidence of audience satisfaction levels, although findings are encouraging, with evidence of good levels of audience satisfaction overall. The lack of repeat surveys conducted by venues means it is not possible to draw any conclusion about changes in attitudes over time.
<b>8. Greater programming diversity in pilot areas</b>		Information held on the RCPS extranet indicates a healthy level of programming diversity across the Scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of 698 unique film titles were screened between the start of the scheme and 14 April 2013.</li> <li>• In the same period there were 103 performances of alterative content (50 in North Yorkshire and Shropshire, and three in Wiltshire).</li> <li>• Over two fifths (44%) of titles programmed across the three Pilots were specialised films (using the BFI's definition), and they accounted for 43% of total admissions.</li> <li>• The majority of frequently programmed titles were British films, led by <i>The King's Speech</i>, <i>The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel</i> and <i>Made in Dagenham</i>.</li> <li>• Six out of ten of the most programmed titles were specialised films.</li> <li>• However, there was a bias towards English language titles in the list of most programmed specialised titles, which was dominated by British films. <i>Untouchable</i> and <i>The Girl Who Played with Fire</i> were the only foreign language titles to appear in the top 20 most programmed specialised films.</li> <li>• Other programming diversity came from partnerships with arts and music festivals; archive film screening and events; and film festivals programming films from around the world.</li> </ul>
<b>9. Increased admissions in pilot areas</b>		Venues generated 209,563 admissions to 14 April 2013 across the Scheme as a whole. No baseline data exist to judge whether this marks an increase in admissions, but it is safe to assume a rise in admissions by virtue of the increased screening activity that took place, in both existing and new venues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average attendance at Blu-ray screenings varied year-on-year during the Scheme, driven by the performance of standout titles.</li> <li>• In contrast, the screen average for DCI performances rose every year of the Scheme, which suggests audiences began to build over time as venues established their offer locally.</li> <li>• The DDP audience survey found the majority of respondents across the three Pilots reported watching more films than in the previous year.</li> </ul>
<b>10. Improved audience diversity in pilot areas</b>		The limited nature of audience survey activity undertaken by the three Pilots, coupled with the fact that the main demographic variables (gender, age, ethnicity and disability) were not collected uniformly, makes it difficult to assess improvements in audience diversity. <p>Existing survey evidence suggests audiences tended to reflect the composition of the populations in each Pilot area. For example, the majority of respondents to the DDP audience survey were aged 35+, and only 2 out of 527 respondents were BAME (which means BAME respondents were actually under-represented in the sample).</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>11. The viability of rural cinema business models is established</b></p>		<p>The Pilots tested a range of business models involving different combinations of delivery partners, programming, licensing terms and revenue sharing. As noted by the <i>Mid Term Review</i>, some approaches had more success than others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence suggests fixed DCI installations contribute to the long-term viability of council-run and other market town venues, especially when coupled with alternative content screenings delivered via satellite.</li> <li>• The case for touring DCI remains to be fully proven, as it was not fully tested. The experience in Wiltshire and Shropshire highlighted certain deficiencies in the model and in the fitness for purpose of the equipment available at the time.</li> <li>• Across all three Pilots there were good examples of thriving, local Blu-ray offers capable of sustaining themselves as a result of capital investment from the Scheme. But in general these ventures succeed only where the right combination of volunteers is actively involved, and/or if they are supported by the likes of Blaize, Flicks in the Sticks, Moviola, or peer networks like the BFFS SW Group and Swindon Film Society.</li> <li>• Film licensing terms can determine the financial success of Blu-ray screenings, and there is evidence that the imposition of minimum guarantees proves problematic when audience numbers are low (which may in turn lead to conservative programming decision making, to mitigate any financial risk).</li> </ul>
<p><b>12. Evidence of RCPS efficacy and impact is collected and reported</b></p>		<p>This outcome was achieved to the extent that some very good evidence exists to inform arguments in favour of future support for rural cinema provision, collated in the present report and elsewhere.</p> <p>That said, there was greater reliance on informal and anecdotal sources than necessary (especially as the data collection plans were agreed from the outset), and no longitudinal data collection. A lack of dedicated resources for research, and the challenges posed to each Pilot by external factors, certainly did not help. In consequence, evidence was less comprehensive on topics like the impact on audience diversity and social inclusion, audience satisfaction and the economic case of digital film exhibition for the full range of venues found in rural areas.</p> <p>Going forward, much could be achieved by standardising venues' data collection and market research activity to build a stronger and more detailed picture of audiences, along the lines proposed in the DDP report (<i>Rural Pilot Programme: Audience Research</i>, April 2013).</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>13. Effectiveness of scheme management is demonstrated</b></p>		<p>Overall, the Scheme was well managed, first by the UK Film Council and latterly the BFI, against a backdrop of institutional change and a fundamental review of film policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial planning for the Scheme, in 2008/09, was based on available evidence, including two consultancy reports and a quantitative assessment of cinema deprivation in England.</li> <li>• Although this preparatory stage proved its worth in many ways, subsequent experience found the equipment specification for touring DCI was under-budgeted, and the challenges of using this untested equipment were far more significant than anticipated. To its credit, the Scheme adapted so Pilots could reconfigure their DCI offers accordingly.</li> <li>• The consortium approach favoured by the UK Film Council proved well suited to the task, and experience confirmed the unique exhibition landscape of Pilot area, justifying intervention based on local partnerships.</li> <li>• Partnership working was not always successful (witness, for example, Moviola's departure from the Wiltshire Pilot), but the benefits felt elsewhere outweighed such negative experiences.</li> <li>• There is evidence that greater communication between Pilots would have been beneficial, especially in view of common challenges associated with touring models.</li> </ul> <p><i>'One of my main criticisms of the programme was there was insufficient communication between the three [Pilots].'</i> <b>Phill Walkley, Moviola</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In general, Pilots found the RCPS extranet useful, and it proved invaluable to this evaluation. However, more could have been done by the UK Film Council/ BFI to avoid inconsistencies, data entry errors and missing entries. Any similar database employed in future should, at the very least, have built-in data entry validation (or some other mechanism for standardisation).</li> <li>• The only significant shortfall in Scheme management was the lack of leadership in initiating dialogue with rights holders about improving the flexibility of film booking terms. To be effective, the conversation around film licensing needed to occur at national, and not local, level.</li> </ul>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>14. Government and other stakeholders accept evidence of economic, social and cultural benefits of rural cinema provision</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">●</p>	<p>The extent to which Government accepts the case for rural cinema as a result of this Scheme remains to be seen, although indications are good:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In recognition of the case for rural cinema, the report of the independent Film Policy Review made a number of references to rural exhibition, e.g.</li> </ul> <p><i>'The consultation [...] suggested that small-scale and rural cinema initiatives have a role to play in audience development strategy, and that there are potential new sources of funding to support this.'</i></p> <p><i>'The Panel recommends that the Big Lottery Fund be asked to consider entering into a funding partnership with the BFI, to create a programme of assistance for local film clubs and societies in areas of rural deprivation or isolation, including the provision of screening facilities for village and community halls. Consideration should also be given to appropriate partnerships with private sector initiatives, to enable the programme to reach even further.'</i></p> <p><i>'[T]he value of the sector needs to be understood in social and cultural as well as economic terms. Alongside local libraries and post offices, cinemas offer a communal space, enjoyed by a wide cross-section of local residents, particularly in deprived and rural communities.'</i></p> <p><i>'The success of initiatives such as the UK Film Council's Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme, Secret Cinema, pop-up cinemas and other event-based screenings also point to a diverse exhibition sector which is providing enriched audience experiences beyond the four walls of traditional auditoria.'</i></p> <p><i>'A comprehensive training and professional development programme would build capacity in venues and festivals, resulting in increased turnover, economic growth and, in particular, the capacity to transform job opportunities in rural areas.'</i></p> <p>(A Future for British Film: It begins with the audience... DCMS, March 2012)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The BFI's plans for a UK Audience Network, comprising regional and national exhibition hubs, will bring together rural providers in an effort to address the issues outlined in the Film Policy Review (see <i>Film Forever: Supporting UK Film</i>, BFI, October 2012).</li> <li>The first ever conference dedicated to rural cinema, hosted by the BFI and Creative England in September 2012, provided a platform to engage the wider stakeholder group in conversation about the case for digital exhibition in non-traditional venues.</li> </ul> <p>This evaluation found convincing evidence that local authorities (including town, district and county councils) are receptive to the economic, social and cultural case for rural cinema, leading to direct investment in, for example, DCI installations across all the three Pilots.</p>

Outcomes	Achieved?	Explanatory notes
<p><b>Goal 1: Rural exhibition is developed and enhanced in three pilot areas</b></p> <p><b>Goal 2: Best practice models of rural cinema provision are established for wider adoption across the UK</b></p> <p><b>Long-term goal (beyond the Pilot Scheme): Rural audiences across the UK have ready access to a high quality cinema experience.</b></p>		<p>Looking across the full body of evidence available to this evaluation, it is clear that access to high quality digital cinema has improved as a result of the Scheme, although not always to the extent outlined in the Pilots' original Business Plans.</p> <p>Nonetheless, all the Pilots, acting as test beds, delivered useful lessons for the development of rural cinema in others parts of the UK. As a result of the Scheme, we now have a better understanding of what works well, what does not, and the reasons for this.</p> <p>As Jay Arnold (formerly of Screen Yorkshire and Creative England and now based at the BFI) suggested in interview, future initiatives could benefit from the 'halo' effect of the Pilots, drawing on models of good practice and the goodwill they generated, to help establish new ventures locally and elsewhere.</p>

### 3. Lessons and recommendations

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Appendix 3 presents the assumptions articulated by Cine Yorkshire, Shropshire Screen, White Horse Pictures and the UK Film Council at the time the evaluation framework was drawn up in October 2010. The Tables set out the thinking underpinning the Pilots (and the Scheme as a whole), casting light on their decision-making at the planning stage.

The Tables also describe the extent to which these founding assumptions proved correct, in light of experience over the last three years, from which lessons can be drawn of relevance to future rural cinema initiatives.

The present section gathers together the most significant lessons, determined by the weight of evidence and frequency with which they arose in interviewees' accounts. The lessons are presented in two broad categories: tactical and strategic. The former have most relevance to day-to-day operations, reflecting key elements of Pilot venues' collective wisdom on different aspects of delivery.

The strategic lessons certainly have operational relevance, but they are intended for an audience of public film bodies, rural cinema networks and others who support rural exhibition, and to this end they are accompanied by specific recommendations for future action.

#### 3.1 Tactical lessons

##### *Social and community aspects of screenings*

*Screenings in village halls can become social events: people have themed events, for instance showing Slumdog Millionaire and having a curry afterwards. In terms of community activity that's what makes it different. We've had jazz music before Casablanca, people decorating their hall as a Greek taverna and showing Mamma Mia!*

**Ellen Thorpe, Blaize**

Time and again, the Scheme demonstrated the importance of the social side of cinemagoing for rural audiences, confirming the Inglis and Todd Consultancy report's finding that socialising is, 'consistently identified as a critically important factor for rural cinema audiences. Creating a sense of occasion is important as are the facilities available at, or near to the venue.' (November 2008).

- Village hall venues tend to attract very localised audiences keen to participate in community events with friends and neighbours.
- In rural settings, the quality of the viewing experience is tied to the communal aspect of screenings and may not be so dependent on the technical presentation (sound and picture quality).

*The other thing we do, we have a 20 minute break halfway through the film and people really enjoy that. It's more than just a film; it's a social event. It's a night out, meeting other people. One man who was widowed 18 months ago comes to every show, he says it's a great opportunity for him to meet people.*

**Chris Henderson, Pateley Bridge Memorial Hall**

- Rural audiences may be prepared to wait longer to watch a film in a local venue if an event offers more than just a viewing opportunity.
- Cine Yorkshire found that 'Silver screening' events aimed at older audiences proved popular, with a high premium placed on the social aspect of these gatherings.

##### *Marketing and promotion*

Different approaches to promotion are required in rural areas, using existing networks and gathering places (e.g. local shops, pubs, community groups). Flyers, posters and word of mouth can be more practical and effective than online promotion. Generating positive word of mouth within local communities is crucial to maintain and increase audiences.

*Word of mouth is still the biggest publicist: the right promoter saying the right things to the right people gets the word out there.*

**Ian Kerry, Flicks in the Sticks**

That said, a strong online presence can raise awareness among partners and local media, and provide a reference point for promoters who may not have their own dedicated web site. The three Pilots each took a different approach to branding and co-ordinated online marketing via a web portal. The results are therefore difficult to compare, but evidence suggests that a strongly branded web site listing screenings across venues in a given geographical area can help to raise the profile of rural cinema generally among potential partners (including local councils), but brings limited benefit to individual venues with their own branding and web sites.

Use of social media to promote specific screenings or events, rather than more generic profile raising, needs to be timely and requires consistent effort:

*[The secret of success is] extremely proactive marketing – use social media, use your email facilities, get the message out there, get it publicised around town and the community. Hit people in real time by which I mean if you've got screenings on a Friday night then get that message on the preceding Thursday. It's not something you can sit back on. You've got to work at it to get the message home to draw the audiences in.*

**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

The Pilots also found that special events (e.g. launches, filmmaker Q&As, festival screenings etc.) serve to attract new audiences and raise the profile of rural cinema ventures. Events held in partnership with other organisations can support cross promotion, broadening the reach of marketing activity.

### **Programme diversity**

Experience of the Pilots points to three key lessons around programming diversity:

- Screen heritage proved popular with audiences when tied into other arts or heritage events, and where content was tailored for the local area.
- Alternative content can regularly draw large audiences, thereby subsidising and helping to promote a venue's cinema offer.

*Festival Drayton [...] said [...] they would now consider [their cinema offer] to be viable but particularly with the satellite element that makes it super viable! That's generally the feedback we've had from everyone; that the satellite offer has potential to subsidise the cinema offer if it needs to. What Festival Drayton was saying is that the cinema offer was doing well but the satellite was hugely beneficial. They said they'd had a significant revenue growth in cinema since the investment.*

**Sue Gainsborough, Wem Town Hall and Shropshire Screen**

- Many venues reported limited demand for 3D screenings, most probably a reflection of the older demographic of rural audiences and the tendency for 3D titles to be family films with younger appeal.

### **Mixed-use venues and working with local authorities**

- Mixed-use venues, including those supported by Arts Council England, have shown interest in extending their programming into film, particularly when tied to the development of alternative content screenings.
- Local authorities are most likely to invest in DCI installations after market testing and audience demand has been demonstrated.
- A committed project champion is needed at executive level within the local council to help support DCI venues under local authority control.
- Cinema has to compete with other non-film offers for programming slots at mixed-use venues, and this can limit programming flexibility.

*It's first come first served, local schools book in for their plays, they have priority, if someone comes along from the National Theatre and says "We'd like to show Hamlet on so and so date" and we look in the calendar, "Well sorry Easingwold Primary have already booked that".*

*We can't do it [...] One of the problems we have with some of the live productions is when some of the companies like the New York Met and Glyndebourne say "We're going to do five operas or music productions and you will take all five". And we look at the calendar and we can't take all five: (a) because we haven't got the space because it's being used and (b) we haven't got the volunteers, there just aren't enough.*

**Walter Rinaldi Butcher, Galtres Centre**

- Furthermore, mixed-use venues can, in theory, maximise their film and alternative content audiences during busy holiday periods. In practice, however, other non-film productions (e.g. Christmas pantomime season) compete for programming slots at the most lucrative times of the year.

### 3.2 Strategic lessons

#### **National support, local networks**

*I do feel really strongly that before you start pumping money for expensive equipment into places you need a small local infrastructure that's going to sustain it. In all our projects we've worked with local groups – whether it's the village hall committee or a small team of enthusiasts – who know their community, and they choose the films and do most of the work on the ground. For example, the first full season of films in Cricklade in this last year has been a huge success, whereas support for the programme in nearby Wootton Bassett, which didn't have the same grassroots community input, has been much patchier.*

**Barbara Hoffbauer, Swindon Film Society**

The Scheme ably demonstrated the virtue of having a national body co-ordinate a rural cinema project involving local delivery partners. The BFI's involvement, backed by substantial Lottery funding, gave the Scheme scale, reach and credibility, helping secure local partnerships with councils and other stakeholders.

*I've been talking to Arts Connect West Midlands, which again is part of the regionalisation programme for arts councils so a major initiative for the West Midlands. Previously we would have been talking about investment into film education [...] and having the weight of Shropshire Screen behind those discussions has been really helpful. It's been useful for profiling not just what's happening already but the ambitions of the county.*

**Sue Gainsborough, Wem Town Hall and Shropshire Screen**

At the same time, delivery by partners sensitive to the needs and circumstances of their local areas ensured the Pilots tailored their offer accordingly. There was compelling evidence that responsive, bespoke delivery was essential to the Pilots' successes, and helped them navigate challenges along the way.

*The great thing about local partners such as Blaize is they know their patch and therefore they are able to deal with the specific problems with a better understanding [...] Having people on the ground is always, always the best solution.*

**Sally Joynson, Screen Yorkshire**

In addition to leveraging additional resources and pooling valuable experience, such local co-ordination can develop a strong, unified brand (where such is felt necessary), and provide a way to manage potential competition between different providers.

*[S]ometimes it feels I get a phone call every day saying "I've heard about Cine Yorkshire and I'd like to do it in my area". I think in terms of raising awareness nationally and being approached by people like arts councils, digital theatres etc, to have that overall brand is really valuable.*

**Rachel McWatt, Cine Yorkshire**

*There are a number of local village halls that provide cinema through Flicks in the Sticks and that's had an impact on our own audience numbers over the years [...] [P]eople who previously would have driven 6 or 7 miles to our Hall will now go and watch it in their local village hall.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

Local networks are also best placed to manage the logistics of equipment loans, providing new and existing ventures with access to high quality kit without the financial burden of purchasing or hiring it at market rates (or the ongoing costs of maintenance and upgrades).

*A lot of the venues can only afford to show films because they get a really good deal with us, they're not paying for hire of the equipment, they're paying a small contribution to the maintenance and admin but they're not paying more than the licence fee so they couldn't really afford to do it if they had to hire equipment on top of it.*

**Rachel McWatt, Cine Yorkshire**

#### **Recommendation 1:**

The cultivation of local rural cinema networks should be encouraged at national level, perhaps as part of the BFI's UK Audience Network comprising Hubs across the nations and regions, and/or through the proposed Community Venues Fund.

The precise form these networks take ought not to be determined in advance; they should develop organically from local partnerships involving existing providers and venues (including village and town halls, mixed-use venues, film societies and community cinemas, touring networks etc.), with involvement of bodies like BFFS and ICO. A core principle of such partnerships should be that publicly funded intervention is informed and driven by local need and circumstance, and not imposed from above.

### ***Flexible film licensing***

Film licensing is one area requiring co-ordinated intervention at national level, to improve flexibility in booking fees and product availability.

- Licence fees for single screenings, which include minimum guarantees, can be prohibitively high for smaller venues in sparsely populated communities where travel costs and poor public transport links minimise the likelihood of passing trade.

*[Minimum guarantees] are a bit of a bugbear. For example, the remastered films [...] the minimums on those are higher than the blockbusters [...] Unfortunately all those have really failed here. So those have cost us a bit of money.*

**Charles Vernon, Movies @ Malmesbury**

*I think the minimum guarantee should be lower. And certainly distributors [...] could offer a deal for new and developing venues or societies, at least to have the minimum guarantee lower to start with [...] If it's a bona fide community organisation that would be a helpful thing for them to do. I think the cost of the film licence is something that always comes as a surprise when people first approach us about putting on a film. They think we can just go into Sainsbury's and buy the DVD and show it. And so we always say to any group do not assume that showing a film is going to be a fundraising opportunity for you because unless you're lucky the chances are it won't. You need to think about it on a break-even basis.*

**Barbara Hoffbauer, Swindon Film Society**

- The cost of film licences can make programmers more risk averse and less likely to programme specialised titles beyond the most popular films with a proven audience.

*I think ideally going forward there would be support for less mainstream content [if there were] lower licence fees [s]o it's less of a risk. Hopefully that's something we can work towards [...] I find it really surprising that for a Blu-ray or DVD screenings the licence fee is as high, if not higher, as it is for a DCI cinema screening.*

**Rachel McWatt, Cine Yorkshire**

In terms of release windows, evidence of audience demand for early releases is ambivalent. Indications are that audiences in village hall venues are generally more content to wait longer (though not too long) for new titles, while visitors to DCI venues are more likely to expect (and demand) early window releases, although over time expectations may change.

*[W]e have learned that to sell-out we need a newly released film as soon as its available on DVD, if we could get them earlier that would be better, and it has to suit our audience.*

**Chris Henderson, Pateley Bridge Memorial Hall**

- Marketing a programme well in advance is crucial, enabling audiences to make informed choices, including the decision to wait for a title to appear locally rather than seek it out elsewhere.

*We found in the early days [audiences] weren't happy to wait and they were still going to the multiplexes for the new releases. So we had to get the marketing more refined in terms of saying this is coming and this is the timeframe, so to try and head people off at the pass from going elsewhere [...] We wanted a greater degree of understanding, that's something the ICO gives us in terms of planning three months ahead. Everyone knows what's coming, the date and time. Marketing is key.*

**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

*I think the important thing is to let people know that the films they want to see are coming and they're relatively patient. Skyfall, for instance, we got about 5 weeks off the release date and we still had good audiences because we'd told people that we were going to get it. It doesn't seem to worry people too much that they're a little bit off release dates*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

- Film supply from Filmbank remains problematic, including the supply of inferior 'vanilla DVDs' and screeners available prior to the home entertainment retail window.

*It's also been a problem in that when we get the discs from Filmbank the quality of the discs is usually nowhere near as high quality as the discs that you get commercially.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

## **Recommendation 2:**

A fundamental review of film licensing terms is long overdue. This follows Ron Inglis and Sue Todd's recommendation in November 2008 that the UK Film Council 'improve non-theatrical distribution': '[t]he Film Council is in a unique position to work with Filmbank and review the distribution arrangements for organisations which lie between theatrical release and domestic usage.'

Such a review requires leadership from a national body (e.g. the BFI) and should go wider than Filmbank to include a partnership approach with rights holders (including distributors and producers), BFFS, ICO, trade associations like the FDA and other interested parties.

The review should examine scope for greater flexibility in:

- the cost of film licensing, including minimum guarantees;
- release windows for public screenings of film on Blu-ray.

It should consider if there is a case for preferential terms for small-scale, rural exhibitors in under-served areas, and whether collective booking schemes, like those operated by networks such as Moviola, Flicks in the Sticks, Blaize Community Arts and BFFS, offer the most effective way to manage bookings while minimising the administrative costs to rights holders.

The review should also examine ways of improving access to publicly funded British films for rural cinema providers, where public bodies have some say in rights management. This could serve the secondary purpose of widening access to independent British film beyond metropolitan centres.

Finally, the review should look at other ways to support rural exhibitors, like the 'guarantee against loss scheme' proposed by Inglis and Todd Consultancy (November 2008), or by reworking existing funds (e.g. the P&A Fund) to include specific provision to incentivise distributors to support rural cinema screenings.

## Valuing volunteers

*[F]or this to work you do need the right group of people involved. [You] do need a group of people who are prepared to give up a certain amount of time.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

The vital contribution of volunteers to the Scheme cannot be underestimated. Across the Pilots there were many examples of volunteer input that helped rural cinema flourish at every level, from village halls to market town venues.

The value of volunteers was first recognised by Inglis and Todd Consultancy's scoping report for the Scheme, which observed that, '[v]olunteers are essential for much of the rural cinema provision in the UK. Many rural venues and organisations rely exclusively or largely on volunteers' (2008).

Evidence from the Scheme highlights the range of benefits that volunteers can bring, including:

- Keeping running costs down, making ventures economically viable even where the business case is unpromising;

*It would be very difficult [to make a profit if paid staff were more involved]. We've taken just over £8,000 profit since last September and there are other events in the theatre [...] I think even if you added those things together it would be difficult to justify a permanent Theatre Manager. It is time consuming. I do all the sorting out of the satellite information when it comes in. If the office did it they'd need another member of staff in the office. I'm going on holiday next week and I have to take the iPad with me in case something turns up which hasn't been sent to other people.*

**Walter Rinaldi Butcher, The Galtres Centre**

- As members of their local community, volunteers can secure buy-in for new services and take advantage of informal channels to help promote rural cinema activity;

*[T]he thing that really worked at Malmesbury is they have strong volunteers working there. [T]he volunteers are always drumming up business and bringing people to it.*

**Sarah-Jane Meredith, White Horse Pictures/BFI (formerly of South West Screen and Creative England)**

- Volunteers, known to local audiences as familiar faces, ensure front of house is welcoming and friendly;
- Volunteers can bring a variety of transferable skills and different perspectives to operations;
- Above all, volunteers are motivated by a desire to participate for the benefit of the venture and wider community, rather than personal gain, and this puts a positive premium on their involvement.

There can, however, be downsides to reliance on volunteers, e.g.:

- A person's commitment to the rural cinema provider may be affected by other factors in their lives, ebbing and flowing over time.
- In human resources terms, there is no guarantee of continuity in the long-term as volunteers can come and go. This problem is exacerbated by the limited nature of succession planning in many voluntary organisations.

*We've got to be mindful that the volunteer pool won't stay static. And I don't think we have currently developed a volunteer recruitment programme. We are holding volunteer meetings every now and then and encouraging people to come along and picking up the odd additional person here and there. I think we've got to just build that in to our planning and programming because I'm not certain that we're doing enough of that at the moment.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

- Ventures may face skills shortages if key volunteers depart or are unable to contribute at any time, and skills gaps can be difficult to fill via ad hoc means.

- Volunteers may not be prepared to take on administrative tasks beyond the bare minimum required for staging a film screening (e.g. box office management and distributor returns). In the case of publicly supported activity, this can mean ventures relying on volunteers are not always willing, or able, to report information required by funding bodies.

*[T]here are a number of issues you need to be aware of when you work on projects which rely heavily on volunteers. When people are paid to do jobs it is fair to have certain expectations of them [...] It is different when you are working with volunteers. You have to respect the fact they are doing the work voluntarily and that often there are other calls on their time. [A]nd also volunteers change, move away, and when they do the knowledge and experience goes with them [...] The admin side of things, like reporting, can be difficult at times.*

**Sally Joynson, Screen Yorkshire**

*It was quite interesting to see there is a difference in professionalism about how they handled [finances]. Obviously with public money you have quite a responsibility about how that money is spent and [...] reported.*

**Shereene Amer, Creative England (and formerly South West Screen)**

The lesson here is that the most successful volunteer-run ventures play to the particular strengths of their team while taking steps to address potential weaknesses. Beyond keeping volunteers committed and engaged to a venture (always easier if it is successful), support and development opportunities offer a way to ensure the correct knowledge and skills are available to the team.

*Things like satellite have gone [...] very smoothly. That is because it was planned well, with the right sort of training and handholding.*

**Ian Kerry, Flicks in the Sticks**

When considering support and development opportunities for volunteers, it is important not to treat them as a homogeneous group. Evidence from the Scheme points to the existence of four broad volunteering categories (catalyst, driver, provider and helper), illustrated in Table 3.1. Any individual can occupy one or more of these categories, and over time they may assume different roles, e.g. beginning as a catalyst or driver then standing aside when others step up into more responsible roles.<sup>7</sup>

**Table 3.1: Volunteering categories**

CATALYST	DRIVER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiates rural cinema venture;</li> <li>• Gathers other volunteers (and/or staff) together;</li> <li>• Secures initial funding/ venue/ equipment etc;</li> <li>• Once up and running, may decide to step back from the venture, or continue in some other capacity (e.g. as a driver, provider or helper).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leads the volunteer team;</li> <li>• Is responsible for co-ordinating activity;</li> <li>• Chairs volunteer meetings and represents the venture in meetings with other parties;</li> <li>• Likely to have financial responsibility for the organisation (e.g. named on the bank account and other formal documentation, including funding applications).</li> </ul>
PROVIDER	HELPER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brings specific skills to the venture (e.g. technical expertise; marketing or programming experience; finance and fund raising etc.);</li> <li>• By virtue of these skills, providers fulfil a specific role within the organisation (e.g. projectionist) and may have formal positions on the management committee (e.g. Treasurer, marketing officer etc.);</li> <li>• Their expertise makes them essential to the venture's long-term success.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides assistance on a more casual basis, helping with equipment set up, front of house duties etc. where specific skills are not required;</li> <li>• May not have such a strong commitment to the venture as other categories, but makes a valuable contribution nonetheless.</li> </ul>

Source: Bigger Picture Research

<sup>7</sup> Rural cinema providers can be run entirely on a voluntary basis, but equally common are ventures with a mix of paid staff and unpaid volunteers; the roles of catalyst, driver and/or provider may be filled by staff working alongside a team of volunteer helpers. For example, a town hall manager (employed by the local council) might initiate film screenings in the venue, employing a part-time projectionist to work alongside local volunteers in front of house roles.

It is clear from Table 3.1 that a successful volunteer-run venture requires a team drawn from across these different categories.

- The catalyst is essential at the start of a new venture, while a capable driver (which may be one or more individuals) is required throughout the life of an organisation.
- Providers bring necessary skills and expertise, enabling the venture to operate effectively, while helpers take on responsibility for practical, routine tasks to ensure screenings and events run smoothly. Depending on their level of commitment and interest, helpers may decide to take on new skills to become providers, or even drivers, over time.

*I think you need to put together a group of people who are going to run with this [...] It doesn't need to be the trustees of the hall or the management committee of the venue, but you need a core group of people who are sufficiently interested to take it forward and some formal allocation of roles. To some extent although it's all volunteers there needs to be some formal process of deciding what is the plan, what are we trying to do, and afterwards most importantly did we achieve it, what went wrong/right.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

The provision of appropriate support and training can ensure the right mix of knowledge, skills and interests is maintained over time, and assist with team morale and motivation. Several priorities for publicly funded support for volunteers (whether delivered through the likes of the BFFS or ICO, or local networks like Flicks in the Sticks, Blaize Community Arts and Moviola) emerged from the Pilots' experiences:

- Mechanisms for identifying and supporting potential **catalysts** in the local area, and making start-up advice and good practice models available to inform and inspire them;
- Developing and supporting volunteer recruitment drives, through promotional activity and other inducements, e.g. employer-based incentives (there is scope for partnerships with third sector bodies like the National Council for Voluntary Organisations and Skills - Third Sector);

*We tried to get volunteers involved and that is one of the problems we've had with the community cinema project. We're disappointed that we don't have a bigger take up from volunteers. Typically it's all administered and facilitated through paid staff. It's difficult to understand, we've gone through local community groups, the local secondary school, we've gone to the audiences and said this facility is here if you want to be a part of it. We haven't had the take-up. We don't know why. But we're continuing our efforts to try to attract volunteers.*

**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

- Offering advice and development opportunities to **drivers** so they are equipped to lead a new (or existing) venture, including understanding the financial and legal requirements this entails, and team management skills;
- Assisting **providers** to hone and develop new or existing skills (whether technical, trade-based or professional), and successfully transpose them into a film exhibition setting;
- Providing development opportunities for non-specialist **helpers** who might consider becoming providers with the right encouragement and support (e.g. taster sessions, introductory courses on technical subjects etc.).

### **Recommendation 3:**

Training and development opportunities for volunteers are available in different parts of the UK, but provision is patchy. It would therefore be timely to review existing support available to volunteers and volunteer-run organisations operating in rural cinema settings, and address gaps or develop new ways of working (including partnerships with third sector bodies) to improve volunteer recruitment, skills development, team building, retention and succession planning.

## **Audience development**

*I think the lesson is: [...] you have got to be a little patient to build audience numbers, prepared to take a bit of a hit initially and not be too adventurous too quickly. You have to experiment; we tried a very adventurous August, it was Olympic month, a lot of people were on holiday and far less people were aware of the cinema. We probably made a lot of mistakes in a short period of time then. But we had an intent to demonstrate that we could do these things, and that helped us to get access to the Creative England funding.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

The Pilots' experiences confirmed what has long been known: audiences take time to build. This appears true irrespective of the size of the venue, and applies equally to Blu-ray and DCI screenings.

*The thing we found with Melksham was trying to work out who the audience is, and that probably took longer than any of us thought. With Blu-ray it's easier to say "We can get this film in for that audience and this film for that audience" and be a bit more eclectic. But with DCI you have to work out who your audience is.*

**Sarah-Jane Meredith, White Horse Pictures/BFI (formerly of South West Screen and Creative England)**

- Audience development, understood here to include a raft of complementary activities such as market research, marketing and promotion, targeted programming and event management, is an area where many rural cinema providers require external support, advice and guidance. The skills required for audience development often exceed those available to volunteer teams, and market research and promotional activity can be expensive.
- The Pilots' included some good examples of audience development support delivered under the Scheme, but more can always be done and future schemes should make adequate funding available *alongside* capital funds for equipment.

*We did get a bit of money from Creative England that helps with the marketing, to do that more professionally than we might otherwise have done, and there's a little bit of surplus within that to allow us to take risks with a few films. But I think if there was access to more development training and resources to help develop that audience it would be a great boon.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

- BFFS and ICO have a wealth of experience in delivering high quality audience development support, and more should be done to develop these offers with rural exhibition in mind.

*If [BFI is] keen on doing community venues the ICO or BFFS has got to play a role. Giving people kit is neither here nor there, it's what they do with the kit, how they work with audiences, how they do their marketing and publicity. There's no point everyone starting from scratch, you might as well bring in someone who knows how to do it [...] Organisations like the BFFS and ICO know what to do, how to make the publicity look nice, make it a good experience [...] You've got to provide the wherewithal, the advice on how to do it.*

**Sarah-Jane Meredith, White Horse Pictures/BFI (formerly of South West Screen and Creative England)**

### **Recommendation 4:**

Funding for audience development, including market research, marketing and promotion activity, programming support and events, should be considered as important as capital funding, with adequate provision made to support rural cinema providers lacking the necessary skills and resources.

### **Data collection and evidence gathering**

A noteworthy strength of the Scheme was its incorporation of evidence gathering and assessment right from the outset. This is not always the case with publicly funded initiatives, despite the obvious benefits of such an approach.

Yet while the Scheme included good examples of data collection and evidence gathering, there were also some significant shortfalls in practice, which hindered the evaluation process.

None of the Pilots adhered strictly to the data collection plans agreed in October 2010, in many cases for good reason as operational changes meant the plans were no longer relevant.

However, the standard of evidence gathering was lower than it should have been in several key areas:

- Audience surveys were not repeated, so it was not possible to measure change over time, and the number of responses was generally low with little thought given to sampling.
- Survey reporting tended to be very basic, and the lack of standardised questions meant that responses could not be aggregated across venues to build a more robust dataset.
- Feedback from spot visits to venues, interviews with venue managers and promoters etc. was rarely documented, despite advice to this effect in the Pilots' data collection plans. Reports were more often ad hoc and lacked specific detail, rendering them less useful to the evaluation.
- The RCPS extranet was a positive development, furnishing the evaluation with unvarnished insights into programming and admissions across the three Pilots. Unfortunately, the lack of validation at the point of data entry meant errors cropped up in reporting and records were not always kept up to date. In consequence, the process of data cleaning took longer than necessary.
- The overall approach to data collection and evidence gathering was reactive rather than proactive, in the sense that information was collected in response to external requirements rather than to inform day-to-day project management.

#### **Recommendation 5:**

A cultural change is required within the funded film sector, placing greater emphasis on tactical and strategic decision-making rooted in evidence-based practice. This cannot be achieved without appropriate support, including sufficient resources to meet research costs and training to develop providers' in-house research capacity.

Further to this, there is scope at national level for the promotion of best practice models (e.g. standardised audience surveys). Much could be achieved by sharing questionnaire templates, analytic strategies and reporting tools, so that even the smallest venue or rural cinema provider could draw upon tried and tested models and in so doing help build a databank of valid and reliable evidence to everyone's mutual benefit.

The limited nature of audience survey activity undertaken by venues across the Scheme, and inconsistency in the way questionnaires were framed and analysed, needs to be addressed going forward. As the audience survey report prepared by DDP for the BFI in April 2013 concluded, *'[t]here clearly needs to be encouragement, support and active training on the benefits of gathering audience data electronically.'* (*Rural Pilot Programme: Audience Research*, April 2013).

The merits of longitudinal research (measurement over time) need to be better understood and implemented. The collection of baseline data is essential, alongside regular follow-up fieldwork, and funded partners need to plan for this.

In the case of audience surveys, questionnaires should be distributed at more than one film performance in an effort to gather a representative selection of responses, including across different types of film and matinee and evening performances (when audience make-up is likely to differ). Venues should plan their sample with care, setting a target for the number of responses and the different types of audience they wish to hear from.

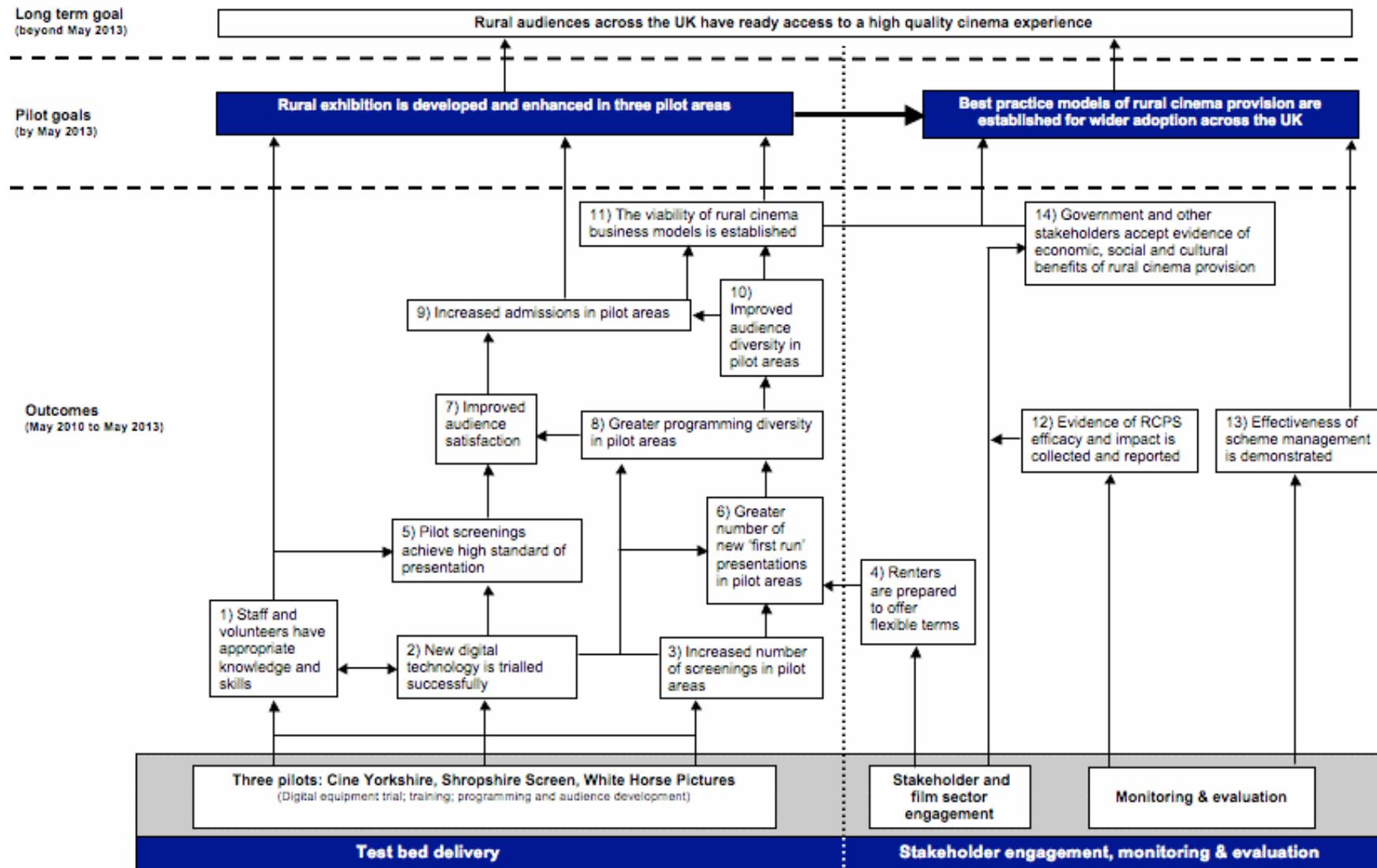
For future exhibition support schemes, there is considerable merit in collecting box office and

programming data via an extranet provided some form of validation is in place at the point of data entry; proper training and support should be provided to anyone responsible for entering data to the system.

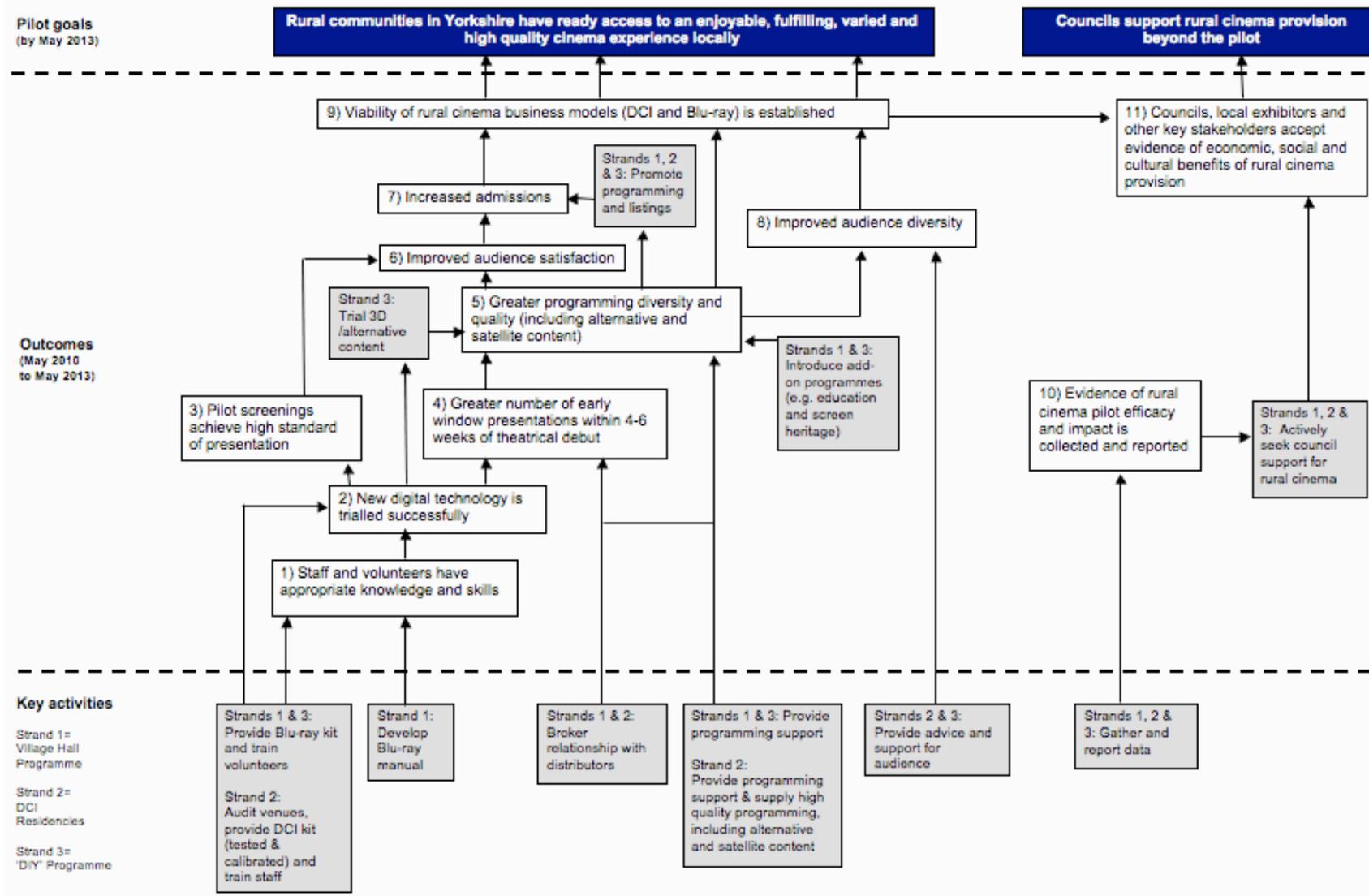
[end]

## Appendix 1: Outcomes maps (revised in June 2012)

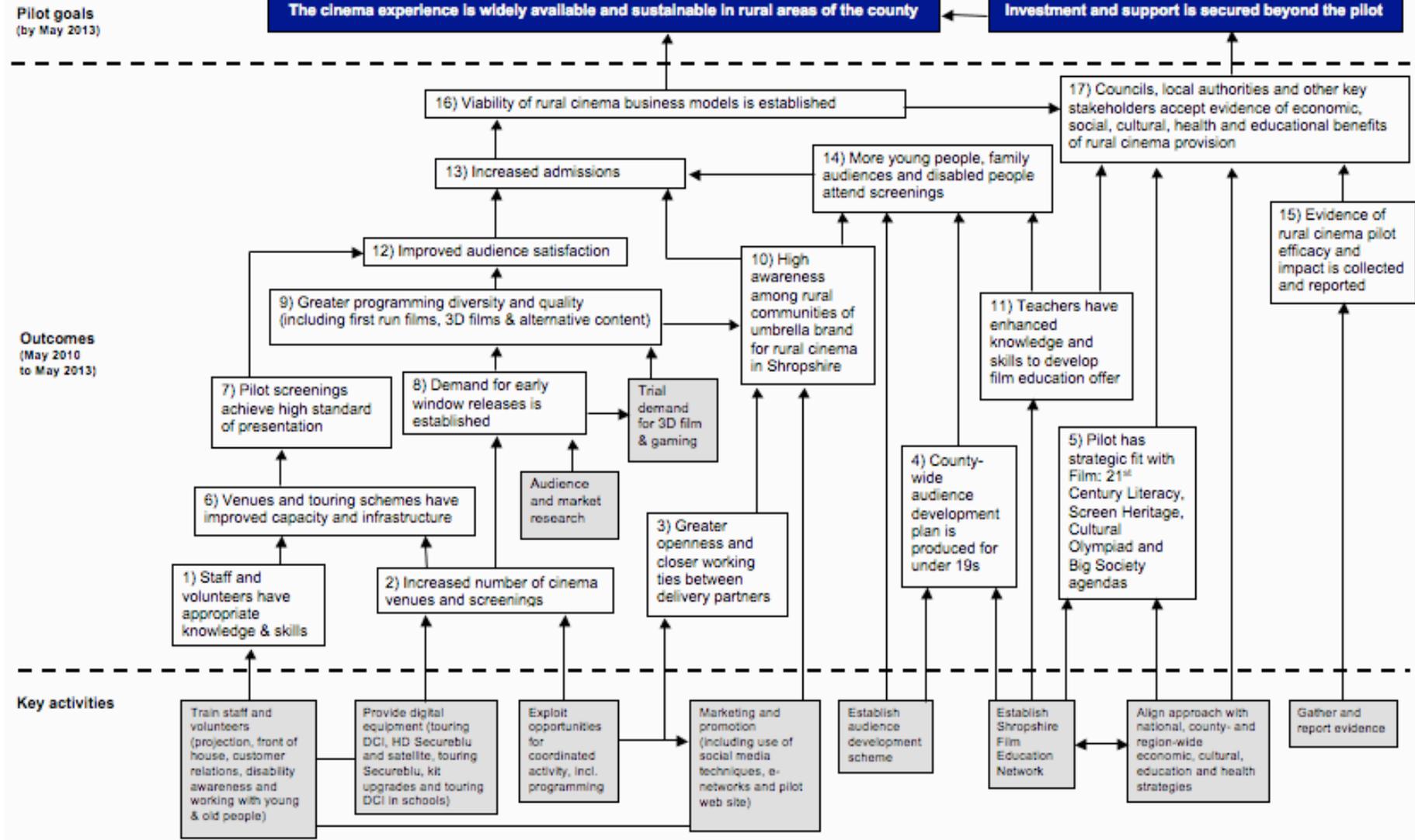
### Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme



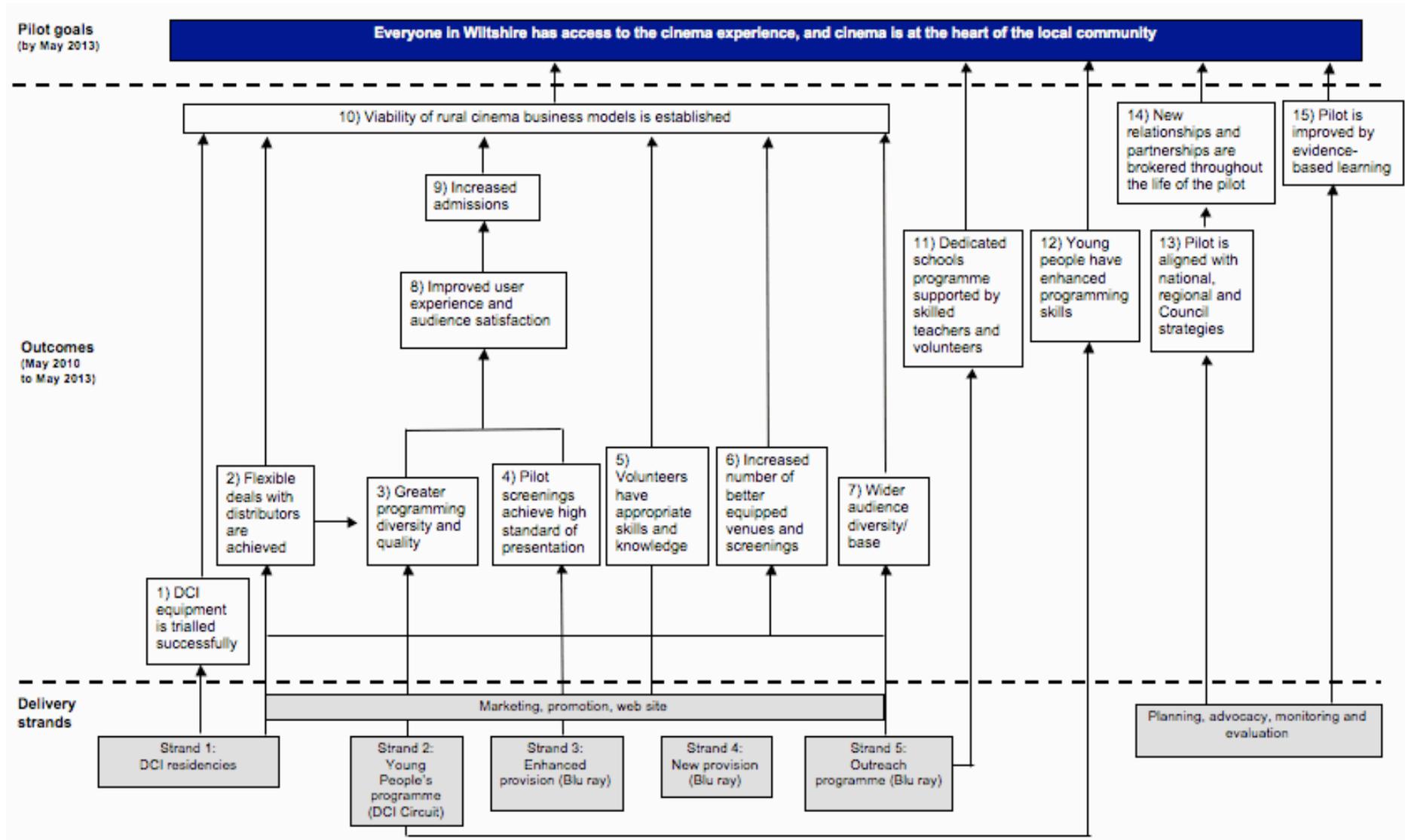
## Cine Yorkshire



## Shropshire Screen



## White Horse Pictures



## Appendix 2: Pilots' data collection plans (October 2010)

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### Cine Yorkshire

#### 1. Staff/ volunteer questionnaire

Staff and volunteers will be asked to complete a questionnaire about their knowledge and skills (**outcome 1**). The survey will use a series of rating scales and attitude scales to assess technical knowledge and proficiency, as well as role-specific skills (e.g. customer care, front-of-house, marketing etc.). The survey will also ask respondents involved in the Village Hall programme their views on the usefulness of the Blu-ray manual.

The survey will be conducted early on in the pilot to establish a baseline for the ratings scales, and repeated at the halfway and end points.

#### 2. Venue/provider management interviews

Managers will be interviewed to give their assessment of staff and volunteer knowledge and skills (**outcome 1**), and the success of the technology trial (**outcome 2**). The interviews, lasting no more than one hour, will follow a standardised question schedule to ensure the same areas are addressed with each manager. Managers will be interviewed twice (at some point during the pilot, and again at the end).

#### 3. Project manager reporting

The project manager will keep records of the following:

- Details of the technology trial across each strand (**outcome 2**), describing what equipment and training has been delivered, the types of technical support available, a log of issues that have arisen in the course of the trial etc. Notes will be compiled at each stage of the technology trial and a summary report will be produced at the end of the pilot.
- Assessment of the rural cinema business case (for Village Hall programme, DCI residencies and DIY programme) based on review of box office and audience survey data and other information sources available (**outcome 9**). (NB an independent evaluator could make final assessment of the business case).
- Details of monitoring and evaluation activity (including data collection strategies, reporting, meeting minutes etc.) that help to establish pilot efficacy and impact (**outcome 10**).

#### 4. Audience survey

Participating venues and providers in each strand will conduct periodic questionnaire surveys to measure:

- Audience views on the quality of film presentation (**outcome 3**), using attitude scales.
- Audience views on programming diversity and quality (**outcome 5**), using attitude scales.
- Audience satisfaction (**outcome 6**), using attitude scales (for quantitative analysis) and open-ended questions (to solicit qualitative responses).
- Audience diversity (**outcome 8**), using demographic and visitor categories (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, disability, whether the respondent is a first time visitor).
- The social and cultural benefits of rural cinema provision (**outcome 11**).

Surveys will be administered at least twice at each venue (at one or more points during the pilot, and again at the end).

#### 5. Spot visits to screenings

The project manager (or someone delegated by the steering group) will conduct one or more spot visits to each venue/provider during the pilot period to personally assess the standard of presentation (**outcome 3**) and make a short report of their visit identifying any issues of concern.

#### 6. Programme and box office analysis

Programme and box office records will be analysed periodically (at the end of each season? Each quarter?) to demonstrate for each strand:

- The number of new 'first run' presentations in film programmes (**outcome 4**), and as % of the total.
- The number of specialised titles, alternative content, satellite content, and different genres in film programmes (**outcome 5**), and as % of the total.
- The number of paid admissions (**outcome 7**).

### **7. Programming Advisory Panel assessment**

Using existing programme records, the Panel will assess the diversity and quality of the programmes across each strand (**outcome 5**). Minutes of their deliberations will serve as a record of the assessments.

### **8. Key stakeholder interviews**

A sample of key stakeholders (e.g. council representatives) will be interviewed about the evidence base demonstrating the economic, social & cultural benefits of rural cinema provision (**outcome 11**). Each interview (held at the conclusion of the pilot) will follow a standard question schedule, and last no more than three quarters of an hour. The interviewer will probe for stakeholder views about the conduct of the pilot, the evidence of impact and prospects for their support of rural cinema provision in future.

## **Shropshire Screen**

### **1. Staff/ volunteer questionnaire**

Staff and volunteers will be asked to complete a questionnaire about their knowledge and skills (**outcome 1**). The survey will use a series of rating scales and attitude scales to assess technical knowledge, proficiency and confidence in a number of areas (e.g. projection, front-of-house, customer relations, disability awareness, working with young and old people etc.).

The survey will be conducted early on in the pilot to establish a baseline for the ratings scales, and repeated at the halfway and end points.

### **2. Venue/provider management interviews**

Managers will be interviewed to give their assessment of staff and volunteer knowledge and skills (**outcome 1**), and any improvements in their capacity and infrastructure (**outcome 5**). The interviews, lasting no more than one hour, will follow a standardised question schedule to ensure the same areas are addressed with each manager. Managers will be interviewed twice (at some point during the pilot, and again at the end).

### **3. Project management reporting**

The project manager will keep the following records:

- Number of cinema venues and screenings in the pilot (**outcome 2**), and details of venue/touring scheme capacity (**outcome 5**).
- Details of the county-wide audience development plan for under 19s (**outcome 3**).
- Pilot's alignment with Film: 21st Century Literacy, Screen Heritage, Cultural Olympiad and Big Society agendas (**outcome 4**).
- Assessment of demand for early window releases, based on evidence from box office data, programming information and audience surveys (**outcome 7**).
- Details of monitoring and evaluation activity (including data collection strategies, reporting, meeting minutes etc.) (**outcome 14**).
- Assessment of the rural cinema business case based on a review of box office and audience survey data and other information sources available (**outcome 15**). (NB an independent evaluator could make final assessment of the business case).

### **4. Analysis of box office and film programmes**

Box office and programme records will be analysed at the end of each season to demonstrate for each provider and across the pilot as a whole:

- Demand for early window releases is established (**outcome 7**).
- The number of mainstream and specialised titles, number of new 'first run' presentations, 3D films, alternative content and different genres in film programmes (**outcome 8**), and as % of the total.
- The number of paid admissions (**outcome 12**).

## 5. Audience survey

Participating venues and touring schemes will conduct periodic questionnaire surveys to measure:

- Audience views on the standard of film presentation (**outcome 6**), using attitude scales.
- Audience demand for early window releases (**outcome 7**).
- Audience views on the diversity and quality of programming (**outcome 8**), using attitude scales.
- Audience awareness of umbrella brand for rural cinema in Shropshire (**outcome 9**).
- Audience satisfaction with the cinema experience (**outcome 11**), using attitude scales (for quantitative analysis) and open-ended questions (to solicit qualitative responses).
- Audience diversity (**outcome 13**), using demographic and visitor categories (e.g. age, gender, disability, whether the respondent is a first time visitor, whether respondent has visited as part of a family group).
- The economic, social, cultural, health and educational benefits of rural cinema provision (**outcome 16**), using attitude scales.

Surveys will be administered at least twice at each venue (at one or more points during the pilot, and again at the end).

## 6. Spot visits to screenings

The project manager (or someone delegated by the Project Board) will conduct one or more spot visits to each venue/provider during the pilot period to personally assess the standard of presentation (**outcome 6**) and make a short report of their visit.

## 7. Shropshire FEN focus group

A focus group with 6 to 10 teachers (selected through the Shropshire Film Education Network) will be hosted towards the end of the pilot. The group discussion, lasting no more than one hour, will explore teachers' views about the impact of the pilot on their knowledge, skills and confidence in developing their film education offer (**outcome 10**).

## 8. Key stakeholder interviews

A sample of key stakeholders (e.g. council representatives) will be interviewed about the evidence base demonstrating the economic, social, cultural, health and educational benefits of rural cinema provision (**outcome 16**). Each interview (held at the conclusion of the pilot) will follow a standard question schedule, and last no more than three quarters of an hour. The interviewer will probe for stakeholder views about the conduct of the pilot, the evidence of impact and prospects for their support of rural cinema provision in future.

## White Horse Pictures

### 1. DCI venue management interviews

Managers and projectionists will be interviewed to give their assessment of the DCI technology trial (**outcome 1**), and managers' view of Moviola's organisational capacity (**outcome 8**). The interviews, lasting no more than one hour, will follow a standardised question schedule to ensure the same areas are addressed with each manager. Managers will be interviewed twice, once in year one (October 2010- March 2011) and the schedule for follow up to be determined at the end of first year.

### 2. Project management reporting

Project manager (Audience Development Officer? DCI lead manager? Programming Group? Management Steering Group?) will keep the following records:

- Details of the DCI technology trial (**outcome 1**), describing what equipment and training has been delivered, the types of technical support available, a log of issues that have arisen in the course of the trial etc. Notes will be compiled at each stage of the technology trial and a summary report will be produced at the end of the pilot.
- The terms of deals with distributors, and the number and type of distributors involved (**outcome 2**).
- Moviola organisational capacity (**outcome 8**).

- Assessment of the rural cinema business case based on a review of box office and audience survey data and other information sources available (**outcome 10**). (NB an independent evaluator could make final assessment of the business case).
- Number of young people involved in programming activity (**outcome 11**).
- Pilot's alignment with national, regional and council strategies (**outcome 12**).
- Details of significant new relationships and partnerships (**outcome 13**). 'Significant' means relationships and partnerships that make a direct and tangible contribution to pilot delivery.
- Details of monitoring and evaluation activity (including data collection strategies, reporting, meeting minutes etc.) and examples of evidence-based learning (**outcome 14**).

### 3. Analysis of box office and film programmes

Box office and programme records will be analysed periodically (at the end of each season? Each quarter? More frequently?) to demonstrate for each strand:

- The number of mainstream and specialised titles, number of new 'first run' presentations and different genres in film programmes (**outcome 3**), and as % of the total.
- The number of paid admissions (**outcome 9**).

### 4. Programming Group assessment

Using existing programme records, the Programming Group will assess the diversity and quality of the programmes across each strand (**outcome 3**). Minutes of their deliberations will serve as a record of the assessments.

### 5. Audience survey

Participating venues and providers in each strand will conduct periodic questionnaire surveys to measure:

- Audience views on the diversity and quality of programming (**outcome 3**), using attitude scales.
- Audience views on the standard of film presentation and seating (**outcome 4**), using attitude scales.
- Audience diversity (**outcome 6**), using demographic and visitor categories (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, disability, whether the respondent is a first time visitor, whether respondent has visited as part of a family group).
- The quality of user experience and audience satisfaction (**outcome 7**), using attitude scales (for quantitative analysis) and open-ended questions (to solicit qualitative responses).

Surveys will be administered at least twice at each venue (at one or more points during the pilot, and again at the end).

### 6. Spot visits to screenings

The project manager (or someone delegated by the Management Steering Group) will conduct one or more spot visits to each venue/provider during the pilot period to personally assess the standard of presentation (**outcome 4**), gather feedback from projectionists and make a short report of their visit.

### 7. Young people focus group

A focus group with between 6 and 10 young people involved in programming and promoting the Young People's Programme will be hosted after the start of the pilot and again at the end. The group discussions, lasting no more than one hour, will explore young people's thoughts and feelings about their involvement in the programme, and specifically about the programming skills they have developed as a result (**outcome 11**).

## Appendix 3: Assumptions

The Tables below set out the assumptions made by the three Pilots and the UK Film Council at the time the Scheme was originally conceived, forming a key part of the evaluation framework developed in October 2010.

Each Table lists the assumptions and describes, in light of experience over the last three years, whether they proved correct or not.

Table A.1 was completed by Bigger Picture Research on behalf of the BFI, while the others were supplied by the project management teams responsible for each Pilot.

**Table A.1: Scheme assumptions**

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
1). A pilot scheme is necessary to trial solutions in a focused, monitored environment.	x			Experience of touring DCI showed, for example, that thorough testing in real world was essential.
2). The pilot areas of Shropshire, Wiltshire & Test Valley and North Yorkshire are areas of cinema deprivation.	x			At the time the pilot Scheme was developed, there was evidence of cinema deprivation in these areas.  Several interviewees questioned whether the three pilot areas were the best choices for the pilot, but evidence suggests the UK Film Council acted in good faith on the basis of solid research evidence. The three pilot areas were certainly not the only areas in England lacking cinema provision, but they were just as well suited to be test-bed areas.
3). Each pilot area has its own particular characteristics and is at a different stage of cinema development. There are significant operational and structural differences in each area. A one-size-fits all approach is undesirable due to local variability.	x			North Yorkshire had relatively little existing provision compared with the other two pilots, although it was far from being a 'blank slate' (for example, the BFFS Yorkshire group was active in the area). Both Wiltshire and Shropshire had well established mobile rural cinema networks (Moviola, Flicks in the Sticks and Reels on Wheels).
4). The areas selected for the pilot provide a valuable test bed for rural cinema development that could be applied in other rural areas.	x			The three areas were sufficiently diverse to provide scope for testing different models and types of delivery.
5). A consortium approach based on local partnerships is the best way to build on the success of existing initiatives.	x			Although the consortium approach worked well in most cases, it was not without problems (e.g. Moviola's departure from the Wiltshire pilot, and competition for funding among partners).
6). Three years is a sufficient period of time for the pilot to yield evidence of positive results.	x			
7). £1.2 million is a sufficient amount of money (along with partnership funding) to achieve the Scheme's goals.	x			

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
8). Ongoing monitoring and evaluation is needed to record and promote good practice.	x			The Mid Term Review identified significant gaps in the data and information captured by the pilots, and not all of these were properly addressed by the end of the Scheme.
9). UK-wide roll out of the scheme will depend on sharing impact evidence and good practice.			x	Other factors are important, including the state of the wider funding landscape, competing policy agendas, different strategic priorities etc.
10). Government, other funders and the private sector need to accept the case for rural cinema's economic, social and cultural benefits if the scheme is to be rolled out across UK.			x	
11). There is unmet demand among rural communities for watching a wide range of programming (including new releases, digital 3D films and alternative content) on the big screen.			x	Although alternative content has proven popular and commercially viable, demand for 3D films and early window new releases has not been properly tested by the Scheme.
12). Existing rural cinema audiences are not fully representative of rural populations; in particular, they tend not to encompass young people (under 24) or older adults (55+).	x	x		Evidence from the pilots suggests that in terms of age profile, rural audiences match closely the older skew found in rural populations.
13). Audience diversity will improve if rural cinemas offer a wider range of programming and a higher standard of presentation.			x	Evidence of audience diversity is incomplete and therefore it is not possible to say for certain which factors might influence it.
14). The two biggest challenges for rural cinema provision are: quality of presentation and supply of content	x	x		The standard of presentation and content supply are important, but not the biggest challenges facing rural providers. Evidence suggests that community and village hall audiences have lower expectations for the quality of presentation, and therefore any improvements are unlikely to make much difference. Equally, early access to content may be beneficial for DCI venues, but Blu-ray services are less affected by longer windows. Of greater significance is the size of minimum guarantees charged by distributors and the lack of flexibility in film booking terms.  <i>'If you want this to work [...] then the high cost of licences has to be addressed and that has not been achieved to date. It is not something that can be handled at local level, it's a national issue and that needs to be led by BFI. It is one of the barriers to the project's long term future.'</i> <b>Sally Joynson, Screen Yorkshire</b>
15). Rural communities do not enjoy the same high standard of presentation found in many urban cinemas because they have limited access to industry standard equipment.	x			Although this is true, it fails to acknowledge the efforts made by film societies, mobile networks and others to provide the best possible standards of service within the context of non-film venues, and the different level of expectation audiences have of such services.

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
16). New digital equipment (e.g. DCI-compliant and Blu-ray projection) offers the best and most cost-effective option for improving the standard of film presentations.	x	x		In some cases, better screens and improvements in sound (through new speakers, amplifiers and the use of sound proofing and dampening solutions) had marked impact on standards of presentation at reasonable cost.
17). Operators need to be trained to get the best out of new digital equipment to ensure the highest standard of presentation.	x			
18). High standard film presentations increase audience satisfaction.	x			
19). DVD-based equipment in current use by rural exhibitors limits programming options due to restrictive release windows.	x	x		Programming options are limited by availability within restrictive windows, but these are shifting and in many cases audiences are prepared to wait for films screened locally provided they are advertised well in advance.
20). Young audiences, in particular, want to see new films as close to their theatrical release date as possible.			x	The Scheme did not test this assumption.
21). DCI-compliant equipment is required to secure licenses for new first run films.	x			This is true but use of DCI equipment is no guarantee of securing first run films within 4-6 weeks. Distributors take into account other factors like audience size, which can influence licensing decisions.
22). British Film Institute, working with pilot partners, needs to encourage distributors to change the current windows for non-theatrical licenses, to make a wider range of titles available as close to cinema release as possible.			x	As this did not take place it is not possible to say whether such action would have the desired effect.
23). A mixed offering of formats (DCI-compliant and Blu-ray) offers the most flexibility for rural exhibition operating across a range of venues.	x			
24). The availability of a wider range of programming (including first run new releases, digital 3D films, specialised films and alternative content) increases audience appeal and satisfaction.			x	
25). Alongside programming diversity, development activity (including marketing and promotion, special events etc.) is needed to build audiences.	x			Effective, targeted marketing and better management of customer data are essential to success.

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
26). Audience development and improved audience satisfaction lead to increased admissions.			x	There is insufficient evidence to test this assumption.
27). The long-term viability of rural cinema depends on increased admissions and sustained audience growth.	x			<p>Other factors are just as important, including the quality and commitment of volunteers involved in delivering rural cinema.</p> <p><i>'I ought to underline that because it's a factor in everything we do, we are all volunteers. Occasionally it's a drawback, occasionally it's an advantage, but it's always a factor.'</i></p> <p><b>David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall, Shropshire</b></p>

**Table A.2: Cine Yorkshire assumptions**

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
1). North Yorkshire has a low population density, making it difficult to offer cost-effective and sustainable film provision.	x			By nature, communities are sparse and more widespread in isolated rural communities, meaning audiences are comparatively low and thus licence fees can be prohibitive.
2). The costs of delivering local services and opportunities are disproportionately high in small rural communities.	x			Added to the above, journey times to more isolated areas + petrol to ferry kit around are also higher. Cost of equipment slightly cheaper towards end of pilot.
3). Older adults and disabled people often suffer from isolation and limited access to social and cultural activities in small rural communities.	x			Audience generally has older skew. The 'silver screening' events have been particularly popular, with a high value placed on additional social activity. As the profile of the project has risen, we have been contacted by a number of organisation that support. Older adults and disabled people who would like to access support from the project (in both rural and urban communities.) One filmgoer who suffered from tourettes hadn't been to the cinema in decades but felt confident enough to attend a screening in her local village hall with people who knew her. Reliance on venues to be accessible but all have disabled access and many have hearing loops etc.
4). Lack of programming and technical experience and skills have prevented councils from investing in film provision in the past.	x			Local authorities were only prepared to invest in DCP after audience had been successfully tested by the project (in case of Whitby Pavilion and The Forum Northallerton.) The pilot has proved that there are both technical and programme champions within local authorities but funds are a bigger issue and councils want a proven business model before they will invest
5). There is a lack of programming experience and skills in North Yorkshire.	x			Programming expertise is evident, but limited to specialist film clubs and societies. Establishment of 2 x DCP venues have improved experience in the region
6). Many existing non-theatrical exhibitors (e.g. film societies) take an individualistic approach and want to operate in their own way.	x			See above + ownership / tendency to be more self serving, reluctance to share kit + report screening data
7). Filmbank has provided poor service in the past.	x			Poor service was mainly around delivery of DVDs but now most venues and Blaize source their own. Single screening fees are still considered high
8). Potential delivery partners (e.g. ACE-funded venues) are keen to extend their programming through film.	x			Although most of the venues on our current waiting list are community / village halls, there are some arts centre and there is also an appetite for support to put an alternative content programme in place.
9). Many communities already congregate in local venues to generate their own programmes of activity. In fact, small rural communities typically self-organise activities around a central, local venue.	x			Most of the venues could not sustain themselves on a film programme alone (which is why there isn't a cinema there..) and typically have a programme of social and cultural activities, which sometimes compliments / supports cross promotion and at other times makes it tricky to put a regular film programme in place. Volunteers often involved in multiple activities in the venues.

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
10). Although travel across the county to access arts opportunities is not convenient for all, most communities are within reach of local venues.	x	x		In rural areas public transport can be very limited particularly in evenings, so if users do not have their own transport they would struggle to get to screenings unless they are very local.
11). Local venues need to programme performances or voluntary arts workshops to meet the requirements of North Yorkshire County and District Councils cultural planning policy.			x	Suspect this remit may have changed significantly in light of local authority cuts.
12). There is increasing demand for, and awareness of, film activity in North Yorkshire.	x			Enquiries continue to come in and we have a waiting list currently of 48 venues. This tends to peak around publicity campaigns (such as the recent launch of our new Bradford Community Initiative). A large proportion is in N Yorks but spans across North of UK.
13). Screen heritage is popular with audiences.	x			Very popular particularly when tied in with arts / heritage days and content is tailored locally. Eg. Pudsey Fair archive show had 800 attending in 2012. We continue to work with YFA to present shows further to the success of our archive film festival (Contrast/Brilliance). Older audiences also love to see classic feature films.
14). Different approaches to promotion are required in rural areas, using existing networks to target engagement activities.	x			Smaller communities who all use the same shop / post office (and are often older and less tech savvy) rely significantly less on online promotion than urban audiences and prefer to use flyers / posters or local print listings, word of mouth and promotion at other local venues. Film nights may only be run by volunteers once every six weeks or so and the motivation to set up an email list or do an online campaign The online profile of the project as a whole has had a significant impact on raising awareness to partners and media and is a valuable reference point for the promoters.
15). Investigation into programming preferences is important in more rural areas.	x			Taking a risk with less mainstream / more specialist titles is a big gamble when the minimum Single Title Screening Licence is so high and many smaller venues in isolated areas (with smaller audiences) struggle to make the minimum guarantee, thus they are more risk averse than a commercial urban venue that serves a more diverse / dense audience. Understanding audience preferences is particularly important for commercial viability of DCI venues.
16). Local venues have difficulties sourcing films due to lack of experience, the administrative burden and not having appropriate systems in place.	x			This can be practically addressed through mentoring and tapping into expertise of an established organisation. However, while administrative support is valuable, the film licence is booked in tandem with the equipment, which is shared by c. 10 venues at any given time. Using the current model, it would not be possible for smaller venues served by the touring model to book their own licence (unless they had their own kit).
17). Box office income will act as an incentive for venues to participate in DCI residencies.	x			Of course, but venues should be advised that audiences take time to build and there is likely to be a period of fluctuation / risk to start with.
18). DCI residencies are more likely to maximise their audiences during busier holiday periods.	x	x		Sometimes yes, sometimes no. Most mixed arts venues for instance will have a panto season or other established activity taking place in the holidays which can make it difficult to programme film in these periods.

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
19). A project champion is needed at executive level within the local council to help support DCI residencies.	x			This has certainly been the case with Whitby Pavilion and The Forum Northallerton and invaluable to the longevity of cinema at the venues.
20). It is important to respect the independence of existing non-theatrical providers and apply a light touch in dealings with them.	x			Very conscious when collecting stats and asking for audience surveys not to push too hard and offer something in exchange (eg promotion or other incentive). Likewise with programming. Offering appropriate support and guidance key. Most difficult to collect stats etc from the DIY (film society) type venues who are already established and set in their ways. The more support offered, the easier the process. Unlikely that the smaller / part time local venues would engage in inputting their own screening data online. They are not big enough stakeholders to have an interest in being an active part of the industry / film culture – they just want to show 1 or 2 films a month...reluctant to invest any extra time, come to free screening days at NMM etc.
21). Staff and volunteers require training and guidance to become knowledgeable and skilled enough to get the best out of new digital equipment, and to ensure the highest standard of presentation.	x			If staff / volunteers aren't trained the equipment breaks and causes problems with the wider programme. Although kit is relatively easy to use, they are not using it that frequently and many benefit from having tech support at the end of the phone for troubleshooting. In cases of DCP, training is vital and more complex.
22). High standard film presentations increase audience satisfaction.	x			Evident in surveys.
23). The availability of a broader range of programming (including first run new releases, digital 3D films, specialised films and alternative content) increases audience satisfaction and will attract a wider range of cinema goers.	x	x		Yes to new releases, though oft quoted that they want them sooner and are frustrated when they have to wait. This applies across all strands. No to 3D. 'Live' aspect of alt content shows highly valuable – eg national publicity campaigns. Overwhelmingly successful and quality of productions such as NT a big hit.
24). Venues and 'DIY' providers need programming support in order to improve their offer.	x	x		The local village hall type venues + DCP in pilot period rely heavily on programming support from CY. DIY / established film societies usually know what they want and book it themselves.
25). Alongside programming diversity, development activity (including marketing and promotion, special events etc.) is needed to build new and more diverse audiences.	x			Special events attract new audiences and are profile raising. Partnership events support cross promotion. Many of the promoters would benefit from more support to set up on their own marketing tools as well as benefit from those offered by the project as a whole (eg advice on sourcing promotional text/images/materials, put in place online marketing tools / set up social networks) and is something that ideally we would like to build on if resources allow.
26). Venues and 'DIY' providers need advice and support for audience development.	x			Need confidence to take risks and find out about what has worked at other similar venues. Also benefit from accessing free short film programmes (such as Aesthetica, DepicT! Fragile stories) through the project.
27). Electronic mailing lists (E-lists) are an effective and low cost method of communicating with audiences.	x	x		Depends on the venue and audience.

<b>Assumptions</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Explanatory notes</b>
28). Audience development and improved audience satisfaction lead to increased admissions.	<b>x</b>			Word of mouth is key in building audiences, both within locality and from area to area. (ie people hear about the project at another village and want to take part themselves.)
29). The long-term viability of rural cinema depends on increased admissions and sustained audience growth.	<b>x</b>			Comparatively high rates for Single Title Licence Scheme mean that it is only possible for venues to carry on (without losing significant amounts of money) if they are meeting the minimum guarantee on a regular basis. Success varies widely across the network. Shared resource of kit is key to success of model (would be far more challenging to sustain if venues also had to buy or pay standard hire rates for kit).
30). Distributors and rights holders are resistant to licensing new first run releases inside the 6-8 week window to venues they fear may lack piracy safeguards, that offer sub-standard presentation and/or have low revenue expectations. Advocacy and relationship building are necessary to address these concerns, alongside the use of secure digital equipment.	<b>x</b>			In case of CY, presentation is not such an issue as we have a high standard across project. Revenue expectation is key and it will always be far more challenging for a venue in an isolated / rural location to compete with a commercial urban cinema. There is a lot of work to be done here, but progress is unlikely to be made in the short term whilst the exhibition industry and supporting infrastructure is in a state of flux and transition.
31). Ongoing monitoring and evaluation is needed to record progress and to build the case for rural cinema provision.	<b>x</b>			Evidence gathering is an essential part of any model that relies on support from stakeholders, particularly if it relies on public funds.
32). Councils and other key stakeholders will not support rural cinema provision beyond the pilot unless the case is made for rural cinema's economic, social and cultural benefits.			<b>x</b>	More likely to support / continue to support provision if the pilot has been successful in demonstrating the value to their local community. Varies from area to area.

**Table A.3: Shropshire Screen assumptions**

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
1). Shropshire has a level of cinema provision well below the national average for England.			<b>X</b>	This was correct at time of the pilot starting although provision has now improved through the pilot, especially in North Shropshire.
2). Shropshire has an older population than the national average, and the proportion of older adults is predicted to grow further.	<b>x</b>			-
3). Disabled people in Shropshire are under-represented in the cinema audience because of venue access problems, lack of adequate rural transport, personal support and economic limitations.	<b>x</b>			Access has been improved in many venues through PIR and hearing loops. Customer Services training for volunteers has made some small impact during the pilot.
4). It is vital that existing film provision is not undermined by a short burst of capital investment.	<b>x</b>			-
5). There is room for additional audience growth in many existing venues.	<b>x</b>			-
6). Shropshire has a strong infrastructure of multi-purpose arts centres, touring circuits and an annual rural film festival.	<b>x</b>			-
7). These rural providers struggle with limited revenues and capital funding.	<b>x</b>			-
8). Local audiences value accessible venues and are prepared to support them.	<b>x</b>			-
9). Village hall venues tend to attract very localised audiences keen to participate in community events and to have access to cinema close to home.	<b>x</b>			-
10). Demand for mixed film programming (mainstream and specialised) at local venues is growing.	<b>x</b>			-
11). Market research has identified strong demand for cinema in rural areas especially among young people, families and older adults.	<b>x</b>			-
12). Secureblu is a viable solution to the challenges associated with obtaining early window releases for village halls.		<b>x</b>		-

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
13). The availability of Secureblu is dependent on studio buy-in, which is outside the control of the pilot.		x		N/A
14). Staff and volunteers require training and guidance to become knowledgeable and skilled enough to get the best out of new digital equipment, and to ensure the highest standard of presentation.	x			-
15). Training is needed in the following areas: projection, front of house, customer relations, disability awareness and working with young and old people.	x			-
16). High standard film presentations increase audience satisfaction.	x			-
17). The availability of a broader range of programming increases audience satisfaction and will attract a wider range of cinemagoers.	x			-
18). In particular, improved presentation, 3D films and alternative content like sports and gaming will help to attract younger and family audiences.	x			-
19). Programming needs to be co-ordinated across the different pilot venues to avoid clashes.	x			-
20). The demand for films in early release windows needs to be established.			x	Audience surveys seem to suggest demand for early release is not an issue but box office reports suggest otherwise generally. This seems to be less important to Flicks venues where there is less likelihood of early release.
21). Alongside programming diversity, development activity is needed to build new and more diverse audiences.	x			-
22). Venues and providers need advice and support for audience development.	x			-
23). Audience development should be focused on young people and family audiences.	x			-
24). One of the most effective ways to develop younger audiences is through film education in schools.	x			-

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
25). A county-wide Film Education Network is needed to co-ordinate and enhance learning opportunities, and to develop an under 19s audience development plan.	x			-
26). Social networking and electronic mailing lists are an effective and low cost method of communicating with audiences, especially younger ones.	x			E-marketing is essential for all age groups. Social media creates profile but does not necessarily lead to sales except in a festival time limited scenario. Orgs have concern as to the time/reward ratio of social media.
27). Rural cinema provision across the county requires an umbrella brand to attract new audiences.	x			The umbrella brand has supported profiling and signposting generally.
28). Audience development and improved audience satisfaction lead to increased admissions.	x			Word of mouth is crucial to MAINTAIN as well as INCREASE audiences
29). The development of younger audiences will give rural cinema provision long-term sustainability.	x			-
30). The success of the pilot and the long-term sustainability of rural cinema provision relies on getting flexible licensing deals from distributors and rights holders, including access to product in early release windows.	x			-
31). Ongoing monitoring and evaluation is needed to record progress and to build the case for rural cinema provision.	x			-
32). Councils, local authorities and other key stakeholders will not support rural cinema provision beyond the pilot unless the case is made for rural cinema's economic, social, educational, health and cultural benefits.	x			-
33). The pilot has a greater chance of securing stakeholder buy-in if it is properly aligned with national, county- and region-wide cultural, educational and health strategies.	x			Policy makers need to recognise and accommodate the particular needs of rural provision. Urban centric decision making does not support rural development.

**Table A.4: White Horse Picture assumptions**

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
1). Overall, the pilot area has areas of multiplex cinema provision and a strong network of village hall provision, but some rural communities do not have ready access to the cinema experience.	x			-
2). North Wiltshire is being targeted in the pilot because it has less existing provision.	x			Although Moviola strong presence for Blu-ray
3). SW Screen has prioritised support for rural cinema since its inception, and accordingly there is a relatively strong network of existing provision via Moviola.	x			And others: SW has a good BFFS network.
4). While the pilot area is well served by commercial cinemas, they are only accessible if audiences wish to travel by, or have access to, a car or use a train service to Bath.	x			Or Chippenham or Devizes, Salisbury.
5). Existing Moviola services, film society programmes and other screening initiatives can continue to operate successfully alongside the pilot.	x			-
6). There is the potential to develop Moviola's target market (45+) further and build the capacity of exiting venues in addition to adding new ones, develop and increase their access to new titles and broaden the existing film offer.	x			There is the potential but from end of March 2011 Moviola was not part of the pilot. This will be developed independent of the pilot.
7). Young people (12+) are willing, and able, to act as 'young promoters' with input from the programming group.			x	This was not developed under the pilot given the change in Wiltshire College's role in the pilot.
8). The future of rural cinema provision is more precarious in rurally isolated and fragmented communities, and where the film programming is more challenging.	x			It all depends what is wanted. A bluray programme is probably sustainable as long as there is a strong group of volunteers / champions and the programme is properly targeted.
9). The pilot will operate most successfully under the guidance of a steering group and a programming group.	x			The steering group was made up of stakeholders not delivery organisations. They were part of a consortium which met on a regular basis.
10). Borrowing Blu ray equipment rather than purchasing it outright offers a more cost-effective option for new start-ups.	x			-

Assumptions	Yes	No	Don't know	Explanatory notes
11). New ventures require advice and support about using equipment use and how to build an audience.	x			Marketing and publicity as important as kit.
12). High standard film presentations increase audience satisfaction.	x			Although in rural communities, it is the experience of being with others which is probably the strength rather than how good the presentation is.
13). The availability of a broader range of programming increases audience satisfaction and will attract a wider range of cinemagoers.	x	x		It all depends on where you are and the make up of the community. It will take time for some communities to take more risks.
14). In particular, improved presentation, 3D films and alternative content will help to attract younger and family audiences.			x	Not sure there is evidence here. 3D has certainly not been what it was expected to be. Alternative Content could attract family audiences (eg for some of the ballets) but not the only audience.
15). Alongside programming diversity, development activity is needed to build new and more diverse audiences.	x			It is not just about putting on an interesting programme. The audience has to be attracted in the first instance.
16). Some venues and providers need advice and support for audience development.	x			-
17). Improved user experience and audience satisfaction lead to increased admissions.	x			-
18). Films screened as part of the DCI circuit need to be mainstream to help develop audiences.	x			In the first instance but all about audience development and trust in the programming
19). As the Young People's programme develops there will be many opportunities for curriculum engagement with the films.			x	This wasn't developed due to the changed role of Wiltshire College.
20). Rural cinema provision across the county requires co-ordinated marketing and promotion to attract new audiences.			x	Not sure it needs co-ordinated marketing. It certainly needs targeted and segmented marketing.
21). Long term sustainability requires sound balanced budgets, grassroots connections and local commitment. The aim is to sell enough tickets to sustain the pilot (White Horse Pictures).	x			-
22). The success of the pilot and the long term sustainability of rural cinema provision relies on getting flexible licensing deals from distributors and rights holders, including access to product in early release windows.	x			In tandem with marketing and publicity.

<b>Assumptions</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>Explanatory notes</b>
23). DCI venues have to be in areas with sufficient population density to offer distributors favourable returns.	<b>x</b>			-
24). Sustainability should also be judged against audience take-up, the ability of the pilot to reach new audiences and continue to reach them, and successful trial of DCI equipment.	<b>x</b>			-
25). Ongoing monitoring and evaluation is needed to record progress and to build the case for rural cinema provision locally.	<b>x</b>			This needs to be done by venues so that they really know their audience and watching habits and behaviours.
26). The pilot has a greater chance of building new partnerships if it is properly aligned with national, regional and Council strategies.	<b>x</b>			Local definitely. Although the aim is for these to become independent venues rather than reliant on any public funding.

## Appendix 4: Mapping Scheme and Pilot outcomes

**Table A5: Mapping outcomes across the Pilots and the Scheme as a whole**

Scheme as a whole	Cine Yorkshire	Shropshire Screen	White Horse Pictures
1. Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and skills	Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and skills (1)	Staff and volunteers have appropriate knowledge and skills (1)	
2. New digital technology is trialled successfully	New digital technology is trialled successfully (2)		DCI equipment is trialled successfully (1)
3. Increased number of screenings in pilot areas		Increased number of cinema venues and screenings (2)	Increased number of better equipped venues and screenings (5)
4. Renters are prepared to offer flexible terms			Flexible deals with distributors are achieved (2)
5. Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation	Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation (3)	Venues and touring schemes have improved capacity and infrastructure (5) Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation (6)	Pilot screenings achieve high standard of presentation (4)
6. Greater number of new 'first run' presentations in pilot areas	Greater number of new 'first run' presentations (4)	Demand for early window releases is established (7)	
7. Improved audience satisfaction	Improved audience satisfaction (6)	Improved audience satisfaction (11)	Improved user experience & audience satisfaction (7)
8. Greater programming diversity in pilot areas	Greater programming diversity and quality (5)	Greater programming diversity and quality (8)	Greater programming diversity and quality (3)
9. Increased admissions in pilot areas	Increased admissions (7)	High awareness among rural communities of umbrella brand for rural cinema in Shropshire (9) Increased admissions (12)	Increased admissions (9)
10. Improved audience diversity in pilot areas	Improved audience diversity (8)	County-wide audience development plan is produced for under 19s (3) More young people, family audiences and disabled people attend screenings (13)	Wider audience diversity/ base (6)
11. The viability of rural cinema business models is established	Viability of rural cinema business models (DCI and Blu-ray) is established (9)	Viability of rural cinema business models is established (15)	Moviola has expanded organisational capacity (8) Viability of rural cinema business models is established (10)
12. Evidence of RCPS efficacy and impact is collected and reported	Evidence of rural cinema pilot efficacy and impact is collected and reported (10)	Evidence of rural cinema pilot efficacy and impact is collected and reported (14)	Pilot is improved by evidence-based learning (14)
13. Effectiveness of scheme management is demonstrated			New relationships and partnerships are brokered throughout the life of the pilot (13)

Scheme as a whole	Cine Yorkshire	Shropshire Screen	White Horse Pictures
14. Government and other stakeholders accept evidence of economic, social and cultural benefits of rural cinema provision	Councils and other key stakeholders accept evidence of economic, social and cultural benefits of rural cinema provision (11)	Pilot has strategic fit with Film: 21st Century Literacy, Screen Heritage, Cultural Olympiad & Big Society agendas (4) Councils, local authorities and other key stakeholders accept evidence of economic, social, cultural, health and educational benefits of rural cinema provision (16)	Pilot is aligned with national, regional and Council strategies (12)
		Teachers have enhanced knowledge and skills to develop film education offer (10)	
			Young people have enhanced film programming skills (11)

## Appendix 5: Interviewees

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The following people kindly agreed to be interviewed for this research:

### Cine Yorkshire

- Rachel McWatt (Cine Yorkshire)
- Kathryn Penny (National Media Museum)
- Sally Joynson (Screen Yorkshire)
- Jay Arnold (formerly Screen Yorkshire, Creative England, now BFI)
- Chris Henderson (Pateley Bridge Memorial Hall)
- Ellen Thorpe (Blaise Community Arts)
- Mark Haynes (The Forum and Hambleton District Council)
- Walter Rinaldi-Butcher (Galtres Centre)

### Shropshire Screen

- Sue Gainsborough (Shropshire Screen/ Wem Town Hall)
- Ian Kerry (Flicks in the Sticks)
- Naomi Vera-Sanso (Borderlines Film Festival)
- Robert Johnson (Reels on Wheels)
- David Jones (Aston on Clun Village Hall)
- Joy Durrant (Shropshire Council)

### White Horse Pictures

- Sarah-Jane Meredith (White Horse Pictures, formerly South West Screen, Creative England, now BFI)
- Phill Walkley (Moviola)
- Barbara Hoffbauer (Swindon Film Society)
- Paul Schilling (BFFS SW Group)
- Jo Crow (Panache Pictures)
- Charles Vernon (Movies @ Malmesbury)
- Steve Gray (Melksham Town Hall)
- Peter Tyas (Wiltshire Council)
- Shereene Amer (formerly South West Screen now Creative England)
- David Sin (Independent Cinema Office)

## Appendix 6: Documentary sources

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### Cine Yorkshire

- *North Yorkshire Rural Cinema Pilot Three Year Plan April 2010- March 2013* (Screen Yorkshire, January 2010)
- *Result of Test Screening Questionnaire 24.09.10* (Cine Yorkshire, September 2010)
- *Whitby Pavilion Staff Evaluation form – Duty Manager* (Cine Yorkshire, November 2010)
- *Whitby Pavilion Staff Evaluation form – Projectionist* (Cine Yorkshire, November 2010)
- *North Yorkshire Key Performance Indicator Report against RIFE Investment Plans 2011/2012* (Cine Yorkshire, May 2011/October 2011/April 2012/January 2013/May 2013)
- *North Yorkshire Rural Cinema Pilot – 2010/11 Summary Report* (Cine Yorkshire, May 2011)
- *Cine Yorkshire Mid Project Review* (Cine Yorkshire, October 2011)
- *Analysis CY 2011-2012 PJH 10.01.12.xls* (Cine Yorkshire, January 2012)
- *Cine Yorkshire – Update @ April 2012* (Cine Yorkshire, April 2012)
- *Cine Yorkshire Business Plan 2012 – 2015 v.1.2* (Cine Yorkshire, April 2012)
- *RE Cine Yorkshire Big Lottery Bid Stage 1 feedback.htm* (April 2012)
- *Analysis NYDC 2010- 2011 PJH.xls* (Cine Yorkshire, undated)
- *Cine North Audience Results.xls* (Cine Yorkshire, undated)
- *Screenwaves 1 evaluation result final* (undated)
- *Screenwaves Evaluation Results* (undated)
- *Training Evaluation Forms – Analysis PJH 07 10 10.xlsx* (Blaize, October 2010)
- *Training Evaluation Forms - Analysis 2011 - 2012.xlsx* (Blaize, undated)
- *training-evaluation-july12.xls* (National Media Museum, July 2012)

### Shropshire Screen

- *Shropshire Screen: A Three Year Business Plan 2010-2013* (Shropshire Rural Cinema Consortium, January 2010)
- *Shropshire Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme Key Performance Indicator Report against RIFE Investment Plans 2011/2012* (Shropshire Screen, May 2011/October 2011/May 2012/January 2013/May 2013)
- *monitoring activity plan and audits.xls* (Shropshire Screen, October 2010)
- *revised outputs Oct 2011.xls* (Shropshire Screen, October 2011)
- *Budget overview for PB March 2012sg.xls* (Shropshire Screen, March 2012)
- *Shropshire Screen - Update Report to BFI March 2012* (Shropshire Screen, March 2012)
- *WTH Audience Surveys with charts 16.04.12.xls* (Wem Town Hall, April 2012)
- *flicks ukfc survey.pdf* (Flicks in the Sticks, undated)
- *monitoring milestones 11.12 and 12.13.xls* (Shropshire Screen, undated)
- *Notes from Promoter Meeting Feedback* (Flicks in the Sticks, undated)
- *Project Plan 2010.xls* (Shropshire Screen, undated)
- *Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme – Shropshire Screen: Revised outputs and Draft Exit Strategy* (Shropshire Screen, undated)
- *Selection of quotes from recent Audience Survey* (Flicks in the Sticks, undated)
- *survey responses.xlsx* (Flicks in the Sticks, undated)
- *Shropshire Screen Marketing Statistics* (April 2013)

### White Horse Pictures

- *Wiltshire and Test Valley Rural Cinema Pilot Three Year Plan April 2010- March 2013* (White Horse Pictures, February 2010)
- *Wiltshire & Test Valley Key Performance Indicator Report against RIFE Investment Plans 2011/2012* (White Horse Pictures, May 2011/October 2011/April 2012/January 2013/May 2013)
- *Evaluation Summary: Global Village Film Festival* (The Pound Arts Trust, April 2012)
- *audience monitoring 2012.xlsx* (Swindon Film Festival, undated)
- *movies@malmesbury\_questionnaire.docx* (White Horse Pictures/ Malmesbury DCI, undated)
- *Swindon Film Festival 2012 Audience Questionnaire* (Swindon Film Festival, undated)

### Scheme as a whole

- *Rural Cinema Exhibition in England: Pilot Research* (Ron Inglis and Sue Todd, November 2008)
- *Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme Guidelines for Applicants* (UK Film Council, July 2010)
- *Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme Evaluation Framework v.3* (UK Film Council, October 2010)

- *Rural Cinema Pilot Data Extranet* (<http://www.ruralcinema.org/>)
- *Mid Term Review Report* (Bigger Picture Research, June 2012)
- *Rural Pilot Programme Audience Research* (BFI/DDP April 2013)

## Appendix 7: Case studies

Case studies were chosen by the evaluator from a list of candidates suggested by the three Pilot project management teams. The Pilots were asked to nominate organisations that met one or more of the following criteria:

- Examples of thriving and/or sustainable rural cinema provision;
- Venues or promoters that demonstrate good practice worth sharing;
- Innovative approaches with demonstrable success;
- Examples of effective partnership working.

Cases were selected to ensure there was a spread of different types of provision (across DCI, Blu-ray and alternative content) and locations, as described in Table A5:

**Table A5: Case study overview**

Pilot	Case study	DCI	Blu-ray/ DIY	Alt. content
CINE YORKSHIRE	<b>The Forum, Northallerton</b> • Market town location • Fixed installation DCI	●		●
	<b>Galtres Centre, Easingwold</b> • Market town location • Volunteer run community centre		●	●
	<b>Bishopside &amp; Bewerley Memorial Hall, Pateley Bridge</b> • Village location • Blaize supported venue		●	
SHROPSHIRE SCREEN	<b>Reels on Wheels</b> • Touring DCI • Village and market town locations	●		
	<b>Aston on Clun Village Hall</b> • Village location • Flicks in the Sticks supported venue		●	●
WHITE HORSE PICTURES	<b>Melksham Assembly Hall</b> • Market town location • Fixed installation DCI • Town council run • ICO programming support	●		●
	<b>Panache Picture House, Box</b> • Village location • Supported by BFFS SW • Filmmaking workshops		●	

**DCI**

# THE FORUM

## Northallerton, North Yorkshire

<http://www.forumnorthallerton.org.uk/>

*Volunteer-assisted part-time digital cinema in a mixed use venue*



© Copyright The Forum Northallerton

### **Background**

Northallerton is an affluent market town in the Hambleton district of North Yorkshire. Situated between the Yorkshire Dales and North York Moors it has a population of nearly 24,000, including outlying villages.

The Forum is located at the heart of the town. Built in 1975, the venue is a modern, multi-purpose facility with meeting rooms and a large performance hall capable of seating 300. Originally managed by Hambleton District Council, a community group has run the venue as a registered charity since June 2012, although the council retains responsibility for the fabric of the building.

*[The Forum has] a board of directors which currently has 7 or 8 people on it including myself [...] We have a full time manager and we're currently recruiting a few part time people to take up duty manager responsibilities and cover some of the more anti-social hours.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

The local Rotary Club programmed regular screenings at the venue prior to Cine Yorkshire's involvement, demonstrating demand for cinema provision in the town.

Following a brief DCI residency supported by Cine Yorkshire, Hambleton District Council

awarded The Forum User Group £22,000 to purchase their own DCI equipment (previously used by Whitby Pavilion), enabling it to become a permanent, part time digital cinema. The Forum has a maintenance contract for its DCI kit with Arts Alliance. Funding was also granted for satellite equipment to offer alternative content screenings at the venue (from March 2013).

*[Cine Yorkshire] were able to justify depreciation on the [DCI] kit, it was not such a daunting prospect for us to raise the money to buy it. Part of the argument we made to the Council in taking the facility on was that they should help us to invest in the place to ensure its long-term financial sustainability. And so we got a grant toward the purchase of the kit from the Council.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

There is little in the way of competition from local exhibitors: a single screen cinema in nearby Thirsk programmes mainstream films, as does a two-screen cinema at Richmond Station. Multiplexes in York, Teeside and Middlesborough are all over 20 miles from Northallerton

During the Pilot period The Forum also secured £8,000 from Creative England to cover marketing and audience development costs.

In addition to cinema, The Forum hosts live acts and local group activities, including comedy, music, theatre, lectures and talks.

### **Delivery**

DCI installation proved to be straightforward enough, and the venue already benefited from a large screen courtesy of the local Rotary Club's previous screening activity.

*There was very little pain for us. People came and installed it; it was a very smooth and straightforward process.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

The Forum hosted its first DCI film performance in January 2011, since when it has tended to schedule screenings on Fridays, at weekends and on weekdays during school holidays.

As a multi-purpose venue, with other users to consider and a range of different activities to accommodate, screening slots are not always available on a regular basis:

*We dance around the multi-purpose nature of the venue. For instance, panto week we struggled to put anything on because they'd pretty much booked The Forum out for the whole week [...] But we are moving towards being able to programme most Fridays and Sundays and then we'll fit them in on Saturdays if there isn't a more lucrative booking. It's going to take time to work with partners to do that in the longer term, some people have booked their show dates up two years in advance.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

A team of volunteers assists the venue manager, providing front of house support and performing other tasks like projection.

*We use volunteers a great deal in the operation [...] We started by encouraging volunteers to man the cinema before we started encouraging them to do anything else [...] Projectionist is a nice volunteer job. It's a bit more technical but we've had lots of people quite readily signing up to be projectionists.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

Success in attracting volunteers to operate the cinema has had a positive impact elsewhere, boosting volunteer involvement in other activities at the venue.

*[W]e built capacity with volunteers quite quickly on the cinema and that's helped us to be able to get volunteers for other activities within The Forum too. It's been very positive.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

Extensive training was provided for staff and volunteers under the Pilot, covering a variety of technical competencies alongside other relevant skills, like marketing.

*We've had lots of training input; we've had their projectionist come down on a couple of occasions [...] We got to the training day they had in Bradford that probably wouldn't have been on our radar, so they've been very useful in plugging us into the cinema scene.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

The Forum experimented with different types of programme during its first years of operation, attracting audiences with mainstream titles and testing local demand for specialised films (which made up around a quarter [26%] of all titles screened to March 2013). Three of the top ten performing titles in this period were specialised films (*Quartet*, *The Iron Lady* and *Life of Pi*).

*We tried some more adventurous art house titles. I think it's worth pursuing because there aren't many cinemas around that are willing to take that risk. So maybe we could pursue that line and try to develop that audience because we'd have potentially a far wider catchment area of people who are prepared to travel for a different type of film.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

Though there have been successful specialised film screenings, such experiments have proceeded cautiously. An alternative model, based on running a film club at the venue for those interested in art house films, is being considered:

*I think some of my fellow directors are nervous that we need to make everything pay to start with, we need to get the business model established and working well before we take too many risks [...] I'm also thinking of trying a different model where maybe you set up a[n art house] film club and get people to pay upfront for [...] a dozen showings, and we'll programme that in and get people to pay upfront thereby reducing the risk to the organisation.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

Programming decisions are made in-house although Cine Yorkshire was on hand to advise where necessary during the Pilot:

*If we're struggling for titles, if we aren't sure, if we're shy of a few children's films we'll call up [Cine Yorkshire] and say "Got any suggestions?". Support's been fantastic, we had the whole film team from National Media Museum come down for an away day recently and that was quite valuable, looking at how we do things, marketing materials, programming.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

Box office results have been mixed, with some notable successes although some performances have fallen short of expectations. Audience feedback has tended to be positive:

*'Not too far to travel, price, comfortable, nice to see people I know, pulls the community together.'*

*'It's easy to get to, good value for money, warm, comfortable, seating is terrific for visibility point of view.'*

*'Excellent viewing of films and concerts. Warm, clean staff were very helpful.'*

**Audience survey responses, March/April 2012**

The Forum faced two principal challenges during the Pilot period:

Technical problems occasionally arose with the DCI equipment, although they always fell short of a full breakdown:

*We haven't had any breakdowns but we had an issue with a key – we did a bulb change and didn't have the [projector's] security key. It tripped a switch and it was a close-run affair getting the Arts Alliance people out to try and get the kit running. [T]hey struggled with it all day.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

Having Cine Yorkshire on hand to assist with technical matters proved helpful:

*One of their tech guys designed a projector enclosure for us, which helped reduce the noise from the projector. Previously it was just behind a curtain. A good example of where they were really useful to us.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

Another challenge has been the lengthy running time of films like *The Hobbit*. This can pose a logistical problem for mixed-use venues where limited programming slots are available and careful scheduling is required.

These issues aside, overall audience numbers are growing and the Board is confident the cinema will contribute to the venue's long-term viability:

*Audience numbers are building from what they were 12 months ago. We didn't set many other objectives except raise awareness of it and for it to contribute to the financial sustainability of the place. That's our major objective [...] At the moment room lettings and the cinema are going ahead of projections and so we're optimistic.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

The Cine Yorkshire Pilot was central to this success:

*[Without Cine Yorkshire] I think we'd struggle with some of the ambitions for the wider audience development [...] I haven't got time to watch films and gather advice, that's their core being [...] They help us in so many ways [...] But I think they've got us to a degree of maturity where we could continue, we just wouldn't be able to do things anywhere near as quickly or as adventurously as we have done.*

**Mark Haynes, Hambleton District Council and Board member of The Forum**

#### Key numbers, January 2011 to April 2013:

Number of screenings	283
Number of film titles	123
% specialised titles	26%
Average no. of weeks after theatrical debut	12
Total admissions	9,163
Highest attendance	214
Lowest attendance	0
Average attendance	32

#### Top 10 films by admissions

1	<i>Les Misérables</i>
2	<i>Quartet</i>
3	<i>The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel</i>
4	<i>Skyfall</i>
5	<i>The Iron Lady</i>
6	<i>War Horse</i>
7	<i>Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked</i>
8	<i>Lincoln</i>
9	<i>Life of Pi</i>
10	<i>Ice Age: Continental Drift</i>

*Note: the case study interview and box office analysis took place before alternative content screenings started at the venue.*

# MELKSHAM ASSEMBLY HALL

Melksham, Wiltshire

<http://www.melkshamassemblyhall.com/cinema.php>

*Part-time digital cinema in a Council-run mixed use venue with programming support from the Independent Cinema Office*



© Melksham Assembly Hall

## **Background**

Melksham, a small market town in Wiltshire situated on the River Avon, has a population of around 23,000 and enjoys good transport links to the M4 and beyond.

The Town Council owns and operates Melksham Assembly Hall, located in the town centre market place. Since refurbishment, the Hall boasts a modern auditorium and stage with capacity for a seated audience of 400, a fully licensed bar, lounge area and kitchen.

Until 1975, Melksham had its own cinema, but now the nearest commercial circuits are located in Devizes, Bath and Swindon.

Melksham Town Council was introduced to the Pilot through Moviola, which was operating monthly screenings at the venue prior to the Rural Cinema Pilot Scheme. Recognising that Melksham needed its own cinema, the Town Council agreed to host touring DCI screenings with the aim of providing high quality entertainment capable of attracting the

local town population as well as people from further afield:

*We believed there would be a catchment area of something like 25,000 people in total that could be drawn in to being interested in the cinema provision [...] It was a case of how can we enhance the social and recreation [opportunities] in the town, what initiatives can we pursue to that end?*

**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

The venue benefited from use of a DCI projector and server, which it shared with the other touring venues, and received funding for a fixed screen and sound system.

However, problems with the equipment arose when the projector and server travelled off site:

*It's down to the fact that [the equipment] wasn't supposed to be toured and it impacted on us because we had to cancel a few screenings. That destroys your credibility or at least compromises it. There was that issue.*

**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

When the touring service ended after around 18 months, the complete set of equipment was permanently installed in Melksham, thereby overcoming the technical issues associated with touring. The Town Council contributed to the installation by meeting the cost of updates to the venue infrastructure, including new wiring:

*There was a degree of investment from the town council to get our infrastructure up to spec. It was significant investment. [A]s we investigated we found there were problems with our wiring so it needed a major overhaul which would have inevitably been needed anyway, this just brought it into sharp focus that it needed doing now to facilitate the equipment.*

**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

Satellite equipment was subsequently installed at the venue and the first alternative content performance, *Swan Lake*, took place in October 2012.

Cinema and alternative content screenings occur at Melksham Assembly Hall alongside a wide range of other cultural and social activities including live performances and community group meetings.

### **Delivery**

The venue began DCI screenings in December 2010, originally programming fortnightly performances under the touring model, before expanding the screening schedule once the projection equipment was fully installed.

White Horse Pictures initially supplied a projectionist, but Melksham Assembly Hall has since recruited a local tradesman, also responsible for the electrics and sound at screenings, for the role.

Existing venue staff manage ticket sales and marketing, and undertake front of house duties.

The venue has tried to encourage local volunteers to assist with screenings, but with little success:

*We tried to get volunteers involved and that is one of the problems we've had with the community cinema project. We're disappointed that we don't have a bigger take up from volunteers. It's difficult to understand: we've gone through local community groups, the local secondary school, we've gone to the audiences and said this facility is here if you want to be a part of it. We haven't had the take-up. We don't know why. But we're continuing our efforts to try to attract volunteers.*

**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

Programming was originally decided by the venue in partnership with White Horse Pictures, but in July 2012 Melksham Assembly Hall entered into a one-year contract with the Independent Cinema Office to manage film bookings and advise on audience development at the venue:

*We talked [...] about taking [Melksham] on a one year basis to try to help establish a kind of programme pattern, work with them to build audiences across the whole range of film [...] especially for more specialised films, at the same time understanding the potential difficulties that they might face.*

**David Sin, Independent Cinema Office**

The venue generally programmes film performances on Friday and Sunday evenings, with family matinees on Saturdays. Friday screenings tend to involve mainstream titles, while programming on Sunday is more specialised.

*What we found with Moviola was there were certain specialist films that went extraordinarily well [...] so we're very keen on that specialised type activity.*

**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

Part of ICO's role is to help Melksham Assembly Hall find a programming mix that works with local audiences:

*[T]o some extent the current programme is still a try-out with a wide range of audiences, and we continue to gather evidence from actual audiences to inform the programme in the future.*

**David Sin, Independent Cinema Office**

The Town Council has been pleased with the results of ICO's involvement:

*When you look at some of the films that have come through and been well received I think that's down to David and his knowledge of film and ability to place films in the right place at the right time [...] It enhances considerably the social and recreational offering in the town.*  
**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

Over the Pilot period, DCI screenings took place on average around 10 weeks after theatrical debut, but the venue generally accesses films 7 to 8 weeks after they first appear in cinemas.

Tickets are priced at £6 for Friday and Sunday performances, and £4 for adults, £3 for under-15s at Saturday matinees. The number of admissions to individual screenings varied widely over the Pilot period, but some performances attracted substantial audiences demonstrating the venue's potential when the right films are available. Marketing is a key success factor:

*Use social media, use your email facilities, get the message out there, get it publicised around town and the community. Hit people in real time, by which I mean if you've got screenings on a Friday night then get that message on the preceding Thursday. It's not something you can sit back on. You've got to work at it to get the message home to draw the audiences in.*  
**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

Alternative content found an immediate audience at Melksham Assembly Hall, broadening the venue's cultural offer and making a significant contribution to revenues:

*Cinema is good but [alternative content] is allowing our community to enjoy an experience that is being beamed live that they'd have to pay £120 a ticket for. I think it really enhances the benefits of living in this town. It works really well.*  
**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

The Town Council is keen for the venue to become self-supporting and financially sustainable, and since the start of 2013 financial targets have been met, including all-important secondary spend on refreshments:

*The secondary spend for us is an integral part and it comes within the calculation of ensuring the offer is economically viable and sustainable. When you look at our experience since January [2013] we're hitting the target both in ticket sales and secondary spend.*  
**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

Overall, the Town Council values the opportunities the Pilot offered, and the biggest lesson has been to recognise the wider social benefits that rural cinema can bring to local communities:

*It's evident that it's becoming a substantial part of the social and recreational offer within the town. I think it really does stand us in good stead with our residents and population, and really builds the community. They come together to enjoy an experience here on their doorstep that hitherto they'd have to drive many miles for. There are all sorts of advantages to that from a community perspective.*  
**Steve Gray, Melksham Town Council**

#### Key numbers, September 2010 to April 2013:

FILM	
Number of film screenings*	215
Number of film titles	142
% specialised titles	33%
Average no. of weeks after theatrical debut	10
Total admissions	6,205
Highest attendance	225
Lowest attendance	0
Average attendance	29
ALTERNATIVE CONTENT	
Number of alt. content performances	3
Total admissions	365
Highest attendance	150
Lowest attendance	106
Average attendance	122

\* includes 9 Blu ray screenings prior to DCI starting in December 2010

#### Top 10 films by admissions

1	<i>The King's Speech</i>
2	<i>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 2</i>
3	<i>War Horse</i>
4	<i>Skyfall</i>
5	<i>The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel</i>
6	<i>Arthur Christmas</i>
7	<i>The Iron Lady</i>
8	<i>Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows: Part 1</i>
9	<i>Black Swan</i>
10	<i>Adventures of Tintin: The Secret of the Unicorn</i>

# REELS ON WHEELS

## Shropshire

<http://www.reelsonwheels.org>

**Commercial mobile cinema service operating across a range of venues including schools, village halls and community centres**



© Copyright Reels on Wheels

### **Background**

Starting life as Weston Coyney Caverswall Film Society, Reels on Wheels, a mobile cinema company, was first established in 1977:

*We used to show films in the local village hall – Weston Coyney – on 16mm once a month, then it went to twice a month and because we were members of the British Federation of Film Societies we won the Kodak Community Award for a scheme where we took films out into the rural areas. And that became so successful we changed the name to Staffordshire Reels on Wheels in the early 1980s [...] Eventually we moved from 16mm to 35mm, then with Shropshire Screen we moved to digital.*

**Robert Johnson, Reels on Wheels**

Overseen by a Board of Trustees, Reels on Wheels is a registered charity with two full time paid staff (projectionist/technicians) and one volunteer. Although based in Staffordshire, the company has a long association with venues in Shropshire,

providing touring and programming services to Ellesmere Town Hall, Festival Drayton Centre, The Old Market Hall in Shrewsbury and others. Reels on Wheels also tours to venues in Cheshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire.

As a commercial operation without external revenue funding, of necessity Reels on Wheels targets market towns and larger settlements with populations capable of generating good-sized audiences.

*Reels on Wheels has never had any money for doing what we do. All the money we get we have to generate ourselves through the box office.*

**Robert Johnson, Reels on Wheels**

Reels on Wheels currently operates with three 35mm projection kits (two are actively toured and the third is a spare), but with the imminent demise of new releases on 35mm, transition to digital cinema was necessary for the company to

remain a going concern. Funding from Shropshire Screen enabled Reels on Wheels to purchase a set of DCI touring kit.

### **Delivery**

The company sourced its digital equipment from Omnex Pro Film, and the purchase price included a daylong technical induction at Omnex's depot in Stockport.

Reels on Wheels operates two screening models. The first involves venues as local promoters, and revenue is shared with the venue. A Reel on Wheels technician delivers the equipment, sets it up and prepares the auditorium, runs the projection and packs it all way again after the show.

Volunteers at the venue assist with front of house duties and are responsible for promoting screenings locally through advertising and word of mouth, and for advance ticket sales.

The venue also has the option to sell refreshments, from which they retain all income. In addition, venues keep 35% of ticket revenue (over a minimum guarantee of £170), the remainder going to Reels on Wheels to cover running costs and film hire. Visits to these venues occur monthly, and normally involve two screenings (one for children, one for adults).

Under the second model, Reels on Wheels hires a venue and runs the screenings themselves, retaining all revenue.

Reels on Wheels has accounts with UK-based distributors and books films directly with them; licensing terms for DCI screenings are the same as for 35mm.

On average over the Pilot period, Reels on Wheels booked films 12 weeks after the start of their theatrical run, but in cases where they can book multiple screenings of the same title the company can secure titles much earlier:

*We were showing Wreck it Ralph on its 4th week. The earliest we've ever done is 3rd week. But in order to do that we've given them 20 bookings. If we said we want a one-day booking we can't do it. They know we'll play Wreck it Ralph until April so they know by giving us a copy they're making quite a lot of money.*

**Robert Johnson, Reels on Wheels**

Local promoters can have a say in film choice, and Reels on Wheels endeavours to source specific titles if requested. In general, though, the selection is based on whatever is likely to prove most popular:

*Every month we take the latest kids film and pick a film for the adults. For example at the moment the kids have Wreck it Ralph, the adults have Quartet, Lincoln, Life of Pi and in a week's time it goes to Song for Marion. Someone said the other week we'd like you to show the French film Amour so we did that for them.*

**Robert Johnson, Reels on Wheels**

Deployment of the DCI equipment has not been without technical and logistical challenges for Reels on Wheels. The kit was bulkier than expected, requiring a hydraulic platform for manoeuvring into the correct position. Two people are required to move the kit around, which means the company has not been able to reduce staff costs as a result of digital transition.

Off site storage also required adapting Reels on Wheels' existing building, and the company had to invest in a larger van to transport the equipment between venues. The annual maintenance contract is worth £2,000, and engineers are required for remedial work as the kit has an automatic shutoff that activates when the outer covering is removed.

Aside from these issues, transition from 35mm to digital cinema has been a positive development and audiences are satisfied with the quality of DCI screenings:

*The public see it the same as the old 35mm except it's the new technology doing it.*

**Robert Johnson, Reels on Wheels**

DCI brings other advantages: the brighter projected image means blackouts do not need to be as good as those required for 35mm projection. This is useful for a touring scheme operating across a range of venues with widely differing facilities.

One feature of digital cinema that Reels on Wheels has not been able to exploit to the full is its 3D capability, for which there was little demand during the Pilot:

*Most people didn't want 3D, they don't like it. It's never proved popular.*  
**Robert Johnson, Reels on Wheels**

Shropshire Screen funding for DCI kit came at a critical time for Reels on Wheels, which would not have been able to make the transition from 35mm without it.

#### **Key numbers, January 2011 to April 2013**

Number of venues	13
Number of screenings	108
Number of film titles	53
% specialised titles	39%
Average no. of weeks after theatrical debut	12
Total admissions	7,173
Highest attendance	300
Lowest attendance	6
Average attendance	67

#### **Top 10 films by admissions**

1	<i>The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel</i>
2	<i>Quartet</i>
3	<i>Salmon Fishing in the Yemen</i>
4	<i>Skyfall</i>
5	<i>The Artist</i>
6	<i>War Horse</i>
7	<i>Jane Eyre</i>
8	<i>The King's Speech</i>
9	<i>Resistance</i>
10	<i>Hope Springs</i>

**BLU-RAY**

# ASTON ON CLUN VILLAGE HALL

## Aston on Clun, Shropshire

<http://www.artsalive.co.uk/venue.aspx?id=52>

*Volunteer-run monthly film and alternative content screenings hosted in a village hall in association with Flicks in the Sticks*



© Shropshire Rural Cinema Consortium

### **Background**

Aston on Clun, a village lying to the west of Ludlow close to the border with Wales, has hosted monthly film screenings as a Flicks in the Sticks promoter since 1999.

In addition to the digital cinema at Ludlow Assembly Rooms, the nearest commercial cinema is The Regal, a multi-arts venue 15 miles away in Tenbury Wells, Worcestershire.

Film and alternative content performances are hosted in the village hall, a modern facility with capacity for a seated audience of 130.

The hall committee and volunteers run screenings to provide a cultural amenity for the local community and much needed income for the venue.

Prior to the Pilot, Flicks in the Sticks operated screenings at the hall as part of

its touring network. A major attraction of funding from Shropshire Screen was that permanent installation of Blu-ray projection equipment made hosting events easier to set up, reduced operating costs and therefore increased revenues to the venue:

*[H]aving the equipment permanently on site meant it was a lot less complicated putting on a film. Before the chap would come along with his equipment in the van and it took probably about an hour to put it all up and an hour to take it all back down again. So the simplicity was much better as a result of the new equipment coming in. But also [we] had to pay for the projectionist as well, which had a fairly significant impact on the financial result.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

### **Delivery**

Ahead of launching their new screening programme as part of the Shropshire Screen Pilot, the village hall committee

drew up a series of reference documents including a marketing plan, volunteer guide and equipment list:

*[A]lthough it's all volunteers there needs to be some formal process of deciding what is the plan, what are we trying to do, and afterwards most importantly did we achieve it, what went wrong/right?*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

Film screenings are hosted monthly on Saturdays, except during the summer (June to August), and tickets are charged at £4 for adults and £2 for children. Since February 2012 the venue has also programmed NT Live performances via satellite, with tickets at a higher premium of £10 for adults and £6 for children. The village hall also hosts live stage shows as a promoter for Arts Alive, Flicks in the Sticks's parent company.

In addition to the practical challenge of unsatisfactory blackouts in the hall, the lack of a seating rake led to line of sight problems when the screen was first installed, although this has since been resolved:

*When the equipment was originally put in we probably got the screen height wrong [...] We realised once we started to sell out that because there is no rake in the hall that we had a line of sight problem. So we have now raised the screen.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

As a Flicks in the Sticks promoter, Aston on Clun benefits from the larger organisation's ongoing support:

*[Help from Flicks in the Sticks] comes in the form of technical support, if there's anything we can't handle ourselves [...] [Support has] been in terms of standing between us and the content providers, whether that be Filmbank or the distributors of alternative content. It's been in terms of providing additional material. We tend to design our own promotional material but then they print it for us [...] And just generally being always there at the end of the phone and always a very pragmatic reaction.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

Flicks in the Sticks was instrumental in helping to resolve an intermittent fault, which took considerable time to diagnose:

*We were a bit unlucky because we had an intermittent fault on three items and we didn't understand it was an intermittent fault [...] The Blu-ray had a fault, the leads from the amplifier to the projector had a fault and also the LNB on the satellite dish had an intermittent fault. So we weren't seeing a consistent set of symptoms at any stage and it probably took four weeks to resolve.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

In addition to technical support, tickets for film and alternative content performances are available in advance through the Arts Alive web site.

In terms of programming, the village hall committee has a strong idea of what works at the venue: British films with appeal to older audiences. This is borne out in the table of top ten performing films during the Pilot period, which lists no fewer than seven British titles.

*Basically what people locally like to see is strong British content, e.g. British actors. They prefer something that is reasonably light in content as opposed to dark and heavy. Not American films, partly, I'm told, because they find it difficult to understand the actors and actresses.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

There is some appetite to broaden the range of films screened at the venue, although too many poorly performing titles would risk demoralising volunteers:

*One thing I'd like to do is try to show a broader range of content even though we might not make money from it, so we can say we're showing a better range of films. When everything has to be done by volunteers there's a limit to the number of times they're prepared to give up an evening. [I]f it's not seen to be a success it diminishes people's enthusiasm but it's also a question of time.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

One way of addressing this is to involve other community groups in programming and running events at the venue:

*Something we have done recently to assist with that is to say to people (e.g. the local Women's Institute), if you want to show something using the screen providing you provide the volunteers and promote it, we'll do the technical side on the night and the bar so we still get some revenue [...] They then enter into the arrangement with Flicks and they get the revenue out of it. It kills two birds with one stone: eases the volunteer problem and gives [the community group] access to additional revenue they wouldn't otherwise get, plus we broaden the things being shown in the hall.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

The hall committee is pleased with the immediate success of alternative content screenings, but adoption of satellite technology was not a straightforward decision at the time:

*I don't think we were all in agreement over [alternative content] when we first looked at it. [W]hen we first were shown the opportunity I wouldn't say every single person said "Yes that's a great idea, let's go for it". I think the reactions varied from, "theatre isn't really going to translate very well into a screen environment". [A]nother reaction was, "are there going to be enough theatre goers locally to really support it?" [...] As it happens [...] it has been a success but there was certainly an element of suck it and see about it. It undoubtedly helped that the financial arrangements on alternative content were much better than film.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

An audience survey was issued at the first alternative content screening, as part of the initial market testing. This drew positive feedback, confirmed by subsequent audience numbers, and led to expansion of the refreshments range and adjustments to the sound equipment.

Pricing of alternative content performances can sometimes be an issue for smaller venues, although Aston on Clun is content with the flexibility they negotiated with distributors:

*There's a certain amount of alternative content we're looking at where we're being asked to hike the price, one of those is at £12, the other is at £13. [We] did get a slight complaint from the distributor that we were not charging enough for junior seats [...] We said we were trying to encourage more young people to come in the audience, but more specifically we provide no old age pensioner concession where probably 60-70% of the audience is over retirement age and that's a fairly significant factor.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

The support of Flicks in the Sticks is critical to managing relationships with alternative content distributors:

*They don't appreciate that we are a village hall run by volunteers – we don't have ticketing systems or full time staff – so some of the contractual terms would be hard to fulfil if Flicks were not there.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

The hall committee approaches film and alternative content performances in different ways. The latter requires wider promotional activity and a full menu of refreshments (helping to justify the higher admission charge for people expecting a theatre-style experience):

*[Alternative content] takes more promotion. In the beginning we did a lot more going around putting up posters, contacting theatre groups, schools etc. Now we've developed an address list of people who come to theatre so it's less pressing but we still do a lot of putting up posters [...] We do a fuller refreshment offer on alternative content, we have tried with cinema to do the same but the audience doesn't seem to go for it.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

The economic benefit of screening activity at the hall is marked and events "rarely lose money" according to David Jones, although the financial contribution of film performances is less important than alternative content:

*If we didn't show [films] it wouldn't have a substantial impact [on the village hall]. It's more the fact that we're providing something locally so people don't have to go a further distance.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

One of the few downsides of alternative content is the additional administrative burden of reporting box office numbers on a regular basis, albeit mitigated to some extent by support from Flicks in the Sticks:

*Dealing with distributors for alternative content [can be a challenge]. We're insulated to a large extent by Flicks but we still have to deal with them in terms of they want weekly audience numbers. I can understand they probably have a contract with whomever to provide those, but it is a bit irksome when in fact you're only selling 100 seats, and there's the volunteer factor as well.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

Nonetheless, any downsides are far outweighed by the benefits of screening activity at the hall, which will continue as long as there are volunteers to run it:

*Our long-term ambition for the venture is we want to continue with it as long as we can and as long as there are people here enthusiastic about doing it.*

**David Jones, Aston on Clun Village Hall**

### Key numbers, September 2010 to April 2013

FILM	
Number of film screenings	24
Number of film titles	24
% specialised titles	42%
Average no. of weeks after theatrical debut	33
Total admissions	1,249
Highest attendance	100
Lowest attendance	18
Average attendance	52
ALTERNATIVE CONTENT	
Number of alt. content performances	8
Total admissions	732
Highest attendance	110
Lowest attendance	59
Average attendance	92

### Top 10 films by admissions

1	<i>The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel</i>
2	<i>The King's Speech</i>
3	<i>Made in Dagenham</i>
4	<i>Jane Eyre</i>
5	<i>The Calling</i>
6=	<i>Oranges and Sunshine</i>
6=	<i>Skyfall</i>
7	<i>War Horse</i>
8	<i>Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy</i>
9	<i>Red Dog</i>
10	<i>Great Expectations</i>

### Alternative content performances by admissions

1	<i>NT Live: The Last of the Haussmans</i>
2	<i>NT Live: People</i>
3	<i>NT Live: The Magistrate</i>
4	<i>NT Live: She Stoops to Conquer</i>
5	<i>NT Live: Timon of Athens</i>
6	<i>NT Live: The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime</i>
7	<i>NT Live: Travelling Light</i>
8	<i>NT Live: Frankenstein</i>

# GALTRES CENTRE

Easingwold, North Yorkshire

<http://www.visit-easingwold.com/galtres-entertainment-centre.html>

*Volunteer-run mixed use community centre offering  
film and alternative content screenings*



© Copyright Easingwold Galtres Centre

## **Background**

Situated ten miles to the north of York, the market town of Easingwold lies alongside the Hambleton Hills of North Yorkshire. With a population of fewer than 5,000, Easingwold is a small settlement, although this number increases if the residents of nearby villages and hamlets (like Crayke, Stillington and Tollerton) are included.

The Galtres Centre is located in the middle of town, forming a complex of buildings converted from a large Victorian Manse. The Centre provides sports facilities for the local area, including outdoor football pitches and an indoor rifle range. A purpose-built entertainment centre hosts meetings, live shows and the town's only film and alternative content screenings.

The Centre is not under direct local authority control, but operates as a registered charity largely run by volunteers.

*The Galtres is a totally independent community centre, it is a charity [...] The local authority has some input into the fitness area of the Galtres Centre [...] Then there's the theatre, which was converted from the original sports hall, which has a fixed stage at one end and padded retractable seats at the other. Apart from the office staff [...] bar staff [...] and the cleaners, everyone else in that building is a volunteer [...] I think The Galtres Centre is quite unique in how it operates.*

**Walter Butcher, Galtres Centre**

Easingwold is equidistant from a number of commercial cinemas located around York to the south, Malton to the east, Harrogate to the west and Thirsk to the north, although none are closer than 9 miles to the town.

Prior to joining the Cine Yorkshire Pilot, the Galtres Centre hosted screenings as a Flicks in the Sticks promoter venue (the first season was in 2008/09). Cine Yorkshire funded acquisition of satellite

equipment and a new projector in 2010, enabling the venue to broaden its offer to include alternative content screenings.

### **Delivery**

Screenings are hosted in the Centre's purpose built theatre, which benefits from raked seating with a capacity of around 170.

Back projection is employed, with the projector permanently installed to the rear of the stage, behind a retractable electric screen purchased by the venue.

Films and alternative content are programmed once or twice a month, depending on what else is booked in the theatre space.

The Galtres Centre charges £5 per adult (£3 per child) for film performances, and £15 an adult for alternative content (£13 for under 16s).

In general, films are booked through the BFFS Yorkshire Group, which offers cheaper terms than Filmbank. The Galtres Centre offers an eclectic mix of titles nearly half of which were specialised during the Pilot period, according to the BFI's own classification.

*I think people are broadening their outlook. I think doing productions which are perhaps not as popular is a good thing. I think it needs doing. Even plays that are slightly unknown people come to them.*

**Walter Butcher, Galtres Centre**

Alternative content bookings are managed through Picturehouse Entertainment (NT Live and The Bolshoi Ballet) and More2Screen (Royal Opera House).

Booking terms are broadly similar, although More2Cinema's are more favourable to the venue (50/50 split, compared with the 55/45 split offered by Picturehouse Entertainment).

Scheduling performances can be problematic in a mixed-use venue serving a range of different user groups throughout the year:

*It's first come, first served. Local schools book in for their plays [and] they have priority. If someone comes along from the National Theatre and says "We'd like to show Hamlet on so and so date" and we look in the calendar, "Well sorry, Easingwold Primary have already booked that".*

**Walter Butcher, Galtres Centre**

A related issue for alternative content bookings is the insistence of certain distributors that venues carry every performance in a season:

*I contacted the New York Met about a year ago and there was no way they'd let me have one or two of the productions. And Glyndebourne was similar. The National Theatre are pretty good because they give us plenty of notice so we take them without too many problems. I think we've got to the stage where we'd say to them we'd like to do those four but we can't do that one because there's a conference. I reckon they would probably agree because we produce quite a bit of cash!*

**Walter Butcher, Galtres Centre**

Technical problems were infrequent during the Pilot, although one incident required a full refund to the audience:

*We had one breakdown [...] when we had The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night Time; apparently the sound went haywire and we had to refund everybody. I don't think it was our sound equipment, I think it was external but we can't prove it. We haven't had it since.*

**Walter Butcher, Galtres Centre**

Despite this, screenings at the Centre have proven profitable, although success varies from performance to performance:

*[We've been] very successful. Some are less successful than others, some of the films its difficult to work out a profit because we have to work out the cost to the supplier, make a costing for adverts, ticketing and the basic cost of using the theatre, heating and lighting. So at the end of the day some things may make a small profit, [and] some make a jolly good profit. We had [The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel], that made over £1,000 profit. The Last of the Haussmans made over £1,000. From single screenings. The Nutcracker made over £1,000. Then we do Hugo and we made a paper loss. But you're providing a service as much as making money.*

**Walter Butcher, Galtres Centre**

## Key numbers, October 2010 to April 2013

FILM	
Number of film screenings	25
Number of film titles	21
% specialised titles	48%
Average no. of weeks after theatrical debut	41
Total admissions	1,797
Highest attendance	189
Lowest attendance	7
Average attendance	72
ALTERNATIVE CONTENT	
Number of alt. content performances	28
Total admissions	3,464
Highest attendance	190
Lowest attendance	22
Average attendance	124

### Top 10 films by admissions

1	<i>The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel</i>
2	<i>Skyfall</i>
3	<i>Made in Dagenham</i>
4	<i>The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo</i>
5	<i>One Day</i>
6	<i>Salmon Fishing in the Yemen</i>
7	<i>Anna Karenina</i>
8	<i>Jane Eyre</i>
9	<i>My Week with Marilyn</i>
10	<i>Alice in Wonderland</i>

### Top 10 alternative content performances by admissions

1=	<i>NT Live: King Lear</i>
1=	<i>Bolshoi Ballet: The Sleeping Beauty</i>
2	<i>NT Live: People</i>
3=	<i>Bolshoi Ballet: Nutcracker</i>
3=	<i>She Stoops to Conquer</i>
3=	<i>NT Live: Last of the Haussmans</i>
4	<i>NT Live: Frankenstein</i>
5	<i>One Man Two Guvnors</i>
6	<i>Royal Opera House: Nutcracker</i>
7=	<i>Le Corsaire</i>
7=	<i>Comedy of errors</i>
8	<i>Bolshoi Ballet: Coppelia</i>
9	<i>Royal Opera House: La Boheme</i>
10	<i>Royal Ballet: Romeo and Juliet</i>

# PANACHE PICTURE HOUSE

Box, Wiltshire

<http://www.panachepictures.co.uk/>

*Pop-up cinema hosting screenings and events in a village hall, with support and mentoring from BFFS SW Group and Bath Film Festival*



© Copyright Panache Picture House

## **Background**

Panache Picture House is the brainchild of Jo Crow, an Assistant Director living in the village of Box, which lies five miles to the east of Bath and a similar distance from Chippenham.

*I moved to Box and have small children and needed to try and keep my passion for film alive whilst also seeing my family. That was the starting point for me. But prior to July last year I'd been formulating my ideas over some time and I had actually seen the White Horse Pictures website, maybe at least a year before I got in touch with them.*

**Jo Crow, Panache Picture House**

The village has a population of around 4,000 people and the nearest commercial cinemas are in Corsham (Pound Arts), Bath (including Komedia and Odeon) and Chippenham (The Astoria).

Although Panache is run for profit, it is organised along more traditional film society lines with a membership scheme and event-based screenings.

White Horse Pictures provided a set of touring Blu-ray equipment through its partner BFFS SW Group, some of which (the amplifier, Blu-ray player and speakers) is on permanent loan to Panache.

*Jo [Crow] had already researched a lot of information and so I initially had to give Jo a lot less than I would normally. She has used one of two sets of equipment that BFFS in South West acquired from White Horse Pictures. Some of that equipment is with her semi-permanently. On a film-by-film basis I ferry a projector and screen to her.*

**Paul Schilling,  
BFFS SW and Shaftesbury Film Society**

Panache screenings are hosted at The Selwyn Hall in Box, although performances are planned to take place in other sites:

*We call it a retro pop-up cinema [...] The way I set it up was, whilst we are based in one venue at the moment we could theoretically pop up in other places, which we have already done at the church in the village when there was a clash with the panto. And I am already setting up an outdoor screening as part of the 'Box Revels' in the summer. The idea is that it's a company that runs at that key venue but has capacity to go to other places.*  
**Jo Crow, Panache Picture House**

*We do nice food, there's a bar. The bar is successful, the kitchen we had to work on but we responded to how things were going and now we've got a better strategy. A lot of work went in at the start to provide really lovely homemade treats and snacks. And now we're doing the 'double pot deal' where they get a pot of casserole, or they had coq au vin for James Bond, followed by a pot of Marshfield ice-cream. For us there's a better margin and it's pre-booked so it works better for us.*  
**Jo Crow, Panache Picture House**

### **Delivery**

Panache Picture House makes every screening an event, with themed entertainment, appropriate staging and carefully selected refreshments. This event-based approach, coupled with the draw of community socialising, provides Panache Picture House's unique selling point:

*We have people who are huge cinema fans but they come for the experience of being there as much as the film. Because it's the community getting together, they know the people there [...] It's a very local audience. We pick up people from Stroud or Frome for special events but largely it's a local audience.*  
**Jo Crow, Panache Picture House**

Screenings occur on Friday nights, with matinee performances on a Friday ('Fratinees') and Saturday.

This latter strand of screenings is branded as 'Panachios Kids' Club', a Saturday morning film club aimed at younger audiences. Child-friendly refreshments and a quiet area for parents and carers to relax ('Panache Parlour') are designed to promote family attendances.

Tickets are priced at £5 on Fridays and £3 on Saturdays. A membership scheme is available, which entitles members to a range of perks including 'VIP seating' and eight adult tickets for the price of six.

In addition, a loyalty card scheme operates at Panachios Kids' Club screenings, rewarding attendance at three screenings with a free snack.

Audiences typically fall into three groups depending on the screening slot:

*The Friday evening screenings we get a lot of 35-50 [year olds], which seems to be the core audience; we also get the 50+. It's a very family-oriented community so we get a lot of parents. We also get the older generation, there's a big retired community in Box. When I put the 12As on we got quite a few of the 10+ coming in to the evening screenings. The kids' club screenings tend to be for the primary key stage 1. On Saturday the first film I aimed at key stage 2 [was] ParaNorman. It doesn't work. From the start we've had a very full house for kids screenings, this was the first one that was only half full. I think we alienated out core audience – the younger ones – because the parents were worried about them being too scared. So I'm sticking with key stage 1. And then Friday morning [...] we have lots of retired people [...] and mothers.*  
**Jo Crow, Panache Picture House**

Panache operates with the use of volunteers, although a projectionist is paid for his time and mileage. All costs are met out of income from screenings and a grant for marketing and audience development:

*I have a team of volunteers but Paul [Schilling] I pay as a projectionist. I have outsourced a lot of the skills like the website, marketing, trailer production, which I pay for. That's paid for from income generated by the company and some of the grant. The grant's meant that we've put out fantastic brochures which will raise the profile hopefully in a way we can get other people to sponsor it in the future.*  
**Jo Crow, Panache Picture House**

During the first year of operation, Panache tended to programme popular mainstream titles to help build audiences,

along with more specialised films targeted at specific groups, like students:

*I've named this season 'gaining the trust of the audience', having experimented in the first year not knowing what would work. So we've got Argo, Skyfall, they've been winners. It's a Wonderful Life just before Christmas was our first winner. So we've gone mainstream. But we had Village at the End of The World, which was a new documentary set in Greenland [...] I did talks in the colleges, emailed students, sent social media, rang up the radio. Had to go very wide because it would only appeal to a limited sector of people. But then those people would be more prepared to travel.*  
**Jo Crow, Panache Picture House**

Panache also has plans to introduce filmmaking workshops to complement their screening activity. Building on Jo Crow's professional experience, the workshops will be aimed at both adults and children in the local area:

*I want to do [filmmaking workshops] but I've been a bit busy! I am trained in running the courses and have people who are interested in it [...] I'd like to do more things that I've set up independently. I'm setting up kids' workshops for the summer.*  
**Jo Crow, Panache Picture House**

Alongside financial and technical support from White Horse Pictures and BFFS SW Group, Panache has benefited from mentoring provided by Philip Raby and Holly Tarquini of Bath Film Festival:

*I [want] to emphasise [...] how brilliant Philip Raby and Holly Tarquini have been at the Bath Film Festival. I connected with them in November [...] and I genuinely feel that they give me incredibly valuable support and advice. They have a different, quite objective, experience in community cinema and it is so reassuring and helpful to get some complete impartiality and profound wisdom from them.*  
**Jo Crow, Panache Picture House**

Panache has found success with a number of titles, and Jo Crow remains confident about the venture's future:

*It feels successful because people are coming and enjoying it, we're getting good feedback on social media. You feel like people have got faith in the brand [...] I'm confident that there is an exciting market in rural cinema [...] I can see so many benefits to community cinema. I also think that the key thing is if I can set up a successful hub at the core, Panache Picture House, even if it's not greatly profitable, if you can get enough add-ons such as workshops, making archive films, or other things, then there is longevity in it as a business.*  
**Jo Crow, Panache Picture House**

### Key numbers, November 2012 to April 2013

Number of screenings	16
Number of film titles	14
% specialised titles	31%
Average no. of weeks after theatrical debut	>100
Total admissions	896
Highest attendance	111
Lowest attendance	18
Average attendance	56

### Top 10 films by admissions

1	Quartet*
2	Skyfall*
3	The Hobbit
4	It's a Wonderful Life
5	Argo
6	Brave
7	Madagascar 3
8	Moonrise Kingdom
9=	Anna Karenina
9=	Paranorman
10	Rear Window

\*Evening and matinee performances

# BISHOPSIDE & BEWERLEY MEMORIAL HALL

Pateley Bridge, North Yorkshire

<http://www.thememorialhall.org.uk/>

*Volunteer-run monthly film screenings hosted  
in a village hall in association with Blaize Community Arts*



© Copyright Cine Yorkshire

## **Background**

Pateley Bridge is a small market town in the Yorkshire Dales lying 10 miles north west of Harrogate, with a population of under 3,000 people.

Cinema in the Dale is hosted at the Bishopside and Bewerley Memorial Hall in Pateley Bridge, a registered charity, and run by the hall management committee.

Screenings came about after the committee Chair, Chris Henderson, looked into establishing a community cinema to make use of an existing screen at the hall and to generate income for the venue:

*[Cinema] was something I felt the town needed and the hall has a capacity of 150 for films. So I started looking online, read up about film clubs and came across Cine Yorkshire and took it from there [...] The village hall needs income, it's a large hall, 50 years old so we need it to be used and I and the committee saw this as a way of improving usage and bringing in much-needed funds.*

**Chris Henderson, Memorial Hall**

In addition to support from Cine Yorkshire, Nidderdale Plus Partnership awarded the Memorial Hall funding to help cover start-up costs. The funding was intended to support development of a film club and screenings for children, but there has been little demand locally for either:

*We received £250 from the Nidderdale Plus Partnership [...] with three objectives: to set up the cinema; to look at forming a film club; and also to run films for children. We've come to the conclusion that there isn't enough interest in running a film club. We tried a film for young people and we lost money on it [...] The Methodist Church two miles away have been running films for children and the film we picked they'd already shown [...] Having discussed it with them, they're going to focus on films for children and we'll concentrate on films for adults.*

**Chris Henderson, Memorial Hall**

The nearest commercial cinemas are located over ten miles away in Harrogate and Skipton, including major circuit venues and smaller, independent exhibitors.

## Delivery

The Memorial Hall hosts monthly screenings running from September to May, avoiding the summer months when audiences and volunteers are harder to attract.

Cinema in the Dale is entirely volunteer-run, with support from Blaize Community Arts, Cine Yorkshire's delivery partner for local community cinema. They provide the venue with a high definition projector so it can screen titles on Blu-ray, and the Memorial Hall also books films through Blaize:

*It's slightly cheaper than hiring a film directly from Filmbank. We looked at doing that, it was one of the options I came upon before I found Cine Yorkshire. Even if it had been the same price I think we would have gone with Cine Yorkshire to support a rural initiative in the county.*

**Chris Henderson, Memorial Hall**

Use of touring kit is not without challenges, including having to adjust settings after it has been used at a different venue:

*With numerous other users fiddling with the settings it can be a bit tricky to get it set up correctly, but experience over the season is helping. I now have two volunteers to help with the projection next season.*

**Chris Henderson, Memorial Hall**

Responsibility for setting up the screening equipment currently falls to one person, although the Hall has plans to train up others. In all, around ten volunteers help out with each screening, with roles allotted according to interest, availability and skills:

*A showing involves about 10 people but I'm responsible for setting up the equipment, the others put out the chairs, run the bar, sell refreshments, sell tickets for the next show, take tickets on the door.*

**Chris Henderson, Memorial Hall**

Tickets, charged at £5 each, are available in advance from the local pharmacy in Pateley Bridge, and on the door. At this price point around 25 admissions are required to break-even, which the venue comfortably managed in all cases during

the Pilot period except for the children's screening.

*We're making a decent income. We have a bar, sell tea and coffee, ice cream, so with that the total profit for the evening is about £500. That's after we've paid £300 to Blaize.*

**Chris Henderson, Memorial Hall**

Marketing materials are produced in-house, and screenings are advertised in the local newspaper and through flyers posted around town. The Cine Yorkshire web site promotes screenings online.

*I've got quite a good relationship with the local newspaper so we get good coverage, they did an article last week about the success of the cinema. We advertise with flyers throughout the town, church magazines, noticeboards.*

**Chris Henderson, Memorial Hall**

Audiences tend to be older, reflecting the demographic make-up of the town. As well as generating welcome income for the venue, Cinema in the Dale provides elderly and disabled residents with their only opportunity to visit the cinema:

*Our core audience, the average age is in the 60s. We get a full range, but it peaks around 45-75. Plus we also have quite a few people with disabilities and the very elderly who have said it's the only way they would be able to go and see a film on a large screen.*

**Chris Henderson, Memorial Hall**

## Key numbers, September 2012 to April 2013

Number of screenings	9
Number of film titles	9
% specialised titles	44%
Average no. of weeks after theatrical debut	65
Total admissions	937
Highest attendance	156
Lowest attendance	21
Average attendance	104

## Top films by admissions

1	<i>Salmon Fishing in the Yemen</i>
2	<i>Skyfall</i>
3	<i>War Horse</i>
4	<i>The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel</i>
5	<i>The Iron Lady</i>
6	<i>Midnight in Paris</i>
7	<i>Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy</i>
8	<i>Mamma Mia!</i>
9	<i>Brave</i>