Local authority arts funding plunges

by Ashley Siddall

Councils in England and Wales have cut arts funding by an average of £986,000 per authority over the past decade, according to a new report.

Arts Council England and UKArts have released the 2013-14 local authority and non-disabled arts funding report, which shows that 88% of local authorities have cut arts funding since 2003-04. The average cut over the last year was £1.3 million and £1.5 million in 2012-13.

Lorna Binnie, director of local arts, said: "The impact of the recession on our funding has been enormous, but it's important to remember that local authorities have always invested in arts.

"We've seen a lot of local authorities making cuts across the board, and that's been a degree of pressure for us to make tough decisions, but we've also seen some creativity and innovation from authorities in finding new ways to support their local arts.

"There are still some areas that are doing very well, and there are some areas that are struggling.

"But overall, the situation is improving, and we're seeing some positive signs.

"We're seeing some private sector investment, and we're seeing some community involvement, which is really encouraging."