Singing, orchestras, drama performances, films, talks, sculpture, painting – the list goes on and on. Once again Mole Valley shows what a wealth of talent it has. Every year we say that this Festival is 'the best yet' – and so it was this year! Once more we enjoyed the Yehudi Menuhin School’s hospitality for our launch and another incomparable performance by their students – for which we offer many thanks.

Street celebrations got us off to an exciting start with choirs, poetry, drumming, an up-and-coming singer, Irish dancers, a violinist, and a ballet dancer; many of whom featured in our drone film presentation. A particular global 'first' was the hugely enjoyable and beautifully organised day of TEDx talks – covering bees, architecture, design and capoeira amongst other things. From Charlwood in the south to Ashtead in the north, and all points in between there was something for everyone. Audiences and participants came from all age groups and this year we had our first ever writing competition for the older generation.

None of this could have happened without the support of our many sponsors, this year joined by Gatwick Airport. Thanks go to them all and to Surrey County Councillors, Helyn Clack, Stephen Cooksey and Tim Hall. Sherree Valentine Daines was again our Patron and I know how impressed she was, particularly with the entries at the Pumpkin Show. Mole Valley District Council was, as ever, hugely supportive. 20,000 brochures were designed and produced by J’CSL and the committee worked tirelessly to achieve what was a huge success.

Back to work now – bigger and even better in 2017!!

Mary Huggins, Mole Valley Arts Alive Chairman
Launch Party

In September the festival was once again formally launched at the Yehudi Menuhin School. The varied programme included the premiere screening of the Arts Alive promotional video, ballet, poetry and performances from the school’s students. It also involved a silent auction of Sherree Valentine Daines’ painting.

Dorking and Leatherhead Creative Celebrations

Following last year’s success, the Dorking and Leatherhead Creative Celebrations took place on separate weekends. Both events were very popular with a variety of performances. There was poetry, music and dancing as well as performances from many young, local upcoming talents such as Alexandra Keeley, Griffin Lynch Irish Dancers, George O’Hanlon, Charlie Taylor, Lily Moram and Blind Summit.

Following the positive feedback from the Dorking Music Festival, some local pubs have taken the initiative to continue the celebration.

Yarn Bombing

We were also delighted to include Dorking’s Guerrilla Knitters in the Festival this year. They decorated lampposts and cycle stands in South Street, and enhanced the performance area for the Creative Celebration in Dorking with a beautiful banner.

Festival Spotlight: Something New

This year, Arts Alive did not lack creativity and diversity in its events. They ranged from an interactive theatre performance in Dorking Sports Centre to Ted Talks.

We also hosted performances from bands from Dorking’s and Leatherhead’s twin towns.

Another diverse event was the Dorking Radical Film Festival, which held a series of thought provoking films in various locations in Mole Valley, including a secret cinema in Narnia at the Old House pub in Dorking.

“Great choice of thought provoking films that raise awareness and take someone outside their cosy world.”
Festival Spotlight: Family Events

There was something for everyone this year, including events that catered for families. This year Pippfest was part of Arts Alive, which was open to all. There was live music, art, food and fun for the thousands of people that came down to Pippbrook.

The Mole Valley Squash and Pumpkin Show was once again a highlight of Arts Alive, this year themed 'Harry Pumpkin and the Chamber of Squashes'. Hundreds of children and local residents attended this marvellous event and feedback was really positive.

“Great community feel. Interesting pumpkins to show children and lovely that it was all from local people. Activities were great and well suited. We went into Dorking especially for this event. Thank you for putting it on.”

Arts Alive also hosted events for toddlers and younger children. There was a multi-sensory theatre piece called Moonbrella, which sold out at Dorking Halls.

“Arts Alive Festival as a whole offers a very good range of events.”

Festival Spotlight: Inclusivity

This year Arts Alive had plenty of inclusive events to cater to people with disabilities and special needs. The Freewheelers Theatre Company hosted two disability shows - 'Haunted – The Blood-Curdling Musical' and then concluded their South East of England tour of 'Destiny Betrayel' in Leatherhead Theatre.

“The Freewheelers Theatre Company’s work is such a good thing for people with disabilities as well as able-bodied people. It gives people a purpose in life and their work is such a high standard. This is such valuable work for the community.”

Mary Frances Trust, a mental health charity, hosted a dance exercise session and The Amber Foundation hosted an open day to exhibit the services they offer young people.

Head2Head Theatre created a multi-sensory pantomime of 'Robin Hood' for children with special needs and their families.

“Absolutely awesome show, integration and inclusion at its best. We need more of this”
Festival Spotlight: Singing

Singing continues to be a favourite for Arts Alive. This year we had three 'Come and Sing' events by Will Todd, Vaughan Williams and Jonathan Willcocks, which were enjoyed by hundreds of enthusiastic vocalists. All Aloud Choir also hosted a singing workshop, which proved to be very successful.

“Thoroughly enjoyed, please make it yearly.”

Festival Spotlight: Creative Writing

Arts Alive 2016 excelled in creative writing events from talented local poetry groups and writing companies. Some of the featured poetry groups and artists were Mole Valley Poets, Well Versed Poetry reading group, Tony Earnshaw and Mole Valley Scriptwriters and Phoenix Writers. Other featured events were “Penny Readings”, “Found Haiku” and “At Home with the Moles”.

There was also a writing workshop hosted by Goldenford Publisher. Arts Alive also held a writing competition for people 65 years old or over. The brief was to write about an early experience from their lives. The story was judged by Moles Creative Writing Group and the winner was Charmian Corner.

Charmian was presented with a £50 book token from Barton’s Bookshop, a £50 cheque from Arts Alive, and the story was published in the local paper.

Festival Spotlight: Lunchtime Concerts

Lunchtime concerts were very well attended within the Arts Alive Festival. Following on from their successes last year, St Martin’s Church introduced another Music at Midday event. A new addition to the lunchtime concerts was ‘Music on Thursdays’ in Leatherhead which was very popular in the Leatherhead community.

“The event was splendid! Music on Thursdays is always a great pleasure! Greatly appreciated. Expected this event to be good and it surpassed my expectations. Wonderful to have such a range of excellent events locally”
Festival Statistics

21,010 people enjoyed the rich and diverse creative events hosted by the Mole Valley community over the 12 weeks. This is something to be truly proud of.

We received 362 audience evaluation forms representing 38 different events. The following information is a snapshot of this data; please note that there were 92 listings and 199 events this year so the information used is not fully representative of the whole festival.

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Gender

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<tr>
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<td>62%</td>
<td>8%</td>
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</table>

98% of people thought that the events they attended were excellent or good.

66% of people were aware that the event was part of the Arts Alive festival.

54% of people contributed to the local economy by visiting cafes, restaurants, bars, shops, sports centres, taxis, parking and hotels.

Arts Alive received £12,810 in grants and sponsorships.

It wasn’t just Mole Valley residents who enjoyed our festival. People from different parts of the UK and beyond attended:

- **Mole Valley 68%**
  (includes Ashtead, Beare Green, Betchworth, Bookham, Brockham, Dorking, Fetcham, Great Bookham, Holmwood, Leatherhead, Little Bookham, Mickleham, Newdigate, North Holmwood, Pixham, Ranmore Common, Westcott and Westhumble)

- **Rest of Surrey 17%**
  (includes Albury, Bagshot, Banstead, Caterham, Cheam, Chertsey, Chessington, Chilworth, Chobham, Cobham, Coulsdon, Cranleigh, East Horsley, Effingham, Effingham Junction, Epsom, Godalming, Guildford, Hersham, Hinchley Wood, Horley, Lightwater, Lingfield, Merrow, Redhill, Reigate, Ripley, Shepperton, Stoneleigh, Tadworth, West Ewell, West Horsley and Woking)

- **Rest of South East 6%**
  includes Brighton, Eastbourne (East Sussex), Canterbury Court, Maidstone (Kent), Cookham (Berkshire), Croydon, Isleworth, London, New Addington, Richmond, Surbiton, Sutton (London), Grayshott, Odiham (Hampshire), Horsham and Pulborough (West Sussex)

- **Rest of UK 1%**
  (includes Leamington Spa (Warwick) and Suffolk)

- **International 1%**
  (includes Adelaide (Australia), Ireland and Northern Ireland)

- **Did not specify 8%**
Thank you!

Thank you to all of the groups, individuals and businesses that have made Arts Alive 2016 such a success.

It really demonstrates that the arts community in Mole Valley is thriving.

The committee would like to say a particular thank you to the following organisations for supporting the festival:

Looking ahead to 2017

The festival committee are really pleased with how Arts Alive has gone this year. Looking ahead we would like to develop the following areas:

**Increasing awareness** - We have received a large amount of feedback from people wishing they knew about Arts Alive. Therefore, we would like to increase the percentage of people that are aware of Arts Alive and increase participation by recruiting a marketing officer and developing a marketing budget.

**Evaluation** - We would like to create an online evaluation form so that more people can give feedback about the festival.

**Young people** - We will work in partnership with schools and youth clubs to create more events for young people.

**Invoicing** - In 2017 event holders will receive an invoice from the Arts Alive Treasurer to make payment arrangements more efficient.

**Brochure** - We will aim to make the brochure more bright and colourful to appeal to younger audiences. We will also make the brochure simpler to navigate and user friendly for our online viewers.

**Closing Party** - Next year, Arts Alive will host a closing party to celebrate another successful year.

We are always on the look out for new active members to join the Arts Alive committee. We meet once a month in Dorking or Leatherhead and organise the festival from start to finish.

If you are interested please contact us at arts@molevalley.gov.uk
www.arts-alive.co.uk