



Proposal for the creation of a Natural Amphitheatre in the Falls Park September 2012

Synopsis:

This is a proposal that is being submitted to The Alpha Programme on behalf of Féile an Phobail for the creation of a natural amphitheatre in the Falls Park. We are applying for £30k for this project which will link in with the overall Falls Park Masterplan.

Project Detail:

This project is about developing an area of the Falls Park in West Belfast and transforming it into a natural amphitheatre where we will be able to host public events, and the local community will be able to meet, enjoy picnics and children play in natural 'play' areas akin to *Charles Jencks* natural landscape art projects in locations such as Northumberlandia.

Native plants will be planted on the site and a network of all ability paths to make the new space accessible for all.

At the heart of the project will be the construction of a natural seating area, surrounded by terraced earth banks, which will be landscaped and planted to form a natural performance and leisure arena for the local community. We propose that the site will also be fitted with effective drainage, mains water supply, and 3-phase electrical points. These will all be discreetly and securely located at strategic points within the amphitheatre.

It will provide a safe area for children (who will be helping with some of the landscaping through planting native plant species) to play and an outdoor green place that is accessible to people with disabilities.

It will not only add to the biodiversity of the area, improving the habitat for wildlife, but it will also provide a valuable community resource that will be enjoyed by people of all ages as well as an important tourist attraction. The project will incorporate into its design some local heritage sites and landmarks such as the 'lazy beds' that are situated on Black Mountain; a mountain that offers an almost 'parental' view over the proposed project.

The site will be open and accessible to the general public and is a location that we have a proven successful track record of hosting events and activities throughout the year. This will be a ready made arena for festivals, music and

community events without the need for any major financial input of building work required in the future.

We have been currently using this site for over 10 years and in this time we have hosted concerts, arts and crafts workshops, family fun days, a Celtic Village, lantern processions, fireworks displays, parachutists, sporting events, and many other children's events.

This project has been identified as a positive addition to our organisation for a number of key reasons. We believe the construction of a natural amphitheatre will significantly reduce our costs per annum; it will make our organisation more accessible in our quest to deliver activities to our community thus making the arts more accessible to our community.

We believe this project will benefit the community immensely as it positively utilises an area that is currently a neutral green space. By constructing a natural amphitheatre we are transforming an open area into a performance space where local young and old aspiring artists can perform; where young people's achievements can be showcased; where children's and family events and activities can occur; and where the community contribute directly to the programme content. The amphitheatre will also be accessible to other groups within the community to use to promote their activities and events throughout the year.

This project is about inclusion and participation. Our organisation is deeply ingrained within the community and our programmes reflect their needs and desires. We also believe that there will be environmental benefits as we are utilising a space that is currently 'neutral' and putting it to positive use for the entire community.

Cost:

We are applying for £30k for this project. This we believe will cover the majority of the costs associated with the construction of the natural amphitheatre. We are also working in close partnership with the Belfast City Council Parks Department who will in turn involve the council's landscape architects and designers. This again will reduce the costs associated with such an ambitious and innovative project.

Support:

This project we believe will benefit the entire community as outlined in the 'Project Detail'. We are therefore requesting support from other groups, organisations, potential user groups, those that will benefit directly or indirectly, as well as the local Parks and Leisure Committee.

The application deadline is 29th June 2012 and we believe having Letters of Support from Project Partners and Supporters will strengthen the application.

I would therefore like to appeal to you to write a letter of support for this proposal called *Access Art – Bringing Art to the Heart of the Community* and address it to Kevin Morrison, 473 Falls Road, Belfast BT12 6DD.

If you have any further enquiries or ideas about this proposal please feel free to contact me, bearing in mind the application is due on the 29th June 2012.

Kind regards

Kevin Morrison
Féile an Phobail

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Morrison". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.