

FIS CULTURE - TRAINING PROGRAMME

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DOCUMENTARY ARTS – October/November 09

Milton Keynes (venue to be confirmed)

(Full day event - date to be determined with interested parties)

A must for - Irish Societies, Heritage Groups, Cultural Societies and Development Officers

Living Archive

This event will explore the Living Archive Project as a case study to demonstrate how life stories and local history can be brought to life in ways that help you to engage with a local community building bridges between local history & heritage, the arts, community cohesion, lifelong learning and social development.

During this full day even will visit the project, talk to their staff, see samples of their work and explore how we can use some of their experiences within our community. We also explore how these activities can be funded from local and national initiatives.

Living Archive is based in Milton Keynes fifty miles north of London and is the United Kingdom's fastest growing new town. Change has been a way of life for more than 40 years. A rural population has watched its old landmarks disappear. Newcomers have left their family and friendship support networks behind as they have moved to brand-new housing estates.

How do you help the old-time residents retain pride in their lives and histories that seem to be being destroyed in the name of progress? How do you give the new arrivals the experience of coming into a place which has a past as well as a future? These were the challenges which led to the establishment of Living Archive. It is a creative cultural and community development organisation whose Documentary Arts work is inspired by people's memories. It has developed its activities over the last 35 years and was formally established in 1984.

Using local lives and events as their starting point, 11 large-scale musical documentary plays, 20 books of local reminiscence, photographic and other exhibitions, films, CD-ROM's, radio and video documentaries, sculpture events and community textile projects have been produced and archived. Local people of all ages and backgrounds have been actively involved in all stages of this work - in interviewing, research, in writing, performing, creating songs and music, sewing textiles, making costumes and stage props, organising exhibitions and editing books.