

ARTS COUNCIL: INTERNAL MEMO

To Training Committee
From David Curtis/Will Bell
Date 21 January 1986

cc Elizabeth Macgreggor
Rodney Wilson
Will Bell

We would like to draw your attention to the urgent need that exists for a training scheme in two closely related areas of film/arts administration.

Since 1977? Film Section has been funding a growing network of Video Access Libraries in the Regions (Arnolfini, Midland Group, Newcastle Media Workshop, Tyneside Cinema and the ICA) and has been giving support to a number of initiatives designed to promote a wider exhibition of Artists' Film and Video (ie Film and Video Umbrella). Our involvement in these areas has been made in response to the widespread interest in the use of the new media in arts centres and film centres - to present both educational material and new-media work by artists. We see Access Libraries, with their holdings of Arts Council documentaries on the arts, artists' film and video and work from the locally-based independent sector, as having a key role to play in the development of film and video policy for the regions.

A major and persistent problem in this development has been the conspicuous lack of administrators with experience of Video Access Library work (with its particular organisational and technological problems) and the necessary knowledge of the extensive area of film/video work.

The need for training exists at two levels: firstly the re-training of staff who have inherited responsibility for Video Access Libraries and or film/video exhibition as part of another job (ie education officer, (general) exhibition organiser); secondly, training for workers seeking a full-time post with a Video Access Library and/or with film/video exhibition responsibilities, such as the new post being created at Wolverhampton. In the absence of any formal courses offering training in these areas, our suggestion would be that attachments be arranged with the Video Access Libraries at the Arnolfini or ICA, and with experienced film/video programmers/exhibitors such as Mike O'Pray (Film/Video Umbrella organiser) or Jez Welsh, London Video Arts. (Exhibition training might also involve work with the BFI Distribution Division and reference to the major collections abroad - such as the Beaubourg Video-teque/Film Archive).

Clearly we could steer likely persons towards Training Dept with proposals for individual training bursaries, but we would welcome the opportunity to set up a more structured programme of training.