

Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund Great Place Programme Evaluation (England)

Year Two Report

BOP Consulting

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1. Executive summary

The Great Place scheme is a joint initiative between Arts Council England and National Lottery Heritage Fund that aims to pilot new approaches to putting culture at the heart of communities and local policy-making. The scheme was initiated in early 2017. An evaluation report was delivered in June 2018 covering the first full year of project activity.

This 2019 evaluation report reflects on the work of the projects across the second year of funding. It will be followed by a summative evaluation report in summer 2020, and a brief follow-up study in January 2022.

The programme evaluation has been commissioned from BOP Consulting to explore three key questions:

1. How best to re-position culture in local decision-making, planning and delivery?
2. Do new approaches lead to improved social, economic and cultural outcomes for local partners?
3. How do NLHF and Arts Council England work together to support these new approaches in future?

The programme evaluation is working closely with the awarded projects to gather both qualitative and quantitative evidence of how the programme is functioning, what it is delivering, and what learning can be taken from it to improve and inform current and future editions of such place-based schemes.

All of the 16 areas granted funding have continued to deliver their projects in line with the Great Place scheme aims. The majority of these have now requested project extensions in order to allow for better quality of delivery. This follows on from the year one finding that the first year was effectively spent on

development time. However, in year two, relationships that took time to establish are now bearing fruit.

Key findings

A key finding for the evaluation at this year two point is that projects are highly focused on the imminent project end point and thinking practically and strategically about legacy. Concerns with sustaining relationships, networks and ways of working are driving new thinking about organisational models, capacity building and plans for large-scale legacy projects. It is notable that, while discussion of future funding plays a part in these legacy conversations, it is only one part. How to enable the work of the Great Places to continue through embedding skills, relationships and habits of practice is more to the fore.

The evaluation data shows a number of significant changes across the programme since year one, including a rise in a sense of shared vision and strength of local cultural infrastructure, stronger engagement with policy-makers, and a rise in the number of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and university partnerships. Capacity building activity with other organisations has risen. Projects have also changed their understanding of how community empowerment will work but report significant progress in reaching a wide variety of groups, and remain passionately committed to delivering authentic empowerment in, and through, culture.

Public-facing delivery has also begun, with nearly 1,300 public-facing events delivered across the programme reaching an above-average proportion of people from lower socio-economic groups.¹ Audience data shows that Great Place activity has been generally well-received, with positive evidence of increased pride, sense of collective efficacy and belonging and enjoyable cultural experiences.

But challenges persist: workload – both of the project teams and of the organisations they need to engage with – continues to be the biggest barrier to

the lower (66.9% in 2017/18).’ DCMS, Taking Part Survey: England Adult Report, 2017/18, p. 5.

¹ England’s ‘Taking Part’ survey 2017/18 found that ‘engagement with the arts is significantly higher for the upper socio-economic group (85.7% in 2017/18) than

establishing partnerships or making change, followed by a lack of local leadership, skills gaps and lack of suitable evidence. Meanwhile, while some participation objectives have been met, projects have found certain groups more difficult to engage than others.

In the focus groups, project managers' survey and learning event, the projects spoke passionately of the high-level learning they had gone through – as individual staff members, as teams and as organisations, and in particular around the process of empowering communities and working with the health sector. Projects were now confident in bringing together arts and heritage, and in how to address creative enterprise. Plans to share and consolidate this learning through Great Place project networking are being activated by projects as a first step, but as an important legacy of Great Place, this programme-level learning should be captured and shared at both local and national level.

1.1 Year two recommendations

For Arts Council England and NLHF

- Continue to review the requirement that projects report audience data for arts and heritage separately and consider alternative arrangements, for instance halving beneficiary numbers between the two organisations
- Work together to plan a dissemination strategy for the learning from the Great Place projects, reaching internal and external stakeholders. How can bodies outside the cultural sector be engaged?
- Support the continued networking between projects
- Discuss with internal stakeholders the next steps for Great Place areas and the potential for future funding. Signpost internal stakeholders to the needs and potential of Great Places when managing new funding rounds; signpost projects to opportunities that arise and how Great Place projects could move towards them.

For projects

- Build thinking about evaluation into the consideration of legacy. How will the impact of the projects be tracked after the funding period ends? What contacts or networks need to be in place?
- Take active steps to build the Great Place project network, benefitting from shared learning and support in particular around creating legacy. Consider if there are benefits to collaboration and contact beyond the project: what should the legacy of this shared experience be? How can the ambition of Great Place be sustained in these areas? Is there a potential for future collaboration?

For evaluators

- Ensure that evaluation methods track changing views on the best ways to empower local communities in and through culture; highlight this learning for use in future projects. Compare and contrast with the learning from Creative People and Places.
- Explore the growth in interest around Community Asset Transfer. What is driving this: increased visibility of project organisations, confidence of community organisations, or the growing national profile of the process?
- Review governance changes in and around lead partner organisations as an additional indicator that projects have achieved change in how the role of culture is being embedded locally across a range of sectors.
- Work with funders on a dissemination strategy, considering key audiences and the form and content of the final evaluation reports.
- Engage with projects to ensure that all are clear about data collection processes and requirements for the final year to ensure highest possible data quality and quantity for the evaluation.

1.2 Reviewing year one recommendations

The recommendations given in the year one evaluation report are included below, with status updates below each (in → *italics*).

For Arts Council England and NLHF

- The importance of the developmental ground-work required for making change needs to be acknowledged, both in managing current grants and in planning for similar future place-making / transformational schemes.
 - ➔ *Project deadlines have been extended in response to the additional time required at the beginning for development.*
 - ➔ *This learning point has been shared across ACE and with government departments developing funding programmes.*
- All projects are clearly structured but ambitious. This raises an issue for funders about what they need to see in a competitive place-making application for future schemes. How much activity is required to drive policy change? How far does policy-change drive delivery?
 - ➔ *Projects note the importance of being able to be flexible in their delivery plans to adapt to new learning and respond to the wishes / needs of local communities. Projects have therefore adapted their plans since initial application – though there is no perceivable drop in levels of planned activity.*
- Sharing knowledge and best practice across the projects is highly valued, especially as these are pathfinders in need of both evidence and a sense of cohort. Future learning events could usefully focus on the types of evidence needed to make the case to external stakeholders for the value of culture, especially economically. The need to support the skills development of the project managers in their quasi-leadership roles is paramount.
 - ➔ *The second planned learning event for all projects was brought forward from year three to year two in response to this demand. Projects were able to share knowledge and learning and discuss the operation of the funding scheme and plans for legacy. Key topics of discussion included building legacy from the work of the funded projects and sharing the learning from Great Place more widely with government, funder and cross-sectoral strategic stakeholders (for example health, communities).*

➔ *The Great Place projects set up an event in August 2019 to support their development as a network-in-progress. The event was funded by ACE.*

- Funders could usefully begin discussions of a joint dissemination strategy of the results of Great Place at this point, considering both internal and external stakeholders.
 - ➔ *Arts Council and NLHF have confirmed that they have used learning from Great Place with internal stakeholders to date. Participants in the learning event emphasised the importance of not losing the valuable body of learning from Great Place and are keen to support a dissemination strategy.*
- Consider re-evaluating the arts/heritage distinction within the programme evaluation, reaffirming the focus on 'culture' rather than 'arts' and 'heritage' and reducing the administrative burden on projects. While there are operational reasons why each funder needs reporting on its individual aims, the joint vision and collaboration of the Great Place scheme could be better represented by carrying the approach to 'cultural impact' through into reporting and assessment.
 - ➔ *This ongoing issue remains a source of dissatisfaction, causing both an administrative burden and working against the scheme ideology. Arts Council and NLHF have committed to reviewing this prior to year three data collection.*

For projects

- Projects should create opportunities to continue their networking, perhaps through regular calls, interest groups, visits, regional meet-ups, social media etc. While NLHF have set up an online space for group discussion, this is cumbersome to use and not gaining traction.
 - ➔ *Project evaluators have established an email group, and there has been some networking among projects. Coventry and Greater Manchester are co-ordinating a networking and information sharing event for all projects in summer 2019, with funding support from Arts Council.*

- Projects should review the ambition of their projects against practicalities, in concert with their NLHF case officers.
 - ➔ *The majority of projects have negotiated new project end points. Projects are highly aware of the distinction between delivery within the project timeframe and establishing mechanisms that maintain the Great Place approach thereafter.*

For evaluators

- Qualitative evaluation work (case studies and focus groups) should drill down into how projects are approaching social and economic development as activity levels grow in these areas.
 - ➔ *Focus groups were held in March 2019. These surfaced a number of points around enabling social and economic development, with a particular focus on capacity building in both community and creative enterprise sectors. Full write-ups are included as an Appendix below.*
- Invest time in making best use of the comparator example of the NLHF Great Place (Nations) Scheme to evaluate the strengths of partnership working between funders in cultural place-making.
 - ➔ *Evaluators have maintained a conversation with the Programme Director and evaluators for the Great Place (Nations) scheme, including reviewing notes from the Great Place (Nations) year one learning event.*

1.3 Structure of Year 2 report

- The Great Place programme evaluation was commissioned in June 2017.
- While the original plan was to deliver a baseline report in September 2017, projects were slow to start. We therefore delivered instead a Year 1 report in June 2018 which served both as the baseline point for project data and give an overview of activity and achievements to date. This was shared with projects in March 2019, and published online in June 2019.

- Evaluation work across year two has included interaction with projects through calls and workshops, including on-boarding new project managers; an in-depth survey of project managers; focus groups on key topics; extended visits to four case studies areas; a learning day (held in Coventry, April 2019); and the first programme level collection of evaluation data relating to delivery, including audience/participant feedback data and audience/participant postcodes.
- A summary of this delivery data is included here as an Appendix, with commentary included within the main body of the report where relevant. While it is possible to reflect on some trends within the data collected at this point, the chief analysis will be at the year three point, i.e. when there is both a larger pool of data and data can be compared across years.
- Analysis and data are reported against each of the agreed outcomes for the programme. This includes both immediate and short-to-medium term outcomes, for which baseline data has been gathered.
- All 16 projects completed all questions in the project managers survey. For all other data sets, completion rates have been noted.
- We have also included summary reflection on the three core evaluation questions, although these will chiefly be addressed in the final report.
- Core information about the Great Place scheme and the structure of the evaluation can be found in the year one evaluation report.²
- All quotations are from Great Place project managers.
- For ease, projects will be referred to throughout by **area** rather than project name. It should be noted, however, that that projects typically focus on specific sub-areas and may not be operating in the entirety of the area thus referenced.

² <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/publication/arts-council-england-and-heritage-lottery-fund-great-place-scheme-year-1-programme>; <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding-finder/great-place-scheme>.

Figure 1 Great Place (England) Awards

Project	Area	Region	Award
Vital Valley	Derwent Valley, Derbyshire	East Midlands	£1,285,800
Making Waves Together	Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft	East of England	£737,900
Creative Connections	Waltham Forest	London	£1,355,600
Park Royal in the Making*	Old Oak and Park Royal, Ealing (OPDC)	London	£1,489,200
Sunderland Comes of Age	Sunderland	North East	£1,249,900
Greater Tees	Tees Valley	North East	£1,332,500
County Durham	County Durham	North East	£1,489,200
Stronger Together**	Greater Manchester	North West	£1,489,200*
Reading-on-Thames	Reading	South East	£558,400
Pioneering Places	East Kent	South East	£1,489,200
Gloucester – A Proud Past	Gloucester	South West	£1,489,200
Torbay – A Place to Feel Great	Torbay	South West	£1,191,400
Coventry – Place, Heritage, Diversity	Coventry	West Midlands	£1,489,200
Herefordshire's A Great Place	Herefordshire	West Midlands	£748,200
Seamless	Barnsley and Rotherham	Yorkshire and Humber	£1,264,000
Crossing the Watersheds	Craven	Yorkshire and Humber	£1,340,300

Source: NLHF

* New project name; originally 'Made in Park Royal.'

**Note: Since award, Greater Manchester has reduced its grant request by 59% (£640,705) to £848,550. The project will still be delivered in full, but with greater use of in-house funding and resources.

2. Process / strategy outcomes

2.1 Cross portfolio, cross sector partnership & working is significantly improved and extended

In the 'development phase' of year one, work to lay the groundwork for cross portfolio, cross-sector working and partnerships was the primary focus of the projects.

Evaluation data from year two suggests that this groundwork has been laid successfully, with a noticeable rise in the sense of shared vision across partnerships, a lower sense of skills gaps, and a reduced sense that cultural infrastructure was lacking.

Workload continues to be the biggest issue preventing cross-sector partnerships and cross portfolio working, especially given the complex, multi-partner nature of Great Place projects and the voluntary nature of many of the partners. This year also saw an increased sense that a lack of clear leadership at local level was a barrier.³

Partnerships between projects and health sector organisations have fallen slightly; partnership with universities and LEPs have risen; and cultural organisations have moved from being always funded partners to being strategic partners, irrespective of funding. Projects continue to report the creation of new cross-sectoral partnerships and growing the number of ways in which these partnerships operate (although figures for joint commissioning remain roughly static). There is also a significant rise in confidence of project managers that they have contributed to cross-sectoral partnering in their area, and that they can see cross-sectoral partnerships across their local cultural sectors.

2.1.1 Partner buy-in and developing a shared vision

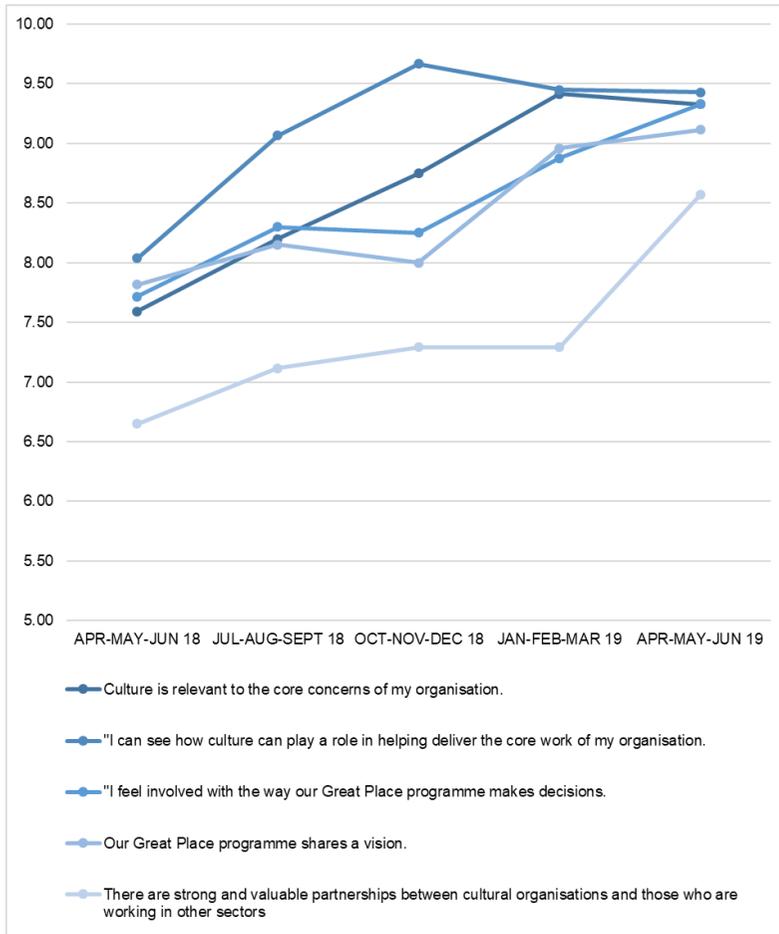
The Year 1 evaluation found that steering group respondents felt involved in Great Place and shared its vision; this was reflected by project managers, who were largely positive with regard to the statement 'Our Great Place shares a vision'. However, significant challenges to developing this shared vision were highlighted, including workload, lack of cultural infrastructure, skills gaps, difficulties in evidencing culture's impacts in non-cultural contexts as well as local governance and partner networking. Although only one in four managers felt that skills or resources for partnership management were lacking, several highlighted the challenge of working with partners for whom money is scarce. In addition, at least five projects highlighted technical process issues, e.g. contracting, procurement, and other legal or financial issues.

Survey data from the Steering Group survey captured between April-June 2018 and April-June 2019 – albeit from four projects only - shows that response rates have consistently improved with regard to 'Our Great Place programme shares a vision' over the year when asked for respondents' own view, growing from around 7.8 to around 9.1, where 10 means 'strongly agree'. The same pattern is visible when asked about 'my organisation's view'; see Figures 2 and 3 below. Whilst this data set is incomplete, the trend across 4 out of 16 projects can be read as indicative as the trend across the projects as a whole though we note that with a high number of variables across projects this is not to a high confidence level.

The same statement was put to project managers. The response was a weighted average of 7.81 (where 10 means strongly agree), which has increased since the same group was asked last year (7.00).

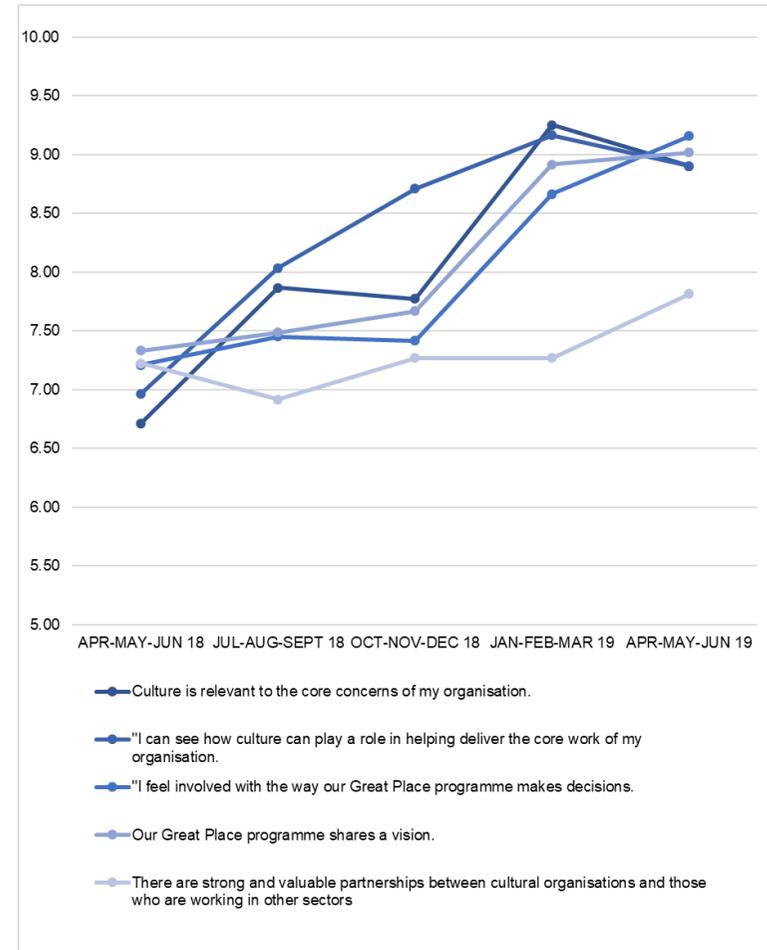
³ This finding relates to the perceptual survey of project managers.

Figure 2 Year 2 Steering Group Survey 'My View'⁴



Source: Great Place Steering Group Survey Year 2

Figure 3 Year 2 Steering Group Survey 'My Organisation's View'⁵



Source: Great Place Steering Group Survey Year 2

⁴ Note that this includes data from Torbay, Tees Valley, Lakes & Dales and East Kent only. No data for Coventry, Waltham Forest, Gloucester, Great Yarmouth, OPDC, Barnsley, Greater Manchester, Sunderland was provided and only one response from Herefordshire, Reading, Vital Valley and Northern Heartlands so this could not be tracked over time.

⁵ Note that this includes data from Torbay, Tees Valley, Lakes & Dales and East Kent only. No data for Coventry, Waltham Forest, Gloucester, Great Yarmouth, OPDC, Barnsley, Greater Manchester, Sunderland was provided and only one response from Herefordshire, Reading, Vital Valley and Northern Heartlands so this could not be tracked over time.

Nevertheless, challenges remain, and once again, project managers point to workload as by far the biggest challenge to creating shared vision. This takes different forms across the projects, with some respondents pointing to difficulties in balancing deadlines alongside other projects (such as e.g. Borough of Culture), while others refer to short lead times and restricted working hours, in particular where project teams are made up of volunteers and representatives from a variety of organisations, who “struggle to wholly commit to the project unless they have been commissioned for particular parts of the project, making it difficult to justify time spent at meetings, which are important [in creating a shared vision]”.

Many pointed to related challenges as stemming from the way their Great Place projects are set up, with a wide range of collaborators, across multiple sites and multiple projects at different points in their iteration. Such set-ups pose challenges to finding time for all to come together, with resulting difficulties in managing expectations, responsibilities and accountability across the team as well as creating a sense of cohesion and shared vision.

“ [The project] is being delivered across four towns by four different lead organisations on four very different sites. [...] There is no real sense of cohesion between projects which are at different stages of delivery due to different start times.

Workload was followed by a lack of clear leadership - increased since last year - and lack of evidence for impact of culture (six projects each).

“ There is a lack of strong, visible leadership of 'place' here. It remains challenging to move beyond 'silos' and think across the whole area, with a shared responsibility for culture.

Noticeably, compared to last year, fewer projects identified lack of cultural infrastructure, and only three projects (compared to nine last year) identified skills gaps. Each of the three moreover pointed to skills gaps in different areas (marketing and communications; stakeholder management; long-term planning), suggesting localised rather than sector-wide issues. This may point to

improvements in local cultural infrastructure and to evidence of upskilling of team members within projects, and it will be interesting to track and review this development over the coming years.

Figure 4 Year 2: Challenges to creating a shared vision

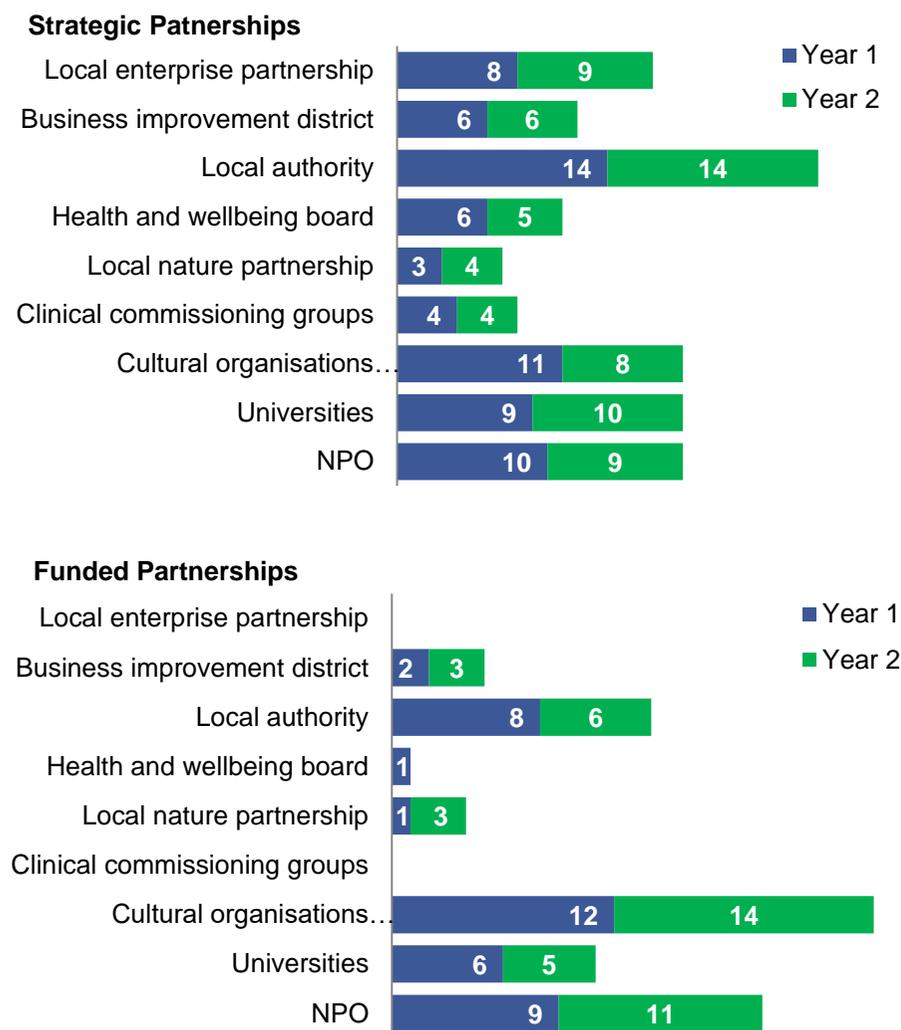


Source: Great Place Project Manager Survey Year 2

2.1.2 New partnerships developed between cultural organisations and those outside the sector

Looking at the types of partners that the projects are working with and how this has changed, the results of the project manager survey suggest that the pattern has shifted only slightly from last year. One clear change however is that eight projects are working with cultural organisations (non-NPO) as strategic partners this year, compared to none last year.

Figure 5 Partnerships with Great Place projects, Years 1 and 2



The following table compares the types of partnerships between the two years in more detail.

Year 1	Year 2
14 projects working with their local authorities	As last year, 14 projects are working with their local authorities as strategic partners. 6 are also working with their LA as funded delivery partners.
Cultural partnerships fairly evenly split between NPOs and non-NPO cultural organisations. Cultural organisations the only partners who were funded but are not strategic partners.	Again, the pattern across NPOs and other cultural organisations is similar to last year in terms of funded delivery: almost all projects (14) are working with cultural organisations as funded delivery partners, while 11 are working with NPOs as funded delivery partners. The majority of projects this year are also working with cultural organisations as strategic partners (8) - a clear change from last year.
Significant number of universities (9) and LEPs (8) involved	Figures here have slightly increased: 10 universities and 9 LEPs are involved in projects as strategic partners. A further 5 universities act as funded delivery partners.

Source: Project Manager survey Years 1 and 2

Health was strongly represented, with 6 Health and Wellbeing boards and 4 Clinical Commissioning Groups partnering projects.	Partnerships with the health sector appear to have reduced very slightly, with 5 Health and Wellbeing boards acting as strategic partners and 4 CCGs.
Only one of these partnerships was in receipt of funding.	No Health partners were involved as funded delivery partners this year.

We suggested last year that it would be interesting to note whether strategic (i.e. share a vision and/ or approach) or funded partnerships (i.e. those in receipt of money to deliver specific projects) have greater strength and longevity as the projects develop. While there have been slight changes to partnerships across the board, it seems too early to answer this question, but it will be valuable to continue tracking how these partnerships develop over time.

In terms of partnerships between the cultural sector and other sectors *outside* of the Great Place projects, evidence last year suggested that Project Managers saw little cross-sectoral partnering with the cultural sector.

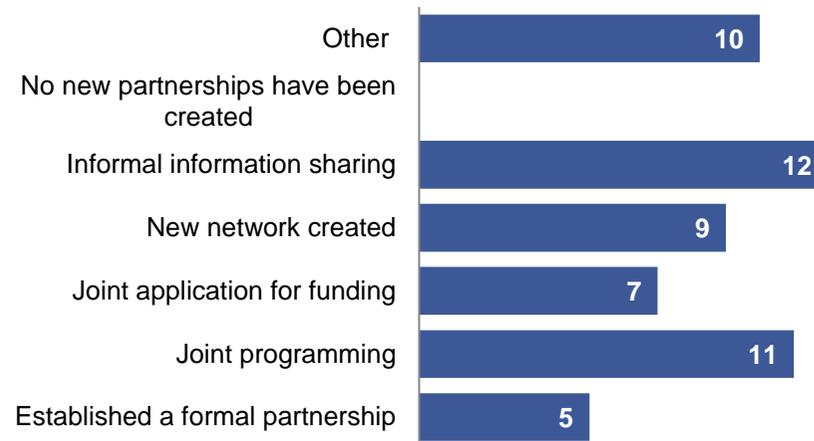
The results of the project managers' survey show that respondents feel more strongly than last year that 'there are strong and valuable partnerships in my area between cultural organisations and those who are working in other sectors' (e.g. health, education, social care, youth services), with the weighted average for that question increasing from 4.75 to 6.19 this year where 10 means 'strongly agree'.

The project manager survey furthermore shows that projects have continued to develop new partnerships of varying types in year 2 of the programme. While fewer projects reported the formation of new cross-sectoral formal partnerships (3 compared to 10 last year), this may be due to the fact that the 10 formed last year continue to exist and there was less need to create new formal partnerships than in the build-up phase of the first year. In contrast, instances of new partnerships in the form of both joint programming and informal information

sharing have increased (from 7 to 9 projects and 6 to 11 respectively), perhaps supporting the notion that approaches to cross-sector collaboration are bedding in. Only one project this year reported no new partnerships. Comments from respondents suggest that partnerships vary considerably from project to project and that, as ever "we can do so much more with more time". One project pointed out that partnerships were relatively localised at present and now needed to be scaled up to create area-wide impact.

Joint commissioning that involves cultural organisations however appears to be a continuing challenge - only 5 out of 16 projects confirmed that cultural organisations were involved in joint commissioning in their area. Furthermore, when asked whether joint commissioning including the cultural sector was *increasing* in their area, the weighted average of responses lay at 5.93, an only marginal increase from 5.47 last year (where 10 means strongly agree).

Figure 6 Types of new partnerships created between organisations in the cultural sector and other non-cultural sectors



Source: Project Manager Survey Year 2

As last year, partnerships are reported as involving a wide range of sectors, in particular health (4 out of 16 projects), youth (4 projects) and education (2 projects). This represents an increase from last year in partnerships with the health sector, which have doubled, and the youth sector, of which there were no reported partnerships in Year 1. However, one fewer project reported a partnership with the education sector. No new partnerships were reported with tourism organisations.

Last year already we reported a good sense that Great Place had contributed to the development of (new) cross-sectoral partnerships; this view has further increased from 6.75 last year to 8 this year where 10 means strongly agree (weighted average).

2.1.3 Cross-Sectoral Focus: Culture and Health

Last year's focus group on Health and Culture revealed two types of approaches to linking Health and Culture across projects: clinical health, through highly targeted initiatives; and community well-being, through large-scale public interventions. All projects who joined the focus group were highly committed to bringing health and culture into partnership as an urgent address to critical local problems as well as a way to support the cultural sector.

Noticeably, both cash and impetus in all cases stemmed from the cultural side, and although health partners were generally positive about the opportunities, there were barriers to further collaboration. There was a general sense that things were slightly further progressed in terms of arts than heritage. Projects highlighted three key challenges:

- the time it takes to establish collaboration
- the need for the cultural sector to learn to 'speak the same language' as the health sector
- the need for local quantitative and qualitative evidence - felt more keenly with regard to health than any other cross-sectoral working.

Collectively, the projects outlined a potential three level structure to developing health and cultural partnerships:

1. Piloting to develop local evidence, paid for by the cultural sector and pushed forward by individuals
2. Further partnership development, requiring qualitative evidence that moves hearts and minds, accepted at organisational level
3. Potential for clinical funds to be spent on cultural interventions, dependent on quantitative / economic evidence and embedded in strategy / policy

At the point of last year's focus group, only Greater Manchester was already at or near level three – with a history of health and culture collaboration dating back to the 1980s.

This year's focus group⁶ suggests that some significant progress has been made in this area, with participants comfortable that the 'case' for arts in health had now been made, evidenced by a key announcement from the NHS during the preceding year, and the fact that money was now flowing in both directions (arts to health and health to arts) rather than, as previously, arts paying for pilots to create evidence for the health sector. While still at different levels in their journey, all three projects reported progress: Greater Manchester, with its well-established arts and health agenda, is now focusing on high-level, strategic relationships. They have set up a high-level steering group which is working on social prescribing and have created an outcomes framework and an interactive platform to share ideas for the cultural sector to use. In addition, a range of initiatives are taking place. Torbay and Sunderland meanwhile, beginning from a lower starting point, have moved from pilot projects to trying to embed this work and establish a regular pattern of activity. Torbay has identified four priority health issues and has run successful pilot projects addressing each. However, there is at present some concern about the future due to current institutional changes within the health sector in the county. Following extensive community consultation, Sunderland has now moved into developing more bespoke community programmes in their target area, including a community allotment.

⁶ Focus group year 2 included Torbay, Sunderland and Greater Manchester. Each of these projects also participated in year 1 alongside Waltham Forest and Reading.

All three pointed to a number of key elements required for the establishment of long-term working relationships between the two sectors:

- high-level strategic relationships, which are seen as intensive to establish in terms of time and energy
- continuing work to maintain newly established ties between the sectors, which are still vulnerably to personnel or organisational changes
- the need to find the right partners on a region-by-region basis. Sunderland has for example identified pharmacists as the most effective delivery partners, while Torbay has focused on working via networks with the Torbay Council, the local hospital and public health teams
- ‘influencers’ from within the health sector are important and need to be nurtured
- the ongoing and indeed growing need for quality assurance processes, which is needed to convince health professionals as much as patients themselves of the value of such activities. With regard to the latter, social and demographic groups will need to be taken into account.

The projects raised two fundamental questions that will need to be addressed more widely in the future:

1. National vs local activity: while the NHS momentum behind social prescribing is considered as positive, there is some concern as to how such national models will take into account local needs and existing work.
2. Who pays for what?: While projects reported money flowing into both directions, participants still noted that this remains an issue - “Arts Council won’t pay for health and NHS won’t pay for arts”. There thus remains an overhanging question of whether there is enough money to make such work viable.

2.1.4 Culture becomes more relevant to stakeholders outside the cultural sector

Last year, we reported that all projects were describing ways in which they were actively approaching non-cultural policymakers, eg arranging meetings, attending conferences. Nevertheless, the process of engaging policymakers outside the cultural sector was considered challenging due to practical issues, the novelty of such work and the lack of evidence of impact. We suggested that this served as a strong reminder that these projects are ‘pathfinders’ and that the programme’s core assumption that culture has a significant value in achieving other agendas is not yet widely held. This was also reflected in the cultural organisation survey, which showed that while 23 respondents felt that the cultural and creative sector is ‘somewhere in the mix of wider local economic and social agendas’, only 13 thought that the CCIs were ‘at the heart of wider local economic and social agendas.’

This year, again, all surveyed projects reported engaging with policymakers around the value of culture in the broader social and economic agenda, although the ways in which projects engaged appeared to have slightly changed.⁷ While the largest number of projects last year reported one-to-one meetings with policy makers (10), this year the largest number reported engaging policy makers through more formal channels of networks, boards, strategy group, committees, etc. A further four projects each reported engaging through strategies and plans; relationship building and stakeholder management; and conferences, meetings and events. This change from one-to-one meetings to engagement through more formal settings perhaps suggests that more ‘doors have been opened’ for projects to engage actively and strategically and will be interesting to track and dig into more detail going forward.

However, as last year, projects continue to face challenges in engaging with policy makers, highlighting in particular:

- proving impact,

⁷ Note this is based on analysis of qualitative responses

- time, workload, and
- getting stakeholders in the same room.

Interestingly, compared to last year, the notion of the ‘novelty’ of such cross-sectoral work was not particularly raised this year as a key challenge by any of the projects, although one project referred to the challenge of facing ‘entrenched ways of working’ while another pointed to conflicting agendas/ priorities.

2.2 Communities have greater input and influence in decision-making in the cultural sector

The second core immediate process/strategy outcome for Great Place concerns community empowerment. Last year’s focus group on co-commissioning and community empowerment revealed that the drive to genuinely empower specific communities is at the heart of each Great Place project, and an aspect of their work to which they are passionately committed. Projects showed a great deal of consistency in this, with many keen to change the status quo of things ‘being done to’ communities. Three projects had dedicated personnel in place to build trust and explore the priorities of local communities. A particular aim in this for projects lay in using community empowerment as a tool to address social issues in their area, through empowering people as decision makers both *about* and *through* culture. Indeed, projects considered cultural activities themselves as community empowerment, through their development of pride and a sense of place/ identity.

Participants felt that more meaningful processes to deliver social engagement had been established, providing better chances for people to be listened to by decision-makers and have real impact. A few key insights were made:

- light touch approaches (e.g. consultations) were seen as insufficient in themselves but considered as useful starting points to more meaningful engagement.

- projects need to ensure that empowering one community does not come at the cost of disempowering another
- a too narrow definition of ‘culture’ can be a barrier to participation

Given this, all projects envisioned their work as a process or pathway, moving from:

1. **introductions** through consultations, surveys and demonstrations, to
2. **engagement** through e.g. volunteering, community panels, research, to
3. **empowerment** through co-production/ -commissioning, participatory budgeting, representation.

This year’s focus group questioned this linear pathway, suggesting that the process was less straightforward and required more time. There was also an overriding sense that projects still feel that they are learning - both about what works, and what does not. But it was clear that progress in empowering communities was being made in all participating projects.⁸ All had run a range of community projects over the past year involving their local communities, some including decision-making by community panel, some of which had worked more or less well. Several mentioned working with community facilitators as well as working with community members via school settings. This work was being noted - several of the projects reported that their leads were being approached by other groups and government agencies for their expertise in community engagement.

Projects felt that they had made progress in understanding how to reach key groups such as different generational groups, and how to deliver programming that is sensitive to different local groups. However, two in particular mentioned the long-term efforts required in building trust and engagement with communities, often from scratch, and the role of local ‘gatekeepers’ in this, who can both be a help or hindrance. Some pointed to the particular value of big events in acting as catalysts for community engagement, as well as the need to develop simple and straightforward messaging, bespoke to different communities.

⁸ Coventry, Herefordshire, Northern Heartlands, Tees Valley

“ With our community initiatives, people want to come and work with you once they understand it's straightforward and that they can benefit from it. So having something simple and straightforward, and building on that, is key.

Interestingly, two projects pointed out that their lead Great Place organisation not being a local authority or government-affiliated body was beneficial in helping them to connect with communities more easily - it allowed them to enter *“without baggage and be more understanding in their challenges and that's been a real icebreaker”*.

All projects are working in partnership with others to varying degrees, such as local NPOs, arts professionals or heritage organisations, including, in one case, engaging in innovative research as to how to bring an arts perspective into planning processes.

“ We're trying to get people to start talking to each other. And a big aspect of that is around finding different ways into the planning system and using the arts to explain to planners how the average person feels about how they live.

All projects however wished they had more time, noting that three years felt too little time to do so. Considering this, one project for example highlighted how they felt part of their work was to help communities build their own capacity to design and steward their own cultural programmes. All felt they were making headway with regard to creating a strong foundation of trust and mutual learning and are now turning their attention to how to establish a legacy for the programme and individual projects.

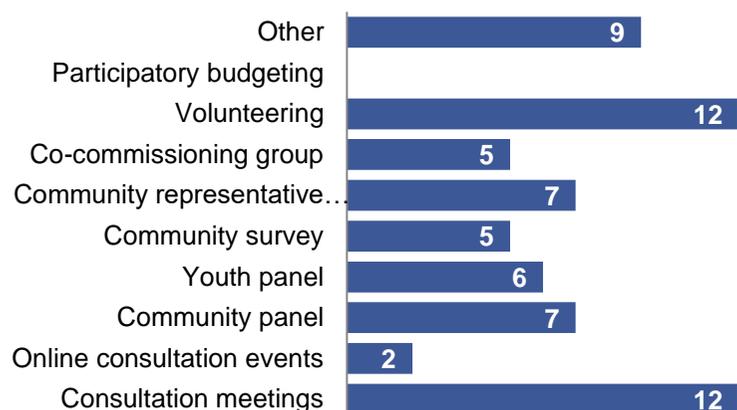
Looking in more detail at the types of approaches taken by projects to engage local communities, the project manager survey revealed that there has been little change in approaches since last year. As last year, the two most popular modes of engagement were through consultation meetings and volunteering, however, while the number of projects indicating 'consultation' reduced slightly

from 14 to 12, volunteering increased slightly from 11 to 12. This was followed this year by community panels (7 projects, same as last year), community representation on steering/ working groups (7, down from 9 last year) and youth panels (6, same as last year). It may be interesting to understand what caused the reduction in community representation on steering/ working groups, and whether this becomes a trend. In the focus group, there were indications that the ambition to deliver co-commissioned cultural projects may be being redefined, with top-down or mixed approaches proving more successful in engaging wide numbers of people: again, this will be interesting to follow.

In terms of volunteering, combined data from the projects (based on the project progress reports) shows that this year, the projects involved 1,374 volunteers, racking up 1,629 days spent volunteering and £3.8m in terms of the value of volunteer or non-cash contributions throughout Year 1 and 2. Project volunteer numbers varied considerably between 0 and 192, demonstrating a huge range of different project approaches. This makes for useful baseline data, which we will compare with project data at the end of the programme.

Referring back to the process that projects see community engagement as, this picture suggests that while slightly fewer projects were undertaking consultations (i.e. the first step of 'introductions'), this was only marginally the case, and most projects still appear to find themselves within the second step of 'engagement'. As yet, only few appear to have moved on to the third step of 'empowerment': reference to co-commissioning in fact reduced from 6 to 5 projects while again, no projects referred to participatory budgeting.

Figure 7 Project approaches to engaging local communities in decision-making



Source: Great Place Project Managers Survey Year 2

In terms of the success of these activities, last year we found cautious optimism that community engagement had led to new ideas, though less certainty that these ideas have yet been implemented. Although both figures have very slightly increased, this pattern has in effect not altered.

Figure 8 Results of community engagement YR 1 vs YR 2

	Weighted average out of 10 YR 1	Weighted average out of 10 YR 2
Community engagement had led to new ideas	6.25	6.56
These ideas have been implemented	5.5	5.94

Source: Great Place Project Managers Survey Year 1 and 2

Noticeably, several projects felt that it was as yet too early to provide an answer to these questions (3 projects with regard to new ideas; 6 with regard to implementation) and a couple mentioned that their approaches had been less successful than hoped. One project for example pointed out that even where new ideas were generated, it was often difficult to translate these into action if these were completely new activities happening outside the partnership, due to a lack of resources and the need to find funding. Nevertheless, many projects provided examples of successful community engagement, resulting in new activities or influencing strategy development:

“ At the school workshops the young people designed a social innovation to attract people to a heritage destination and came up with some amazing ideas.

“ Through Steel Gala, the themes of the artistic intervention have come directly from consultation and Steering Group participation by members of the local community.

“ Feedback from Culture Conversations is being fed into the development of new Culture Strategies.

“ Currently 33 projects are running through CIF, all of which have been generated by the community themselves. In addition, [there are] three co-commissioned programmes.

2.3 Culture is embedded in wider local plans and strategies

Last year, we found that the extent to which culture was being understood and used as key driver of other agendas varied significantly between projects.

A baseline review of 43 local and regional strategies furthermore suggested that culture did not as yet feature in many strategies and plans, other than in a few regional strategies. However, most projects reported that they were currently involved in consultations on new strategies (14 out of 16). 10 out of the 16 Greater Place areas moreover had cultural strategies, all of which to some extent made the case for culture's role in other policy agendas.

No formal data collection has been done at the year two point to assess the number of formal strategies locally which feature culture. (This will be done after projects end). From the year 2 case studies and focus groups, however, there are two trends to note in how culture is becoming embedded in wider local plans and strategies: the marked raising in confidence around the role of arts in health, in line with national endorsement of this relationship; and ambition to overcome the administrative hurdles to build relationships with LEPs. The year three evaluation will also explore formal governance changes around culture and their impact on enabling and embedding cross-sectoral partnerships through the project managers' survey, the case studies and through the final review of local policy. As an early indicator of change, County Durham and Hereford are currently investigating creating a formal organisation to spearhead this work, following in the steps of Gloucester, which established an independent organisation in 2018.

Many projects report that they are contributing to the work of local strategies, for instance planning and education. It will be the role of the year three evaluation to track these developments formally and assess the extent to which culture's role has become embedded.

2.4 Culture becomes a wider civic responsibility

As outlined last year, while the overarching aim of the Great Place programme lies in demonstrating the value of culture in addressing contemporary challenges, it also promotes the more pragmatic aim for projects to diversify their income by engaging local businesses and non-public sector stakeholders in the face of shrinking public support to culture.

Asked how projects engage with local businesses and non-public sector stakeholders, last year the surveyed project managers largely pointed to one-to-one networking (6), followed by connections to their Business Improvement Districts (BID) (3) and attending business network meetings (3). Engagement levels with non-public sector stakeholders were considerably lower, and felt to be less strategic, than those with policy makers (although one-to-one meetings were most frequently cited among both).

This years' survey suggests that this picture has not altered considerably, with lower number of responses for all options. The largest number of respondents referred to communications/ events (5) and skills/ training work (5), followed by procurement from local businesses (4, compared to none last year), attending business network meetings (3, as last year) and supporting network creation (3, compared to 1 last year). These modes of interaction perhaps suggest a slightly more strategic or mutual two-way engagement than previously. The qualitative responses to this question showed up a wide range of different interactions, from space usage to mentoring programmes to membership in local business networks and joint communication tools. They reflect that these relationships are seen as mutual, providing local businesses with opportunities as much as vice versa.

“ Audience and business research will increase our understanding of local needs and how we can provide solutions to problems that businesses may encounter. The world heritage site can be an opportunity for small or micro enterprises, and we are researching how to promote this.

In terms of funding gained through partnerships, projects are generally reporting that their match funding is on track. 12 projects raised a combined total of £1,463,017 through partnership funding in Year 1 and 2, with a further £1,131,429 expected by the end of the project - however, this predominantly came from local authorities and other public sector bodies rather than non-public funders. Only a small number of projects noted raising significant amounts of commercial funds or funds from other sources. This is a useful baseline which we will review towards the end of the programme.

Figure 9 Partnership funding raised, years 1 & 2, from 12 Great Place projects

Source	Raised (£)	Expected (£)
Local authority	606,340	575,888
Other public sector	293,066	188,733
Private donation	270,000	85,000
Other fundraising	134,934	43,200
Commercial	108,677	95,608
Own reserves	50,000	143,000
Total	1,463,017	1,131,429

Source: Heritage Lottery Fund quarterly progress reports 2017-2019, 12 Great Place projects

In terms of the key challenges noted by projects in engaging local businesses and other non-public sector stakeholders, project managers again referred to the same issues as previously, particularly highlighting:

- limited capacity (e.g. time, staff and finances, from both sides);
- lack of shared visions/ agenda (e.g. differing priorities between commercial and non-commercial partners, communicating the value of arts and culture);
- challenges in communication (e.g. lack of platforms through which to engage; identifying suitable partners; making first contact; making engagements 'meaningful'; lack of trust); and
- practical issues around e.g. procurement rules.

One project referred to the lack of a “*track record*” in this area (i.e. business sponsorship of the arts/culture), suggesting that in this and other cases, contacts, trust, and an understanding by businesses of the value of culture to them have to be developed from scratch.

“ Striking a balance between delivery / language and approaches that will appeal to traditional business communities, without putting off stakeholders who don't work closely with the commercial sector.

“ It is challenging to keep the thread of culture going - by that I mean that culture is not part of their 'day job' in the same way that it is

ours, it is just a small part at the moment, so it is challenging to retain their interest between peaks of activity. Partners' capacity is also a challenge - there are always competing priorities and not enough time.

“ The BID is not convinced of the value of culture vs. any other footfall-driving event.

2.4.1 Community Asset Transfer

Last year, Community Asset Transfer and Asset of Community Value Registration was a priority for only one project (Hereford), but the process touches on the community empowerment value of the Great Place scheme and last year's research found that was on the radar of a number of projects.

This year's project manager survey revealed that five projects out of 16 are at present aware of or involved in discussions about assets of community value in their area, including both local heritage assets as well as others with potential to become sites of creative or community use:

- one project is looking at a possible community asset transfer of a building for creative and community use
- one project is looking at the transfer of physical assets from local authority ownership to community organisations, with a view to maintaining or encouraging new cultural activity
- one project is involved in a community allotment project and the restoration of several heritage buildings in the town centre
- one project has recently started working on a community-led regeneration project and is looking at whether the asset in question may lend itself to a new Sure Start centre
- one project referred to formal request from a community group related to a local heritage building which could become an asset of community value. To support this would mean needing to restructure the Great Place budget as this was not originally planned for

- projects also referred to recommending sites for local listing and working with relevant colleagues in other organisations (e.g. local authorities, Historic England) to create a profile of the local historic environment and the key trends and issues affecting it (Greater Manchester)

This suggests a marked growth in interest in the community asset transfer process – or perhaps an increased prominence of the Great Place project organisations, such that communities now have a clear point of contact for starting these conversations. It is also possible that this is a national trend, as the process gains profile more generally.

2.5 People have a greater sense of collective efficacy

Sense of efficacy is measured by individual audience /participant responses to the prompt, “By working together, we can bring about change in our local neighbourhood.” 60% of arts audiences strongly agreed with this statement, and a further 34% agreed. While heritage audiences also generally agreed with the statement, only 32% answered ‘strongly agree’ while 66% ‘agreed’. This is interesting in light of a number of projects who categorised events and activities with a participatory element as ‘arts’ rather than ‘heritage’.

When combined, 45% of all audiences ‘strongly agreed’ and 51% ‘agreed’ that cooperation could bring about change in their local area ⁹ This data will be baselined, tracked and reported from Year 2 onwards.

3. Cultural delivery outcomes

There has been a huge range of cultural delivery across the Great Place programme, chiefly in year two. Fifteen projects report a total of 1,299 public-

facing events delivered between them between 1st May 2018 and 30th May 2019, reaching a total audience of 515,952.

There was great variation in the number of public facing events each project delivered, ranging from 4 to 1,213. Total public audiences reached by individual projects ranges from 172 – 309,901. This demonstrates the marked variation in project approaches, reflecting the variation in local contexts.

Data on public-facing events was collected by the programme evaluation for the first time in year two, and at this point in the evaluation serves two functions: as a snapshot of potential trends, and as a baseline from which to evaluate at the year three point. There are some issues with quality and quantity of this data which also need to be addressed; these are noted in the Appendix. The baseline survey with sample cultural organisations involved in Great Place will be repeated at the end of year three.

The requirement that projects distinguish between ‘arts’ and ‘heritage’ related data for evaluation purposes continues to be unpopular, both ideologically inappropriate in the Great Place context and administratively complex. We have included some reflection on the relative activity levels across the two sectors, but note that these cannot be considered robust – they may, however, prove useful talking points.

3.1 Arts events, activities, sites and facilities are enhanced

3.1.1 Higher quality / more innovative

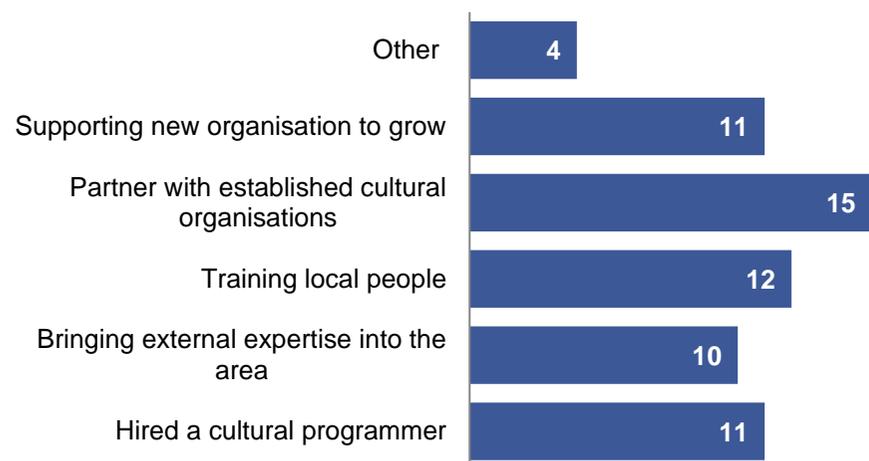
Project managers were asked what methods they were using to improve quality or increase innovation in local cultural programming. Since last year, there has been an increase across all measures apart from bringing external expertise into the area, which has remained the same (10 projects):

- 15 projects partner with established cultural organisations, up 1 project

⁹ Based on 996 responses submitted by 5 projects, of which 466 were ‘mainly arts’ and 530 were ‘mainly heritage’ responses

- Perhaps the most interesting change is the 19% increase in both training local people and supporting new organisations to grow from last year (training: 9 projects last year, 12 this, supporting new orgs: 8 vs 11)
- Other: open call commissioning process, Great Place Arts Sector Specialist role.

Figure 10 Approaches to ensuring high quality activities



Source: Great Place Project Managers Survey Year 2

3.1.2 Events and activities have greater reach

Assessment of the improved reach of events and activities will be made at year three using data from the cultural organisations sample survey, and comparison of year two and year three audience data.

3.2 Heritage events, activities, sites and facilities are enhanced

3.2.1 Heritage is in better condition

Although the Great Place scheme is a revenue not a capital fund, projects are delivering some elements of physical enhancement of heritage to support increased engagement or new activities. These numbers are not changed substantively from year one to year two:

- Five events held (static)
- Eight instances of physical infrastructure development (static)
- Six instances of signage / wayfinding development (down from eight)
- Five instances of enhanced interpretation (down from seven).

Where numbers have fallen, this indicates that work was completed in year one.

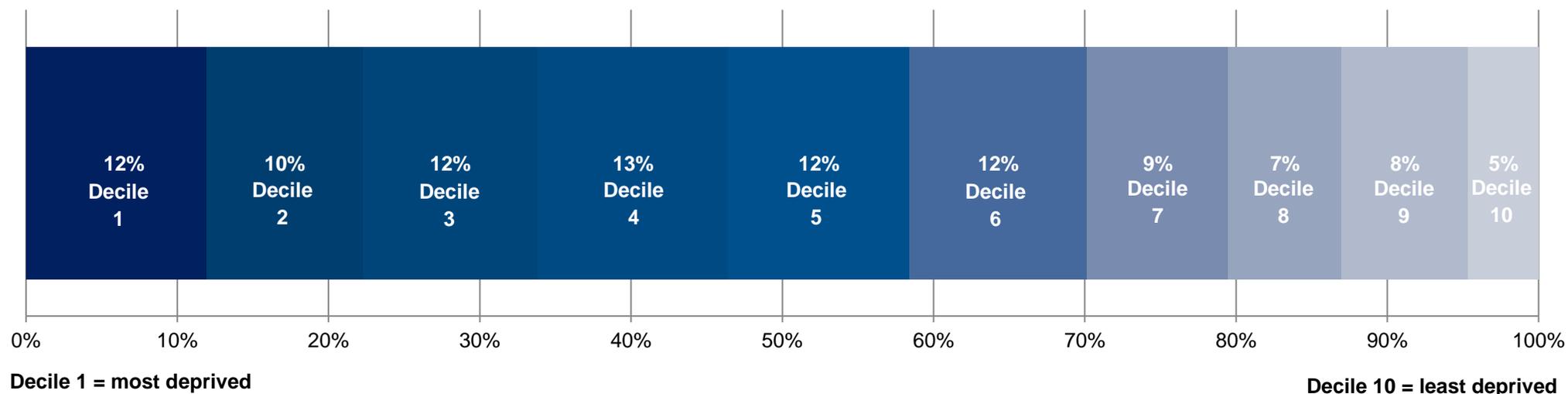
3.3 More people, and a wider range of people engage with arts and heritage

As last year, project managers were asked what methods they were using to reach new or wider audiences.

- The most frequent response is “delivering with new partners” (14 out of 16)
- “Delivering in new places” the next highest, with 12 responses
- “Setting up/expanding websites” and “developing content relevant to a wider audience” 11 responses each
- The number of projects developing content relevant to a wider audience decreased from 14 to 11 projects.

Comments highlight increased and more efficient social media usage for marketing purposes, as well as delivering with partners beyond the cultural sector as key elements of projects’ approach.

Figure 11 Audience deprivation levels across all Great Place projects



Source: Postcode collection data Year 2 based on 12,358 postcodes from 16 projects

There are no consistent baselines for levels of cultural participation in the Great Place project areas. Looking at postcode data collected from public audiences across year one, however, does suggest that the projects are achieving their aim of widening cultural participation. Postcode data collected and measured against the English Index of Multiple Deprivation shows that the level of deprivation among Great Place participants and audiences is above the national average: 59% of audiences come from postcodes classed among the 50% most deprived in England.¹⁰

Low income audiences

Ten projects had the stated objective to reach people with lower incomes. While there was considerable variation in concentration of deprivation among different project audiences- as well as variation in the number of postcodes collected- the

majority of project datasets when analysed individually also showed above average levels of deprivation among their audiences. This is of course a reflection of the areas in which Great Places operate, but nonetheless suggests that the projects are achieving their aim of reaching people in more deprived communities.

This data suggests that Great Place project audiences run counter to national trends: England's 'Taking Part' survey 2017/18 found that 'engagement with the arts is significantly higher for the upper socio-economic group (85.7% in 2017/18) than the lower (66.9% in 2017/18).'¹¹

¹⁰ School postcodes were not included in this data as they cannot tell us the IMD ranking of individual pupils

¹¹ DCMS, Taking Part Survey: England Adult Report, 2017/18, , p. 5

⁸ Postcode collection data Year 2

BAME groups

A further ten projects identified BAME groups as a target audience. Participant demographic data from 12 projects shows that 85% of all audiences (arts and heritage) identified themselves as White British while 9% identified themselves as belonging to BAME groups (based on 7587 responses submitted by 12 projects).

This figure closely corresponds to the estimated demographic make-up of the combined Great Place districts, which was 86% white and 12% BAME.¹² This suggests that while audiences have been broadly representative, there has not been any overrepresentation of BAME groups (within the 12 projects who responded) as was the case with deprived households.

People with disabilities

Just over half of projects stated their objective to engage people with disabilities. However, 90% of all audiences (arts and heritage) reported having no health problems or disabilities that affected their daily lives; 5% were limited a little and 3% were limited a lot (based on 6973 responses submitted by 11 projects).

This is significantly lower than the UK average: estimates suggest that 22% of the population have a disability.¹³ The available data (albeit limited) therefore suggests that Great Place projects have not succeeded in including people with disabilities in their events and activities.

Tourists

Ten projects identified tourists as a target group for their activities. In order to measure this, projects were asked to define which postcodes were 'local' to their Great Place, therefore also defining who should be classed as a 'visitor'. Collated postcode data shows that of the total audiences and participants to

year 2 activities, just over a third were 'visitors' to the region while just under two thirds were classed as local audiences.

When analysed individually, five out of sixteen projects had a higher proportion of visitors attending their events and activities than participants they would define as 'local'. This is interesting in and of itself, but the definitions of what is 'local' and what constitutes a 'visitor' is what makes this finding potentially revealing and points the way towards a further point of exploration for year three. Some projects note that crossing ward boundaries is a significant step in some areas, and that there is little culture of travelling within a region. How far afield is project activity drawing in audiences, how and why?

There is little evidence that the events have attracted international tourism: both postcode data and audience surveys show only a very insignificant minority of audiences do not reside permanently in the UK.

3.4 Stronger, better networked cultural sector

3.4.1 Local networks between arts, heritage and creative industries are better developed

In year one, 64% of cultural organisations rated new partnerships as a priority for their involvement with Great Place,¹⁴ and project managers showed a marked lack of confidence that there were strong networks in their local area (weighted average 4.94 out of 10). The baseline picture was of a strong need and desire for better networked cultural sectors.

In year two, when asked about strength of local networks between cultural, heritage and creative industries organisations in their area project managers responses came to weighted average of 6.69 out of 10. This rise suggests that Great Place has helped to strengthen – or at least make visible - local networks.

¹² Based on ONS GSPREE model 1 estimates 2015 for the following districts: Barnsley, Bolton, Bury, County Durham, Coventry, Craven, Derbyshire Dales, Ealing, Gloucester, Great Yarmouth, Herefordshire, County of, Oldham, Reading, Rotherham, Shepway (now Folkstone), South Lakeland, Sunderland, Tees Valley, Thanet, Torbay, Waltham Forest. These are estimates not ONS official statistics, so caution should be exercised when interpreting the data. For more information, see technical note: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/censustransformationprogramme/administrativedatacensusproject/administrativedatacensusresearchoutputs/populationcharacteristics/researchoutputsethnicityestimatesfromsurveyandadministrativedata2015#toc>

[atacensusresearchoutputs/populationcharacteristics/researchoutputsethnicityestimatesfromsurveyandadministrativedata2015#toc](https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/censustransformationprogramme/administrativedatacensusproject/administrativedatacensusresearchoutputs/populationcharacteristics/researchoutputsethnicityestimatesfromsurveyandadministrativedata2015#toc)

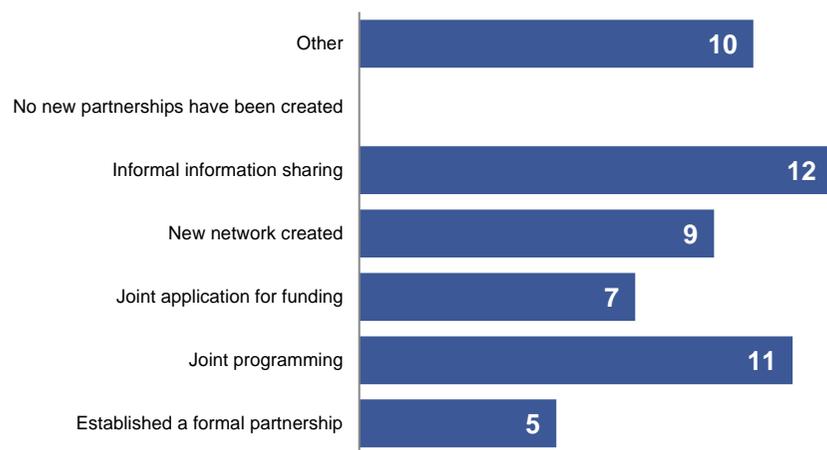
¹³ Department for Work Pensions; Family Resources Survey, 2018

¹⁴ Baseline Cultural Organisations survey across all 16 Great Place project areas. This survey will be repeated at programme end (ie was not delivered in Year 2).

There are further signs that networks are strengthening. All projects reported new partnerships. Projects involved in joint programming have increased by 3. Informal information sharing is common in three quarters of projects. Networks and joint funding applications have increased - although formal partnerships have halved. This finding may be due to survey data error, with formal partnerships registered instead under joint programming or funding applications.

A range of other network-type activities were also referenced: virtual digital hubs, young people's forum, festivals and events forum.

Figure 12 Types of new partnerships created within the cultural sector



Source: Project Manager Survey Year 2

Three quarters of the projects have been successful in raising partnership funding. The majority of this comes from local authorities but other sources include other public sector bodies, commercial sources and fundraising activities. Of those who have already raised partnership funds, all projects

expect to receive more funds into year 3. Partnership funding will be reviewed in depth using project reporting in the year three report.

Projects reported a range of positive stories regarding networking:

“ Joint programming and joint application for funding has been embraced by cultural sector, and the more it happens the more partnerships it inspires

“ We created a shared project to look at why local people don't engage with culture which brought partners together for the first time. We plan to build on this. We have begun hosting regular social evenings for the sector to come together informally and has restarted monthly newsletters. Our network has undertaken a review and will be shaping into a new formal network.

When asked to what extent did the Great Place programme contribute to the development of this/these partnership(s) within the sector(s), the weighted average this year is 8.27- slightly up from 7.93 in year one, where 10 indicates 'strongly agree'.

Projects cite diminished resourcing from local authority officers and geographical barriers alongside the key issue of capacity from small, hard-pressed organisations as issues preventing the formation of strong networks.

“ Until the Great Place funding there's been no single, regular network for local practitioners to be part of, set up around a shared vision, and few projects which bring organisations together. Competitive funding environments and what I see as a lack of confidence in some cases seems to have led to a natural tendency of isolationism / silo working – organisations and individuals looking out for themselves and not seeing the merit of working together as partners

Lack of shared vision, workload and competitive funding are all seen as key challenges to creating strong local networks within the CCI sector, in particular the latter two (both 9 compared to 7 for 'lack of shared vision'). This represents a marginal decrease in those pointing to workload issues from last year.

3.4.2 Cultural practitioners enhance their skills

Only 3 project managers identified a lack of skills in year two compared to 9 last year. The areas identified were also reflected as skills gap during the creative and cultural entrepreneurship focus group in Year 2, with competence in marketing and communications seen as a significant gap.

Figure 13 Participant responses to statement “I learned a new skill”

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
20%	21%	59%	0%	0%

Source: Year 2 Audience Data Collection Survey . Based on 534 responses submitted by 7 projects for both arts and heritage events.

Of those who attended skills or professional development training events for arts or heritage, less than half agreed that they had learned a new skill, suggesting that efforts to upskill had limited success (figure 13).

Figure 14 Participant responses to statement “The skills I have gained will support my career in the cultural sector”

¹⁵ NOMIS is an official source of labour market statistics provided by the Office for National Statistics. www.nomisweb.co.uk

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
16%	16%	67%	1%	0%

Source: Year 2 Audience Data Collection Survey . Based on 509 responses submitted by 5 projects for both arts and heritage events.

Likewise, when participants were asked if they thought any skills they had gained would support their career in the cultural sector, around a third of respondents agreed. This low figure partly reflects the fact that only 41% participants reported having learned any new skills.

While this data is not representative of all skills workshop participants (3200 in total from 15 projects) it does suggest that projects may need to adapt their approach to training and development in year three to make sure they are targeting specific skills gaps and particular professionals/individuals who stand to benefit the most.

3.4.3 New entrants progress into local cultural and creative industries (CCI) organisation

A baseline has been created from NOMIS for the six Great Place project areas that have selected this indicator as appropriate to their activities.¹⁵

The baseline covers number of businesses in four size categories across each of the CCI areas for 2012 and 2016. This is not presented here as its value is an indicator of trends only; the data will be updated and analysed in comparison to this baseline at final reporting stage (year 3).

4. Community and social delivery outcomes

There are a wide range of optional community / social outcomes, reflecting the wide range of different activities, target groups and priority local needs in the Great Places. Immediate and medium term outcomes are congruent.

The five optional outcome areas are:

- Local pride is increased
- People feel a greater sense of belonging to a place
- Young people’s aspirations are raised
- More intergenerational connections are made and understanding increases
- Participants’ mental health improves

Reflection on how to achieve change in these areas from the projects is included in the focus group on Community Empowerment; see Appendix 1.

4.1 People have enjoyable cultural experiences

The following figure shows that projects were largely successful in creating enjoyable cultural experiences.

Figure 15 Audience responses to statement “I had a good time!”

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Arts	42%	43%	13%	1%	1%
Heritage	67%	29%	2%	1%	1%
Combined	49%	39%	10%	1%	1%

Source: Year 2 Audience Data Collection Survey. Heritage: 1985 responses from 8 projects. Arts: 5691 responses from 11 projects. Combined: 7676 responses

4.2 Local pride is increased

When asked if ‘today’s event has increased my pride’ in the respective Great Place, 11% of all audiences (arts and heritage) answered ‘strongly agree’ while 71% said that they agreed. (Based on 2,291 responses submitted by 8 projects). There was no significant variation between responses from arts audiences and heritage audiences.

While there is no baseline for this data, this figure of 82% agreement that an event has increased a sense of local pride is a strong indication that the Great Place cultural events are successfully achieving this aim. To put this figure in context, the Edinburgh Festivals Impact Study asks the same question of the audiences attending the festivals each time the study is repeated every five years. In the most recent version (2015), 89% of all local audiences to the long-established and internationally recognised Edinburgh Festivals reported that they agreed that the Festivals increase their pride in the city, albeit with a much higher proportion (48%) who strongly agreed.¹⁶

4.3 People feel a greater sense of belonging to a place

In year 2, projects worked with a combined total of 4,834 volunteers or community/co-commissioning group participants. Of these, 2,436 were involved with arts events and activities and 2,398 with heritage events.

When asked, 18% of audience respondents ‘strongly agreed’ and another 58% ‘agreed’ that ‘having [the Great Place project] is part of what makes [the Great Place] special as an area’. (Based on 1,144 responses submitted by 5 projects). Although not all projects incorporated this question into their evaluations, the available audience data suggests that the Great Place project has had some positive impact on feelings of attachment to place.

However, to use the Edinburgh Festivals as a comparator once again, there was much stronger support for the statement that the Festival is part of what

¹⁶ BOP Consulting, Edinburgh Festivals Impact Study, 2012, p. 40

makes Edinburgh special as a city: 94% agreed (as opposed to 76% across the five Great Places that asked this question), including 63% of Edinburgh Festivals visitors who strongly agreed.¹⁷ This reflects the much more longstanding nature of the Festivals in Edinburgh, as well as their greater scale and impact.

4.4 Additional outcomes to be assessed in year three

Three programme outcomes will be assessed in year three:

- Young people's aspirations are raised
- More intergenerational connections are made and understanding increases
- Participants' mental health improves.

¹⁷ ¹⁷ BOP Consulting, Edinburgh Festivals Impact Study, 2012, p. 40

5. Economic delivery outcomes

Economic outcomes for the cultural sector are included within reporting on work on the cultural and creative industries sectors specifically. Economic delivery outcomes relate to the Great Place area as a whole, and are focused on (cultural) tourism: to Great Place sites and events in the immediate term, and with a legacy for the relevant areas as a whole in the short-to-medium term.

5.1 Great Places become destinations of choice

Nine projects will report on immediate term tourism-related outcomes during the evaluation in line with their project activities, i.e. Great Place events / sites directly marketed to visitors / tourists.

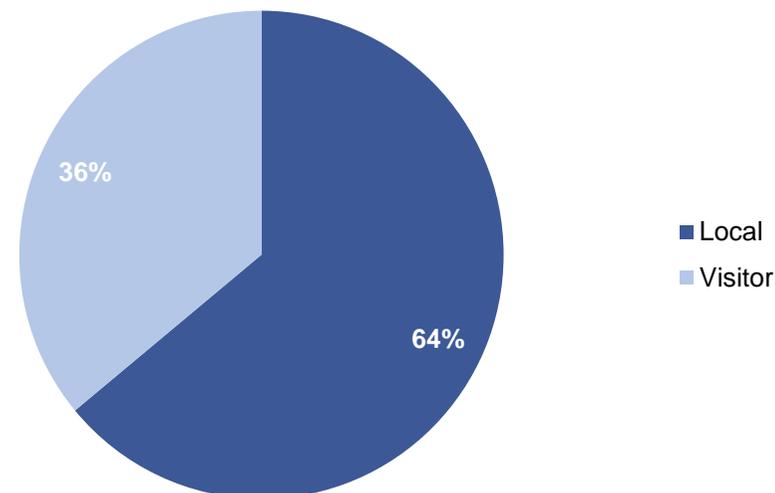
The evaluation will monitor attendance levels and perception; baselines are included in the year one report, and progress will be assessed against these in the year three report.

As a snapshot at the year two point:

- Less than 1% of all audiences (arts and heritage) who responded to audience surveys came from outside of the UK. These results were unchanged when arts and heritage events were looked at individually. *(Based on 8,870 responses submitted by 10 projects)*
- 36% of audiences were 'non-local' according to postcode data collected by each project. There was great variation in the proportion of 'visitors' each project engaged with: some projects reached very few 'non-local' audiences while 5 projects reported majority 'non-local' audiences. This reflects the diversity in target audience and nature of activities among different projects.
- Audiences who were defined as 'non-local' by projects were asked whether or not they would recommend the Great Place in question to friends and family. 56% strongly agreed and 37% agreed. *(Based on 1,302 responses submitted by 5 projects)*.
- When broken down into arts and heritage audiences, arts audiences were much more positive, with 76% agreeing strongly with the above statement

and 19% agreeing *(based on 908 responses submitted by 5 projects)*. Of heritage audiences, 11% 'strongly agreed' compared to 77% who 'agreed' *(based on 394 responses submitted by 5 projects)*.

Figure 16 Local or visiting audiences



Source: Postcode collection data Year 2, based on 12,358 postcodes from 16 projects

6. Core research questions

6.1 How best to re-position culture in local decision-making, planning and delivery?

In year one, projects reported that the majority of their time was spent establishing the groundwork for re-positioning culture: setting up project teams and administration, holding one-to-one meetings with influencers, seeking evidence to make the case. While projects report the continuation of these activities during year two, overall the balance has shifted with projects shifting from informal to formal connections and exploring structures to make permanent change: strengthening networks, capacity building among partners, establishing new partnerships and looking at local strategies and organisational leadership to ensure that culture's cross-sectoral role can be maintained.

The majority of projects have also begun to deliver high levels of public-facing activity, putting flesh on the bones of local strategy. Much learning has already come through, and while the principles of operation remain the same, with a passionate commitment to authentic engagement and genuine consultation, practical recommendations as to how best to deliver these are shifting in line with experience. Some contextual factors have proved helpful – the public commitment of the NHS to the role of arts in health, the rising profile of Community Asset Transfer. Other contextual factors, notably the continued squeeze on local authority budgets and need for all cultural and community organisations to seize opportunistic project funding, have proved less helpful.

Project planning for how to embed culture's role is now being driven by the imminent project endpoint (project extensions notwithstanding). Projects have been very clear that for long-term change, the project funding approach is problematic – and it is certainly true that the real impact of these projects will not be fully measurable during their three years of funded activity. But perhaps ironically, the high level of consciousness surrounding the deadline is driving strategic thinking as to how legacy can be embedded, with projects working in a

range of ways to ensure that what they have started does not stop with the end of the grant.

As in year one, the importance of networking among projects as they pioneer new approaches remains important, and projects plan to invest their own energies and resources into regional, national and ad hoc networking across Great Place. The value of the Great Place learning is not, however, confined just to these project leads but to others working in culture – and in the sectors with which culture now intersects. Part of the embedding of culture's role as envisaged in the Great Place objectives must therefore take place at national level and include sectoral leadership in dissemination.

6.2 Do new approaches lead to improved social, economic and cultural outcomes for local partners?

There are strong signs that in the immediate term, Great Place projects are having a positive effect on social, economic and cultural outcomes for local partners. There is justifiable pride among projects in the connections made and impact had on underserved or low participating communities, and trial and error has strengthened the methods and models for community engagements. Some innovations – for example, co-commissioning of cultural activity – have been found to be unsuccessful in their original format, but elements and principles of this remain in working methods going forward, with a strong preference for 'top-down' cultural programming which provides a rallying point for conversation and convening.

A noticeable emphasis on capacity building, with a rise in reported activities and in the significance attached to this by projects in conversations around legacy (focus groups and learning event) suggests that there will be direct benefit to local partners – with some reported as having already gone on to further activity or successful fundraising. Networks are increasing and strengthening – with some examples of new types of networking activity coming in. The rise in interest in Community Asset Transfer can be considered as another example of

improvement for local partners – though the long term future of transferred assets is, of course, unknown.

As key focus areas across a number of projects, new approaches to work in health, visitor economy and creative enterprise will be interesting to track across the evaluation, with early signs that trials are catching the attention of the right people in the right places. However it is too soon to say what the results of these initiatives may be, as projects state: change is often still vulnerable to the interests of transient individuals, and much takes time to come through.

Public beneficiaries from cultural activity report high levels of enjoyment and seem to include a higher-than-average percentage of people from socio-economically disadvantaged groups. This is certainly a positive outcome: though project leads repeatedly warn of the loss of trust and disappointment resulting in agencies repeatedly parachuting in and then disappearing at the end of a funding period, an issue of great concern for the final year.

6.3 How do NLHF and Arts Council England work together to support these new approaches in the future?

From the project perspective, the requirement from funders that evaluation data is reported as two separate streams (as ‘arts’ and as ‘heritage’) continues to be a major issue, with a resulting loss of confidence in the efficacy of the joint approach from funders.

The slow publication of the year one evaluation report – necessarily delayed due to the publication of the new strategy for what is now National Lottery Heritage Fund – also dented confidence that this was an effective partnership. The agreement to allow extension to all project deadlines, however, demonstrates that the partners are able to work together on an administrative/strategic level, and will continue to do so.

When project managers were asked to what extent they felt that there was appropriate support from the funders, the results showed a weighted average of

6.75, which represents a marginal increase from an average of 6.5 in last year’s survey (where 10 indicates ‘strongly agree’).

With the end of the Great Place funding period in mind thoughts inevitably turn to ‘what next?’ With new strategies published or in process from both funding bodies, a response to the legacy and learning of Great Place will need to be found by both organisations. This issue was raised at the learning day and Arts Council and NLHF have each given commitments to working on internal and external dissemination.

6.3.1 Year Two Recommendations

For Arts Council England and NLHF

- Review – again – the requirement that projects report audience data for arts and heritage separately and consider alternative arrangements, for instance halving beneficiary numbers between the two organisations.
- Work together to plan a dissemination strategy for the learning from the Great Place projects, reaching internal and external stakeholders. How can bodies outside the cultural sector be engaged?
- Support the continued networking between projects.
- Discuss with internal stakeholders the next steps for Great Place areas and the potential for future funding. Signpost internal stakeholders to the needs and potential of Great Places when managing new funding rounds; signpost projects to opportunities that arise and how Great Place projects could move towards them.

For projects

- Build thinking about evaluation into consideration of legacy. How will we track the impact of the projects after the funding period ends? What contacts or networks need to be in place?
- Take active steps to build the Great Place project network, benefitting from shared learning and support in particular around creating legacy. Consider if there are benefits to collaboration and contact beyond the project: what

should the legacy of this shared experience be? How can the ambition of Great Place be sustained in these areas? Is there a potential for future collaboration?

For evaluators

- Ensure that evaluation methods track changing views on the best ways to empower local communities in and through culture and highlight this learning for use in future projects. Compare and contrast learning from Creative People and Places.
- Explore the growth in interest around Community Asset Transfer. What is driving this: increased visibility of project organisations, confidence of community organisations, or growing national profile of the process?
- Review governance changes in and around lead partner organisations as an additional indicator that projects have effected change in how the role of culture is being embedded locally across a range of sectors.
- Work with funders on a dissemination strategy, considering key audiences and the form and content of the final evaluation reports.
- Engage with projects to ensure that all are clear about data collection processes and requirements for the final year to ensure highest possible data quality and quantity for the evaluation.

These points will be addressed during our work with projects and funders in year three and the follow-up report one year later.

7. Appendix 1: Focus Group Summaries 2019

The following focus groups are drafts awaiting final sign off from participants.

As in year one, the focus group conversations were inspiring, ranging through practical delivery tips to strategic insights. The level of institutional and individual learning evidenced on each topic was considerable – and as the projects note, this learning will be valuable to other projects and should be shared.

As common themes, the groups reflected on the difficulties of addressing long-term change within a three year project framework, and the importance of finding ways to ensure the legacy of the Great Place approach. Capacity building, network formation and development of new strategies and even organisations were priorities.

7.1 Great Place Programme Evaluation: Co-commissioning and Community Empowerment Focus Group II, March 2019

Participating Projects (4): Herefordshire, Coventry, County Durham, Tees Valley

Overview

Last year (year one), participants discussed the pathway required to build trust and genuine relationships with community groups from light touch consultation to co-commissioning and reflected on where they were along this continuum. All projects shared a determination to work authentically with communities and break a tradition of things being done 'to' groups, in particular those struggling with socio-economic deprivation. Participants felt that the culture sector had a

lot of expertise in listening to communities and had a particular role to play in building meaningful, trusting relationships.

This year (year two), participants discussed their progress and a wide range of activities carried out during the past year from grants to capacity building, craft workshops to festivals, high profile arts events to planning consultations through theatre. As in the previous year's discussion, there was a strong emphasis on the importance of two key factors: time and trust. Participants pointed to different ways in which trust could be built:

- Demonstrable commitment: showing up
- Listening
- Understanding where the major difficulties lie
- Following through
- Working with gatekeepers (who can be both a positive and a negative force).

Two new points emerged from discussion also: that the development of strong community relationships is not linear; and that working towards empowering communities is now very much in the air, an approach that is becoming increasingly common. Participants noted the impact on the culture sector of recent City of Culture approaches – Hull, and now Coventry – with their strong emphasis on consultation, community commissions and ground-up programming. Projects were now being approached to share their expertise in community work with others.

Co-commissioning had not overall worked well in the way originally envisaged. It was hard to engage people with the idea and took a long time to build relationships to the point where co-commissioning activity was appropriate. Instead, projects found that top-down programming – the importing of a major project – had generally been more successful in engaging a wide group of people, building local capacity and interest in culture, and had led to more cultural activity. Elements of co-commissioning, however – the selection of relevant themes/topics with community participants – remained important.

All four project participants had now developed capacity building programmes for community groups, addressing skills gaps (eg (self)-evaluation), networking smaller with larger organisations, offering support and training in completing funding applications.

Much of the conversation focused on legacy; finding ways to work which ensured that this work and approach continued beyond the funded period of the project. Projects were passionately concerned that the work they had done to establish relationships and make a difference to people should not come to an end and were working to embed sensitive community-focused approaches within individuals, organisations and structures. Legacy was being built in through the capacity building of community groups and through the networking and upskilling of delivery partners, but all projects had formal plans to continue this work and ethos at organisational level.

What work have you undertaken around community empowerment this year?

Coventry's Great Place programme has four strands of activity including embedding culture in local strategies and plans, celebrating their history of diversity, architectural and site-specific works, and animating the city. All of these involve close working with community groups.

Currently, they have a focus on the history of local diversity through two projects: *100 Lives Project* and *Change the Word*, a creative writing project working with recent refugees and migrants bringing them together with local host communities and local and national writers. The project is a ten-week series of workshops culminating with an exhibition and performances at Coventry's Refugee Week. They are also running a community photographic project working with 11 emerging photographers along two streets, including photographs of Coventry's multicultural communities (Nigerian barbershops, Polish shops, Jewish shops) and culminating in a large outdoor exhibition near the station to coincide with local festivals. The project will be showing the lives of a wide variety of people who have been mentored and teaching the young photographers how to interact with the local community and talk to people on the street. After each project, through feedback forms and focus groups the project tracks how proud and connected participants feel to Coventry.

A capacity building programme has run alongside this, helping communities build their skills in designing and stewarding their own cultural programmes. The Great Place team has been running a funding programme where grassroots organisations have been writing funding applications for the first time – and learning that getting smaller organisations to a point where they can take ownership and run their own projects can be a slow process. They've also therefore organised 'meet the funder' events and encouraged larger and more established organisations to work with smaller community organisations.

Herefordshire has initiated a community focused grant scheme, with small grants of c£2,000 for community groups to commission new artwork and new arts activity. This had a slow start but is now picking up and garnering interest from a diversity of groups. Ewyas Harold Festival of Arts, for example, were funded to run spinning and weaving demonstrations at the town's May 2019 arts festival (estimated attendance of 1,500 people) and establish spinning and weaving courses for local people, in particular working-age residents. A further 16 people will attend weekend courses in July and August 2019 where they will learn about the history of wool in Herefordshire and use raw materials from the area. People on the course will be encouraged to use their new skills and knowledge to join existing arts clubs or establish new groups. While the team were "fairly hands off" with the first tranche of grantees, in following rounds they have worked in evaluation support and will be running evaluation workshops for community groups.

Community engagement is also woven in across other areas of Hereford's Great Place work. They are also running a larger-scale grants programme – Hidden Gems – with awards of c£12,000, for which community involvement is a core requirement; their June 2019 conference will focus on creative career paths for 16 – 35 year olds. They have a formal contract with the council to animate and manage Community Asset Transfer in select locations. But more important is the programme's overall ethos, of enabling proactivity in rural communities that have little trust in centralized leadership.

“ Our job has been getting everyone excited about the Community Asset Transfer projects and creating a safe space for discussion of what we can do, getting energy levels up so that the community is hungry for it, but they're also informed, upskilled, and fully aware of what's needed to make it a success.

While developed over a period of time (not just in the past year), this ethos is now formally embedded in policy: one of five priorities in the new Herefordshire Cultural Strategy, supported by Great Place and being published by the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership in April 2019, includes 'Cultural Democracy', highlighting the importance and impact of community-driven cultural activity.

County Durham have dedicated extensive resourcing to community work with two full-time Community Facilitator posts who work closely with communities, identify need and broker relationships. They have worked, for example, with St Catherine's Community Centre, who told the facilitators that they were keen to extend their range of events in order to increase opportunities for local people and help with financial sustainability. Following this discussion, the team have programmed a partners' event at the centre; supported the centre as a venue for the Beyond the End of the Road theatre tour, the first time the centre had hosted a professional theatre production; and used the centre as a venue for workshops relating to large-scale art projects. Centre organisers have attended Great Place discussion events, and conversation is ongoing about potential new opportunities.

The project has just launched the fourth and final round of their community initiative fund, made possible by funding from County Durham Community Foundation. Through the partnership, the foundation managed the application process and Great Place promoted the availability of the fund, from which communities could apply for up to £10,000 (with most awarded grants being between £2,000 and £5,000). Applications were required to be grassroots led and linked with the aims of Great Place, responding to place and landscape, and have focused on themes ranging from astronomy and archaeology to heritage. Decisions were made by a community panel. The Great Place team

have been very hands on in supporting funding applications and helping to manage projects – deliberately working as more than just a funder.

Work recently began on one of their major community initiatives, the production of a community opera with a professional opera company, with the process involving workshops in eight small communities across the area. The Opera will be performed in 2020 at Locomotion, the National Railway Museum in Shildon..

Other activities:

- engaging farmers throughout the area, bringing sculptors and photographers together with farmers to discuss everything from connections to landscape to Brexit. The collaboration will result in an exhibition to be held in rural churches in July
- bringing an artist training project to schools throughout the county, with emerging artists working in schools
- facilitating a series of speaker and discussion events, bringing together communities, artists and decisionmakers to get more people involved in decision-making around a variety of issues, including (to date) planning, tourism and farming

Tees Valley's whole programme could be described as community engagement, with a variety of different focal points.

- 'Real Tees Valley' is targeted at young people, working with filmmakers who visit locations where young people meet. The groups create films based on culture and heritage, reinterpreted from their own perspective, through a process of co-design and co-creation
- 'Heritage on Track', run with Darlington Borough Council and Tees Valley Arts, focuses on engaging communities local to the historic railway track in commissioning artists to work on the programme, with perhaps limited success

“ We came out with a sense that the model works better than the final outcome.

- in Cleveland, they are re-imagining the steel gala, working with well established community networks to form a steering group to help re-present the steel gala
- working with a company who take over empty urban spaces and turn them into cultural event spaces, establishing a student gallery, running talking shop sessions and feeding into the regeneration of that area

What have you learned?

County Durham point to the ongoing need for “a lot of reflection and painful navelgazing”. They stressed the importance of having a very open, flexible programme structure that has allowed them to be responsive rather than prescriptive – a point echoed strongly by the other projects.

In particular, County Durham have found that co-commissioning as originally conceived has generally not worked well. The lack of existing confidence and engagement around rural communities has made co-commissioning challenging – building relationships with under-engaged communities is a long-term effort, and laying the groundwork for that co-commissioning work is challenging within the Great Place timeframe. This was felt with **Herefordshire** to be a particular issue for rural projects, where isolation from decision-makers can be an issue. In this context, the nature of the lead organisations was particularly relevant: not being a local authority or government-affiliated body was beneficial in helping them to connect with communities more easily.

“ We found that co-commissioning was a bit ambitious, hard to enable them to know what they wanted to do. It can be hard to engage communities where there’s a lack of confidence – where people feel like there’s no point or that the work you do won’t make a difference ... overcoming the feeling that nobody cares.

All projects agreed that the timeframe was tight for establishing, building and developing relationships to the point where co-commissioning was realistic – and that the process was not a linear one. The County Durham team had spent

time reflecting on many of the reasons why progress was not as originally envisaged:

- It takes a lot of time to identify a group, establish that they want (and are able) to take part in a project, undertake initial facilitation and create a project brief;
- Co-commissioning is an unknown for groups, and may even put people off because it requires more initial effort from them;
- While creating co-commissioned works is important to us, community members are doing this in their free time and may give it a much lower priority;
- Many contacts are volunteers and so it can take time to get responses or arrange meetings;
- At any point in the process a group may lose interest or enthusiasm;
- Due to competing demands on staff time, we have not always been able to move the process forward as quickly as we hoped to;
- Creating briefs for these projects was a steep learning curve, and so initially took extra time;
- Appointed practitioners must fit the work into their existing schedules and need time to understand the place/community before they start - this can lead to delay;
- Working with young people adds the constraints of school schedules and terms, which can lead to further delays;
- Travel time between rural locations, was a real issue, as staff time spent travelling was time that could not be spent with community partners.

“ I think I still believe in the continuum, but we still need another three years. The process has been much slower than we anticipated and it’s not always a linear journey. It can be a long slow burn.

“ We’ve all recognised that community work takes time and can be at different levels, and a rigid process doesn’t work well.

The nature of engagement was also discussed: initial conversations tend to be very practically focused, and only later on could conversation shift into deeper topics such as place, pride, or culture. This, too, adds to the time required for communities to be empowered to lead cultural initiatives.

Participants noted that nearly every community has 'gatekeeper' individuals and organisation that has the power to either help them engage or act as a naysayer in their efforts.

Coventry's key learning point was the need for cultural programming that is sensitive to diverse communities' heritage and history in the UK, for example with those Coventry residents who arrived in the UK as part of the Windrush generation, understanding how they feel towards older heritage. Effectively engaging with local communities has also required understanding generational differences and facilitating programming that helps younger generations connect with and explore their parents' diverse heritage. All projects stressed the need to respond to unique community histories.

In order to do this, the Coventry team and delivery partners try to incorporate elements of co-commissioning where community groups can pick their own heritage and stories that they want to highlight. Coventry acknowledges that their status as City of Culture in the leadup to 2021 has served as an entrée to new community engagements and partnerships.

This use of tentpole events to bring forward community engagement was common across projects: County Durham, for example brought the Man Engine to the former coal-mining town of Willington. These 'top-down' events were noted by the community facilitators as being more effective than the ground-up co-commissioning approaches in engaging a wide spread of the community. The practical focus of making something happen – finding venues, obtaining permissions etc – had been effective in bringing people on board who would not necessarily have been interested in an appeal simply from County Durham. As a result of these top-down projects, County Durham had found that follow-up projects were now taking place in these areas due to the inspiration and capacity building that the projects had entailed, and they now saw this approach as an important stage in moving towards co-commissioning.

“ A real event is easier to understand and talk about than the possibilities or concept of Great Place.

Tees Valley noted that they had learned from their community projects, and their community projects had learned from each other. This had contributed to a Creative People and Places bid which would shortly be submitted – it would be interesting to compare notes with Creative People and Places projects. Learning from other projects (and sectors) would have been a positive in the first twelve months, if there hadn't been a pressure to begin delivery.

How are you working to ensure there is a genuine legacy from this programme, rather than a hard stop at the end of the funding period?

“ It's all gone so quickly. We have a year left, but we feel we've only just started! People now recognise us, and we're beginning to understand what we're doing and people trust us. And we're already thinking about what next! Can we just have another ten years please?

All projects felt strongly that legacy planning was their key priority for the remaining time, and had already begun to work on ways to deliver this. Managing expectations with communities was part of the solution – but also potentially problematic, as announcing that this was a three year project worked against the grain of relationship-building.

Working through partners, who could be geared up to carry on these relationships was an approach being used by all projects to some extent, and Tees Valley were investing in skills and knowledge sharing across projects as part of their overall ambition to create a better networked cultural infrastructure. But projects were also looking to how they could continue these projects in their own right. Tees Valley are bidding for further Arts Council funding and launching a Tees Valley-wide

consultation as preparatory work for a City of Culture bid; Coventry have City of Culture 2021 and a legacy project including a five year business plan for culture in the city; County Durham are exploring setting up a new organisation capable of receiving funding; Herefordshire are feeding learning into the ten year strategy of the Herefordshire Cultural Partnership, now a formal organisation capable of applying for funding.

7.2 Great Place Programme Evaluation: Arts & Heritage Focus Group II, March 2019

Participating Projects: East Kent; Reading; Barnsley & Rotherham

Overview

Last year (year one), all participants spoke of developing projects which brought arts and heritage together. They felt heritage assets benefited from the arts' expertise in social engagement and raise visibility and interest through its 'power of spectacle', while art is grounded and made relevant by heritage. Combining both and focusing on arts and heritage rather than partnering with other sectors allowed created wider and stronger outcomes.

This year (year two), projects reported on the progress and activities that have happened in the previous year, all of which have joined arts and heritage elements. In progressing their activities, projects have identified a number of key elements of success; in particular, the need for projects to be rooted in and to have buy-in from local communities and to be of high quality; and for projects to be bold enough to take risks and learn from their mistakes. In this context, projects again reiterated their preference for the term 'culture' over 'arts' or 'heritage'.

Projects identified the same benefits of joint arts and heritage projects as last year, again reiterating the increased visibility this brought; the wider range of (new) audiences such projects can attract; and the ways in which arts and heritage can challenge each other to be more creative and 'do things differently'. Alongside challenges discussed last year, projects had identified

new challenges in the further delivery of their activity; around measuring success; building on past success and new expectations; keeping on board different groups with different interests in a site or activity; and maintaining positive relationships with local partners.

Projects are starting to think about the future of their activity. They are getting contacted by interested parties who are observing their innovative joint activity and new ways of drawing in audiences and are asking to partner up or get support in developing similar ideas. How best can this knowledge be passed on? Also going forward, how can the areas build on their existing project and find new funding opportunities to continue their activities?

How and why are you using Arts & Heritage, and what has happened since last year?

Last year, Kent was focusing on different heritage sites, bringing in arts organisations to help the community learn about their local heritage. Reading was using art to help interpret and bring to life local heritage sites to improve their understanding among local people; and Barnsley was aiming to reach diverse communities and catch (inter-) national attention with their activities, supported by a team with both arts and heritage expertise.

Barnsley undertook two big projects in year two: a piece of land art at Wentworth House to help 'challenge preconceptions about Rotherham' and a community event to decorate the village of Elsecar for the Tour de Yorkshire, inspired by the village's history, which 3,500 people attended. Projects have inspired further activity – an artists' residency at an archaeological dig led to a conference paper and a new artist-in-residence scheme. Successful activities have meant momentum is growing, with more interest from potential partners and participants. They have partnered with national outdoor arts specialist organisation Without Walls and hope through this to gain more data to make their case for outdoor arts. They have also worked to create a programme for secondary schools that brings together heritage, arts and enterprise.

Kent has now got four arts and heritage projects, with their own creative and learning teams. All are significant to each area's local history but for various reasons were not 'working well'. One site is exploring how to 'monetarise'

heritage and find different ways to present it. They have opened a Christopher Marlowe-themed escape room, supported by creative practitioners, that has received strong bookings from the public since it opened. They are working with over 350 children across the sites and are exploring how to develop 'children's voice', e.g. through the process of creating a child-led plan for Ramsgate Harbour. Another site has organised guided tours of their site led by experts from various backgrounds (e.g. architects, artists). They have been approached by the National Trust, who are interested in the new angles they are bringing to 'what is heritage' and 'who owns heritage', and how this is helping to draw in new audiences.

Reading is delivering across three core strands. These include a Cultural Commissioning outreach programme for targeted communities which is working to broker relationships between arts, culture and heritage organisations and commissioners of services and activities that have social and health outcomes. They are awarding a series of 9 major grants and 4 mini grants to trial innovative projects that partner cultural organisations with those working in the fields of health and social care. Secondly, Reading-on-Thames Festival brings high quality nationally and internationally recognised artists to the town to raise awareness of the impact that cultural activity can have in making Reading a great place to live and work. Finally, the project is working with Reading University and community participatory researchers 'Whitley Researchers' to develop best practice geared to the needs of marginalised groups across the town. Overall, the project is aiming to bring different socio-economic groups in Reading together to create a 'sustainable future'.

What key elements of success have you identified?

All three projects highlighted the importance of **working in local communities**, building their buy-in and embedding activities within local communities, in order to **ensure authenticity** and develop successful and sustainable projects. This has to be a balance - giving people agency through co-commissioning or co-creation is great but needs to be balanced with giving people *'experiences beyond what they know already'*. If successful, this helps build local pride in the place (*"pride in the context of other places around*

them"); makes people curious, communicative, and wanting to engage; and helps to raise awareness of the organisation/ project supporting the activity.

- “ It's about building trust.
- “ Unless you understand people and place, you are imposing stuff. It needs to be connected to get local buy-in.
- “ You need to understand where people are coming from, what they want to see. We shouldn't assume. [...] We need to listen and upskill them.

In this context, projects again re-iterated a preference for using the more general term 'culture', as they felt that this sits more naturally with audiences.

- “ We found that we cannot think of art and heritage separately. I would argue that we got to a more successful place by considering both together as 'culture'.
- “ For communities, it's not 'arts' or 'heritage', it's 'culture'.

Community buy-in goes hand in hand with activities needing to be of **high quality** at every level; this is achieved by working with those who are best and 'most right for the project'. This requires a shared understanding of the meaning of 'quality' and continuing to push themselves about this understanding.

- “ Have high ambitions. Don't undersell your activity. Go for the biggest impact you think you can have. People will come if it's of quality.
- “ Aiming for quality helps push us and keeps us on the right path, it forces us to raise the bar and be innovative.

“ Quality is essential, but it's only there if you are responding to the needs and interests of your widest possible audience.

Projects need to be bold enough to **take risks** and learn from mistakes.

What are the benefits of Arts and Heritage working together?

Last year, the participants listed a range of benefits of arts and heritage working together, including improved exploitation of assets and use of available resources; improved profile; and new ways of interesting audiences.

The projects re-iterated the benefits identified previously. They highlighted:

- the visibility and interest created by joint art/ heritage projects, which acted as 'great calling cards', created an appetite for more cultural experiences and brings in new audiences who may be interested in one or the other

“ Different types of people go for different reasons, or some sign up for everything as they are interested in the process.

- the way joint projects make team members on both sides more creative and creates more contemporary ideas at heritage sites, rather than 'falling into traditional heritage site ideas'

“ We need to bring in voices and ideas that people have not come across before that might help them think differently about a historical site.

- the way art and heritage activity support and challenge each other and help 'do things differently'

“ Areas are defined by heritage and activated by arts.

“ You can use contemporary art to juxtapose heritage sites, to amplify both.

“ We're commissioning art work [that is] rooted in the [local heritage]. It's not just 'creating some new stuff'.

“ Projects are opening up conversations about what is heritage for different people.

What are the challenges?

Participants last year highlighted a number of challenges around bringing organisational leaders from both areas together, existing prejudices based on familiarity with one over the other; and competition for available funding within a context in which both are important.

This year, projects identified previously mentioned as well as new challenges, connected to being further in the process of delivering their projects. These included:

- the different knowledge-bases within arts and heritage. Projects have not come across people with all the skills and knowledge required across arts and heritage, so joint projects require bringing in experts from both areas across various organisations in order to be able to 'work with the best'.
- the question of how to capture data and information from their activity particularly with young people
- challenging political processes while working with local councils on some projects
- challenges brought on by working with different groups of people throughout the project - e.g. self-selected interest groups, general public, master planners, who all come at it in different ways. How do you bring everyone along on the story and development of the site?
- the challenge of 'what comes next', following on from a successful activity and raised interest within the local community
- competitiveness and fear of 'not being able to live up to our activities' among local partners, as projects are creating new yardsticks of creativity and quality

Going forward

Projects highlighted that synergies between the two sectors exist and that partners find that “*there are more similarities when they start working together*”. The projects are seeing interest from other arts and heritage organisations, Councils, etc. who are looking for synergies between arts and heritage. How could the projects help share knowledge and encourage partnership working, with the aim of drawing in new audiences? It all feels quite new at the moment, with no existing standards.

“ We are bringing new discourse that is challenging our silo working.

“ A lot of partners want toolkits from us, [on] how they can add value to each other.

“ This needs to be encouraged more. It’s about funders perhaps - funders understanding this.

Projects also pointed to what might come next, once the Great Place funding ends, in terms of what future funding opportunities may exist, how projects can build on what they have done and learned, and what partnerships may be beneficial at a strategic level to developing sustainable activity.

“ We need to keep the momentum going, keep trying things, and build on work that has happened.

“ Joint working, relationships and partnerships will be crucial to this.

“ The local cultural education partnerships have asked me to join the board. I take that as a positive sign that they are trying to be more strategic. That in itself may help us as region to think differently about ongoing funding opportunities.

“ Many projects are treating this as a pilot. They will probably go to someone like NLHF for capital investment with the learning they have taken from this.

“ We are merging our project into a wider vision for the area, getting all local organisations to work together to represent all communities and create something sustainable for the area, [and to] encourage public and private funding into the area.

7.3 Great Place Programme Evaluation: Health and Wellbeing Focus Group II, March 2019

Participating Projects: Torbay, Sunderland, Manchester

Overview

Last year, participants reflected on the process required to develop genuine partnership between culture and health and stressed the need for evidence bases, established/establishing relationships and ‘learning the language’ of the health sector. Overall a clear need was identified to ‘make the case for culture’ to the health sector. Group participants identified a clear distinction between ‘health’ activities with a targeted approach within a formal medical framework and ‘wellbeing’ activities which aimed to improve individual or social wellbeing through the generic benefits of cultural participation; across projects, pilot activity was underway in both these categories. All project participants had clearly targeted plans to address priority local health challenges through arts and heritage. Participants agreed that the relationship between arts and health was more developed than that between heritage and health.

This year, the focus of discussion was less on specific activities and more on the process required for culture to become part of a regional healthcare strategy. The experience of each project was different, according to the historical relationship between culture and health in each region, though for all

heritage currently played only a minor role in conversation with the focus very much on arts. In Greater Manchester, with a very established arts and health agenda going back over 100 years, the project is focusing on high-level, strategic relationships. In Torbay, where the arts and health agenda has been growing across the past c5 years, the focus has developed from proof-of-concept pilot projects to trying to build a regular pattern of activity. In Sunderland, similarly, having run a number of successful pilot projects the team are working to find the right partnerships and models to embed this work.

Overall, participants felt that the 'case' for arts in health was now made – evidenced by a key announcement from the NHS during the preceding year, and the fact that money was now flowing in both directions (arts to health and health to arts) rather than, as previously, arts paying for pilots to create evidence for the health sector. The work to be done now was to find and establish practical regional models. The focus group identified a number of key points for establishing a long-term working relationship between the culture and health sectors:

- High-level strategic relationships are important, and intensive to establish
- At this point, the relationship between the two sectors has to be built, not assumed – so is vulnerable to changes in personnel or organisational structure
- At practical, delivery level, there is a need to find and identify the right partners on a region by region basis. Sunderland's Cultural Partnership has become the key point of contact for the culture sector, and Sunderland Culture have identified pharmacists as most effective delivery partners. Torbay has appointed a Creative Commissioning Lead and the partners include the NHS Devon CCG, Torbay Hospital and Torbay Public Health.
- GPs and others need to hear things from their peers; there is an important role for influencers, who need to be nurtured and supported.

The discussion also covered a number of fundamental questions affecting culture and health partnerships.

- National vs local: the NHS momentum behind social prescribing is very positive and has made a difference. But how will the development of national models take into account local needs or existing good work?
- Money: who pays for what? Projects reported money flowing in both directions, from arts to health and health to arts but participants noted that this remains an issue to be resolved: "Arts Council won't pay for health and NHS won't pay for arts."

Arts organisations: no longer see health as an exciting new source of revenue, but as a serious issue to address organisationally. Does it fit with existing remits? How can new health relationships work? Is there enough money and expertise to make such work viable?

“ How do you make small groups want to take on new people, and become able to support them? How do you ensure the quality and responsibility for cultural prescribing in the same way as for Occupational Therapy?

- Quality: there is a growing need for a quality assurance process as arts becomes embedded within the health sector. GPs need to know that what they are prescribing will have a positive impact and be valuable to their patients. Without quality assurance, there is a danger that prescribing arts will be seen as a 'fobbing off' before a patient returns to the GP for 'proper' treatment. This also connects to an anxiety that social prescribing may become a way of pushing medical responsibility back to the community with no resources to support this.

“ Social prescribing is great but it does feel like the buck is being passed to the voluntary sector.

- Public perception: while these conversations are happening at strategic and delivery level, there is a gap in public conversations. Are patients ready to go to their GP with a health complaint and get prescribed an art class? Social and demographic differences will need to be taken into

account. We cannot simply assume that this new approach will be accepted by everyone; how will this be made to work for different communities subtly and respectfully?

Why are you working with Culture and Health? What local activity is taking place?

Greater Manchester has a heritage of arts in health going back to the 1880s. With the devolution of the Health and Social Care budget comes an opportunity to have culture included within new policies and strategies – and Health and Wellbeing are one of the nine priorities of the recent Creative and Cultural Strategy.

The focus of the Great Place work is at high-level, creating strategic relationships and lobbying for co-commissioning. Great Place has a steering group including directors of public health, local authorities, Marketing Manchester and c15 people from the cultural sector including ACE, NLHF, the Lowry and a small arts activist organisation.

Greater Manchester is working on a number of culture, health and wellbeing programmes including social prescribing; contributing to an outcomes framework which the cultural sector can use and a platform onto which the cultural sector can upload activities useful for social prescribing.

Other initiatives taking place include; i-Thrive (CYP Mental Health) programme has a post to embed creative activities as part of the mental health services for children and young people; a workplace health stream is looking at the impact of shift patterns on absenteeism and health and wellbeing; all 133 GM libraries will have staff trained in autism awareness and a pilot cultural offer will be co-produced with autistic young people and piloted across a number of sites. As Health and Social Care implements a place-based approach, based on neighbourhoods (30 – 50,000 people), there are other opportunities being explored as to the role of the cultural sector in this way of working.

“ We’re lucky that culture and health is a well-established movement in Greater Manchester. We don’t need to prove anything to health – we are past the piloting stage.

Torbay has identified four priority health issues, in line with the joint needs assessment data owned by the local authority: respiratory diseases; children and young people with mental health issues; older people with mental health issues; older people at risk of falls. As Torbay Culture is hosted by TDA, a development agency which is separate from, but owned by, the local authority, they are able to access a range of data; as well as intelligence from a range of partners. This year, they have run pilot projects addressing each of these priority health areas, for example a ‘singing for wellness’ project to build confidence in school children at risk of poor mental health, a project co-commissioned with the Clinical Commissioning Group with additional £75,000 funding from the Health Foundation. Despite these successful high level partnerships, however, institutional change is occurring within the health sector as the two Clinical Commissioning Groups - South Devon & Torbay CCG and the North, East & West Devon CCG – have recently merged into a single NHS Devon CCG. This has led to some confusion as to who will take responsibility for such projects and next steps, and an understandable hiatus in conversations. Some key contacts have moved roles, leaving no connection between pilot projects and the bigger conversation about social prescribing. New conversations are taking place with strategic partners like Active Devon to extend reach into sports and active living.

In 2018, the Torbay Care Charter was developed by artists to explore models of good practice in care homes. This has been cited by partners (like the Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance, and Arts & health South West) as a good example of responding to local needs (Torbay has one of the highest populations of care home residents in the country) <https://www.torbay.gov.uk/health-and-wellbeing/care-charter/>.

“ Lots of people feel this is a good thing but it doesn’t sit on their desks . . .

Sunderland has a dedicated strand of Great Place work dedicated to culture and health/wellbeing, focused on a single geographical area (Coalfields). This strategy was informed by evidence gathered through the community consultation delivered for Sunderland’s City of Culture bid. Depression, social

isolation, and obesity are key issues. Through a 'cultural village' at a recently revived historic carnival, they delivered extensive community consultation using theatre artists dressed as doctors offering 'cultural health checks'; hens for cuddling; and toy vegetable 'babies'. Following this, they are developing more bespoke programmes, for example a community allotment.

The push to develop a social prescribing model locally is coming not from the GPs or the health sector but from Sunderland Culture. Local pharmacists have been identified as the best delivery partners: they have time to talk to patients, are rooted within the community, and as independent businesses are more flexible. Sunderland Culture are currently the largest body involved in these conversations and are driving them forward through personal passion; finding existing groups and upskilling them; and finding responsive models that fit specific communities (no one-size-fits-all approach). While they have also invested money to make things happen, they are also receiving money from others (eg Groundworks, Big Lottery).

“ We have needed to meet the right people and build trust and relationships.

7.4 Great Place Programme Evaluation: Creative and Cultural Economy Focus Group II March 2019

Participating Projects: Vital Valley, Torbay, Waltham Forest, Tees Valley, Gloucester, Lakes and Dales

Overview

Last year the participants identified two connected reasons for focusing on creative economy. First, the sector's potential as engine for growth in its own right, and second the opportunity for culture to support wider economic regeneration activities, making the place somewhere people want to live, work

and visit. The areas have different priorities and approaches to supporting the creative economy which include developing work space, as well as events and festivals. All projects were looking to work at the policy level to some degree. In the main, projects prioritised creating the conditions for creative economy development such as connections within the sector and embedding creative industries in the policy context, rather than specific economic outcomes around jobs and growth.

This year, projects reported on the progress and activities that have happened in the previous year. All areas are delivering some form of support activity to creative and cultural enterprises; the scale and focus of this ranges from relatively open networking sessions to more formal training on specific topics. A group of creative champions has been set up in the Lakes and Dales, Waltham Forest is running masterclasses for creative professionals and in Gloucester a programme for start-ups and small creative businesses is underway. Torbay has seen success in their work with the tourism sector, raising the profile and understanding of how culture and tourism can work together for the benefit of both. Waltham Forest has been tackling access to council procurement through meet-the-buyer events.

Through commissioned research, informal consultation and trial and error, areas have built their understanding of their local sector. This has led to activity plans being tweaked, training tailored and new approaches to communications trialled. In progressing the activities, the projects have identified a number of things that have helped to unlock success; in particular, having funding to deliver projects helped build trust among the local sector; the research helped to seed conversation with other organisations and people working in other policy areas; and the novelty of the programme supported the development of new relationships outside the usual silos.

There are still some barriers to delivery. While progress has been made to break down silos, it remains particularly hard to tackle when linking up with the economic development agenda. Some areas have found it hard to engage meaningfully with LEPs simply because the geography of the LEPs does not naturally align to that of GP (e.g. either GP funding covers a small part of one LEP, or GP funding relates to an area covered by multiple LEPs).

Over the last year, projects have been focusing on delivering activity and overcoming barriers. When asked to think about the future, areas anticipate a diverse range of outcomes for the creative economy. Legacy is likely to take different forms. Some areas are thinking about making aspects of their activity self-sustaining, and others are looking for legacy in the procurement and commissioning processes. There remains a key challenge of how to continue influencing economic development policy after GP. How can the relationships be maintained? How can the knowledge be passed on and embedded within new programmes? How can the needs of the sector be advocated for within the wider economic development agenda?

What has been your biggest achievement since last year for the Creative and Cultural Economy?

Last year, Waltham Forest was focusing on showcasing events, a festival of volunteering opportunities and undertaking creative economy research. Torbay were embedding artists in town regeneration, working to enhance the cultural tourism offer and strengthen cultural organisations. Gloucester was working to develop a physical creative workspace hub to host events, Lakes and Dales were connecting to local creative clusters and developing events. In Vital Valley, activity focused around supporting businesses and developing case studies to support new visitors. Three areas, Waltham Forest, Torbay and Lakes and Dales, were working on research to better understand the creative economy.

Waltham Forest GP have developed a programme of masterclasses, as part of the active citizen programme. These support individuals and organisations to grow their practice and be more sustainable. The masterclasses, run with the Barbican, range from topic-specific sessions on fundraising and marketing to showcases. They have delivered two 'meet-the-buyer' events which bring the council's procurement and business teams together to understand problems and propose solutions. This has led to some local creative businesses winning contracts with the council. They are running wider learning/networking events which are open events for creative sector.

In **Torbay**, they have been successfully working with the tourism sector, where they developed strong relations through the business improvement district. The

English Riviera BID Company appreciates how culture can support tourism and diversify the tourist base. A consultation across the tourism and cultural sectors has led to a shared vision and principles and has been instrumental in developing a positive partnership between the two sectors. In addition, they are running a digital magazine that promotes cultural life in Torbay from an insider's perspective (www.theshorely.com) which has led to the Great Place team working with the English Riviera BID Company on cultural content for their own platform (www.englishriviera.co.uk/be-inspired/arts-and-culture/meet-the-makers).

In **Gloucester**, the cultural economy work has focused on developing a physical hub and an aligned programme of enterprise support. Although it has taken longer than originally anticipated, the team have identified a space and are applying for funding for refurbishment. Work alongside hub development continues: a weekly pop up co-working space is now operational, and a programme of events and training is underway. The team are drawing on expertise in start-up businesses from the university, adapting it to meet the needs of the creative industries. They have a successful programme of PechaKucha nights, as well as more structured training events. Through the work developing a hub, they are influencing future city redevelopment plans to incorporate the needs of the creative sector.

Lakes and Dales is focusing is on connecting young creatives with opportunities in the local economy. They ran a conference in November 2018 which focused on enabling conversations between older and young local creatives. They have developed a creative champion network of 30 people with the explicit aim of connecting local people in the area and building collaborations. These include sculptures, poets, calligraphers and musicians. They had encouraging interest in this network which suggests the value of this activity.

In **Vital Valley**, creative economy activity started in late October 2018, after a lot of time managing procurement processes. They have engaged a creative producer to deliver the programme. Activity includes building networks between

local creatives, mentoring of participating artists and supporting networks to become self-led and sustainable

“ Great Place has been an opportunity to pilot new ideas to support the cultural economy.

“ It has taken lots of incremental, behind the scenes activity

What have you learned about the cultural and creative economy in your area this year?

By listening to the sector and working closely, GP teams have adapted the way they communicate about culture and the creative economy.

“ We need to change our messages away from heritage to make it more personal and more attractive to the creative industries.

Commissioned research has led to new insights about the creative economy in areas and influenced the focus of activities.

“ From the research, we learned there are a lot more creative and particularly creative young people working in the area than we thought. It highlighted a weakness in communications with young people around creative and cultural industries, so the priority now is co-designing a response to this.

The process of running workshops led to new insights about what the sector really needs from support and the best way to provide this. Creative industries don't always see themselves as contributing to the local economy and this needs be taken into consideration when designing support for the sector. It needs a more tailored approach than those provided by the Growth Hubs.

“ Through running one day workshops for small businesses, we learnt how hard it is for them to give up a complete day, so we have adapted the way we deliver

“ We have identified a need for more skills in marketing and digital marketing and that traditional business support programmes on offer aren't right for creative sector there.

“ Creative industries need more bespoke support programmes than is offered here

What is key to growing the cultural and creative economy locally?

Breaking down silos both within the cultural sector, and between the cultural sector and others, remains central to growing the cultural economy locally. Projects are finding that this unsurprisingly happens slowly, finding practical ways to foster shared understanding.

“ The regular strategic partner meetings instigated by GP are an important mechanism for better coordination

The importance of getting buy in from local politicians is an essential element for holistic, connected support for the creative economy. This buy in helps to open doors for culture from a strategic (aligning strategies and plan) to a very practical level (help securing a lease for space).

What has been most helpful to you in trying to develop this area of work?

The areas identified the four following ingredients that helped their work:

- Having funding to deliver projects and activities has catalysed activity and through this GP has gained the trust of the local cultural sector
- The research outputs have provided something tangible which have proved to be useful conversation starters with key decision makers
- The novelty of the project has opened doors and led to new relationships, outside the existing organisation and sector silos

- Learning from external experts and other areas has provided new ideas for practice.

What are the challenges?

Many areas are working to embed culture better within the economic development agenda. To do this, most areas are working with LEPs. GP projects are finding the economic development focus to be narrow and that there are language differences which make communication difficult. There is also a very practical challenge to engaging with LEPs; often their geographies do not align with those of Great Place.

“ There are a suite of place-based programmes for the national park and peak district, but they don't fit neatly into economic boxes, making it a challenge to engage with the LEPs.

“ The issue is how to breakdown the silos between creative industries and economic development more generally

“ We are working across multiple LEPs, it is quite complex to get our voice in there

“ We've taken part in conversations about the creative economy instigated by our LEP, though as a small area in terms of the LEP's overall geography, impact requires further partnership-building

“ Working in a large council, where there are competing pressures, it can be hard to align agendas

The small size of cultural organisations is proving to be challenging for the GP activities. Some are finding that cultural organisations are struggling to have capacity to fully engage, despite an eagerness to. There is a specific challenge around size in the work Waltham Forest is doing to open up council contracts to local creative industries. They are finding that many creative organisations are simply too small to bid.

“ Capacity of the sector is a key barrier, as the organisations are generally small and underfunded so it can be a challenge to get people together

“ Our team are exploring ways to overcome the challenge that small creative organisations are unable to bid for council contracts, we are exploring an approach that links small and larger cultural organisations in the borough to pursue larger contracts.

Some areas are facing specific challenges around unlocking space for creative activities. Others around managing the expectations and experiences of existing creative and cultural organisations of Great Place.

“ We see empty shops around and we could make use of them, but there doesn't seem to be an easy way to make this happen.

“ We are working hard to build trust – that is crucial to do this and to avoid any feeling as though activity is 'parachuted' in. It is vital for legacy.

What difference do you think can be made in the life of the project?

In terms of legacy, the projects have a wide range of different changes and outcomes they would like to see. They include:

- Embedding artists in town centre design process for public realm schemes will lead to a lasting legacy in the physical infrastructure of the borough.
- Commissioning and procurement processes that are more accessible to creative sector
- Retention of more creative graduates and higher number of creative start-ups, particularly those from diverse backgrounds.

Better recognition of connection of creative industries to heritage and better connection within the sector

“ Finding a model that enables a self-sustaining creative hub

“ Building a sense of trust across and between sectors and hopefully people will carry those relationships on after the programme

8. Appendix 2: Q&A from Learning and Networking Day 2019

What are you going to do with the evaluation? Is there a plan for sharing the overall evaluation with the projects? How are you going to use the results of the evaluation for future learning and change? What have the funders learnt from working together in this way?

The programme evaluation will be delivered by BOP Consulting to Arts Council, NLHF and Historic England and then circulated to all projects. It will also be published online by the funders.

Beyond this, it is clearly important that the learning and insight from the projects is shared within the funding bodies, and with other strategic bodies. Each funding body has internal processes for doing this: Arts Council, for example, has been reporting to its Executive Board which includes Deputy CEO Laura Dyer the lead for place and engagement. The Executive Board has recently been updated on the Year 1 programme evaluation report and the case study report. Regular dialogue is maintained with DCMS, which will include discussion of this evaluation.

The Year 1 report has been shared with the Heritage Fund's Executive Team which includes the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors. The Fund's Head of Data and Insight who has the strategic responsibility for translating findings from programme level evaluation into organisational wide learning, has been involved in the Great Place evaluation exercise from the start. The Great Place Programme Manager is already using learning from the scheme to inform their wider regeneration policy brief at Heritage Fund and where possible are implementing changes that arise from the recommendations of the Year 1 report.

To date, key learning for NLHF is around internal processes – how to align our funding and operational models to make Great Place (England) possible – and around timescale, i.e. the need for projects to spend time on set-up and development with public-facing delivery a much later concern. This learning has fed into the design and expectations for NLHF's Great Place (Nations) scheme. The findings of the year 1 report, feedback from the sharing day and visits to projects are regularly shared with partners and have also fed into the design thinking on new schemes such as the Cultural Development Fund and the High Streets Cultural Programme - a partnership between the Heritage Fund and Historic England and Arts Council England.

It is hoped that all projects will also champion the learnings and insights from the Great Place scheme and share them through their own local, regional and national networks.

Can we share the year one report on our website?

Absolutely – please do!

What are the main areas of learning from City of Culture for the Great Place scheme?

Each City of Culture – Glasgow, Derry, Liverpool, Hull – has demonstrated the transformative effect that culture can have on a place, with impacts evidenced socially, culturally and economically in the short and longer term. As such, these CoC programmes – while different in scale to Great Place schemes – share many of the Great Place ambitions and provide a useful context for evidencing what culture can achieve at place level.

More specifically, applications for City of Culture titles feature strongly in the narratives of many of the current Great Place (England) projects. Like the Great Place programme City of Culture aims to support weaving culture into all aspects of a place is crucial to achieving and sustaining a culture-led transformation. Great Place can share a lot about the process of achieving this infusion of culture into all aspects of a place.

How will the local evaluations be incorporated into the overall evaluation?

Local evaluations will be delivered to NLHF and shared with Arts Council in line with project funding agreements. These evaluations will also be shared with BOP Consulting, who will review and incorporate information and insight within the programme evaluation where this relates to the programme evaluation's core questions. The Programme Evaluation will not, however, summarise or necessarily reflect on the work of each individual project.

Are newsletter sign-ups relevant data?

Newsletter sign-ups will be relevant for some projects and not others, in line with their local evaluation frameworks.

In terms of the Programme Evaluation, newsletter sign-up data may be relevant to the outcome 'more people, and a wider range of people, engage with arts and heritage.' This data has not been set as an overall indicator for this outcome area at programme evaluation level but, at final reporting stage, this is an example of the type of data that may be pulled across from local to programme level evaluation reporting.

How will you measure legacy, sustainability and long-term change?

A recurrent theme of discussions around Great Place is the tension between limited-term project funding and the ambition for creating long-term change. Many of the impacts that Great Place projects aim for will only be seen after project funding has finished – and this is understood.

The evaluation addresses this in two ways. Firstly, via the logic model which shows the chain of cause and effect which link the activities of the project to the long-term goals. By showing how projects achieve in the short-term, the evaluation will provide evidence as to the likely impacts in the longer term. For example, through data showing the delivery of skills training and networking for cultural practitioners and organisations, the cultural sector gains capacity within

the life of the project. Longer term, it is assumed that arts/heritage/cultural organisations will therefore be more resilient.

Secondly, the programme evaluation continues beyond the funding period. BOP are contracted to collect (a limited amount of) primary data and prepare a final report for funders one year after project funding ends, currently set for May 2021.

It would of course be interesting – and valuable – to revisit the Great Places after a long time period. Precedents for such longitudinal evaluation work do exist – BOP, for example, delivered a review of the current status of the organisations which had received the first 100 major grants funded by NLHF, twenty years on from receipt of funds. There are, however, no current plans to commission such a study for the Great Place programme: any such commission would be made at a future point and in line with current strategic priorities.

Are project extensions/ a second funding round being considered? If so, when will they be announced?

Project extensions have been agreed and this information will be communicated to all projects via the Investment Manager and / or BOP Consulting. A benefit of supporting a cohort of projects is the ability to compare progress and approaches between projects within a defined structure for the programme. One of the aspects of this structure is the time each project has to complete. In discussion and with the agreement of the Heritage Fund Investment Manager, project extensions can be granted till August 2020. Any extension beyond this date will require additional consideration. There are currently no plans for a second funding round of Great Place.

What strategic funding streams might Great Place Schemes be eligible to apply for to continue? Will Great Place Scheme areas be able to apply for the NLHF Place Campaign? When will more information be available?

There are opportunities to take forward activities or initiatives that emerge from the work being done on Great Place Scheme projects. Heritage Fund's recently launched Strategic Funding Framework set's out six strategic objectives including demonstrating how heritage helps people and places to thrive. Heritage Fund will consider proposals that can show how they will achieve their published outcomes in proportion to the amount of grant being requested. Opportunities for funding that arise or are inspired by Great Place projects should be discussed with the relevant Heritage Fund Investment Manager. In line with a commitment to work strategically and champion innovation the Heritage Fund expects to run a time-limited place campaign in 2021 – 22. Learning from Great Place will help shape the programme. Details and a launch date will be published as soon as possible and providing sufficient time for applications to be developed.

Is there anywhere to share local theories of change and data capture methods? How will you facilitate future networking/information between projects?

There are a number of existing avenues for projects to network and share information:

- The NLHF online forum – though it is generally agreed that this is not functioning well and is unlikely to be used going forward
- The e-list maintained by BOP Consulting, which includes BOP, Arts Council and NLHF: some projects have 'replied all' to this newsletter to circulate questions /comments across projects; further use could be made of this as a way to share project news
- The evaluator email list set up by Judith at Heritage Insider; this does not include BOP or funder representatives

Attendees at the Coventry Learning Event were clear that networking among projects was a priority. NLHF and Arts Council are exploring what resourcing (if any) they are able to provide to support further face to face peer led networking, ideally later this summer.. Meanwhile, the Project Managers Survey will include a question regarding which forms of networking would be most accessible / valuable to projects:

- regular open-access conference call slots
- an additional / alternative online resource (email list, social media space)
- visit to other project(s)
- regional meet-up
- national meet-up

9. Appendix 3: Workshop feedback - Learning and Networking Day 2019

Governance

The workshop identified a gap between 'strategy' and 'delivery'. This included a lack of continuity and shared purpose between delivery teams, which were seen as a potential barrier to legacy. This could be the result of both a failure to recognise the value of culture and competing objectives among policy-makers (eg licensing restrictions v efforts to stimulate tourism). It was also felt that losing funding at the end of the programme without joined-up future funding opportunities could lead to a loss of influence on local policy-making.

The main governance legacy enablers described in the workshop came down to building relationships and changing perceptions. In practice, this meant establishing long-term partnerships and changing the priorities of stakeholders so that culture becomes embedded in processes. This can be helped by the articulation of a coherent message and long-term vision during the project.

Legacy Enablers

- Establishment of long-term partnerships with engaged partners
- Long-term vision and planning

- Culture becomes embedded into other areas- readjusted priorities/ organisational focus
- Community trust and confidence in organisations and local authority
- Legacy organisations which can apply for future funding opportunities
- Advocacy and advocates for change
- Lasting brand and coherent message
- Creating the 'expectation of change'
- Establishment of a 'place-based model'
- Meaningful evaluation
- Flexible governance
- The 'right people' around the table

Legacy Barriers

- Loss of funding and lack of joined up funding opportunities
- Culture, arts and heritage are not fully recognised as a catalyst for change
- Gaps between strategy and delivery
- Lack of continuity between governance structures/ delivery teams
- Inadequate rural/urban infrastructure
- Arts and culture programmes are not accompanied by adequate social welfare policies
- Loss of momentum and changing priorities
- 'Locked doors' and gatekeeping in Councils, LEPs and local business
- Too reliant on individuals rather than structures
- Bureaucracy and slow decision-making
- Difficulties in creating lasting policy-change
- Competing objectives and outcomes, eg. licensing v tourism
- Lack of time to apply for new funding streams
- Lack of common purpose and strategic vision among local authorities

- Potential loss of influence on local policy-making

Community engagement

Barriers to sustained community engagement included skills and knowledge gaps alongside demographic change (in particular young people moving away from the area). Some projects felt that their legacy relied too heavily on individual community leaders. There were also concerns surrounding the confidence of community groups to 'go it alone' and a lack of continuity leading to a loss of trust. Again, this in part came down the loss of funding. Community engagement legacy enablers centred around the creation of strong partnerships, networks and resources (eg. Creative Toolkits) that will last beyond the project. Examples given included establishing 'co-creation habits' and 'upskilling' partner organisations. It was also pointed out that a willingness to listen and respond to different community groups is vital for building enduring trust, confidence, pride and vision. Effective communication of the benefits and impact of the project was also raised as a significant enabler.

Legacy Enablers

- Use of local knowledge, artists, schools, organisations etc
- Finding relevance of culture for the community
- Creation of Creative Toolkits
- Enabling creative start-ups and networks
- Individual 'creative champions' to inspire and advocate
- Establishment of consensus and joined up approach
- Large initial impact brings people on board
- Effective articulation of the benefits of culture
- Allowing young people to take the lead
- Increased confidence of the community
- Effective connections and directly reaching out to certain groups
- Empowering and upskilling partner organisations

- Humility and a willingness to listen
- Restoration of pride/ positive perceptions
- Effective digital engagement and communication of impact
- University and research partnerships
- Meet the Funder events and bid writing training
- Creative education partnerships
- Co-production habits

Legacy Barriers

- Small scale of delivery
- Excluded, 'hard-to-reach' communities
- Gatekeeping of community groups and reluctance to collaborate
- Demographic change and changing populations – young people moving away
- Reliance of individual community leaders
- Lack of trust in local authority
- Loss of funding
- Low baseline for engagement
- Cultural barriers to engagement
- Lack of continuity leading to loss of trust
- Insufficient funds to employ skilled strategic thinkers/ skills and knowledge gaps
- Lack of confidence of community groups to 'go it alone' after Great Place Scheme
- Lack of clear roles and responsibilities among community groups
- Other challenges in people's lives prevent them from engaging.

10. Appendix 4: Audience data

10.1 Distinguishing between 'arts' and 'heritage'

- When collecting and reporting audience data, projects were asked to distinguish between arts audiences and heritage audiences. Set definitions for each category were not specified but left to the discretion of project managers in accordance with local definitions.
- The main determinants for 'heritage' classifications were reported to be events which either took place on a heritage site or which made use of heritage resources such as archives and collections.
- Several projects made reference to community identity, narratives, history and traditions within their definitions of heritage events.
- 'Arts' events were often simply defined in contradistinction to heritage events (eg. arts = everything else).
- Events with practice-based or participatory elements were also predominantly classified as 'arts'.

Two projects felt that they could not decisively say whether or not an event had an 'arts' or 'heritage' focus. In these cases, they 'split the data in two', reporting half as 'arts' audiences and half as 'heritage' audiences. Another two projects did not have any data to report under 'heritage' audiences, as all of their year 2 activity fell under their definition of 'arts'. We note that given the difficulties of categorisation in projects aiming for cultural (=arts+heritage) outcomes, there is limited value in analysing the data by the categories of 'arts' and 'heritage'. Where comparisons have been made, these should not be considered as robust.

Notes on data collection:

The purpose of the audience data collection surveys was primarily a baselining exercise to enable data to be compared with data collected at the end of year 3.

- 15 projects reported a total of 1,299 public-facing events, reaching a total audience of 515,952
- There was great variation in the number of public facing events each project delivered, ranging from 4 to 1,213. Total public audiences reached by individual projects ranges from 172 – 309,901.
- The total completed surveys received from 13 projects ranges from 4 to 1,637. One project provided a large amount of demographic data that was collected not through surveys but through schools.
- While some questions were optional in accordance with the aims and objectives of individual projects, core demographic and experience feedback data was compulsory for all public audience surveys. Some projects, however, did not successfully manage to collect demographic data from their audiences. This was reported to be due to delivery partners either not collecting the data or not providing it to project managers.

Therefore, the following demographic profiles and survey data cannot be considered to be representative across all 16 projects and will be skewed towards projects who delivered larger programmes and conducted more extensive data collection.

It can, however, provide a snapshot of some of the activity that has taken place in year 2, the kinds of audiences that have attended and various ways it has been received.

10.2 Distribution of events and audiences between ‘arts’ and ‘heritage’

The data shows that the majority of events, workshops, audiences and participants in year 2 were defined by the projects as being ‘mainly arts’. Only two projects had greater numbers of ‘mainly heritage’ events and audiences. The preference for ‘arts’ classifications may reflect the way that the organisations administering Great Place regard themselves (eg. as arts rather than heritage organisations).

Figure 17 Distribution of events and audiences between ‘arts’ and ‘heritage’

Total number:	Arts	Heritage
- Public-facing events	774	525
- Public audiences	448791	67161
- Professional skills events	229	83
- Professional skills participants	2133	1067

Source: Year 2 Audience Data Collection Survey. 15 responses.

Outcome 1. Cross portfolio, cross sector partnership & working is significantly improved and extended.

Total number of volunteers or community/ co-commissioning group participants:

- Arts – 2436
- Heritage – 2398
- Total - 4,834

Outcome 5: People have a greater sense of collective efficacy

Figure 18 By working together, we can bring about change in our local neighbourhood.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Arts	60%	34%	5%	1%	0%
Heritage	32%	66%	2%	0%	0%
Combined	45%	51%	3%	1%	0%

Source: Year 2 Audience Data Collection Survey. Heritage: 1985 responses from 8 projects. Arts: 529 responses from 5 projects. Combined: 996 responses.

Outcome 9: More people, and a wider range of people engage with arts and heritage

9.1 People have enjoyable cultural experiences:

Figure 19 'I had a good time!'

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Arts	42%	43%	13%	1%	1%
Heritage	67%	29%	2%	1%	1%
Combined	49%	39%	10%	1%	1%

Source: Year 2 Audience Data Collection Survey. Heritage: 1985 responses from 8 projects. Arts: 5691 responses from 11 projects. Combined: 7676 responses.

9.2 Participation from target under-served / marginalised /disadvantaged audiences is increased:

- 85% of all audiences (arts and heritage) identified themselves as White British. 9% identified themselves as belonging to BAME groups. (Based on 7587 responses submitted by 12 projects)
- 90% of all audiences (arts and heritage) reported having no health problems or disabilities that affected their daily lives; 5% were limited a little and 3% were limited a lot. (Based on 6973 responses submitted by 11 projects)

Outcome 10. Stronger, better networked cultural sector

10.2 Cultural practitioners enhance their skills:

- Of those who attended skills or professional development training events (arts or heritage), 20% strongly agreed that they had learned a new skill and another 21% agreed. However, this leaves 59% respondents who answered 'neither agree nor disagree' suggesting that efforts to upskill had limited success. (Based on 534 responses submitted by 7 projects).
- Likewise, when participants were asked if they thought any skills they had gained would support their career in the cultural sector, 16% strongly

agreed and another 16% agreed. 67% 'neither agreed nor disagreed' (Based on 509 responses submitted by 5 projects).

Outcome 11. Stronger, more connected and happier communities.

11.1 Local pride is increased:

- When asked if 'today's event has increased my pride' in the respective Great Place, 11% of all audiences (arts and heritage) answered 'strongly agree' while 71% said that they agreed. (Based on 2291 responses submitted by 8 projects). There was no significant variation between responses from arts audiences and heritage audiences.

11.2 People feel a greater sense of belonging to a place

- When asked, 18% of respondents 'strongly agreed' and another 58% 'agreed' that having [the Great Place project] is part of what makes [the Great Place] special as an area. (Based on 1,144 responses submitted by 5 projects)

11.3 People feel their community has been brought together

- 10% of all audiences (arts and heritage) 'strongly agreed' and 76% 'agreed' that they had a lot in common with people from their local area. The number of respondents who 'strongly agreed' was marginally higher among arts audiences than among heritage audiences. (Based on 718 responses submitted by 4 projects)

11.4 More intergenerational connections are made and understanding increases

Just two projects chose to ask questions about intergenerational contact, leaving inadequate data to assess this outcome.

11.5 Participants' mental health improves

Only one project chose to use the Warwick-Edinburgh mental wellbeing scale in their year 2 data collection. We will assess this data in depth in year 3.

Outcome 12. Great Places become destinations of choice.

12.1 Cultural tourism at GP sites/events is increased:

- Less than 1% of all audiences (arts and heritage) who responded to audience surveys came from outside of the UK. These results were unchanged when arts and heritage events were looked at individually. (Based on 8,870 responses submitted by 10 projects).

12.2 Visitors' perceptions of sites/events improve:

- Audiences who were defined as 'non-local' by projects were asked whether or not they would recommend the Great Place in question to friends and family. 56% strongly agreed and 37% agreed. (Based on 1,302 responses submitted by 5 projects).
- When broken down into arts and heritage audiences, arts audiences were much more positive, with 76% agreeing strongly with the above statement and 19% agreeing (based on 908 responses submitted by 5 projects). Of heritage audiences, 11% 'strongly agreed' compared to 77% who 'agreed' (based on 394 responses submitted by 5 projects).