

Member Briefing

Cultural Improvement Partnership East Midlands

Culture Matters

The impact of cultural services

Overview

Cultural services contribute significantly to cross cutting themes including health improvement, education and learning, inclusive communities, community cohesion, community safety, sense of place, as well as physical and social regeneration.

This briefing sheet is intended to help Cabinet Members build the case for Cultural Services within their authority and local area.

Why it Matters

Activities supported by Cultural Services span the arts, sport and physical activity, film and media, heritage, museums, libraries and archives, the creative industries, tourism, parks and recreation. Cultural Services often deliver activities themselves, but increasingly they work in partnership to deliver ongoing programmes, events and festivals. Tourism and the creative industries are of growing economic importance and these increasingly depend on the strength of a local cultural offer. This local cultural offer can sometimes reflect the aspiration of a particular place and its communities.

Background

Participation in cultural and sporting activities has been shown to have enormous personal, social and even economic benefits.

- The creative and cultural sectors have been growing at twice the rate of other industrial sectors since 1997. It is estimated that in the East Midlands alone, the creative, cultural and sporting fields contribute up to £7bn per annum to the regional economy (which is 6.6% of the total GVA) and account for nearly 10% of all employment. (Regional Cultural Strategy The Place of Choice, Culture East Midlands)
- The Home Office Citizenship Survey 2001 suggested that sport and exercise are the single greatest contributor to social participation (51%)
- In inner city areas, those who participated in culture were 10% more likely to be satisfied with where they live, compared to those who did not participate. (DCMS, internal analysis of Taking Part survey data, 2007)
- 70% of young people believe that a lack of positive activities provision leads to more youth crime. (MORI, 2002)
- When asked, activities for teenagers is the local issue that most people want to see improved. (Audit Commission, CPA – The Harder Test, 2007)
- 80% of people believe that participating in sport teaches respect for others and increases people's involvement in community activities
- 76% of people believe that participating in sporting activities reduces anti-social behaviour/crime amongst young people. (MORI research, 2004)
- 63% of people believe that local arts facilities create a sense of pride for local people and 56% felt that it improved the quality of life for local people. (Jermyn H, The arts and social exclusion: a review prepared for Arts Council England, 2001)
- 45% of museum visitors agree that they felt more positive towards other people and their cultures and ideas as a result of their visit. (MLA & MORI, Renaissance in the Regions, 2003)
- 81% of teachers thought it either 'likely' or 'very likely' that their pupils had learned more about other people and communities as a result of their visit to museums (Hooper-Greenhill E et al, What did you learn at the museum today? Second study, 2005)



- Over 89% of visitors to archives in England believe that the domain contributes to society by strengthening family and community identity. (PF/Public Services Quality Group – Visitors Survey 2004)
- 70% of people say that they are interested in the history of the place where they live. (DCMS, Taking Part Survey, 2006)

Case Study: A race to the top

Rutland may be the smallest county in the country but it is already making a big name for itself in the international world of cycling. Although it has only been established for two years some of the top cyclists in professional racing have taken part in the annual 100 mile Rutland to Melton cycle race. Last year over 5,000 people lined the route to watch the race which included a number of Olympic and World Champion medallists. Each year the event has grown and it looks set to turn into a serious tourist attraction in the lead up to the 2012 Olympics. The event is not only attracting tourists but also appeals to local people. This fits with the county council's strategy of integrating tourism within a wider context of community and economic development, sustainability and the 'clean, green and safe' agenda. Rutland County Council has also used the community plan and the Local Area Agreement to weave tourism within a wider strategic context.

Sandra Hayes, Head of Culture and Partnerships at Rutland said:

"There is an old fashioned view of tourism that you have to fly somewhere to be a tourist. Yet it doesn't matter where you come from if you are spending money locally – you can be a visitor in your own town. We are a small county and many residents would be concerned about the impact of a lot of tourists, but if they see themselves as visitors in their own area they are more likely to be open to others coming in and spending money to help support local services. It's really important that we continue to develop the visitor economy as well as showing people what is on their doorstep."



Photo: Rutland County Council

Your next steps

- **Identify which of your authority's strategic priorities or outcomes (for instance in the Local Area Agreement) recognise culture as an important contributor and support officers in LAA refresh processes.**
- **Identify challenges for culture in your authority, for instance where the contribution of culture and sport might be developed, and address them with the managers concerned.**
- **Create a central point for collecting the evidence on the value and contribution of Cultural Services.**
- **Visit front line facilities and talk to staff and the public to get a sense of what works well and areas for improvement.**
- **Find out what work is delivered in partnership and support partnership development.**
- **Ask how culture delivers on your sustainable communities strategy.**



**Cultural Improvement Partnership
East Midlands**

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