

DANCING IN THE STREET: MAXIMISING HEALTH AND WELLBEING BENEFITS OF UK CITY OF CULTURE

2016 Annual Report
of the Director of
Public Health



Hull
City Council



HULL
2017
UK
City
of
Culture

**"WE WANT THIS.
WE NEED THIS."**

(Focus of Hull's bid for UK City of Culture, 2013)

**"ARTS AND CULTURE
MAKE A HUGE
DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S
LIVES – CONTRIBUTING
TO INDIVIDUAL AND
COMMUNITY WELLBEING
AND HELPING PEOPLE
OVERCOME PERSONAL
CHALLENGES AND FULFIL
THEIR POTENTIAL"**

**(Sir Peter Bazalgette, Chair Arts
Council England, 2014)**

**"IN 2017, I PLAN TO
BE A PART OF IT ALL"**

(James, Victoria Dock resident, 2016)

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FOREWORD



Councillor Gwen Lunn,
Portfolio Holder for Public Health,
Prevention and Safeguarding Adults

As 2017 draws ever closer and anticipation builds on the back of the first season programme announcement, I am delighted to be involved as Portfolio Holder for Public Health, Prevention and Safeguarding Adults in the build up to our amazing year in the spotlight. I'm excited by the once in a generation opportunity we have to use our year as UK City of Culture to focus on the health and wellbeing of our residents, particularly concentrating on improving mental wellbeing, physical activity and social isolation. I am so pleased that the Director of Public Health has chosen this topic as the focus for her annual report.

As I settle into my new role and learn more about what we are already doing in Hull to build on our many strengths to help improve people's health and wellbeing, I feel inspired and confident that we will use Hull 2017 as a catalyst for lasting change. We must all work together to use the year and its legacy to give everyone a boost, especially those who have the greatest need.

This year we have already seen the positive difference that hosting big cultural events can make to the wellbeing of individuals taking part and also to how our city is viewed by the world. As the world looks on, we can at last prove to any remaining doubters that we are indeed "good enough". It is a pleasure to witness this increasing confidence and pride.

I wholeheartedly agree with Martin Green when he says: "the voice of this city has always been strong, but I believe in 2017 we will roar."



Matt Jukes,
Hull City Council Chief Executive

Hull's year as UK City of Culture 2017 will offer people unrivalled opportunity to engage with culture and the arts, experience something new and see their communities enriched and transformed. Hull has the chance to benefit economically, socially and culturally from its 365-days in the spotlight and beyond.

Good health is the essential foundation to participation in culture. Mental and physical wellbeing gives people the freedom to go to events, volunteer, explore the city and experience the wealth of exciting events happening both within communities and centrally.

This report sets out our key priorities for health as we prepare for 2017 and its legacy. We consider how we can maximise health and wellbeing within the context of our year as City of Culture, physically, mentally and socially, as well as the public protection elements essential to providing safe and welcoming events.

In 2016, as proud hosts of the Public Health England (PHE) Health Inequalities Conference, we were afforded an opportunity to reinforce the link between health and culture on a national platform.

Our hope for 2017 and beyond is a healthier, happier city.



Ten thousand strong, a
peaceful throng, the crowds
walked in,

Ten thousand faces wreathed in
smiles, eyes raised to the skies.

Angels in white above the
crowd, came to earth,

While we below, earth tied,
could only gaze in awe.

Then, feathers flew and
fluttered slowly down,

While angel music filled the air
and ultra violet visions

Flew aloft. This was laughter.
This was awe. This was joy.

For an hour, we were held,
entranced, seduced and
charmed.

Then home we marched, this
crowd, enraptured, our hearts
captured

By these angels from above.
And home we went, to sleep

And dream of angels on wires
and the joy that is ours to keep.

David Osgerby, 2016 ©

INTRODUCTION



Julia Weldon

Director of Public Health,
Hull City Council

This is an exciting time for Hull and an amazing opportunity for a Director of Public Health – a real game changer. No other UK city has been in a position to explore and demonstrate the health benefits of a year of inclusive cultural activity before.

Hull is seizing the opportunity to do this and to create a blueprint for future UK Cities of Culture to follow.

Hull was announced as UK City of Culture 2017 in November 2013, soon after I became Director of Public Health (DPH). I joined in with the cheers of joy at that wonderful achievement, by and on behalf of the people of this city. As DPH I knew it would be vital to ensure Public Health and the wider health and social care community were able to take every opportunity to maximise the health and wellbeing benefits of Hull's year as UK City of Culture before, during and after 2017.

My Public Health team undertook an assessment of the potential health impact of 2017, challenging the UK City of Culture team to get behind a health and wellbeing focus. We agreed to grasp all the potential benefits of a programme of arts and culture for our city. Such was the enthusiasm, a number of health priorities were written into the Hull, UK City of Culture 2017 Strategic Plan including:

- improving mental wellbeing using the arts and integrating health promoting activities in public events
- creating opportunities for physical activity through arts participation
- reducing social isolation through inclusive work in our communities and encouraging intergenerational working through an access-for-all artistic programme

- maximising the health legacy by developing employability skills and building on Hull's reputation as a pioneer in health outreach arts activity.

The successful City of Culture bid was just the start of this collaborative journey between culture and health. We now have the ground work in place and are getting ready to launch the 2017 programme through a 'health lens'. We may not be able to improve the health of the entire city in a single year, but everyone involved is determined it will be a catalyst for change.

Last year, my report used art and culture to promote a smoke-free city – designed in a bold comic-book style, the report received national recognition. In it, I set out a series of actions to be undertaken – you can access the report and see the progress we are making at hullpublichealth.org

I am proud and privileged to share this year's DPH Annual Report with co-authors including Martin Green, Chief Executive of the City of Culture team. It provides a strong evidence base for culture as a means to improving health and wellbeing, provides local examples of these benefits and calls for everyone in Hull to get ready and fit for culture and be part of legacy that leaves us happier, healthier and safer.

The following chapters reflect the health priorities agreed with our partners, and set out how we will protect and promote health of residents and visitors through the year and beyond.

It's been an amazing journey so far and in 2017 we can expect a year of culture beyond all our expectations. We need to ensure we are ready and fit to make the most of it.



Martin Green

CEO and Director,
Hull UK City of Culture 2017

As UK City of Culture 2017 Hull has a once-in-a-generation opportunity. We won this title by demonstrating our belief in the transformational nature of culture and I want all 260,000 residents to look back at 2017 and say with pride and confidence 'I was there'.

The legacy of 2017 must celebrate Hull's history and future and allow it to take its rightful place among the great northern cities. But I want the benefits to go deeper. In 2015 I was invited by leaders and individuals from across the NHS and public sector, community and voluntary organisations and of course public health to discuss the health agenda for 2017; the key themes and activities which might shape our programme of 'healthy art'.

There are so many ways that art and culture benefit individuals and communities. Making people happy, sparking imagination and triggering creativity; all contribute to mental wellbeing. You can get up and dance, explore the city and get physically active in fun and stimulating ways. Many activities are ideal for bringing people together and reducing social isolation. We want our cultural programme to be inclusive and our volunteering and learning programmes to provide new experiences for people of all ages right across the city.

On the back of this, we have tried to embed wellbeing into every aspect of the four seasons of the Hull 2017 programme:

- **Made in Hull, January – March:** we'll focus on celebrating local stories and uniting the city to show the world what we're made of
- **Roots and Routes, April- May:** we'll involve whole communities and neighbourhoods in celebrating Hull's unique place and style in a constantly changing world
- **Freedom, July – September:** we'll celebrate our freedom of identity, freedom of expression, and equality and social justice for all
- **Tell the World, October – December:** we'll be looking forward with a transformed voice for the city, "this is just the beginning of something special. Who knows where it will end..?"

Events throughout 2016, like Place des Anges, which created a feather-filled playground for 10,000 people, and the Sea of Hull, which encouraged 3,200 naked people to paint themselves blue for art, as well as annual events like Humber Street Sesh and the Freedom Festival, show that this is a city of amazing culture and incredible people. Being UK City of Culture in 2017 is a once in a generation opportunity to create wonderful memories and transform lives for the better.

GOOD MENTAL WELLBEING

Photo © Freedom Festival

PEOPLE WITH GOOD MENTAL WELLBEING ARE:

SATISFIED
OPTIMISTIC
HAVE HIGH
SELF-ESTEEM
RESILIENT
FEEL IN CONTROL
HAVE A SENSE OF
BELONGING.

WHY FOCUS ON GOOD MENTAL WELLBEING?

Mental wellbeing is part of being healthy.

Good mental wellbeing allows people to develop their potential, build good personal relationships and make a contribution to the community. Mental wellbeing can greatly influence an individual's path in life, for example high levels of wellbeing means someone is more likely to be in work or full-time education.

THE IMPACT OF ARTS AND CULTURE ON MENTAL WELLBEING

Improvements in mental health and wellbeing can bring a range of health, social, educational and economic benefits to people and communities. It is estimated happier people add seven-and-a-half years to their life.

In 2008, the New Economics Foundation (NEF) developed a simple, evidence-based approach to positive mental health. The Five Ways to Wellbeing underpin our approach to maximise the benefits of 2017.

It has been noted that these five actions correspond closely to behaviours that can emerge in well-designed participatory arts projects. Research commissioned by the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department of Health (2007) and Faculty of Public Health (2012) explored the impact of participatory arts projects in England for people aged 16 to 65 with mental health needs. The research concluded that arts participation improves mental wellbeing and decreases mental distress.

FIVE WAYS TO WELLBEING

CONNECT... with the people around you

BE ACTIVE... walk, run, cycle, garden, dance. Exercising makes you feel good

TAKE NOTICE... be curious. Savour the moment. Be aware of the world around you

KEEP LEARNING... try something new. Build confidence and have fun

GIVE... do something nice, smile, volunteer your time.

GOOD MENTAL WELLBEING

Expanding horizons leads to wider aspirations and opportunities and to improved self-esteem

Connecting with others in a supportive environment decreases social isolation and builds confidence in forging relationships

a 'service user' identity

Focusing on art provides relaxation and distraction

Using abilities gives a sense of pride and achievement

Having time out helps alleviate worries and responsibilities, decreasing mental distress

Getting motivated inspires hope and reduces inactivity

Self expression promotes catharsis and self acceptance, and provides alternative ways of coping

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT MENTAL WELLBEING?

Figures show 80 per cent of boys and 66 per cent of girls in Hull secondary schools were happy all or most of the time. However, ten per cent of boys and almost 20 per cent of girls said they were sad all or most of the time, and research in Hull among young people found that the top five issues causing worry and stress are:

- Bullying (including cyber bullying)
- Exam stress
- Body image
- Drugs and alcohol
- Self esteem and confidence

The majority of adults in Hull feel happy, not anxious, satisfied with their life and that life is worthwhile. However, there are more people in Hull who report poor mental wellbeing compared to the national average:

Measure	Hull	England
Life satisfaction rated as 'LOW':	8 per cent	5 per cent
Feelings of happiness rated as 'LOW':	14 per cent	9 per cent
Feeling life is worthwhile rated as 'LOW':	5 per cent	4 per cent
Levels of anxiety rated as 'HIGH':	21 per cent	19 per cent

Over the last four years, the percentage of people in Hull with poor mental wellbeing has remained relatively unchanged (or deteriorated slightly). Poor mental wellbeing is two to three times higher among people living in the most deprived areas in Hull compared to the least deprived. It is estimated that around 26,000 people aged 18-64 have a common mental health condition such as depression or anxiety that causes marked emotional distress and interferes with daily function.

WHAT ARE WE ALREADY DOING?

Over the last two years there has been investment in activities to improve mental wellbeing for everybody in Hull. We cannot describe them all here, but the following examples illustrate the range of work:

HeadStart Hull

The project has secured more than £8m of lottery funding to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, build their resilience and enable them to bounce back from life's challenges. After a successful two-year pilot working with three secondary and ten primary schools, we are rolling out the programme across the city over the next five years. There will be a range of ways young people can get involved including campaigns, and volunteering as peer mentors. There will also be specifically commissioned arts in health projects linked to City of Culture which will be designed in partnership with young people to address emotional health issues relevant to their lives.

Butterflies Memory Loss Support Group

The group was set up in 2010 by June Cooke, whose dad had been diagnosed with dementia. Butterflies offers an opportunity for those living with dementia and their families to share their experiences, worries and joys. It enables those with dementia to emerge from the condition and spread their wings in a safe, supported environment. Art has always been an integral part of Butterflies; members are already planning their activities around the Hull 2017 seasons and are excited to be getting involved. In recognition of her work, June Cooke has been awarded an Unsung Hero Award by Public Health England.

One Million Volunteer hours

Volunteering is a great way to give back and boost mental wellbeing. Hull offers a multitude of opportunities for volunteers. So many of our community sector activities and services rely on volunteers to improve the lives, health and wellbeing of others. Hull CVS is the centre for volunteering in the city and hosts the 'Do It' website. Their research has recently found that:

- 132,000 people volunteer at least once a year
- 85,000 volunteer at least once a month
- Regular volunteers carry out nearly 1,000,000 volunteering hours every month which is equivalent to 123,000 working days or 6,000 full time employees.

WHAT WILL WE DO IN 2017?

Aspects of the City of Culture year will tap into the 'five ways to wellbeing' - Give, Connect, Be active, Take notice, Keep learning.

Arts and culture for everyone

The focus on arts and culture means many organisations will be introducing new projects and activities in 2017 that allow them to help more people experience the therapeutic benefits. The projects below are all evidence of the five ways to wellbeing in action.

4,000 volunteers for 2017

Through the creation of 4,000 volunteer posts, local people aged 16-80 are seizing the opportunity to get involved, keep mentally active, make friends and develop new skills over the 600 days of the programme. Being a 2017 Volunteer will help with confidence building, boosting achievement, reducing social isolation, and employability.

The launch of the ambitious volunteer programme, the biggest of its kind ever in the UK, saw thousands of people signing up within the first few weeks of the call going out. As of July 2016 a total of 1,814 people of all ages have applied. Of these, 245 are unemployed and 214 have additional needs such as a physical disability, a health condition or a mental health issue. The Hull Homeless Community Project is also encouraging their clients to consider volunteering.

The programme will build on the great work we already do across the city as volunteers and may help enormously to redeploy these new volunteers into further opportunities after 2017.

"The thing that motivated me to apply to become a 2017 volunteer was the fact that it's such a huge thing to be happening in our city! I suppose I was in a rut so I wanted new experiences in my life.

The reality of being a 2017 volunteer has far surpassed my expectations. I feel very much involved in the whole process.

After the year's celebrations have come to an end, I'd like to continue to volunteer; I wish I'd done it a long time ago."

VAL COOK, HULL 2017 VOLUNTEER

"I have set myself a target to keep learning until I can speak English well enough to be able to volunteer. I've promised my children I will do it."

RECENT IMMIGRANT TO THE CITY, SPEAKING AT A CITY OF CULTURE ROADSHOW

GOOD MENTAL WELLBEING



WOW Festival

Inequality can have a major impact on people's sense of self-esteem, which can have an impact on a person's mental well-being in the longer term. Events like the WOW (Women of the World) Festival will offer a creative space for women, girls, men and boys to come together to celebrate and champion equality in all its forms, with the aim of inspiring change.

Creative Communities Programme

In every neighbourhood across the city, local residents are being encouraged to get involved in a huge variety of cultural activity that will see them coming together with artists and other local people. Many of the projects they will be involved in are inspired by local stories and the communities themselves, aimed at stimulating creativity and people's connectedness. This includes a high profile public project by the Goodwin Development Trust, which will see Thornton Estate get a full colour makeover. Local residents will introduce a splash of colour to the outside of their homes, creating a large-scale light installation, inspired by Hull's connection with the sea and traditional seafaring communication methods.

Sea of Hull

Renowned New York artist Spencer Tunick was commissioned to do a mass naked photo shoot in the city centre in July 2016. Thousands of local people participated, making it the largest artwork Mr Tunick has created in the UK. By challenging preconceived notions of nudity and the often negative connotations associated with it, a healthy debate on body image was sparked.

More than 3,000 participants wore blue body paint to reference the colours of the sea and Hull's maritime history. Having overcome any inhibitions, many said it was the most exciting, liberating and inspirational event they had ever been a part of. Participants spanned all ages, shapes, sizes and abilities. The resulting pictures will be presented in the Ferens Art Gallery during 2017.

"I will forever be in debt to the whole surreal experience. I initially signed up thinking I wouldn't be chosen to be part of it but when I got my confirmation email I set myself a challenge. For years I suffered Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Social Anxiety; Sea of Hull became my jumping-off point to better my life.

I have gone from being locked away in my own bedroom to being able to go to the shops with my partner. This may not seem like a big milestone, but to me it was the start of the rest of my life. From more than five years of being almost a total recluse to actually leaving the house".

SEA OF HULL PARTICIPANT

INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The potential benefits of physical activity to health are huge. If a medication existed that had a similar effect, it would be regarded as a 'wonder drug' or 'miracle cure'.

UK CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER, 2010





INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

WHY FOCUS ON PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

When we say 'culture', we refer to sport, arts, heritage, and all forms of leisure. We know that our professional sports clubs are as much a part of the cultural offer as our theatres. Inactivity impacts on society through preventable illness and premature death, sickness absence and lost productivity, and at an individual level through loss of independence and social isolation.

Regular physical activity is hugely important for people of all ages. Any physical activity is better than none. Physical activity is more than sport and PE, it encompasses active living which includes housework, gardening, DIY, walking, cycling, using the stairs, play, dance and hiking. As little as ten minutes of physical activity at a time provides physical and mental health benefits.

WHAT IMPACT CAN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HAVE ON HEALTH AND WELLBEING?

Being active leads to greater self-esteem, self-control and the ability to rise to a challenge. It can also help to prevent and manage more than 20 chronic conditions and diseases, including some cancers, heart disease, Type 2 Diabetes and depression, as well as reducing the risk of falls in the elderly.

INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



Photo © Tom Arran

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

The number of people undertaking physical activity has increased over time. However levels of obesity, poor diet and physical inactivity are still higher in Hull relative to England.

- 91,000 people are physically active for two and half hours a week
- 91,000 people are physically inactive, meaning they do less than 30 minutes moderate intensity activity at least once a week
- Rates of inactivity are highest in those with chronic and long-term health conditions; 77 per cent of people in Hull with a limiting disability are inactive
- Almost 37 per cent of adults are overweight and 27 per cent are obese; 25 per cent of Reception age children and nearly 33 per cent of Year 6 children are overweight or obese. Unlike the national picture, this trend is increasing locally
- More than 50 per cent of people lack the confidence to take part in sport or physical activity.

WHAT ARE WE ALREADY DOING TO PROMOTE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

The Active Hull Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2014-2017 aims to increase sustainable participation in sport and physical activity, leading to improved health, better social cohesion and reduced inequalities across the city.

Us Mums

Us Mums helps inactive pregnant women and new mums (with their children) in regular physical activity. Sessions include aqua natal, yoga, parent-and-child dance and gentle fitness. The programme reduces social isolation and helps mums share their experiences in a supportive way. Social Media has been very effective in reaching the target audience.

During her pregnancy Marilyn found fewer opportunities to stay active. After hearing about Us Mums she decided to give it a go and felt "at home" almost straight away and loved the tailored advice given. Over the following weeks the intensity of the sessions gradually increased as did Marilyn's levels of activity and her circle of friends. The experience has given Marilyn the confidence to sign up to a more demanding exercise session at her local gym, which she hopes will enable her to start running again. Without Us Mums Marilyn doesn't believe she could have made such improvements to her lifestyle so quickly after having her baby.

INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



Active at every age

Activities offered by day services illustrate that physical activity can be enjoyed by all, with activities ranging from Boccia (a Paralympic sport) to wheelchair dance. Wheelchair dance has been a great success, showcased at many events such as Dove House Strictly Learn to Dance, a Dementia Collaborative event and the Older People's Partnership Group celebration events.

Work is continuing across Hull to provide physical and mental activity for our ageing and vulnerable population, empowering them to keep independent for longer and reduce social isolation. Activities have included Active in Age sessions, Movement to Music and countryside health walks. This sustainable programme also includes intergenerational activities for ages eight to 100.

Parklife: walk, jog, run

We support a range of running events and activities from the annual Race for Life, the Jane Tomlinson Hull 10k, the Hull Marathon as well as Parkrun – every Saturday at 9am there are free timed 5K events in East Park, Peter Pan Park and the Humber Bridge Country Park where you can walk, jog or run the distance. Parkrun has encouraged people to take up exercise for the first time and whole families to start the weekend being active together.

“Four years ago I turned 50. I was overweight at 18 stone and an HGV truck driver with high blood pressure and cholesterol off the scale. I started jogging early in the mornings when it was dark so nobody could see me. I gave up alcohol. Then I started going to Hull Parkrun. I joined East Hull Harriers and completed both half and full marathons. I’m doing my first Half Iron Man this year with Humber Triathletes. With steady exercise my blood pressure is normal, heart rate spot on, cholesterol normal; I’ve lost four stone and I’m still teetotal after four and a half years, plus my wife says I’m a better person to live with!”

ANDY BUTLER, HULL

One YOU

The Public Health England One You campaign aims to address preventable disease by encouraging adults, particular those aged 40-60, to take control of their health. Living healthily in midlife can double your chances of being healthy at 70 and beyond. One You is made up of seven messages: move more, eat well, drink less alcohol, be smoke free, reduce stress, sleep better and get your health checked.

In Hull we have the potential to make a greater impact by joining together the Hull City of Culture 2017 and the One You brands, directly linking arts and culture to health. The overarching message is we all have the power to shape our future health by making simple and small changes now.

UK CITY OF CULTURE AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Exercise should be fun, social and a great way to reduce stress. So what might Hull's year as UK City of Culture Offer?

Circus skills, walking tours, cycling and mass dance will be just some of the great ways to get active in 2017!

Circus skills

Contemporary circus uses traditional skills and techniques with an artistic twist, often drawing on other art forms like dance, theatre, comedy and physical theatre.

Walking

Walking is the easiest way to incorporate physical activity into everyday life. Events like Sean McAllister's *Made in Hull* at the start of 2017 and *Look Up*, a year-long programme of artists' works made specifically for Hull's public places and spaces are not only designed to make people look at the city's buildings and public spaces with fresh eyes. They will encourage residents and visitors alike to walk around the city, as they follow the trails created by the artists.

The Humber Bridge will also take centre stage, when the acclaimed Opera North transform the iconic structure into a piece of music. People will be encouraged to wear headphones and walk across the bridge as they listen to its sounds, captured by Hull-based sound artist Jez Riley French and performed by the orchestra and chorus of Opera North.

Dance

From ballet to parkour, tap dancing to disco or breakdancing to lindy hop, dancing is one of the most enjoyable ways to exercise. Regular dancing is great for losing weight, maintaining strong bones, improving posture, strength, balance and co-ordination, and beating stress. At mass dance events you can have fun, meet new people and get all the health benefits of a good workout. Parkour, also called freerunning, is a great way to introduce physical activity to people, in particular young adult men, who want to keep fit but don't engage with traditional sports. With Hull set to be at the forefront of celebrations to mark 50 years since the decriminalisation of homosexuality in England, LGBT 50 will be inviting people of all ages and abilities to join a mass participation dance, celebrating the city's contribution to liberation, tolerance and emancipation around the world.

Use of outdoor space

Hull has 100 parks and open spaces across the city. Using these for cultural and artistic events, will encourage people to get out and about, be active and benefit from the great outdoors. Discovering new uses for outdoor space will promote their continued use well into the future for everything from walks to group activities and art and crafts activities.

The benefits of being in the outdoors to physical health, mental health and general well-being are beginning to be recognised as cost effective and a valuable step forward in preventing illness and improving health.

Cycling

The Hull Cultural Strategy (2016-26) will place a renewed emphasis on cycling in Hull, making the use of our flat geography, new cycle zones in the city centre and a new Cycling Strategy to be launched in the spring of 2017.

REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION



Photo © Huili, 2017

Individuals who are socially isolated are between two and five times more likely than those who have strong social ties, to die prematurely.

**FAIR SOCIETY HEALTHY LIVES,
PROFESSOR SIR MICHAEL MARMOT (2010)**

REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION

WHY FOCUS ON SOCIAL ISOLATION?

Anyone can experience loneliness and social isolation at any time of life. Social isolation is being separated from social or family contact, community involvement, or access to services. Individuals can be lonely but not isolated or isolated but not lonely. Many of the risk factors associated with social isolation are more prevalent among socially disadvantaged groups and can accumulate throughout life from childhood to adolescence and adulthood.

There are situations when we are particularly vulnerable to becoming socially isolated; being a new mother, children and young people experiencing bullying, people with long-term conditions such as mobility problems, hearing and sight loss, being unemployed, a carer or retired, living alone, being aged over 80, bereaved or living on a low income.

Nearly three in ten British adults say that they feel lonely at least some of the time, and more than three quarters of GPs said they see between one and five lonely people a day.

Social Isolation can be as harmful to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day. It increases the risk of premature death by 30 per cent, and leads to poor lifestyle behaviours including alcohol misuse, drug abuse, bulimia, weight gain, smoking and physical inactivity. Isolation is also linked to depression and suicide risk. Those who are socially isolated are at high risk of cardiovascular disease.

WHAT IMPACT CAN ARTS AND CULTURE HAVE ON REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION?

Positive social relationships and networks are vital for our wellbeing. They provide a sense of belonging and identity, encouraging and influencing healthy behaviours and providing social support to cope with life's challenges and changes.

Evidence supports the positive impact the arts can have on physical, mental and social wellbeing for everyone. Older people in particular are especially vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness.

76 per cent of older people say art and culture is important in making them feel happy; **57 per cent** say art and culture is important in helping them meet other people; and **60 per cent** say it is important in encouraging them to get out and about.

Dancing can improve cardiovascular health, strength, flexibility, balance and cognitive performance. The social and creative aspects of participating in the arts enhance overall wellbeing and reduces feelings of isolation.

REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT SOCIAL ISOLATION?

- There are some strong social networks and social support available in Hull. Almost half of adults surveyed had three or more close family members or friends living nearby. While 17 per cent had no-one, three-quarters of these lived with other adults, so overall only around four per cent of adults live alone with no close family or friends living nearby
- Almost nine out of ten adults had someone they could ask for help if they were ill in bed and only five per cent stated they would have no-one to ask
- In any serious crisis, 98 per cent said they would have someone to turn to for comfort and support
- Despite this, responses suggest that one in ten residents (as many as 26,000 people across the city) feel lonely and isolated from others all or most of the time.
- The number of people aged 65 and over is projected to grow at the fastest rate of any age group in every region of England. In Hull this age group is expected to see a 15 per cent increase (5,700 people) by 2024 and a 39 per cent increase (14,800 people) by 2034. This increase in the number of people aged 65 and over will mean that social isolation among older people in particular is likely to remain a significant challenge.

WHAT ARE WE ALREADY DOING?

- The complex relationship between social isolation and health means that tackling it must involve communities, voluntary groups, public services and businesses. Public Health England has outlined a range of evidence-based community-centred approaches to improve health and involve those at risk of social exclusion through activities such as volunteering, peer support, social activities and social network approaches such as 'timebanking.' Some of Hull's initiatives to combat loneliness and social isolation are described below:

Intergenerational Choir

NHS Hull CCG and Hull City Council collaborated on an innovative project to encourage old and young people from 14 local organisations including schools, voluntary groups and residential homes to come together in five inter-generational choirs, culminating in a mass showcase performance in Hull City Hall in March 2015.

The project brought old and young together to feel the health, wellbeing and social benefits of singing.

"To see young people and older people working together in that setting was absolutely brilliant".

"The event at the City Hall was incredible. It was obvious how much everyone had gained from the experience. It was uplifting to be a part of it and I am certain it has had a very positive impact on everyone involved."

HULL CCG CHAIR, DR DAN ROPER

"I love coming to sing because it helps with my breathing and I enjoy meeting new people and the children. It gets me out as I recently lost my husband.

PARTICIPANT

Freedom Road Creative Arts (FRCA)

Funding from the Health and Wellbeing Board gave FRCA an opportunity to engage with children and young people who might otherwise find it difficult to access creative activities. They are encouraged to sing, learn an instrument, create songs, interact with their peers and forge friendships. The workshops help to raise aspirations and confidence and empower young people.

FRCA are actively involved in preparing for Hull 2017 City of Culture with a view to extending the workshops across the city. Younger participants are keen to get involved in artistic events, whilst the older ones are excited about the prospect of volunteering.

Parent Peer Mentoring (Child Dynamix)

Child Dynamix is a local charity providing services for children, young people and families with a focus on social regeneration. Alongside peer mentoring the charity offers one-to-one and group support for a range of issues including social isolation. The organisation's accredited programme recruits, trains and supports parents to become volunteer peer mentors. During a pilot project working with 22 people, 14 reported an increase in their social networks and 17 reported an improvement in emotional wellbeing.



REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION

“It brings you out of yourself, it’s helpful to talk to another adult as there are only children in my house. I am less stressed and things are calmer at home.”

PARTICIPANT

Child Dynamix has been granted permission to use the Hull 2017 Community Brand and has appointed a youth and community worker as a UK City of Culture Champion to help inspire over-16s to think about volunteering.

Five volunteers, all recovered from addiction, run BriCWorks as a way to give back to the community that helped them. They say they want it to be a hub for everybody in Hull, not just those in recovery.

Zoe, 38, used to be socially isolated and long-term unemployed. She had low self-esteem and little confidence. She attended BRiCWorks via a supporting agency and became a volunteer. She received training to Level 2 Food Hygiene and has increased her confidence and self-esteem, enabling her to actively seek paid work.

Ray, 48, became isolated and withdrawn after 12 years of substance misuse left him without any support from his immediate family and no support network of friends. Ray is currently abstinent from illicit drugs and is developing his social support network. He says he has found a safe place that helps him maintain his positive behaviour.

BriCWorks community hub, cafe and Dry Bar

BriCWorks offers live music events, social activities and an alternative evening venue to people who choose not to drink alcohol. Above the bar and café, two additional floors house free-to-use community asset meeting rooms, an IT suite, art room and community radio station. Many free training sessions are offered including a Wellbeing through Creativity course.

The venue initially attracted people in recovery from addiction, offering a safe place to be around others, reducing isolation and loneliness. It offers support to people who may have problems with issues such as addiction, welfare benefits, housing, mental health or social isolation.

As it has grown in popularity, the venue is now used by community groups, families and individuals. The live music nights help to attract a younger crowd, including university students, who might otherwise be facing pressures to drink to excess.

TimeBanking

Hull and East Riding TimeBank builds social networks of people who give and receive support through contributing skills and practical help. For every hour’s help a member gives another, they receive one time credit which they can spend on receiving help from another member. Contributions may include providing transport, digging a garden, giving a massage, fixing a bike, setting up a wi-fi connection, hanging some wallpaper. Time credits are banked in the TimeBank using an online software package and a time broker matches up the giver and receiver. Weekly craft sessions are held in a community venue where members can create arts and crafts with materials provided and socialise.

“It is a great tool for bringing communities together and raising people’s community spirit. A way of getting people to give their time who wouldn’t normally volunteer as TimeBanking is so flexible.”

PARTICIPANT

REDUCING SOCIAL ISOLATION

WHAT WILL WE DO IN 2017?

The programme of activity in 2017 will encourage participation and connectedness with a particular focus on inclusion and targeting those who find activities harder to access.

2017: INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE

Everybody will have the opportunity to take part in 2017. During the spring of 2016, 21 City of Culture road shows across every part of the city attracted 10,000 visitors who wanted to discover how to be involved.

A specially created Community Brand gives community groups a direct route into City of Culture. They will be able to forge links with the cultural sector to raise their profile, reach new people and become a valued part of the 2017 year.

The Creative Communities Programme has provided grant funding to 60 different community projects to use arts and culture to improve health or reduce social isolation. More than 600 applications were submitted from organisations tackling issues including poor mental health, social isolation and dementia.

Events will take place right across the city, from central locations to the heart of communities and will be as inclusive and as accessible to as many people as possible.

A total of 63,000 pupils at mainstream and special schools will explore arts and culture in creative, inspiring ways through the Education Programme which will be brought to every student in the city.

CELEBRATING HULL AND CONNECTING PEOPLE

Celebrating what Hull has to offer and connecting people from different parts of the city with visitors and people from other cultures, will create a sense of community, civic pride and belonging which will make people feel less isolated and increase the likelihood they will stay active and involved beyond 2017.

Throughout the whole of 2017 there will be dozens of cultural events and activities involving a variety of artists and creative organisations and designed to bring people together, celebrate local communities and stimulate the creativity of people living in every neighbourhood across the city. This includes the Creative Communities Programme and Back to Ours, which will see lively and colourful shows staged right on residents' doorsteps. This groundbreaking festival includes comedy, music, circus, theatre, cabaret, dance and film at the heart of local communities, to create fun nights out, unmissable family shows and create lasting memories.

Sirius Academy West will take part in a site-specific promenade performance staged in Pickering Park, using multi-artforms to explore themes of freedom, poverty and social justice. Students will work with performance practitioners to develop their creative voices, tell their own stories and those of their communities, past and present.

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PROTECTING PUBLIC HEALTH

WHY IS PUBLIC PROTECTION IMPORTANT?

A crucial yet sometimes unrecognised factor in keeping people healthy and well is investment in public protection. This area encompasses a broad range of activity related to reducing risks to the public from environmental hazards, unsafe food, dangerous work practices, trading standards and licensing. Hull City Council's Public Protection team is a key part of the Council's Events Safety Advisory Group and has been working closely with the Culture Company throughout the preparation for 2017 to ensure planning and infrastructure is in place to facilitate 365 days of events with a safe, inclusive, appealing atmosphere, where health risks are identified and addressed.

HOW WILL PEOPLE BE PROTECTED?

Work within key areas of Public Protection will ensure people have opportunities to make healthy choices and be protected from situations which could negatively impact their wellbeing.

HEALTHY AND SAFE FOOD CHOICES

Events of all sizes across the city will attract a range of mobile food traders and existing food premises are likely to be busier than normal. Large-scale events may involve preparing and serving food for thousands of people from a single kitchen in a short space of time. Significant work will be required behind the scenes to ensure the relevant work is done by Environmental Health staff to reduce the risk from food borne infectious disease. Hull City Council and the Culture Company have committed to producing strict guidance for street food vendors and encouraging a choice of healthy food options.

EVENT SAFETY AND SALE OF SAFE GOODS

Each event will undergo a thorough risk assessment and a 38 point safety checklist. Large-scale public events can lead to problems with regard to the sale of counterfeit goods especially from mobile traders and our Trading Standards staff will have to be vigilant to minimise the risk of potentially dangerous goods.

NOISE AND DISTURBANCE

Work will take place ahead of events to manage any potential statutory nuisance issues from either activity taking place in existing areas, or the creation of temporary spaces or staging. These could include noise issues, and concerns about odours and light pollution.

ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO

A priority for 2017 is the promotion of responsible drinking, the reduction in harm caused by drinking too much and the protection of young people from drinking at an early age. By working with the Public Protection Licensing Section we will ensure that all operators are fully compliant with the licensing objectives concerning the sale of liquor and will encourage the adoption of good practices. We are also working with event planners to explore ways to create an inclusive family atmosphere at all events, make non-alcoholic drinks readily available, and reduce the potential of harm from drinking too much. Plans under discussion include training volunteers in appropriate alcohol harm reduction and other relevant health issues. In addition to sensible drinking, every effort is being made to promote smoke-free areas particularly for family events, limit the availability of illicit tobacco and ensure retailers comply with legislation on the sale and visibility of tobacco products.

LEGACY

"This is a defining moment for culture in Hull. On the eve of the City of Culture year, we can look back with pride at our recent achievements and look forward to 2017 as a reward for our success: a pivotal point in our history. Hosting the UK City of Culture is just the start, and how we capitalize on this opportunity will dictate how successful we will be in delivering a lasting and sustainable legacy".

JON PYWELL - CITY CULTURE AND PLACE MANAGER, AND CITY LEAD (UK CITY OF CULTURE)

Photo © Tom Arran

"A big ambition is that every person living in Hull will be affected by the experience of this city being UK City of Culture. Not just because it will put the city in the national spotlight, but because it will build on Hull's self-evident creativity, its independent spirit and its sense of pride. Events will be taking place in every neighbourhood to ensure as many people living in Hull have the opportunity to experience and participate. In doing so, we hope it will create a long-lasting legacy of memory and build this city's confidence, for confident cities can do what they like."

Martin Green, CEO and Director, Hull UK City of Culture 2017

WHY IS LEGACY IMPORTANT?

Culture should enrich lives, create successful communities, improve reputation and create thriving cultural institutions. Everyone should have the chance to experience culture, participate in it, create it and see their lives transformed by it. (Culture White Paper 2016)

The legacy of Hull's year as City of Culture is crucial. What happens after 2017 is arguably more important than what takes place during our year.

The activities and impact of the year will aid Hull in boosting regeneration as well as economic, cultural and health aspirations for the city.

The New Cultural Strategy for Hull, 2016-2026 plots a course for culture beyond 2017, and through to 2026. Plans adopted now will be integral to the city's success by supporting the legacy of the City of Culture as well as the development of cultural activity.

The strategy recognizes and builds on the ambitions for health and wellbeing discussed within this report; creating a city where participation in physical and creative activity is booming, social isolation is reduced and mental wellbeing enhanced.

A VOLUNTEERING REVOLUTION

As discussed in the Good Mental Wellbeing chapter of this document, Hull already has an impressive number of active volunteers.

Hull's first ever Voluntary, Community, Social Enterprise (VCSE) strategy was launched in October 2016. Its vision is for a recognised, diverse, sustainable and resilient VCSE Sector for Hull. The strategy has the potential to boost partnership working, helping arts and cultural providers get involved in bidding for public service contracts to address specific health and social challenges

USING EVALUATION AND RESEARCH TO EVIDENCE IMPACT AND INFORM LEGACY

The cultural programme for 2017 presents a unique opportunity to build up a local evidence base. Evaluation of arts and culture projects and their impact on mental wellbeing must combine quantitative methods to assess the extent of any change associated with arts participation, with qualitative research methods to understand how and in what contexts this change occurs.

Robust evaluation and research, with academic collaboration from the University of Hull via a PhD studentship, has the potential to leave a legacy of improved understanding and insight into how this arts and cultural programme might impact on health. Better evaluation may add to the overall evidence base, (using recommended methodology as outlined in the

PHE report Arts for health and wellbeing - An evaluation framework) and answer the following questions:

1. What is the perceived and real impact of Hull 2017 on individuals, their families and communities in terms of health, social isolation and mental wellbeing?
2. What impact does Hull 2017 have on community cohesion and social connectedness, in particular with regards to age?
3. What can we discover about access and participation in arts and culture in terms of motivation, ability and barriers?

Working with the Culture Company to evaluate what works, and why, will allow partners to better understand and implement creative solutions to health and wellbeing issues. This will also help to develop evidence on how different types of intervention can have an impact on social outcomes. Together with more widespread use of the Social Value Act, this will encourage arts and cultural commissioning to deliver wellbeing outcomes.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

If we can maximise the impact of 2017 on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities, we can then use this to build on other strategies across Public Health and Adult Social Care, with the aim of increasing community resilience. There is a unique opportunity to ultimately reduce demand on local statutory services.

IN CONCLUSION

The City of Culture year should be viewed as a unique opportunity to 'kick start' long-term change and build a lasting legacy. Our aim is for the health legacy to represent a successful transition between the transformational impact of hosting the UK City of Culture in 2017 and using culture to address Hull's long term health and wellbeing challenges. In preparing to host City of Culture 2017, the city has already demonstrated the power of culture in increasing participation and engagement.

By 2026 Hull could be a city that has achieved the ambitious vision as set out in the New Cultural Strategy; where all events, not only arts and culture, place an emphasis on the Five Ways to Wellbeing. There is a chance to embed healthy culture into every public sector activity and every Workplace Wellbeing Charter, ensuring all businesses and organisations understand, embrace and prioritise the impact of culture on health.

This surely would be a Legacy to be proud of.



RECOMMENDATIONS

My recommendations this year focus on ensuring that as a city we fully capitalize on the huge opportunity presented by Hull's year as UK City of Culture 2017 to make a lasting impact on the health and wellbeing of the city through culture and the arts.

My recommendations and challenge to all of us working in Hull is:

Common Understanding of the impact of arts and culture

That Hull City Council, together with the local statutory health and social care sectors, the cultural sector and the research community use Hull's year as UK City of Culture 2017 as a springboard for developing a deeper common understanding of how public engagement in arts and culture can contribute to physical and mental health, emotional wellbeing, community resilience, health maintenance and health promotion.

The development of a common approach to Evaluation and Research into the role of culture and the arts in contributing to wellbeing has the potential to help to tackle some of the deep-rooted and complex challenges in Hull while also addressing shortcomings of the limited research already reported on this topic.

Systematic use of Health Impact Assessments (HIAs)

That HIAs continue to be used systematically across the Council for all large future strategies and projects.

The initial HIA that Public Health carried out on plans for Hull as UK City of Culture had a major influence in substantially shifting the priorities of the Culture Company to embed health and wellbeing as a key objective of the 2017 programme. This demonstrates what an important impact HIAs can have on shaping strategies.

Physical Activity

That the City of Culture leads to an increasingly diverse and accessible programme of physical activity during 2017 and beyond.

Any new local strategic plan to improve physical activity in Hull should focus on activities and events that are diverse, broad ranging, unique and innovative which make the most of our existing parks and open spaces, and encourage active transport like walking and cycling wherever possible.



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Social isolation

That focus and investment is maintained in reducing Social Isolation and the negative consequences it has across the life course.

We will continue to measure and monitor the effectiveness of interventions to help ensure that levels of reported social isolation reduce over time. We will encourage better connections between public, voluntary and community sectors on the ground by building on what we have in terms of community assets, using existing and new volunteers more and to build on projects that work such as intergenerational peer mentoring. We will make more of physical spaces and assets like community centres, by supporting and promoting their best use.

Volunteering

Support 2017 Volunteers who want to build on their experience and progress to further volunteering or employment beyond the City of Culture year.

This will ensure that their enthusiasm, skills and expertise can be used to bolster volunteering activity across the city and build capacity within VCS organisations, in particular those that work across health or social care.

Commissioning

That the health and social care sector should seize any opportunity, post 2017, to spread public health messages that encourage public engagement in the creative arts as a route to achieving health and wellbeing goals.

We have an opportunity to learn from others elsewhere in the UK, where local commissioning has incorporated arts and cultural provision aimed at addressing specific health and wellbeing issues.

Legacy

That the legacy planning incorporates those elements of the new VCSE Strategy that will help to have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of people in our city.

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Photo © Tom Arran



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A wealth of information on the health and wellbeing of Hull's residents can be found in our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on our Public Health website www.hullpublichealth.org



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GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK

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