



department for  
**culture, media  
and sport**

## Evaluation of the Cultural Pathfinder Programme

Cultural Evaluation and Research Unit (CERU) and

International Cultural Planning and Policy Unit (ICPPU)

De Montfort University, Leicester



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improving  
the quality  
of life for all

## Acknowledgements

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The authors note that the views expressed in this report are their own and not necessarily those of the DCMS or the LGA.

## Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of the results of the Cultural Pathfinder programme. It presents a series of findings of success factors and challenges that differing local authorities faced in testing their cultural aspirations within Government cross cutting agendas – the Shared Priorities.

This report provides learning for the stakeholders about the benefits of the adaptability of cultural practices to relate to social, economic and quality of life agendas.

The Cultural Pathfinder programme aims to maximise culture's contribution to the Government and Local Government's Shared Priorities of: raising standards in schools; improving the quality of local environments and of life for young people, families at risk and older people; promoting healthier, safer and stronger communities; meeting transport needs, and fostering local economic vitality.

In April 2005 thirteen local authorities in England – located in different regions in the country and operating in a variety of cultural forms and policy areas - embarked on a pilot two-year programme, which was jointly initiated by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and by the Local Government Association. The aim of the programme was to highlight innovation, learning and transferability in using cultural activities to support the work of partnerships in different Shared Priority areas.

The thirteen local authorities and the twelve Cultural Pathfinders projects are:

Birmingham City Council (Leaps and Bounds project)  
Canterbury City Council (At the Heart and Taking Part)  
Hampshire County Council (Discovery Centre programme: regenerating libraries and transforming communities)  
Herefordshire Council (Enabling creative industries)  
Liverpool Culture Company and Liverpool City Council (It's not OK! Violence prevention education programme)  
Manchester City Council (Museums for changing lives; working together to raise standards)  
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (Culture for Keeps: encouraging participation)  
Sheffield City Council (Creative Futures: Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration)  
Somerset County Council (Somerset Creative Industries Development agency)  
Spelthorne Borough Council (The Sunbury Cross public art project)  
Suffolk County Council (Realising the cultural and heritage dividend)  
North and South Tyneside Councils (Cultural regeneration through coastal partnership).

This report of the Cultural Pathfinders is organised in six main chapters addressing: the role of culture as a catalyst; the importance of collaboration and advocacy; leadership and skills; evidencing the results; the benefits of Cultural Pathfinder status; and the power of the unexpected.

The **Conclusions** highlight the importance of crosscutting approaches to both cultural policy and practice, and the innovative nature of much of the work carried out by the Cultural Pathfinder authorities, which is often closely related to the adoption of integrated practices; the issue of political advocacy; a range of issues around the evaluation of the multifarious impacts of the Cultural Pathfinders, and about the success, or otherwise, of the projects. Lastly, some considerations are made on the importance of Pathfinder status, and on the future of the programme.

The report, in short, has uncovered plenty of evidence that Pathfinder status worked as an effective catalyst for learning, advocacy and raising awareness about the role of culture in furthering the strategic goals of local authorities.

The following key points are noted:

- when operating an integrated and cross-cutting approach to both cultural policy and practice, sport and culture can bring real benefits to local authorities in addressing community priorities and needs;
- working strategically in partnership is key to delivering outcomes but without an effective communication and advocacy strategy partners do still not necessarily recognise the benefits. Targeting the message at the policy level has generated success. This has highlighted a need to provide support and improve understanding and competency at every level;
- leadership is critical and needs developing. Projects operate at both the macro policy/national and the micro delivery/partnership levels. Both need to develop in parallel;
- providing evidence for advocacy and to attract investment requires good baseline information and consistent processes in evaluation methodologies at local and national levels.

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## Section 1 Introduction

Over the last 10 years culture has risen up the UK's public policy agenda. The Cultural Pathfinder Programme aimed to maximise culture's contribution to the Shared Priorities of: raising standards in schools; improving the quality of local environments and of life for young people, families at risk and older people; promoting healthier, safer and stronger communities; meeting transport needs, and fostering local economic vitality.

In April 2005 thirteen local authorities in England – located in different regions in the country and operating in a variety of cultural forms and policy areas - embarked on a pilot two-year programme, which was jointly initiated by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and by the Local Government Association (LGA). The aim of the programme was to highlight innovation, learning and transferability in using cultural activities to support the work of partnerships in the Shared Priority area.

The thirteen local authorities and the twelve Cultural Pathfinders projects were:

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The programme is an innovative exercise in holistic or joined up government. It starts from the assumption that cultural activities have positive impacts across a wide range of policy areas and seeks to test a range of approaches to enhance these impacts. The Cultural Pathfinders are a further step in a long term process of the integration of culture into wider public policy agendas, following the responsibility assigned to local authorities by the Local Government Act 2000 to promote the economic, social and environmental well being of their areas.

Successive steps have included: the development of Local Cultural Strategies; the importance given to cultural provision in *A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal: A National Strategy Action Plan* (2001); the emphasis on local well-being in the LGA document *Powering Up: making the most of well-being* (2003); the development of a new spatial planning system which takes cultural considerations more into account; and the emergence of a new framework for the assessment of the

performance of local authorities, the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA), in which culture and leisure services are measured through the cultural services assessment, also known as the 'culture block'.

The Cultural Pathfinder programme is an important step in providing evidence of the benefits of moving away from the compensatory logic of traditional arts policy to a more 'productive' form of cultural development, where funding is understood as investment in creativity and in addressing the problems and potential of local communities. Culture's special and often difficult association with policy resides in its relationship to civil society. In both historical and contemporary terms, culture is about citizen-formation and about conduct and affiliation, identity and sense of place: 'folk, work and place', as Scottish interdisciplinary thinker Patrick Geddes once put it.

Culture, moreover, is an important structure for democracy, autonomy and self-expression. Culture is also about social exclusion and inclusion. We know these things both tacitly and theoretically although evidence of impacts at individual and social level has often failed to convince key policymakers (especially at local level). The Pathfinders' evaluation represents a key attempt to demonstrate that by placing culture at the centre of local policy making and delivery, benefits can be accrued in a number of different spheres.

There is indeed growing evidence of the links between cultural participation, including sports, and the development of social capital (bonds and networks of trust and reciprocity) in communities. For example, the seminal studies published in the mid 90's by Comedia Consultancy and, more recently, the DCMS policy document *Building on Pat 10*, amongst others.<sup>1</sup>

In particular, connections have been established between a range of forms of cultural participation and:

- a) civic participation and volunteering rates;
- b) improved literacy, writing and numeracy skills;
- c) increased skills in the key competencies of problem solving, planning and organising, communication, and working with others; and
- d) sustainable and innovative economic development.

Our report on the Cultural Pathfinder programme provides some important additional evidence of the existence and significance of these positive impacts of participation in cultural activities.

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<sup>1</sup> DCMS, 2001, *Building on Pat 10: Progress Report on Social Inclusion*

Dwelly, Tim, 2001, *Creative Regeneration - lessons from ten community arts projects*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, UK

Landry, Charles, et al., 1996, *The Art of Regeneration: Urban Renewal Through Cultural Activity*, Comedia, Stroud: UK

Matarasso, Francois, 1997, *Use or Ornament: The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts*, Comedia, Stroud: UK

Shaw, Phyllida, 2001, *Creative Connections: Business and the arts working together to create a more inclusive society*, Arts and Business, UK

Walker, Chris et al, 2002, *Reggae to Rachmaninoff: How and why people participate in arts and culture*, The Urban Institute, USA

One of the influences on our approach is the idea of 'cultural planning', which has been discussed since the early '90s in North America, Australia and Europe, as a possible alternative to both cultural policy-led urban regeneration strategies and traditional cultural policies. Unlike traditional cultural policies - which are still mainly based on aesthetic definitions of 'culture' as 'art' - cultural planning adopts as its basis a broad definition of 'cultural resources', which consists of:

arts and media activities and institutions; the cultures of youth, ethnic minorities and other 'communities of interest'; the heritage, both tangible and intangible; local and external perceptions of a place, as expressed in jokes, songs, literature, myths, tourist guides, media coverage and conventional wisdom; the natural and built environment, including parks and other public and open spaces; sports, play and recreation; the diversity and quality of leisure, cultural, eating, drinking and entertainment facilities and activities; the repertoire of local products and skills in the crafts, manufacturing and services.

While traditional cultural policies tend to take a sectoral focus - e.g. policies for the development of theatre, dance, literature, the crafts and other cultural forms - cultural planning adopts a territorial remit.

Its purpose is to see how the pool of cultural resources identified above can contribute to the integrated development of a place, whether a neighbourhood, a city or a region. By placing cultural resources at the centre of the table of policy-making, two-way relationships can be established between these resources and any type of public policy - in fields ranging from economic development to housing, health, education, social services, tourism, urban planning, architecture, townscape design, and cultural policy itself.

Cultural planning cuts across the divides between the public, private and voluntary sectors, different institutional concerns, types of knowledge and professional disciplines. In addition, cultural planning would encourage innovation in cultural production, for example through interculturalism, co-operation between artists and scientists and crossovers between different cultural forms. It is also important to clarify that cultural planning is not intended as 'the planning of culture' - an impossible, undesirable and dangerous undertaking - but rather as a culturally sensitive approach to urban and rural planning and policy.

The Pathfinder projects have often demanded new models of partnership and joined up working between central and local government, across local government departments and between local government, non-departmental public bodies and the voluntary and private sectors. They also provide an opportunity to highlight good practice and learn about the role culture plays in other thematic agendas, such as health, social cohesion, community safety and education.

Our main research methodology can be broken down into 7 stages:

1. meeting with the Steering Group – drawn from the LGA, IDeA and DCMS;
2. collation of the baseline information from the 12 projects, and 5 non-Pathfinder authorities (3 Beacon status and 2 non-Beacon status) and preparation of a wider literature review on relevant policy initiatives;

3. analysis of the interim evaluation reports utilising the format of the Evaluation Framework undertaken by the 12 Pathfinder projects, and subsequent reports from each of the projects;
4. consultation with the Steering Group on the findings of the desk research and its implications for the research programme;
5. semi-structured interviews with key players within each Pathfinder and non-Pathfinder;
6. feedback and consultation meeting with the Steering Group and Pathfinder projects to review the findings; and
7. preparation of final report and PowerPoint presentation.

In establishing the methodology, we agreed with the Steering Group that our approach had to be iterative and constructivist in nature in order to be fully responsive to the findings on all three aspects of desk research, baseline information and the interviews with the participating authorities. We found quickly that this constructivist approach supports the ambition for the Pathfinder to be a truly learning experience. Early in the report stages we found that the evaluation framework established by the Pathfinders was being used inconsistently across the projects.

Given that the Pathfinder projects are in effect 'action research' based, we felt it important to allow for the unexpected in addressing the outcomes of the projects leading to the final section in this report, Meeting the Unexpected. These unexpected results support the view that the approaches developed by some of the Pathfinders reflect and endorse a cultural planning emphasis. The report structure reflects something of the process we have engaged in, with the outline being endorsed by the Steering Group at our regular meetings.

The chief aim of the report has been to produce evidence to reach the six goals of the project, which DCMS defined as the need to identify and discuss:

1. critical success factors that enable cultural services to meet the Shared Priorities and Local Area Agreements (LAAs) (especially those that may be transferable to other local authorities);
2. barriers to success and strategies that have been successful in overcoming these;
3. lessons learned by the Pathfinders in collecting and using empirical evidence of outcomes achieved;
4. techniques for measuring outcomes and related performance management tools;
5. positive and successful experiences in using culture in sustainable community strategies and LAAs; and
6. good practice in partnership working, citizen engagement and links to the corporate centre of local government.

Our report is thus organised in seven sections.

1. **'Culture works!'**, which highlights those cases in which the Pathfinder has acted as a catalyst in advocating the role of culture across a range of different policy agendas, services and organisations, including youth services, economic development, education and physical planning.

2. **'Connecting and communicating'**, which deals with issues of collaborative working, and on connections at different levels: local, sub-regional, regional and national. The chapter also discusses how the Pathfinders have tried to improve their connections with local politicians, and how their use of advocacy and communication strategies have impacted on the understanding or the role and value of culture.
3. **'Leaders matter'**, which concentrates on the role of individual and collective leadership, risk taking and vision in the Pathfinder projects.
4. **'Prove it'**, which considers the methods of evaluation Pathfinders have piloted and developed and highlights what has proved successful in gaining leverage and support.
5. **'Was it worth it?'**, which explores the value of the Pathfinder designation in gaining support from elected members and senior management; influencing strategic objectives locally and regionally; the support of potential partners, users and potential users; implementing new ways of working with culture, and leveraging funding and resources. The findings derived from our study of Pathfinder authorities are then compared with a sample of non-Pathfinder councils, in an effort to verify the nature of the benefits of Pathfinder status.
6. **'Meeting the unexpected'**, which analyses unexpected outcomes, changes in structures and attitudes/ perceptions, and factors for the success or failure of the projects.
7. **Conclusions**

Lastly, like any piece of social research, our evaluation of the Cultural Pathfinders has experienced certain difficulties. It has taken place at a problematic time, when many of the projects have not been completed and/or have not been evaluated at the local level. Moreover, Local Area Agreements are currently being developed, and many local authorities don't yet know whether they have been successful in getting culture included.

Where quantitative evidence was produced, covering areas such as participation and satisfaction, the data across the Pathfinders was not comparable because of the diverse nature and scale of the projects, and has thus been excluded in this report. We have, however, considered data collection methodologies covering: value for money, impact, participation and satisfaction, the four areas covered by the evaluation framework.

## Section 2 Culture works!

The Culture works! section deals with these issues by showing how in those cases in which there is an 'explicit' recognition of the value of culture in local strategic plans there is also better partnership work, a tendency to be less risk averse and more effective in the delivery of services, although some Pathfinders have illustrated an awareness of culture that has not yet been written into these plans.

Culture works! highlights those cases in which the Pathfinder has acted as a 'catalyst' for advocacy, awareness raising and learning about the value of culture and in particular for those local authorities' officers and staff that had not previously had the opportunity (nor the time) to engage in such joined up work.

This section also shows how the establishment of new forms of co-operation across a variety of services and organisations (e.g. youth services and culture, or, community development culture and planning) has, in some cases, led to a process of 'learning by doing' by local stakeholders (including members) which will open the way to embedding culture firmly in local development in the future.

Culture in its widest sense is about what matters to people and communities. It is about relationships, shared memories and experiences, identity, history and a sense of place. We also know from evidence produced over the past fifteen years in the UK and elsewhere, that culture can make a significant contribution to local economic development, tourism, social cohesion and identity.

This is why one of the key aims of the Pathfinder programme was to provide positive and successful examples of how culture can contribute to sustainable communities and economic development. Evidence of such positive impacts is emerging from each Pathfinder (and is highlighted throughout this report). What is equally evident is the low level of awareness of such impacts and the value attached to culture among key players within local authorities. In some cases, what seems to be emerging is a degree of willingness among key strategic partners to recognise that by backing cultural projects they are also making an investment in community cohesion, quality of life and economic development.

A shift in perception has taken place in **Sheffield** where the integration of the neighbourhood approach adopted in the SOAR Pathfinder programme area within the city's cultural strategy provides a clear link to the roll out of a cultural dimension within Housing Market Renewal. This, in turn, will contribute to positive regeneration and shifts in perceptions of the area, and of the role of cultural activities and their value across the city. Although not explicitly formalised, this process of joining the cultural to the housing dimension is providing important lessons to other key local stakeholders.

Example of such learning is evident in the explicit acknowledgement of the Cultural Pathfinder made in the new cultural strategy for the city (adopted in 2006) which gives some emphasis to neighbourhood development and regeneration with a stronger cultural dimension. Overall, culture is now on the agenda and the Cultural Pathfinder has helped to link locally generated work to national policy imperatives with some support from local members.

In addition, the appointment of a new Director of Culture has had an impact on both the Cultural Pathfinder (by securing investment to support Eventus to undertake the local evaluation of the programme), and on ensuring that cultural matters are addressed within the LAA Board – a point of ongoing and future development.

However, even though SOAR has now taken on a leadership role by coordination of the Cultural Strategy Steering Group (CSSG) and this process continues with the ongoing support of networked partners, culture is still a difficult word for some members for whom connections to cultural activities are not always obvious.

In **Herefordshire**, it was recognised by the Economic Regeneration Officer that although there was no clear evidence that the Creative Industries project had in itself greatly improved the economic vitality of the County, i.e. the development of earnings of the participants on the scheme had not been particularly significant, there had nevertheless been an improvement in the image of Herefordshire both within and outside the county which could be attributed partly, at least, to the project. Evidence of improved perception is contained in the answers given to a survey run by the Council among newcomers about the reasons for choosing to settle in the County with the ‘creative feel of the place’ emerging as a key factor in the decision to settle in Herefordshire.

In addition, the programme also managed to attract more arts and crafts people to the county to work/live and to attract more tourists, making Herefordshire the place to come for arts and crafts.

Culture has really been embraced in **North and South Tyneside**. In South Tyneside, for example, it is deeply embedded in the Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement to the extent that it is not only a cross cutting theme in each of the four main themes – Children, Community Safety, Health and Economy but also has a chapter to itself.

*"South Tyneside decided when they were doing their LAA that they were going to retain their Community Strategy themes and not just put them into the four blocks which most LAAs fit into.... They said 'no we're going to have a fifth and that's going to be culture'. I mean, they've worked very hard to actually demonstrate how culture impacted on the other four, which is a really interesting approach....and that's something we fed back to them. They were keen to take that on and embrace in terms of the fresh process."*

The **Leaps and Bounds** project has had a major impact on the operation of Connexions and the Youth Services and indeed cultural services in the Black Country authorities and the way they approach dealing with ‘at risk’ young people. The project involved three strands working in harmony: Youth at Risk workshops and goal setting with the young people; arts input both in terms of general arts in phase 1 and more significantly the ballet, led by Birmingham Royal Ballet (BRB) in phase 2, which always had to be a 5 star experience; and, personal development through the use of life coaches and the dedicated officers from each of the participating local authorities.

*"You know if you just simply take young people from youth services and you try and give them collective opportunities and try to get them back into education you can tell pretty well what your success rate is going to be and it isn't very high. I know that, because we've got all the statistics."*

*"What I can show is that the combination of those three things - the life coach and someone taking an ongoing interest, the initial Youth at Risk workshop methodology and the creative bits, the arts, have a bonding effect that caused an unusually high percentage of those young people to find a positive route on. So they've either gone into education and stayed there or planned other routes, or they've gone to things that are connected with the arts."*

Here again, as in **Sheffield**, our evaluation shows that perhaps it wasn't just cultural activities alone (i.e. ballet) that achieved this step change but a combination of arts, Youth at Risk methods and personal support and development, which were very different from the 'softly softly' methods previously employed by the traditional agencies tasked to tackle this particular issue.

Though this joined up approach has delivered innovative results and culture is increasingly being used in **Birmingham** across different children's agendas, this success owes probably more to the *Every Child Matters* programme rather than the Pathfinder per se (and by extension to participatory arts projects). In particular, though culture is embedded in the current community strategy, this strategy was based on a long term vision starting in 2002. Although Birmingham are currently writing a new Cultural Strategy much of the emphasis of their work over the last year has been on children and young people in line with *Every Child Matters* and the emphasis therefore has been on this area. In addition, they have produced a Young People in the Arts strategy, which is part of the Young People's Plan, in the Local Area Agreement. (LAA). Here the Pathfinder has been influential.

The **Leaps and Bounds** project had a profound effect in changing the mindset of councillors and members of the LSP in Dudley, one of the partner local authorities. The Chief Executive of Dudley Borough Council believes that the Leaps and Bounds project has demonstrated the spin off benefits of culture across different council agendas.

*"I've got a number of members - most of the cabinet and the Leader of the Council - who now see a real value in this type of project and they probably didn't before. I've got a group of corporate directors who meet every week as a board and still they're receiving items about Leaps and Bounds. And it's not that it only benefited the Director who is responsible for Leisure Services, it benefited environmental services, it benefited Children's Services, it benefited different services and so they're all taking an interest."*

In **Manchester** the Pathfinder programme has been integrated into the planning and priorities of Manchester Education Partnership (MEP) which is now part of Children's Services. In particular, a two-way learning partnership has been created as teachers have now become very creative and technically competent and museum and gallery staff are enhancing their professionalism to match. The Pathfinder has also helped

teachers to change the way they plan and deliver lessons by integrating museums and galleries into their work as a creative resource.

Overall, the Pathfinder has influenced future work at MEP – Gill Hunter, Primary Strategy Manager, had never encountered the DCMS before in her professional practice, but this project has made MEP look at a wider context for children and joining up the ends of different priorities.

*“How do you know you like pears if you have only eaten apples? Just because teachers want this, that’s where they are coming from, they aren’t actually aware of all the other things that can happen out there.”*

The Cultural Pathfinder in **Suffolk** has used a variety of existing and new projects to highlight the ways that culture can impact on outcomes across the LAA blocks, particularly around the ‘prevention’ agenda in health and crime, for example. These exemplar projects have been supplemented by a communications strategy that has involved presentations at a number of high profile conferences and events ranging from the Suffolk Strategic Partnership Board (May 05) to the LGA Cultural Conference (March 06).

In Suffolk, overall, the profile of culture has been raised and the result is that staff involved in Children and Young People, Adult and Community Services and the LAA are more aware of where culture can help them fulfil their objectives. Again, this is not to say that culture 'is' at the heart of the LAA agenda, but simply to say that learning has been disseminated, awareness raised, evidence produced so that the ground has been prepared for culture to occupy a key position in the future.

Strong evidence of a higher status of culture and of joined up thinking is coming from the **Somerset** Pathfinder. The work to progress consideration of potential alternative models of service delivery which would improve and embed arts and creative industries development has led to a strengthened relationship between the County Council and the five Districts which in turn has enabled those authorities to use the Pathfinder to deal with issues such as the decrease in funding for the arts. For example, two of the four Arts Development Officer jobs that were at risk within the District Councils before the start of the Pathfinder have been reconfirmed. Similarly there has been a strengthening of the relationship with ACE which has enabled a joint approach to the refocusing of priorities. Somerset Arts Promoters – an organisation which represents 16 different private/not-for-profit service deliverers in the arts and creative industries sector - has been very much involved with this partnership approach to help ensure the connection between strategic countywide planning and local delivery.

Somerset County Council has taken the lead in relaunching the Cultural Forum Executive as the key strategic stakeholder group. The Chair of this Group is also a member of the Somerset Strategic Partnership (SSP) Forum, thereby providing an opportunity for the link between Culture and the implementation of the Community Strategy and LAA to be made. The Executive includes portfolio holders as well as representatives from Somerset Arts Promoters and all of the key cultural sectors.

Some of the research done leading up to the proposal for the Pathfinder (under the Creative Industries' Agency theme) has helped to make the case for culture within economic development. Now the creative industries are written into the Economic

Strategy and the economic block of the LAA as an emerging priority. This, in turn, has increased the profile of the creative economy at regional level.

Another indicator of the change of status of culture in Somerset is that the Chair of the Cultural Forum Executive (the Somerset portfolio holder for Adult and Community services and Deputy Leader of the Council) has, together with other members of the Executive given a presentation to the Sub regional Strategic Partnership (SSP) about the role of Culture in relation to the Community Strategy and LAA. This will include examples of how the work on the Cultural Pathfinder is supporting the targets within the economic development block as well as illustrating how culture also underpins most of the other LAA themes/blocks. This will be the first time such culture-based topic has been presented to the partnership and coincides with the work that has just started on refreshing the community strategy and LAA.

*"We would probably not have got on the SSP's agenda had it not been for the Pathfinder."*

On the negative side, in Somerset, culture and arts development is not, as yet, prioritised in the LAA, except as a means to deliver discrete 'functional' priorities. This means that arts outputs are not, as yet, tied back into LAA priorities and evaluation. In addition, there are still some issues about aligning the County Council's overall strategic priorities with programming and delivery (by the Districts and organisations on the ground).

*"The problem seems to be that what is still missing here is the hard evidence that culture, and in particular the creative industries, have an impact at local level on social issues."*

In **Richmond**, a *Culture for Keeps* Steering Group meets regularly to monitor activity, and the evaluation, which has been undertaken over two years by an independent consultant. The project including the development of a *Culture for Keeps* card allowing free access to children looked after to all sports and recreation centres within the Borough and an 'entitlement statement' which outlines the children and young people's entitlement to be supported and enabled to access cultural activities. The project wanted to build on the concept of 'corporate parenting' across the Borough and raise awareness amongst staff within Education and Children's services of the specific needs of looked after children and the value of their engagement in positive cultural activities. This has enabled partner agencies, from the voluntary and private sectors, to develop innovative services to meet the needs of this group of children and young people.

As an innovative project, the London Borough of Richmond has created a DVD, *Culture for Keeps: The Story So Far*, which they hope will be useful to other local authorities and is proposing a DVD about the programme to be devised, managed and filmed by young people.

Impacts of this magnitude are bound to impress members and key strategic stakeholders and (with time) put participatory arts projects on the agenda of community development and social exclusion. What is emerging from our evaluation is that Cultural Services have developed a clearer understanding of the barriers that prevent looked after children from participating in and benefiting from cultural activity

while Social Services have developed a better understanding of the widespread benefits that culture can offer. From a point of view of service delivery, there is learning taking place about sharing resources and synergies between education and learning and the arts.

Whether the evidence produced by the Pathfinder is enough to convince service providers to roll out and fund a full programme of cultural activity to help encourage participation and engagement of looked after children in the future is as yet unclear.

It is clear from other areas, including Sheffield that the scale of relationship is important for locally elected members when they see direct benefits to individuals in their wards as a result of participation in a cultural project or event. Culture works at a personal one-to-one scale, as well as at a policy level scale, addressing the needs of whole communities, cities and regions.

In **Spelthorne**, the process of involving young children at risk in the design and implementation of murals in (derelict) public spaces has acted as a catalyst for showcasing the role of culture/art in urban planning and regeneration.

At the same time, disaffected social groups feel they have learned new skills through participation in arts projects and have become advocates for more involvement in arts/culture in general.

*"I don't want to get into trouble anymore so I'm waiting for the workshops so I can get working on my own style."*

This kind of evidence has also helped to improve the status of culture in community strategies. Now, the local agencies involved in crime prevention as well as the Highways department and the planners are much more supportive and can see the difference between a top down, 'hit and miss' decision making process and one that focuses on a specific need and target.

Following the success of the Pathfinder, Spelthorne Borough Council (SBC) is continuing its partnership with Surrey Youth Development Service and artists Signal Project Ltd to roll out the work to other areas of the Borough.

*"We at Surrey Youth Development Service were very proud to have this group of young people demonstrating their artistic talents on what has turned out to be a very rewarding project."*

Community buildings are to be targeted as well as youth centres and park activities. SBC will also continue the development of a Community Arts partnership with HMP Bronzefield to create more mosaic work for the community through signage and planters as well as researching other areas in need within Spelthorne. SBC intend to use the evaluation of the Cultural Pathfinders scheme and the best practice learned from other Pathfinders to inform the new Leisure and Culture Strategy and the Community Action Plan. In addition, they are hoping to raise the profile of culture within the county (and the work done during the Pathfinder) through the widespread profiling of Surrey Arts Partnership.

One tangible by-product of the success of the *Aerosol* projects developed within Sunbury Cross is the creation by SBC of a document (a guide) on 'How to Run an *Aerosol* Mural Project with Young People.'

This document is now available for other Local Authorities and Police Officers to use as a template when creating their own projects.

In **Hampshire** the success of the Gosport Discovery Centre Pathfinder has acted as a key catalyst, in conjunction with other local improvements to the cultural services for advocacy with political leaders, potential partners and stakeholders. It has played a key part in raising awareness and learning about the contribution that the work of the Recreation and Heritage department, i.e. culture, can make in achieving other local priorities and policy objectives and helped to open doors to working in partnership in other areas of cultural provision, helped to achieve higher investment and a higher status.

Among the success factors of the Gosport Discovery Centre there has been a 40% increase in visits to the centre, and an increase in borrowing activity reaffirming the key role of the library with books still the primary reason for visiting the Centre. There is a positive perception expressed by users and non-users of the value of the Discovery Centre, as a place where learning is accessible to all sectors of the community and many appear to have overcome previous negative perceptions of libraries.

Hampshire has pursued the Discovery Centre development programme alongside other local cultural initiatives and involvement in discussions about the future role of libraries at both a local and national level, including strong support for the inclusion of a culture block in CPA. Although CPA now has a finite life, Hampshire believes the debate these innovative programmes such as the Discovery Centres has stimulated, has played a key role in raising the recognition of the contribution of culture across the political agendas.

At a local level the quantitative evidence produced through user surveys has helped the Council Leader to feel more positive about the role of culture in tackling some of the local priority issues of social deprivation and educational disadvantage. The Council as a result has committed financial support to the Discovery Centre and library refurbishment programme.

It is felt that the positive results shown in the development of Gosport Discovery Centre will help to make a much stronger case for a more central role for culture in the new LAA, and especially for the effectiveness of joined-up service delivery whether with Adult or Children's services (internal) or external partners. It is clear from the comments of other stakeholders that the contribution of the Discovery Centre to improving the life chances of children and young people is now recognised.

In **Canterbury**, the stakeholders involved in the redevelopment of the Beaney Institute have said that, essentially, the Pathfinder has helped them to add value to their core work (and delivery). The Pathfinder has been used as a way not only of making their service more sustainable but also of adding value to it by experimenting with new audiences and by profiling their role in education and life long learning.

As a result of the Pathfinder there has also been a considerable improvement in the museum/library/local authority understanding of the needs, interests and motivations of children and young people. In particular, the 'learner-led' approach developed within the Canterbury Pathfinder for the Beaney will be used and applied to further work with young people across the museum service. The Pathfinder has shown the potential for creative learning in the non-school environment – for problem-solving, risk-taking, experimenting, playfulness, team-work, communication. As children have said:

*"It feels like you're not doing any work but you're learning" and "we learn better in different places than school."*

From a status point of view, the Head of Housing and Community Development of Canterbury City Council suggests that whereas before the Pathfinder culture was not clearly visible in community plans, now it is embedded in such plans. This may be due to the fact that the Pathfinder provided such concrete evidence of social impact that head of services are now fully aware of the advantages of an integrated Cultural Planning approach.

*"The Pathfinder really gave our unit the opportunity to work for the first time with the culture people at local level and as a result we have been able to see tangible results. This is a step forward towards a more co-ordinated way to work together. Culture is now embedded in our respective plans too."*

Having said that, since Canterbury's bid for the 2008 European Capital of Culture (and even before, e.g. back in 2003 when Canterbury took the lead in the development of the East Kent Cultural Consortium), culture and cultural planning had the full backing of the Chief Executive and lead members. But, even though there is a history of valuing culture in Canterbury – and further evidence is in the existence of a cultural sub-group in the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) – the current LAA does not explicitly refer to culture except for where it talks about "improving participation and engagement by all the children, and young people in youth, cultural and community activities."

*It's not OK!*, the **Liverpool** Cultural Pathfinder, is a clear example of integrated and joined up working. The members of the Steering Group are representatives from Liverpool Culture Company, Liverpool City Council Children Services, Ariel Trust, City Safe (the city's crime prevention partnership), Merseyside police, Connexions, the Primary Care Trust, and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (the latter only for the *Street Heat* project). According to the evaluation of the *Plastered* project (a film and learning pack on alcohol abuse aimed at young people) by the Ariel Trust, one of the key tasks for the Steering Group was to

*"develop a network of delivery agencies... teachers, youth workers, community police officers and others are currently using the resource. Establishing a user base like this is problematic without people willing to be project champions. The steering group played this role and created a unique user base."*

The Ariel Trust also believes that through this partnership approach *Plastered* was able to attract financial support from a broad range of sources.

Culture works! shows that social impacts are evident across different groups at local as well as broader levels. The Pathfinders have in some cases highlighted the benefits of cross - departmental working and in the projects service delivery awareness has improved in response to user and audience needs.

The examples shown here highlight a range of new partnerships that embrace cross-disciplinary working that support the changing status of culture through its inclusion in the LAA blocks, and where projects are beginning to influence outcomes and LAA block structures.

## Section 3 Connecting and communicating

This section explores the collaborative working that has developed within the Pathfinder authorities and with their partners. It also considers the importance of structures for supporting this joint working and issues around advocacy and communication.

The Cultural Pathfinder programme is focused on using cultural activities to achieve a variety of aims identified by the individual projects. In order to do this, it is essential to create a strong, shared interest in building and strengthening partnership working across and within local authorities, including members and with partners and communities. Developing a shared vision that informs all decision-making is fundamental to the success of partnerships' ability to plan effectively and undertake actions which meet the objectives they develop. In order to do this they must develop a range of working practices that enable the best use of each individual's expertise.

### A focus for joint working

The fact that some of the Pathfinders have incorporated projects that are delivering cultural services to beneficiaries, whether disadvantaged young people, encouraging other people to take part in physical activity or developing support for creative industries, has provided a clear focus around which the partners can create a vision and working practices that enable them to learn from each other.

In **Suffolk** the Cultural Pathfinder has provided a focus for engaging with District Councils through the Cultural Officers Group (COGS) and has given this group a focal point that has enabled them to develop relationships and embed partnership working. Interestingly, the Pathfinder project came at a period of change within the county as a number of the individuals involved in COGS were new in post, and felt that the Pathfinder gave them a reason to work together which has made the relationships more secure than they might otherwise have been.

The District and Borough Councils are involved in more direct service delivery than the County Council and have focused on this rather than the strategic work, but through the COGs they have started to forge links to other service areas such as looked after children and the extended schools agenda. There is a sense that being involved with the Cultural Pathfinder has encouraged them to think and plan differently and that these discussions would not have happened without the Pathfinder.

The *Culture for Keeps* programme in **Richmond** is a joint initiative between Richmond's Cultural Services and the Children Looked After Team (CLAT). It grew out of work that was being undertaken by the CLAT and a growing awareness of the fact that looked after children were not benefiting from the cultural services that the local authority provided at the same level as other children.

*“a councillor was asked about a young person in care having access to books and he said ‘well actually, your parent has got millions of books in the libraries’,*

*because if a child is in the care of the council they should have access to everything the council has and it doesn't happen routinely."*

Children looked after by local authorities face a number of problems in accessing cultural provision that are specific to being in care. The concept of the council as a corporate parent, as articulated in *'If this were my Child'*<sup>2</sup>, has been key to developing understanding between the two services and has been an influential shared vision. Agreement to work to a common agenda is central to partnership working.

*"I think the position with South Tyneside three years ago was really it didn't engage particularly well with its partners and it didn't really promote itself particularly well and as a consequence it didn't actually attract much funding. So, there wasn't a great deal of partnership working. I think you could say it was standing still and probably that was true right across the services that I managed."*

In the **North and South Tyneside** Cultural Pathfinder a major emphasis of the whole project was/is partnership working and they have achieved a significant ongoing success with this, particularly as the relationship between the two local authorities was quite poor prior to the project. They are now successfully carrying out joint events, joint funding bids, joint tourism strategies and joint evaluation. There are regular meetings between cultural services in both authorities covering arts, tourism, and regeneration departments, which feed into the recently restructured sub regional tourism partnership. Cultural Services Directors also meet up regularly and the partnership sprang from their shared vision and enthusiasm.

*"Traditionally we've been rivals. I mean it was a question of trying to get people to either Whitley Bay or South Shields or, you know, just purely a sort of competitive situation between the two districts. So I do think the Cultural Pathfinder was quite useful, very useful really in embedding the fact that the future was to do with co-operation on the tourism offer along the coast rather than just competition between the different districts."*

The Head of Housing and Community Development in **Canterbury** also suggested that the Pathfinder gave them for the first time the opportunity to work together with schools and Libraries/Museums. This is a classic example of joined-up thinking and she is very positive with the result. In fact, so positive, that her department is already involved in the development of the (architects) brief for the redevelopment of the Marlowe Theatre. Expanding audiences, access, etc are the shared priorities in this collaboration.

Relationships are important at local, regional and national levels, as well as across services and the Cultural Pathfinders projects have had a range of impacts.

### Local connections

Local partnerships and networks appear to have developed through steering groups created to manage the Pathfinder projects and these have proved to be useful in

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<sup>2</sup> DfES (2003), *If this were my child*

encouraging understanding of the diverse perspectives that the different partners bring to the project. On the ground in **Manchester**, a network of experienced expert teacher practitioners and museum/gallery educators has been facilitated through the Primary Consultant. This role has enabled museums to better understand the needs to schools and vice versa.

*“Informally I have learnt a lot because I have been involved in the strategy group and I have also been involved in working with museums and the galleries that I haven’t before, so I have met a lot of people and I have made links that I wouldn’t have done.”*

A team of advocates comprised of the teachers who have been involved has also been created through a ‘cascading’ model – teachers are working in their own schools and supporting other teachers in other schools through the process of learning (training is also happening through initial teacher training). The Primary Consultant has a particular role as a curriculum advisor, which has meant the museums and galleries have developed closer relationships with other curriculum and humanities advisors.

These groups are in the best position to understand the impact of the project as it develops and to modify or expand the programme. The partnership between Manchester Education Partnership (MEP) and the Hub museums has enabled new programmes to develop with new schools. MEP has identified other schools that could work with the museums on projects and brokered these new relationships.

Collaboration between **Liverpool** Culture Company and the Department of Children Services at Liverpool City Council was good. The different members of the project’s Steering Group worked together very well, despite the often steep learning curve they had to negotiate. Relationships of trust have been developed within the Steering Group which have been useful to get other projects going.

There were, though, some problems of communication between film-makers LA Productions and some of the other partners, particularly around the issue of intellectual property of the films.

The project’s relationship with Creative Partnerships (CP) has not been satisfactory, mainly due to changes in personnel at CP in Liverpool. Now that CP has a new Director, Liverpool Culture Company is hoping to establish a *“mutually beneficial alliance”*. On the whole, strong partnership working has been achieved, and there is a commitment from partners to continue the project beyond 2008. After the 2008 European Capital of Culture event, the project will need funding for a manager to keep communication lines and relationships open.

As well as connections between those working directly on the projects, some of the Pathfinders have focused on developing relationships with Local Strategic Partnerships and Local Area Agreement (LAA) partnerships. Whilst the timing of the evaluation meant that new LAA targets were not yet finalised, there is evidence that the Pathfinders had successfully engaged them in understanding the importance of culture.

In **Canterbury** where culture already had a high status, as a result of their experience of bidding for European Capital of Culture, and a high level of joined up work over the past 5 years, the Pathfinder has helped to bring down to the practical level Canterbury's policy aspirations towards culture. Here the Pathfinder provided the first opportunity for museums to work with Libraries and schools. Equally for Libraries, the experience of working in consultation with young people has been quite exciting and has helped to better target services to local needs.

Comments and the results of consultation have provided a focus for improvement of services and, in particular, for redevelopment of the Beaney (the Pathfinder focus), so that, overall, culture can play a more relevant role in the lives of local people.

In addition, in Canterbury, as a result of having worked with artists, libraries and museums feel they have reached out to new audiences who may not have been library users or museum visitors in the past.

In **Spelthorne** the *Aerosol* work with disaffected young people has helped to establish links with planning. The LAA will be ready in 2008 and it is not certain whether it will have culture in it. But the Pathfinder has certainly helped to make the case for culture to be included in LAA by creating more communication between councillors, young people, older people, the community and the Council about the role of culture in young people's lives. Culture is also marked in the Leisure and Culture Strategy, the Community Plan and the Arts and Heritage Strategy.

In **Suffolk**, the LAA is supportive of the cultural work highlighted by the Pathfinder and have allocated a Reward Grant. It is unclear whether there will be specific targets for culture in the next LAA, partly because there is some anxiety that targets are too narrow to truly reflect the importance of cultural activity across the blocks.

*"Suffolk's Pathfinder team has done a great job at every turn of the LAA in really trying to get culture woven through. Without it being a sort of separate target, you know, they've managed to sort of weave it through the blocks very nicely and I think that's right for something like culture or sport or the arts ... , So when I think of the Pathfinder, I think of that sort of perspective ... woven through the LAA, it's a means to deliver many of the outcomes that feature.*

*... So it's actually a tool rather than an outcome in itself."*

In **Oldham** (one of the 88 projects which bid for Cultural Pathfinder, but wasn't in the final 12) both sport and arts have representatives on LAA Boards. The Oldham Partnership has also won an Academy for Sustainable Communities Award in the Cultural Contribution category in June 2007 for using arts to strengthen community cohesion.

Establishing a respected voice for culture that partners can turn to and channel funding through may be one answer to developing better connections. In **Suffolk** work is underway to create a Cultural Strategic Partnership (see diagram in Fig 1 below).

*"One of the real outcomes originally in this [the Cultural Pathfinder] was 'how do you get back in the mainstream's resources?' and, hence, what we're in*

discussion about at the moment is about a model that looks at a Cultural Strategic Partnership. So Pathfinder moves into that model and it's going to be a partnership that would be one single voice if you like or the first stop and a voice for culture in terms of that commissioning by the LAA ... and its also an interface with regional agencies there that would be our interface with the LAA and other agencies."

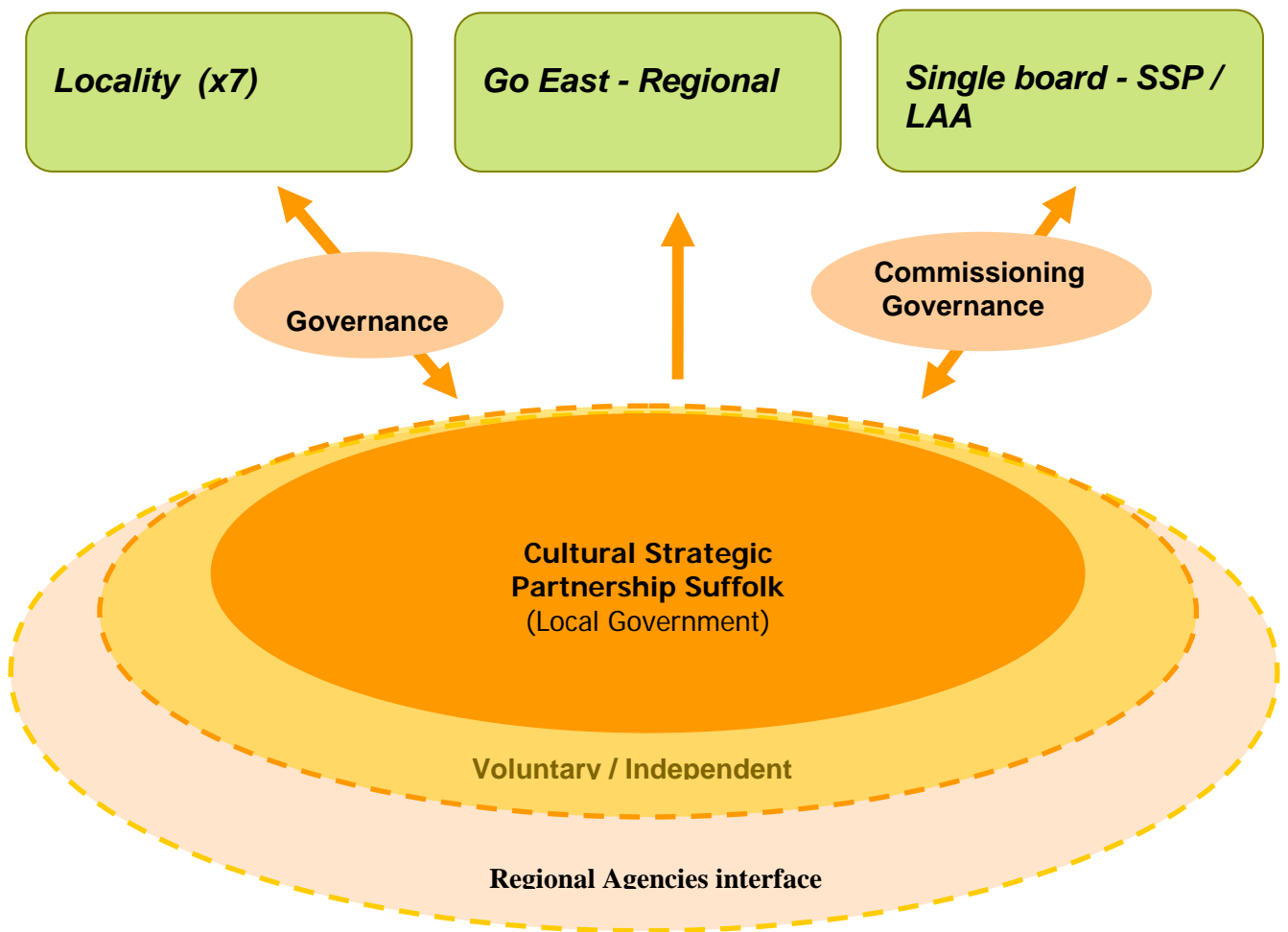


Fig 1 – A journey from Cultural Pathfinder to the Suffolk Cultural Strategic Partnership Model

In **Oldham** most of the original projects have gone ahead, despite the project not being a Cultural Pathfinder, and structures have now been developed that enable better communications and partnership working.

*"It's important to get the right structures in place from the start, with a clear vision that's shared by everyone."*

Several networks and partnerships have now been created, including a Sport and Physical Activity Alliance, which is to become a single system for delivery across the Borough, and aims to become a single voice to advocate for sport and physical activity.

It includes a diverse range of agencies, including Sport Development, the PCT, Leisure Trust, Age Concern, Environmental and Regeneration Services and hopes to develop a single action plan that incorporate statutory and voluntary sector bodies with an interest in sport. There are issues around allocation of funds, but developing trust means that the focus is changing to the shared vision: how can we best deliver on the vision of more people, more active, more often?

### New connections

What is apparent is that most of the partnerships and networks that have been developed, particularly at a local level, are new. This is true for both the Pathfinder councils and the non-Pathfinder authorities. Something in the process of bidding for Pathfinder status has encouraged the creation of dialogue and relationships between services, external agencies and the corporate centre.

Pathfinders report better understanding of the role of culture and therefore better working relationships between departments within local authorities such as education, youth services, economic development and tourism. There is also increased interest from new and potential partners in the local area, helped not least by the networks/networking that exists between key players.

**South Tyneside** has ensured that different departments are fully involved in the development of projects. The current redevelopment of South Marine Park has involved Creative Partnerships, schools, libraries as well as regeneration and tourism. The Cultural Services Director believes that maintaining understanding and good relations between departments is key to getting culture more widely accepted. The way that South Tyneside is structured means that he has always been able to maintain good relations right across the Council.

*“When I started, Culture was in Life Long Learning which is why I (my office) now sit in Education. Culture moved to Corporate Development and I never moved. Subsequently we’ve been moved into Neighbourhood Services and I’m about to move, but what that’s meant is we work closely with each of the directors of the Council and we are developing better links.”*

In **Herefordshire** the lead officer for the Creative Industries Project works in Cultural Services but, physically, has a desk in Economic Development. He reports to both the Cultural Services Director and the Head of Economic and Community Services but works collaboratively with officers in Economic Development to fulfil elements of the Economic Development Strategy ensuring that the project is embedded across both departments.

*“They are nicely joined up – issues to do with quality and other such things are taken on board and discussed and you know they are not beavering away in their separate silos, which does happen in other places.”*

**Herefordshire** has also seen the growing interest of other partners such as the local Art and Design College and Business Link and their direct involvement has increased since the Cultural Pathfinder.

One of the barriers to getting these types of organisations involved has always been the credibility of the creative industries programme but this has changed in recent years with the growing awareness of the benefits of the programme amongst stakeholders.

The Chief Executive of Dudley Borough Council has used his networking skills to attract the interest of partners such as Black Country Connexions and the LSC, who have been instrumental to the success of the **Birmingham** Pathfinder.

*“I sit on the Black Country Connexions Board, as does the person from the Learning and Skills Council ..., as did a couple of the youth officers for the Borough and, therefore, we were having early discussions about the fact that we should all be getting together and what a great initiative it was. So at Chief Executive level it was these people who were on board very early on saying ‘we don’t know whether we can put money in, but we would really like to help, what can we do?’ And us turning round and saying ‘well, we’ve done the figures if you put in x you can have equal billing, that sounds like a good deal and give us some support in kind. By the way we can help you with your targets because you can recruit’.”*

Indeed Black Country Connexions been ‘remarkable’ in their support in terms of time, money and influence. They have also used their own networks to enthuse council members.

In **Hampshire**, the Discovery Centres are a model for an improved, more effective and more efficient way of delivering services by co-locating them in one building. The Cultural Pathfinder has helped to successfully showcase a more joined-up approach to service delivery rather than just raising the profile of culture. The integration of teams of staff with a variety of skills to deliver a different modernised service centred around the needs of the local community has raised issues relating to the changing skills required to deliver the a better service for the customers in the future.

The further development of other Discovery Centres in the County will be facilitated by releasing capital from the sale of Council owned buildings. For example, the development in Winchester has been made possible by the sale of redundant council property. This demonstrates the political support for the changes and modernisation being achieved through the Discovery Centre programme.

Despite the initial problems and low awareness in **Somerset**, especially at District level, of the importance of the arts and culture, significant work has been undertaken after the granting of the Cultural Pathfinder to re-establish trust and to make the case for culture as a catalyst of development and community regeneration in the county. In April 2006 Somerset County Council restructured its Community Regeneration responsibilities under a new head of service in a move designed to bring greater strategic leadership and a more coherent and high profile approach to culture. The change has brought together the strategic management of culture, arts, heritage and leisure with skills, learning and economic development.

Alongside this, Somerset County Council's political leadership and responsibility for culture, the arts, heritage and leisure sits with the Adult and Community Services (including Culture) Portfolio holder and Deputy Leader.

There is also a portfolio holder for Economic Development. This means the County is effectively taking a strong lead in ensuring culture is totally integrated into regeneration and economic development.

The by-products of Creative Futures in **Sheffield** include the establishment of a completely new working relationship between Galleries and Museum staff and facilities with discrete communities of interest in the SOAR programme area, and increased use and awareness of local museum collections. The Cultural Strategy Steering Group now links to the Neighbourhood Action Group to provide a new networking group of cultural practitioners, local providers and local people, coordinated by the SOAR team, with considerable investment by key city-wide workers.

For the museums staff and teachers engaged in the Museums And Galleries Project In Education (*Magpie*) project in **Manchester** a key outcome has been the teachers have developed skills and creativity to enable them to deliver a greater percentage of the sessions – in the past teachers would tend to step back and allow a museum educator to conduct the session.

*“One of the best outcomes from this programme would be that we actually almost do ourselves out of a job... [Teachers] can use our collections in the context of the gallery space and they are actively planning and leading and delivering.”*

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) was one of the project's original objectives, yet the extent of the impact CPD has had on individual teachers to become advocates has been unexpected. The way the project has been managed evolved as those working 'on the ground' did not have the authority to make decisions (which was the responsibility of the steering group) – this has changed to allow decisions to be made at the right time and by the right people.

### Political connections

The importance of political support was discussed by most of the Pathfinders, although the level of involvement varied widely from a sense that members responded to good news stories provided by officers who are driving the process forward, to direct high levels of engagement.

Local Councillors in **Spelthorne** were heavily involved in advocating within the community and provided support for the development of the whole of 4 *Aerosol* programmes and were generally supportive of the celebration of the regeneration programme. In **Suffolk**, an Economic and Cultural portfolio has been created at cabinet level within the County Council.

Elsewhere there was a sense that one member may have been driving the process forward, or that members were only really interested when the project affected their wards and that the process was largely driven by officers.

In **Liverpool**, City Councillors and the Council's Chief Executive know about the project. Both the Council's Director of Education and the former Leader of the Council spoke at the launch of *Plastered*, while the current Director of Education spoke at the launch of *Street Heat*. According to the Liverpool Culture Company, the project has certainly helped raise the profile of culture in the work of the local authority, and in tackling difficult issues.

### Sub-regional Connections

**Herefordshire** are rolling out the creative industries programme to other counties within the West Midlands region to help realise the potential of the creative industries and the West Midlands Rural Regeneration Zone are supporting this. They are already running bespoke courses in Shropshire, including Telford & Wrekin, and collating evaluation data in tandem and they are looking to work with other neighbouring counties. However, this has proved a challenge on occasions due to the differing strategic priorities of some counties.

They are also trying to develop links with similar areas in Wales but this is more problematic due to the differing regional funding and tourism bodies.

**Canterbury** is continuing East Kent partnership work with development of a peer-exchange network linked to the Pathfinder project. Turner Contemporary in Thanet and Stour Valley Arts on the Ashford/Canterbury border are, like Canterbury, working with small groups of young people to explore development of spaces and places for art. Peer exchange between these students and the Canterbury group, and between visual arts professionals, is highlighting common concerns and having a ripple effect of extending knowledge about cultural provision in East Kent among local young people.

### Regional Connections

Although the Cultural Pathfinders focused in the main on local partnerships, regional collaboration is also important, particularly as many of the funding and policy bodies such as Arts Council England, Sport England, Regional Development Agencies and Government Offices for the regions operate at this level.

**North and South Tyneside** has also become much more connected to the region. It has always felt like the poor relation but is now being included in regional plans including the Regional Economic Strategy and the two authorities had positive feedback in the Regional Commentary.

*“And the perception of regional partners has changed as a result of this to the extent I think South Tyneside now lead in a sort of Tyne and Wear sub-region in terms of charing cultural services groups, whereas traditionally it would have been Gateshead or Newcastle or Sunderland maybe.”*

For example, one of the keys issues North and South Tyneside face in tourism terms is that being next to the regional capital, with an established tourism brand (Newcastle/Gateshead) they face difficulties in providing a distinct 'offer'.

One of the things which has emerged from this process is the concept of the Cultural Coast, which is being used as a message both to articulate an independent offer but also link to the wider Newcastle/Gateshead package. This has resulted in a package of investment in Whitley Bay alone of £60m which has a cultural quarter aspiring to be 'second only to the Sage and Baltic in the region' at its heart.

The Coastal Regeneration Partnership (CRP) is a focus for this work and includes North and South Tyneside, as well as the City of Sunderland. There were initial aspirations to de facto include Sunderland in the Pathfinder process. Whilst this did not work out for a variety of local reasons, co-operation through the CRP does give the three authorities more presence with regional agencies (ONE North East, Government Office) and to some extent acts as a counter -balance to the more established Newcastle/Gateshead axis. It may be a stretch to ascribe this as a direct outcome of the Pathfinder process, but it did contribute to the climate of co-operation which has helped these developments to take root.

The authorities did also concede that the interest and enthusiasm for culture in the area has also been helped by the fact that Newcastle and Gateshead have prioritised culture and regional bodies have been able to see the benefit over the last 10 years.

*“I think Newcastle/Gateshead was probably very influential in the sense that they got the culture at the top of the list at a very early stage and I think it began to be apparent to many of us that it was working and.... but I mean the bid for the city of culture was tremendously influential.”*

Relationships with regional partners vary. The Regional Commentary in **Suffolk** indicates that regional connections are a priority for the County Council and that there is good communication with the regional cultural agencies, with the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) being particularly positive about the impact Cultural Pathfinder status has had on innovative thinking and partnership development. This is exemplified by the project between the PCT and Libraries to tackle obesity in young people and the establishment of a Reading Academy with Ipswich Town FC.

*“Particular emphasis was put on engagement with partners during the development of Cultural Pathfinder activity, some of which has been translated into joint project work. The Chief Executive of MLA was a member of the Pathfinder steering group.”<sup>3</sup>*

It has not yet led to a sense that all of the priorities are aligned with those of the Pathfinder or the LAA and this is an area that has been identified for further work.

A better relationship has been developed during the course of the Pathfinder between Arts Council England and **Somerset** County Council. As a result of the review of the County's strategic priorities, Arts Council has decided to back SAP (Somerset Arts Providers) with a considerable amount of new funding for internal organisational development.

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<sup>3</sup> Suffolk County Council (SCC) – Regional Commentary (RC)

It appears that relationships at a regional level are reliant on the attitude of the regional agency to culture in general and the specific projects in particular. Relationships with regional development agencies (RDA), for example, are better where the projects focus on activities which the RDA perceives as relevant to its remit, such as tourism or creative industries. Advocacy at a national level would appear to be needed if this is to change.

## National and International Connections

Most of the Pathfinders commented that, even though they already had projects on the table, they believed the Pathfinder would provide an opportunity to 'learn' how to do things better and to 'share' this knowledge with their peers. Their perception is that by communicating with other Pathfinders they could disseminate information about their projects and build a set of best practice examples which they could all share. North and South Tyneside in particular felt that the Pathfinder had raised their profile nationally through attendance and speeches at conferences.

On the negative side, the lack of communication between DCMS and individual Pathfinders seems to be an issue for all the Pathfinders. In particular, all would have wanted to have more regular feedback/update workshops and some help on firming up their internal evaluation framework at the beginning.

There is also some disappointment that the Cultural Pathfinders have, to date, not on the whole shared their experiences. Canterbury and Manchester have made links, but this appears to be the only example of peer support group amongst the 12 Cultural Pathfinders. There is scope for this to be further developed. During the research phase, one local authority mentioned that they wanted to work with looked after children, so were given contact details for the Richmond Cultural Pathfinder.

Our research has highlighted some interesting instances of how initiatives developed for the Cultural Pathfinder projects have transcended local significance, and linked in interesting ways with debates on policy and practice at national and even international level. The 'golden thread' linking local with national strategies is visible in most of our examples.

For example, the Cultural Pathfinder project in **Richmond** is an innovative way of providing services for looked after children, who are a national priority group, so it could offer a model for other local authorities.

The **Sheffield** case-study is interesting in that it has three areas of work that are all dependent upon both local and national funding and policy imperatives. The projects all oscillate between addressing local needs, at a micro level, and seeking to achieve objectives at a macro national level. Thus, the Sheffield Museums and Galleries Trust is able to support local needs and aspirations and connect local people to its own work in Sheffield, and at the same time address the *Renaissance* agenda at a national level. The hub/spoke/hub feel to this range of projects allows for incremental building of relationships, and like the iterative process of design, will address both local aspirations and needs and contribute to better understanding at city / regional / national levels. How long this process takes is subject to debate. In the case of

Sheffield's Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration, it is arguable that the process of development has been progressive over a seven year period, and that fuller engagement with communities will continue to be enhanced through ongoing linked work and the Housing Market Renewal initiative.

Twelve fire authorities from across the country have expressed their desire to use the learning pack produced for *Street Heat*, a film forming part of the **Liverpool** Pathfinder project, and aimed at highlighting among teenagers the dangers of arson. In 2008 Liverpool will host the International Firefighters' Games, coupled with a large conference. 5,000 firefighters are expected to be present. Liverpool's Ariel Trust plans to have an international launch of the *Street Heat* learning pack at that conference. The national profile of the Ariel Trust itself, of film-making company LA Productions and of the Creative Communities team at Liverpool Culture Company have been raised considerably as a result of their involvement in the *It's Not OK!* project. The three organisations have developed an interesting model of how to produce films and accompanying learning packs aimed especially at young people at risk. This model could be used more widely in the UK as well as internationally.

In some cases, however, our evaluation has highlighted the weaknesses of connections between local experiences and national policies. The **Manchester** example, for example, revealed a lack of awareness of work being undertaken by the DCMS, which appears to be a result of a lack of communication from the national level.

*"The one thing that would have been helpful was to know how DCMS fits in with DfES, because everybody has got their own agenda and, in a sense what we are trying to overcome is that they haven't done that nationally because we have tried to merge the two sides together, but nationally there doesn't seem to be any connection whatsoever."*

Similarly, *Every Child Matters* is a key driver of policy related to children and, with the focus it gives on joined up working would seem to be closely related to the aims of the Cultural Pathfinders but, according to one of the stakeholders in the Manchester case-study, *"the DCMS doesn't seem to be part of it [Every Child Matters]."*

## Communication Counts

The Cultural Pathfinders' aim to encourage greater joint working across local authority services is reliant on the development of effective partnerships. Good communication is critical in developing and maintaining the relationships within these partnerships. Good communication increases the likelihood of successful projects as it enables those running the project to understand and learn from other, including partners, stakeholders and those participating in the project.

There are five key elements to communication that have become apparent during the evaluation of the Cultural Pathfinders: Advocacy, including an understanding of policy making processes; tailoring the message to the audience; listening, learning and responding; communication structures and the need for clear messages.

## Advocacy

Advocacy, persuading people from other service areas, strategic partnerships and the public, that cultural services are relevant and useful to them was a key aim of the Cultural Pathfinders. The Pathfinders with successful advocacy strategies have focused their messages on convincing policy-makers of the benefits that culture can have – and have tailored the messages they give to the focus on the major concerns of particular audiences.

The **Suffolk** Cultural Pathfinder, in addition to rolling out existing practical arts and sports-based projects, such as *Amplifier* (a music project working with young people), focused on raising the profile of culture amongst decision-makers across the County Council, Suffolk Strategic Partnership and District Councils. In order to do this it used Pathfinder status as a brand, with a subtext that culture is important and that Suffolk had been ‘chosen’ to demonstrate culture’s value. The messages have broadly focused on ‘well-being’ and the ‘prevention’ agenda, with more specific messages, around volunteering, for example, being used when necessary.

*“Our task was to come up with some projects that could illustrate and help to articulate the difference culture can make ... influencing some of the broad LAA targets.”*

To date it appears that support has been developed, with the Suffolk Pathfinder receiving an LAA reward grant and two new posts being created in the County Council to focus on culture and community and an understanding of importance of culture being clearly articulated by LAA managers.

Other Pathfinders have worked with stakeholders and beneficiaries to cascade information out to the wider community. In **Spelthorne** local members did more advocacy within the community and provided support for the development of the whole of 4 *Aerosol* programmes and generally supportive of the celebration of the regeneration programme.

Advocacy for the role of community consultation in the improvement of the public realm was a positive outcome from both the **Canterbury** and **Spelthorne** projects. Both projects are essentially about involving young people in improving their environment while at the same time, addressing issues of exclusion, lack of aspirations and confidence. At the same time, disaffected social groups felt they have learned new skills through participation in arts projects and have become advocates for more involvement in arts/culture in general. This kind of evidence has also helped to improve the status of culture in community strategies.

Communication does not have to be in conventional form. In Spelthorne, the *Aerosol* works have introduced young people at risk to positive activity. Spelthorne Borough Council's project leaders have included workshops and talks from Community Wardens, local Police Officers, construction workers and Connexions so that the young people can gain an understanding of their actions as well as look to a positive future with career prospects.

The artists have worked with the Council to develop their designs in order to decrease vandalism in the subway. With the artist from Inspired Mosaics they installed the mosaic pieces so that they are flush with the surrounding tile meaning they are more difficult to chip out. The surrounding tiles are flecked with colour so that they aren't a 'blank canvas' for graffiti vandals. In addition the pieces have included reflective tiles and mirror to make the area brighter. These are all forms of communication which relate on the one hand to sending out a message that the local authority is serious about using culture and the arts to tackle issues of vandalism and crime, and on the other to get young people to feel more ownership of public space and a better sense of responsibility.

Policy-makers are a specific audience for Cultural Pathfinders, so an understanding of how policies are made, who needs to be involved and the sorts of messages they are most likely to respond to is fundamental to raising the profile of cultural activity across local authorities and strategic partnerships.

Amongst the Cultural Pathfinders that have focused on raising the profile of culture at a strategic level, this understanding has been essential. One Pathfinder manager, for example, has used his understanding of policy making to champion culture within the LSP and LAA.

*“What he’s got ... it’s an absolute championship for culture with an understanding of policy.”*

Where this form of communication works best, is when there is a consistent message across the local authority and amongst the various partnerships that projects are tied to local, regional and local policies by a ‘golden thread’ that illustrates where the work fits into the priorities that the strategies articulate.

*“We don’t have any strategic projects that aren’t linked with local authority objectives because we wouldn’t get that through our internal processes. So it was quite easy for me to say ‘I’ve got two major projects, of course they fit into Pathfinder’ because those projects are about delivering on the local authority agenda, ... and if I don’t have a raft of projects that fulfil that, I’m not doing my job... . And that process runs throughout the Local Authority from top to bottom, bottom to top.”*

**North and South Tyneside** have found that, although their project is essentially long term, they have been able to raise awareness and generate enthusiasm for the project both inside the Councils and with other partners by the more short-term joint events programme which has been highly successful. They’ve used this highly visible success to advocate for support for future strategic work and it gives people an idea of what can be achieved.

*“It’s only one event really in a way, but on the other hand it gives people an idea of what the concept is – [South Tyneside] working together with North Tyneside. And you can’t do one without the other really you need both kind of something visible and public, but also some strategic background of what your trying to achieve which is more than just having one just event a year.”*

## Tailoring the message to the audience

Tailoring the message to specific audiences is an essential factor of a successful communications strategy – the right messages, to the right people at the right time. This involves having a clear understanding of the needs of the particular audience; what are they interested in, who makes the decisions and when do they need to make them?

*Culture for Keeps* in **Richmond** has used a Connexions Personal Advisor, who is funded by Connexions to work four days per week in the Multi Agency Team (Children Looked After) alongside the children looked after social work team to deliver the *Culture for Keeps* programme. This post has been very effective at working with social workers, foster carers and residential staff, as well as the team and children and young people themselves to raise the profile of the project and develop services. A consultation form, which is used alongside the Personal Education Plan, ensures that children's views and cultural interests are given a focus within the statutory looked after review process.

Given the sensitive and confidential nature of information on children looked after, direct communication between children and young people and those developing and creating services isn't always easy. Growing understanding and developing trust, however, has meant that recently one member of the Cultural Services staff has started to work directly with young people and their carers to engage them in innovative projects and it is hoped that this approach will be built upon in the future.

On the other hand, in **Manchester**, the fact that the Primary Consultant, who is the link between the museums and schools, was a former head teacher has been essential in ensuring that the communications are couched in the right language and are perceived as coming from a trustworthy source.

*"[The Primary Consultant] had the confidence of her peers, other heads would listen to her and respond in respect of what she was saying about museums and galleries, which probably wouldn't have happened had it been a museum professional."*

The London Borough of **Newham**, who have been working on an evaluation toolkit with research consultants Ecotec, were very aware that to get the support and funding from key partners they needed to sell the benefits of their work in the right way to get it noticed and carried forward. They believe that the support of the Minister for Culture, plus a professionally produced document which detailed the toolkit, how it works, its benefits and findings so far, got them round the table with the LSP.

*"Yes, we have been to the Local Strategic Partnership – our mayor, Sir Robin Wales and the Minister for Culture David Lammy have launched it, so again you're getting good positive stuff really. As you've probably gathered I'm a bit of an evangelist about this. To produce that document cost us a little bit of money, but it gets you around the table and with partners in the Health Service."*

## Listening, learning and responding

As a two-way process, communication offers project managers an opportunity to learn about the impacts of their programmes and modify them, if necessary as a result. Better communication with young people and children has allowed Libraries and Museums in **Canterbury** to gain a better understanding of how to work with young people and how to develop a 'learner-led' approach. In addition they have a better appreciation and understanding of the role that artists and professionals outside the formal learning sphere can play in fostering learning.

There is good evidence from Canterbury that dialogue and involvement of children in the planning of a public building can make them feel more responsible for their learning and feel that their opinion is valued.

### Communication structures

Most, if not all of the Pathfinders have set up new structures to ensure that information is disseminated to stakeholders, but it is important that these groups have a clear remit and that this is understood by all of the members.

In **Somerset**, after the 2004 application for Pathfinder status, significant work was done in order to re-establish trust between some of the partners which had been lost as a result of the way in which the Pathfinder project was perceived to have been managed, developed and communicated. In particular, the Pathfinder has allowed some of the professional arts organisations (SAP) on the ground to move from a position of criticism towards the County for having taken a 'top down' decision regarding the bidding for Pathfinder status to a more collaborative and constructive attitude. The setting up of the CIDA Steering Group is a demonstration of the change towards strengthening partnership work between the Districts and the County in Somerset.

In addition, in Somerset there is a strong and more shared interest in building and strengthening partnership working between the Districts and with the County. Evidence of this is in the commissioning of consultant David Powell Associates for a review of how to improve current arts and creative industry development practice and the overall efficiency of the arts development services.

In **Hampshire** the Discovery Centres programme has been an element in establishing better communication between the Recreation and Heritage department and adult learning providers especially LearnDirect and links with local arts development organisations have been developed through the incorporation of exhibition areas and performance areas in the Discovery Centre at Gosport.

In **Manchester**, the Steering Group has been a key form of communication which met termly and involved all stakeholders from the museums service and the Education Partnership (MEP). However, more recently, a second group has been set up and there appears to be some confusion within MEP about how its remit differed. Clarity of purpose is essential if these new groups are to remain effective in leading the process.

Eventus in **Sheffield** addressed the need for communication by buying into the locally produced newsletter '5Alive' in order to ensure that coverage of cultural and

Education Action Zone (EAZ) information was included in every issue, and was delivered to every household in the area. Their regular meetings provided the reservoir of information on shared priority projects and acted as a formal network for local workers, activists, politicians and local people. Critically the Steering Group provided the link between local resources and those managed centrally – Galleries and the Cultural Quarter.

Cascading information through a range of existing structures can also be effective. In **Richmond** *Culture for Keeps* is a standing item on the agenda of a range of departmental meetings so that all staff are aware of the project and able to feedback on problems, successes and issues.

### Clear messages

Clear and consistent messages are fundamentally important to any communication strategy and it appears that the Pathfinders have found a range of ways of using their projects to develop these. In Suffolk, the message for stakeholders has been 'we've been chosen as a DCMS/LGA Cultural Pathfinder'; in Richmond the message is all staff are 'corporate parents' for looked after children.

In summary, the Cultural Pathfinders have been a useful catalyst in developing collaborative working and in establishing new partnerships. Many of these partnerships have become embedded as new structural units that both lead strategically and deliver across sectors. They also provide mechanisms for networking, improved communications and advocacy.

## Section 4 Leaders matter

In the projects developed within the Cultural Pathfinder programme some have indicated very clearly that individuals have been key to the perceived successes of their projects, whilst others have been less focused on a key personality but have identified that the successes have been the result of effective partnership working. This section explores the question of leadership both within the Pathfinders and for the cultural sector – the managers, animators and producers.

It is important then, to consider the extent to which individuals have been instrumental in taking projects forward, whether there are particular skills that help and how other factors have played a part in progression and success.

As highlighted elsewhere in this report, the culture of the organisations developing the Pathfinder projects have in some instances altered due to the fact that key personnel have been in, or recently have been appointed, to the area or the project. Where success has been articulated around partnership working, then the drive in leadership is still there, it is simply focused on a clear shared understanding of the project's aims. Thus leadership may be apparent in the style and approach, but has not been focused around an individual.

How has this manifested then across the Pathfinders?

For **Suffolk** it was important for the project to have a clearly appointed leader. This key individual with particular skills and knowledge was central to the process and project. Experience of policy making, with the ability to connect to other agendas and make a strong case for culture has been critical.

Leadership has been fundamental in raising the profile of culture across the local authority and within the Suffolk Strategic Partnership. The project team, led by the Head of Culture and Heritage, has led the communications strategy and has been very clear about the effects that the Pathfinder might have on other people's agendas. The 'golden thread' that runs through from national, via regional to local strategies is part of the way Suffolk County Council works and the Cultural Pathfinder has used this to develop arguments for culture. The timing of the Pathfinder bid was also mentioned by several of the interviewees in Suffolk as a number of the senior managers across the county were new in post and they felt that the project gave them a focus for joint working within the Cultural Officer's Group.

The newly appointed Head of Community Regeneration at **Somerset** County Council (April 2006), is a strong believer in the ability of the creative sector to change the image of a place and to contribute to the economy. Since being in post she has made a difference to the County's commitment to backing the creative sector and the arts and has lobbied the Chief Executives of the Districts about keeping Arts Development Officers in place. She has been able to draw upon the expertise that was imported through a series of consultancies to establish the framework of the Somerset CIDA and associated support structures and secured the agreement of the Executive Board to the allocation of Local Authority Business Growth Initiative (LABGI) funding which will provide the resource to enable the County Council to take

the strategic lead on Culture and in particular to develop the links between it and economic development.

In 2002 a new department had been formed and new Director of Recreation & Heritage had been appointed with the ambition that new leadership would take **Hampshire's** Recreation and Heritage services forward to a new dimension, shaping them for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. An element of this was a re-thinking of library services. This coincided with the appointment of a new Head of Libraries to carry a new approach and vision forward with political backing.

The appointment of new personnel in key positions was clearly instrumental and provided the political backing for a culture change to service delivery in Hampshire which is reflected in other innovative and high risk initiatives in the county, stronger partnerships and joined-up service delivery. Bringing new blood into the authority and influential leaders able to drive forward and mobilise support for the Discovery Centre and library refurbishment and modernisation programme has been key to its success.

In **Canterbury**, the Arts and Education Officer has injected strong individual leadership in a newly appointed post. Canterbury's Pathfinder was developed with advice from Creative Partnerships Kent and both District and County arts officers, and led by an arts professional experienced in education work. The schools involved were keen to try new ways of working and the research background of the project coordinator established a rigorous approach to evaluation. Canterbury is an authority with some experience of joined up cultural planning and raised aspirations, having bid for Capital of Culture 2008 and taken a leading role in the implementation of the East Kent Cultural Consortium, a strategic mechanism put in place to co-ordinate cultural funding and priorities across the sub-region.

This emphasis on joined-up thinking was strongly evident in the preliminary work in **Sheffield**, as it was developed by the independent cultural agency Eventus, firstly for SRB5 in the SOAR area and then in the development of the Pathfinder programme. Key to this was the relationship with the then Programme Manager at SOAR. Her continuing involvement in policy management within the City Council has been a central plank leading to more joined up work now planned within the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder. The link is both at a policy level and a professional confidence and shared understanding of cultural planning, although this is not a descriptor used by all.

In this case, however, no real sense of political leadership emerged, nor was it evident until the new Director of Culture was appointed and she was able to see the potential for the Pathfinder to raise the profile of neighbourhood work that is concerned with shared working where cultural activity supplies the glue to regeneration work with communities. It appears that the leaders are not always immediately evident, and perhaps the opportunity of the Pathfinder brought new leaders.

*"I am probably the only Councillor who has read the Cultural Strategy. ... if Councillors are used to having people turning up at the surgery, having problems with benefits, having problems with housing, having problems making ends meet... they're not going to be totally interested in culture, because they*

*don't see culture's doing anything about that and you have to have a very much wider strategic understanding of the part that culture can play..."*

While some Pathfinders have strong political leadership, for most it appears that "at the end of the day it's the officers who drive it." This is not to say that members are unsupportive, rather that the officers are the ones who have the original vision and members pay particular attention when they impact on specific wards.

Leaders also emerge because the circumstances demand it. Again in **Sheffield**, the opportunity to work between community interests and resources within the SOAR and city centre based institutions within the Steering Group, has allowed for new relationships and new leadership styles to emerge, over time. This process results in the gradual integration of existing interests into the on-going work.

The work at a neighbourhood level has captured the attention of the local members, and the Chair of the Cultural Group now sees his role to lead other elected members to accept that cultural activity is relevant, worthwhile and viable at a neighbourhood level and that this work contributes to the cultural assets of the city as a whole.

*"I think the Pathfinder has been influential in terms of grass root changing people's view of culture and how it can be integrated. Certainly the housing market stuff is about training mainstream housing market renewal staff in how to understand culture. So they don't bring in someone to do culture, they can do culture themselves, which is about empowerment."*

The most successful outcome of the **North and South Tyneside** project is the strength of the growing partnership and shared working across the two authorities. It was led with vision and enthusiasm by the Cultural Services Directors from both authorities, backed by a strong team who share this enthusiasm, with very strong support from the Chief Executives on both sides of the river.

*"No doubt whatsoever our Chief Executive is leading the process. She is absolutely committed to this and she is absolutely committed to the role of culture in the authority."*

The most successful outcome is the strength of the growing partnership and shared working across the two authorities. Once again, the initiative coincided with changes to the structure and personnel of both authorities, so timing was an important factor that gave permission for culture change and risk taking within the organisations.

Council members in North and South Tyneside have been clearly involved in the visioning and decision making around culture and coastal regeneration ensuring support from the corporate centre.

*"We got the local authorities together; that was leaders, in our case cabinet members, directors etc and we had a bit of a forum where we identified what....the common issues were that we were all trying to grasp, how we were struggling between us to get across the value of coastal tourism ... and how we needed to get that on the agenda..... So that was a great opportunity for us to go forward and the sign up politically for this has been superb across the board."*

The creative industries project in **Herefordshire** was managed by a dedicated officer with support of senior managers, specifically strong leadership from the Head of Service who initiated the project. The project fulfilled aims within the Economic Development Strategy, which linked to the Herefordshire Community Strategy, so had a countywide agenda with input and sign up from many partners.

In the London Borough of **Richmond**, the success of the *Culture for Keeps* programme has been due to the development of partnership working and joint ownership. As the Pathfinder did not attract any new funding, the delivery of the programme was dependent on utilising existing services, resources and partnerships between Children Looked After, Cultural Services, Connexions and the Youth Services. The Steering Group reports to the Corporate Steering Group which includes councillors, heads of service and is chaired by the Chief Executive of Richmond Council.

This has worked because of the dedication and enthusiasm of the team members and a very clear focus on the entitlement of looked after children to cultural activities. The 'corporate parent' concept has been a useful tool in communicating this message.

By contrast, there was no clear ownership of the **Leaps and Bounds** project by **Birmingham** City Council and, due to staff turnover and a lack of agreement of aims in differing departments, it resulted in a lack of clear leadership on the Cultural Pathfinder and thus led to disappointing outcomes. However, the Pathfinder project was only one part of the overall cultural programme and, aside from this, the Cultural Pathfinder element, the Leaps and Bounds programme received very strong leadership from the Chief Executive of Dudley Borough Council, who pushed the programme forward. The strength of the Leaps and Bounds team was also integral to the success of the project as a whole. The Chief Executive also emphasized the importance of the Council's role in leadership.

*"The backing has got to come from the top of the organisation. If the Chief Executive is lukewarm about it, then everybody else is going to be lukewarm. And if the Chief Executive is red hot, but he has got a Leader who is lukewarm or is positively opposed then he's not going to be allowed to make it happen. If you have a situation where you have got someone at the top of the organisation who is really keen on doing it and it's the right thing to do and you have got a politician who says yes and says it without reservations, you're there."*

He also emphasized the importance of the willingness of the Council to take risks and to trust the judgement of its Chief Executive and senior staff.

*"If you are going to do a high profile project like this with this sort of client group and have it on television, the reputation of all the Council is involved. They could have seen it as a high risk issue 'we don't take risks', but they are now very pleased they did take that risk."*

In **Manchester** the focus of leading the project came down to the selection of the right consultant to lead the process. It was important that the post holder came from the education sector rather than the museum sector in order to lead the programme for the maximum benefit to schools. The Primary Consultant is employed within

Manchester's School Improvement Service and has strategically managed the project. She has also performed a wider role of advocate, communicator and mediator between the education and museum sectors. As an ex head, she has expertise and knowledge of how the education system works and has therefore been able to develop the trust of teachers, which has allowed them to try new approaches. The teachers are now becoming the driving force of the project as their confidence, skills and ability to lead sessions increase and this is being passed on to trainee teachers and other schools.

This link to individuals, and the permission they appear to give to others to take risks, develop new approaches and then cascade this learning, is a recurring theme in this section. It is also evident that new blood, whether in the form of an external consultant or as a new appointment, or as a deliberate strategy, has been an important factor for a number of the Pathfinders.

However, it is not always the case that new blood is helpful or desirable. In **Liverpool** the Creative Communities Team, as an arm of the Liverpool Culture Company, has a deliberate policy to work whenever possible with local skills and talents. This approach supports the feeling of a strong and vibrant cultural identity for the Pathfinder projects under the banner of '*It's not OK – Violence Prevention Education Programme*' and helps to give the project credibility amongst the target group of young people and to embed the learning within the community.

Whether the leaders are individuals with an understanding of policy making, or a team, what is shared by the successful Pathfinders is a clear, well articulated understanding of how cultural activity can impact on the specific agendas of their partners combined with support to make change happen.

## Section 5      Prove it

This section considers the methods of evaluation Pathfinders have piloted and developed and highlights what has proved successful in gaining leverage and support.

As indicated in the introduction to this report quantitative evidence was produced by Pathfinders covering areas such as participation and satisfaction. However, the data across the Pathfinders was not comparable because of the diverse nature and scale of the projects, and has thus been excluded in this report. We have however considered data collection methodologies covering: value for money, impact, participation and satisfaction, the four areas covered by the evaluation framework.

Evaluation is acknowledged as important by most of the Pathfinders. Important in terms of changing your offer depending on feedback from users or customers, as well as to prove to senior managers, council members, LSP members, funders and regional bodies that what you have done has made a difference.

However, it appears that, whilst evaluation data is often collected by local authorities, it is not always used. On other occasions the research aims and objectives are unclear, with little understanding of how the data will be used to inform future decisions. One of the challenges for the Cultural Pathfinders has been to ensure that evaluation has a clear purpose and that it is then used.

Cultural Pathfinders has given participating local authorities a chance to experiment and pilot methods of data collection and, as a result, those that took up the challenge have found new ways of working and have been able to use the information that they have collected to gain funding or to prove the value of culture itself to secure inclusion into regional and local strategic plans or to prove their worth in the face of cuts in funding.

*“Our local strategic partnership basically said ‘unless you can demonstrate that the things you do make a difference you won’t be getting any more money’.”*

We found that the type of project affected ease, method and success of evaluation. Some projects were delivery based with a finite timescale and specific outcomes at the end of that time. Other projects were policy based, more complicated in nature, with less clear outcomes and longer term in timescale and, therefore, much more difficult to evaluate within the time set by the Pathfinder programme.

### Use of the Evaluation Framework

In the early stages of the Cultural Pathfinder programme the Pathfinder authorities worked together through a facilitated workshop to develop a shared framework with key themes for evaluating the projects. The Evaluation Framework that was set up was designed to be flexible and fairly loose as the projects were so diverse. This was quite a useful approach as the projects were action research and at the outset it was difficult to quantify what the outcomes would be. It was intended to inspire Pathfinders to design their own bespoke evaluation methods.

Whilst this happened in some Pathfinders, others found the framework too vague and were unclear what they were supposed to be evaluating.

In fairness, use of the evaluation framework has been difficult to gauge, as, at the time of our evaluation, a number of the projects had not carried out or completed their evaluations. This has had an impact on our analysis of evaluation methods as we have been unable to add up the measured impact of the whole range of projects or identify best practice from all 12 Pathfinders. For this research therefore we have also considered the work of non-Pathfinders, Newham and Oldham. Given the variety of the projects, it might have been better to consider selecting comparable projects at the outset.

Some Pathfinders did use the framework as a starting point. **Herefordshire**, a relatively straightforward creative industries project, was able to use the four indicators; satisfaction, participation, impact and value for money, and designed their evaluation accordingly, using baseline data, face to face interviews and surveys at events.

**North and South Tyneside** used the framework as an inspiration to help them plan for evaluation of tourism in the coastal strip. Evaluation was an area that they felt that they hadn't been good at. In their leisure centres, for example, they collected data on visitor numbers and knew that attendance had been in decline, but they couldn't tell which visitors had stopped coming or why. They also found the Framework a helpful device for initiating discussions between the two authorities on collecting joint data.

*“The fairly rigorous Evaluation Framework that they tried to develop for the Cultural Pathfinder Project was a really useful start in trying to be a bit more rigorous about what sort of information we should be collecting. And can we try and make sure that at least for North Tyneside and South Tyneside we're collecting comparable information.”*

In the event, they concentrated on two of the performance indicators, satisfaction and participation. They found assessing impact, particularly the economic impact of tourism, a difficult area to assess.

Indeed, Pathfinders generally had more success collecting information regarding participation and satisfaction, partly because, to some extent, there is existing methodology present in local authorities for collecting this data and partly because to measure impact takes time and funding is usually for short term projects. Equally, value for money assessment is not straightforward and often needs more lateral thinking across different departments.

*“Proving value for money was always felt to be the most difficult to evidence (by all Pathfinders), but in particular over the short term and with those projects seeking to demonstrate social impacts. Improved motivation, self-esteem and the contribution towards better employment prospects are evidenced in some of these projects, but always in return for a high level of professional (or specialist) input.”*

That isn't to say that there isn't good work going on assessing impact or value for money.

In **Hampshire** stakeholders have already begun work to evaluate the impact of the Discovery Centre programme, prior to being awarded Cultural Pathfinder status, based mostly on attendance figures (participation) and perception data (satisfaction). This was further developed to meet the needs of the Pathfinder evaluation and offered an opportunity for a fresh look at the broader social and strategic elements. They wanted to capture the lessons from the development of the first Discovery Centre to make changes locally at Gosport, improvements to the service and layout, but also to inform the future developments at Winchester and Basingstoke.

The small scale of **Canterbury's** Pathfinder has enabled the evaluation of impacts on the young people and professionals involved. A more rigorous approach was taken than usual for museums or libraries, with baseline and tracking evidence gathered, thanks to the appointment of a coordinator with a research background. This has led to development of evaluation methods for ongoing museum and library work.

**Leaps and Bounds** in the Black Country employed a methodology developed by Connexions to assess the impact of personal development and ballet on 'at risk' young people. This is set out in **Appendix 4**. They also looked at value for money by measuring the spend per person and then comparing it to costs of other relevant outcomes. They used the example of the cost of keeping a child in a young offenders' institution for a year. They also used health and education figures.

*"We measure the spend per person and then we will measure things like the percentage of people that go on to further education."*

They are also seeking funding to continue to monitor those that took part in the project over time to look at reductions in criminality, early pregnancies, changes in literacy levels, engagement in education etc.

The London Borough of **Newham** have also been working specifically on an evaluation methodology for assessing the impact of culture across four neighbourhood renewal areas, health, social cohesion, education and reduction in crime (see case study in **Appendix 4**).

### Quantitative vs. qualitative

It is a general belief that that it is quantitative information that is the key to leveraging support from stakeholders and to a certain extent this is indeed true.

*"When we are putting together ... bids [for culture] it is incredibly difficult to persuade somebody that it has an economic benefit. You go along to somebody and say, 'right, we want to upgrade our park'. Great, so what? ... it's just so difficult to demonstrate the value of spending on culture and tourism unless you have got some backup and statistics that are reasonably rigorous that can show you track changes, improvements and impact or whatever it is you are trying to do."*

**Oldham** believes performance management, including quantitative evaluation, has been crucial in convincing stakeholders of the value of what they are doing and

making arguments that culture is fulfilling other people's objectives. It also helps to encourage people to work together as they can see that they are achieving agreed end results.

In **Herefordshire**, Council members and senior managers in the authority were impressed by figures taken from the surveys at creative industries events and from the biannual survey aimed at creative industries in the county showing that the work of the creative industries project had resulted in more people moving to the area or coming to the area as tourists.

Pathfinders and non Pathfinders who have carried out pilot projects in this area, such as the London Borough of **Newham**, have found that it is important to have a combination of both quantitative information to highlight key changes against specific objectives and qualitative information to illuminate and illustrate the outcomes so that it raises the awareness of decision makers of the impacts culture can make, particularly at a local level.

**Leaps and Bounds** collected largely qualitative information by collecting three life goals from each of the 'at risk' participants at the start of the project. They turned this information into quantitative figures using the Connexions APIR wheel repeated at 6 monthly intervals. From this and comparisons with relevant data they could derive statistics about how many of the young people had, for example, not re-offended or how many of the young people had given up smoking. They found that it was important to keep providing figures to stakeholders throughout the project to keep people supportive.

*"I've got the co-ordinators coming back with anecdotal stories, qualitative stories of what's happening with some of these young people, but you have got to turn it into a proper quantitative evaluation. It's reassuring though, as you go along that you are getting success stories out of it and that's very important in terms of keeping morale up."*

Now that the original project has finished they are finding that powerful examples of individual success are an extremely effective way to lever support for future similar projects.

*"In many ways you talk about problems with numbers and it's X percentage of the population under fifteens or over fifteen or over 18 whatever and it doesn't mean anything, but if you turn round and 'it's a cohort of 200 young people and 45 of them are from Dudley and, of those forty five, here's Andy' - you work them out as characters it makes it very real. It also makes it manageable."*

**Hampshire's** Recreation & Heritage Research Consultant worked with the Library & Information service, Discovery Centre project team & Discovery Centre Manager over the two years of the Cultural Pathfinder to build on the research and evaluation work already carried out prior to the development of the Gosport Discovery Centre. An initial piece of shaping research had been carried out - qualitative research with senior people (mostly the chief executives) representing the key local community groups. These people were selected to be interviewed in order to help shape the Gosport project to meet the needs of the community. This fitted well with the evaluation framework for the Cultural Pathfinder programme.

The evaluation is explicitly designed to be comparable with baseline data - before and after comparisons formed the basis of much of the research e.g. keeping to the Public Library User Survey questions

In **Richmond**, the evaluation shows that, as of September 2006, 63% of children looked after aged 5 to 17 years had been involved with at least one *Culture for Keeps* activity, with an expectation that this will rise to 75%. There is also an expectation that others have used universal services such as library events or youth clubs.

In addition to participation, the evaluation has considered the impact on children looked after in terms of educational attainment, attendance at school and increased self-esteem, social skills, self-advocacy and resilience. The results to date indicate an increase in GCSE attainment in 2005-6, improvement in attendance at school and a reduction in average number of days on fixed term exclusion.

Young people have also been involved in quality assurance and evaluation and their contributions are leading to improvements and changes in the design of the programme.

Impacts on individuals can be seen clearly in small projects like the **Canterbury Pathfinder**, where qualitative data was gathered, tracked and analysed. The Pathfinder took a learner-led approach, with continuous shaping based on feedback.

The point was raised, though, that there is a difference in the needs of the different stakeholders and information should be targeted accordingly. In **Herefordshire**, for example, they had ESF and ERDF funding to start the creative industries project. ESF / ERDF was output driven and wanted statistics on numbers of participants etc. but ACE WM wanted more qualitative information on the quality of the experience. This created a culture and understanding for performance management, knowing that data and results can effectively drive improvements.

### The importance of quantitative baseline data

Baseline data is essential for effective research as it allows local authorities to measure the 'distance travelled' over time against objectives and offers proof of change. The London Borough of **Newham** believes this is the key to convincing sceptical partners. They have a strong ethos of performance management that underpins all of their research. Their main comparator is the *Newham Household Panel Survey* which follows similar methodology to the *British Household Panel Survey* to allow for national comparisons. Over two years they have been developing the *Newham Ecotec Assessment Technique*, or *NEAT*, evaluation toolkit and have been able to track differences, particularly around social cohesion.

In **Liverpool**, the methodology used by the Ariel Trust for the evaluation of *Plastered* (on alcohol abuse amongst teenagers) involved the collection of data through a questionnaire featuring a series of attitude statements. Survey participants were asked to indicate on a 10-point scale the extent to which they agreed with particular statements with identical questionnaires completed by young people before the

project and at the end. The 'before' and 'after' results were then compared and percentage changes calculated.

The evaluation methodology also used one to one recorded interviews with young people who had experienced *Plastered* as part of PSHE projects in 3 schools.

Responses were also gathered from teachers, youth workers and others who had made use of *Plastered*, through evaluation forms filled in at the end of training sessions. In addition to the questionnaire and interview-based research with young people, there were interviews with teachers, youth workers and others who had used *Plastered* and had attended training events related to the project.

According to the evaluation report on *Plastered*, prepared in 2007 by the Ariel Trust, the project reached in excess of 20,000 young people. As a result of involvement in the project, there was a decrease of 13.6% (to 51%, so still a way to go) in the number of young people agreeing with the statement 'Drinking at house parties is a laugh and a safe thing to do'. The percentage of interviewees agreeing with the statement 'If I see one of my friend's getting drunk I don't worry, they'll be OK' also fell, by over 16%, to just under a third of all respondents (31.8%). Similarly, the percentages of young people agreeing with the statements 'Alcohol doesn't affect your ability to look after yourself' and 'People still make good decisions when they have been drinking alcohol' fell by 16.1% and 14.8% respectively.

This evaluation has been particularly effective because it set a baseline at the start of the project, so could therefore measure the distance travelled over the life of the project.

One of the main challenges for many authorities, and the Pathfinders are no exception, is that they don't have much baseline data or a culture of systematically collecting relevant information.

This is certainly one of the problems **North and South Tyneside** faced and the work they have been doing in partnership over the last two years has been to look at methodologies for collecting these figures.

The aims of the projects in **Oldham** were to change young people's perceptions of other communities. A baseline was set at the beginning of the projects using interviews and questionnaires and then followed up at the end of the project to compare attitudes. Performance indicators have been set within the LAA around participation in sport and arts activity, one of the first in the country to achieve this. They believe that this has been fundamental in influencing support and decisions around funding. Other evaluation being undertaken includes work done by the DfES using the *National Schools Survey*.

Eventus in **Sheffield** originally intended to link the Pathfinder evaluation into the City's *Sheffield Neighbourhood Information System (SNIS)* however, the specificity of the current indicators on health, quality of life and environment ruled this out. The ongoing work on the *Housing Market Renewal (HMR) Culture Programme* is looking at incorporating generic cultural questions into the *Neighbourhood Management Survey* (perception) piloted in SOAR in 2006.

**Herefordshire** on the other hand set up a biannual survey five years ago which set out to measure development of creative industries and was sent out to a database of practitioners. Having now completed the survey three times they are beginning to see measurable differences and are using the data to gain leverage for future support of the creative industries programme. Neighbouring county Shropshire has started to use the same methodology to allow for benchmarking within the last two years.

Several Pathfinders mentioned the need for collecting baselines which were comparable with other areas regionally and nationally. They were aware of very few baseline surveys relating specifically to culture that were carried out nationally with the exception of sports and libraries.

The Regional Development Agency in the North East has been working on measures for the economic impact of tourism which has benefited **North and South Tyneside** who have adopted the STEAM model.

*“Well, STEAM isn’t directly related, it’s commissioned more by One North East but we use it. So, for example, STEAM is given baseline data in relation to average visitor expenditure. ... we gather information about visitors to a particular event and they do estimates on the number of visitors who have come from outside the area, they can use the STEAM data to calculate approximate expenditure so that will give an indication of the economic benefit...”*

Culture10, an agency for the events and festivals programme in the North East, has been working with consultants SQW on a tool to monitor the impact of events and festivals regionally. This will inevitably impact on the evaluation work North and South Tyneside are doing.

*“We’ve developed an evaluation framework with and, for consistency, we’re asking all projects to work to those lines. So, it’s collecting data in relation to visitors, getting survey evidence which gives an indication of the levels of those visitors who might have travelled from outside the region. It’s looking at the activity of the event in its entirety, looking at how you know whether business support has happened through local contractors in relation to infrastructure or services such as you know from catering vans, from staging to volunteers.”*

The local authorities which have used national self assessment improvement tools - such as *Towards an Excellent Service* (TAES) for sport, *Inspiring Learning for All* for museums, libraries and archives and *Arts at the Strategic Centre* - which were all designed to provide a basis for self-assessment to achieve continuous improvement, found that they were a useful yardstick, particularly when disaggregated to local level. TAES, in particular, was cited as asking good basic questions which then allowed the local authority to measure its performance over time. However these tools appear not to be widely used or understood.

*“So we have got TAES from Sport England and we have got Arts at the Strategic Centre from the Arts Council and something else from the library and I am just saying all we want is time and, unfortunately, what this does is just stretch our resources.”*

## How do you measure unexpected outcomes?

Some of the proof is in the form of unexpected results or benefits. Not all of the Pathfinders stuck religiously to their remit and by being more flexible in approach they thus gained outcomes that would not otherwise have occurred. Innovative projects such as these are likely to have some unexpected outcomes. If recognised early enough they can be incorporated in evaluation. The unexpected element is still important even if evidenced anecdotally as it can often have the biggest influence on political stakeholders.

The original objectives of the Pathfinder in **North and South Tyneside** were to use tourism and culture to support jobs and economic development and to develop the cultural infrastructure of the coastal areas north and south of the mouth of the Tyne. The real success though was about the quality and outcomes of the partnership working between the cultural services departments of the two authorities which weren't formally evaluated.

**Richmond** has found that there have been an unexpected positive outcomes such as the fact that the programme has enabled them to encourage healthy lifestyles by increasing access to a range of sporting and leisure activities, increasing the numbers participating in physical exercise and reducing the risks of obesity, smoking and drug and alcohol problems.

A further positive outcome has been that *Culture for Keeps* has enabled them to develop a wide choice of pathways to employment - indeed, two employment opportunities have been developed as a result of links with partners within the authority. In 2005-6 nearly 90% of care leavers were in education, employment or training.

One unexpected outcome in **Leaps and Bounds** was how much the project affected the working methods and attitudes of those who worked on the project including Birmingham Royal Ballet, the life coaches and youth services. Measurement though of this, again, is only anecdotal.

Another outcome of Leaps and Bounds was that, even though young people dropped out or left for a reason, such as getting a job or going back to their families, research evidence indicates that some have been affected in a positive way. Unfortunately the evaluation wasn't set up to monitor these young people and so the final evaluation figures only reflect those who completed.

*"She didn't do phase 2, but came back about one month later to see Michelle and said 'I want to do my BTEC,' so she was doing BTEC in the Performing Arts in the background whilst all this stuff was going on."*

This is an important point, as most impact evaluation is undertaken at the end of a project with those participants who are still involved. Methodologies also need to consider ways of contacting those who have dropped out or there will be a bias in the results towards those who are satisfied.

In **Hampshire** one evaluation issue identified is how best to measure the delivery of an integrated service. In adopting a joined-up approach to service delivery with co-

located services, whether it is libraries and museums or health services, is it still possible or desirable to measure the performance of each service separately? Should the focus be on the benefit to the people using the service and focus on the key outcomes desired of the project? This serves to reiterate the difficulties of capturing the contribution of culture to agendas such as well-being.

### How robust does evaluation have to be?

Many authorities are put off using data because they are concerned that they do not have the capacity to employ an independent researcher, meaning that the evaluation has to be carried out in-house by inexperienced staff. However, our evaluation indicates that it is better to have some data, rather than none, as long as it is used.

**Herefordshire** had followed the Evaluation Framework to evaluate the Cultural Pathfinder, but used anecdotal responses combined with qualitative research conducted by the individual leading the programme, who was concerned about bias.

However, it's not just qualitative information they have used but also information from a baseline survey, surveys as part of events and economic data which back up the qualitative information and, on the back of it, the creative industries programme has received considerable support from the within the local authority.

*“But at the end of the day we can prove that this is what we’ve done, we’ve got the backup information from the people who’ve been on this scheme ... Yes and looking at the economic side of it, where people moving into the county, what they are doing, why they’ve come here all that is healthy information according to us but also to economic development and also other parts of the council as well.”*

The Head of Economic and Community Services at **Herefordshire** Council felt that, coming as she did from a Cultural Services background, she needed to doubly prove the value of the creative industries to be able to incorporate them in the County's economic strategy and has been able to use the evidence base created by the project. Equally the officer leading the project felt that, although officially he works for the Arts Service, they don't necessarily understand what he does. He has been able to use the evaluation to *‘prove his worth’*.

Stakeholders don't necessarily question the authenticity of the figures though, it's how they are presented that is important.

*“If I can go to a meeting and say ‘we had a million visits to the leisure centre, one million visits to the library, one million visits to the community centres’ it's pretty powerful stuff. Actually I could say anything - once you start firing figures out like this nobody ever repeats what you say.”*

An officer from a regional body commented that he was aware that the data collated in **North and South Tyneside** could be more robust, but that regional agencies are paying more attention to the area and investing in projects because the authorities are demonstrating what they've achieved to date.

The London Borough of **Newham** worked in partnership with research agency Ecotec who carried out the qualitative side to ensure that no bias was present. But even in Newham they are aware that it's not foolproof.

*“If you wanted to pick holes in it, you could, – as with a lot of these things – but it's quite fascinating because I have found in other areas, less robust data is believed and held up.”*

In summary, evaluation has been a thorny issue for the Pathfinders, particularly impact and value for money. All of the projects were keen to undertake evaluation and felt that quantitative information that allowed them to manage performance and track distance travelled was important in making the case for culture, although the lack of baseline data was a problem for many of the projects. It would, therefore, be useful for baseline quantitative data, which can be used to influence targets to come from the national level in all cultural areas to provide a means of benchmarking, particularly where that national data can be disaggregated to the local level.

In terms of proving the case for culture, there is no doubt that quantitative data was invaluable, particularly when it was related across different council agendas, in gaining the interest and support of council members and directors of relevant departments. However, interviews with the corporate centre of the Pathfinders revealed that qualitative information was equally important to help stakeholders understand the value of culture and be inspired to support it. This is clearly demonstrated by the Leaps and Bounds, Newham and Liverpool projects whose projects focused on methods to prove the impact of culture.

What comes out of these projects is the need for clear aims, baselines, relevant indicators and the use of both quantitative and qualitative data. What is also interesting is the use of statistics from across council agendas such as education, community cohesion and law and order to prove value for money and impact. The evaluation structures in Newham and the Black Country can be replicated by other authorities and in so doing, as long as the same indicators are used, can be used as comparable data.

Whilst clear aims and objectives were seen as important in undertaking evaluation, there is a caveat, in that it makes it difficult to assess unforeseen outcomes. In essence the Pathfinder projects were action research and often projects were altered or changed due to unforeseen outcomes. This meant that it was difficult to test evaluation methods as laid out in the evaluation framework. However, as the projects were action research, for those that had a finite lifetime, it does now provide us with realistic outcomes by which to measure future similar programmes.

## Section 6

## Was it worth it?

This section of the report is divided into two parts. Part one discusses the impacts, the advantages and the issues resulting from the granting of Pathfinder status. In particular, when dealing with benefits, comments will be made about the use of Pathfinder status as a brand for raising the profile of culture and in gaining support from council members and senior management.

Then, in order to establish whether impacts can be directly attributable to Pathfinders, part two of this section presents a summary of the views emerging from the interviews conducted with a sample of non-participating local authorities, including some that tendered for Pathfinder status and some that did not. This way, we are able to compare the progress made amongst Pathfinder and non-Pathfinder councils over the past two years and see where the benefits of the Pathfinder status lie.

### Pathfinder Status

Because Pathfinder was a competitive bidding process from the DCMS and LGA, some projects used the status as a brand to increase awareness or raise the status of culture amongst key stakeholders and to demonstrate the importance of culture in delivering against a variety of agendas and policies

In **Herefordshire** the Pathfinder status generated interest amongst council members initially and it raised awareness of the value of the creative industries. It also raised awareness of the work and status of Herefordshire amongst neighbouring counties and regional agencies. Being a Cultural Pathfinder has made the arts officer more aware of various strategies and the importance of being involved.

*"Certainly, at my level, you are just wandering along and whenever these strategies fly by I sort of make sure I jump on and that I've got a seat on the bus."*

Their relationship with Arts Council England West Midlands has also improved as a result of the Pathfinder. In particular, Cultural Services in Herefordshire feel that there is now a real direct link with regional partners and strategies around creative industries development.

In **Suffolk** Cultural Pathfinder status has been used as a badge to raise the profile of cultural activity across the County Council and the LAA and as a focus for the countywide Cultural Officers Group. Senior staff are all very aware of the DCMS/LGA Cultural Pathfinder and use it as a way of discussing culture across the authority. By contrast, it has been used less directly by the District and Borough Councils which have tended to focus on direct service delivery. The journey has, however, reinvigorated a number of 'two tier' cultural projects and themes, culminating in the concept of a Cultural Strategic Partnership, accommodating the voluntary and community sector (see **Figure 1**).

In **North and South Tyneside**, the success of the initial bid and the joint events and initiatives has raised awareness of other programmes of work that both authorities

could do and there is reportedly a great deal of interest amongst council members about supporting it through.

*"Everyone's really enthusiastic about this and it's partly because we are arguing we've got South Marine Park – we've got Arbeia and then we could have this other development slightly further round – the Wear Mouth Jarrow Heritage Site."*

In **Sheffield**, the status allowed for a raising of the sights and created a sense of confidence with project participants. Project leaders and artists involved recognised the significance of the award within the arts community, and it has been important to the Sheffield Museums and Galleries Trust in giving perspective to the range of its work. In particular the neighbourhood based cultural organisations e.g. *Burton Street Project* who had been involved since 2000 felt it validated their bottom up approach.

However, for politicians in Sheffield this particular award did not hold much water, but their involvement and attendance at events was an important marker of interest. For the new Director of Culture, instead, this award has been recognised as important to develop local strategies, and to use it as a stepping-stone to a higher status of communication and engagement with DCMS and local/regional partners.

In **Hampshire**, though the move towards the creation of the Discovery centres was happening anyway, what the Pathfinder has done is focus attention on producing sound evaluation evidence. This has helped to support the place of culture in the County's activities.

Here, though the community strategy does not include a discrete cultural theme, it nevertheless includes a mention of the role of culture under health and well-being. The Gosport Discovery Centre is written into the *Gosport Community Strategy Action Plan* and both the Cabinet Portfolio Member and Policy and Review Committee for Recreation and Heritage have shown full commitment to the Discovery Centres programme.

In **Manchester**, Manchester City Gallery reports back on achievement and outcomes to the Local Authority on a quarterly basis – being part of a Pathfinder project means the gallery is recognised as being successful in delivering on its aims and objectives. Overall, here the Pathfinder status has meant the project has become recognised, rather than it being a driving force.

*"I think one thing, even if it didn't have Pathfinder status, it still has its own status because people recognise it as significant and people talk about it and in other regions people know of it because it is such a valuable programme."*

In some cases, putting the spotlight on a particular (local or county) authority, meant that officers and line managers were forced to deliver results according to a set timetable and aims, this was really useful in 'concentrating minds'.

In some cases, the status of Pathfinder helped authorities to feel more confident about making decisions about high level of funding for cultural projects, e.g. The Gosport Discovery Centre or the redevelopment of the Beaney Library and Museum in Canterbury. Overall, 'sense of responsibility' and 'determination to make things

happen' are the words often used to convey the feelings related to the granting of Pathfinder status.

### Gaining support

In **Canterbury**, the Museums Service has improved delivery in relation to schools, partly as a result of this project, and there has been some short-term improvement to museum and library services for local people. The building refurbishment will eventually bring considerably improved services for everyone.

The Canterbury Pathfinder also provided an opportunity to tackle head on the issues of declining number of library users and museum visitors. In some cases, the Pathfinder gave staff the opportunity to learn new skills and to establish a better understanding of users' needs. Whereas in other cases it had the opposite effect of making staff feel anxious about change and generated insecurity about jobs future.

On the positive side, the Pathfinder status has also been used as a vehicle for the dissemination of information about each participant's project to a national audience. Having a national audience was seen as an important marketing tool by authorities and in some cases (e.g. Spelthorne) because it put them on the map of best practice in participatory arts projects.

*"Pathfinder had prestige and even though it had no money attached, it meant that the authorities involved would be put under the spotlight of national interest."*

Innovation was also a result of the Pathfinder status in **Spelthorne**. Here, partnership between the Council and Surrey Youth Development Service, Surrey Police, The Youth Offending Team and professional artists has delivered tangible results. By involvement in Pathfinder's participatory arts projects the young people have been able to develop their talents, interests, social skills and community engagement by focusing on art practice.

In addition to the actual art workshops, young people have been introduced to the possibility of taking part in research activities thus opening their eyes to using libraries and the internet and have taken on accreditations to support their future. As a result of the Pathfinder, Spelthorne has been contacted by other local authorities, community groups and police officers who want to create similar projects within their cities and communities.

In **Herefordshire** there is a high proportion of mature students who tend to start off studying a part-time course, like a part-time foundational course. For most of them, their intentions are to stay in Herefordshire so the Pathfinder is a support for them to give them a framework. More specifically, the project has had a direct input on how to set up a business and how to showcase and market creative products. The Pathfinder has also had an impact on the Hereford College of Art and Design where the creative practitioners either graduate from or teach and over the three years of the pathfinder, the college has become increasingly more involved and is looking at further involvement in the future.

In **North and South Tyneside** the Pathfinder status provided the impetus for the two authorities to work together. In particular, it provided a framework in which the two authorities were able to look at evaluation more strategically and develop joint methods of collecting data which hadn't been done before.

*"It was a good opportunity for us to expand what we were doing using the Pathfinder as a vehicle to do it. If the Pathfinder wasn't there we would have achieved most of it but it has given us that extra bit of impetus."*

In addition, it highlighted the value of the coastal region to One North East and the Area Tourism Partnership.

As for Spelthorne, Canterbury, Suffolk and Hampshire, overall, being a Cultural Pathfinder has enabled them to develop publicity and awareness and provided an opportunity to engage people they wouldn't otherwise have engaged.

*"Pathfinder has allowed us to shout about what we've done."*

The momentum of the Tyneside partnership has carried forward into the new Area Tourism Partnership (Tourism Tyne and Wear) arrangements and they start that relationship from a much higher base of understanding than would have been the case without the experience of co-operation around the Pathfinder.

North and South Tyneside Pathfinder stakeholders are also using the success of the project to try to influence the regional development agency to include the coastal regeneration area in the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) and strategic development objectives for the future.

Both authorities have found that by concentrating on successful large-scale highly visible projects that potentially create more jobs, they can argue more successfully for funding and support for smaller more routine projects.

Most of the stakeholders interviewed in **Liverpool** agreed that Pathfinder status had been beneficial to the project. One of our interviewees believed that Pathfinder status "*certainly helped*", although she added that probably not every organisation contributing to the project knew about it, and that it "*was probably more important for Liverpool Culture Company, Liverpool City Council and Connexions than for other partners.*"

According to another local stakeholder, Pathfinder status gave the project certain kudos, in the city as a whole and within the City Council in particular. Others argued that the Pathfinder designation gave the Steering Group for the project an enhanced status, that it "*helped bring people together*", that probably the different agencies wouldn't have come together if the project had not been a Cultural Pathfinder, and that *It's not OK!*, before it achieved Pathfinder status, was operating less strategically.

On the other hand, several of the Liverpool stakeholders argued that the Pathfinder designation was of limited importance. Some argued that the project would have happened also without its Pathfinder status, and for some stakeholders the fact that this was a Pathfinder project was not clear at the outset.

According to one interviewee, Pathfinder status is perhaps just a way for DCMS to put its name to projects it had in reality very little to do with.

### Lever funding and resources

Many of the Pathfinders have been successful in gaining large amounts of funding and resources from a range of funders including ACE, Neighbourhood Renewal, LSPs, trusts, local authorities etc. Raising funding from partners is not only important in that it allows projects to continue or be extended – it is also an indicator of the level of support for the initiative, which is particularly important for pilot projects which are hoping to become part of mainstream practice, such as the Pathfinders.

**South Tyneside** received £5 million of National Heritage Lottery funding. They had applied for this twice before without success and had been invited to put the bid in again, but it had just sat on the shelf. They believe that Cultural Pathfinder status helped achieve that funding. Success breeds success –they have also received further joint funding from other sources and believe that gaining the Pathfinder helped convince the local authorities that it was worth match funding.

In **Somerset**, the establishment of Creative Business Boost, Taunton Deane Borough Council's creative sector support project has attracted RDA, ACE and other funding and clients across the county (overall investment £300,000). Given its success (over 150 clients) Creative Business Boost is now in a position to enter into partnership with a number of host agencies and to broaden its activity to be more strategic in supporting the creative economy.

In addition, in Somerset a two year £827,500 funding was awarded to SAP (Somerset Arts Promoters) by ACE under the THRIVE! Initiative. SAP is a network of professional arts organisations well established across the County and the funding will enable all the sixteen county-based professional arts groups to develop and consolidate experience of new ways of working together with their statutory partners, and with local communities.

The award of such funding represents an opportunity for SAP to raise the profile of arts activity and more generally to provide evidence of the benefits of culture. However, in order to make sure such benefits become tangible, local authorities will need to ensure that their arts development officers work in collaboration with SAP in shaping the direction of the actions funded under THRIVE!

The work to raise the profile of culture and, specifically, to demonstrate the link between the potential development of creative industries and improved economic performance has resulted in the allocation of £50,000 in each of the next two years from the County's LABGI funds to support the further development of this area of work.

In **Canterbury**, the Pathfinder and its involvement of young people appear to have been a contributing factor in the positive Stage 1 grant funding decision from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the redevelopment of the Beaney Building.

In **Hampshire**, Winchester City Council has committed £1 million, in addition to a land contribution to the Winchester Cultural Centre. Basingstoke & Deane Borough

Council has identified £650,000 from Section 106 developer contributions for the upgrade of cultural facilities in the proposed Basingstoke Discovery Centre. Large scale funding and sponsorship in cash and equipment for developments at Basingstoke include £45,000 from the Linbury Trust for an Arts Exhibition Gallery and £0.5m sought from corporate sponsors such as Sony and Ericsson. Arts Council funding has come for commissioned art in the Gosport Discovery Centre and community arts support project.

There has also been Area Investment Framework money to upgrade the Gosport Gallery to exhibition standard in order to link as the key regional partner with the British Museum bringing high quality exhibits to the area.

In **Suffolk** Pathfinder status has helped to raise the profile of culture and been fundamental to the LAA providing an £80,000 Reward Grant to culture. **Sheffield** attracted ACE support of £70,000, and additional project and partner support to the value of £30,000. The value of the HMR initiative has not been set as yet.

In **Spelthorne** two final projects have taken place in early 2007. The first is the *Aerosol* Commission of 'the Sunbury Sunset' by Signal Project Ltd., a commission which will complete the final areas in a subtle *Aerosol* style to reflect the Sunbury motto. Young people would not be able to paint this area due to the working at height legislations for young people but this is to be funded by a grant from British Airways and from the Arts Development Budget.

The second is the *Mosaic Map Project*. In late 2006 SBC developed a partnership with HMP Bronzefield and the Inside Out Trust in order to create art pieces that will benefit the community whilst training prisoners in artistic skills and developing their social skills. This map is for users of the subway to find their way through the maze of tunnels. This project has been funded by a grant from British Airways and funds from the Inside Out Trust.

In addition, a grant from the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership has been awarded for a summer '07 project in Staines. Spelthorne has also recently received funds from Kempton Park Racecourse and has applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop the projects further.

Eventus in **Sheffield** attracted ACE & SRB support of £70,000, and additional project and partner support to the value of £30,000. The value of the HMR initiative has not been set as yet.

## The Issues

From our interviews there are not only benefits, but also a number of issues emerging around the designation of Pathfinder status. Some of the Pathfinders point out that the fact that there was no money attached meant that they had to work hard to demonstrate to elected members that projects had 'status'.

The time taken in involvement with the DCMS attending meetings where they didn't learn was also an issue for some Pathfinders, especially because some felt they did not learn much that was new.

The fact that the projects were so different from each other meant that shared and focused learning did not really take place.

Most found that just telling people they were a Cultural Pathfinder didn't mean much to new or potential partners and they had to qualify it by explaining that they were strongly supported by the DCMS.

Those Pathfinders that had given presentations at meetings felt they got no relevant information in return (as projects were all so different); also there were few opportunities for exchange of information with those Pathfinders that dealt with similar themes and projects. Discussion at a workshop with the Pathfinders indicated that they would have appreciated opportunities to link with other projects, either with a similar theme or covering a similar geographic or demographic area. The possibility of visiting other projects was also mooted, although lack of resources would have made this difficult.

An online forum was also established following early discussions, but although one or two people left messages, they were disappointed by the lack of feedback. Comments from the Pathfinders suggest that this sort of forum needs to be facilitated in order to initiate and sustain discussion. Again, resources were an issue here.

**Herefordshire** was probably one of the most active members having left two or three messages, but felt the forum never got off the ground. More specifically, in Herefordshire the Pathfinder status was not what they expected. Stakeholders in this Pathfinder expected status, shared learning, working with other authorities and publicity from the DCMS, but feel they didn't get much of it. In particular, following the initial announcement and flurry of activity they feel that the DCMS has provided little follow-up and the initial interest and impetus has been lost.

There is uncertainty about how much the Pathfinder has helped in putting in place a robust evaluation method and the project manager is aware that he did more evaluation when the project was funded previously by ESF.

*"It was just sort of 'well talk to each other, tell us how you want to evaluate yourselves, you make the rules up, do what you like' basically...."*

For the **Birmingham** project, the designation as Pathfinder added little and was not in itself used to raise awareness of culture. The **Leaps and Bounds** project, however was used as an example of how the arts, when combined with personal development approaches, can work across the agendas but no one attributed this to the Cultural Pathfinder.

**Birmingham** was also unclear about what the Pathfinder evaluation was actually supposed to be measuring. Their comment on this issue is that it would have been helpful to have someone from DCMS in charge of monitoring and evaluation. In addition, it would have been more useful to Birmingham if the Pathfinders themselves had been more focused around one area e.g. culture and young people so that a 'learning cohort' could have developed.

In summary, Pathfinder status was used to raise awareness about the benefits of culture amongst stakeholders improving the status for culture – to articulate brands and as a mechanism to pilot a cultural planning approach demonstrating the benefits of joined up thinking.

## PART TWO - Non Pathfinders

In order to establish whether impacts can be directly attributable to Pathfinders, this section presents a summary of the key elements emerging from the interviews conducted with a sample of non-participating local authorities, including some that tendered for Pathfinder status and some that did not, but have achieved Beacon status.

The projects contacted during the evaluation under the Non Pathfinder heading were: Eastbourne's *Towner on the Town Cultural Outreach Programme*; Leicester's *Cultural Quarter/Liveability* project; London Borough of Newham *NEAT evaluation toolkit*; Oldham's *Unity Sports* project; and, Oxfordshire's *Creative Learning for Children and Young People*.

### Eastbourne

Eastbourne Borough Council did not bid for Pathfinder Status because, at the time, they chose to concentrate on their Cultural Outreach programme. As a result, Eastbourne was awarded Beacon Status for its visual arts outreach programme *Towner on the Town* as well as for its *Disability Sport* programmes.

*Towner on the Town* (TOTT) is a visual arts outreach project linked to the collections and exhibitions programme of the Towner Art Gallery. TOTT was launched in 2000 as a pilot, following extensive consultation with groups involved in community development in Eastbourne. Subsequently TOTT formed partnerships with key local stakeholders to provide developmental and diversionary projects aimed at young people at risk of social exclusion, older people and people engaged in substance misuse programmes. Since then the pilot has become one of the most innovative gallery outreach programmes in the UK.

Relevant to our evaluation is the fact that, though not a Pathfinder, by working in partnership with key local agencies in the field of crime reduction and youth work, *Towner on the Town* has successfully demonstrated how cultural activity can make a real difference to the lives of young offenders.

On this subject, the Acting Chief Inspector, from Sussex Police said that the Council's cultural programmes have made a very important contribution to the local Crime Reduction agenda, particularly in key target areas of youth offending, substance misuse and anti-social behaviour.

Another partner in the project from Turnaround Community Detox Programme has noted that partnership work with Eastbourne Council has made a clear contribution to the highest success rate in the South East for Drug Treatment Testing Order completions. As a result, Turnaround has mainstreamed culture into its core work.

In relation to the Cultural Pathfinders, achieving Beacon status (which attracts additional funding) was perhaps more important than Pathfinder status. To get the Beacon status they had to provide evidence on the ground of both ability to achieve targets, partnership building and consultation.

The interviewees felt that Beacon status delivers more benefits to the Borough Council than Pathfinder because it is essentially evidence based from the start. This means that the stakeholders involved in the bidding have already been working together even before the status is granted. The projects initiated come from a rigorous assessment of need, are backed by extensive consultation and robust evaluation. This means that Beacon projects are able to demonstrate more forcefully the impacts of culture to members.

Another key element of difference between Beacon projects and Pathfinders is that Pathfinders generally are given two years to develop and this is a short time for partnerships on the ground to consolidate and deliver longer-term outcomes. Beacon projects allow partnerships a longer development time, but also the space to evolve new and creative ideas.

Since the pilot *Towner on the Town* has been mainstreamed, the LSP has commissioned the project to develop a creative package of consultation tools targeting the homeless in Eastbourne. In addition, part of the Legacy programme of *Towner on the Town* is to roll out a series of projects (using culture as a tool to deal with social issues) across neighbouring local authorities.

### Leicester City Council

In Leicester, an unsuccessful bidder, the Pathfinder status is not given high priority whereas Beacon status is recognised more clearly as an award and a badge of success. This is also because the process associated with Beacon status is considered much more rigorous than that of granting Pathfinder status.

Overall, the Cultural Pathfinder was a city initiative with the support of Leicester's Cultural Strategy Partnership (CSP) with a focus on transforming the public realm areas in the emergent cultural quarter of the city. The CSP is one of 7 theme groups within the Leicester Partnership and culture is a key theme in the Community Plan.

In general, the city is well advanced in policy structures with well established cultural strategy partnership tied into community plan and LAA and Leicester was successful in Beacon status for cultural and sports work with 'Hard to Reach Groups' in 2006.

The Pathfinder initiative sought to build on existing strengths and to offer a new dimension in the cultural quarter – bringing together the *Liveability* project on improved and integrated street services and community engagement in the design and development of the public realm in the area of the Performing Arts Centre.

According to the Cultural Strategy Manager, the project is moving forward without Pathfinder status even though some aspects of the work have not progressed as planned, in particular the establishment of a community trust for the St Georges churchyard.

Overall, directors in Leicester believe that Beacon status confers higher-level benefits to the City Council than Pathfinder (cultural) for a number of reasons:

- rigour of evaluation because it is evidence based from the outset;
- directed towards the final dissemination of information so acting as pilots to inform other authorities;
- money – enough to appoint a co-ordinator to deal with dissemination;
- building on existing practices and experience/strengths (i.e. you need to prove you can do it before getting the status conferred);
- evaluation includes peer, partner and community consultation;
- worked across service areas as well as within all culture and sports groups;
- early commitments mean shared ownership;
- Beacon projects in each theme area meet with each other to share info and experience.

On evaluation the Cultural Strategy Manager noted:

*“We need to be much smarter in the sector, much smarter about demonstrating how culture delivers on things, and it’s not enough to say what we know it does or we have got a case study example of someone whose life was transformed ... We need to be able to use the same performance measures that education use and actually show the impact, even if that is using proxy indicators.”*

### London Borough of Newham

In much the same way as Leicester, Newham was an unsuccessful Pathfinder bidder but went on to gain Beacon status for the work that they were doing on evaluating culture. Pathfinder was not given particularly high status within the authority and indeed the person involved could not remember what went into the bid.

However, the Local Authority received £300,000 of Neighbourhood Renewal funding to run a series of pilot cultural projects targeting community need and from that to develop an evaluation model/technique to help measure the value of culture across four local authority agendas, community cohesion, crime reduction, health and education. Working in partnership with research agency ECOTEC, they developed the Newham Ecotec Assessment Technique (NEAT) which looked at the impact of programmes and identified which programmes were successful enough over a two year period to replicate over the longer term and aid continuous improvement of culture and community department. This is set out in the attached [Appendix 4](#).

The LGA and IDeA have shown interest in mainstreaming the model and the authority are already in discussions with other local authorities how to use it.

### Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

This was an unsuccessful Cultural Pathfinder and Beacon status bid. Its original aims included 'to raise the profile of the Borough at a national level'. All the projects named have happened anyway (because they were based on pre-existing work on cultural cohesion) and some, such as the *Unity Sport* project, have gone on to gain a national profile.

The *Unity Sport* programme is tied in to the LAA and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and has been taken up by the Council at a corporate and national level and has been mentioned at a national level by Ted Cante as an example of a successful community cohesion project.

*"We used to have to go to people to promote the value of sport, now they are coming to us."*

Oldham has targets in the LAA related to sport such as, for example, two hours sport in school (a stretch target). It also has an innovative arts target in the LAA focused on the number of people participating. They also have a pledge to mainstream two major sports projects, but as a result of having delivered against their PSA targets, they haven't a need to draw down all of the money because they have been able to lever in external funding.

Members pay particular attention to programmes when they impact on specific wards, so Oldham feel that performance management and evaluation need to be able to drill down to specific geographical areas (e.g. a specific school).

Performance management has been essential to the success. Oldham made use of a number of surveys. For sport, for example, they are using the survey commissioned by the DfES from TNS, plus the local schools survey (the next one is due out in October 2007).

*"Quantification has been crucial in convincing stakeholders of the value of what they are doing and making arguments that culture is fulfilling other people's objectives. It also helps to encourage people to work together as can see that they are achieving agreed end results."*

## Oxfordshire

Saw the bidding for Pathfinder as an opportunity to highlight what was already happening on the ground, but also to gain more experience in evaluating culture-led projects and to share that information and learning with other Pathfinders.

Their focus was on work with children and young people chiefly within a school setting but also extending activity to other settings. The reason for choosing this theme was that the County had just undergone reorganisation; a Directorate for Learning and Culture had been created (Culture had moved from being a separate department within the County Council into Education and Learning). So, in order to consolidate such re-organisation, a set of projects needed to happen.

This meant, in the first instance, improvement in the relationships with schools, but also the creation of a set of cultural entitlements which was about identifying what expectations young people in Oxfordshire had in terms of their experience of libraries, museums etc. They also created a Cultural Entitlement Officer post. These were all elements of the original bid for Pathfinder status. In addition, the bid also included actions under the heading of creative learning. These were projects aimed at young people and focused on working with artists to encourage creative skills among this sector of the community. Finally, the bid for Pathfinder wanted to showcase the joined up work between the County and the District Councils.

The bid was unsuccessful. One interviewee mentioned that they were disappointed about having had little feedback from either LGA or DCMS on why they had been unsuccessful. Though they did not expect support in funding, they would have welcomed the possibility of learning about evaluation.

His point is that it wasn't very clear at the time what criteria were being used for the selection of projects. Not unlike other Pathfinders that were selected for status, this wasn't a new project and it was about doing the things they were doing anyway. The risk of it not happening was very low and it wasn't dependent upon being a Pathfinder. In essence, the Pathfinder status would have given them the opportunity to learn from other projects and to develop a robust framework for the evaluation of impacts and around the question of how to deliver entitlements.

Overall, projects have been developed regardless of Pathfinder status, indicating that the real value of the Cultural Pathfinders may be the capturing of the impacts cultural activity can have in order to share the learning and provide examples of different approaches that have worked.

## Section 7 Meeting the unexpected

As discussed earlier, the differences between projects does not allow for an easy framework to benchmark progression and achievement against a set of norms. However, this section considers some of the factors militating for and against success and failure, whether foreseen or unexpected.

Throughout the evaluation, we have seen some projects that addressed and achieved against each of their original aims and have been able to articulate clear areas of success and failure. For these and, indeed, most of the projects we also found that some outcomes both for good and ill were simply not anticipated and that these may contribute significantly to the future sustainability of locally based projects.

The short timeframe given over to the Pathfinder programme has been a window in longer-term processes. Some, for example **Sheffield**, had a gestation period of some 5 years prior to the Cultural Pathfinder. So, the Cultural Pathfinder provided an impetus for a number of projects to become more visible or indeed became the catalyst to put into action a project that had been discussed but not moved forward.

Different factors have contributed to success: timing, synchronicity, leadership, partnerships, personnel changes, scale and ambition, enabling networks, visibility of project outputs, willingness to take risks, trust and perseverance.

Factors militating against progression and completion may include some of the following: poor communication systems; lack of agreement on aims; being too ambitious; lack of shared understanding, or a shared or common language; time and personnel changes.

Our evaluation has discovered a range of unexpected outcomes across the Cultural Pathfinder projects:

**Sheffield** is now placing culture at the centre of its Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, building cultural engagement started with SOAR.

Partnership working between **North and South Tyneside** has strengthened their individual standing with each other and, jointly, they have secured funding and are working on joint events and on a long-term strategy for coastal regeneration. In addition, an unexpected outcome has been the change in attitude towards both authorities by regional bodies and funders. In the past funding would have gone straight to Newcastle/Gateshead. North and South Tyneside are now regularly attracting funding for events from Culture 10 and feature in regional strategic plans for the future.

North and South Tyneside are finding that there has been an attitude shift within tourism strategies in the region. Also unexpected was the effect the project has had on both North and South Tyneside's CPA where it was shown that satisfaction levels had improved and also on the Regional Commentary assessments which were very positive.

*“We were recently 4 star plus in the CPA announcements and we were in the top ten authorities in the country under these CPA assessments being the highest class and improving strongly. Whereas when [the Chief Executive] came we were very much in the doldrums and had just failed an education inspection and were a really a low performing authority. It’s not just a result of Cultural Pathfinder but Cultural Pathfinder is a useful part in this and is transforming the Borough agenda.”*

The regional officer working with North and South Tyneside on the Regional Commentary reported that they had improved across the board on how they were delivering cultural services. He was impressed by the newly proactive attitude of the authorities,

*“[They] want to understand what they’re not doing well and they want to work to improve, so the appetite to improve is definitely there.”*

Partnership progress in one area, may however be countered by partner disagreement elsewhere. For **Leaps and Bounds**, the initial ambitions and working partnership between Birmingham and the Black Country Authorities were not fully realised, and this had some bearing on our ability to measure the successes of the Pathfinder project.

Despite the success of the visible end of the project, as manifest in the Channel 4 production ‘*Ballet Hoo*’, The Leaps and Bounds project struggled at the start due to changes in the personnel who had signed up to the process and differences in aims and objectives of the partner authorities. Certainly when Birmingham became a Cultural Pathfinder it looked as though the project might not get off the ground as the partnership wasn’t working. It is therefore a hugely significant achievement that the project was as successful as it undoubtedly was in terms of working with young people at risk. This was down to some inspired and determined individuals committed to giving their best to the young people.

Whilst the overriding objective agreed by the Leaps and Bounds steering group was ‘to provide life changing opportunities for young people through personal development and dance’, the Cultural Pathfinder had several additional aims including; sharing good practice between local authorities, recognising the young peoples achievements through Arts Award, linking young people with employment in the arts sector and identifying links between the arts and corporate sectors through the life coach programme.

**Birmingham** City Council recognise they did not achieve all they set out to achieve with the Pathfinder in regards to the above aims. It did, however, enable them to look at the relationship between arts and the youth service and consider working more closely in partnership. They are now developing and hoping to get funding for a new joint training programme for artists and youth workers to understand the disciplines of youth work. Birmingham also believe that the project has left a legacy of understanding how to work with young people at risk, particularly the need for a large element of pastoral support to make it work and overcome barriers in some young people’s lives.

Although Birmingham didn't achieve their aim of using the Arts Award, as a result of Leaps and Bounds, Sandwell College has developed a tailor-made BTEC for the project – which 38 young people have completed. In reality this is probably more effective than Arts Award because it is a more widely known qualification.

Measuring change in people's lives and seeing how these changes affect individuals' future decisions demands longitudinal approaches and sophisticated evaluation well beyond the resources of any of the Pathfinders. We can, however, mark the ways in which some groups and associations have set structural or attitudinal change as a part of their aspirations and where the Cultural Pathfinder has resulted in some shift of emphasis.

### Changing Perceptions

Cultural Pathfinders have allowed some projects to develop their identities at both local and wider levels. Changing perceptions of institutions and areas takes time and is affected by different factors. The sense of change that has taken place as a direct result of involvement in the Cultural Pathfinder is evident in Hampshire, Sheffield, Birmingham and Spelthorne.

As a result of the implementation of the Discovery Centre, users in Gosport **Hampshire** now more closely match the demographics of the area. There has been an increase in young people and increase in new users who are coming for new uses (e.g. using computers, or for evening classes, or to see the exhibitions, or simply to have a cup of coffee). A mystery shopper survey of young people carried out in Hampshire concluded the Gosport Discovery Centre was the only 'library' that young people would want to use.

Initially the move towards the co-location of library/museum and exhibition area was not popular among the traditional library users (especially those aged 65+) who felt that money was going into a building rather than into improving the book stock. Now some of these traditional users are coming back and happily mixing with the young people.

Hampshire has in the past been perceived by some as not at the vanguard of innovation and there has been a change in the perception of Hampshire thanks to the pioneering (on such a scale) of the Discovery Centres. Hampshire is now becoming known as an innovative county in terms of joined up delivery, evaluation systems and, more generally, for successfully co-locating 'learning' services and functions. There is a possibility here to roll out the model to other libraries and to show how cultural services can work well with education/learning.

The **Leaps and Bounds** project unexpectedly had an impact not only on the young people, but everyone who worked on the project and affected the ways of working;

*“Ballet Hoo changed my life’ could equally apply to life coaches, youth workers or ballet dancers.”*

In terms of audience development it has also had the unexpected result of attracting new audiences to ballet and made ballet more accessible.

*“It was a completely different audience reaction ... Quite extraordinary... the families and carers of the people involved will have a completely different attitude towards dance and ballet than they did before.”*

Indeed, working with the young people has altered the culture of Birmingham Royal Ballet itself and the way it works with young people. It is now much more outward looking - indeed they have recently appointed a Director of Learning to ensure the continuing development of the organisation. Previously they have always targeted middle class young people who had a strong interest and talent for ballet and are now looking at ways of extending the use of ballet. The project has shown that the discipline of ballet can work to have significance beyond the art form itself and have a positive impact on a range of clients, most notably, disaffected youth.

In **Sheffield** the integration of the neighbourhood approach adopted in the SOAR programme area within the city’s cultural strategy provides a strategic link to the roll out of a cultural dimension within Housing Market Renewal. It is a small step that has longer term and larger implications.

*“As well as being a named project, the cultural strategy is now feeding into the Local Area Agreement.”*

The focus on area identity, building a network of resources and people who manage these, all contribute to positive regeneration and shifts in perceptions of the area and of the role of cultural activities and their value.

*“Well I suppose for me it’s about ... if you can embed a way of thinking, an approach in your general regeneration programme it becomes so much easier if you have some resources and someone to facilitate that ... it needs someone with a cultural head on to facilitate that and spark the ideas, and ‘had you thought of this, and had you thought of that?’ Otherwise I don’t think it happens.”*

The starting point for Sheffield has not been quite so positive. Initially the project had limited member or senior officer engagement with the main impetus for the Pathfinder bid coming from SOAR. The lead senior officer was due to leave the Council shortly after the success of the bid was announced - and it was some months before the new Director of Culture would come into post. A further complication was that the bid author also moved from SOAR to the Council at this time, although she acted as caretaker for the project until the Director of Culture arrived. As a result Eventus, an independent consultancy and partner in the bid, took the lead role in delivery. While strongly supported by individual officers at SOAR, following personnel and programme changes it was something of an uphill struggle to retain culture as a focus for SOAR - this has only recently altered with the adoption of the Cultural Strategy Steering Group (originally facilitated by Eventus) within the community engagement arm of SOAR’s work.

Surprisingly then, with the input the new Director of Culture and professional connections at policy levels, that the processes of work in SOAR, over some seven years, resulted in new working partnerships on Housing Market Renewal, and that

policy has swung round to adopt and take a more active neighbourhood-centred focus, while building links with central institutions and agencies.

It is the post of Director of Culture and the breadth of the portfolio of this office that allowed the City Council to suggest, 'why do we not link together our Pathfinder work?', hence the process of cultural engagement is now informing and leading thinking for the Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder and is also informing the Stage 2 roll out of the Local Area Agreement in Sheffield.

As part of the Cultural Pathfinder scheme **Spelthorne** Borough Council has worked in partnership to regenerate the pedestrian subway system at Sunbury Cross. The area was identified as having a high level fear of crime due to the poor lighting, unsafe floor surfaces and graffiti which drew in numbers of young people looking for a place to 'hang out'.

Spelthorne looked to develop creative projects for young people which would result in public art for the Sunbury Cross area. This activity, combined with improved lighting, better drainage and installation of CCTV, has made the area safer for users. Young people at risk of offending or re-offending were targeted in order to integrate them into their community, offer positive projects, accreditations and show them pathways back into education, work and positive activities.

So from such a difficult position, the Pathfinder has managed the following results:

*"We've been asking for graffiti boards for ages. It's all about the arts man."*(Young person involved in art project 2006) and *"I don't want to get into trouble anymore so I am waiting for the workshops so I can get working on my style."* (Young person involved in Aerosol project 2005).

The projects have proved to be a great success, not only encouraging residents and visitors to use the subway system but also through partnership working they have engaged a number of young people in activities which have led them back to education or employment and have reduced the number of cases of vandalism on the area. As the work developed Spelthorne has been contacted by other local authorities, community groups and police officers who want to create similar projects within their cities and communities.

Unexpected events and impacts have occurred in all of the Pathfinders, although not all of these have been described in this report. What is clear is that, when they have occurred, the Pathfinders have been flexible enough to incorporate the positive and determined enough to find ways of overcoming the problems. For all, there has been a growth in understanding of the value of culture amongst partners and of the perspectives, challenges and priorities of other services amongst cultural services.

## Section 8 Conclusions and Recommendations

These conclusions discuss and summarise the most salient issues and lessons to have emerged from the evaluation. They are grouped within the sub-headings of the report for clarity. However, some conclusions relate to more than one area.

### Culture Works

Whether the projects addressed specific sub-cultures or communities or were targeted at changing organisational cultures, social impacts are evident across different groups.

Cultural planning approaches such as those used by the Pathfinders encourage new partnerships and cross-disciplinary working and offer an innovative, holistic model which can be used to support the changing status of culture at the strategic centre, and across the shared priorities. In the Pathfinders this resulted in imaginative combinations of culture with approaches derived, for example, from social work and education.

Both of these conclusions support the need for an integrated and crosscutting approach to cultural policy-making and delivery. Where this has occurred in the Pathfinders the service delivery has become more cohesive to the benefit of communities and the partners tasked to address shared priorities.

### Connecting and communicating

The Cultural Pathfinders provided an opportunity to develop new partnerships, share learning and create new shared visions of the services that the local authorities can provide. It is in sharing of information and openness that new relationships flower.

In order to embed the new ways of working authorities have devised new structures, whether project steering groups or new strategic cultural partnerships, that provide space for regular communication, sharing of learning and mechanisms to advocate for the efficacy of culture in overcoming a range of problems.

In some cases the new structures emphasised the importance of listening to stakeholders and potential beneficiaries and using this information as an iterative learning opportunity in itself. For some this led to clear continuing professional development strategies and for others it was used to improve the projects themselves.

Successful advocates throughout the Cultural Pathfinders have shown the importance of targeting their messages appropriately, whether this is a marketing message to participants or a clear policy line that demonstrates that a particular project is achieving against corporate objectives.

More needs to be done to ensure that all stakeholders – from local participant to ward councillor, project manager to funder - are included in a three-way communication cascade – up, down and laterally.

## Leaders Matter

The Cultural Pathfinder projects were geared to affect change. To do so demanded that individuals at varying levels acted as change agents. Sometimes new people were engaged specifically to do this, while in other cases the skills, knowledge and abilities were already in place. Here, the designation as a Cultural Pathfinder provided support and permission to enable those individuals to innovate within their authorities. In all cases the project leaders were empowered to take risks, and in some instances passed on this power to others enabling them to respond positively and creatively to the unexpected.

It is clear that in order to lead in this way there is a core set of skills and competencies - determination, clear vision, policy-making, understanding of 'audience' needs, credibility, lateral thinking and the ability to connect and enthuse. All the leaders showed clear understanding of the potential of cultural activity in addressing issues articulated in other spheres of activity, for example, social care, education, housing, or health.

Where these skills have been evident a key outcome has been to ensure that the learning has been transferred to, and embedded within, the mainstream – ensuring sustainability of the good practice. To achieve this outcome leaders have been trusted and created trusting cultures around the projects.

Those projects that prospered had developed a shared vision which was communicated well and derived support from the strategic centre. They also had set high expectations of everybody involved in the process, as well as in quality outcomes.

Good leaders recognised the importance of operating simultaneously at macro and micro levels, and highlighting connections.

Leadership skills are clearly essential to achieve consistent quality outcomes and good practice across services and levels of seniority. Some Cultural Pathfinders have shown that leadership skills can be developed.

## Prove It

Making the case and proving the benefits of cultural activities demanded that the Cultural Pathfinders effected some measurement of the anticipated changes. This national report is one part of the matrix of evaluation undertaken, with each Pathfinder having pursued its own local study. Many of the authorities signed up for this project in order to pilot evaluation techniques and to learn from other Pathfinders. Three examples of good practice are set out in detail in **Appendix 4** to this report.

However, the variation of project types and objectives made comparison between them all difficult. The fact that these were pilot projects also made a shared evaluation framework difficult to operate as each project responded to the feedback and learning and thus adjusted their initial objectives.

Despite this, several of the Cultural Pathfinders have undertaken successful project evaluations covering in particular participation and satisfaction levels. One or two have also addressed value for money and impact. The latter two elements – value for money and impact, have proven more difficult where baseline information was either not available or not collected at the start.

In order to measure and evidence distance travelled, projects need to have clear aims, baseline data and relevant indicators by which to measure changes.

Where baseline data exists at a national level and is available, it is used better by some sectors over others, in this case sports are well advanced. There is clearly an appetite for the processes of evaluation amongst cultural providers, however they did not appear to be using data from national research sources indicating there may be a communication problem.

To prove the case we found that quantitative data is important for convincing the strategic centre in terms of value for money and impact. Qualitative data is important for bringing quantitative data to life. Both are necessary and should work in harmony, and both require smart objectives and agreed baseline information or an agreed methodology for its collection at the outset. Consistency in evaluation methodologies at both national and local levels will provide a stronger case for culture.

Having completed the pilot phase of work, participating projects are now better equipped to establish realistic targets for participation in the future.

### Was it worth it?

What we have discovered is that, whilst the exemplar projects may well have happened without the Cultural Pathfinder label, the programme acted as a catalyst to greater joined-up working and to provide a heightened profile within each local authority for the work undertaken.

This emphasis on joined-up working convincingly suggests that the cultural planning approach has some merit in addressing shared priorities and providing local authorities with a sound basis for innovation in meeting community needs that do not at first glance appear to be cultural problems.

It is clear from some of the immediate impacts noted from the Cultural Pathfinders that the learning process is two-way: cultural services have learned more about the needs of sister services and their clients, and these partners have a much better understanding of the value that culture can add to their work. In one or two cases the learning is also about cultural planning and holistic/lateral problem solving and is being extended to other service areas.

### Meeting the unexpected

We find that the projects pursued an action-research process which meant that all were subject to change as learning occurred, and as circumstances surrounding the

projects changed. It is not surprising therefore that some unexpected, but welcome outcomes developed. Whilst we have stressed the importance of planning, smart objectives and common baseline information, we must also highlight the need for projects to remain flexible and creative.

Cultural Pathfinders have illustrated their capacity to adapt through awareness of changing circumstances. This has been enabled through regular review, trusting partnerships and good communications that have allowed them to address issues before they became full blown crises.

Some Cultural Pathfinders have worked successfully to shift perceptions either of the role and work of the authority, or of the identity of a specific place, or of what culture can achieve. By targeting opinion formers some have seen perceptions change exponentially in some unexpected quarters.

## **Recommendations**

From this evaluation we have established two sets of recommendations. The first are general learning points relevant to all partners, the second focus on any future Cultural Pathfinder type programme.

We **recommend** the following:

- Development and implementation of a national advocacy strategy for the use of culture in achieving a variety of objectives, using the Cultural Pathfinders as case studies. This strategy should be led by DCMS / LGA and include advocacy across government departments. This may include a programme of CPD on approaches such as cultural planning.
- Explore new cultural strategic partnerships to support the dissemination of learning, advocacy and partnership development both within the cultural sector and with other sectors. These structures need to be inclusive and operate from strategic to delivery levels.
- The development of training in leadership, policy-making and communications targeted at the cultural sector. One of the problems Pathfinders had was in identifying champions who have the communication skills to make the case for culture.
- Carry out research at a national level into cultural participation to provide a baseline against which local authorities can benchmark themselves. Where such data already exists a communication strategy should be put into action to ensure that local authority officers are aware of it and use it.
- Development of case studies of good practice that illustrate the effectiveness of good evaluation practices that use both quantitative and qualitative data in leveraging funding or political support.

- Development of guidance on evaluation methodologies nationally, possibly linked to cultural targets within the LAA framework.

### Recommendations for any future Cultural Pathfinder type programmes

Should any future Cultural Pathfinder type programme be developed we **recommend** the following:

- Develop clear and transparent aims and selection criteria.
- Provide more support for the evaluation of projects in general. In particular, some Pathfinders thought that DCMS / LGA should attach a specialist external evaluator to work with projects such as the Pathfinders from the start.
- Organise more practical workshops by DCMS / LGA to explain the benefits, opportunities and potential issues when launching new programmes such as Pathfinders.
- More opportunities for projects that are similar in theme or character to link and work together. Some Pathfinders suggested visits to other Pathfinders and to relevant projects in the UK and abroad to help in making connections and sharing learning.
- The creation and support of an ongoing network of Pathfinders. This could be a live resource used by DCMS, LGA and local authorities for learning and exchange of experience.
- Attach some financial reward to Pathfinder status, perhaps to bring in external specialist evaluators or to organise special seminars dealing with practical issues of implementation.

# Evaluation of the Cultural Pathfinder Programme

## Appendices

Cultural Evaluation and Research Unit (CERU) and  
International Cultural Planning and Policy Unit (ICPPU)  
De Montfort University, Leicester

July 2007

### Appendix 1

#### Pathfinder Summaries

This section provides brief summaries of each of the Cultural Pathfinders identifying their starting points and the main areas of work to be progressed within the programme period.

##### Birmingham – Leaps and Bounds

Birmingham Cultural Pathfinder was a part of a larger scale project called Leaps and Bounds which involved the Black Country authorities Sandwell, Dudley and Wolverhampton as well as partners Birmingham Royal Ballet (BRB), Diverse Productions and Youth at Risk and funders - LSC and Black Country Connexions. It was already underway when Pathfinder status was granted to Birmingham.

Leaps and Bounds was designed to change the lives of 300 young people aged 15-20 who were considered to be disadvantaged and/or at risk by the use of one-to-one personal development techniques developed by Youth at Risk and dance – primarily ballet. The entire project was filmed by Diverse Productions for Channel 4 and resulted in a 4 part documentary of the development of the children and a screening of the final performance of Romeo and Juliet performed at The Birmingham Hippodrome by 80 of the young people in association with BRB in the autumn of 2006. Following the performance many of the children worked for their BTEC in performing arts.

Whilst the overriding objective agreed by the Leaps and Bounds steering group was 'To provide life changing opportunities for young people through personal development and dance' Birmingham Pathfinder's objectives also included:

1. Learning from sharing of practice between local authorities in the fields of youth work and community arts and to develop closer working relationships between youth services and cultural services within Birmingham City Council;
2. Improving knowledge and experience of the arts among young participants;
3. Providing a wide range of opportunities for young people to experience the arts, as creators, audiences and administrators/technicians;
4. Recognising young people's achievements through the Youth Arts Award;
5. Linking young people with opportunities for employment in the arts sector;
6. Developing skills/knowledge among trailblazers;
7. Developing arts skills/knowledge amongst life coaches;
8. Identifying new links between the arts and corporate sectors through the life coach programme.

Whilst the wider Leaps and Bounds objective of 'providing life changing opportunities for young people through personal development and dance' was achieved in a very high profile way, Birmingham Cultural Pathfinder's more wide ranging objectives achieved less success due to staffing problems and differences in approach. The Leaps and Bounds Trust has now been set up in Dudley with aim of building on the success of the original project.

<http://www.brb.org.uk/timeline/ballethoo>

### Canterbury – At the Heart and Taking Part – The Beaney Institute and Young People

This Pathfinder aimed to engage children and young people creatively with their cultural heritage, in the context of the radical refurbishment of an historic building in Canterbury. The Beaney Institute is a late Victorian museum and gallery building in the centre of Canterbury which requires radical improvement to its facilities.

The Pathfinder created an opportunity for local children and young people to become actively engaged in the refurbishment plans for the building while at the same time working with cultural collections and professionals. The Shared Priorities addressed were: improve standards in schools, improve the quality of life of children, young people and families at risk, transform the local environment and create stronger, safer communities. The target groups and community benefiting were the children and young people from two Canterbury schools, one primary and one secondary. These have been involved in a three-year cross-curricular programme.

The impacts sought were: improvement in pupil motivation, self-esteem and attainment; greater sense of ownership among local young people of cultural resources; increased sense of pride in the locality, especially town buildings; improved understanding of town/building development issues; improved understanding of the needs, interests and motivations of children and young people. At policy level, the outcomes sought were: improved museum and library services for local people of all ages and abilities as well as for schools.

For information contact email: [Krystyna.Matyjaszkiewicz@canterbury.gov.uk](mailto:Krystyna.Matyjaszkiewicz@canterbury.gov.uk)

### Hampshire – Discovery Centres and the library transformation programme

This Pathfinder project focused on demonstrating the contribution of culture to the Shared Priorities through the development of the Discovery Centre concept and the initial project in the Discovery Centre programme in **Hampshire** at Gosport which opened in March 2005.

Discovery Centres are a shared facility accommodating more than one service within one building and designed to be a focal centre for the community. Discovery Centres developed in Hampshire as a response to the decline in library use occurring locally and book borrowing (also experienced in other authorities), and is just one element of a major investment programme in Hampshire in libraries and the development of other cultural services to meet community needs, drive service improvement and to develop and position cultural services for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The key aims of the Discovery Centre programme are;

- to enrich community life – providing a centre accessible to all the community;
- enable personal growth – provide a stimulating and accessible learning environment;
- increase usage throughout the community;

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- develop a sense of place – a space that all ages can identify with as a place for them.

The 'shared priorities' addressed through the Discovery Centre project are : to improve the quality of life of children, young people, families at risk and older people; to contribute to making (Gosport) a safer and stronger community and stimulating the economic vitality of the community.

The Gosport Discovery Centre programme's key aims to be evaluated over the two years of the cultural pathfinder were: to attract more users; that the user profile should reflect the whole community; to modernise the library and museum service for the 21st century; to deliver improved service quality with a local community focus; and to improve customer satisfaction and value.

[www.discoverycentres.co.uk/gosport](http://www.discoverycentres.co.uk/gosport)

### Herefordshire – Creative Industries

The Creative Industries Programme was set up for individual artists and designer makers in Herefordshire as a follow on from a previous EU funded creative industries project, funded by Arts Council England (ACE) and Herefordshire County Council. This previous project had involved grant giving to creative industries but with less funding available it was decided to take a more strategic focused approach by offering services to develop and nurture artists at different stages of their career through start up courses, mentoring, tradeshow and design agency support.

There was also a sector support programme made up of already established initiatives e.g. Contemporary Craft Fair, H.Art Week. Herefordshire County Council also wanted to look at methods of working with neighbouring counties and develop a cohesive approach to developing economic vitality in the Rural Regeneration Zone in the West Midlands. The shared priority for Herefordshire was to promote the economic vitality of the locality.

Primarily they aimed to support the development of individual businesses and provide opportunities for creative sectors to sell their work and in so doing show how working with creative businesses benefits the local economy. Their original goals were drawn from the Cultural Strategy. Overall impact sought to create a brand and image for Herefordshire as a creative county to work in and to visit.

The project has already been running for 2 years and funding is due to finish in March 2008. Herefordshire County Council is interested in continuing support to the creative industries and is currently looking at sustainable methods to do so.

<http://www.creativeherefordshire.co.uk/>

### London Borough of Richmond upon Thames – *Culture for Keeps*: Encouraging Participation

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The Cultural Pathfinder Programme in the London Borough of Richmond on Thames is called *Culture for Keeps* and focuses on access to cultural provision for looked after children.

The focus has been on cultural provision for children aged 5 and over, largely during the school holidays, but increasingly tapping into the extended school day. The project was a joint initiative by the Children Looked After team and Cultural Services.

Richmond's shared priority was focussed on improving the quality of life for children, young people and families at risk.

The local authority has appointed a Participation Worker, funded by Connexions, and based in the Children Looked After Team (CLAT), who liaises with cultural providers within the Council and the children and their carers to encourage participation in arts and sports.

[www.richmond.gov.uk](http://www.richmond.gov.uk)

## Liverpool – It's Not OK! Violence Prevention Education Programme

It's Not OK!, the Liverpool Cultural Pathfinder project, is a violence prevention programme aimed at teenagers. It was initiated in 2004 by the Creative Communities team of Liverpool Culture Company (LCC), in collaboration with Liverpool City Council. The shared priority area is the creation of safer and stronger communities.

The project aims to encourage young people to make positive choices, and to challenge the view that violence is an acceptable form of human interaction, by exploring the negative effects of violent behaviour. The project is also aimed at youth workers and at teachers of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) in secondary schools in Liverpool. The topics at the centre of the project are alcohol abuse, arson, race hate, homophobic bullying, knife crime and the influence of the gun culture.

It's Not OK! is centred on the production of five films: Plastered (on alcohol abuse), Street Heat (on arson), Senseless (on racial harassment and attacks), a fourth film on homophobic bullying, and a fifth on knife crime and gun culture are planned for 2008. All films are accompanied by learning packs, prepared by Liverpool-based Ariel Trust, specialising in media education. Radio is part of each project, with radio drama scenes supporting the education packs.

The members of the Steering Group are representatives from LCC, Liverpool City Council Children Services, Ariel Trust, City Safe, Merseyside Police, Connexions, the Primary Care Trust, and Merseyside Fire and Rescue Service (the latter only for Street Heat).

[www.liverpool08.com](http://www.liverpool08.com)

## Manchester – Museums for Changing Lives: Working Together to Raise Standards

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Manchester City Council's Cultural Pathfinder is a project between the Manchester partners within the North West Museum Hub Manchester Education Partnership (part of Manchester LEA), which was already up and running prior to the Cultural Pathfinder. It aimed to embed the use of museums and galleries into Manchester primary schools' practice, to raise attendance at Manchester's museums and galleries by 25% and to raise attainment levels in writing in participating schools. This project addresses the shared priority of raising standards across our schools.

The Manchester museums and galleries pooled their funding from the Renaissance in the Regions programme to employ a Primary Consultant - Museums and Galleries based within MEP with a brief to liaise between the museums and galleries and primary schools. Entitled Magpie, the project has been evaluated by the Centre for Education and Industry at the University of Warwick.

The programme has now been fully integrated into the planning and priorities of MEP and a two-way learning partnership has been created as teachers have become very creative and technically competent, and are delivering a greater proportion of the sessions than they would have done previously. Museum and gallery staff are enhancing their understanding of schools' needs and working practices and the National Curriculum to match. The Primary Consultant has been instrumental in brokering relationships with curriculum Advisors.

The Pathfinder has influenced future work at MEP, as they had previously not linked to DCMS. A network of experienced expert teacher practitioners and museum/gallery educators has been facilitated through the Primary Consultant and a team of advocates comprised of the teachers who have been involved has been created through a 'cascading' model. Whilst Continuing Professional Development was one of the projects original objectives, the extent of impact CPD has had on individual teachers to become advocates has been unexpected.

[www.mlanorthwest.org.uk](http://www.mlanorthwest.org.uk)

## North and South Tyneside – Cultural Regeneration through Coastal Partnership

South and North Tyneside share the coastline of Tyne and Wear, along with their neighbour the city of Sunderland. Prior to the Cultural Pathfinder programme North and South Tyneside had little if any joint working taking place involving cultural activity. The Pathfinder project therefore involved the two Councils coming together to work in partnership with the ultimate aim of developing the coastal strip to regenerate the area through tourism. Their specific political aims included: the use of tourism and culture to support jobs and economic development and the development of the cultural infrastructure of the coastal areas north and south of the mouth of the Tyne. The Shared Priority focus of the North and South Tyneside project was 'promoting the economic vitality of localities'.

Regeneration of the area is essentially a long-term project and outside the scope of the Cultural Pathfinders programme. However, in the time allotted, North and South Tyneside have focussed on two main areas - events and facility management. There

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have also been areas of work which they have sought to influence, such as a wider regeneration scheme and the profile of culture at the coast within the wider region.

From a starting point of little involvement with one another prior to 2004 both local authorities now have a track record of staging successful large and small-scale events. This started with a successful bid to Tyne and Wear partnership to hold small out of season festivals and events and now include events of significant scale promoted and funded by Culture10 (events arm of Newcastle Gateshead initiative) including the Mouth of the Tyne Festival.

<http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/tourist/events>

### Sheffield – Creative Futures: Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration

The Sheffield Cultural Pathfinder is located within the Southey Owlerton Area Regeneration (SOAR) boundaries northeast of the city centre. The SOAR based Pathfinder stemmed from and was developed in response to a number of existing projects, primarily based upon 'Creative Futures' – A Cultural Action Plan for the Neighbourhoods, commissioned by SPELL-NE as part of the SRB-5 funded initiative in 2000. Creative Futures (Phase 1) was developed by Eventus, an independent cultural agency that had authored the action plan.

Eventus raised significant funds from ACE-Yorkshire and SRB to manage and deliver the Creative Futures (Phase 2) projects within the SOAR area for an 18-month period. In this they established a SOAR Cultural Strategy Steering Group including individuals from EAZ, health, cultural industries, the Burton Street Project, Sheffield Galleries and Museums Trust and Eventus.

The Cultural Pathfinder also brought together two other main strands of activity. Firstly the Liveability programme to revitalise communities and green and open spaces, parks and public realm through improvements to the environment, and secondly a new project to establish working relationships with the Cultural Industries Quarter Agency (CIQA) by establishing two hubs of activity in the SOAR Area. These would open the potential to establish pathways to employment and enterprise in creative industries.

The Sheffield Pathfinder was reliant on a number of partners and partnerships to achieve an ambitious programme, addressing four of the Shared Priorities, as follows:

- Promoting healthier communities by targeting key local services
- Creating safer and stronger communities
- Transforming our local environment
- Promoting the economic vitality of localities.

The Sheffield Pathfinder occurs within a time window that allowed for a particular focus on a part of the process of change, planning, advocacy, project delivery and on-going evaluation.

The Cultural Pathfinder has two distinct impact patterns – one at the end of the project delivery where local people are engaged in a process of revitalisation and make visible

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their aspiration, stories and commentaries, and at the other, where civic pride and policy making link to secure new ways of working encouraging creative learning and thinking as well as joined-up delivery.

Both of these ends of the spectrum are visible in Sheffield, both are important indicators of a process of change – that takes time to achieve. The evaluation of the direct impact of the Cultural Pathfinder locally is difficult to distinguish from other impacts or changes that would have occurred in any case due to the on-going nature of the programmes of work. However the political and strategic impact can be measured by the creation of the HMR culture Programme across the city as a direct result of the cultural planning approach adopted for the Pathfinder.

[www.eventus.org.uk/index.php?page=Creative\\_Futures](http://www.eventus.org.uk/index.php?page=Creative_Futures)  
[www.sheffield.gov.uk](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk)

### Somerset County Council – Creative Industries Development Agency (CIDA)

This particular project deals with the shared priority: Economic Vitality of Communities and aimed to set up Somerset Cultural Industries Development Agency (CIDA) to support existing creative businesses and grow new ones within the county. The project's key aims were to provide improved focus, leverage and efficiency for existing public sector investment. Key objectives of the project were to create a higher profile for Somerset Creative Industries within the county and beyond, to ensure that Creative Industries development is integrated into local and regional strategic planning, and to provide a sustainable future for key creative suppliers and agencies such as Somerset Art Weeks, Somerset Film and Video and Somerset Arts Promoters.

Additional objectives were to increase investment in Somerset from external sources, to build and sustain new creative businesses in Somerset so that it matches the regional profile to provide clear leadership for the Creative Industries sector within the county.

For information contact: Kay Allen, [KXAllen@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:KXAllen@somerset.gov.uk)

### Spelthorne – The Sunbury Cross Public Art Project

This Pathfinder focused on the area of Sunbury Cross within the Borough of Spelthorne where there is a major issue with fear of crime. A series of arts based projects have been developed (and will continue to be developed) with young people resulting in aerosol graffiti and contemporary mosaic-based public art for the Sunbury Cross area. The project's key aim was to regenerate an area of Sunbury Cross. The project met the Council's four priorities of making Spelthorne a safer place; engaging younger people making Spelthorne a safer place and improving customer service

The anticipated outcomes of this project for the young people involved were: raised awareness of their rights and responsibilities in terms of the law; an increased awareness of the impact vandalism and illegal graffiti has on the general public; an

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improvement in art skills, and an increased awareness of the educational and career options open to them relating to art and design.

In addition to the artwork, Spelthorne Council has been working closely with the Crime and Disorder Partnership (CDRP), the police, youth service and fire service to provide a set of safety measures within the Sunbury Cross subways.

[www.spelthorne.gov.uk](http://www.spelthorne.gov.uk)

[www.signalproject.com](http://www.signalproject.com)

[www.inspiredmosaics.co.uk](http://www.inspiredmosaics.co.uk)

### Suffolk County Council – Realising the Cultural and Heritage Dividend

The Cultural Pathfinder in Suffolk aimed to show how cultural projects can impact on wider county outcomes, including Local Area Agreement priorities and Community Strategy targets. It was a wide ranging programme of activities undertaken by a range of cultural partners across Suffolk, led by the County Council, with the focus on evaluating, illustrating and promoting the project's impact in relation to LAA outcomes. It is based on the belief that cultural provision is often the key interface where communities access service provision directly: playing a game of football in the park, finding a good book to read in the library or joining in a street festival. It contributes to making our society a more vibrant, diverse, interesting and fun place to live.

The Cultural Pathfinder bid was compiled at a time of change in Suffolk County Council: a new Head of Service Development, focusing on cultural activity, had recently been appointed; Suffolk was piloting the first phase of the Local Area Agreements (LAAs); and there was political change across the county. The restructuring of the County Council in Children and Young People's Services (CYP) and Adult and Community Services was also perceived as an opportunity to develop new relationships and to use the Cultural Pathfinder brand to identify the added value that culture could provide to the end targets identified within the LAA.

Suffolk addressed five of the Shared Priorities:

- Creating safer and stronger communities;
- Improving the quality of life for children and families at risk;
- Promoting healthier communities and narrowing health inequalities;
- Raising standards across our schools; and
- Transforming our local environments.

The Cultural Pathfinder in Suffolk has used a variety of existing and new projects to highlight the ways that culture can impact on outcomes across the LAA blocks, particularly around the 'prevention' agenda in health and crime. These exemplar projects have been supplemented by a communications strategy that has involved presentations at a number of important events over the course of the programme. Cultural activity tends to cut across the various LAA blocks and does not feature as particular targets, except for one around physical activity. The next LAA is currently being negotiated.

Suffolk County Council and the Strategic Partnership share a priority to increase their work with the voluntary sector and increasing volunteering has been identified as a target within the LAA. Voluntary Sector organisations in the cultural sector are included

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within this and the Cultural Pathfinder has received a Reward Grant from the LAA towards a project aimed at increasing volunteering.

The Cultural Pathfinder has also provided a focus for engaging with district councils through the Cultural Officers Group (COGS). Portfolio holders meet in the Suffolk Cultural Network. There are plans to develop a Cultural Strategic Partnership for Suffolk which will help to embed these relationships further.

The Suffolk Strategic Partnership is currently reviewing their Sustainable Community Strategy. The draft strategy now includes a dedicated theme for culture and sport. The sustainable Community Strategy will inform round two of the LAA which will act as the three year delivery plan of the Strategy.

[www.suffolk.gov.uk/LeisureAndCulture/CulturalPathfinder/Listing.htm](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/LeisureAndCulture/CulturalPathfinder/Listing.htm)

### Non Pathfinders

Eastbourne: Diane Bagley, Project Leader for Towner on The Town, Community Services, Eastbourne Borough Council.

Leicester: Liz Blyth, Cultural Policy Manager, Leicester City Council.

London Borough of Newham: Gary Hughes, Business Improvement and Performance Manager, London Borough of Newham on secondment to IDeA, Jonathan France, Senior Consultant, ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd, Priya Lakanpaul and James Anderton both from London Borough of Newham

Oldham: Neil Consterdine, Head of Sport and Recreation Development, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

Oxfordshire: Richard Munro, Head of Cultural and Adult Learning Services, Oxfordshire County Council.

## APPENDIX 2

### CONSULTATION LIST

#### Birmingham

Val Birchall – Head of Arts, Birmingham City Council  
Michelle Bould – Youth Co-ordinator, Leaps and Bounds Project c/o Sandwell MBC  
Tony Howell – Head of Children’s Services, Birmingham City Council  
Sue Harrison – Evaluator Leaps and Bound Project  
Keith Horsfall – Director Leaps and Bounds Project  
Wanjiku Nyachae – Arts Officer (Dance), ACE WM  
Andrew Sparke – Chief Executive Dudley Borough Council

#### Canterbury

Michelle Anderson – Acting Head, Kingsmead Primary  
Jill Chapman – Key Stage 3 Manager, Canterbury High School  
Velia Coffey – Head of Housing and Community Development, Canterbury City Council  
Neil Kelly – Lead Artist  
Krystyna Matyjaszkiewicz – Art and Education Officer, Canterbury City Council  
Museums and Galleries Service  
Pat Tomlinson – District Manager, Canterbury Libraries, Kent CC  
Ken Reddie – Curator of Museums and Galleries, Canterbury City Council

Plus visit to Victorian Day Workshop at Canterbury Museum

#### Hampshire

Chris Edwards – Discovery Centre Programme Manager, HCC  
Ynnon Ezra – Director of Recreation and Heritage, Hampshire County Council  
John Parry – Recreation and Heritage Research Manager, HCC  
Tim Willis – Gosport Discovery Centre Manager  
Richard Ward – Head of Libraries, HCC  
Helen Wheeler – Policy Manager, Project Lead officer, HCC

Plus visit to the Gosport Discovery Centre and meeting with 2 adult users and 2 children

#### Herefordshire

Andy Dawson – Creative Industries Co-ordinator, Herefordshire County Council  
Richard Heatley – Principal, Hereford College of Art and Design  
Jackie Lee – Visual Arts Officer (Crafts), Arts Council England - WM  
Jane Lewis – Cultural Services Manager, Herefordshire County Council  
Mel Potter – Arts Officer, Herefordshire County Council  
Alan Ronald – Economic Regeneration Officer, Herefordshire County Council  
Natalia Silver – Head of Economic and Community Services, Herefordshire County Council

Plus focus group with participants in the Creative Industries Programme

### Liverpool

Paul Ainsworth – Ariel Trust, Liverpool

Nikki Bonner – Business Development Manager, LA Productions, Liverpool and Liverpool Film Academy

Sue Brennan – Healthy Schools Team, Liverpool City Council

Phil Sadler – Alcohol Strategy Co-ordinator, Liverpool Primary Care Trust

Gill Summers – Community Cohesion Officer, Liverpool City Council

Gaynor Wright – *It's Not OK!* Project Leader, Liverpool Culture Company

### Manchester

Lee Avison – Education Manager, Manchester Gallery

Peter Brown – Head of Learning & Interpretation, The Manchester Museum

Gill Hunter – Primary Strategy Consultant, Manchester Education Partnership

Sue Good – Primary Consultant – Museums and Galleries, Manchester Education Partnership

Cia Vinten – Primary Phase Consultant, Literacy, Manchester Education Partnership

Myna Trustram – Research Manager, North West Museums Hub

Esme Ward – Head of Learning, The Whitworth Art Gallery

### North and South Tyneside

Bryan Atkinson – Cultural Development Manager, South Tyneside Council

Richard Barber – Cultural Development Officer, South Tyneside Council

Jonathan Barrand – Tourism Development Officer, North Tyneside Council

Pauline Beaumont – Chief Executive, Culture North East

Carol Bell – Head of Programme Development, Culture 10

Steve Bishop – Senior Manager, Arts, Tourism and Community, North Tyneside Council

Chris Clarke – Regeneration Manager, South Tyneside Council

Tony Duggan – Head of Cultural Services, South Tyneside Council

Paul Gowns – Head of Cultural Services, North Tyneside Council

Jamie McKay – Regional Officer, DCMS NE

Plus visits to sites of infrastructure development projects.

### Sheffield

Ian Drayton – Programme Manager, SOAR

Dr Ann Gosse – Director of Culture, Sheffield City Council

Cllr. Robert MacDonald – Cabinet Member, Culture, Sheffield City Council

Clare MacManus – Director, Eventus

Miranda Plowden – Programme Director North ADF, Sheffield City Council, previously Programme Manager, SOAR SRB5

Cultural Strategy Steering Group:

Jon Bradley – Communities Officer, Sheffield Galleries & Museums Trust,

Alison Rayner – Project Manager, Liveability

Penny Rea – Ex Co-ordinator, Together We Can EAZ

Viv Scone – Arts Worker, Burton Street Project

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### Somerset

Kay Allen – Head of Community Regeneration, Somerset County Council  
Caroline Corfe – ADO, Taunton Deane and Creative Business Boost Project  
Rob Froud – Group Manager Culture, Somerset County Council, Project Lead Officer  
Julie Hall – Williams, Consultant  
Tracey Hill – Creative Business Boost Project  
Chris Humphrey – ACE SW  
Liz Leyshon – Somerset Arts Promoters  
David Powell – Consultant, DPA  
Chris Sidaway – ADO Sedgemoor

Plus visit to Boost Offices

### Spelthorne

Sonia Blair – Signal Project Ltd - lead artist  
Liz Borthwick – Head of Community Services, Spelthorne Borough Council  
Nigel Lynn – Strategic Director, (Community), Spelthorne Borough Council  
Emma Jane Matthews – Youth Development Service  
Faye Munns – Arts and Heritage Development Officer, Spelthorne Borough Council and Project lead Officer  
Vic Smith – Crime and Disorder Partnership

Plus visit to Aerosol Sites

### Suffolk

Neil Anthony – Chair Cultural Officers Group for Suffolk and Head of Leisure - St Edmundsbury District Council  
Maurice Brenner – Head of Strategy and Performance Children and Young People's Services, Suffolk County Council  
John Clough – Director of Suffolk County Sports Partnership  
Jo Cowley – Development Manager Adult & Community Services, Suffolk County Council  
Graham Gatehouse – Director of Adult and Community Services, Suffolk County Council  
Richard Hunt – Head of Culture and Heritage, Suffolk County Council  
Jayne Knight – Amplifier and Making Art Work, Arts Officer, Libraries and Heritage, Suffolk County Council  
Lyn Gash – Museums Officer, Suffolk County Council  
Guenever Parchent – Service Director Culture, Information, Inclusion and Learning  
Rachel Thompson – Head of Partnerships, Suffolk County Council

## Appendix 3

### Critical Success Factors

The following notes summarise the perceived critical success factors and key challenges identified by each of the projects.

#### Leaps and Bounds

##### Critical success factors

- Passion and enthusiasm from all of the staff involved particularly the youth workers and Connexions staff taken on by each Council to support the project.
- Passion and enthusiasm of Dudley Chief Executive.
- Commitment of the young people involved, supported by their life coaches.
- Birmingham Royal Ballet delivering on their promise.
- The calibre of experience on offer and lack of compromise by BRB on the standards expected from the young people. (the best of everything).
- Everyone involved learnt from the project not just the children.
- Having television cameras there to document the project kept everyone focused.
- An unconstrained budget.

##### Challenges

- Differing agendas/understanding of partners and local authorities involved.
- Difference of approach between Youth at Risk and traditional authority/Youth Service methods. Whilst some Councils embraced the approach, others were uncomfortable about following this 'hard line' methodology..
- Recruitment of life coaches. It was initially planned to have one life coach per child (300) but they only recruited 70, some of whom dropped out due to the commitment and pressure.
- Lack of consistency in staff involved. At the beginning, in particular, different staff from one authority went to different Leaps and Bounds meetings and had different visions for the project.
- Local authority understaffing. The project was reliant on 1 part time member of staff from each Council plus 2 Connexions staff, plus voluntary life coaches to look after 'disaffected' 'troubled' children.
- Animosity over the original contract signed by the various chief executive of each participating local authority.
- Accreditation needed to be built into the project from the beginning it became a bit of an afterthought, which was the reason the Arts Award wasn't used as had been envisaged by Birmingham City Council.. It was possible to use the BTEC award in Performing Arts, however, and this has proved a good route as it is a well-known award which is useful to the young people.
- Television cameras – although also listed as a Critical Success Factor – can equally be a barrier to honest communication.
- Key staff changes at both chief executive and operational level in the local authorities and Birmingham Royal Ballet.

- Budgetary planning and communication.

### **Canterbury City Council**

#### **Critical success factors**

- Context of long-term commitment of Canterbury Chief Executive and lead members across parties to culture and cultural planning
- Involvement of Creative Partnerships Kent and both City and County arts officers in planning and part-funding the project
- Involvement of an experienced researcher, arts educator and creative facilitators in developing and delivering the project
- Enthusiasm and support of school heads/senior managers for exploring new ways of pupil learning
- Commitment and enthusiasm of young people involved

#### **Challenges**

- Limitations to availability and flexibility of school time for work with pupils
- Limited funding and need to fundraise
- Wide range of other commitments and priorities for museum, library and school staff
- Limitations to how and when feedback could be input to building design process
- Finding ways for impacts and ways of working to ripple out to other schools/ museums and up to the LEA

### **Hampshire County Council**

#### **Critical Success Factors**

- Political support from the Leader and members.
- Investment in the Winchester Discovery Centre.
- Promote acceptance and drive forward the change culture.
- Growing interest of potential partners in future developments e.g. Basingstoke & Deane.
- Raised profile of the contribution the cultural services can make to achieving Hampshire's local priorities.
- The rigorous evaluation and qualitative research has demonstrated real impact and provided data to encourage future support and the case for a stronger cultural element in Hampshire's next LAA and Community Strategy.

#### For Gosport Discovery Centre

- More people are visiting the Discovery Centre.
- The profile of the users (age, socio-economic status etc) matches the profile of the population of Gosport.
- Satisfaction levels are high with all users.
- Visitors are doing more activities per visit i.e. using the range of services available.

### Challenges

- Getting partners on board – the success of Gosport has encouraged others to become partners in future planned Discovery Centres
- Transferring the Discovery Centre concept elsewhere – each community has its own needs
- Restructuring the library service to establish a sound financial position for the future development of the service going on in the background
- Building the right programme of local activities

### Herefordshire County Council

#### Critical success factors

- Support of Cultural Services department which is currently very strong and support and active encouragement from Head of Economic and Community Services who was previously Head of Cultural Services.
- Strength and determination of the individual leading/running the programme.
- Use of data to prove the value of the project and gain support.

#### Challenges

- Other counties' attitudes to partnership working, where Cultural Services aren't so strong and/or creative industries aren't a priority.
- Moving goalposts of the various local authority and community strategies, none of which link into each other.
- Whilst support for artists in the first 18 months of development was useful and appreciated, support for artists who had been trading for longer periods was not so well targeted.
- It was difficult at the start of the project to get partners to come on board such as the art college and Business Link because they were not clear what benefits the creative industry project could provide for them.

### London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

#### Critical Success Factors

- Having a worker to co-ordinate activities and communications, including with children and young people placed outside the authority and their carers and social workers, and promoting the concept of 'cultural entitlement'.
- Good communication between Cultural and Social Services, within Cultural Services and between the Participation Worker and children looked after and their carers.
- Having a worker in place who is able to provide and coordinate intensive support for young people if necessary.

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- The confidence to innovate and change the scheme in response to increased understanding.
- A very clear focus that “*that these children and young people and their families are entitled to access our services.*”

### Challenges

- The need for the needs of individual looked after children to remain confidential.
- Providing services for children living outside the borough.
- Foster families many have a number of children living at home with a range of different interests and sometimes struggle with the logistics of organising activities.

## Liverpool Culture Company and Liverpool City Council

### Critical Success Factors

- The representation on the steering group from key agencies.
- Consultation with teachers in the production of the learning pack, and with young people in the development of the film.
- Embedding the film into a structured programme of learning if the complete learning pack is used to deliver a structured programme of learning then there is evidence of measurable change in young people's attitudes. However when young people are just shown the film there is no positive change in their attitudes.
- High quality production values for the films and the imaginative design of the learning pack.
- The provision of CPD training for teachers, youth workers and others to enable them to use the pack.
- It was important for young people in schools to see actors with a Scouse accent in *Plastered* and *Street Heat*, and the acting was pitched at the right level.
- The good relationships between the different partners in *It's Not OK!* has been very important, as has been the close collaboration with the city's schools, which has been facilitated by Liverpool City Council's Healthy Schools team.

### Challenges

- The roll out of the learning packs did not begin with a clear analysis of the target audience and was often opportunistic rather than strategic.
- The radio campaign did not overlap with launch of the learning pack or the film, and did not focus on the benefits of *Plastered* as a learning resource.
- The partners on the Steering Group had different priorities and sometimes targets were not defined systematically enough.
- The costs of making the films were underestimated, by about £10,000-£15,000 in the case of *Plastered*.
- The Steering Group's control over the project tended to slow decision-making down, and often at Steering Group meetings the agendas and action plans were not focused enough.

- The City Council's Education Department should have been involved in setting up the project from the beginning.
- The financial sustainability of the projects could be a problem. There is a possibility that from January 2009, when Liverpool is no longer European Capital of Culture, the City Council will de-prioritise these projects. The project has a budget line at the Liverpool Culture Company, but when that is exhausted there could be problems.
- The relationships between the different partners should be more formalised, perhaps also through Local Service Agreements.
- A streamlined Steering Group with a good Project Manager would be needed for the future.

### Manchester City Council

#### Critical Success Factors

- As a former head teacher, the Primary Consultant has had the trust of teachers, expertise and knowledge of how the education system works.
- An effective steering group that includes the relevant people.
- The provision of CPD training for teachers, particularly the link to initial teacher training. Changing teacher perspectives have changed the way they plan and deliver lessons.
- The programme has been fully integrated into the planning and priorities of Manchester Education Partnership.
- A two-way learning partnership has been created as teachers have now become very creative and technically competent and museum and gallery staff are enhancing their professionalism to match.
- A team of advocates comprised of the teachers who have been involved have been created through a 'cascading' model – teachers are working in their own schools and supporting other teachers in other schools through the process of learning

#### Challenges

- Those working 'on the ground' did not have the authority to make decisions.
- Even though the Cultural Pathfinder encompasses the objectives in the *Every Child Matters* strategy there is little recognition in the DfES of its benefits.
- Education is still not part of core museum funding (in the case of Manchester Museum) – the funding for the Pathfinder has been from outside. Questions then arise as to whether funding would be found internally if needed in the same way funding is found for collections or front of house.

### North and South Tyneside Councils

#### Critical Success Factors

- Cultural Directors in both North and South Tyneside are like minded, keen to work together and are passionate and enthusiastic about joint working. They work well

together, bouncing ideas off each other and have different strengths and weaknesses.

- Trust and honesty between authorities e.g. they bid jointly for funding but one authority is in a position to use the money and the other isn't. They are happy for the authority that is ready to go ahead and use the money now.
- The project managers on both side of the water are also like minded and work well together.
- The support and understanding of the Chief Executives of each authority.
- The current, outward looking culture of both organisations.
- Top quality international standard events that have raised the profile of the area above the norm.
- The momentum of the partnership has carried forward into the new ATP (Tourism Tyne and Wear) arrangements and they start that partnership from a much higher base of understanding than would have been the case without the co-operation around the Pathfinder.

### Challenges

- The timescale. This is a long term project and, on the surface, they haven't achieved what they set out to do within its two year life.
- Convincing regional bodies to include North and South Tyneside in strategic plans.
- Maintaining partnership and shared vision between local authorities in the face of changing political climate.
- The capacity of people involved. Much of the Pathfinder work has been carried out on 'top of the day job' and it would be easy to allow the partnership to slip if people didn't prioritise the partnership meetings. The challenge has been to keep the momentum and enthusiasm going.

### Sheffield City Council

#### Critical Success Factors

- Key leaders sharing a vision and pursuing this (ambition).
- Good luck and synchronicity.
- A long-term programme of gradual build up – the tenacity of Eventus to make connections.
- Networks of active projects being enabled to come together and share experience.
- Means of sharing ideas and successes – newsletters, conferences held locally.
- Finding a common, but not dumbed down, language to describe the work.
- Creative and lateral thinking.
- Accepting cultural activities as the glue that binds people and places by doing something.
- Recognition of the qualities of work engaging and involving people at a neighbourhood level.

#### Challenges

- Intransigent gatekeepers.

- The need to address core agendas within regeneration and Government priorities. As culture is not considered a priority it is not included in the list of 'actions'.
- Changes in personnel where ownership is linked to particular individuals.
- Local versus city (region versus national).
- Being too ambitious leading to a sense of failure, or the list is not completed.
- Project limited funding – too short a timeframe to make judgements.

### **Somerset County Council**

#### **Critical Success Factors**

- Restructuring of the County Council services to provide a focus on culture.
- Agreement of partners to jointly commission external consultants to provide independent facilitation of the Steering Group as well as the key research and resulting report into potential alternative models.
- Regular meetings of the steering group with representatives from all partners.
- Linking the project to the key corporate objectives of the County Council, District Councils, Community Strategy and LAA ie as they relate to economic development.

#### **Challenges**

- The history of how the bid was made and the impact this had on relationships.
- Lack of County Council resource (initially) to focus on moving this forward.
- Lack of countywide leadership on culture prior to April 2006.
- Trying to align the funding and political issues across six different authorities, within a regional and countywide context and whilst having regard to the needs of those (external to the Local Authorities) who are delivering the service.
- The potential impact of a Unitary bid made by Somerset County Council which has delayed a decision on a final outcome since April 2007.

### **Spelthorne Borough Council**

#### **Critical Success Factors**

- Building on an existing steering group leading on the regeneration of the area of Sunbury Cross and which includes the crime and disorder reduction partnership, Surrey police and highways
- Spelthorne had established a working relationship with Surrey youth development service and the Cultural Pathfinder project helped to strengthen this partnership in order to engage young people fully in the task.  
The development in partnership between the arts officer, artists and the youth service. Finding graffiti artists with both skills in working with young people and understanding of local authority issues was a difficult task to begin with but Signal Project have worked intensively on the scheme for 3 years and are now being contracted for a further artistic projects to divert young people from crime or to build on the art skills of vulnerable young people in a roll out of projects around the rest of the Borough.

## Evaluation of the LGA/DCMS Cultural Pathfinder Programme - Appendices

- The council having a priority in engaging younger people as well as priorities in making Spelthorne a safer and better place.
- Spelthorne Council's members were supportive of the cause and have advocated well within the Borough to promote the art work as a positive and not as a form of vandalism (graffiti art style).
- Using Cultural Pathfinder status as a notion to raise the profile of culture within the Borough, County and nationally.
- The lack of this kind of activity nationally has led to a document being created by Spelthorne on how to run aerosol projects from a local authority, youth service or police perspective.

### Challenges

- Funding. Having to raise funds for this project is time consuming and the cost is not small for the amount of young people coming through the programme. In order to reach out to more young people and develop their ownership with the art work schools were brought in on the mosaic works as this engaged a large number of young people but not as intensively as the graffiti art projects which were designed to develop both self esteem and diversionary work from crime.
- Maintenance. Because there is no central pot for the development i.e. all art projects were run through grants, no money could be put aside for maintenance and this has proved difficult in working out who is responsible for each area. For example, the area is owned by different bodies; the Borough and County Councils and the Highways Agency
- Although the work has fed into the leisure and culture strategy, community plan and arts and heritage strategy. As a smaller Cultural Pathfinder it has been difficult to link into the LAA and promote the work on a high strategic level.

## Suffolk County Council

### Critical Success Factors

- A key leader with an understanding of policy-making.
- Timing – several people coming into post at about the same time.
- Good relationships with District Councils.
- A culture of strategic planning in the County Council that culture can use to influence strategy.
- Active projects that deliver on the ground.
- Using Cultural Pathfinder as a badge or brand to raise the profile of culture.

### Challenges

- Different projects have different evaluation methodologies, implemented with varying levels of consistency. Most lack a baseline against which impact can be measured.
- A lack of clear performance indicators for arts activities which can be easily inserted into the LAA.

- Increasing budget pressures with local government.

## Appendix 4

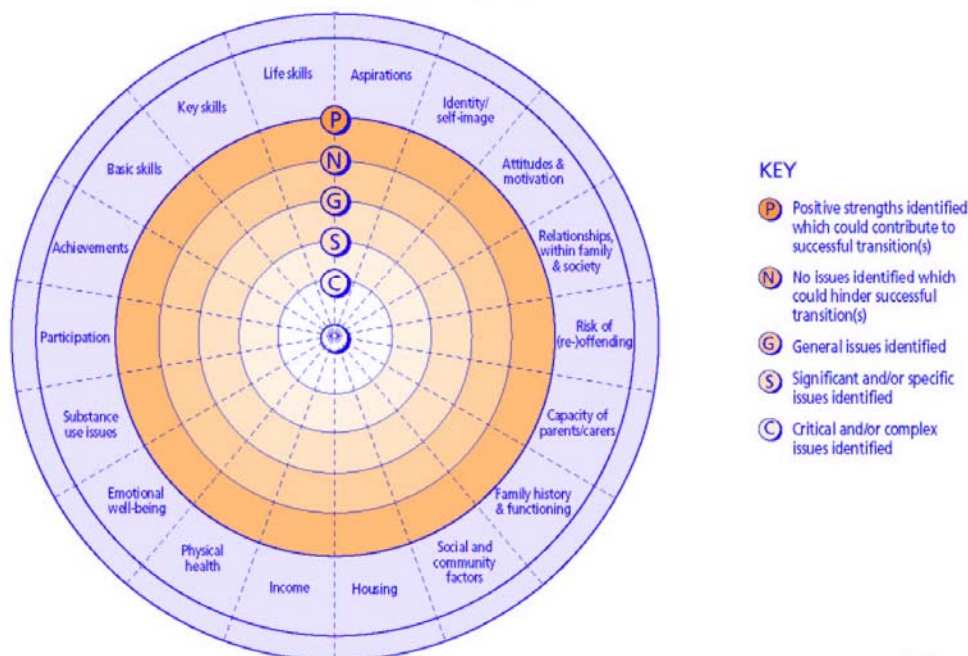
### Case Studies of Good Practice in Evaluation

#### Leaps and Bounds: Measurement of impact

One of the reasons for carrying out the Leaps and Bounds project was to pilot the use of the arts and personal development in changing lives, so a system of measuring impact had been set up from the outset based on the Connexions APIR wheel.

Name:

Date created:



Based around a Youth at Risk model, the young people were given a 3 hour interview at the beginning and another 3 hour interview at the end of the project and asked to assess themselves on a grid in terms of a range of 18 factors such as emotional well being, physical health, risk of offending, substance use and abuse, attitudes and motivation. By plotting these on to the Connexions APIR wheel above, the young people can start to prioritise areas that they might need to change or positives that they can build upon.

Using this understanding, the young people were also asked at the initial interview to come up with three life goals. At regular intervals through the project participants were asked by life coaches to reassess themselves on the grid and assess their progress towards their three goals. By collating the grids these essentially qualitative findings could be quantified.

To prove value for money, the evaluator compared outcomes with relevant data and derived statistics about how many of the children had, for example, not re-offended or how many of the children had given up smoking and compared the cost of the person on the programme compared to the cost of for example keeping someone in a young offenders institute and the add on legal costs. This provided some powerful research into the impact and value of the project.

The key requirements for the success of the evaluation they felt were:

- 1. Simple aims** which allow the authority to measure progress. SMART objectives are key, but authorities need to guard against being too prescriptive, particularly with new and pilot projects where innovation and experience may alter the way the evaluation is carried out or, indeed, the project itself. Leaps and Bounds used the simple question 'can personal development and ballet change my life?' and found this was flexible enough to accommodate the twists and turns of the pilot project.
- 2. Clear agreed definitions** to avoid confusion and misunderstanding and ensure that you are measuring the right things. Leaps and Bounds had a problem between different local authorities having different interpretations over 'at risk' and 'disadvantaged' young people.
- 3. Timing of the evaluation.** It is essential to follow a fairly rigid timetable or structure for the research and to allow the evaluator the correct amount of time to be able to get meaningful findings. Impact, for example, is difficult to measure over a two-year period, particularly if there are no baselines. It is also essential to carry out a baseline survey at the start of the project.
- 4. Ensuring all partners in the process follow the chosen methodology.** This was a problem in measuring certain aspects of the Leaps and Bound programme as certain partner local authorities used different pro formas and didn't follow guidelines which made data collected difficult to compare.

### **London Borough of Newham: NEAT (Newham Ecotec Assessment Technique) for Performance Management**

In partnership with research agency Ecotec, the London Borough of Newham developed a toolkit for evaluating the value of culture across four local authority agendas: community cohesion, crime reduction, health, and education. They focused on developing a bank of indicator questions that could be used by any local authority. The evaluation methods used included surveys at major events throughout the year, surveys at a sample of smaller scale projects, focus groups using the same sample projects and diaries. Survey results were then compared to local statistics such crime figures to measure the impact.

Neat Seven Stage model<sup>4</sup>



Although it has only been running for a couple of years, the authority has already seen significant impacts in certain areas, particularly community cohesion and crime reduction. They have found health in particular and education harder to measure in the short term. For education, for example rather than measure educational attainment they have tried to assess shorter term goals such as improvement in skills, self esteem and pupil concentration which has been more successful.

They are currently working on web based tools that they can share with other authorities.

Newham attained Beacon status and believe that this is partly down to their work on this model. LGA/IDeA has shown interest in mainstreaming the model and the authority are already in discussions with other local authorities how to use it.

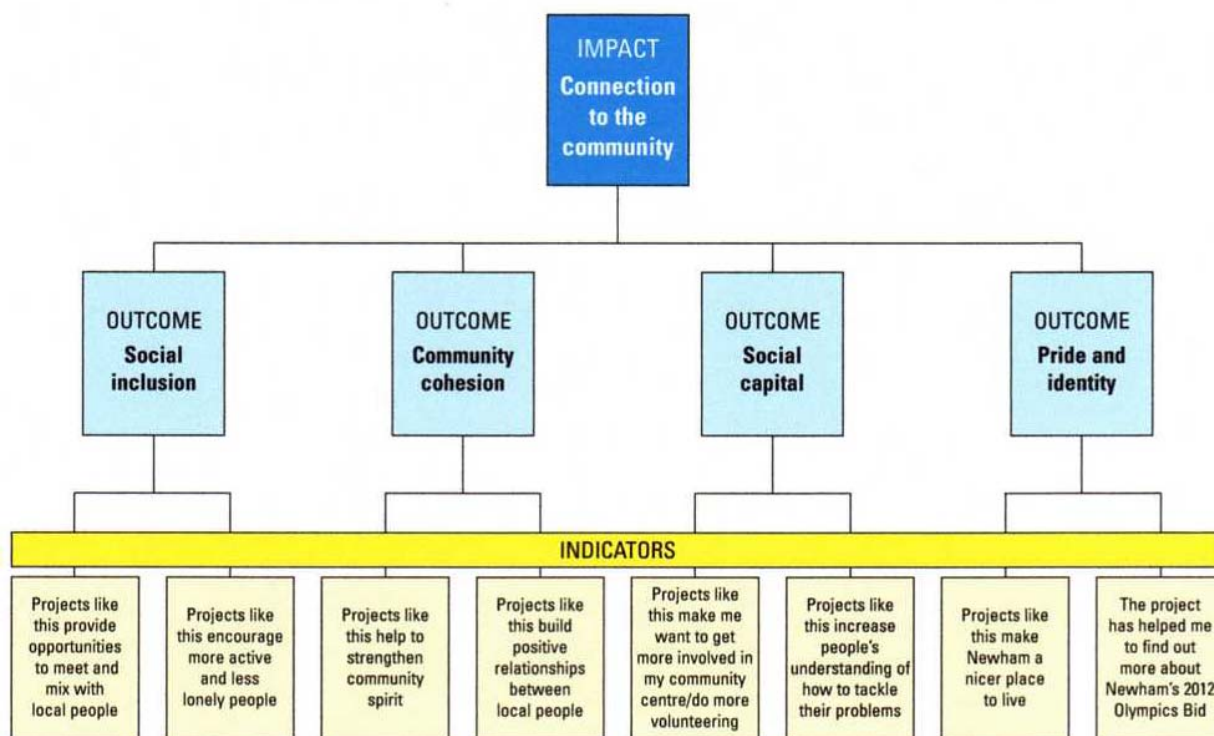
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<sup>4</sup> Building active and cohesive communities through sport – an evaluation of the London Borough of Newham’s Cultural and Sporting Programme 2004/2006, London Borough of Newham/ECOTEC 2006

The key things they believe were important in designing an effective toolkit are:

1. **Relevant aims:** They stressed the need to make aims relevant. They used their Community Strategy aims and objectives as a starting point for the evaluation and aimed to measure whether the authority was delivering against these.
2. **Key indicators to help measurement:** Getting the right indicators is vital. The London Borough of Newham have been developing and shaping them over time, but initially they used indicators already in existence such as the New Economics Foundation's indicators around community participation and community cohesion. They also held discussions with project officers to find out why they were delivering things and what they were hoping to achieve.

Connection to the community outcome measures and evaluation indicators<sup>5</sup>



3. **Capacity building of staff to undertake training:** Newham didn't want to pay for experienced consultants to enter and analyse data, so part of their programme was to raise the skills levels amongst staff using the research consultants to carry out the training.
4. **Support of grass roots staff:** One of the critical success factors of the evaluation work of Newham was to ensure that grass roots staff that were running the projects and therefore often collecting the data were involved with

<sup>5</sup> Building active and cohesive communities through sport – an evaluation of the London Borough of Newham's Cultural and Sporting Programme 2004/2006, London Borough of Newham/Ecotec 2006

the evaluation from the outset and understood the reasons for collecting the information and could see benefits from it.

The challenges have been to:

1. Overcome the initial scepticism from funders and other stakeholders by selling the scheme to them and outlining the benefits of it.
2. Be flexible enough to change the framework and develop it.
3. to keep the momentum going and not sit back and get complacent.

### **Discovery Centres – The Cultural Pathfinder evaluation framework**

**Hampshire's** Recreation & Heritage Research Consultant worked with the Library & Information service, Discovery Centre project team & Discovery Centre Manager over the two years of the Cultural Pathfinder to build on the research and evaluation work already carried out prior to the development of the Gosport Discovery Centre. An initial piece of shaping research had been carried out - qualitative research with senior people (mostly the chief executives) representing the key local community groups. These people were selected to be interviewed in order to help shape the Gosport project to meet the needs of the community. This fitted well with the evaluation framework for the Cultural Pathfinder programme. The evaluation is explicitly designed to be comparable with baseline data - before and after comparisons formed the basis of much of the research e.g. keeping to the PLUS questions

The Discovery Centre evaluation is ongoing and is based on several pieces of research;

- A postal survey of the residents of Gosport to identify the aspirations and needs of the local community (not just by existing library users) – repeated after the Discovery Centre had been open for one year
- A user survey that enabled some comparison with baseline data from the Public Library User Survey but tailored to capture views about the Discovery Centre. The survey has been repeated twice during the period of the Cultural Pathfinder.
- Observational research of the use made by young people of the Discovery Centre and focus group research with young people
- Baseline comparative data e.g. visitor numbers, borrowing activity, and the underlying trends

**Hampshire** has identified some key learning from carrying out the ongoing programme of evaluation:

1. That evaluation often has to meet the aims of a number of agendas and these aims need to be clear at the start
2. It is essential to identify and focus on a small number of key indicators at the outset – those that are most robust and indicative of trends
3. That there is a large cost, time and work involved in carrying out research surveys that provide adequate levels of data to understand the use and impact for priority groups

4. The evaluation presented an opportunity to develop new analysis methods such as 'community variance analysis' in order to see how well (or not) we are providing a service for the whole community

Hampshire will continue the evaluation of the Discovery Centres programme. Further work is being pursued around a value for money exercise looking at comparable five year trend figures against other libraries in Hampshire and other authorities based on the cost of interactions (operating costs and yields) to see what we are getting for our money. Using standard trend analysis of footfall as a proxy indicator for interactions, the Discovery Centre has exceeded initial expectations.

## Appendix 5 Glossary

**Arts at the Strategic Centre** – a self assessment tool, developed by Arts Council England and IDeA, for positioning and embedding the arts at the strategic centre of your local authority.

**The Beacon(s) Scheme** – Run by IDeA, the Beacon Scheme identifies excellence and innovation in local government. The scheme exists to share good practice so that 'best value' authorities can learn from each other and deliver high quality services to all.

**DCMS** – Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

**DfES** – Department for Education and Skills

**Every Child Matters** - *Every Child Matters: Change for Children* is a new approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19. The Government's aim is for every child, whatever their background or their circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well-being

Every local authority will be working with its partners, through children's trusts, to find out what works best for children and young people in its area and act on it.

**IDeA** - The IDeA works for local government improvement so councils can serve people and places better by sharing good practice through the national Beacons Scheme, regional local government networks, leadership programmes and other support.

**Inspiring Learning for All** - A framework which has been developed by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) for measuring how people learn in museums, archives and libraries that consists of:

- A framework for planning effective learning opportunities
- Tools for measuring learning outcomes
- Advocacy materials to promote learning as a priority

**LABGI** - Local Authority Business Growth Incentives. A scheme designed to give local authorities an incentive to maximise local economic growth by allowing them to receive a proportion of increases in local business rate revenues to spend on their own priorities.

**LGA** –Working with and for member authorities the Local Government Association exists to promote better local government and enables local people to shape a distinctive and better future for their locality and communities.

**Local Area Agreement** - Local Area Agreements have developed from their original role as a means of simplifying arrangements for pooling central government funding and helping to join up public services in a local area. They remain three-year agreements, but are now the main vehicle for setting out the strategic direction and priorities for a local area. From 2008/09 each LAA will contain 18 statutory education/early years targets and up to 35 targets drawn from the new national indicator set established out of the CSR07. Local Authorities and partners will negotiate with Government Offices which indicators from the national indicator set they propose should have targets set against them and these will be agreed with central Government. Local authorities with partners will also agree additional indicators and targets in the LAA as local priorities for implementation of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

**Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)** - Cross-agency, umbrella partnerships that include all sectors of society, aimed at working together to improve the quality of life in a particular locality. The Government sees them as the main mechanism for the coordination of delivery of better local services.

**Regional Commentary** – a structured narrative between the regional agencies and the local authority in each region, highlighting the cultural services and opportunities available to their communities. Its aim is to provide an opportunity for the authority to gauge their own position against the expectations of regional agencies and help develop the roles and relationships between it and its partners. Full details can be found at: <http://www.idea-knowledge.gov.uk/idk/aio/4793842>.

**Regional Development Agencies** - These are business-led and promote sustainable economic development. Each RDA produces a 'regional economic strategy' (RES), which outlines the planned economic development and regeneration of the respective region.

**Renaissance in the Regions** - In 2001, the Government launched Renaissance in the Regions: a new vision for England's museums. The vision aims to enable regional museums to raise their standards and deliver results in support of education, learning, community development and economic regeneration. Renaissance in the Regions affects the entire museums sector, and a network of 'Hubs' has been set up in each English region to help promote and disseminate good practice.

**Shared Priorities** - Local and national government have agreed seven Shared Priorities covering areas in which it is most important to deliver tangible improvements for local communities. They are:

- Raising standards across our schools
- Improving the quality of life of children, young people and families at risk
- Promoting healthier communities and narrowing health inequalities
- Creating safer and stronger communities
- Transforming our local environments

## LGA/DCMS Cultural Pathfinder Programme Evaluation

- Meeting transport needs more effectively
- Promoting the economic vitality of localities

**TAES** – Towards an Excellent Service. A self-assessment improvement tool coordinated by Sport England.

**TNS survey** - DfES commissioned TNS to conduct a survey among LEAs on the subject of Alternative Educational Provision. The research aimed to collect information about the types and numbers of units, numbers of places, types of pupils accessing such provision, the amount spent, and issues regarding the reintegration of pupils. See <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/behaviourandattendance/about/newsdetails.cfm?id=11>