INTRODUCTION

An Evaluation of Year 3 of the Living Places Programme has been carried out on behalf of the Living Places Partners (Arts Council England, CABE, DCMS, DCLG, English Heritage, Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, and Sport England) by DC Research Ltd.

**Living Places** emphasises the use of culture and sport to support local distinctiveness and quality of place and promotes the advantage of cultural bodies working together to support local services for communities and individuals, particularly in areas that are experiencing housing led growth and regeneration. The aims of the Living Places Programme are to:

- Align investment from the sporting and cultural sector across organisational boundaries so it can be used more efficiently for people and places.
- Provide information, advice and support on the use of culture and sport in sustainable communities to people working in local government, housing, property development, planning and a host of other fields who take the day-to-day decisions that shape communities of the future.
- Build the capacity of communities themselves so people can be empowered to bring cultural and sporting activity and infrastructure to their communities.

Five Priority Places (Corby, Pennine Lancashire, Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), Thames Gateway and The South West) were chosen as the key element of the Programme as they were all places experiencing significant change, whether through regeneration or growth, demonstrated ambition and/or good practice in terms of the role of culture and sport in this change, and were sufficiently different to allow the learning to be of broad application.

Part of the remit of the Year 3 Evaluation was to provide a summary of the achievements in each of the Priority Places, focusing on the impact and added value that the programme has achieved in each place, the conditions and factors that have helped to achieve these impacts and added value, and - building on this - to identify the lessons for other places that can be learned from these experiences.

**PUSH Priority Place**

**PUSH** is a partnership of unitary authorities including Portsmouth and Southampton; Hampshire County Council and district authorities of Eastleigh, East Hampshire, Fareham, Gosport, Havant, New Forest, Test Valley and Winchester. The Partnership is estimated to cover a population of over 1.5 million people. **PUSH** is linked to the Solent LEP, and has recently been joined by Isle of Wight Council.

Impact and Added Value

The key impacts and added value that **PUSH** has achieved as a Priority Place include:

**Influencing Policy**

In planning terms, there is strong qualitative evidence to suggest that the development of culture and sport through Living Places has influenced planning and economic development policy in **PUSH**. Currently, the **PUSH Economic Development Strategy**, **South East Regional Spatial Strategy for South Hampshire** and the **PUSH Design Charter** all contain a focus on cultural and sporting developments. While Living Places cannot be said to be wholly responsible for this inclusion, it can be seen to have assisted with the promotion of culture and sport issues in development policy.
There have also been positive Living Places developments within the PUSH area, including:

- Joint funding (50% Living Places partners, 50% Hampshire County Council) of a **PUSH Cultural Coordinator** to increase capacity and take forward the agenda of the Quality Places theme group from July 2009.

- Commissioning of research on **“Providing for Cultural Infrastructure in the PUSH area: the role of spatial planning and developer contributions”**.

- Commissioning of **“The South Hampshire and Hampshire Cultural Infrastructure Audit”**, which suggested appropriate ways in which to: secure cultural and sporting infrastructure through developer contributions; increase the profile of planning for cultural infrastructure in the PUSH area and; suggestions as to how the Culture and Sport Planning Toolkit could be used to help secure appropriate cultural and sporting infrastructure through developer contributions.

- Helping to provide an evidence base for studies such as **“Spatial Planning and the Provision of Cultural and Sporting Infrastructure in the PUSH area”**.

The **Design Charter**[^1] launched by the Quality Places Panel represents another product developed by PUSH that can be seen both as an outcome in the Living Places sense, and an approach that could be adopted and adapted for use in other places. The Charter recognises the importance of high quality design in adding social and economic value to an area and it aims to set a standard for such design to ensure that developments within the whole area covered by PUSH are contributing to the overall plans.

Additionally, **PUSH’s Multi Area Agreement** now has dedicated chapter for ‘single conversation’ document by the Homes and Communities Association. Whilst PUSH’s MAA will not result in additional funding for place shaping, it does keep councillors focused on quality places as being something PUSH is trying to achieve.

As well as commissioning studies and influencing local policy, PUSH has also increased the potential for Priority Place activity to influence national policy through initiating a joint letter to the DCMS Permanent Secretary, following the meeting of Chief Executives and other senior partners from each of the Priority Places. The meeting focused on commonalities and a shared desire to put culture and sport at the heart of regeneration and beyond and this shared consensus was viewed as an opportunity to collaborate to promote Living Places collectively and influence policy.

### Developing Evidence

In PUSH there have been a range of studies and research exercises completed, focusing on culture and sport evidence, design guidance and creative industries research. For example, PUSH has commissioned and developed the **Spatial Planning and the Provision of Cultural and Sporting Infrastructure**[^2] research, which can be used as evidence to support provision for culture in Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) agreements. This work has led to proposals currently being considered by PUSH to top slice CIL and S106 funding for strategic culture projects, and has provided the evidence base that allows planners to be confident in asking for affordable developer contributions.

PUSH has also been involved in work commissioned by SEEDA that includes:

- Developing a typology of art facilities that match CIL developer contributions.

[^2]: [www.push.gov.uk/spatial_planning_and_the_provision_of_cultural_and_sporting_infrastructure_in_the_push_area.pdf](http://www.push.gov.uk/spatial_planning_and_the_provision_of_cultural_and_sporting_infrastructure_in_the_push_area.pdf)
Living Places Year 3 Evaluation: PUSH Priority Place Summary

- Estimating catchment areas for place shaping based on survey data.
- Undertaking ‘condition audits’ of facilities.
- Current and future modelling (inward investment and demand).

Such studies have helped in promoting planner confidence in the culture and sport evidence base, and can be regarded as an outcome in terms of the Living Places Evaluation Framework, with S06 and CIL contributions being the related impacts.

Attracting Additional Investment and Support

The ‘flypaper effect’\(^3\) has resulted in the PUSH receiving investment from NDPBs (Non Departmental Government Bodies) over and above what might otherwise have been expected in particular projects- one example being funding for the Heritage at Risk work. This demonstrates that cultural and non cultural investors have increased their confidence in the ability of the successful Priority Places to deliver results.

In total, it is estimated that PUSH attracted £306,000 in additional revenue funding over the lifetime of the Living Places, which directly leveraged just under £2m in capital investment.

As well as securing increased investment for studies to be carried out, a number of consultees also made the connection around the benefits that high quality investment in cultural and sporting infrastructure has on the ability to market quality of life aspects of a place to an external investment market. Consultees in PUSH particularly noted the investor perception benefits of being able to showcase facilities such as the Theatre Royal (in Portsmouth) and the new arts centre in Southampton.

Improving Engagement between Culture & Sport and Planning & Development

In year one of the programme, representation for Living Places on the Quality Places theme group was formalised and it became the main point of contact between PUSH and its Creating Quality Places theme. Linking these elements together, Living Places is now strategically placed to both increase engagement between the cultural sector and the wider PUSH remit, and to influence policy within this wider planning and development scope.

Whilst this engagement and inclusion obviously provides a major benefit for Living Places, consultations also demonstrated that frustrations arose (particularly in Year 1 of the programme), resulting from perceptions that Living Places branded some existing PUSH Quality Places activity as its own.

Conditions and Factors that Enabled Impact and Added Value

There are a number of factors and conditions that have supported and enabled the impacts and added value that PUSH has achieved as a Priority Place. The key enabling factors have included:

Local Leadership

The early identification of the importance of culture and place shaping to PUSH, and the opportunity provided by Living Places were significant factors, as was the agenda being led at the Chief Executive level.

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\(^3\) The ‘flypaper effect’ in the context of Living Places refers to activity and support/resources highlighted and observed through consultation where Priority Places have received additional investment as a result of their profile as a Priority Place.
It is clear that up until the appointment of the Cultural Coordinator, PUSH lacked capacity to comply with the evaluation requirements of Living Places. The role, which was funded by a mix of local and Living Places resources, has proven to be increasingly successful at making connections and linking activities and projects together. For example further CSPT/design guidance related work has been delivered and the Quality Places work plan has included engagement with the Portsmouth Harbour redevelopment, and the new Southampton arts centre.

Consultees suggested that the having a Cultural Coordinator not only helped to promote and facilitate good networks between different sectors and with other Priority Places, but also assisted with securing additional investment through the capacity and expertise provided by the role. Whilst the Coordinator post added value, it is also important to recognise the pre-existing ability and capacity of members of the Quality Places Panel to deliver significant projects by themselves.

Priority Place Profile

Those with a leadership role at the Priority Place level are clear that Living Places has resulted in high level dialogue and contact that would otherwise have been very difficult to secure. Having Priority Places status has enabled places to raise their profile at the regional and national levels in terms of culture, sport and place shaping, and has created good networks between Corby, PUSH and Pennine Lancashire in particular.

Furthermore, early consultations suggested that both the planning research and additional capacity (in the form of the Cultural Coordinator) were unlikely to have happened in PUSH, in the short to medium term at least, without the support of the Living Places partners and the status of PUSH as a Priority Place.

Partnership Arrangements

It is important to remember that the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire was created before Living Places and has a wider agenda than Living Places Alone. This partnership (like Corby) already placed significant emphasis on culture and sport in its development and regeneration agenda prior to the programme, and so it is difficult to attribute the successes of culture and sport development to Living Places alone.

As a partnership, PUSH is well established, with the Quality Places Panel (one of five PUSH programmes) fulfilling the function of the Priority Place Partnership. PUSH has provided Living Places with clear evidence of place shaping working in a wider context, although this may provide cultural agencies with only a partial view of activity. Nevertheless the cultural agencies are well engaged, as are Tourism South East (highlighting the symbiotic nature of the tourism economy and culture in the South East).

In PUSH, the Quality Places Panel meets on a quarterly basis and has been actively engaged with other PUSH Panels regarding the focus of economic development activities, especially around the relative priority of the creative industries sector. This engagement is indicative of the increasing reach of the Quality Places Panel, which has also taken on PUSH lead for tourism and retail activity.

Evolution of Partnership Arrangements

In Year 3 of the Living Places programme, the PUSH Quality Places Panel has widened its remit in to include tourism, retail and creative industries sector in addition to culture and sport. Engagement also includes a focus on higher education, economic development and planning, and a range of thematic representatives reflecting the sectors engaged. In contrast to Corby, the engagement of the cultural agencies has become more
infrequent in the past 12 months in comparison to the first two years of the Living Places Programme.

Despite this decline in engagement frequency, the PUSH partnership has recently been engaging in debates about (LEP) structures. For example, PUSH partners are looking at developing their partnership into an LEP, and the existence of Priority Places means that Living Places thinking will be well-placed to exert influence. The challenge for Living Places activity therefore, is firstly to ensure prominence on the LEP agenda, and secondly how to continue to support the capacity and expertise that Living Places partners have provided to PUSH.

Mainstreaming of Activity

Currently, PUSH Living Places consultees find it increasingly difficult to distinguish between Living Places activity and mainstream activity in their area, and this is something that they expect to increase going forward. In particular however, the principle of cooperation established by Living Places through PUSH is something that is not currently part of the mainstream and the partnership would ultimately like to make it so. By 2011, the contribution of the cultural coordinator role will potentially be evidenced and supported by a two year track record, and at this point PUSH may decide to mainstream the post.

Pre existing support and arrangements

The Living Places programme in the PUSH area benefits from being nested into a well established regeneration partnership with a wider agenda. It can also be argued that there was a demand for culture and sport based place shaping in PUSH, and that Living Places was able to help meet that demand.

While Living Places may have enhanced the credibility and strength of engagement between cultural and development sectors, it cannot be said to be responsible for its creation. PUSH was already a well recognised as an established mechanism for sub regional priority setting and collaborative working, with the Quality Places Panel increasingly taking on responsibility on the basis of sub regional local government efficiency in terms of place and culture, promoting better joint working in areas such as tourism, museums and heritage, and being seen as the most appropriate place to engage in such debates. The pre existing partnership working between the authorities can therefore be seen as a key contributory factor for what has been achieved there.

In addition to this, PUSH has benefitted from having individuals that have grasped Living Places as a high profile opportunity to better deliver existing culture, sport and place aspirations. This has helped to bring forward Living Places ideas and promote the priorities of sport and culture.

Lessons from PUSH (for other places)

In terms of the lessons from the Pennine Lancashire Priority Place for other places that aspire to achieve similar aims and objectives to Living Places, the following aspects are the main learning points and lessons:

- Ensure there is a strong local commitment, drive and engagement from key individuals to support the agenda of culture and sport.
- Incorporate Living Places into pre-existing programmes and structures to increase the integration of culture and sport priorities into mainstream policy and ensure the spatial scale is effective and appropriate.
Appoint a leader for Living Places (such as a cultural coordinator) to provide greater capacity and expertise to secure additional investment and to link activities and projects together.

Maximise the profile of the place through the positive exploitation of successful projects and encourage investment through promoting the positive aspects of the area.

Be willing to evolve the partnerships, focus and programmes to ensure alignment with changing policy context and local demand.

Develop a strong evidence base from which to inform policy direction and increase learning.

The Tables overleaf highlight the range of activity and influence that PUSH has had as a Priority Place in terms of studies and research reports that have been commissioned, and those that have been influenced by Living Places and the Priority Place Partnership in PUSH.
### Table 1: Research Studies and Plans commissioned by PUSH as a Priority Place (as lead or as partners) (x=some contribution, xx=significant contribution, xxx= critical contribution)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Name of Document</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Geography Covered</th>
<th>Produced by partner/Commissioned</th>
<th>Name of Company/Partner who Produced it</th>
<th>Strength of Culture and Sport Reference</th>
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<td>PUSH</td>
<td>The South Hampshire and Hampshire Cultural Infrastructure Audit, (2010).</td>
<td>South Hampshire</td>
<td>Development Document</td>
<td>Commissioned by PUSH.</td>
<td>Audience South/Cultural Consulting/ Professor M. Elson/ Charles Freeman</td>
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<td>PUSH</td>
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<td>PUSH</td>
<td>Spatial Planning and the Provision of Cultural and Sporting Infrastructure in the PUSH area.</td>
<td>PUSH</td>
<td>Development document</td>
<td>Commissioned by Living Places and the PUSH Quality of Life Delivery Panel.</td>
<td>Martin J Elson.</td>
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**Source:** DC Research 2011
### Table 2: Priority Place Strategies and Plans influenced by PUSH as a Priority Place
(x=some contribution, xx=significant contribution, xxx= critical contribution)

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**Source:** DC Research 2011