

The Network Newsletter: tackling social exclusion in libraries, museums, archives and galleries

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The Network's Website is at www.seapn.org.uk and includes information on courses, good practice, specific socially excluded groups, as well as the newsletter archive.

Introduction

This “culture policy special” issue of the Newsletter assesses four recent policy documents.

Contents List

- *Understanding the value of arts and culture ...* – page 2
- *Funding arts and culture in a time of austerity* – page 6
- *The Culture White Paper* – page 8
- *Libraries deliver ...* – page 17

Abbreviations and acronyms – page 18

Understanding the value of arts & culture ...

“The Cultural Value project, supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, looked into the question of why the arts and culture matter, and how we capture the effects that they have.

The Project had two main objectives. The first was to identify the various components that make up cultural value. And the second was to consider and develop the methodologies and the evidence that might be used to evaluate these components of cultural value.”¹

The report²

“[...] presents the outcomes of the AHRC’s Cultural Value Project which looked at how we think about the value of the arts and culture to individuals and to society.” [p6]

It is supported by the results of some 70 original pieces of work – a mixture of new research, critical reviews of the literature and specialist workshops.³

The aim of the project was to:

“[...] cut through the current logjam with its repeated polarisation of the issues: the intrinsic v the instrumental, the elite v the popular, the amateur v the professional, private v public spaces of consumption, qualitative v quantitative evidence, and the publicly-funded v the commercially-oriented. Definitional and boundary difficulties of these kinds have bedevilled debate about what constitutes the value of culture and in what ways it may be evaluated and captured. The Report moves beyond these binaries to open up a fresh approach to thinking about the value of culture.” [pp6-7]

It is well worth exploring the full report and the supporting evidence in more depth, but there are also some ‘headlines’, key amongst which is the need to re-think the supposed role of culture:

“What emerges from the Cultural Value Project is the imperative to reposition first-hand, individual experience of arts and culture at the heart of enquiry into cultural value. Far too often the way people experience culture takes second place to its impact on phenomena such as the economy, cities or health.” [p7]

¹ Taken from:

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/research/fundedthemesandprogrammes/culturalvalueproject/>.

² Geoffrey Crossick and Patrycja Kaszynska. *Understanding the value of arts & culture: the AHRC Cultural Value Project*. AHRC, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (5290 kb) from: <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/documents/publications/cultural-value-project-final-report/>.

³ The full list of these is available at:

<http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/research/fundedthemesandprogrammes/culturalvalueproject/research-activities/>.

One of the results of this is that:

“[...] it leads to a neglect of such issues as reflectiveness, empathy and imagination that have as their starting point individual experience. And, secondly, it ignores the fact that some of the most important contributions of arts and culture to other areas are embedded in that individual experience [...]” [p7]

The Project focuses on the following:

- “Particular attention is given to the ability of arts and cultural engagement to help shape **reflective individuals**, facilitating greater understanding of themselves and their lives, increasing empathy with respect to others, and an appreciation of the diversity of human experience and cultures. Case studies of arts engagement in prisons and amongst professional and informal carers serve as exemplars of this potential for reflectiveness.
- Participation in arts and culture may **produce engaged citizens**, promoting not only civic behaviours such as voting and volunteering, but also helping articulate alternatives to current assumptions and fuel a broader political imagination. All are fundamental to the effectiveness of democratic political and social systems. Arts and cultural engagement help minority groups to find a voice and express their identity. They can engage people in thinking about climate change when used not didactically but as a basis for reflection and debate. Governments also deploy culture internationally to build influence and trust, though the report notes the very limited evidence about the success of such programmes.
- There is a widespread use of arts and cultural interventions to help **peace-building and healing after armed conflict**, helping communities to deal with the sources of trauma and bring about reconciliation [...]” [pp7-8 – emphases theirs]

There is also an interesting take on the impact that regeneration may have on a community, questioning the role of ‘major cultural buildings’:

- “When thinking about the impact of arts and culture on **cities and urban life**, the report questions the impact of major cultural buildings in urban regeneration, and the emergence of vibrant creative and cultural quarters. The regeneration of places is usually accompanied by gentrification, the rise of the ‘experience economy’, and the disruption and exclusion of communities as those who live there and produce there are forced out by rising property prices. Far more significant might be the effect of small-scale cultural assets – studios, live-music venues, small galleries and so on – in supporting healthier and more balanced communities.” [p8 – emphases theirs]

It also questions the findings of the economic benefit studies that have been undertaken:

- “Although the **economic benefits of arts and culture** have been central to the case that has been made for public funding, the report questions

the significance, and at times the quality, of economic impact studies. It calls for more attention to be given to the ways in which arts and culture feeds into the creative industries, supports the innovation system, and attracts talent and investment to places. Here, it is argued, are the distinctive contributions of arts and culture to the economy and they need to be better understood.

- It is an error to see publicly-funded and commercial arts and culture as separate worlds, one dependent on the taxpayer and the other on the market. They operate as part of **a complex ecology of talent, finance, content and ideas**. The non-profit cultural sector contributes research and development for commercial cultural providers, while public funding enables them to take risks with creative content and ideas. The flows between them, and indeed amateur arts and co-production as well, are underlined by the report.” [p8 – emphases theirs]

It then goes on to look at the arts and culture and health, education and wellbeing:

- “The contribution of arts and culture to **improving health and wellbeing** has been extensively studied, with activities that include dedicated arts therapies, the use of art and design to produce better healthcare environments, community arts interventions to improve social inclusion and mental health, and the benefits of engagement for older people and also for those suffering with dementia. While noting the powerful evidence in support of many of these, the report stresses that only by gathering qualitative and personal evidence can the more pervasive benefits for health and wellbeing be fully grasped. The absence of consistent quality in research design and methods in this area is highlighted. The standards of the good studies that integrate quantitative and qualitative methods, and use controls where appropriate, should be matched in future work.
- Cohort studies of health in the Nordic countries show an association between **long-term arts engagement and positive health outcomes**, after attempts to control for relevant social, economic and demographic variables. The report calls for long-term questions about arts and cultural engagement to be included in major UK cohort studies in the future and for these questions to be stable over time to enable longitudinal research.
- **Arts in education** has been shown to contribute in important ways to the factors that underpin learning, such as cognitive abilities, confidence, motivation, problem-solving and communication skills. These are more compelling than claims to significant improvement in attainment on standard tests where the evidence is much less convincing. It also questions the hierarchy of subjects that means we’re interested in whether studying music improves ability in maths, but not whether studying maths improves ability in music.
- The positive relationship between **arts and cultural engagement and subjective wellbeing** is a major area of current interest, though the report is cautious about how much should be read into this in the absence of more sustained studies over time. It calls for culture to be more effectively incorporated in government approaches to measuring wellbeing.” [p8 – emphases theirs]

The report then goes on to consider areas where “grown-up conversations” are needed, including:

- Inequality of access to the arts
- Modes of engagement: “[...] the report stresses that engagement takes place in a variety of settings that include purpose-built cultural buildings, small-scale adapted spaces, institutions such as care institutions and prisons, and most commonly the home and the virtual space of the internet. Indeed, the home is where most engagement with cultural activities takes place and yet it is virtually ignored in discussions about their impact.” [p9]
- Greater consideration of the growth of digital technologies.

The report also questions evaluation and research methods, for example:

- “[...] the report calls for the **wider application of evaluation as a tool within the cultural sector** itself, rather than as something carried out just for accountability purposes. **Formative and participatory evaluation, as opposed to summative evaluation at the end, needs more attention** if it is to play a role in helping cultural organisations and practitioners learn from their activities and their audiences.
- The report questions the **hierarchy of evidence** that sees experimental methods and randomised controlled trials as the gold standard, even in areas where these cannot effectively be applied due to the difficulty in isolating variables in complex situations. **Qualitative research (with the depth that it gives) need not be less rigorous than quantitative, experimental studies (with the breadth that they provide)**. It does, however, operate with different criteria of rigour. Qualitative research is far more suited to certain research purposes, and quantitative research is better suited to others. The issue is the character of the knowledge and understanding that is being sought, because each approach will have its own benefits and drawbacks. The report shows that they may fruitfully be combined [...]
- Too much evaluation of the effects of arts and culture does not meet the necessary **standards of rigour** in specification and research design, especially but not only in the use of qualitative methods. **The high research standards visible in many of the studies upon which this report draws needs to become much more the norm across both research and evaluation.**
- A wide range of **methodologies** are being used to research and to evaluate the effects of arts and cultural engagement and they are explored in the report: social science research methods, approaches from economics, the application of ethnography and network analysis, arts-based and hermeneutic methods, and approaches from science and medicine.” [p9 – emphasises theirs]

Finally:

“The report concludes by recommending that the AHRC consider establishing an **Observatory for Cultural Value**. This could be located within a university and, with modest resources, be tasked with identifying the research activities, outputs and needs in the areas covered by this report, publishing surveys and overviews, maintaining a database of relevant work, and recommending to the AHRC and other funders promising and relevant areas for further research.” [p10 – emphases theirs]

This is an important piece of work, particularly for attempting to move away from the binary approaches to the arts and culture, and for re-emphasising the importance of qualitative research.⁴ What it does not really do, however, is look at the role of libraries (beyond mentioning that they are included in the “Taking Part” surveys).

Funding arts and culture in a time of austerity

This new document⁵ from the NLGN and ACE looks at the funding of arts and culture by local government at a time of austerity:

“Even now, collectively, local government is one of the primary funders of arts and cultural activities, with its contribution even higher than that of Arts Council England.

However, that support is in jeopardy. Direct funding from local government to the arts, museums and libraries has been under enormous pressure in recent years as austerity bites, and organisations and services face severe sustainability challenges as a result.” [p6]

To begin to consider how to proceed:

“In this paper, we set out recent trends in local government’s funding for arts and culture and the prospects for the near future. Using Arts Council England figures we also assess the impact that these cuts are having on the viability of the sector, before setting out some ideas for new ways in which local government can continue to support arts and culture even in straitened times such as these.” [p6]

The paper starts by very briefly outlining the massive reductions in local government funding, particularly for culture and the arts:

⁴ There is a useful, brief article on the report in the June 2016 *Museums Journal* – Caroline Parry “Don’t use evaluation of your work purely to seek funding”, p7.

⁵ Adrian Harvey. *Funding arts and culture in a time of austerity*. New Local Government Network, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (899.18 kb) from: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Funding%20Arts%20and%20Culture%20in%20a%20time%20of%20Austerity%20%28Adrian%20Harvey%29.pdf>.

“Between 2010 and 2015, Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) [...] figures show that total spending by councils in England on arts and culture development and support, theatres and public entertainment, on museums and galleries, and on the library service has declined from £1.42 billion to £1.2 billion, a 16.6 per cent reduction.” [p9]

It says that:

“[The cuts] have fallen fairly evenly across each of those three areas: slightly heavier on libraries (the biggest item of expenditure) and slightly less so on museums and galleries (the smallest). Although museums and galleries may be smaller in terms of expenditure, the impact has been substantial. For example, one-in-five regional museums has either closed, or plans to close [...]” [p10]

Chapter 4 looks at the impact on arts and culture organisations, with particular focus on ACE and National Portfolio Organisations.

The next section looks at “New ways of working”. This includes:

- New delivery models, eg Dorset County Council’s transfer of its Arts Unit to a public service mutual
- New income streams, eg in Liverpool (although this seems very vaguely described here) and Kent where arts and culture have been included in the County Council’s commissioning process
- New partnerships, eg Birmingham’s “Culture Central”, “which has a founding membership of 14 of the city’s cultural and heritage organisations, and is an open membership body representing and working on behalf of all of the city’s arts and cultural organisations, practitioners, agencies and organisations engaged in the sector.” [p17]

The report’s conclusions are:

“Local government in England has been, and remains, a very significant funder of the arts and culture, with over £1 billion still being invested in arts and cultural activity. Yet the impact of the significant cuts over the last five years, in this as in many other areas, cannot be ignored. Some institutions have been able to diversify their funding base to compensate for the shortfall. For others, not least public libraries, the result has been a mixture of closures and new models of delivery.

New ways of working will become ever more important over the coming years, as the funding environment becomes increasingly difficult. The cuts are far from over, with the core grant to councils expected to halve over the current Spending Review period. Local government and cultural institutions alike will need to negotiate new relationships. Yet, if the cuts require change, then the devolution agenda allows for revolution, creating the scope for new institutional models, new relationships, and potential new income streams. This is challenging terrain and ever

shrinking resources will make it harder to navigate. But there are already signs that councils and the cultural sector are beginning to feel out a way forward.” [p18]

The report was launched at an event with the National Local Government Network on 13 April, with a speech⁶ by Sir Peter Bazalgette, Chair of ACE.

It will be interesting to see how this key work is taken forward ...

The Culture White Paper

In March, DCMS published its long-awaited White Paper⁷. As Ed Vaizey says in his foreword:

“This is the first white paper for culture in more than 50 years and only the second ever published. It is the latest contribution to our approach to public support for art and culture.” [p5]⁸

The introduction outlines the shape and aims of the Paper, eg:

“It explains how the government will help to secure the role of culture in our society, using it to inspire our young people, rejuvenate our communities and enhance our influence as a nation across the world. It addresses financial resilience and the need for partnership working across and beyond the cultural sectors. And it describes how strong leadership can deliver this national vision at a local level.” [p13]

It then goes on to describe briefly the role of Government in culture; and looks (also briefly) at “the value of culture”. This includes:

- “the **intrinsic** value: the enriching value of culture in and of itself;
- the **social** value: improving educational attainment and helping people to be healthier; and
- the **economic** value: the contribution culture makes to economic growth and job-creation.” [p15 – emphasises theirs]

This section has links to key sources of evidence.

After the introductory chapter, the Paper has four main themes:

⁶ The speech, “Local government, art and culture: the future”, is available online (see: http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/download-file/Sir-Peter-Bazalgette_NLGN-Speech_13-04-2016_0.pdf), as is the speech (<http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/explore-news/local-government-art-and-culture-future>), plus a version with subtitles (<https://www.youtube.com/embed/2KqvwJr3TL4>).

⁷ *The Culture White Paper*. Cm 9218. DCMS, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (6290 kb) from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510798/DCMS_The_Culture_White_Paper_3_.pdf.

⁸ The previous White Paper was that developed by then Arts Minister, Jennie Lee: *A policy for the arts: first steps*. HMSO, 1965. Available to download as a pdf (20850 kb) from: http://b.3cdn.net/labouruk/e30626bec6f30f5893_mlbrotoq01.pdf.

- Everyone should enjoy the opportunities culture offers, no matter where they start in life
- The riches of our culture should benefit communities across the country
- The power of culture can increase our international standing
- Cultural investment, resilience and reform.

Each theme has a number of sub-themes, and these are considered briefly here. The Paper has links to or brief descriptions of a number of case studies which do reflect the range of provision being made, and there is a DCMS webpage with information about these, grouped under 13 headings⁹.

1. [Educational Initiatives](#)
2. [Equality and Diversity](#)
3. [UK City of Culture](#)
4. [Quality of Life](#)
5. [Health case studies](#)
6. [Arts and the Justice system](#)
7. [Historic Built Environment](#)
8. [Cultural Diplomacy](#)
9. [Impact of Catalyst examples](#)
10. [Non-grant finance examples](#)
11. [Regional philanthropy case studies](#)
12. [Donations and bequests of works of art](#)
13. [New models and partnership examples](#)

1. Everyone should enjoy the opportunities culture offers, no matter where they start in life

This section emphasises the aims for culture to be universal:

“These opportunities should be available to everyone, wherever they begin in life. It is only when those opportunities are universally available that we will be sure that we are making the best use of talent, one of our greatest natural resources.

We want to see increased public participation across all our cultural sectors: the arts, museums and galleries, libraries, archives and heritage.” [p20]

The first sub-theme is “**Culture should be an essential part of every child’s education, both in and out of school**”. The Paper gives examples of the range of good work going on, but also says:

“While the government considers that many of the elements needed to provide quality cultural opportunities for children and young people already exist, the network of provision remains patchy, with geographical and social barriers stacking the odds against those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds.

⁹ See: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/culture-white-paper-case-studies/case-studies-for-the-culture-white-paper#in-harmony>.

We need a clearer focus on those who are currently least well served.”
[p22]

Each section also has a “What we will do” list. For this section, this includes:

- “We will establish a new cultural citizens programme, with the support of Lottery distributors, to create new cultural opportunities for thousands of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- We will work with the RSA to encourage schools to use the pupil premium to promote cultural education as a means of raising the educational attainment of disadvantaged pupils.
- We will use the Pupil Premium Awards to highlight the benefits of cultural education for disadvantaged pupils.” [p23]

The second sub-theme is “**There should be better access to skills development and clearer pathways for talent, where it emerges**”. For this section, the actions are:

- “We will work with Arts Council England to understand the barriers that prevent people from particularly under-represented groups becoming professionals in the arts.
- We will ask Arts Council England and Historic England to develop strategies that support cultural organisations to make best use of apprenticeships and help with skills development and career choices.” [p25]

The third sub-theme is “**Publicly-funded culture should reflect the diversity of our country**”. The Paper says that:

“Diversity is essential to success. Genuinely diverse cultural sectors will use all our national talent, will challenge and rejuvenate themselves, and will increase their audiences. Young people from minorities and with disabilities will believe that these are sectors with which they identify and in which they can work.

Achieving greater diversity has been a problem for many years. While progress has arguably been made on addressing gender balance and LGBT representation within the cultural sectors, there remains some way to go; and the overall figures on diversity do not reflect national averages.” [p26]

The actions are:

- “We will ask Arts Council England, Historic England and the national museums and galleries to develop and share strategies for tackling the lack of diversity in leadership across the cultural sectors and to provide regular reports on what has been achieved.
- We will examine the role of networks to make pathways into the cultural sectors easier for people from black and minority ethnic groups and for disabled people.

- We will ask the heritage sector to build on the foundations of successful programmes such as the Heritage Lottery Fund’s Young Roots programme to create more opportunities for young people outside formal education settings to enjoy and learn about heritage or to lead heritage social action.” [p27]

2. The riches of our culture should benefit communities across the country

This section looks at cultural place-making, and also the need to get the right balance of funding between London and the regions.

“Each one of our communities has been shaped by a unique combination of landscapes and architecture, traditions and festivals, artisans and artists. We want more local leaders to grasp the potential of culture to achieve their vision for their community, and to put culture at the forefront of their strategies.” [p30]

This section also has a small mention of libraries:

“Public libraries are an important part of our local communities. The Leadership for Libraries Taskforce was established in 2015 by the government and the Local Government Association. Its objectives are to support collaboration, best practice and development across England’s public library service.” [p30]

There is also an information panel about the Task Force:

“The Leadership for Libraries Taskforce is putting in place measures to support and reinvigorate the public library service in England. The government is working with the Taskforce to develop a shared vision for public libraries in England that will provide direction and purpose for the service by highlighting existing good practice and providing collaborative ambition in support of libraries. This will include supporting cultural access and engagement, literacy and learning, digital literacy, economic growth, health and wellbeing and community cohesion.” [p31]

The first sub-theme is “**We will promote the role that culture has in building stronger and healthier communities and boosting economic growth**”. This includes, for example, a mention of the role that culture is playing in the regeneration of coastal towns; and also:

“The best of our civic museums are welcoming and accessible places that host a wide range of events and use their collections and spaces for public benefit. Some civic museums are undergoing marked changes to their governance and funding arrangements. It is vital they can continue to innovate and flourish. The new Civic Museums Leadership Network, supported by funding from Arts Council England, will help leaders in the museums sector to develop their own strategies for thriving contemporary civic museums.” [p32]

The White Paper is very positive about the role of culture in health and in benefiting prisoners and ex-offenders, etc:

“There are many good examples of how cultural interventions can affect health and care outcomes in both physical and mental health, benefitting individuals, their families and the wider community. This includes a growing number of case studies and research projects on the benefit of cultural activities for older people, including those with dementia [...]

There are also many good examples of how cultural interventions can benefit prisoners, ex-offenders and people at risk of becoming involved in crime. Culture can help to improve self-esteem, social skills and wellbeing: all of which helps to reduce the risk of offending and re-offending and make our communities safer. We will work with Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and other partners to ensure that offenders and those at risk continue to benefit from cultural opportunities.” [pp32-33]

The actions are:

- “We will showcase the power of culture to transform communities, through UK City of Culture, the Great Exhibition of the North and the Discover England fund.
- We will hold a competition in 2017 to find the next UK City of Culture for 2021, and we will commence the process to find a European Capital of Culture for 2023.
- We will work with Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and other partners to develop and promote the benefits of culture for good health, wellbeing and safer communities.” [p33]

The second sub-theme is “**Greater local and national partnerships are necessary to develop the role of culture in place-making. We will require national institutions to back local vision**”. This section looks particularly favourably at developing regional partnerships, based on the model developed by the North East Culture Partnership (with its *Case for Culture*¹⁰), as well as local partnerships.

Actions include:

- “We will identify experienced, national cultural leaders to work with those developing, or considering developing, new cultural partnerships.
- We will work with National Lottery distributors and national cultural organisations to support communities to realise their local cultural vision, through a new Great Place scheme.” [p35]

The Great Place scheme:

¹⁰ *The North East of England’s case for culture*. Culture North East, 2015. Available to download as a pdf (1090 kb) from: <http://www.northeastcouncils.gov.uk/file.aspx?id=266>.

“We will work with Lottery distributors and national cultural organisations to launch a new Great Place scheme. This scheme will initially be piloted in twelve areas, of which at least four will be rural areas. It will support areas where there is a strong local partnership and a commitment to embed culture in the local authority’s plans and policies. Historic England will provide advice to pilot areas on using planning and development to support the area’s wider cultural offer. We will also ask cultural leaders to help local areas develop new cultural visions.” [p35]

The third sub-theme is **“Our historic built environment is a unique asset and local communities will be supported to make the most of the buildings they cherish”**.

The actions are:

- “We will support Historic England to establish new Heritage Action Zones.
- We will continue to support the heritage sector to advise local communities on how they can make best use of their historic buildings.
- We will encourage local authorities and property owners to make more empty spaces and buildings available for cultural activities on a temporary basis and encourage them to consider cultural elements, such as artists’ studios, when planning new developments.
- We will provide £20 million across 2016-17 and 2017-18 to extend the First World War Centenary cathedral repairs fund and establish a review to examine how church buildings and cathedrals in England can become more financially sustainable.” [p37]

In terms of Heritage Action Zones:

“We will support Historic England to establish new Heritage Action Zones in England. In these areas, Historic England will build and improve relationships between local partners to manage change and new developments better and to stimulate the productivity of the historic environment through regeneration and growth.” [p36]

The fourth sub-theme is **“Technology is expanding the ways in which we make and experience culture; the digital dimension is becoming a ‘place’ in itself”**.

The actions are:

- “We will commission a report on the key issues to be addressed to make the UK one of the world’s leading countries for digitised public collections content.
- We will ask Historic England to work with local authorities to enhance and rationalise national and local heritage records over the next ten years, so that communities and developers have easy access to historic environment records.” [p39]

3. The power of culture can increase our international standing

This section has three sub-themes:

“By promoting the UK through our cultural exports we will enhance our global reputation and soft power”, with actions:

- “We will promote a global cultural export programme with UKTI [11] to open up new markets; and ensure that the cultural sectors are able to participate in UKTI’s High Value Opportunity (HVO) programme.
- We will ask our public bodies to ensure that funding helps to develop the capacity of the cultural sectors to pursue new opportunities through international exchange, partnerships, enterprise and innovation.
- We will ask Historic England to work with other heritage organisations to develop the heritage sector’s international commercial offer.” [p43]

The second sub-theme is **“The GREAT campaign will draw on culture to promote ‘brand Britain’ and will enhance our cultural offer to visitors by bringing us the best the world has to offer.”**

“The GREAT Britain campaign was launched in September 2011 to build on the opportunities created by the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games. It aims to increase our trade, exports and inward investment by presenting the UK as a great place to visit, study in and do business with. In 2015 the campaign supported some 1,100 separate events and activities in more than 190 locations around the world.” [p44]

The actions are:

- “We will work with the British Council and the cultural sectors to support cultural cooperation with all countries, champion the artist’s right to roam and help make sure that culture continues to transcend political and geographical boundaries.
- We will work with the GREAT Britain campaign partners, the British Council and Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) to support the UK’s cultural sectors to use Shakespeare’s inspiring works and legacy to present the best of contemporary British culture to the world and help VSO use the anniversary to raise funds to support children’s literacy around the world.
- We will celebrate seasons of culture with India, the Republic of Korea and the United Arab Emirates in 2017.” [p45]

The third sub-theme is **“We will work with partners globally to protect world heritage”,** and the actions are:

- “We will extend international aid support to the protection of cultural heritage and antiquities and help countries to recover from acts of cultural destruction through a new £30 million cultural protection fund.

¹¹ UKTI: “We lead the government’s approach to increase the number of exporters and inward investors to the UK”, see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-trade-investment>.

- We will ratify the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols, subject to legislation.
- We will share our expertise in cultural development and protection with our partners around the world, particularly those in developing countries and countries experiencing or emerging from conflict.” [p46]

4. Cultural investment, resilience and reform

This section reiterates the Government’s commitment to culture:

“Since the Second World War, we have developed a unique model of cultural investment in which public funding sits alongside private investment, philanthropy, and earned income.

This mixture of income streams provides the basis for a thriving cultural sector.

The government believes strongly in public investment in culture. As well as core Exchequer and Lottery funding, the government supports culture through tax incentives and encourages philanthropy.

The government supports free public access to the permanent collections of our national museums and galleries.” [p50]

The first sub-theme is “**The government will continue to invest in our growing cultural sectors**”. Actions are:

- “We will hold a formal consultation on a new tax relief for museums and galleries to be introduced in April 2017.
- We will consider changes to the Gift Aid donor benefit rules, in the light of responses to the current consultation.
- We will increase the amount of investment eligible for Social Investment Tax Relief, subject to State Aid clearance.” [p54]

The second sub-theme is “**Government support to help cultural organisations develop more mixed funding models makes a demonstrable difference**”. This section looks at some existing funding programmes (eg the Catalyst scheme, and Catalyst: Evolve¹²; partnership with the Wolfson Foundation), but also sets out the Government’s view that:

“[...] there are opportunities to explore revenue generation from new social investment and other alternative finance models that are still relatively untapped by the cultural sectors.” [p53]

This includes exploring the use of Social Impact Bonds¹³.

¹² See: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/funding/catalyst-evolve>.

¹³ “A SIB is a financial mechanism in which investors pay for a set of interventions to improve a social outcome that is of social and/or financial interest to a government commissioner. If the social outcome improves, the government commissioner repays the investors for their initial investment plus a return for the financial risks they took. If

Actions are:

- “We will invest a further £2 million in the Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund, which will be matched by £2 million from the Wolfson Foundation.
- We will establish a crowdfunding pilot scheme, to be delivered jointly with Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund, to provide match-funding for cultural organisations which raise funding by this means.
- We will establish a new virtual Commercial Academy for Culture to support the extension of commercial expertise across the cultural sectors.
- We will work with Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and other partners to support cultural organisations to diversify their funding, including exploring non-grant sources of income and innovative means of fundraising.
- We will work with Arts Council England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and other partners to rejuvenate the approach to stimulating interest from key donor groups in developing relationships with cultural organisations, including identifying ways to improve the cultural sectors’ corporate engagement.” [p55]

The third sub-theme is “**We will support public bodies to meet the objectives set out in this white paper**”. This section looks at some of the reforms initiated since 2010, and, most importantly, announces:

“The government carries out reviews of its public bodies from time to time, and is now focussing on two kinds of review:

- tailored reviews of individual public bodies: this develops the 2010-2015 Triennial Review programme further by including executive agencies and non-ministerial departments, but excluding advisory bodies. The purpose of these reviews is to challenge the continuing need for individual public bodies, in relation to both their functions and their form, and to review the control and governance arrangements;
- thematic or clustered reviews of groups of public bodies: these are new types of reviews and will look at how public bodies with similar functions, customers or processes might work more efficiently and effectively.” [p56]

This is an introduction to the actions:

- “We will carry out tailored reviews of Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund during 2016/17.
- We will carry out a review of museums in England.” [p57]

the social outcomes are not achieved, the investors stand to lose their investment. Social Impact Bonds provide investment to address social problems and look to fund preventative interventions. As such, they present an opportunity to provide support to reduce the strain on acute services.” Taken from:

<http://www.socialfinance.org.uk/services/social-impact-bonds/>.

There is a side-panel with further information about the Museums Review:

“The review will have three strands, looking at:

- big questions around the national infrastructure for museums: what it is; what it should and could be; the roles of government, Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund in nurturing it; how the infrastructure in England relates to those in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; the role of museums in delivering against the themes of this white paper;
- museums sponsored directly by the government: what they should deliver for their core funding; how they could work better together and with other museums;
- local and regional museums: challenges and opportunities; how these museums might work more closely together; the roles of Arts Council England and the Heritage Lottery Fund in supporting museums which are not directly funded by the government.” [p57]

This is followed by Appendix 1 which looks at measuring impact, and outlines existing measures, plus those recommended actions that will need new measures developing, and those that will need output measures.

Finally, there is a list of consultees.

This White Paper is certainly a positive step forward, especially for museums, and includes some very useful examples of social engagement by cultural organisations. However, whilst it is clearly vital that a vision for culture is developed and set out, the Paper does not really tie this vision into the day-to-day reality of ‘austerity Britain’. It is also very unclear exactly where libraries fit into all this – perhaps DCMS’s view is that the Task Force will pick up all the policy and strategy elements when it finally reports ...

Libraries deliver ...

This consultation paper¹⁴ – which is the latest development from the Libraries Task Force – was published in March 2016, and the consultation closed at the beginning of June.

The Network responded, and our response is available on the website¹⁵.

¹⁴ *Libraries deliver: ambition for public libraries in England 2016-2021*. DCMS, 2016, <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/libraries-deliver-ambition-for-public-libraries-in-england-2016-2021/libraries-deliver-ambition-for-public-libraries-in-england-2016-2021>.

¹⁵ *Libraries deliver: ambition for public libraries in England 2016-2021 – response from “The Network – tackling social exclusion ...”*. The Network, 2016. Available to download as a pdf (334 kb) from: <http://www.seapn.org.uk/uploads/files/Response-to-Libraries-Deliver.pdf>.

Abbreviations and acronyms

ACE = Arts Council England

AHRC = Arts and Humanities Research Council

DCMS = Department for Culture, Media and Sport

NLGN = New Local Government Network

UKTI = UK Trade & Investment

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