

Tees Valley Culture

Task and Finish Group Final Report:



Tees Valley Culture Task and Finish Group

Final Report

Foreword

Following a seminar in June 2014 attended by business leaders, academics, local authority officers and representatives of the cultural sector, a Task Group was established by the TVU Leadership Board to attempt to progress a number of key aspects of the cultural agenda here in the Tees Valley with a view to maximising the contribution that culture and the creative industries could make towards 'place-shaping' social inclusion and future economic growth.

A powerful consensus quickly emerged that our image, reputation and cultural offer are going to be increasingly critical if we are to: attract and retain the right companies, the right investment, the right labour force, top quality students, and visitors. Reassuringly however, it also became clear from the work of the group that the 5 boroughs boast an impressive, and growing, array of existing and emerging cultural assets, events, festivals, etc. which have probably not been fully exploited in the past in terms of the way in which they could have been used to promote the attractiveness of the area as a place to visit, to live or to do business – and hence as a valuable lever to attract inward investment and visitors to the area.

The work of the Task and Finish Group, has been steered by the core Group members but has been enthusiastically progressed through a number of thematic sub-groups convened by members of the Group, which have drawn upon the knowledge and expertise of colleagues from the five Councils, from arts organisations, health and social care agencies, business, the University and the College of Art and Design.

It is clear from our work that there is significant enthusiasm and energy within the Tees Valley to drive progress towards securing, consolidating, and capitalising upon a strong creative arts and culture sector, not just for its own sake but the wider benefit of the economy and the community. Towards that end, a number of core outcomes, recommendations and suggestions for future action have emerged and whilst there remains work to be done the Group now feel able to present to the Leadership Board a clear overview of the current situation and some options (with milestones and resource requirements) to take this agenda forward.

The attached papers therefore seek to set out, for the Board's consideration, the significant progress that has been made towards identifying both the key issues that need to be addressed and a series of distinct proposals for future action.

Amongst our recommendations, I would particularly draw your attention to our suggestion that place making and promotion should be adopted as a core function of the Combined Authority/LEP (including exploration of the establishment of a destination management organisation (DMO) with private sector stakeholders) and the proposal that we explore the potential benefits of making a bid for UK City of Culture 2025, aligned with the 200th anniversary of the first passenger railway.

It has been a great honour and pleasure to have chaired the Task Group, and may I close by thanking all of the members of the group, and its sub-groups, and all of the other stakeholders who have contributed to our work since the group was established.

Professor Graham Henderson CBE
Task Group Chair

Executive Summary

Introduction

This work, supported and engaged in by a wide range of interests, emerged from a shared belief that arts and culture have a significant role to play within our Strategic Economic Plan for the Tees Valley. The fact that a diverse range of people have contributed, formally or informally to the work of the Task and Finish group, is further testament to the power of that belief, and the ambition to make it a reality.

The TVU Leadership Board and originating group were always clear however, that they were not interested in strategies per se, as much as they were interested in action. And with resources under pressure it was also agreed that this agenda and the responsibility for driving that action forward, is a shared one, with Teesside University, the Local Authorities, Tees Valley Unlimited, Arts Council England, Cleveland College of Art and Design, and Tees Valley Arts all making an important contribution to the work to date.

Task and Finish participants were also clear that they were not seeking to legislate for or direct the arts and cultural priorities of the five local authorities more that, within the established principles of subsidiarity they were seeking to identify the things that if considered collectively would benefit all.

In that same vein the work does not seek to make any definitive statements about what should be considered culture. From a purely practical point of view it has been decided not to address sport within this programme, but there is a clear acknowledgement that the Tees Valley has some very significant sports assets and that participating or watching sport is a hugely important aspect of people's lives.

There are important conclusions that have been reached and are to be tested out now in a final round of consultation, there is immediate action, but there is also a framework of priorities for the partners to take forward.

The Task and Finish group has been well served by the work, going on in parallel, of the North East Cultural Partnership to bring together a Case for Culture, and there has been extensive cross fertilisation of ideas and views. This is particularly to be welcomed as there is little doubt that within the region, the Tees Valley has not always secured the resources and support to capitalise on its unique assets and address its needs.

Tees Valley, characterised by its industrial heritage and framed by rugged coastline and beautiful moorland with the winding River Tees at its heart, has quietly been reinventing itself as a place with cultural assets and events that appeal to wide audiences, and that speak of its ambition to be a diverse, vibrant and exciting place to live, work and visit.

There are three goals for action:

To be a destination – a place people know about, like living in, want to move to or visit – because of its cultural assets, events, environment and lifestyle;

To be a place of choice for artists and creative businesses to set up and grow – because of the support, spaces, and opportunities to network with other creative people;

To be a place that understands and deploys arts and culture in sustaining inclusive and healthy communities, where arts interventions are actively used to support education, health and well-being, and skills for employment;

This report and supporting action plan summarises a set of proposals for how these goals will be realised, where leadership will rest and how resources will be secured to ensure delivery.

Attached are three papers and recommendations from the three work streams represented in our goals.

1. Destination and place making
2. Social inclusion
3. Business growth

In summary our work has demonstrated the following:

The Tees Valley has many important cultural assets, important because of their artistic importance and value, important because they preserve vital elements of our history and identity, and important because they enable us to present a view to the world that challenges tired preconceived notions of what we are.

Destination and Place Making

Defining Key Assets

All our cultural assets have value; from our smallest community arts project to our highest profile events. However, a small sub-set has the potential to change perceptions about the place and reach national and international audiences. These assets could be used strategically to promote the Tees Valley.

Agree to develop a marketing strategy for the Tees Valley that derives its weight from an agreed set of significant assets.

The Potential Role of Public Art

The areas public art is of regional and national significance in terms of scale, quality and proximity of pieces. It is therefore important to give further consideration to its potential.

A formal exploration in to the potential for the 'giants' should be revisited, led by the Combined Authority / Teesside University.

Events and Festivals

We believe there is an opportunity to link our current festivals and events, to expand our local audience base and have better connectivity between our communities in the Tees Valley. This will also increase the sense of Tees Valley as a single place and foster greater ownership of our key cultural assets.

Each of the major festival's commissioners should be invited to respond to the proposal that they support satellite elements in other parts of the Tees Valley where the potential satellite host is prepared to fund the additional costs.

Key cultural event programmers, including local authorities are encouraged to submit information to the public facing 'Festivals of the North East' website, and also to contribute advance programming information to the planned non-public section of the above site (development of this site is being pursued by the North East Cultural Partnership).

UK City of Culture

The aim of UK City of Culture programme is to encourage the use of culture and creativity as a catalyst for change, to promote the development of new partnerships and to encourage ambition, innovation and inspiration in cultural and creative activity.

The Tees Valley is recognised internationally for its innovation and creativity and 2025 is particularly significant as we celebrate the bicentenary of the birth of passenger rail and its importance in the story of the railway history. This opportunity will allow us to connect our contemporary strengths to our historic achievements, galvanise communities and institutions around shared ambitions, and achieve a step change in perceptions of the place amongst national and international audiences.

Partners within TVU to declare intent to submit a bid for UK City of Culture 2025, and begins the process of wider consultation on the bid and programme priorities.

Marketing and Destination Brand and Programming

The way a destination is presented can be the difference between being known, being invisible, being presented and being passed by. Ultimately a clear and coherent set of practical, meaningful and distinctive tourism objectives and aspirations lie behind brands unique features. The challenge of promoting the conurbation as a single destination highlights competing allegiances, identities and loyalties between the sub centres.

Partners within Tees Valley give consideration to the preferred function, shape and resourcing of a DMO, as part of a brand development strategy

The local authorities agree to develop a collaborative approach to programming and marketing cultural events and attractions

A framework or a mechanism for cross conurbation marketing should be agreed between DCMS Officer Group and the Heads of Communications Group

Social Inclusion

The role of arts, culture and creativity in achieving social impact is increasingly well documented. Engaging with cultural and creative activity has the power to affect personal change in individual participants, facilitate community and civic engagement and to deliver significant outcomes in relation to educational attainment, health and well-being and economic benefit.

The Tees Valley includes some of the most deprived areas in the UK. Complex and multiple deprivation indicators relating to health, finance and access to education can lead to marginalised individuals and communities who feel that they do not have a stake in society and that their capacity to change things is low.

Partnerships and Frameworks

Work is ongoing, led by Teesside University and Tees Valley Arts, to further develop partnerships and business models that will enable the arts and culture to be used more systematically to support health, wellbeing, and employability. In particular there is a need to address the scale and process gaps between cultural practitioners working in this field and the standard commissioning and procurement approaches.

Develop a consortium approach or a framework of suppliers to support cultural practitioners and arts organisations to meet the requirements for bids and tenders, including Big Lottery/TVU commissioned work with workless individuals.

Undertake a cultural sector training needs analysis leading to the development of a CPD offer and targeted business support.

Analysis of partnerships and networks (existing and potential) required facilitating a coherent offer in the Tees Valley that will deliver positive outcomes and evidence results.

Further development of knowledge and capacity in new business models such as Social Enterprise, designed to deliver a sustainable cultural eco—system delivering both high quality arts experiences and social inclusion/impact.

Mapping and Evidence

The partnerships, frameworks and potential business models will need to relate to the existing profile of the sector, to be bespoke and fit for purpose. Further work is to be undertaken to map the sector and its work and impact with regard to social inclusion.

Further consultation with commissioners, providers, arts and cultural organisations and other key stakeholders to map the sector and determine demand and supply relating to arts interventions which achieve social impact.

Leadership in supporting the sector to deliver new ways of thinking, new ways of working and new business models which recognise the value of arts and cultural practice in achieving social impact.

Development of an evidence portfolio to be considered by all of the five Health and Well-being Boards with a request for a “pledge” to explore the value of arts based interventions in tackling public health, worklessness and mental health issues.

Align with national initiatives to support a Social Inclusion agenda in arts and culture, such as the North East Cultural Partnership Case for Culture and The Warwick Commission – Enriching Britain: Culture Creativity and Growth.

Business Growth

The cultural and creative business sector nationally is one of the fastest expanding sectors; it grew by 10% in 2012 and constituted 5.2% of the UK economy (DCMS January 2014).

The sector is relatively weak in the Tees Valley, so there are opportunities for growth. Over 10,000 people are employed in the digital and creative sector. Tees Valley has an ambition to create 25,000 net new jobs in Tees Valley over the next 10 years and 2,000 of them are forecast to be in the digital sector with a further 1,000 in tourism / leisure businesses.

The aim of this work was to draw together ideas from a variety of businesses in the cultural sector to identify blockers and issues that, if addressed, would improve the economic performance and offer of the sector and, thereby, improve economic and social outcomes for residents and businesses.

Tees Valley Unlimited to identify creative businesses, establish relationships and analyse business support and networks relevant to the sector

TVU to include digital and creative businesses in the Tees Valley Business Compass ERDF open call for business growth.

Resources and Capacity

Capacity, resources and skills are variable across all partners and it will prove useful to undertake an audit to establish what skills and capacity we have within the Tees Valley. This, in turn will give us the understanding of what additional resources we may need to fulfil any future work.

Partners within TVU give active consideration to assigning the resources required to build on the engagement and momentum represented in this report and to implementing the recommendations.

Arts Council England support a proposal to build capacity within the Tees Valley to take forward the recommendations within this report

It is not at this point planned to continue with the Task and Finish group, but rather to review as work on the priorities develops what sort of model of partnership would best add value.

Task and Finish Group Membership

Professor Graham Henderson, Vice Chancellor and chief Executive, Teesside University
Cllr David Budd, Mayor of Middlesbrough (and co-chair NE Cultural Partnership)
Jonathan Blackie, North East Cultural Partnership
Jane Tarr, Director, Organisational Resilience and Environmental Sustainability, Arts Council England
Sharon Paterson, Assistant Dean (Business Engagement and Partnerships) Teesside University
Gerda Roper, Dean of School of Arts & Media, Teesside University
Rowena Summerville, Director Tees Valley Arts
Patrick Chapman, Head of Employability and Enterprise, CCAD
Reuben Kench, Head of Culture, Leisure & Adult Learning, Stockton Council
Margie Stewart-Percy, Cultural Partnerships and Strategy Coordinator
Michael Lavery, Director of Marketing and Student Recruitment, Teesside University
Ada Burns, Chief Executive, Darlington Borough Council
Linda Edworthy, Director of Strategy and Investment, Tees Valley Unlimited
Neil Kenley, Director of Business Investment, Tees Valley Unlimited

The actions arising from report recommendations are contained within action plans. Supplementary papers and discussion pieces produced as part of the development of this report are also available. These include Tall Ships (John Mennear); Footloose (Stella Hall), Tees Valley Giants (Matthew Jarrat), TVU Business Growth Action Plan, Cultural Creative Business Size Support. To request a copy of the Action Plan or the supporting reports contact Margie Stewart-Piercy, Tees Valley Cultural Partnership and Strategy Coordinator, Stockton Borough Council: margie.stewart-piercy@stockton.gov.uk

Detail Reports

PLACE SHAPING AND OUR DISTINCTIVE OFFER

Summary

The Tees Valley Culture and Economic Growth Task and Finish group has explored a range of issues around culture's contribution to place shaping. This paper makes a series of recommendations relating to maximising the impact of key cultural assets and developing the Tees Valley as a destination.

Suggested actions and areas for further work **Appendix 1 and background papers from which** arguments are drawn **Appendices 2-5** were included as part of the original report, but are removed from this combined report.

Background

A seminar in June 2014, hosted by Teesside University and attended by business leaders, academics, local authority officers and representatives of the cultural sector, considered the potential contribution of culture to our economic aspirations. A powerful consensus emerged; if we are to recruit and retain the right companies, the right investment, the right labour force, top quality students, and visitors, our image, reputation and cultural offer is critical.

Culture's contribution was defined as relating primarily to place shaping, inclusive workforce development, and cultural business growth. These three strands have been the subject of separate working groups and this is the report of the place shaping strand.

Detail

The starting hypothesis is that the Tees conurbation has cultural assets and characteristics that can and do have a positive impact on the area's ability to attract visitors, investors, businesses and talent, but to maximise the impact they have we need to strengthen some, add new ones in certain areas, and promote them differently. Furthermore, if we are to optimise the impact of these cultural attractors and raise the (positive) profile of the place (singular) then we must address the twofold problem of our identity and the weakness of destination marketing capacity for the Tees Valley.

Defining our Key Assets?

Any attempt to definitively list the key cultural assets will be fruitless since the context they will be used in will vary and thus those that are 'key' will change.

The potential impact of culture on economic growth through place shaping is likely to be a function of our ability to reach and change the views of key audiences. These audiences may be geographically dispersed specialists, such as the potential overseas digital animation entrepreneurs who might be attracted by the globally significant Animex Festival at Teesside University, or be the broader potential skilled workforce of other English regions who might view the collection of facilities as offering the quality of life that convinces them to look for work here.

There are a number of established cultural events and attractions within the Tees Valley that could be described as distinctive or unique, and of a scale in either visitor numbers or media profile that would result in them being known beyond the immediate vicinity, and potentially therefore having the desired effect on perceptions of the place. However, it is difficult to define objective criteria by which our key assets might be selected. A one size fits all approach will not offer us the flexibility we need and many of the quality marks we use regularly within arts, culture and heritage only offer a basic standard to adhere to. It is also valid to mark out differences between offers on the levels of regional, national and international significance for the visitor.

Although there must be mobility between these, the ability to understand and define our key assets in terms of regional, national and international significance is important and offers us a better understanding of markets and audiences.

It is proposed that the following serve as a measure of regional, national or international importance:

- Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status, this denotes a national importance in terms of quality of work, relevance to audiences, strategic role.
- Museum Partner Museum (MPM) status
- Arts Council England Designation scheme: This scheme identifies and celebrates collections of outstanding resonance – that deepen our understanding of the world and what it means to be human. The Tees Valley currently does not have any designated collections.
- ACE Museum Accreditation
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) a UNESCO-endorsed accolade awarded to areas with world-class geology
- All venues must be signed up to the VAQAS scheme through VisitEngland

These measures are assessed by others and criteria are fixed. In addition we would propose using measures relative to:

- Average audience levels from outside the Tees Valley
- Typical levels of national or international media coverage (measured by value)
- Significance to an international specialist field/subject such that those in that field would cite it as of international significance

In addition events and attractions must be 'market ready';

- *Products must be up and running and open to the public **now** as a quality product*
- *The product must be ready for marketing investment **now***

Key Cultural Assets

Using the above criteria each of the following cultural facilities or events attracts visitors from beyond the Tees Valley, or is an Accredited Museums or ACE National Portfolio Organisations;

- Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (MIMA),
- Hartlepool Historic Quay (National Museum of the Royal Navy),
- Festival of Thrift,
- Stockton International Riverside Festival (SIRF),
- Animex,
- Darlington Civic Theatre,
- Hullabaloo Theatre Company
- ARC,
- Preston Hall,
- Dorman Museum,
- Kirkleatham Museum
- Head of Steam

In addition to these fixed events or sites there are two possible key assets that are less well defined but equally powerful;

- The natural landscape including the river, combines moorland, hills, coast and cliffs, with estuarial sites of national significance for wildlife
- The industrial heritage of railways, iron, steel and bridge-building

The physical environment within and between our towns and villages acts as a network of multifunctional open spaces, including formal parks, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, waterways, open countryside and coastline. The opportunities offered to us through these not only brings opportunities for leisure and sport but also links together our wildlife areas and our industrial heritage of railways, iron and steel.

The Tees Valley engineering history including bridge building and railways puts the Tees Valley alongside contemporary industry and gives us a unique story and a place in history that has international appeal.

We should consider a way of grading the landscape which may include any designated landscapes, scheduled monuments, listed buildings, registered historic parks and gardens and battlefields, Areas of Outstanding Beauty and areas of Special Scientific Interest.

In recent North of England tourism discussions, the themes of landscape, culture and heritage, have emerged as the characteristics of the North which are believed to provide a marketable offer in international tourism terms. These themes would provide vehicles for the promotion of a slightly wider list of Tees Valley assets around themes. The Stockton Darlington Railway heritage offer provides a good example of the potential of thematically connected sites or events.

It is therefore proposed that landscape and heritage are added to the set of significant assets.

There is a longer list of assets which may be of value in promoting the place; they can be used as supporting products in any marketing exercise.

The next stage involves consultation with stakeholders and general public about our suggested cultural assets list, testing levels of ownership and interest in these and other attractions.

The question whether or not a football club constitutes a cultural asset may be debated, but it should be acknowledged that Middlesbrough Football Club can and does make a considerable contribution to place shaping and place marketing, and of course, it attracts a significant number of visitors from beyond the Tees Valley. We also need to consider other ways that clubs support the place shaping agenda, for example the use of the club as a music venue or conference facility.

Potential New or Emerging Assets

There are several major attractions that are expected to be developed in coming years which would be likely to contribute to the place shaping objectives. The following cultural developments would, once completed, constitute additional cultural assets;

- Kirkleatham Estate, incorporating the stables, walled gardens and grounds,
- Middlesbrough Sports Village featuring a velodrome and athletics track,
- Skytrail high ropes attraction in conjunction with the existing Tees Barrage facilities,
- Hullabaloon centre of the excellence for children's theatre in Darlington,
- Middlesbrough Town Hall venues
- The combined sites, buildings and artefacts associated with the Stockton to Darlington Railway and the birth of steam passenger rail.

A brief outline of some of these projects is available in the supplementary **Appendix 2**.

It is also agreed that other assets, events and attractions, including sport, are celebrated and marketed as important contributors to quality of life.

TVU is not defining this work within administrative boundaries, but reaching out where appropriate in to other local authority areas.

Recommendation 1. Agree to develop a marketing strategy for the Tees Valley that derives its weight from an agreed set of significant assets

Sport and Active Leisure

Whilst we understand and appreciate the value of sport, the focus of this work is on the arts and culture. The group believe they are underutilised and have the potential to make a greater contribution to economic growth.

Understanding the difference sport and active leisure offers us both opportunities for place shaping and tourism. Formal and informal activities offer different opportunities for engagement and support both place shaping and tourism. Taking part in formal and informal clubs and activities gives great opportunities.

We do need to develop, programme and market these offers to build both our built and landscape offer and tie in to our festival and events programme.

The Potential Role of Public Art

The areas public art is of regional and national significance in terms of the scale, quality and proximity of individual pieces, including Temenos by Anish Kapoor, Bottle of Notes by Claes Oldenburg, and Brick Train by David Mach. Sitting within a North East England collection of large scale public art these might be promoted to a national audiences and may contribute to visitors reasons to come to the Tees Valley.

Temenos was conceived as the first of 5 Tees Valley Giants, a set of site specific works by an artist of world renown, one in each of the Tees Valley Boroughs. If realised, Tees Valley Giants would be a world class landmark collection attracting global visitors and media coverage. The Giants would have major international visitor pull and would undoubtedly be utilised in any list of key cultural assets being drawn up to market the Tees Valley.

The project is summarised in the supplementary **Appendix 3**, and a case can be made for resurrecting its original ambition. Whilst the cost and political capital investment required may be high, the return would be transformational. If our aim is to cement a Tees City Region status, in the context of a national government move toward city identities and powers, The Giants would be emblematic.

For the 'giants' to be successfully re-launched there would need to be a sequence of discussions, presentations and debates which generated support, quantified the anticipated benefits and addressed any risks.

Recommendation 2. A formal exploration in to the potential for the 'giants' should be revisited, led by the Combined Authority / Teesside University.

New Events and Festivals

The desire to scan the horizon for 'footloose' events and to bring in ready-made attractors of large audiences has been expressed across the North East. The conclusions of earlier regional and Tees Valley work around finding the right location for the right event, backing our authentic indigenous product, and being clear about frameworks and shared objectives if we choose to collaborate on large events, all remain pertinent to current consideration of new events. These factors would be built into a framework for Tees Valley event development and collaboration.

Commentaries on the experience of the Tees Valley Tall Ships in 2010, by John Mennear, former Hartlepool BC Assistant Director, and on the footloose event opportunities in general by Stella Hall, Independent Festival Director, have provided significant insight. Their analysis can be found in the supplementary **Appendices 4 and 5** respectively.

These commentaries demonstrate that there is real potential value, but also real hidden costs and risks in staging large one-off events. There are also objectives for the event 'owner' that are not always compatible with the hosts objectives. These can be minimised or accommodated through compromise but are commonly overlooked at the point of bidding or expressing interest in the event.

Another common oversight is the amount of time required to fully exploit the opportunity of the visiting event. An assumption that the event is a ready-made one leads to an approach which can fail to ensure a legacy other than that of media profile and perceptions.

The capacity to attract large events and optimise their impact for the whole Tees Valley requires structures for collaboration and marketing which are not currently in place.

The next phase must be designed to enable the Tees Valley to generate greater impact from existing and visiting events, building audiences, packaging related visitor experiences, connecting events across the conurbation and investing jointly in events so that they serve as marketing tools for the destination. The challenges in doing so and recommendations to support these are outlined later in the report.

It may be advantageous to develop our capacity to pursue sponsorship and also to maximise opportunities for participation across a group of our major events. This could be considered as part of the capacity building process linked to the Capital of Culture opportunity.

It may be possible to access additional ACE funding for this collaborative marketing and participation work, however a match contribution from local authorities and other partners would be required.

Accolades or designations which reflect existing characteristics, and which celebrate the presence of a range of cultural assets may not be events in themselves, but they bring a focus of attention to a place. The year-long national and European Capital of Culture status awards are run on a cycle, with 4 years between each UK Capital designation. If the Tees Valley City Region were to bid for UK City of Culture status, the process of developing the

bid could be unifying and inspiring, supporting efforts to build audiences and raise the profile of the place.

The potential for the Tees Valley to pursue the status of UK City of Culture in 2025, utilising the bi-centenary of the 'Birth of Passenger Rail' as a unifying feature of the bid, offers the opportunity to assess our current capacity, put in place programmes to strengthen our position, and align efforts toward a clear and compelling vision. City of Culture preparations strengthen the case for matching investment from national funders, including Arts Council England and the Lottery distributors.

Initial analysis of the UK City of Culture opportunity suggests we have a strong starting position and the right time-frame in which to generate widespread support and a very credible bid.

The five local authorities have agreed to fund a .5 post to support the development of our culture and economic growth work for an initial phase. This work will be coordinated by the Tees Valley DCMS Officer Group and report through the Directors of Place, linking with their other place shaping work and the Live Work Play prospectus.

If greater collaboration and joint working emerges in the context of a 2025 bid, additional capacity would need to be created and the Combined Authority would be the most appropriate vehicle for this.

Recommendation 3. Each of the major festival's commissioners should be invited to respond to the proposal that they support satellite elements in other parts of the Tees Valley where the potential satellite host is prepared to fund the additional costs.

Recommendation 4. Key cultural event programmers, including local authorities are encouraged to submit information to the public facing Festivals of the North East website, and also to contribute advance programming information to the planned non-public section of the above site (development of this site is being pursued by the North East Cultural Partnership).

Recommendation 5. Partners within TVU to declare intent to submit a bid for UK City of Culture 2025, and begins the process of wider consultation on the bid and programme priorities.

Marketing and Destination Branding

The way in which a destination presents itself to the world, not only through the key messages or images we convey but through the experience visitors have and the emotive invitations we present, can be the difference between being known and being invisible, being visited and being passed by.

A destination brand, often misunderstood as a logo stating the name of the destination, is in fact an important symbol for the destination and a 'promise' of the quality of experience a visitor can expect. Nevertheless the brand name and visual identity is a vital reflection and frames a destination's character, competitive identity and strategy.

Ultimately a clear and coherent set of practical, meaningful, and distinctive tourism objectives and aspirations lie behind a brand's unique features. Through its presence, the brand showcases the destination to the world far beyond simply slogans and symbols, making the desired connection with target audiences. Brand development requires thoughtful, responsible commitment to the long-term identity – and offer - of our conurbation as a destination.

The challenge of promoting the towns and communities of the conurbation as a single destination, or of promoting the cultural assets as belonging to and signifying the key cultural attractions of the place, highlights competing allegiances, identities, and loyalties between the sub-centres.

If Darlington seeks to promote its town's retail heart it will market the Dolphin Centre and Civic Theatre as part of the mix. Seeking to attract shoppers and visitors to Middlesbrough, the Council will reference mima, Town Hall venues and Dorman Museum. Redcar and Cleveland is currently raising the profile of its coast and moorland by promoting them as being part of Yorkshire, much of it does lie within the North Yorkshire Moors National Park. Stockton is striving to attract people to its redeveloped town centre through marketing of events like SIRC and the Cycling Festival.

If our aim is to use the key assets to promote the Tees Valley, we must either redirect our promotional effort away from the association with our towns and Boroughs, or add an additional layer of promotion of the conurbation.

This place promotion function is the subject of debate and it is reasonable to argue that the Combined Authority or the LEP might lead the development of a new destination marketing organisation (DMO) or grouping, given our stated ambitions for talent retention and investment attraction.

Work is currently underway to assess the DMO need and opportunity and to evaluate the proposals put forward by the Tees Valley Tourism Alliance. The conclusions of this should inform the next step in relation to the promotion of the cultural assets.

Recommendation 6. Partners within Tees Valley give consideration to the preferred function, shape and resourcing of a DMO, as part of a brand development strategy

Teesside University's Department of External Relations is completing some market and creative research and development work to outline how we might approach collaborative marketing and also to share examples of good practice and the different creative approaches (including the creation of 'mood boards').

Programming Across the Key Assets

The extent to which coherent programming across the key assets can take place, as with the question relating to destination promotion, is partly a function of willingness and motivation. It is possible to make thematic connections and align events, exhibitions, performances etc. There have been good recent examples across the Tees Valley such as the co-commissioned exhibition and outdoor theatre production to mark the centenary of World War 1, and the Festival of Engineering that was staged as part of the Festival of the North East. However, the engagement with such collaborations is typically uneven or asymmetrical, with some Boroughs or institutions engaging more fully than others, depending on the extent to which the event serves the local need or priorities.

The Tees Valley has world class distinctive cultural events which continue to grow and thrive. Programming will support these and future events and has the potential to increase our audiences and promote in a way that changes the perceptions of the Tees Valley external ly whilst raising the aspiration of our residents.

At its simplest it ought to be possible to coordinate programming in an attempt to clashes of timing between major events. This has also been raised at a regional level and a shared, non-public web-based diary for event planners is being explored. (this is covered in the Festival and Events section)

Recommendation 7. The local authorities agree to develop a collaborative approach to programming and marketing cultural events and attractions

Recommendation 8. A framework or a mechanism for cross conurbation marketing should be agreed between DCMS Officer Group and the Heads of Communications Group

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Context

The role of arts, culture and creativity in achieving social impact is increasingly well documented. Engaging with cultural and creative activity has the power to affect personal change in individual participants, facilitate community and civic engagement and to deliver significant outcomes in relation to educational attainment, health and well-being and economic benefit. The arts can be a highly effective way to engage with disengaged communities working best when taken to where people are, both geographically and socially.

The Tees Valley includes some of the most deprived areas in the UK and faces challenges such as poverty, poor health and life expectancy and educational under-attainment. Complex and multiple deprivation indicators relating to health, finance and access to education can lead to marginalised individuals and communities who feel that they do not have a stake in society and that their capacity to change things is low.

The Warwick Commission report on the Future of Cultural Value published earlier this year noted:

“The key message from this report is that the government and the Cultural and Creative Industries need to take a united and coherent approach that guarantees equal access to everyone to a rich cultural education and the opportunity to live a creative life. There are barriers and inequalities in Britain today that prevent this from being a universal human right. This is bad for business and bad for society”.

The Warwick Commission, Enriching Britain: Culture and Growth 2015

Infrastructure

The changing landscape is defined by a radical shift in the resources available to support this area of work. Local authorities face increasing pressure to deliver savings, resulting in staff reductions and diminished funding streams. Arts Council funding to Local Authorities has reduced, as has the funding available to artists and cultural organisations. Public and third sector bodies in education, health and social services, who historically have commissioned social arts practice, have had to deliver significant change in economically challenging times and need to focus resources to achieve and evidence greatest impact.

A commitment to Arts and Culture as a means to promote social inclusion and act as an agent of change at both an individual and community level, will require a new way of thinking, new ways of working and new business models designed to ensure that excellent art and opportunities to be creative are available to everyone.

This report comes out of a series of consultation meetings with key stakeholders including Arts and Cultural Sector organisations, Arts Council England, Local Authorities, Commissioners and community groups.

The consultation exercise identified a number of key issues:

- Capacity within the sector to respond to opportunities to develop work in areas such as health and wellbeing.
- Skills gaps amongst practitioners, arts practitioners and new entrants to the cultural industries.
- The need for a network hub or framework structure to support arts organisations to engage with current opportunities.
- A need for the cultural sector to capture and analyse data and produce evidence of social impact and value for money.
- Support for the arts and cultural sector organisations to develop the capacity to determine metrics to address commissioning bodies' criteria.
- A need to develop business models (such as Social Enterprise) that address social impact whilst bringing an entrepreneurial approach to developing sustainable cultural sector businesses.
- The need to develop a sustainable cultural eco-system across the Tees Valley which promotes the use of creative and cultural activities to meet social aims and that attracts and retains practitioners working in this field.
- A need to further investigate ways to engage with marginalised communities and to understand where participants and audiences are generated.
- A need to increase digital capacity in the sector recognising the importance of digital technologies in increasing participant reach and engagement.

The consultation meetings recognised the importance of work with children, young people and their families and the far reaching impact of arts and creative engagement in achieving educational attainment, developing confidence and skills and building the audiences of the future. There is a collective commitment to delivering a strong cultural offer for children and young people secure in the knowledge that the end result will be an adult population that is more economically and socially active.

Work with children, young people and their families is an area of strength in the Tees Valley. Theatre Hullabaloo, a sector lead in work for children and young people, is based in Darlington. Theatre Hullabaloo delivers Take Off, an international festival of theatre for children and young people. In 2017 Theatre Hullabaloo will open in Darlington (a partnership between Darlington Borough Council and Theatre Hullabaloo). This will be a National Centre for Excellence for work with children and young people and one of only three such centres in the UK.

Tees Valley Arts have a long history of work in the field of Social Inclusion across the Tees Valley, working with young people in challenging circumstances. Tees Valley Arts have an extensive bank of knowledge and expertise of participatory arts practice with marginalised and disenfranchised communities.

mima has a strong strategic focus on social art practice. The newly established *Office of Useful Art* reintroduces the idea that art is not for its own sake but as a tool or device for social change. Current and planned exhibitions bring together artists whose work is

concerned with social transformation and community engagement at both a global and a local level.

Our work to achieve Social Inclusion should recognise the Tees Valley's history and achievements in participatory arts practice and ensure that steps taken to achieve sustainable arts organisations working in this field place a compelling argument for the value of our cultural offer at the heart of strategic interventions.

Future Proofing the Sector

Working in art form practices with and within marginalised communities requires specific skills and expertise as well as often demanding highly developed knowledge in sector specific areas. Training opportunities appear limited with a clear need for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for established artists and graduates. This uncovers a need to embed learning about the development and delivery of projects in this area of work in current HE programmes. Additionally, there should be more opportunities for student placements. It is recognised that arts organisations and providers will need additional resource to support offering such opportunities to emerging artists.

The project recognises that the sector needs support to move from a culture of 'funding to finance' but that in a complex landscape of freelance artists and micro businesses, sector specific models, initiatives and interventions will be required.

In order to establish a sustainable ecosystem which promotes the use of creative and cultural activities to meet social aims, targeted business support for artists and new graduates wishing to work in this field will be required. Knowledge of Social Enterprise business models appears to be limited with a need to support new cultural sector organisations who may be considering a Social Enterprise structure. A partnership project with Darlington Borough Council *Social Enterprise in the Creative and Cultural Sector: Building Sustainable Business Models* seeks to address this gap.

There are growing opportunities working in the area of Arts and Health. This may involve working in specialist areas with older people, those using mental health services, children, young people and their families. Arts and cultural activity can be framed within the preventative medicine portfolio and seen as an integral part of a Health and Well-being strategy. A key challenge in this area is embedding appropriate metrics that effectively measure success in project design and delivery.

Cultural interventions can demand longitudinal studies to demonstrate value and impact whereas budget holders often require empirical evidence of measurable results and outputs.

Arts and cultural organisations could benefit from a consortium approach to a framework of suppliers. Work is needed to develop an infrastructure to support cultural practitioners to meet the requirements for bids and tenders. Further work needs to be undertaken to determine the evidence required to meet the criteria set by commissioning bodies. The arts and cultural sector will need the capacity to collect, share and analyse data in the areas of participation reach and social impact.

Recommendations

1. Further consultation with commissioners, providers, arts and cultural organisations and other key stakeholders to map the sector and determine demand and supply relating to arts interventions which achieve social impact.
2. Leadership in supporting the sector to deliver new ways of thinking, new ways of working and new business models which recognise the value of arts and cultural practice in achieving social impact.
3. Development of an evidence portfolio to be considered by all of the five Health and Well-being Boards with a request for a “pledge” to explore the value of arts based interventions in tackling public health, worklessness and mental health issues.
4. Develop a consortium approach to a framework of suppliers and a fit for purpose infrastructure to support cultural practitioners and arts organisations to work together in order to meet the requirements for bids and tenders.
5. Support to develop a consortium approach to a framework of providers that can be available to Big Lottery/TVU commissioned work with workless individuals.
6. Analysis of partnerships and networks (existing and potential) required to facilitate a coherent offer in the Tees Valley that will deliver positive outcomes and evidence results.
7. Further development of knowledge and capacity in new business models such as Social Enterprise, designed to deliver a sustainable cultural eco—system delivering both high quality arts experiences and social inclusion/impact.
8. Support to undertake a cultural sector training needs analysis leading to the development of a CPD offer and targeted business support.
9. Align with national initiatives to support a Social Inclusion agenda in arts and culture, such as the North East Cultural Partnership *Case for Culture* and The Warwick Commission – *Enriching Britain: Culture Creativity and Growth*.

BUSINESS GROWTH

Background

The cultural and creative business sector nationally is one of the fastest expanding sectors, it grew by 10% in 2012 and constituted 5.2% of the UK economy (DCMS January 2014).

The sector is relatively weak in the Tees Valley, so there are opportunities for growth. Over 10,000 people are employed in the digital and creative sector. Tees Valley has an ambition to create 25,000 net new jobs in Tees Valley over the next 10 years and 2,000 of them are forecast to be in the digital sector with a further 1,000 in tourism / leisure businesses.

According to a new report by the Commission for Underperforming Towns and Cities, '[A brighter future for our towns and cities](#)', culture can help define a sense of place and attract new businesses. The report goes on to say "A strong cultural offer can attract "bright young businesses" to underperforming towns and cities helping to maximise growth potential, and details a number of ways that local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships and government can maximise growth. On a local level, defining a "sense of place" and attracting "the brightest and the best" people and businesses are seen as key, and a strong cultural offer is one way that towns and cities can do this. The report writers point to success stories such as Glasgow, Liverpool and Tyneside, where investment in culture has helped to attract private sector investment and enhance the reputation of a place.

http://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/news/underperforming-towns-should-look-culture-report-suggests?utm_source=Weekly-News&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Underperforming-towns-should-look-to-culture%2C-report-suggests&utm_campaign=22nd-May-2015

Work Stream Activity

The aim of the Business Growth work stream was to draw together ideas from a variety of businesses in the cultural sector to identify blockers and issues that, if addressed, would improve the economic performance and offer of the sector and, thereby, improve economic and social outcomes for residents and businesses.

A meeting/workshop was held on 10th March 2015 to have a roundtable discussion concentrating on business growth from a business perspective and get a feeling from people who are involved in businesses or within businesses. This included discussions around blockers, issues and opportunities going forward.

Some of the issues raised at the meeting were:-

- a) Tees Valley residents don't realise the value of culture on their doorstep. There isn't a consistent offer or network for Artists. Awareness needs to be raised for smaller culture assets and activity.

- b) There is a problem with transport and infrastructure. Parochialism exists within the individual Council's – there should be promotion of events throughout the different Boroughs.
- c) There are strong businesses in digital and there is some joining up to do – digital, tourism etc.
- d) There is a lack of networking and people go to where they know. There is no central contact point within the Tees Valley.
- e) Poor understanding of the type of support available or where to find the support.
- f) As an area we don't sell ourselves well.
- g) We don't embrace the natural assets within the Tees Valley.
- h) The Tees Valley was like a dysfunctional family – in competition with each other rather than working together.
- i) Lack of Destination marketing.
- j) There was a need for a central website and events calendar for the Tees Valley
- k) There needs to be a vision which drives collaborative decisions between public and private sector and move forward.
- l) They also struggle to find a relevant Tees Valley contact regarding available space for cultural businesses.
- m) Lack of a Destination Management Organisation (DMO)

Throughout the workshop discussions, it was agreed that some of the concerns raised had a cross-over between the other cultural working streams – i.e. Destination and place making, and Social Inclusion, and that action plans from these streams would address some of the issues/concerns.

Recommendations

- 1. Identify businesses and create relationships with cultural businesses in order to identify their growth needs.**
- 2. Identify in greater detail and analyse business support & networks.**
- 3. Include digital and creative in the Tees Valley Business Compass ERDF open call for business growth.**
- 4. Undertake some scoping to determine what a DMO would look like. Identify the need for public and private consultation and collaboration.**
- 5. Support the development of the Capital of Culture bid.**
- 6. Review list of Tees Valley Creative venues.**