



Evaluation Report
(activity up to June 2022)

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1 Introduction

1.1 This Report

This report is about the programme developed through the Brighton & Hove ABCD plan for Cultural Recovery¹, which has, as its key aim: ‘To create a cultural sector in Brighton & Hove that is more inclusive, collaborative and sustainable than pre-Covid.’

The programme has a set of overarching aims which are initially being met through three different strands of work. These strands are Enliven Brighton, Engine Room and Creative Communities Network. This report is structured around the overarching aims for the programme as a whole and the aims for each strand of the work.

The different strands of the programme have been developed in direct response to the challenges presented by Covid-19. This is articulated in detail in the appended report, which was written as part of the wider evaluation process informing the development of this report.² The evidence presented throughout this report has been gathered through a range of evaluation activities, which are detailed below.

This report concludes by summarising the learning points that emerge and suggesting a set of recommendations based on this learning. The learning points include positive examples of things that have worked well and could be usefully continued as well as those which indicate potential areas to be refined or changed.

1.2 Evaluation Approach and Process

The evaluation process has involved the development of frameworks to identify what evidence should be collected, what questions need to be explored and how best to nurture reflection on what has been happening and the difference it is making. A range of processes were thereby identified for use across the strands.

The use of surveys has been important as a way of gathering feedback from people engaging in more fleeting ways. It has also been useful to use surveys to gather retrospective feedback from people. Alongside surveys, evaluation questions have been embedded in other processes. For example, they have been used in some organisations’ evaluation processes, as part of one-to-one interviews. Questions

¹ The Plan can be viewed at: <https://bit.ly/3Nzhi2N>

² Appendix 1: The Impact of Covid-19 on the CCS

have also been identified and asked of people involved in the development and management of the programme, during interviews and group reflection sessions.

More inclusive processes for gathering feedback have also been developed. For example, participants for whom written language is a barrier have been sent questions in voice memos and questions have been translated into Persian and Arabic to ensure a greater diversity of feedback from people engaging.

All data thereby gathered has been mined for themes and for evidence of how the aims have been met. Learning points have thereby surfaced, which indicate action points for future programme development. Films made and other evidence generated through project processes have also been analysed in a similar way. The external evaluator is continuing with the ABCD programme, and a further evaluation report will be written at the end of 2022, when the programme is due to conclude.

2 Project Summary

2.1 Background, Structure and Governance

The Brighton & Hove ABCD Cultural Recovery Programme (ABCD) has evolved through a common ambition to counteract the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the cultural sector in Brighton & Hove, and through the Enliven Brighton strand, in ways that also begin to redress the impact on local business. Louise Backwell describes how initial strategic development centred on growing concern about the impact the pandemic was having on artists and cultural workers:

“The first key strategic partnership is between four local network leads; Marina Norris and I, Andrew Comben and Ian Baird (What Next Brighton & Hove’³, [Arts & Creative Industries Commission \(ACIC\)](#), [Events Professional Independent Committee \(EPIC\)](#)⁴) who invite the three local MPs to a meeting to listen to a range of case studies from local artists and cultural workers on how the pandemic is impacting us. Caroline Lucas uses the case studies in a speech in the House of Commons to argue for more support for freelancers. These key individuals and influencers are crucial in driving the project forward.” (Louise Backwell, Blog content, August 2021)

Three networks therefore came together to address the challenges presented to the cultural sector in Brighton & Hove by COVID-19:

“There were three networks in the city... We decided we should all meet up, in Feb and March, when we were thinking ‘what’s going on?’ and there was a real demand from What Next Brighton & Hove, so we decided to invite our MPs to meet us, online, and talk about what was going on, on the ground. Someone from Arts Council England was present and then they approached us and suggested we apply for some managed funds to work together and for the cultural industry in the city to work together in response to and to

³ www.whatnextculture.co.uk/chapters/brighton/

⁴ accessaa.co.uk/brighton-hove-event-industry-launch-epic/

recover from the pandemic crisis.” (Conversation with the ABCD Founders, December 2021)

Andrew Comben describes how the partnership recognised the significance of this moment in time, as one in which there was a need to act, to safeguard the future of cultural activity in Brighton & Hove, given the high proportion of people working in the cultural and creative sector, but also as a moment in which to seize the groundswell of enthusiasm to address inequalities and raise the bar in terms of what could be achieved by the sector:

“There was increased activism at that time, around the inequalities in the sector and society; Black Lives Matter (BLM) was very present but also there was a presence of freelancers and a growing awareness of their situation, which was important. Brighton & Hove has such a high proportion of freelancers. We were openly acknowledging that there was great stuff in the city ‘but...’ and we wanted to use the ‘but’ to think about what we could aspire to.” (Conversation with the ABCD Founders, December 2021)

The founder members were aware that partnership working and involving freelancers would be important to the effectiveness of the programme, as is articulated by Synthia Griffin (then Arts Development Manager at the council):

“There seemed to be a general acknowledgement that coming together rather than working in silos would be key to the sector’s recovery. So, it is important that we’ve come together from different cultural contexts across the sector, for example, with Ian coming from more commercial events... 100 people were convened⁵ (through 17 conversations), so it was very much about the city defining what it needed, so this is quite a radical shift because there is a sense that the voice of freelancers hasn’t been heard much before, and the Covid 19 pandemic exposed some longstanding issues that needed to be addressed.” (Conversation with the ABCD Founders, December 2021)

It was important that the programme could be collectively ‘owned’ across the city, while using what resources organisations and individuals could provide to get things off the ground. Brighton & Hove City Council and Arts Council England (ACE) indicated they would be involved if a proposal could be formulated, which would ensure resource to pay people involved when facilitated conversations began. In the interim, the Founders met weekly, used existing resources from the three networks and secured in-kind support to establish a skeleton infrastructure for the initial work. This collective generosity was then amplified by local National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) and successful ACE Cultural Recovery Fund (CRF3) applicants contributing financially to paying freelancers to be involved. This was crucial in terms of being able to create initial opportunities for paid involvement for a wide range of people, including freelancers, working in the creative and cultural sector.

The desire to generate opportunities for people working in the cultural sector to sustain and develop their creative careers was also fuelled by a desire to challenge the ideas that were revealed by a government campaign, which promoted the idea

⁵ See List of people convened in the Plan: <https://bit.ly/3y7dos5>

that people from the cultural sector should retrain in cyber security, implying that these were more relevant and useful careers than those in the cultural sector:⁶

“The political narrative and the government campaign about retraining and abandoning a creative career... in the context of Brighton & Hove that was particularly damaging given the high number of freelancers. It had the potential to destabilise the whole network of freelancers, because it was not an optimistic message.” (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

Whilst Brighton & Hove Council have supported the programme, financially and otherwise, it is important to acknowledge that the council has not tried to claim the programme as their own, rather, the council has supported the plan in ways that have encouraged further support:

“It wasn’t about the council trying to own the plan, it was about the council giving it legitimacy so that we could marshal resources around the plan. It has been important that the legitimacy of the plan was recognised within the council so that the different things that the council could make possible could happen.” (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

Conversations also started with other partners, extending partnerships, capacity, skills sets, expertise and the potential reach of the work. People involved in the programme have articulated how the different partnerships fed into the success of the strategy and approach:

“The right approach, enabling by skill sharing and capacity building... is essential to a diverse business and cultural life in the city. If people are encouraged and supported to do their own thing and follow diverse approaches this does not only enrich the city but means that future difficulties and threatening impact can be weathered better and are met with more stability.” (General ABCD Survey, May 2022)

Through the partnership with the council, ABCD was given the opportunity to put forward projects to the Welcome Back Fund (WBF), Covid recovery money from central government, which was channelled through local authorities. Nine projects were funded and a total of £196K was allocated from the WBF to the cultural recovery programme. A further three projects were developed later, resulting in a total of 11 projects. The total sum of money raised so far (to June 2022) through ABCD is £548,000⁷. Other funding sources for the projects included the Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership, Police and Crime Commission and the University

⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/oct/12/ballet-dancer-could-reskill-with-job-in-cyber-security-suggests-uk-government-ad>

⁷ See Appendix 2: Facts and Figures

of Sussex. This represents a broad range of funders and for all of them, the collaborative nature of ABCD was a key part of securing the funding. Cultural organisations further contributed through their Cultural Recovery Fund grants and through support in kind. For example, production company ‘Whiskey Bravo’ and Brighton Dome supported by managing the funds for ABCD. There was also significant administrative support from the council.

2.2 Structure and Governance

The Brighton & Hove ABCD Cultural Recovery Programme governance group has made strategic decisions about the structure of the programme. Working groups were recruited through an open process to take forward the priority areas. The membership of the governance group includes representatives of founder members, Brighton & Hove council officers, chairs of the working groups and representatives from Sussex University.

The founders were dedicated to the programme being developed in inclusive ways, from the outset:

“We tried to make sure this was a fully inclusive process, rather than one that was or was perceived to be, held by gate keepers, this was something the whole group held on to and I think we did this reasonably successfully, but it was something we grappled with.” (Conversation with the ABCD Founders, December 2021)

The content of the programme has therefore been developed and supported through a carefully considered and orchestrated governance structure, with working groups having been established to make decisions about the three different programme strands.⁸ This has ensured that relevant expertise, from local organisations and individuals, including practitioners working in the cultural sector, has informed the direction of each strand:

“The work has succeeded in getting the sector to work together more effectively, because we have found that having governance groups and working groups is a way to realise that.” (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

The working groups have developed their roles organically, which has led them to all be quite different in terms of how they operate and function:

“It was interesting to see how the different working groups worked so differently to fulfil the remit of their group. The creative community’s group were perhaps more reflective in terms of how they were reflecting on the role of communities in the context of the pandemic, which was quite specific to work relating to the voluntary sector where people were giving a lot of

⁸ All strands and projects are detailed on the website: <https://cultureinourcity.com/abcd/>

thought about how best to respond in these circumstances, and to working in social contexts and with the third and voluntary sector. So, the groups took on their own life.” (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

Although the groups’ roles were autonomous and flexible there was specific expertise in the room for all working groups, relating to the focus of that working group. The benefits of working in this way has also been recognised by partner organisations and practitioners.

One of the key objectives, within the working groups, which has been recognised widely as beneficial, not least in terms of legacy, was to pay freelancers to get involved. This was a significant difference to how similar previous work had been organised and can be recognised as instrumental in ensuring the work was more inclusive. The contributions of local NPOs was important in supporting this.

A wide range of partner organisations were involved in the planning and delivery of the Brighton & Hove ABCD Cultural Recovery programme. This was a strategically mutually beneficial approach, whereby the programme benefitted from the connectivity local organisations already have across communities, and local organisations, projects and practitioners benefitted from the funding.

Partner organisations and practitioners also benefitted from the opportunities presented by being part of a wider programme, not least because of the dynamic interplay there has been between different projects and programme strands. This interplay has also led to a programme that, whilst having distinct strands, has also been recognisable as one consistent programme:

“I think the ABCD programme has looked really coherent... it's been clear where it's come from.” (Richard Freeman, Always Possible interview, March 2022)

The governance and working groups have thereby developed a programme that has not ‘parachuted in’ organisations or practitioners but has instead invested in the existing cultural assets and workforce, embedding a legacy in the area.

2.3 The Working Groups

The original make-up of the first three Working Groups was as follows.

Enliven Brighton

Co-Chairs:

Tarik Elmoutawakil, Marlborough Productions

David Sheppard, Marlborough Productions

Members:

Sarah Davies, Creative Workspace Network (previously at Phoenix Arts Space)

Kim Jack-Riley, Tea & Grazing Ltd

Sally Oakenfold, The Hope and Ruin

Tristan Sharpes, dreamthinkspeak
Simon Vaughn, Creative Giants

The Engine Room

Co-Chairs:

Erin Barnes, Independent Producer
Marina Norris, Cultural Baggage, What Next? Brighton & Hove

Members:

Philippa Aldrich, Future Perfect Company
Julian Caddy, Brighton Fringe
Joe Shelton, University of Brighton

The Creative Communities Network

Co-Chairs:

Cath James, South East Dance
John Varah, Same Sky

Members:

Nicky Crabb, Little Green Pig
Faith Dodkins, The Spire / freelance
Lex Hollingworth & Paul Musselwhite, Komedia
Terri-Sian Lugosi, EPIC / freelance
Will Mytum, BOAT
Jess Starns, Dyspraxic Me
Jonathan Suffolk, independent

ABCD Governance Group

Co-Chairs:

Donna Chisholm, Co-Chair, Brighton & Hove City Council
Kate O'Riordan, Co-Chair, University of Sussex

Members:

Working Group Co-Chairs
Ian Baird, Event Producers Independent Committee (EPIC)
Louise Blackwell, LOOKOUT Brighton, What Next& Bright & Hove
Andrew Comben, Brighton Dome & Festival, Arts & Creative Industries Commission
Jane McMorrow, Creative Futures, Arts, Health & Wellbeing Network

2.4 Phases of the ABCD Cultural Recovery Programme

Phase 1, Apr-Sep 20

Talking, listening and bringing people together:

- Four local network leads come together to discuss responses to the pandemic - What Next Brighton & Hove, Arts & Creative Industries Commission (ACIC), Events Professional Independent Committee (EPIC)
- Funds raised from Arts Council England (ACE) and Brighton & Hove City Council (BHCC)
- Consultation with over 100 creative workers in the city
- The Founders draw out common themes and develop a plan around them

Phase 2, Feb-Sept 21

The power is shared:

- Working Groups are openly recruited for three of the five ABCD Plan strands
- Organisations in the City come together and contribute financially and in kind to support the ongoing payment of freelancers in the team
- Programme Manager recruited
- Project development and partnership building to bring the ABCD Plan to life
- Fundraising from a variety of sources brings £200K by August 21 to invest in cultural recovery

Phase 3, Oct 21-June 22

Projects take flight:

- 11 projects are delivered across the three strands – details below
- A Review & Reset meeting takes place with 60 participants to help guide the next phase of the ABCD Plan and beyond

Phase 4, Jul-Dec 22

The remaining two ABCD strands will begin:

- Space to Grow Working Group starts to meet, supported by Coast to Capital Local Enterprise Partnership
- Creative Worker Income Guarantee - initial research commissioned to scope a pilot project, supported by the University of Sussex
- The programme will also respond to the outcomes of the Review & Reset meeting, dependent on raising additional funds.

2.3 Delivery Partners and Summary of Events

The following partners were involved in the initial three strands of this programme:

Enliven Brighton

- VideoClub (<https://videoclub.org.uk/tag/brighton/>)
- Richard Wolfströme Design (<https://richardwolfstrom.com>)
- Sussex Dance Network (<https://sussexdancenetwork.co.uk/>)

Engine Room

- Always Possible (<https://www.alwayspossible.co.uk/>)
- Meanwhile Foundation and Meanwhile Space (<https://www.meanwhile.org.uk/> and <https://www.meanwhilespace.com/>)
- The Hub (www.thehubuk.com)
- Storythings (<https://storythings.com/>)
- LMNOP Studios (<https://www.lmnopstudios.com/#home>)
- No Stone Unturned Fundraising

Creative Communities

- Turner Community Project (<https://www.turner.org.uk/>)
- Faith Dodson (Safe & Equal Brighton)

The following projects, events and activities have been delivered:

Enliven Strand

Third Thursdays: VideoClub

- Five Third Thursday Events took place, on 16th Dec 2021, 20th Jan 2022, 17th Feb, 17th Mar and 21st April. These included local musicians as roving buskers, Films in Shop Windows and Film Trail events. The audiences for these were:
- Musician events: 6,325
- Films in windows: 2,264
- Film trail events: 1,600
- Additional events:
 - 20 Jan 21 – Thomas Buckley, Digital Stag: 300 approx.
 - 17 Feb – Bring Your Own Beamer: 100 (approx. from Pop Up Brighton)
 - 17 Mar – Electric Laser Flares: 225
 - 17 Mar – X-CITE disco: 124
 - 17 Mar – Letters to the Earth by Little Green Pig: 200 (approx.)
 - 17 Mar – Other Worlds presented by Oska Bright Film Festival: 45

This Project has included:

- 5 films trails, showing 25 films
- 15 businesses engaged in events
- 15 artists' commissions
- 40 musicians
- 69 artists
- **Total audience members** across all Third Thursday dates and events: **11,183**

Enliven Art trail

- A Wayfaring trail of public art conceptualised by Richard Wolfströme
- Artworks included in the trail were made by eight different artists, and eight participants from Rocket Artists, an inclusive studio practice in Central Brighton.
 - Richard Wolfströme
 - Dave Pop
 - Lee Eelus
 - Josef Cabey
 - Gil Mualem-Doron
 - Kate Forrester
 - Liberty Cheverall
- Using AI data and estimating that just 5% of people passing along the art trail would have engaged with the public art works, the average footfall is 10,610 people per month, which equates to 53,052 audience members over 5 months.

Alternative Tours of Brighton & Hove

- Delivered by Sussex Dance Network.
- This project was jointly supported by the Enliven Brighton and the Creative Communities working groups and the details are below.

Engine Room Strand

Igniter: Always Possible

- Igniter consisted of 4 Webinars, which focused on inspiring ideas, exploring new ways of working and recharging resilience:
- ABCD Igniter Event 1: Does Brighton Dare? 68 people signed up for this event
- ABCD Igniter Event 2: A new Resilience for Brighton & Hove. 35 people signed up for this event
- ABCD Igniter Event 3: Compassionate, Creative and... Commercial. 30 people signed up for this event
- ABCD Igniter Event 4: Clusters, Communities & Co-Working Spaces. 39 people signed up for this event

Creativity and Meanwhile use: Meanwhile Foundation and Meanwhile Space

- Three webinars for online discussions asking how meanwhile use could unlock space in Brighton & Hove for the city's creatives, and what practical steps can be taken to realise this ambition. These were attended by 96 people.
- The meanwhile toolkit
- Online Facebook platform engaging 17 members
- 10 free Meanwhile Foundation memberships

Regroup 'n' Renew Leadership Support Programme: The Hub

- Six meetings with two action learning sets
- Four Creative Circle sessions
- Initial 1-1s with all cohort members, to help identify mentors
- Eight hours mentoring for each cohort member
- Re-Inventing Your Future business planning training course, A total of 27 people took part in this training
- Open space event for wider creative community in Brighton
- Final evaluation with cohort members and mentors (and the time of writing, the programme was still in process so the evaluation will form part of the next phase of evaluation)

Brighton Creative Stories Campaign: Storythings

- Created five films, including a trailer for Brighton ABCD and films about Afrori Books, Audio Active, ONCA, Marlborough Productions and Brighton Digital Festival.

Creative Communities Strand

Community Led Events Development: Tarnier Community Project

- Workshops attended by 45 people:
 - Art workshops for Young People with Dave Pop (sign writing)
 - Lantern making workshops for Children with SameSky
 - Art workshops for young people with Priority 1-54⁹ (graffiti)

⁹ Priority 154's works collaboratively to promote the rights and wellbeing of every child. <https://priority154.com/>

- Glow festival at Turner park on the 26th of March 2022, which 450 people attended.

Alternative Tours: Sussex Dance Network

Delivered 14 Alternative tours in total:

- **Trails of Migration**
 - Delivered 12, 2-hour workshops to people who utilise 'Voices In Exile.'
 - Delivered two tours: 19th March 16.00 & 17.00.
- **Voices of Motherhood**
 - Recruited a core group of seven mothers for the project with different lived experiences.
 - Delivered nine community workshops, working with local mothers to explore their stories through movement, theatre and discussion. Workshops amounted to 26 hours.
 - Delivered a free workshop at Brighton Dome, Brighton Women's Centre and Brighton Museum's International Women's Day Celebration exploring themes of the tour.
 - Delivered four tours: 26th March 16.00 & 18.00, 27th March 14.00 & 18.00.
- **Through The Senses**
 - Delivered one community workshop at Possibility Place, working with three members of the local VI community and 1 companion, exploring movement and space
 - Collected audio material for delivery of tour podcast through 1 to 1 sessions and direct sessions with the lead artist.
 - Delivered one further 1 to 1 session with a member of the local Visually Impaired community, exploring tour route.
 - Delivered four tours: 11th March 14.30 and 16.30, 13th March 11.30 and 14.00.
 - One tour was delivered for a Brighton & Hove based social group for the sight impaired, called ESVS VIABLE.
- **Free Your Map**
 - Delivered 1 workshop at Fabrica Art Gallery, with 8 artists (inc 4 wheelchair users) using Enayball.
 - Produced and curated an exhibition of the maps that were created.
 - Delivered tours: 23rd March 12.00 & 14.00, 26th March 12.00 & 14.30.

Alternative tours participants total: 81

Alternative tours Audiences: 266 (this includes people who stopped/filmed/asked questions or watched for a section of the tour.)

Across the programme there have been¹⁰:

¹⁰ See Appendix 2: Facts and Figures

- 25 new commissions
- 24 events
- 48 Workshops
- 435 participants
- 30 participants paid a per diem
- 27 volunteers
- Over 12,000 audience members, and an estimated 50K who engaged with the Art Trail over 5 months (based on AI data capture)
- Over 160 outputs
- 324 freelance artists / creatives
- 65,025 audience members
- 53,052 estimated audience members for the Art Trail

Of those employed (based on surveys returned):

70% were from White backgrounds, and 30% from non-White backgrounds

63% identified as women, 30% identified as men and 6% as non-binary

The largest age group was 24-30yrs at 40%

30% identified as having a disability

3 How the programme met its Overarching Aims

3.1 To create paid work and professional opportunities for creative practitioners in the city who have been most affected by the pandemic

This aim has been met across all strands of the work through employing freelance creative practitioners, who are the most affected by the pandemic:

“The most profound management lesson of the pandemic has been the sector’s structural dependence on freelance and self-employed professionals, many of whom have been left catastrophically exposed by the pandemic.”
(Sargent, 2021)

In a survey conducted with all creative professionals involved in ABCD, 92% of respondents said that their professional life was affected by the pandemic. People also commented on the extent to which their lives have been affected, for example:

“I lost my freelance work and was ineligible for government support as I had not been a freelancer long enough to have filed accounts. I have used up all my savings, lost my house, and am having dire trouble getting back into work.” (General ABCD Survey, May 2022)

Across all projects there has been an emphasis on employing freelance artists and other creative and cultural professionals. Consequently 324 freelance artists and creatives were employed. This has been a crucial as a strategy to avoid losing valuable expertise from the mainly freelance workforce of the cultural and creative sector (CCS):

“An increasing number report that they have been reconsidering their careers, feeling forced to look for jobs elsewhere, potentially creating a risk that the CCS may face a severe scarcity of talent, creativity and skills just as it is emerging from the pandemic.” (Sargent, 2021)

This programme has employed a significant number of freelancer creatives, at this pivotal time, through all strands and projects, including the Enliven strand:

“Support was given to artists and musicians through the commissions and presentation fees, which helped to sustain artists.” (Jamie Wyld, videoclub, Questionnaire, June 2022)

As is also evidenced throughout this report the programme has supported artists and arts organisations to develop projects and events that have raised their profile:

“It’s a success for the artists in terms of them getting their work out into the public domain. It’s the previously unseen artists, who are trying to make their way, who need that exposure, so that has been a success for these artists.” (Interview with Richard Wolfeströme, June 2022)

This exposure will nurture the potential for artists and arts organisations to continue to flourish in future. For example, Jamie Wyld of Videoclub explains how the experience of producing Third Thursday has both nurtured their organisational potential to produce on this scale and led to further funding for future film trails:

“Videoclub had done some work in the public realm before, but quite minimal, nothing as extensive under our own production and curating. Delivering Third Thursdays has really helped us to develop our knowledge and experience of delivering outdoor work. We’ve just received funding to do new film trails in Crawley.” (Jamie Wyld, Questionnaire, June 2022)

Similarly, artists have reported gaining further commissions based on work they have produced as part of this programme, for example:

“Tom Buckley has already been invited to do other work following the work he did for Third Thursdays.” (Jamie Wyld, Questionnaire, June 2022)

“Following the mural I painted by Boots, I have been commissioned to paint a similar one by the station, and I’m sure these will both raise my profile as an artist” (General ABCD Survey, May 2022)

This aim has also been met through the ‘Engine Room’ strand of work, including through leadership training workshops, developed and delivered by the Hub, and the support and space that has been evolved through always possible’s Igniter series.

Participant feedback from the leadership programme, Regroup ‘n’ Renew, indicates that the training has provided a useful opportunity for creative practitioners to rebuild their businesses and plans for the future, for example:

“The training has made me more aware of preparing for my future and creating a plan of action. I now feel more confident to tackle my business plan and freelance work.” (Business planning training summary findings, April 2022)

Similarly, Igniter participants have reported that the space evolved has given them more awareness and inspired them:

“More awareness, inspiration.” (Igniter Survey results, May 2022)

Furthermore, in the General ABCD survey, when asked if their involvement in this programme is likely to lead to more work in the future, over 60% of people said yes, with most of those people citing specific examples of work already secured.

3.2 To develop a more inclusive arts offer and more diverse arts sector in Brighton & Hove.

This aim was identified as something that should be pivotal to the programme, rather than something bolted on, and there is significant evidence from across the Creative Communities strand that this aim was addressed. The project briefs required proposals to demonstrate how they would ensure diversity and inclusion. It has consequently run through each strand of the work. For example, during Sussex Dance Network’s ‘Alternative Tours’ there has been an emphasis on engaging with people from a range of protected characteristic groups. Furthermore, these people have led the direction of the work by developing their own city tours and content within the tours, spreading greater understanding about their own experiences of the city.

The Alternative tours presented an opportunity for people who are often not highly visible, thereby raising the profile of people who are often overlooked. For example, this has happened in the Through the Senses tour:

“There was one woman who came out of a café and told people in the tour who were visually impaired that Jesus loved them, which was awkward, but apparently it happens to these people a lot. People are not used to seeing lots of people using a cane, walking along together and there is something significant about lots of people being seen together.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

For further example, Trails of Migration made refugees more visible:

“A lot of work with refugees tends to be quite hidden, so this was also about doing something more public and visible.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

Alternative Tours has generated unsolicited positive feedback about Sussex Dance Network that was provided to the National Diversity Awards¹¹:

“Their Alternative Tours of Brighton & Hove is a fantastic example of how they open up the arts to all in their local area, as well as commissioning and working with artists whose voices go unheard by bigger local organisations.”
(Anonymous testimony, National Diversity Awards information, 2022)

Alternative Tours also stimulated spaces in which people could make connections with and beyond their communities, for example:

“The refugees involved talked about gaining a growing sense of family through the project.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

Furthermore, people have commented on the value of the space in which to recognise and value each other’s differences, within communities that may externally be seen as more homogenous than they are:

“Today I really enjoyed like the fact of how different we are. Because all the people they were coming up with different gestures, different movements, different ideas. That just shows how different we are, but at the same time, like very connected as well.” (Participant, Tales of Migration Tours, Alternative Tours of Brighton & Hove: Overview Film)

The way in which the Alternative Tour programme was developed also meant that the needs of people engaged were met in very direct and practical ways, for example:

“We gave them a per diem for their involvement, to acknowledge their work and the Co-op donated food every week, which was a nice touch. People felt like they could come when they could, be that early or late, so it felt like a space where people could come as they were.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

Responsive work, which meets people where they are at and evolves through exchange with those people, is clearly the most inclusive approach, as the process and plans are driven by and tailored to fit with whatever needs and interests those people have. Furthermore, the plans that are thereby developed are relevant to a wider cohort of people from protected characteristic groups, but also act to inform wider audiences of those people’s experiences, for example:

“All the tours were relevant to me, the most being Through the Senses one, being led by a visually impaired artist and talking about our challenges and the positive as well, going around Brighton and discussing what we could hear and smell and, in some cases, see and feel and the changes in the

¹¹ See <https://www.nationaldiversityawards.co.uk/>

streets; that made it ambitious. I've never heard of a tour in this way... what I loved about this was that Vi people were encouraged to help design it and to come along, but sighted people were too and they could understand visual impairment a bit more than maybe you could from a documentary." (David Horwood, Through the Senses participant, Voice memo feedback, March 2022)

For further example, this also happened as part of Alternative Tours 'Free your Map' event.

For example, feedback from the Turner Community Organisation's festival, Glow, also indicates how diverse the audience was:

"Absolutely awesome, really inclusive, lovely to see so many people from our local community enjoying time together, all ages." (Turner, Glow Festival, Event Feedback.)

"It's nice to see diverse groups of people, out with kids." (Molly interview, Turner Glow Festival, 26th March 2022)

Of those people attending the Glow festival, 26 responded to the survey question about racialised identity, with 15 people (58%) stating their identity to be white British, 6 people (23%) identifying as Black, 3 (11.5%) as dual heritage and 2 (7.5%) as Indian. In an area where the population is less diverse than the national average, with 80.5% of people identifying as White British¹², this is a significant achievement.

The Glow festival achieved diverse audiences by platforming diversity:

"Musically we had a really diverse line up and I think that is good to see and showcase that in this local community; we had people performing who are neuro-diverse, people who are transitioning, gender wise and only one white performer, so we had pretty good diverse representation." (Interview with the Turner Community Project team, March 2022)

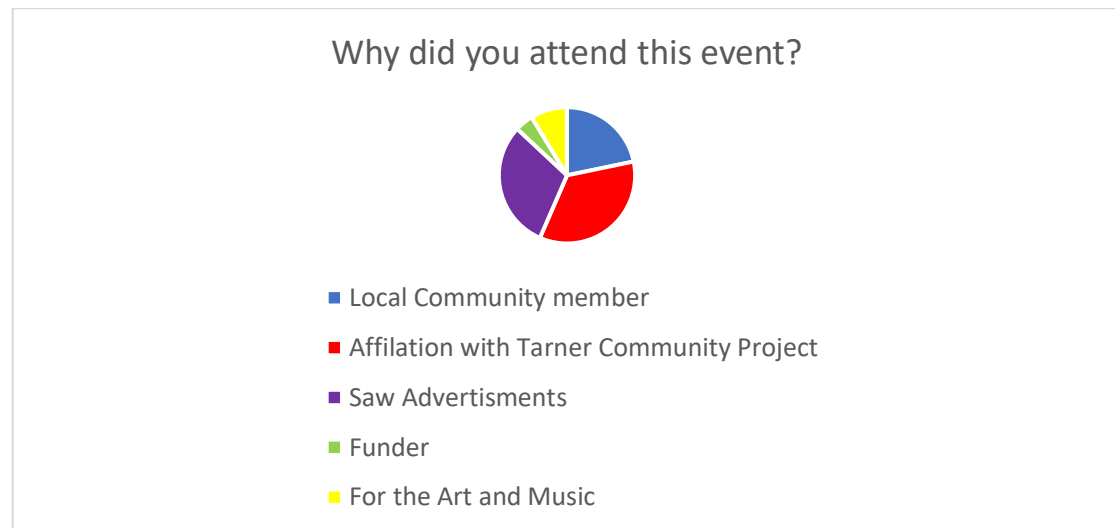
Feedback from people attending the Glow festival has been very positive, indicating that the team have succeeded in engaging a diversity of local people, as well as visitors to the area, through a considered programme:

"Amazing! Well organised and felt so very safe, was happy to let my daughters (11 and 8) play and run around without me constantly by their side. Lovely that it was free!" (Turner Community Projects survey, Turner Glow festival 2022)

"It's flowing out of the park man, I didn't think it would be this vibesy, I can't lie!" (Vitamin D interview, Turner Glow Festival, 26th March 2022)

¹² From the Local Insight profile for Brighton & Hove Report, 29 March 2021

The festival has also attracted new audiences to the Turner Community project, as is indicated by the numbers attending Glow who came because of advertisements, rather than prior involvement:



The festival has clearly exceeded people’s expectations, indicating the potential legacy of this work in establishing the potential for a larger scale event, as long as it retains a sense of intimacy, for local people:

“I would make it a little bit bigger, because it’s a community thing so you want to get everyone involved as much as possible, but at the same time I feel like it would lose the intimacy of it and there’s a nice part of knowing everybody and everyone being connected here, but expanding that would always be a good thing. (Esme and Jade interview, Turner Glow Festival, 26th March 2022)

As is also indicated in this feedback, the festival has been effective in bringing the community together, nurturing connections and cohesion:

“It gets better every time I come here... It brings the community together, and everyone just comes down here and you can communicate with each other.” (Ollie interview, Turner Glow Festival, 26th March 2022)

Inclusion and diversity have also been important across all other strands of the programme, including as part of the Leadership Training Programme:

“We are using an open space technique for them to explore issues that are really important for the city. Today we are looking at diversity and inclusion. This will also help them identify kindred spirits who they might collaborate with in future.” (Julia Payne, The Hub, Interview, March 2022)

The diversity of membership in working groups has also been a pivotal consideration, for example:

“I feel like this particular group is fairly diverse, there are some holes in terms of protected characteristics, but as these groups can go, I feel it’s definitely a

step in the right direction.” (Tarik Elmatouwakil, Interview with Enliven Working Group, March 2022)

Furthermore, the structure of the working groups has provided contexts in which people’s diverse experiences have been valued and people have felt that it is important to contribute diverse ideas:

“My experience as a marginalised person has informed my decisions in this group. That’s something I’ve really leant into, and I have felt the value of contributing in ways that are informed by my experience, rather than going along with what’s easiest. This group has not chosen to go along with what’s easiest or chosen to just involve people who everyone already knows; it’s so easy to do this and to just replicate what has gone before and that has not happened in this group. It’s been a good thing that in this group we have been encouraged to lean into using our experience to inform our decisions and without this having been a focal point I might have felt a little more worried about how I might have been interpreted and so I might have not been so forthcoming about using my experience to inform decisions.” (Tarik Elmatouwakil, Interview with Enliven Working Group, March 2022.)

This has been a very important detail, as it has ensured that members of the Enliven Working group have not felt they have had to fit in with pre-existing ideas and neither have they had to fit in with a majority, because the diversity of the group has been such that there has not been a majority that could dominate decisions:

“I fall into multiple categories of groups that might be under-represented in most areas. I think it is commendable to be able to say that this group is so diverse that it has been really productive to have a seat at this table. What’s noticeable about our diversity, and this group pretty much covers a very diverse range, is that it seems as if none of us are two of the same and that is the true meaning of diversity, so when we pull together our combined experiences, based on our backgrounds, diversity in decision making is happening in this group by default.” (Kim Jack-Riley, Interview with Enliven Working Group, March 2022)

What is apparent is that a diverse group nurtures a more equitable space in which people can be their authentic selves and contribute in more authentic ways. The consequence of having a diverse group leading this work has been a more equitable and equally relevant and meaningful programme, which engages diverse participants and audiences:

“I think the manifestation of that diversity is evident in the work that has been put forth.” (Kim Jack-Riley, Interview with Enliven Working Group, March 2022)

However, it was noted by the Enliven working group that the voice of young people was missing from the table.

A legacy from this learning chimes with ambitions of many people involved in the programme, as it points towards exploring further a model of diverse leadership as a way of ensuring relevant opportunities for a greater diversity of people. The success of the Enliven working group, as a model of diverse leadership, could be expanded upon by considering models that also encourage and support young people to be involved at a strategic, decision-making level¹³ and by replicating this model in the membership of the governance group:

“How we relate to the governance group is interesting, because that group is not as diverse as it could be. The governance Group is made up of people who have been involved from the start and individuals who were involved in the (Arts and Creative Industries) Commission. The work has evolved effectively in this working group but there has been a challenge in filtering that up to the Governance group, which relates more broadly to the way cultural decisions tend to be made in the city.” (David Sheppard, Interview with Enliven Working Group, March 2022)

It is evident that the programme has contributed to the development of a more inclusive arts offer and more diverse arts sector for Brighton & Hove. However, this ambition necessitates an ongoing focus, and the programme so far has effectively developed valuable and solid foundations from which to build an increasingly inclusive offer and diverse sector.

3.3 To encourage partnership working in order to strengthen the creative and cultural sector in the longer term

The programme has been dependent upon a wide range of partners collaborating and working together towards a common set of aims and ambitions. Partnership working has thereby been encouraged and has succeeded in establishing fruitful connections, as is evidenced in a wide range of feedback, for example:

“The level of connectedness the programme is creating is extraordinary and the entrepreneurial approach to trying to redistribute money and funding is so gutsy and so clever. The mechanisms through which the programme has happened and the conversations it has kicked off is really important to talk about.” (Julia Payne, The Hub, Interview, March 2022)

In the general ABCD survey, feedback has indicated the value of the partnerships that evolved the work and those within the governance structure, for example:

“I think identifying new partnerships, like the one with the BID, has been crucial to the success of the ENLIVEN strand. So much especially in relation to funding feels sown up in the city and accessing a new source of funding support for artists/artistic projects was excellent and liberating. More of this” (General ABCD Survey, May 2022)

¹³ For example, see On Board: <https://rising.org.uk/onboard/>

Partnerships within working groups have also been important:

“This partnership way of working has evolved and manifested in ways that has been very productive for all the teams involved.” (Kim Jack-Riley, Interview with Enliven working group, March 2022)

Partnership working has also been encouraged across strands, for example:

“Our organisation worked closely with the project team and were encouraged to connect and widen the conversation with other organisations involved. We supported other ABCD projects and ensured the main message was consistent to the audiences. The events were a platform to spread the message on what can be done and to support organisations collaborating together.” (General ABCD Survey, May 2022)

The Hub leadership training programme has also been an important component for addressing this aim, as is articulated clearly by one of the facilitators:

“It has been a space to share and work through urgent problems around post-pandemic recovery, to form stronger social and professional networks, and to bring a sense of solidarity and understanding. The issues have ranged from planning workflow, securing funding, balancing health and income, balancing passion projects with work and growing new ideas into marketable products. They have been optimistic, future focused sessions which have often focused on developing strategies for individual and professional recovery.” (Steve Taylor, The Hub Facilitator, End of project feedback, May 2022)

Feedback from the general ABCD survey provides further evidence of the role of this project in nurturing connectivity across programme strands:

“Connections were made across programmes and getting into the 'Regroup 'n' Renew' programme has enabled these to grow further. New venues have become partners of our work and new people have engaged with it.” (General ABCD Survey, May 2022)

Furthermore, feedback from the same survey indicates some of the principles and values that have underpinned the success of partnership working in and across this programme:

“Principles of generosity underpinned ABCD from the start. Fundraising through CRF encouraged applicants to be active contributors. Structure of working groups has brought organisations and freelancers together to work on equal footing.” (General ABCD Survey, May 2022)

When asked if this partnership working would strengthen the cultural and creative sector in the long term 73% of people said yes, with 24% saying they weren't sure and just 3% saying no. When asked how it would do this, one person has clearly articulated the way in which they have witnessed this being achieved:

“Collaborations and conversations were forged amongst speakers, organisations and our audiences. We created a safe space for people to be

honest, challenging and ask questions. The programme has allowed for platforms to be created and conversations to be had with lots of different voices that wouldn't normally come together.” (General ABCD Survey, May 2022)

Evidence of partnership working and the positive outcomes realised through partnerships is presented throughout this report, as it has been key to the different strands of the programme.

4 How Enliven met its Aims

When the Brighton & Hove ABCD Plan for Cultural Recovery was in its early stages of development, conversations started with Brilliant Brighton, who were increasingly concerned about the impact of the pandemic on the Brighton Business Improvement District (BID.) ‘Brilliant Brighton’ is another name for the Brighton BID, which is:

“A collection of 517 shops, bars, restaurants and cafés in the centre of Brighton, come together to jointly work towards creating a thriving, safe, clean and vibrant city centre that residents and visitors want to come back to time and time again.”¹⁴

These traders joined together to become the Brighton BID, to fund improvements to their trading environment, and make strategic decision about how best to make such improvements. Gavin Stewart of the BID describes the dialogue that was happening amongst its members at the time:

“One big idea that came out of those conversation was about reimagining what the high street could look like, by animating it with events. When we have tried to consult with businesses about this idea in the past, pre-pandemic, the business community didn’t want to pay for this sort of thing themselves, not least because there were plenty of creative things going on, but this idea shifted in the context of the pandemic, so that people wanted to contribute to make this happen. We took this info back and at the same time I was having conversations with the precursors to ABCD.” (Interview with Gavin Stewart and Shelley Welti, Brighton BID, May 2022)

This led to Brighton BID becoming a partner in the Enliven Brighton strand, and contributing money to ABCD, as the partnerships evolved. As Gavin explains, the local traders contributed the money in anticipation of the work helping to reinvigorate the high street:

“The money is from our local businesses, including small traders who don’t have additional funds, but they trust us and know that if they put money into the BID their money will be spent on things that will make the city centre a better place for everyone. So, they agreed to put money into the ABCD plan

¹⁴ <https://www.thebestof.co.uk/local/brighton-and-hove/business-guide/feature/brilliant-brighton---brighton-bid/>

with a sense of philanthropy, but also because they believed it would be a positive thing for them financially, in terms of their bottom line.” (Interview with Gavin Stewart and Shelley Welti, Brighton BID, May 2022)

Representatives of local businesses have commented that the work has exemplified the benefits and potential of such creative and cultural programmes, for businesses, for example:

“I run The Hope and Ruin on Queens Road and... having been involved in this and having a better understanding of what the BID is about has been really useful, so if there was a chance to do something similar in future then I think we would definitely consider it to be a good thing to be part of. Having seen the more creative side, I understand the benefit of creativity and perhaps not all businesses do, but what has happened around the area where this project has taken place has really enhanced the area and we would really like to enhance the Queens Road areas in a similar way, so I know it is something people would be keen to be involved in.” (Sally Oakenfold, Interview with the Enliven Working Group, March 2022)

Feedback from a wide range of partners concurs with this impression, for example:

“The effect of the overall project on the city is that it's bringing colour back in and bringing life back into the city.” (Annie-Marie Page, Always Possible interview, March 2022)

Enliven is about bringing colour back to the city and re-enlivening the city centre, encouraging people back outside, to socialise and to experience and enjoy Brighton & Hove’s cultural and retail offers:

“The work that has happened through the Enliven working group has been supported by the Welcome Back Fund, which was about reviving the city centre and I think those projects, Alternative Tours and the Art Trail have been able to do that, they have shifted how arts for the city can be animated, even in a city like Brighton where there is creativity at every corner.” (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

Also funded by ACE, the Enliven Art Trail, Alternative Tours and Third Thursdays have been key to the realisation of this aim. However, the Alternative tours also relate to, and were supported by, the Creative Community strand and so more evidence of this work is contained in the relevant section. There is also cross over between this strand and the Engine Room strand of the programme, as the need to ‘Invest in local artists’ so that they are equipped and supported to work in the public realm, in ways that enliven city centre spaces, is also relevant here.

4.1 To employ creative and cultural businesses and practitioners to enliven the city centre, attracting footfall, boosting the city’s vital retail economy and making it a more attractive and rewarding destination to visit.

There is a wealth of evidence to suggest this aim has been met through various strategies and projects. One of the projects that addressed this aim was Third Thursdays:

“Over the course of the project it was possible to see the enlivenment, the building knowledge of Third Thursdays and the growing number of people coming to see activity certainly helped to enliven the city centre. Engaging commercial, outdoor and art spaces enabled us to enliven diverse spaces, reaching communities and audiences in multiple ways. I think continuous investment would have a logic to it. To continue to build audiences for the programme and build the brand.” (Jamie Wyld, Questionnaire, June 2022)

One of the strategies employed in this project was the engagement of local businesses in the project. Third Thursdays worked with the following 15 businesses:

1. Polo Restaurant
2. Knoops
3. Simon Webster Hair
4. Wideye
5. Habitat
6. Ollie Quinn
7. Enter Gallery
8. Infinity Foods
9. Komedia
10. Lucy & Yak
11. Lush
12. Joe & the Juice
13. GAK
14. Wideye
15. Brighton Unitarian Church.

A significant number of people, approximately 11,183 attended Third Thursday events, increasing direct footfall in the local business district.

This footfall was further increased through audiences for Alternative tours and people following the Art Trail, which:

“Brought colour into what was otherwise a colourless space, or a neutral space. It has brought intrigue, curiosity, and surprise.” (Jamie Wyld, Questionnaire, June 2022)

The extent to which Enliven had a direct and immediate impact for local businesses is evidenced in feedback from those businesses. For example, when asked in a survey what their impressions were of the Enliven programme, local businesses said:

“Well organised and executed, helped our business to reach new customers and brought engaging art to the area.”

“Fantastic community-based creative programme that helps push footfall to vital areas of the city, especially important for small business.”

“Great project to help the city come back to life creatively after COVID, and offer opportunities to upcoming artists.”
(ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

For further example, when asked “Do you think this programme has helped to re-enliven the city centre?” 100% of BID respondents said yes.

This has been echoed in responses from audiences at Enliven events, for example:

“Gives the city centre a new lease of life.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

“Engaging in activities and made it such a fun time when I often visit town! A different unique experience.” Enliven Survey, May 2022)

Similar feedback from audiences indicates that people have recognised the opportunity as one in which they could ‘reclaim the streets’, for example:

“Very inclusive, helps people get to know streets of Brighton more whilst seeing inspirational work for free. Reclaiming the streets.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

Furthermore, in the BID survey, when asked if the programme had benefitted their business, 83.33% said yes and made comments such as the following:

“We took part as a Third Thursdays venue and found that it encouraged people to stop by the salon window to watch the videos, which drew the participants' attention to our salon.”

“It drew attention to our business in a good way.”
(ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

When asked if the programme has benefitted the BID area in general 83.33% said yes, with follow up comments such as:

“It would be great if this could continue as an initiative because I fully believe that it benefits artists, local businesses and the tourism sector of Brighton alike.” (ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

This immediate impact is significant, but the strategic ambition for this work is about how the audience's experience influences their perceptions of the centre, as a lively place worthy of visits, and therefore influences their decisions to come back in future. This greater potential for future impact is echoed in some of the businesses feedback, for example:

“Not benefited us regards to sales, but it does attract a different type of customer to my store which could in the future lead to a potential sale.”
(ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

The programme’s influence on people’s perceptions of the Business Improvement District is one way in which the programme will be of future benefit to the local retail and hospitality sector. In addition, it promises to influence choices made about further arts and cultural work in the public realm. This potential, for the value of the work to be recognised and built upon, is clearly articulated by Richard Wolfeströme:

“I think it raises awareness of possibilities, what we’ve done I think is we’ve sown seeds to make people more aware of possibilities... we’ve filled in some spaces and places with nice arts works and I’m not sure we are fixing anything, but we are sowing seeds of ideas about how we might be able to create better communities.” (Interview with Richard Wolfeströme, June 2022)

National concerns about the decline of retail-based town and city centres, as a consequence of both austerity and the increase in online shopping, have been exacerbated by Covid¹⁵. Furthermore, research indicates that Covid has had a more detrimental impact on strong city centres, like Brighton, when compared to those in less affluent areas. Pre Covid, stronger city and town centres developed in more affluent towns and cities, where more restaurants and cafés could profit. The pandemic lock downs obviously resulted in a decrease in profits across the hospitality sector and so those more affluent town and city centres with a higher percentage of restaurants and cafés have suffered more.

It will therefore be interesting to consider what the legacy of this work is, in terms of the impact it has on people’s decisions about visiting the city centre in future. This has also been articulated by one business which responded to the survey, when they said:

“I think it’s great to have these portable films being played in store as it attracts attention, I would consider doing this again to see if it converts into store sales.” (ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

It is, however, important to acknowledge that only six of the BID’s 517 members responded to the survey and these were businesses that were involved directly in the work. A future priority for the evaluation process will be to get wider feedback from more members of the BID.

Although Alternative Tours were supported through the Creative Communities strand of the programme, it also contributed to achieving this aim, by bringing people into the centre, enlivening and animating the streets, as is evidenced in the relevant section of this report.

¹⁵ www.centreforcities.org/reader/cities-outlook-2022/will-covid-19-kill-the-high-street

4.2 To increase awareness among visitors of the range of the cultural, retail and hospitality offer.

It is apparent from the feedback from businesses, presented above, that the work has positively benefited those businesses and made people more aware of the presence and range of the cultural, retail and hospitality offer. For further example:

“Definitely helped highlight the store to new customers.”

“We think it helped draw attention to our business, which is relatively new to the area.”

(ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

Evidence from audience members to the Enliven strand of the programme also suggests that this aim has been met. Audiences have been introduced to retail spaces, they were not previously aware of, for example:

“Seen parts of Brighton never seen before on the trail.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

“Been down new streets not seen before and noticed new spaces.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

“Really good to see artists supported and the city brightened up - great for the residents and businesses - win win all round.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

Marketing and publicity has been another way in which the programme has been successful in sharing the cultural offer with visitors and where and when this has been appropriate, organisations delivering projects have worked hard to ensure as much press coverage and social media presence as possible. For example, during Alternative Tours the following was achieved:

- Radio interview: BBC Sussex, Alison Fern Show, 17th February 2022.
- Delivered a talk at a ‘What Next’ event, 21st October 2022.
- Blog contributions to Culture In Our City website.
- Newsletters have been sent out to those signed up (673 people).
- Information has been shared on our social media (Facebook: 1,985 followers, Instagram: 1935 followers, Twitter: 863 followers).

In addition to this, the tours were documented and shared via the Culture in Our City YouTube Channel: https://youtu.be/pLAVbBYj_ZA

In some projects media coverage and social media presence has been solely achieved by the commissioned organisation, even though they may have expected this to be held as a more central responsibility, of the BID or the City Council. As has been recognised by the BID, in some cases their role has been confused, not least as

they are sometimes thought to be part of the council and seen to have more responsibility around the programme than is the case:

“Lots of the organisations who were commissioned came to me for marketing support, I don’t think they really understand who we are, and... just see us as a form of support; they maybe think of us as an extension of the Council.”
(Interview with Gavin Stewart and Shelley Welti, Brighton BID, May 2022)

More effective media coverage and publicity could be achieved through ensuring greater clarity around who is responsible for generating content and coverage, so that artists and arts organisations can build in time and allocate enough of their budget to this element of the work. This has been important learning for the working group chairs, for example:

“Another (area of learning) is around underestimating the significance of marketing and comms. This work is powerful and extraordinary and ground-breaking and from the outset this needs to come through marketing and comms, through there being a dedicated project team, from the beginning.”
(Interview with Erin Barnes, 6th June 2022)

Furthermore, a dedicated marketing and PR team could have ensured the national profile of the work, through telling the story of the programme to a wider audience:

“If someone had been with us on the journey to tell the story it would have raised the profile of the work beyond the region... it would have been brilliant to have and someone telling the story of that. Not having this effected our capacity to reach certain people.” (Interview with Marina Norris, 6th June 2022)

4.3 To improve infrastructure, create the Third Thursday platform and test a network of outdoor projection and performance sites.

Third Thursday has platformed and tested a network of outdoor and performance sites. 26 projection sites have been trialled (15 via film trail, 4 x commissions (Digital Stag around town, Remembering Place on Gardner St, Bring Your Own Beamer on Market St, Behind the Mask at TK Maxx), 7 x films in windows: Knoops, Infinity, Enter Gallery, Ollie Quinn, Habitat, Polo Restaurant, Trailfinders, Lush.)

The film trail has engaged significant audiences, with some people and groups following throughout the trails and the number of people increasing at each event. There is also a significant social media presence of photographs, which audience members have taken and shared, of each month’s film trails.

The film commissions within the Third Thursday Film Trails were small (£500, £1000 and £6000), but made a difference for audiences, artists and Videoclub as an organisation. Jamie Wyld has commented on some of the key learning there has

been, for Videoclub, about developing a network of outdoor projection and performance sites, through this testing phase:

- Curating for the public realm (considerate curating)
- Technical production for outdoor events/projection events
- Audience development for public realm
- Creating work for outdoor spaces

Another piece of learning has been about how to curate a series of projects, whereby they culminate in something spectacular and larger scale:

“Tom Buckley’s large-scale work – Remembering Place – had an impact on audiences’ experience and enjoyment of the final event. I think having a finale work for the season gave people a spectacle and some intrigue about future events.” (Jamie Wyld, Questionnaire, June 2022)

The sites that were tested proved to be relevant and suitable as has been indicated by audience feedback presented previously. What is also apparent is that people appreciated the trail nature of the experience and the opportunity it presented to walk around with a purpose:

“Nice to walk around town. With a collective purpose.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

People also appreciated the range of films shown:

“Event is fantastic, to be out with people experiencing culture in a safe way post covid. Eclectic mix of ideas and films. Excellent curation.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

Audiences also appreciated the inclusion of buskers providing music along the route:

“Really creative and liked that there was music as well. Would be good to see other arts and performers involved as well. Concept of trail is great. Stop more at buskers so music is more integrated.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

Third Thursday has developed a groundswell of interest and an engaged community that is keen to see the work continue and grow.

4.4 To Invest in local artists, leading to more, and more diverse, artists with skills and experience working in the public realm.

Local artists and creative professionals, with a range of skills and specialisms, were invested in through being commissioned to deliver projects. Within each project additional artists and creative professionals, with a range of skills and experiences were also employed.

As has been evidenced previously, both Third Thursdays and the Art Trail have supported artists to develop new work, and extend on their experiences and knowledge of working in the public realm. For further example:

“Some of the artists were new to working outdoors. It gave them opportunity to learn about producing an outdoor projected event, such as where to hire and how to power a projector outdoors, creating an artwork for an outdoor space, working with commercial spaces.” (Jamie Wyld, Questionnaire, June 2022)

Some artists who have made work as part of the Art Trail have similarly developed their public realm work through this opportunity:

“Lee has been helped to develop his work and he was able to use a new style he has been developing on his murals.” (Interview with Richard Wolfeströme, June 2022)

In addition to the artists producing the films that were projected during Third Thursdays, 40 local musicians performed as part of Third Thursdays and 69 local, national and international artists’ work was shown across the Art Trail and Third Thursdays.

In addition, as part of the Alternative Tours, Sussex Dance Network employed three freelance producers and four recently graduated creative artists assistants. In total 20 people received work through the Alternative Tours project, all of whom will remain part of Sussex Dance Network's freelance pool of team members for future projects. Furthermore, the artists, producers and other creative and cultural professionals employed as part of Alternative Tours developed valuable insights and experiences of working in the public realm, as is articulated in the project report:

“- All artists are... creating work for new contexts including work that is led by the community, promenade/tour-based work and outdoor work.
- Producers have learnt more about access, particularly in relation to the city.
- Recent dance/arts graduates whose career start has been impacted by the pandemic have had opportunity to learn from more experienced sector peers, helping them to better start their careers, gaining practical knowledge both from an administrative and artistic perspective.” (Katie Dale-Everett, Project Report May 2022)

4.5 For visitors to report positive experiences visiting the city centre as a result of engaging in the programmed activity.

When asked if their experience of visiting the city centre was positive, 95% of Enliven audience members said yes, with 5% having not attended. (This survey was distributed with an offer to enter a prize draw and so was completed by some people who had not attended the events.)

When asked why it was positive, people commented that it was a positive experience in general, for example:

“Yes, overall thought it was a positive experience.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

This chimes with the idea that people will think generally about their experience of being in the centre and might thereby be more inclined to return having had a positive experience.

In other feedback people have also indicated that they have indeed extended on their cultural experience as customers in hospitality venues in the area, for example:

“It was fun to go to the shows and we went for dinner in town before.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

Visitors have thereby reported positive experiences, of visiting the city centre, as a result of engaging in the programmed activity.

4.6 For participants from target communities to feel a greater sense of engagement with cultural activity in the city centre.

The strategic nature of the projects developed and delivered for the Enliven strand of the programme ensured that this aim informed the details of the work. For example, in his Wayfaring Trail proposal, Richard Wolfströme describes an approach that “meets with the project aims to increase the sense of connectivity and engagement between the Brighton & Hove public realm, its wide variety of communities and visitors by bringing a sense of narrative, culture and legibility to the place.” (Wayfaring Trail for Brighton & Hove, Richard Wolfströme, August 2021)

The Art Trail is a model of how to use ‘wayfaring’, to make cities more legible and enjoyable and has thereby focussed on producing art that is integrated into the built environment and landscape, with materials that are sympathetic to the existing distinctive public realm. Through this approach the work emphasises uniqueness of place in ways that are surprising, fun, engaging and informative. The approach is a collaborative one that engages with a range of stakeholders to ensure a sense of ownership for local communities.

It is apparent from feedback that the Arts Trail along with all strands of the Enliven programme have engaged people in the city centre in positive ways, for example:

“Yes, lovely to see the city making arts available to all.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

“It felt like it was bringing people together spontaneously, but also, I felt much happier afterwards, as having spent two years alone in lockdown I

bumped into lots of people, had lots of chats, and laughed a lot.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

When asked general, open questions about their experience of the programme, businesses responding to the survey who had experienced Third Thursdays were also quick to identify the inclusive and accessible nature of the programme, for example:

“For a city full of creatives I feel as though Brighton is sometimes lacking in opportunities to experience art - Third Thursdays is an easy accessible way to experience it.” (ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

“Very inclusive and community focused. Responsive to our business needs and interests.” (ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

In addition, the Alternative Tours, as evidenced previously in this report, clearly addressed this aim, by working with people from targeted communities in order for them to be able to reclaim the centre and share their experience of the space with a wider audience.

4.7 To achieve a sustainable partnership between the BID and the creative and cultural sector that can have long-term benefits.

The businesses responding to the survey were very positive about the potential to work in partnership with the creative and cultural sector in sustained ways. For example, when asked ‘Would you be interested in being involved in any future activity?’ 100% of those completing the survey said yes.

Furthermore, every business replying had ideas of how they would like to be involved in the future, for example:

“Happy to be involved in any way.” (ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

“We would be happy to continue to host future events.” (ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

“We would love to be a venue again and would also be open to any other opportunities that were available.” (ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

“Another film screening or anything else really! Our business is very interested in creative ventures.” (ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

“It was a really seamless quick installation on the day and the staff were friendly. I met with Jamie prior to the film screening and he was extremely friendly and informative. Overall our business would love to be involved again.” (ABCD BID survey, May 2022)

Given the appetite amongst the businesses responding to the survey for this work to continue it makes sense for the partnership to also continue. Furthermore, if a larger

proportion of businesses are involved, a wider range of BID members would be more likely to want to fund the programme in future. This could be important to sustaining a future partnership, through ensuring that future activity is more embedded in the business community.

Similarly, if the BID were more involved in decision making processes, the longer-term strategy for some work could be mutually developed and understood. This would also cement a longer-term partnership.

5 How Engine Room met its Aims

Engine Room is about addressing the needs of the arts and cultural sector workforce, seizing this moment as an opportunity to address some of the longstanding issues faced by the sector, especially the freelance workforce. It is about developing new, relevant types of support and opportunities and improving access to opportunities and networks, for freelance creatives to be able to develop their practice in ways that are sustainable, so that they, and therefore the arts and cultural sector, can flourish.

5.1 To develop existing, and identify gaps in, sector specific business support designed specifically for cultural and creative workers living / working across Brighton & Hove.

One of the projects that has addressed this aim has been the ‘Regroup ‘n’ Renew’ Leadership support programme, developed and delivered by the project team at the Hub, which was set up primarily to help build the capacity of the creative sector. The team has devised the ‘Regroup ‘n’ Renew’ Leadership support programme specifically to support people in this moment, because:

“People need some space to reflect and think strategically, when emerging from ‘emergency mode’.” (Julia Payne, The Hub, Interview, March 2022)

To this end the programme has included action learning sets, mentoring and a series of ‘creative circles.’ In addition, there has been an option to attend ‘business planning training’. Participant feedback indicates that this training has been relevant to the needs of the sector in providing business support for creative workers. For example, 75% of people taking part reported that ‘The course has helped me to start developing a clearer sense of what my next steps should be.’ 75% of attendees also reported that they had ‘developed some really useful strategic planning knowledge and skills’ through the training. (Business planning training summary findings, April 2022)

This course has been important for cultural workers involved in the wider programme, for example:

“I think Re-group and Re-new is important too, since I’ve been part of it I’ve been doing action (learning) sets, which has expanded my thinking about who I can reach out to and it has meant I have somewhere to reflect.”
(Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

The course has also supported people who are starting to develop their creative business, for example:

“For me this was a really good course to get me started and understand what the future challenges might be.” (Business planning training summary findings, April 2022)

People have been supported to develop a clearer understanding of what is involved in cultural business development, for example, in putting together a business plan:

“Learnt the smart way of working on Business Plans.”

“The session helped me to reframe business planning for myself as a freelancer.”

“The structure of putting together a business plan and how to create something tangible from an idea.”

“The different stages of the business plan and what to consider.”
(Business planning training summary findings, April 2022)

The team at the Hub has facilitated a programme that has identified gaps in sector specific business support through a responsive and flexible approach and facilitating open space. The team has used this to develop a programme specific to the needs of cultural and creative workers living / working across Brighton & Hove.

The cohort attending the course has been diverse, for example, 50% were male and 50% female, 17% identified as having a gender identity that was different to the sex they were assumed to be at birth, only 66% identified as heterosexual, with ages ranging between 20 and 64. 58% of people identified as White British, 17% as Mixed heritage, White and Black Caribbean, 17% as white any other background, 8% as Black British African. Whilst most people identified as non-disabled or preferred not to say, 17% did have a mental health condition and 8% identified as having a cognitive or learning disability. Socio-economic backgrounds were also diverse, with 25% of people stating that their parents had no formal qualifications and 8% having parents with a doctorate. Most people (75%) went to state schools, with just a few going to a mixture of state and private, private or grammar schools.

However, the course has not yet concluded, and so more detailed feedback will only be available in the future version of this report.

5.2 To ensure that signposting saves time and increases access to opportunities for creative workers and businesses



The Culture in our City website clearly addresses this aim. The website was one of the projects supported through the Welcome Back Fund has been developed and updated to make it more responsive and dynamic.

The website is easy to navigate and constitutes a main port of call for creatives, as it contains news and updates for the sector as well as links to opportunities, for example, for development and support, funding and jobs. People are also able to sign up to the newsletter and post their own content.



However, feedback from users of the website has been hard to gather and will be a priority in future evaluation processes.

5.3 To ensure that leaseholders, building owners and creatives have the right information, skills and insight to develop mutually successful partnerships in the short to long term.

This aim has been met is through the Meanwhile use project, which was developed, designed and delivered specifically to do so, through a partnership with Meanwhile Foundation and Meanwhile Space¹⁶. The project included a series of three ‘practical and inspirational’ online events and a practical downloadable toolkit for user groups interested in setting up their own meanwhile spaces and landlords considering letting properties for meanwhile uses. (<https://cultureinourcity.com/abcd-project/meanwhile-use-toolkit/>)

The rationale for this strategic work is articulated clearly in the Meanwhile Space report:

“Meanwhile use is a tool that creatives can use to seek out and activate space. It can be colourful city centre pop-ups and high street shop takeovers. But in a city where these spaces are at a premium, it can also be a way to think about how to bring a diversity of spaces to the conversation and carve out opportunities from vacant sites, long-term vacant buildings, under-utilised upper floors and phased future developments. And it can seed creativity in under-served places. Not all user groups need prime location shop fronts – meanwhile use can find opportunities on secondary high streets for more impactful uses which bring activity and vibrancy to vacant spaces and local neighbourhoods, while covering costs for the landlord.”

The programme introduced the opportunities for accessing space in the city, from the perspective of creative and cultural user groups, as well as how asset holders including landlords, developers and agents can make spaces available. Enablers, including local authority officers, councillors and members of Brighton’s business improvement district also formed part of the discussion around wider benefits that meanwhile use can bring to particular high streets and how it can meet the challenges in a city, like Brighton, where the pressure on space is intense.

In such a context people are keen to find alternative processes, such as meanwhile use, to establish enterprises, for example:

“I’ve started a hyper local social enterprise in Brighton called the Embankment project and we’re looking for premises without success. I think meanwhile use might be the answer until we can unlock a local property.”
(Creativity and Meanwhile Use final report, May 2022)

The programme resulted in 178 Eventbrite subscriptions, 96 people attending webinars, 10 memberships to the Meanwhile Foundation being given to webinar attendees, the Meanwhile Use Toolkit available of the Culture in Our City website and 17 members of the Facebook platform.

¹⁶ Introduction to Meanwhile Space: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1X1oQujCXI>

Four surveys were completed about the Meanwhile Use programme. When asked 'did this event give you information, skills and insight that may help you develop meanwhile use partnerships in future, all people responding answered 'Yes'.



5.4 To enable creative and cultural leaders to be better able to adapt to future ongoing challenges and economic shocks

The 'Regroup 'n' Renew' Leadership support programme's 'business planning training' has also addressed this aim. As articulated by Julia Payne, elements of the programme were specifically designed with this aim in mind:

"People who have taken part in the business planning training, when we spent time talking about what being a resilient practitioner or business looked like, we looked at the trends likely to impact on business and looked at what else is happening in the landscape and if identifying competitors and potential collaborators, so this directly addresses this aim." (Julia Payne, The Hub, Interview, March 2022)

Julia also describes the details of the training that supported people to prepare to adapt and respond:

"We used exercises to help them think about how they will respond to threats and opportunities. We covered quite a lot about what the changes are that you need to make and looking around internally and externally, setting strategic aims to turn that into strategy. We did quite a lot of work on risk and how to be smarter." (Julia Payne, The Hub, Interview, March 2022)

In the cultural context however, Julia identifies how it is always important to support people in ways that ensure they can adapt in bespoke ways:

"The big thing I talk about is what does good growth look like *for you*. It's a bit like going into a changing room and trying on lots of outfits, what looks good on you won't suit others and that's how we encourage people to think about what fits for them; in terms of what your strategy will be, it depends on values and other things personal to you." (Julia Payne, The Hub, Interview, March 2022)

As a direct consequence of this work, 88% of attendees stated that they 'feel more confident thinking about what comes next and planning for the future.' For further example, 88% of participants on this course stated that they 'feel more equipped to

make smart decisions about my future.’ (Business planning training summary findings, April 2022)

Feedback has also indicated that this training has been effective in supporting people to become more confident about adapting to future challenges, for example:

“By helping me to think more clearly about business planning for myself as a freelancer, and also framing it as a dynamic iterative process, I will be better able to adapt and adjust to future challenges by having a plan that supports change.” (Business planning training summary findings, April 2022)

5.5 To recharge and strengthen the resilience of the creative and cultural sector

The main project that was developed to address this aim was ‘Igniter.’ Led by ‘always possible’, Igniter Events were an online series of events focused on inspiring ideas, exploring new ways of working and recharging resilience. The Igniter programme was made up of a series of four online webinars, entitled:

- Does Brighton dare...?
- A New Resilience for Brighton & Hove
- Compassionate, creative.... and commercial?
- Clusters, Communities + Co-working Spaces

The webinars were opportunities for people to come together and discuss the issues and challenges but also the learning and consequent opportunities presented through the pandemic:

“The pandemic has shown how vulnerable the creative sector can be, but also how critical for wellbeing, understanding and belonging. How can we be better prepared for a future crisis? What strengths can we keep building on? Igniter is an opportunity for you to be heard, to learn, to challenge and be inspired – empowered by Brighton’s radical heart.” (Culture in our City Website content: <https://cultureinourcity.com/abcd-project/igniter-events/>)

The work has clearly made a difference in ways that relate to this aim, as is evidenced in feedback from people taking part. For example, it has provided an opportunity to ‘recharge’:

“I was feeling exhausted and burned out but this reignited my enthusiasm to keep going.” (Igniter Survey results, May 2022)

The always possible team have described how the events worked in this way, through broadening people’s perceptions of the wider context of ‘recovery’ in which the cultural sector is located:

“I think it’s easy for people to see cultural recovery through the lens of what it is that they do, or the sort of bits of the world that they understand. I think

what the Igniter events have done is to show that... it's social, it's economic... cultural recovery is about where culture sits, and touches sort of every part of an ecosystem." (Richard Freeman, always possible interview, March 2022)

The events have thereby supported people to think differently, make connections and plan for a future through enabling a safe space for dialogue:

"I think we've created a safe space, for people to be able to talk about it, which is really important and to be real, and to be human and to be ourselves and know that it's okay to fail and to learn from the challenges. And I think that we've, well, I hope that we've inspired people to learn from the experience and move forward." (Annie-Marie Page, always possible interview, March 2022)

Feedback from people attending the events chimes with this intention, as people have acknowledged the value of the sessions as inspiring spaces in which they have made connections. For example, when asked what their top takeaways were people replied:

"Inspiration, hope and some great connections."
"That connection is the most important factor - and to seek out collaboration."
(Igniter Survey results, May 2022)

Similarly, when asked what has changed because of the events, people responded by saying:

"More awareness, inspiration"
"Better understanding and inspiration"
(Igniter Survey results, May 2022)

Because these events were online, the discussions were also open to a broader set of participants, from beyond Brighton:

"I think what's also been relevant to that is that we haven't just had people from Brighton within the webinars, we've had a much wider reach. So, it's having that relatable conversation around how what you're doing there, ties in with what I'm doing, you know, it's broadening that beyond Brighton, and that was always one of our main intentions as well to have that national international approach." (Stephanie Danvers, always possible interview, March 2022)

This national and international perspective has helped to contextualise the Brighton & Hove Cultural Recovery, but also it helped to establish a sense of equality:

"A good thing about the series being online was that it felt like, there was a sense of equality throughout the series, and everyone was on the same level. So, it didn't matter where someone was from or what they identify with, or how much they earn, or what they've done, because everyone was on the same screen. And it just felt like there was an equal opportunity for people to

say what they wanted to say and share their experience, without the ego interfering.” (Annie-Marie Page, always possible interview, March 2022)

The ‘Regroup ‘n’ Renew business planning training’ has also addressed this aim. For example, one attendee commented that:

“I rewrote my mission/vision and feel more confident thinking about the various elements contributing 'resilience.’” (Business planning training summary findings, April 2022)

Through such support, these projects have supported creative and cultural professionals in ways that have recharged and strengthened the resilience of the creative and cultural sector. The recordings made of the Igniter Events remain as a resource on the Culture in Our City YouTube channel.

5.6 To increase the profile for creative & cultural businesses in the city

The Digital Communication Campaign, delivered by Storythings, in partnership with VisitBrighton, has addressed this aim through producing five films, including a trailer for Brighton ABCD and films about Afrori books, Audio Active, ONCA, Lighthouse and Marlborough Productions. The films were commissioned:

“To shine a light on the rich cultural ecology that makes up the city, through profiling creative businesses and the stories behind them.” (Polly Gifford, Brighton Creative Stories Introduction, 2022)

The full rationale and the films are available on the Culture in Our City website: <https://cultureinourcity.com/brighton-creative-stories/>

These films are a coherent and high-quality summary of a diverse range of creative and cultural businesses. The extent to which the films have raised the profile of these businesses will be an important focus for future evaluation processes.

6 How Creative Communities met its Aims

The aims of the Creative Communities strand of the programme have been realised through commissioning community led events, which complement and enhance the existing work happening in communities (both geographic communities and communities defined by common experiences) for whom access to cultural activities is problematic or where the offer provided is short term or does not match the interests of that community. The aims of this strand are summarised in the headings below.

6.1 To support culture in all parts of the city

The majority of venues in Brighton & Hove are located in the city centre and seafront area and that is also where much of the festival activity takes place. This strand aimed to support led by and located in local communities outside the centre. The Turner Community Project's festival, Glow, took place in Turner Park in the heart of that community, supporting local people's sense of ownership over that space.

6.2 For Community-led programming to enable more, and more ambitious, relevant and sustainable community-led programming and events to take place

Turner Community Project's Glow Festival has been shown to have realised all elements of this aim. For example, people attending the Glow festival have commented on the relevance of the programme, for example:

"Does it feel relevant to you?" "It does, because (I live round the corner and) it makes me feel like the community is connected and that it's an important part of society." (Audience interview, Turner Glow Festival, 26th March 2022)

The Glow festival was programmed using the expertise of the team at Turner Community Project, ensuring that it was relevant to local people:

"What's it felt like to be involved?"
"It's really good because I feel like I'm a part of the community as a young person and I can have a say in what goes on." (Josh performer / audience interview, Turner Glow Festival, 26th March 2022)

The team at Turner Community Project are experienced in involving local and young people in event planning, as they are led by the interest of local young people, and this ensures the relevance of their programme:

"We use a participatory model so we support people to do what they want to do." (Interview with the Turner Community Project team, March 2022)

The Turner Community Project team are clearly known and trusted by members of the local community, for the work they do locally and regionally, for example:

"Tom's done a lot for the youth in the area, in Brighton, in Sussex in general, he's branched out, he's doing things in Worthing, he's doing things out and about. It's a beautiful thing to see something that is actually demonised most of the time, which is Rap, bringing a load of different people together and making it happen as a community and elevating people and getting them out of the normal day to day struggle." (Mason interview, Turner Glow Festival, 26th March 2022)

Furthermore, the team are used to working in ongoing reflective ways, that are responsive to 'unexpected situations' (Schön, 1983) as they unfold, for example:

“There are things that have happened accidentally in previous events, like children just dancing on the empty stage and so at this event we built on those, so for example, I just realised there was a moment where no one was performing and that the same thing could happen and so we invited the children to dance on the stage and they did, so lots of children were there dancing away on the stage, which was lovely.” (Interview with the Tarner Community Project team, March 2022)

Local and young people were also actively involved in the set up and performing at the event on the day:

“We’ve been setting it up. It’s been amazing... everyone’s got involved... I knew there was high hopes but I wasn’t expecting it to be this good.” (Esme and Jade interview 26th March 2022)

“I introduced one person, Eli to chat to one of the performers and he ended up getting up on stage and performing impromptu, which was great.” (Interview with the Tarner Community Project team, March 2022)

The festival has clearly also been ambitious and thereby exceeded people’s expectations. For further example, when asked ‘Was the glow festival what you expected?’ 23 people responding this question, with more than half saying it was better than they expected and that they would return to the event again.



Even the team was surprised at the effectiveness of the lanterns and UV artwork, which were made in workshops with young people prior to the festival, once the sun went down:

“When it went dark it was a great surprise to see how the artwork looked when it became illuminated, it looked great all day but it was amazing when it went dark.” (Interview with the Tarner Community Project team, March 2022)

The theme of 'glow' was thereby used as catalyst for creative activities and events in the lead up to the festival, engaging more people than may otherwise have been the case, as young people not interested in performing could be involved in making, encouraging their sense of ownership of the event and consequent attendance at the event. The team does not usually theme events in this way and so this has been useful learning:

"What we did have was a strong theme and that was really effective... the 'glow' theme turned out to be a great success. We had been a bit reluctant about it and were worried about how it would look, but it really benefitted the event it and became a strong focal point, which was really nice."
(Interview with the Tarner Community Project team, March 2022)

The theme, and how it acted to establish an identity for the event, clearly contributed to the general sense in which the event exceeded people's expectations. Because people found the event to be impressive and better than they have expected, it has also raised the positive profile of the local community, generating pride in that community:

"It's so lovely to be part of such an amazing community. These events are just so brilliant in bringing everyone together! There's so much effort that goes into making these happen and so much amazing creativity. Brilliant, brilliant work. We'll always support these events." (Tarner Community Projects survey, Glow festival 2022)

The event has left people feeling inspired, proud of their community and energised:

"How do you feel like you're going to walk away feeling?" "Content, wholesome, fulfilled, humanity restored, energy up!" (Donny interview, Tarner Glow Festival, 26th March 2022)

The festival has thereby heightened ambitions for future years, ensuring a legacy and indicating the sustainability of the event:

"I would make it a bit bigger, so everyone gets the same opportunities to really show off their talent, because it's such a good opportunity." (Esme and Jade interview, Tarner Glow Festival, 26th March 2022)

However, the intimacy of the event is something that people also appreciate:

"I'd probably keep it how it is, it's a cosy environment. I'd keep it where it is."
(Josh performer / audience interview, Tarner Glow Festival, 26th March 2022)

The Tarner Community Project's Glow Festival has been highly successful in achieving this aim, demonstrating the value there is in investing in existing local community projects that can build on their existing practice and expertise and the trust that they have nurtured over years of engagement with local people.

The Alternative Tours have also been developed through a responsive process, in which the work has evolved on the basis of the needs and priorities of people engaging:

“We changed plans for the tour to make sure people would feel comfortable. It has been about establishing a sense of belonging.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

For further example, this responsive approach was essential in the Through the Senses Alternative Tour:

“In terms of the Through the Senses tours, the person who attended all three ‘open to the public’ tours was someone who has lost all of his sight. He expressed interest in wanting to attend so we ensured that he could be guided and could touch elements of the tours where needed. Being responsive to different needs has been important and taking the time to do that is vital.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

Taking the time to be responsive, through a ‘slow inclusion’ approach has been common successful feature of much of the work. This has been valuable learning for some artists and creative professionals, which will inform their future practice, for example:

“I think that the numbers of participants were just right. We were aiming for more, but I think this would have diluted and reduced the impact of the experience, making it less meaningful. Participants felt heard, given space to contribute and welcome. That’s my biggest learning I think, that it’s not about the number of people but that it takes longer to tailor things to be inclusive.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

Katie Dale-Everett also comments on this key learning in the project report, stating that:

“Participation numbers are less than originally planned per workshop, however some participants have had higher contact time than originally anticipated... we have found that in some cases a smaller participative group than originally sought has been more beneficial as it allows participants more time to be heard and to contribute.” (Katie Dale-Everett, Project Report May 2022)

Such reflection as this, contained in Katie’s report, is also evidence of a reflective process through which learning has been surfaced in an ongoing way, informing project development as the work has evolved. For further example, Katie identified the following challenges in her report, which could usefully inform future work:

- The time it takes to build relationships with specific charities.

- Access budget not being sufficient for the goals set out with including BSL & audio-descriptions.
- Documenting ‘Trails of Migration’ because of the danger this may put participants in. We are working on seeing if we can document the process without sharing identities.
- The number of tours of ‘Trails of Migration’ has been reduced to two tours instead of four due to locations most familiar to the participants not being available on certain dates & finding commitment for participants being difficult due to living conditions & family priorities.
- Planning a wheelchair accessible route is proving problematic, but something we are continuing to work on.

(Katie Dale-Everett, Project Report May 2022)

Such valuable learning, as part of ongoing professional development, has happened through the new opportunities this programme has presented for artists and cultural workers, in new spaces and programmes.

6.3 To generate new opportunities for artists and cultural workers in new spaces and programmes

The programme has generated new opportunities for artists and cultural workers to work in new spaces and develop new programmes. It has thereby developed sustainable programmes of work, raising the profile of artists, cultural workers and local organisations, so that they are now confident enough to fundraise to continue the work. For example;

“It has lifted our profile and as a result people are asking me if I am going for the NPO round and I have been sent emails asking if we are going for it. I don’t think this would have happened without this work. I think I might be going for that in the next round, not this one. The contacts and having organisational support and being part of a wider network are all real benefits.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

Artists and cultural workers have developed valuable contacts and support through new networks. They have also been supported in ways that have developed their own practice, for example:

“I have recently been awarded a virtual residency with Goldsmiths University as the UK artist in an international dance and technology collaboration research project using Motion Capture. They said one of the reasons I was selected was down to my commitment to DEI¹⁷, so the project has supported my independent work and growth as well as the networks.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

¹⁷ Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The programme has thereby made a significant difference for artists and cultural workers through the opportunities presented, leading to a legacy in terms of their future practice and programmes:

“It has helped our network build. Our audiences have evolved and developed. It has put us on the map so much more.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

Furthermore, a wide range of project work, including that developed by Sussex Dance Network, has continued beyond the programme duration:

“We are already delivering two further dance sessions with Voices In Exile this month, funded by the charity.” (Sussex Dance Network Final Project Report)

The continuation of such work, in new spaces and as part of new programmes is a fantastic legacy, which could be built upon by ensuring a continuation of the networks and support mechanisms that the programme has established, so that such projects continue to benefit from the wider infrastructure and connections.

7. Learning Points / Conclusions

The overarching aim of the programme, ‘To create a cultural sector in Brighton & Hove that is more inclusive, collaborative and sustainable than pre-Covid’ has clearly been met through a carefully devised programme, with enough structure for it to effectively address its aims and enough flexibility to be responsive, enabling it to be inclusive. Such a flexible and responsive approach has also ensured that the programme did not become prescriptive or homogenous:

“The learning is about fragility and the massive opportunity that has been presented in the ecology of the cultural sector and how you explore that whilst avoiding falling into homogenous, prescriptive programming, as opposed to listening and being grassroots up. Constantly applying attention to that is a challenge, it’s a good challenge and it’s about shared responsibility and understanding, of the need for commitment from everyone and for an ecology where there is a need for people to take responsibility for work that isn’t always remunerated. It needs to be fully supported and remunerated if it is to continue to work in ways that extend the impact of the programme.” (Interview with Erin Barnes, 6th June 2022)

The ABCD programme has thereby met its aims and in doing so has addressed the key issues and challenges that Covid-19 imposed upon communities, as identified through research at The Centre for Cultural Value:

- **Audiences:** While the shift to digital transformed cultural experiences for those already engaged with cultural activities, it failed to diversify cultural audiences.
- **Workforce:** The UK’s cultural sector is undoubtedly at an inflection point and facing imminent burnout alongside significant skills and workforce gaps.
- **Organisations:** In light of the pandemic and Black Lives Matter, many cultural organisations re-evaluated their purpose and their relevance to local communities, which was complemented by increased local engagement. (Walmsley et al, 2022)

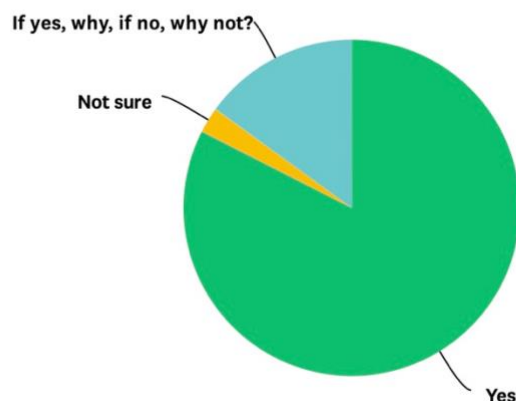
The programme has addressed these issues and challenges through its focus on nurturing, supporting and diversifying the cultural and creative workforce, extending audience diversity, not least through work in the public realm which is free of charge but also free from any potential threshold anxiety, and encouraging networks and collaboration to flourish.

One clear indicator of the success of the programme is the feedback from artists and other creative and cultural professionals and organisations, whereby there is a keen appetite for this work to continue, as has been evidenced throughout this report.

Furthermore, there is a similar desire from audiences and participants, as is clearly indicated in feedback gathered through the Enliven audience survey:

Q3 Would you like to see more of this sort of thing?

Answered: 40 Skipped: 0



Those people selecting ‘if yes, why, if no, why not?’ were all answering ‘yes’, which means that 97.5% of people said yes, with some contributing reasons why they would like to see more, for example:

“Because makes people feel happy and connected and for free.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

For further example of the extent to which people are keen to see this work continue, Enliven audiences have also commented as follows:

“Can we have more of this kind of thing.”

“Would be great for this to be a regular thing. Bringing art to the public.”

“More events please.”

“Permanent. permanent. permanent.”

“Should continue and being city wide.” (Enliven Survey, May 2022)

Ideas have also been inspired about how work could be developed further, for example, as part of a rolling process, to realise the sort of permanence and continuation indicated above, rather than being defined as part of a fixed programme, for example:

“Art programmes could be created in ways that are ongoing, so that people paint these horrible plastic planters to make them beautiful in an ongoing way, not as a one off, so it has inspired this idea that you ‘keep doing’, that it is more ‘rolling’ than this one-off way of programming.” (Interview with Richard Wolfeströme, June 2022)

One of the key characteristics of the programme, contributing to its success, has been the centrality of collaboration:

“I think the source of the ABCD programme has been to... find a more collaborative way.” (Richard Freeman, Always Possible interview, March 2022)

What has also been central to the approach taken by the ABCD programme is building on the assets of communities, through working together creatively and collaboratively, which chimes with wider research in the local area about the impact of Covid-19 on marginalised communities:

“While it is easy to see marginalised communities as victims or as a problem to be solved, we should ensure we value the assets, ideas and solutions that these communities bring, without which our findings would surely be far graver. A difficult funding landscape for the voluntary community sector and statutory organisations alike can make finding a strategic approach to ending these inequalities challenging. We do, however, see many opportunities to address these challenges together as a city. We must move forward creatively, collaboratively, and with the most marginalised communities at the centre of our work and investment.” (Woodhull, J. 2021)

It is important to acknowledge and anticipate the time-consuming nature of such collaboration and how far it depends upon generosity of all involved along with trust in the agreed decision-making structures:

“Collaboration is time consuming and requires endless generosity. But ultimately you have to trust in a structure, for a decision to be made.”
(Interview with Marina Norris, 6th June 2022)

There has been valuable learning, articulated by the governance group, about how to drive forwards the programme and overcome challenges, through working in such partnership with wider networks:

- “Finding new ways to connect with existing challenges / problems in the city of ownership / power and gatekeeping in the cultural industries
- Exploring how to give power to a wider network and how that impacts on ownership of driving the project forward
- Understanding how people drive things forward, if someone has a particular passion and/or particular partners come on board to give something momentum then it’s possible to make something happen – without that, things get left behind.” (Governance group interview, January 2022)

The Governance group has recognised how valuable it is to work with specific partners with relevant expertise, understanding and connections, to make meaningful things happen.

Members of the Working groups have also recognised the significance of the power that can be harnessed through working together in open ways that acknowledge different vulnerabilities:

“I’ve also learnt that there is a huge power, which becomes apparent when we work together, and there’s an ability to create optimism through the darkest times and it was a wonderful thing to be part of that and see people coming together and being vulnerable together.” (Interview with Marina Norris, 6th June 2022)

This in turn has exemplified the value there is in working flexibly with partners and responding to and accommodating different needs, situations, and timelines. This emphasis has been echoed in the leadership training developed and delivered at The Hub:

“The emphasis was on bringing people together, as we had spent so much time in our own homes and heads. However, one of the first things we were due to do ended up being online because of Omnicom. We moved some other dates back so we could meet in person, because one part of the focus has been about bringing people together, as we knew people had been on their own, firefighting, and being very reactive, so the design was first and

foremost about getting people out of their siloes and out of that firefighting, emergency way of thinking.” (Julia Payne, The Hub, Interview, March 2022)

It is evident that the Brighton & Hove ABCD Plan for Cultural Recovery has been effective in addressing its aims and what’s more, it has done so responsively and swiftly:

“When I have spoken to other local authorities what struck me with the recovery plan is how responsive it was in relation to the city and how quickly it was put in place and how that instilled confidence across the sector, so I think the commitment that was put in place relatively swiftly really helped to build credibility for the plan.” (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

The extent to which the council recognised the challenges facing the sector led it to respond to the programme quickly:

“The council felt the pain of the cultural sector and so we were quick to respond and be involved in the recovery, all the outdoor arts and events were falling down around our ears, and a huge percentage of people rely on this for their income. So, with the timing of this in the lead up to the season when these events happen meant that the council were very quick to try to push this through.” (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

The process has generated useful learning for the ABCD partners and the council. For example, there has been important learning for the council in terms of its approach to working strategically with the wider sector:

“One of the pieces of learning is that this was always going to be a tactical response, and this is a different way of working to how the council usually operates in culture, as a sponsor or funder, so the council doesn’t usually look to the sector for long term plans.” (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

The way in which the programme was devised and the structure that has been put in place to support it has been a new way of working, which has been a positive learning experience for the council. The programme has also exemplified how such a structure and common set of priorities can effectively garner further support and resources:

“One thing we have learnt from a council perspective is that having the plan has meant that we could marshal other resources around it, which we couldn’t have done without the plan and so we couldn’t have supported as

much as we did without the plan. So the role the plan has had, has not just been important in terms of having a clear idea of what we were going to do, but also as a way devolving resources into it; because it was there, other things happened around it, because we had the plan, we had all the thinking in place so, for example, the business rates grants became easy to identify and use; because the council had embraced the plan we could just take the idea to the committee and it would be accepted.” (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

Synthia Griffin and Donna Chisholm have articulated the council’s approval of and work to support the plan as acting like a magnet for further funding and support. This in turn has supported Donna to be able to think differently about ‘how we enable strategy to be effectively delivered.’ (Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

There has been mutual learning about partnership working between the council and the governance group. This was evidenced when the governance group were asked ‘What learning has there been for you in the development of this programme so far?’ One response was: ‘Finding out about how to work with the council in the best way.’ (Governance group interview, January 2022)

It was important for the programme to evolve in the way that it did so that it could inform the council’s approach in this way. Furthermore, the programme’s success is testament to the skills, wisdom and abilities of professionals from the cultural sector and evidences the potential for developing the future phase in a similarly responsive way as has informed the programme to date:

“If we just rely on the council to do everything, we underestimate our own brilliance. I would like the message to be that we can make the next phase whatever we need it to be, and not overburden ourselves with structure.” (Interview with Marina Norris, 6th June 2022)

One other area of learning has been articulated by members of the BID, who, whilst quick to express how brilliant different events have been, also stated that they would have preferred to have more involvement in the decision-making process:

“The arts and event have been superb. It has been thrilling to see the Third Thursday events grow and become more popular week by week. It was great to see the diversity of all of that, so the arts side was a huge success. However, the governance side of things lacked somewhat and didn’t allow us to be a part of the decision-making process that formulated the programme that would ultimately deliver on many of our objectives.” (Interview with Gavin Stewart and Shelley Welti, Brighton BID, May 2022)

This issue was also acknowledged by Polly Gifford, Programme Manager, during evaluative reflection, and could be addressed in future structures:

“(The BID) were certainly involved in the recruitment and commissioning of a number of the artists. We could have gone further on that and involved them in (the working group) meetings, so they got to know the wider partnership more. Having people personally invested rather than just commercially invested has been important.” (Polly Gifford, Interview with the Enliven Working Group, March 2022)

Some other challenges can be seen to stem from different working practices across sectors and this might be most usefully addressed through working together to share working practices and agree processes prior to commencing the work. For example, there is a need to outline processes clearly for all involved, especially across sectors, for recruitment and commissioning, prior to the point at which any recruitment or commissioning process begins.

It has also become apparent that whilst paying freelancers for their time at meetings is an aspirational norm in the cultural sector, the idea is less familiar to the business community. Within ABCD, paying freelancers for their time is an objective that clearly relates to the programme’s aim, to achieve equity for freelancers in the cultural sector:

“ABCD has tried to do some things differently to the pre-pandemic norm, particularly around having a wider range of voices involved in decision making; linked to extending inclusivity and diversifying leadership; part of that has been about having freelancers involved, and committing to paying people for their time. As things have opened back up and gone back to more familiar delivery models this has been harder to maintain. How that structure is maintained and how to pay people who we need to be there is important. We need to develop a whole new budget line to include freelancers in conversation which is really hard and really important.” (Polly Gifford, Interview, May 2022)

As a pilot programme, this work has effectively surfaced this as a difference between sectors and now that this difference has been surfaced it could be addressed in future.

One important strand of learning has therefore been about this sort of difference between working practices in different sectors and how time is essential at the outset to recognise and appreciate these differences:

“Working across sectors and getting used to working with each other with different working practices, some time for that partnership to do its storming and norming.” (Polly Gifford, Interview, May 2022)

Sharing a range of policies and statements that are in place might also be useful in ensuring a mutual and common understanding of the relationships between, and roles of, different partners involved. For further example, this could help to clarify

details that have caused some confusion for people commissioned, such as the relationship between the BID and the council, as different entities, and responsibility for marketing.

Whilst the programme has met many of its aims in ways that can be sustained and built upon, it is apparent that there are several key areas for future focus, some of which will be supported by the two remaining strands of the original ABCD Plan. For example, one future focus needs to be about 'space to grow', addressing the need for creative space in the city within which artists and cultural organisations can develop their practice:

“Certain working groups have... achieved what they set out to achieve, and what is rising to the surface are things we need to address across the city, like the need for 'space to grow' which could have an impact on space within the city and infrastructure and how that is delivered, because it is a need that is completely rearticulated across the sector and across the city.” (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

This focus has also been emphasised by members of the Enliven working group, as a potentially valuable way to develop more partnerships between the BID and creative industries:

“We talked earlier about Space to Grow and the pilot that happened with the disused shops that Creative Futures took up, which was associated with Enliven, and how that provided a really good model of how projects using disused shops can be beneficial to business. The more interface that we can find between the BID and creative industries the more it will grow momentum and there are ways make the most of the proximity of the shops in ways that will ensure the work can continue to grow and have benefits.” (David Sheppard, Interview with the Enliven Working Group, March 2022)

Another area that is similarly still being pursued are plans for the Cultural Worker Income Guarantee Scheme. The need to pay freelancers for their time is one of the key areas of success within this programme, as it is essential for freelancers to be paid, for them to be able to engage in strategic long term decision-making processes if those processes are to become more inclusive and representative of broader perspectives than just those of PAYE staff from existing organisations.

Another set of learning coming from the work is about diversity, as the programme has managed to support the development of several strands of work that have successfully diversified the participants and audiences engaging. The key learning has been about the advantages working with partners who have expertise and networks in different contexts.

There has also been learning about the need to consider 'how to implement anti-racist practice in a project that has many stake holders.' (Governance group interview, January 2022)

There has been important learning too about access, as the Alternative Tour work with disabled people has highlighted issues of access around the city, which will be reported directly to the council:

"Brighton isn't really wheelchair accessible so doing the accessible tour was really difficult, but also a positive learning curve. Polly is asking us to write about the access issues." (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

Another focus that builds upon the learning to date, for the middle and longer term, is about cultivating more diverse leadership:

"What has come to the surface recently is the need to cultivate diverse leadership across the city. The council has a wider anti-racist pledge but there is work about how to make sure diverse communities feel represented across the community, alongside the third sector team, there is a need to bring more diverse voices into the conversation about the role of culture going forwards." (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

Key learning that might successfully inform future work has been articulated by the Enliven working group, when they acknowledged and articulated how a diverse leadership group nurtures a more equitable space in which people can be their authentic selves and contribute in more authentic ways, thereby evolving a more diverse programme.

As reflection has been embedded into this phase of the programme, it has surfaced learning in an ongoing way which has then influenced decisions and initiated action, for example, through reflecting on the challenges of gathering evidence about the impact of Third Thursdays on the business community, an action was identified that was both useful for gathering further evidence in future, but also for encouraging reflection within the business community:

"It was about making the city centre somewhere exciting for people to visit again, particularly before the spring, when festivals start happening anyway. But there is an issue about how to evidence those things. There has also been a challenge in involving the businesses. We thought more of the existing cultural organisations would have got on board with programming Third Thursdays, but they didn't and we need to understand why." (Polly Gifford, Interview, May 2022)

This conversation has also informed future evaluation processes by identifying the value of including the question “Did you do anything else while you were here?” In surveys of people attending activities like Third Thursdays in future.

The evaluation process has also generated a wealth of evidence that relates to the outcomes there have been for people engaged as audience members or participants. Whilst this evidence does not relate to the overarching aims of the programme, it acts as a valuable reminder of why such work is important for people engaged. For example, one person who took part in the Voices of Motherhood Alternative tour stated that:

“This project landed in my life at a very difficult time. It helped me have another focus and helped me digest some of the grief and anxiety that I was struggling with. It gave me something to look forward to and I felt heard and held creatively and emotionally.” (Participant Feedback, Voices of Motherhood.)

For further example, an audience member of Enliven stated that:

“I realise that this was exactly the kind of event I needed in my life and was missing so much.” (Enliven Audience Survey, May 2022)

Such feedback indicates the wider benefits that have been realised through the programme, especially in terms of people’s wellbeing, as can be seen to be of great significance, especially in our recovery from the pandemic:

“All the tours improved my sense of wellbeing.” (David Horwood, Voice memo feedback, March 2022)

Such outcomes, as have been clearly evidenced across the programme, are at the core of the rationale for such work and have been realised through a focus on strategic interventions to re-invigorate artists practice through a carefully structured interconnected programme of opportunities.

What is interesting about this is that the realisation of such outcomes (as improved wellbeing or community cohesion) does not depend upon a set of aims concerned with the impact the work will have for audiences or participants.

Professionals who have been working in this sector, in equitable and informed ways, for any significant length of time, realise that these are the outcomes that will occur when opportunities to engage in cultural activities are developed in responsive ways, whereby the results are almost inevitably ones that have a positive effect on people’s wellbeing and community cohesion. This is perhaps taken as read in this programme, freeing up the potential to explore the new spaces that Covid-19 and other elements in the wider socio-political landscape has exposed or highlighted.

8 Recommendations and Ways Forward

The realisation of the programme aims and outcomes, as has been evidenced throughout this report, has generated significant impact and cultural change, not least through the learning that has surfaced. This learning has influenced strategic approaches across partnerships and informed practice within and across a range of organisations. Some of that learning has been about how to retain the ability to be responsive when working across such multiple organisations and contexts:

“When you get groups of 14 people around a table it’s hard to move quickly... How to remain agile and get stuff done with this number of voices is also important learning.” (Interview with Erin Barnes, 6th June 2022)

Remaining agile and nimble have been crucial to ensuring the flexibility required to be responsive, which has been key to realising the outcomes of the programme. In addition to having met the outcomes relating to its aims, the programme has realised multifarious strategic outcomes that are about ‘big changes,’ which are best met through ‘slow’ processes, because;

“If we are slow, we really listen. We find out what being included means to each person rather than forcing everyone into the nearest job, college course and lonely flat. We provide enough information for people to make their own decisions and then we honour that choice.” (Bates, 2005)

The learning-based outcomes from this programme to date, as evidenced throughout this report and summarised in the previous section, are ripe to build upon in future, alongside the planned continuation of the programme. These can be summarised as recommendations, as follows:

Governance, Structure and Working Groups

Whilst the working group model has clearly provided a useful structure for more equitable decision making, which is flatter and less hierarchical than many others, ideas have been suggested during reflective conversations about how this model might be improved or built upon. For example, it would be useful to anticipate that working groups for different types of projects would take on different shapes and roles, as they need to develop in bespoke ways in response to the different needs of different projects:

“In terms of the model and the processes, the working group model and the wider model, where it was the same size and shape for all three strands, I’m not sure that this served every strand equally well, because they were all so different. Enliven was so focussed, Engine room so broad and Creative Communities was different again and that became clear to everyone involved.” (Polly Gifford, Interview, May 2022)

Polly has also recognised that the working group structure and processes may have benefited from more lead in time, clarity around roles and greater agency for the working group chairs:

“The role of the Chairs in leading their groups was really important and maybe needed some time at the beginning. I wonder if it would have been valuable to have recruited the chairs and had some discussion with them about the roles and for them to have a role in the recruitment of the working group which might have given a bit more focus.” (Polly Gifford, Interview, May 2022)

Legacy

It is clear there is a keen appetite, amongst artists, organisations, participants, audiences and businesses, for the work developed through this programme to continue. Alongside this there is a clear need to develop a way of holding the work, through a non-hierarchical structure, based on the model developed within this programme, which can ensure a cohesive approach that makes the most of potential partnerships and connections.

Partner organisations have been supported to extend and expand upon the work they usually programme, producing new events and activities that have been popular, exceeded expectations and ignited people’s ambitions for the continuation of such opportunities in the future, for example, for Tarner Community Organisation there is a clear legacy from the Glow festival:

“The legacy will be the way we continue to do these events with the young people and the community. Every time we do this sort of event it gets bigger and as great as the new partnerships are and as much as we’d like to do this event at the same time of year again, for me, being known as the organisation that puts on the summer event is what matters the most.” (Interview with the Tarner Community Project team, March 2022)

This is reiterated in the feedback from the young people involved:

“Hopefully this will continue for years to come.” (Vitamin D interview, 26th March 2022)

The Tarner Community project team are aware of the potential to support more young people, who have been inspired by the performances at the Glow festival, to perform in future:

“There are young people who want to perform now, the stage looked great this year and so for a couple of the young people, aspirationally it was really great for them to see and might inspire them to perform at our next event. And all the children dancing on the stage as well, it might give them some ideas about performing in the future as well.” (Interview with the Tarner Community Project team, March 2022)

Similarly, people engaged in the Alternative Tours have also expressed a desire to continue to be involved in similar work:

“The Trails of Migration project, those involved would like to see it continue, it has been a very positive space for the people and in which to be seen.”
(Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

For this type of work to continue, funding to nurture reflection has been suggested as a useful consideration in future:

“We are a young organisation and I want us to be led by the community and what they want and it would help us to do this and to be more sustainable if there was an annual fixed amount of money for reflecting on what we have done and learnt to inform future work and continue to build accessible programmes that would be brilliant.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

There has also been significant feedback suggesting that an important part of the programme’s wider legacy, will be to share how this programme has evolved and what has happened as a result:

“I think it would be worth Marina and Polly and others involved talking about how they have done this, how they went about securing that amount of money from the council in the first place, then getting that topped up and then CRF money on top of that, which is amazing, it’s proper Robin Hood stuff, which is amazing. They got the extra money principally to get freelancers engaged in the programme. You need a bit of gumption to do that. People like Marina were saying let’s just ask, lots of people don’t think to ask. Talking about that and sharing it more widely, for example by having a symposium or getting it in Arts Professional, could be really amazing. I just think the programme is amazing.” (Julia Payne, The Hub, Interview, March 2022)

“I think it would be good to do a festival about the programme, celebrating what it has achieved, but which also highlights those issues and means so that we can all share our learning around it.” (Interview with Katie Dale-Everett, 24th March 2022)

Diversity and Diverse Leadership

Whilst this programme has been exemplary in the ways in which it has centred on diversity and developed diverse leadership, there has been key learning which can be expanded upon across the partnerships, such as at the council, to ensure more diverse leadership as a norm across the area:

“Some of the things we haven’t done yet are the instruments for social change, around diverse leadership and having tools to enable more people who feel marginalised in the overall development of the sector, the future direction of leadership in the sector.” (Interview with Synthia Griffin, Arts Development Manager and Donna Chisholm, Interim Executive Director, Brighton & Hove Council, April 2022)

Alongside this, some people have indicated a need to ensure that anti-racist practice is similarly commonplace in Brighton & Hove. This has not been borne out of any issues raised, but out of a recognition of the value there was in the anti-racist training that a small number of people involved in this programme happened to attend outside of this programme.

The success of the Enliven working group has been highlighted through feedback as a model of diverse leadership that could be expanded upon by:

- Replicating this model in the membership of the governance group;
- Encouraging and supporting young people to also be involved at a strategic, decision-making level;
- Doing more to embed anti-racist practice across the programme.

End Note

The Brighton & Hove ABCD Cultural Recovery Programme has resulted in a wide range of positive outcomes and has cemented a set of partnerships that promise to deliver a hugely beneficial programme in future.

The learning from this programme indicates that the next phase of the work is key in terms of building upon the work that has happened, to evolve an effective way of maintaining the connectivity and sense of a common vision amongst and across a wide range of partners. However, it is also important to maintain an openness to continuing to learn through the next phase:

“This is not prescribed or a finished product, this is about learning and unlearning.” (Interview with Marina Norris, 6th June 2022)

As the work continues to develop, not least through the future focus on ‘Space to Grow’ and ‘Creative Worker Income Guarantee’, the learning from this phase will usefully reinforce the structures that support the programme’s activities.

The opportunity for Brighton & Hove’s cultural and creative sector to imagine what happens next, which is taking place in June 2022¹⁸, is key to informing the detail of the programme’s future evolution, as this will ensure that it continues to be directed through a non-hierarchical structure and process.

Maintaining a responsive approach, which continues to be as much about listening as doing, will be key to this future development. This will ensure that people don’t default to previously established, well-trodden paths or entrenched power positions, but galvanise the work by continuing to create new and innovative networks, approaches and programmes:

“It’s about how you create a new way of doing things when people default to existing positions, it’s about how to galvanise something without people resorting to pre-existing power positions, assuming who it is that has the power.” (Interview with Erin Barnes, 6th June 2022)

¹⁸ See [The Open Space Report](#) from the June review and reset session

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Appendix 1: The Impact of Covid-19 on the Creative & Cultural Sector

Appendix 2: Facts and Figures – these are embedded in the Executive Summary that can be downloaded from the [Culture in Our City website](#).

APPENDIX 1

The Impact of Covid-19 on the Cultural and Creative Sector

Dr Roz Stewart-Hall

March 2022

This summary paper contextualises the work of ABCD Brighton and Hove Cultural Recovery by considering the wider impact of the Pandemic on the Cultural and Creative Sector and the learning that has emerged. The pandemic has clearly had unprecedented impact on the creative and cultural sector:

“In the eighteen months since Covid-19 was declared a pandemic in March 2020, the world’s cultural and creative sector has been impacted more traumatically than by any other crisis in living memory. The damage has been spread more universally than in previous crises, the effects compounding one another in the depth and breadth of the fallout they caused. The endless cycles of enforced business closures, lockdowns, travel bans, distancing measures, quarantine and working-from-home regimes together led to the longest disruption to the sector in living memory, causing extensive business and organisational failure and severing essential professional and supply chain connectivity.” (Sargent, A. 2021)

One obvious impact on the sector has been a loss of income:

“As an industry that thrives on collaboration, communication and connection, indoor confinement has had huge knock-on effects on the creative industries. The Creative UK group — composed of Creative Industries Federation and Creative England — shows that Covid-19 has cost the creative industries £12 billion in the value of its goods and services.” (Al-Dujaili, D. 2021)

This has touched every corner of the creative and cultural sector, for example:

“An emergency report produced by the UK’s youth circus network in the early days of the Covid-19 lockdown measures is vital reading, including the statistic that 74% of survey respondents estimated 100% loss of income due to the crisis.” (Kavanagh, K, 2020.)

“Losing 95% of its income, moving staff to working from home and closing its doors to audiences overnight was a scenario that no one at this large Salford-based theatre and gallery complex could have planned for.” (Walmsley et al, 2022)

Lockdowns, self isolation and social distancing and have combined to create a bleak landscape in terms of the potential for creative and cultural engagement, which has in turn impacted on the stability of work in the sector:

“The impact of COVID-19 on the creative industries, and particularly on the cultural sector, has been significant. Live performance venues and museums

and galleries have been forced to close their doors for long or indefinite periods, films and television programmes have had to halt on production, and self-employed creatives have experienced immense job instability.” (Owen, G et al. 2020)

In the same report, led by Nesta, the researchers conclude that:

“Our initial findings show that workers in the creative industries have been hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown. Moreover, with a collapse in the number of hours worked and large numbers of job losses, the cultural industries and occupations have been hit especially hard.” (Owen, G et al. 2020)

Learning from working in the Context of Covid-19

In many ways, the impact on the creative and cultural workforce has exposed the precarious nature of most contemporary creative and cultural vocations:

“These devastating effects have also shone a harsh light on structural flaws and fragilities throughout the CCS. That is especially true in employment models, where typically a third of workers in the sector have semi-detached status as casual, contract, self-employed or freelance workers, whose losses and suffering around the world have been some of the most agonising. Even for those people whose work was not immediately so gravely threatened, every aspect of pandemic lives throughout the world became ‘strange, small & stressful’.” (Sargent, 2021)

Whilst the long-term impact of Covid-19 on this fragile freelance workforce is impossible to predict, there has been much speculation about its significance:

“The most profound management lesson of the pandemic has been the sector’s structural dependence on freelance and self-employed professionals, many of whom have been left catastrophically exposed by the pandemic. An increasing number report that they have been reconsidering their careers, feeling forced to look for jobs elsewhere, potentially creating a risk that the CCS may face a severe scarcity of talent, creativity and skills just as it is emerging from the pandemic.” (Sargent, 2021)

For everyone, from audiences to artists, the impact of COVID-19 has been significant. Anthony Sargent has listed the following reasons why the creative and cultural sector has ‘suffered deeper and more disabling damage than many other sectors’:

- “The cultural sector typically relies on physical congregation and social interaction for all its production and consumption, so was particularly impacted by the continued lockdowns, physical distancing edicts and travel restrictions;
- A larger-than-average share of jobs in the culture and creativity sectors are precarious, informal, and/or part-time jobs – and the lack of professional status for many artists and culture professionals often limits their access to

support mechanisms or safety nets that have protected people in other sectors;

- Widespread job losses and income reductions are limiting spending on the products and services of the CCS by consumers, reflecting the greater cuts most people make to their discretionary spending compared with their basic living necessities;
- There has been a widespread physical impact on cities, with vibrancy and footfall (on which many CCS organisations depend) drastically reduced in the most acute phases of the pandemic. Images of neighbourhoods around the world that boast of ‘never sleeping’ suddenly devoid of human life for extended periods became commonplace during lockdown;
- In many territories with undeveloped infrastructure, the lack of access to digital technology and online platforms has proved challenging, for both producers and consumers.” (Sargent, 2021)

Within the UK, access to online platforms has been widely assumed to be fairly unproblematic, and so ‘the digital space’ has become one in which people have explored and experimented, to create opportunities for engagement. However, a digital divide still exists, creating a barrier for many people who do not have access to, or knowledge of, online platforms. This represents one of the many ways in which the effect of the pandemic has been more significant for those who are already marginalised through existing inequalities:

“The Covid-19 pandemic is unique because it affects the entire population in a way very few events do. However, the stark reality laid bare by the past 18 months is that the fault lines of inequality underlie even the most universal of challenges.” (Woodhull, J. 2021)

“We cannot overlook the fact that longstanding inequality of cultural access and opportunity has just got worse.” (Walmsley et al, 2022)

Digital spaces have, however, offered an alternative for many. For some artists the online version of their work has been more straightforward than others, with artists working in participatory ways finding the successful use of the space more challenging. A blended approach, where digital platforms are used when relevant and these are combined with live work in new and innovative ways, could become one of many new tools for working in more inclusive and equitable ways.

Many people in the creative and cultural sector have thereby developed new ways of using on line space more creatively:

“Many cultural organisations and practitioners have responded rapidly by creating opportunities for cultural engagement within the digital space.” (Barrett, M., et al, 2020)

The ways in which members of the creative and cultural sector connect, within and across organisations, as well as with audiences and other people they seek to engage, has shifted significantly:

“Nowhere was the response of the CCS to the pandemic more spectacular than in the online world, where a digital journey already underway was suddenly exponentially accelerated. Deprived overnight of any possibility of connecting with live audiences and communities, whole segments of the CCS sped into new online worlds. The quality varied wildly, business models were uncertain and for many discoverability was an unsolved challenge, but the online space was suddenly alive with cultural offerings. Partnerships sprang up between major cultural players and tiny specialist digital teams, festivals joyfully united artists all over the globe, and all kinds of interactive adventures linked audiences and artists in thrilling new ways.” (Sargent, 2021)

The use of online communication spaces became the norm, transcending previously assumed geographic limitations. For some organisations this nurtured opportunities for more frequent exchange, due to the reduction in time spent travelling. For example, Orit Azaz, working with Imagineer in Coventry, comments on their experience of collaborating with the team at Creative Barking and Dagenham during the development of Imagineer’s ‘Bridge’:

“We have reflected that ‘this weekly hour is gold dust’ - if we hadn’t been forced to work like this we would be locked together in the intensity of doing... to have the space to think, to create, to respond to challenges, to think about what the next things are, we have decided we are going to try to work in that way, in long term collaborative relationships, because we have recognised the value that brings to the potential impact the work can have.” (Azaz, O., quoted in Stewart-Hall, R 2021)

This quieter, more reflective space has been commonly recognised as a consequence of the pandemic:

“The absence of the perpetual roar of traffic in our cities suddenly made space for a completely different kind of life, slower, more reflective, kinder, environmentally more responsive. The ecosystems that make up the sector came together in ways no one could have imagined. Traditional competitors instinctively became collaborators as self-help networks sprang up throughout our communities, inward-facing at first, then gradually more outward-facing and ambitious. Arts organisations, remembering the most people-centred elements of their core missions, turned over their staff and equipment and facilities to all kinds of social and civic generosity and community service.” (Sargent, A. 2021)

The potential for future uses of on-line space should be considered alongside locating more popular public spaces as ways of making connections with new audiences, if the sector is to diversify engagement. This is reflected in the following three key findings from research at The Centre for Cultural Value:

- **Audiences:** While the shift to digital transformed cultural experiences for those already engaged with cultural activities, it failed to diversify cultural audiences.

- **Workforce:** The UK's cultural sector is undoubtedly at an inflection point and facing imminent burnout alongside significant skills and workforce gaps.
- **Organisations:** In light of the pandemic and Black Lives Matter, many cultural organisations re-evaluated their purpose and their relevance to local communities, which was complemented by increased local engagement. (Walmsley et al, 2022)

Whilst the COVID-19 pandemic has been a destructive force, with ripples of impact that continue to cause challenges across the creative and cultural sector, it has given rise to learning and insights regarding more equitable ways forwards:

“The worldwide discontinuity in the work of cultural and creative industries has been a traumatic moment of almost incalculable loss and damage. However – as always – amongst the loss and damage there has been invaluable learning of new kinds of thinking, new ways of doing things. We need to identify all those new learnings around the world then build on those new foundations, rather than just reassembling the broken pieces from the past in their prepandemic form.” (Sargent, A. 2021)

This has also been identified beyond the cultural sector, in the voluntary sector of Brighton and Hove:

“While it is easy to see marginalised communities as victims or as a problem to be solved, we should ensure we value the assets, ideas and solutions that these communities bring, without which our findings would surely be far graver. A difficult funding landscape for the voluntary community sector and statutory organisations alike can make finding a strategic approach to ending these inequalities challenging. We do, however, see many opportunities to address these challenges together as a city. We must move forward creatively, collaboratively, and with the most marginalised communities at the centre of our work and investment.” (Woodhull, J. 2021)

Moving forwards creatively and collaboratively, building on the learning and insights generated through the pandemic, could offer solutions to challenges that the sector has faced for many decades. Ways of working that are more equitable and inclusive could be devised through applying the learning that has surfaced during this period. There has been significant learning, for example, about the types of organisation that have survived and from this we can ascertain how important it is to have a clear mission, be non-hierarchical, nimble and responsive:

“Amongst all this turbulence, exciting futures are now coming into view. CCS organisations who survive this harrowing time are more likely to understand their core purposes clearly; have fleet-footed unhierarchical structures, be risk-sophisticated, have culturally and psychologically safe workplaces, be digitally mature and recognise the overwhelming importance of climate sustainability.” (Sargent, A. 2021)

It has also been apparent that an openness and willingness to work together in truly collaborative and co-creative ways has been key to the success of many creative and cultural organisations during this time:

“Looking outward, there are lessons about the value of generous-spirited collaboration in addressing adversity, the critical need to form a more rational kind of relationship with risk, the need to think afresh about the whole industry of touring, and about how to remedy what we have learned to be governments’ damagingly uneven comprehension of the cultural sector. There are also complex lessons around how we will recover and re-incentivise audiences after this unprecedentedly long winter of frozen inactivity, connecting with our communities in new ways and offering them fresh, deeper kinds of relationships.” (Sargent, A. 2021)

However, it is also the case that COVID-19 has touched and influenced the way we live in different areas, in unpredictable ways, across small details of day to day life, for example:

“Coronavirus (Covid-19) significantly changed the way people used roads and public spaces in Brighton and Hove. As people tried to avoid public transport, demand for parking increased and the reintroduction of charges and enforcement became increasingly necessary to ensure priority could be maintained for those who needed it most.” (Brighton and Hove City Council, 2021)

Such detail is of significance when trying to reignite audience interest and engagement. The current situation is one in which it is difficult to anticipate ways forward, as the pandemic is far from over. For example, recent stats from Brighton and Hove show that:

“In the 7 days up to 11 March (based on data published on 16 March) we had 2,717 confirmed new cases of COVID-19 in Brighton & Hove.

This is:

- up 60.7% on the previous 7 days
- equivalent to a weekly rate of 793.9 per 100,000 residents
- higher than the South East which was 769.1 per 100,000
- higher than the rate for England, which was 580.2 per 100,000”¹⁹

As we continue to live with Covid-19, rather than living post Covid-19, the relevance of the learning that has been nurtured through this reflective phase, could invigorate our sense of optimism for the future of the creative and cultural sector, whereby formulaic approaches could fade away to be replaced with more bespoke, responsive and tailored ways of developing inclusive creative and cultural opportunities.

Locating Brighton and Hove’s ABCD Plan for Cultural Recovery in this Landscape

It is apparent that the overarching aims of Brighton and Hove’s ABCD Plan for Cultural Recovery chime with the findings of the research referenced previously. For example, the report by Walmsley et al, 2022, concluded with three key findings emerging from the creative and cultural sector during the COVID-19 pandemic. Firstly, there was recognition that the reliance on digital platforms during the pandemic has had an

¹⁹ www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19 last visited March 18th 2022

impact on audiences in terms of failing to 'diversify cultural audiences'. This failure is directly addressed through the programme aim to 'Develop a more inclusive arts offer and more diverse arts sector in Brighton and Hove.' It is achieving this through working 'in real life', in public spaces where people congregate and through working with the community based creative organisation, Turner.

Secondly, the same report concluded that there has been significant impact on the workforce, whereby the UK's cultural sector is 'undoubtedly at an inflection point and facing imminent burnout alongside significant skills and workforce gaps.' This issue is addressed through another of the three overarching aims of the programme; 'to create paid work and professional opportunities for creative practitioners in the city who have been most affected by the pandemic.' Thirdly, the research concluded that many cultural organisations have re-evaluated their purpose and their relevance to local communities, which was complemented by increased local engagement. This is echoed in the final overarching aim of the programme, to 'encourage partnership working in order to strengthen the creative and cultural sector in the longer term,' whereby existing organisations are working collaboratively in response to the needs of local people.

In summary, the strategic location of Brighton and Hove's ABCD Plan for Cultural Recovery Programme echoes the findings of a range of significant research programmes. Furthermore, the findings from the programme could effectively inform future strategic approaches to moving forward creatively, collaboratively, and with the most marginalised communities at the centre of work and investment. Through extending upon the programme partners' openness and willingness to work together in truly collaborative and co-creative ways, the legacy of the programme promises to establish new, informed ways of working together more effectively.

By building on the learning there has been from the pandemic, around new kinds of thinking and new ways of doing things, there is the potential for re-connecting our communities in new ways and offering them fresh, deeper kinds of relationships with cultural experiences. Research from The Centre for Cultural Value claims that the organisations surviving this harrowing time 'understand their core purposes clearly' and are 'fleet-footed' and 'unhierarchical.' (Sargent, A. 2021) It follows therefore that by supporting cultural organisations to be increasingly nimble, responsive and non-hierarchical, Brighton and Hove's ABCD Plan for Cultural Recovery promises to lead to new, deeper kinds of engagement in future that are more meaningful for all involved. Ultimately, by listening and responding to the learning that emerges from the different programme strands, a set of priorities for future support might be best and most appropriately tailored.

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