

22845

YOUNG PEOPLE

14141

COMMUNITY

MEMBERS

217

LEARNING

SETTINGS

101

CULTURAL

ORGANISATIONS

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

OUR JOURNEY



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In early 2008 a 'cultural offer' pilot programme for young people was created under the name 'Find Your Talent', to be run by ten pathfinders across Britain. In Liverpool a group of leading cultural organisations (National Museums Liverpool, The Bluecoat, FACT, Liverpool Biennial, Liverpool Everyman and Playhouse, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Tate Liverpool and Unity Theatre) submitted a successful bid to be one of the pathfinders with support from three local authorities – Liverpool, Knowsley and St Helens – along with Curious Minds, the local area delivery organisation for the Creative Partnerships programme. Together they formed the strong foundation on which the Find Your Talent pathfinder was built.

The cultural organisations involved had a strong set of shared values. They were all working in a city and region which experiences high levels of disadvantage,

and where young people often lack opportunity and aspiration. They wanted to change that. They believed in the potential of arts and cultural experiences to change children and young people's lives. They agreed that **all** children and young people should have access to high quality culture and that this is a fundamental right in a civilised society. And they recognised that cultural services for and with children and young people could be delivered better with a partner-based approach.

The pathfinder offered a chance to try out new approaches, test new partnerships, and develop new models to learn from in the future. It forged closer relationships between cultural organisations and the wide range of services that support development and learning for young people and children.

...IN LESS THAN TWO YEARS MORE THAN 20,000 YOUNG PEOPLE EXPERIENCED HIGH QUALITY ARTS AND HERITAGE PROJECTS AS AUDIENCE MEMBERS, PARTICIPANTS AND PRODUCERS.

The ambitious programme targeted young people who were disengaged from culture and even from Liverpool city centre. It focused on disadvantaged communities facing real and difficult challenges. It offered young people experiences in a wide range of art forms (music, drama, museums, heritage, visual arts, graffiti, digital media, fashion, literature, public art). It looked at questions of quality, evaluation, the participation of young people in shaping the cultural offer and how things could change to support better delivery. It linked in with early years settings, primary schools, youth service provision, and agencies supporting NEET (not in employment, education or training) and seldom-heard young people. It reached into and embraced communities who had no previous relationship with the cultural organisations on their doorstep. It was far-reaching, wide-ranging and innovative.

The programme was launched in September and in less than two years more than 20,000 young people experienced high quality arts and heritage projects as audience members, participants and producers. This pamphlet summarises what was delivered by the programme in that short period. It represents just a fraction of what was achieved. Looking to the future, it also considers the legacy of the project and how we can use the Find Your Talent experience to improve our cultural offer to children and young people in the future.

Find Your Talent in the Liverpool City Region was managed by National Museums Liverpool on behalf of the Liverpool Arts Regeneration Consortium (LARC), made up of the leading arts organisations in the city. Principal partners included Curious Minds, and Liverpool, Knowsley and St Helens Councils.

OUR LEGACY

AMY'S STORY



The Equation Class
(a situation or problem in which a number of different
factors need to be considered)
Photograph by Amy Cliffe

Amy is 16. She participated in the Find Your Talent Kirkby's Kreative 'Identity' project.

"My mum was really unwell and I had to be the adult in the house and look after mum and little sister. I basically missed out on my childhood. This had a big impact on me and made me not want to go out and do stuff. I lost my confidence and I didn't go to school for most of years 8-10. I didn't have any friends or do normal stuff like going to friends' houses or going to the pictures. It made me lose trust in everyone.

My learning mentor at school told me about Find Your Talent taster sessions. They weren't really what I wanted to do but one of the creative mentors asked me what I was interested in which is photography, even though I'm not amazing at it. She said she could arrange for me to work with a photographer as part of the project and I thought I would have a go. This project has opened a lot of opportunities up for me, even just by

going to a few sessions a week. I'm doing more stuff in the day now. Even though I've not got a camera I'm thinking all the time about what I can do, ideas I have for shots, writing down set ups for shots, and I'm not bored.

Being involved in the project has made me a lot more confident. I'm going out more and doing stuff that I wouldn't have even thought of before. I didn't grow up with a family or friends who would normally go to places like exhibitions or galleries so I wasn't really able to go out and look at stuff that was on. Being around other people used to make me cringe and feel really uncomfortable. I'm used to doing stuff on my own and not having a camera held me back. But now I feel I can do stuff and I am doing more. My next steps are hopefully getting into college, to do a BTEC National Diploma in Art and Design with Photography at Liverpool Community College. The worries about not being able to do it would've stopped me before. Now I feel I've got a chance."

OUR LEGACY

WHAT'S CHANGED?

Strong models of good practice have been identified. These include using culture to engage NEET young people; expanding the level and quality of cultural activity in early years learning; and enabling young people to input into Extended Services plans such as after-school activities.

Models to support a coordinated offer for schools have been established.

In Knowsley a 'cultural links' worker is being created in every school after the idea was successfully tested in three local authority areas through Find Your Talent. A joint publication detailing the wide-ranging cultural programme for schools was also produced and distributed at a series of local marketplace events. This direct method of communication was much welcomed by teachers and is a model that can be built on in the future.

Tools that have national significance have been developed. These can easily be adapted to other contexts and regions. They include a 'Development and Quality Assurance Framework' for cultural organisations and an online evaluation tool for young people to feed back on their experiences. A toolkit to support high quality cultural learning in Early Years will also be available on the www.earlyarts.co.uk website.

A number of the partnerships and programmes will continue.

Some of the programmes developed will become part of the partners' core offer. Working together has enabled the partners to manage and communicate their programmes more effectively and coherently. The well-established cultural infrastructure in the region will ensure continuity in challenging economic times.

Networks established will remain.

Partners will keep working with local authorities to coordinate their offer and improve the infrastructure in the wider region, alongside Curious Minds. The cultural sector plays a strong role in the civic life of the region and our organisations will feed into strategic developments through the formal networks they participate in. Collectively, they will work towards genuine cultural entitlement for all children and young people, supported by a 'cultural offer alliance' across the region. This work will be based on the real needs of young people in Merseyside.

The answer to the question : 'what's changed through this programme and what will continue into the future?' is that the lives of young people like Amy have changed. The cultural offer pilot was always about working together to achieve better outcomes for young people like her, and her story is just one of many.



SOME OF OUR PROJECTS



Merseyside Sings

Local Music Services, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Sing Up work in harmony to get children singing every day.



Ancient Egyptian Adventure

Hope Street Ltd and National Museums Liverpool bring ancient history to life in the heart of schools.



Reclaim Your Space

The Bluecoat and National Museums Liverpool give budding artists the chance to exhibit in prestigious venues.



Young Leaders

Tate Liverpool, Merseyside Dance Initiative and Hope Street Ltd work with 'Young Leaders', developing their skills to become cultural leaders and curators.



Midas Touch

St Helens Council, Aspire Trust and National Museums Liverpool explore an innovative creative recycling approach to early years learning.



Digital Hubs

FACT workshops give young people the skills to create their own reel of witty, entertaining animations.

Arts & cultural organisations in the region continue to offer a comprehensive learning programme for schools.

For more information on what's available see 'Your Culture Offer 2010/11', available as a pdf at www.larc.uk.com/projects/cultural-offer



Rihanna Pop Art
by Jessica Williams.

Michaela Burns from
Ravenhead Foyer St Helens

OUR PARTNERS

The Bluecoat

Liverpool's oldest city centre building and home to a vibrant community of creative people and a contemporary programme of exhibitions, performances and events.

www.thebluecoat.org.uk

Culture Liverpool

A new business unit within Liverpool City Council working to promote culture throughout the region.

www.liverpool.gov.uk/culture

Curious Minds

A charity and social enterprise dedicated to helping people realise their greatest asset - their creative potential.

www.curiousminds.org.uk

Everyman & Playhouse

Two theatres at the heart of Liverpool's theatrical and cultural landscape - bringing a new generation of playwriting and bold and innovative theatrical productions.

www.everymanplayhouse.com

FACT

The UK's leading organisation supporting artists' work and innovation in the field of film, video, and new media.

www.fact.co.uk

Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Including Prescott Museum locally, the Council supports learning within the borough through Creative And Cultural Learning, Arts & Heritage And Music & Performing Arts Services.

www.knowsley.gov.uk

National Museums Liverpool

National Museums Liverpool believe in the power of museums to promote good and active citizenship and to act as agents of social change. The quality and significance of their collections give their museums and galleries national status.

www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

The leading music organisation in Liverpool and the North West, comprising a world class symphony orchestra and major concert venue.

www.liverpoolphil.com

St.Helens Council

St Helens is host to a number of cultural venues such as The Citadel and World of Glass, while further activity is offered through the Council's Music Service, Dance Co-ordinator and Arts Service.

www.sthelens.gov.uk

Tate Liverpool

Housed in the Albert Dock, Tate Liverpool is one of the largest galleries of modern and contemporary art outside of London.

www.tate.org.uk/liverpool/

Unity Theatre

This lively, small but perfectly formed venue boasts a fast-changing programme of theatre, dance, music and visual arts.

www.unitytheatreliverpool.co.uk

TAKE NOTICE

In March 2010, a group of young people from the Liverpool City Region did a creative presentation at the Cultural Offer Regional Development Conference in Manchester for an audience made up of representatives from youth agencies, cultural organisations and local authorities. The young people expressed a desire for a cultural offer that is high quality, inclusive, accessible, coherent and relevant. This is what they said needs to happen:

OFFER CHOICES, DON'T MAKE DEMANDS.

MAKE SURE EVERYONE IN YOUR ORGANISATION KNOWS WHAT YOU OFFER.

HAVE ONE CENTRAL POINT FOR ALL INFORMATION.

GIVE US A DEDICATED PERSON TO SPEAK TO.

OFFER GUIDANCE AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRESSION.

MAKE SURE THE PEOPLE WHO CONNECT WITH YOUNG PEOPLE CARE.

EVERY ORGANISATION DOES NOT NEED TO DO EVERYTHING.

STOP DOING SO MUCH, DO LESS BUT DO IT BETTER.

GIVE THINGS THE TIME THEY NEED.

RE-TEST, RENEW, RE-USE, RECYCLE.

COMMUNICATE.

SIMPLE IS GOOD.