



City of Westminster

City  
for  
All

# A Culture of Culture

Report of the Access to Culture  
Scrutiny Task Group

November 2019

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# Chair's Foreword

Westminster is globally recognised as an iconic city of culture and opportunity and Westminster City Council aspires to be a City for All. In October 2018, this task group was convened because we were aware that many of these cultural activities and opportunities are not accessible to all. As local politicians representing diverse communities, we want to ensure that young people and residents on low incomes can access the arts and culture within our vibrant city of Westminster.

With a daily footfall of over a million people, residents and non-residents have a stake in cultural activity in the city. From museums to cinemas to theatres to community/church halls to public libraries, culture brings people together.

In my role as Chairman of the Economic Development, Education, Skills and Place Shaping Policy and Scrutiny Committee, it is apparent that access to culture can result in improved skills and employment prospects. Looking at research by The Edge Foundation, formerly chaired by Lord Baker, the loss of creative skills in schools is having an impact in unexpected ways, with trainee surgeons no longer having the sewing skills required or finer manual dexterity.

We learnt about the barriers and the approaches of other local authorities and cities to overcome similar obstacles to cultural participation and engagement. We also learnt at the onset that one of our main obstacles is being able to reach our young people and residents, in order to communicate and disseminate what is (and could be) on offer in Westminster so as to increase engagement and participation.

Now, how we plan to increase our residents, including children and young people's engagement in arts and culture, particularly those from low income backgrounds or who face inequalities of access, is by having one integrated card for each resident, which can be achieved with a quick, single registration.

The benefits are multitudinous! It can be tailored with offers for each individual resident, act as a proof of age card, eligibility for housing, library card, local retailer offers, loyalty discounts, recycling or Green rewards, collecting skills for inclusion in a CV, tailored mailings and surveys, a health card, blood group and donor card, sports and leisure membership, indeed multiple memberships, with possible 'Westminster' branding, real time integrations and endless possibilities. A further benefit is that the council

will have a secure online database, card management with reports enabling us to direct our resources to where they are most needed.

This has been an energetic and enthusiastic task group resulting in the integrated card and other exciting recommendations which will enable access to culture for the many. My especial thanks go to members of the task group, Councillors Christabel Flight, Elizabeth Hitchcock, Andrea Mann, Guthrie McKie, Eoghain Murphy and Emily Payne as well as the expert witnesses, (in particular Rolls-Royce, Cambridge City Council, Bracknell Forest and Queen's Park Primary School) and Westminster Youth Council in addition to the Westminster officers whom we have met and consulted during our investigations.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K.S.', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Karen Scarborough  
*Chairman of the Economic Development, Education Skills and Place Shaping Policy and Scrutiny Committee and the Access to Culture Task Group*

# Executive Summary

In October 2018, a task group was established to investigate the barriers to cultural engagement faced by residents on low incomes in order to widen access for those residents. Westminster offers diverse cultural experiences and it is recognised that participating in culture can benefit individuals in many different ways, including improved career opportunities, personal resilience and health. Members investigated how cultural engagement can provide emotionally and intellectually moving experiences, and is also a means of acquiring skills, expressing creativity, forging an individual identity, and enhancing or preserving a community's sense of place. As the investigation progressed, members saw how greater access could improve the lives of residents of all ages.

The task group's recommendations focus on improving access to culture by:

- increasing cultural capital for young people in Westminster;
- integrating services; and
- establishing a cultural budget.

## **Increased Cultural Capital for Young People in Westminster**

It is clear to the task group that there are examples of good practice within Westminster, including the Westminster Children's University and the Westminster City Lions. We recommend that the Westminster Children's University, which focuses on primary school children, should be rolled out across the city beyond the current participating schools. This expanded roll-out could also include improving awareness of the diverse existing offer and encouraging increased collaboration between schools and other institutions, such as the Rolls-Royce STE-A-M Evolution Project or The Wallace Collection Young Curators.

We further recommend that the Westminster City Lions programme become the primary conduit by which to increase cultural experiences and enrichment for younger residents aged between 13 and 16. We would like to see this unique programme embedded, especially the collaboration with the Society of London Theatre, with even more partnering with the great national and local cultural institutions within Westminster to make this a reality, an opportunity for Westminster residents, especially those from lower socio-economic incomes.

We have adopted Westminster Youth Council's suggestion as a recommendation: that young

people in Westminster schools themselves become champions for culture as Culture Ambassadors. We saw great potential in student Culture Ambassadors within schools who would be available to talk to peers about cultural engagement, what's on in Westminster. One barrier can be not knowing what is available and where in Westminster. Knowing how to access more reduced theatre ticket prices, having opportunities to go backstage, meet the cast and do workshops, having subsidised travel expenses for some young people and providing cultural work experience opportunities: some of these are currently features of Westminster City Lions.

## **Integrating Services**

We investigated good work already in progress, what levers could be used to increase access and what could be done to remove obstacles for our residents, researching how other local authorities and cities have approached issues concerning access to culture, improved social mobility and increased cultural capital. This led us to work by authorities using integrated smart card schemes to deliver solutions to these issues and providing a single point of access to council services. We recommend using a smart card to unify (as many as possible) council services and to enable residents to have one multi-purpose council account.

We recommend that the Westminster City Save scheme, which has great potential, could be integral to this, with further improvement. This would also facilitate working more closely with cultural partners and stakeholders in Westminster to create opportunities and experiences for Westminster families, school children, Westminster City Lions and older residents as part of a more holistic cultural offer, whilst streamlining points of contact for the residents.

Widening access to culture must start from an early age and for this reason we recommend automatic library enrolment at two key milestones in the life of a Westminster child. It is serendipity that our first task group meeting was held in a Westminster library: we recommend the automatic enrolment at birth of all children born in Westminster. Library cards provide access to literacy skills and the written culture, such as novels, plays, film scripts, books about contemporary art or classical music, across many diverse cultures. This journey into a cultural life could begin at the moment of registration of birth, as has been done elsewhere, like Scotland. This encourages library use from an early age and is an opportunity for the council to communicate with new parents, advertising the entirety of the offer and ideally inviting the parents and the child into cultural participation at a time which can sometimes be isolating.

But this is a task group about widening access to culture and we are cognisant of the fact that Westminster does have significant population churn, which is why we would recommend automatic library enrolment at a second life milestone of all Westminster school children entering Reception class. This may be done as part of the school admission or induction process. The initiative in Wales where library enrolment was automatic for Year 4 children to increase use of library services but also in line with research on improved literacy and life outcomes. This emerged from the evidence about the Cambridge City Culture Card which influenced our task group's thinking.

There is a nexus between poor literacy and poor access to arts and culture. Lacking vital literacy skills can hold a person back at every stage of their life. As a child, success at school may prove elusive. As a young adult, they will be locked out of the increasingly challenging job market. As a parent, they will lack resources to support their own child's learning and may experience limited career options. Low levels of literacy undermine the UK's economic competitiveness, with functional illiteracy costing the UK economy £36 billion a year. Many businesses are not satisfied with young people's literacy skills when they enter the workforce and have organised remedial training for young recruits to improve their basic skills, including literacy and communication. Poor literacy and numeracy in Westminster mean that residents do not have the skills to attain their potential, in career or creative terms. This also has an impact on how we as a council can communicate with our residents. We would like to see continued improvement in and maintenance of literacy skills for our adult resident

population and in our schools. Libraries can act as an early, free gateway to culture in the city as well as other council services. Early automatic library enrolment places young Westminster residents ahead of the curve, increases their cultural capital and broadens their vocational opportunities.

### **Establishing a Culture Budget to Increase Cultural Capital**

Westminster is a cultural capital and, as a task group, we are committed to delivering wider access to culture, both for reasons of "art for art's sake" but also for the stimulus it provides to the life course professionally, socially and in well-being. Access to culture for residents is also about enabling them to have the experience and skill to be able to deploy the appropriate knowledge in any given situation: a job interview, a conversation with a neighbour, building a work network, and so on. This cultural capital is what we should be able to offer Westminster residents of all ages.

In order to do this, we recommend establishing a dedicated council budget for culture, including scope for commissioning, to increase cultural capital. This would also allow the council to include public art as part of any regeneration scheme and public realm project. Public art should be a key part of the council's approach to place shaping and part of the fabric of our neighbourhoods. We further recommend that the council encourage, support and facilitate culture in the local community by continuing to support and facilitate cultural events at neighbourhood/ward level, especially in areas of the city that do not have dedicated cultural venues. This should include enabling and supporting local communities to use community spaces (e.g. libraries, community halls/school halls/academy spaces, sports centres) for cultural purposes.

### **Conclusion**

We are conscious of the initial cost implications of our recommendations but we are awake to the enormous potential of a smart card scheme and the potential of a dedicated culture budget to support and reinforce our Westminster culture of culture. Globally, Westminster is a cultural capital. With the implementation of our recommendations, we aspire to make Westminster a cultural capital city for all our residents.

# Introduction

The arts, however defined, have the power to challenge us, provoke debate and transform us. How we engage with the arts depends upon our access to culture. Culture runs through our city, connecting the lives of residents and communities, visitors and businesses as audiences, providers, professionals, amateurs, volunteers, and donors or investors. In Westminster, local cultural activity can have other dimensions as the local may also be the national or the global, with many national or internationally-recognised centres and venues of art, music and culture, such as the National Gallery, Abbey Road Studios or Royal Opera House, located in Westminster.

With this in mind, we as the Access to Culture task group wanted to examine how the wealth of culture available in Westminster is accessible to our residents and what could be done to remove or lessen the impact of any obstacles. We considered how the arts in Westminster contribute to the local and UK economies, how important access to culture and building cultural capital are. As we were mid-way through our work, the Arts Council England published research which reveals that the arts and culture had overtaken agriculture in terms of their contribution to the UK economy. In 2016, the sector added £10.8bn to the economy, which was up £390m on the previous year, despite 74% of arts organisations having been affected by public funding cuts.

We investigated good work already in progress, what levers could be used to increase access and what could be done to remove obstacles for our residents, researching how other local authorities and cities have approached issues concerning access to culture, improved social mobility and increased cultural capital. This led us to work by authorities using integrated smart card schemes to deliver solutions to these issues and providing a single point of access to council services. Bracknell Forest Council uses a smart card scheme to offer library, leisure, loyalty, incentive, parking, staff ID, PASS Proof of Age, and bus pass services to its residents, to list only a few whilst Cambridge City Council's Cambridgeshire Culture Card uses a smart card scheme as the basis for improving both school and social outcomes as well as wider access to culture.

## Methodology

The Access to Culture task group was created in October 2018 when the Economic Development, Education, Community and Place Shaping Policy and Scrutiny Committee decided to investigate access to culture. The objectives of the task group were to make recommendations to improve access to the arts and culture for residents, particularly those on low incomes in the city; improve levels of cultural participation; and reduce levels of deprivation in wards such as Queen's Park, Church Street, Churchill, Westbourne and Harrow Road. We also wanted to investigate what needed to be done by residents, schools, businesses, the council and the government to improve access to culture. Finally, we were keen to explore how improved access to culture can result in improved skills and employment prospects, particularly as this aligns with City for All ambitions.<sup>1</sup>

The task group then began the scoping, research and evidence-gathering phases of its work. We held five meetings and met in various venues, including Victoria Library for its first meeting. We also received written and oral evidence from a range of witnesses, both internal to Westminster and external. These included Cultural Partnerships; Community Services; Physical Activity, Leisure and Sport; the Libraries Service; Cambridge City Council; Bracknell Forest; Queen's Park Primary School; Westminster City Lions; Westminster Youth Council (WYC); Rolls-Royce; and SmartCitizen.

<sup>1</sup> Westminster City Council. (2019). City for All 2018/19. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/city-for-all> [Accessed: 28 September 2019].

## Integrated Smart Card Schemes

We investigated how other local authorities and cities have approached issues concerning access to culture, improved social mobility and increased cultural capital. This led us to work by authorities using integrated smart card schemes. Authorities can (and some do) use these as library, leisure, loyalty, incentive, parking, staff ID, PASS Proof of Age, blood group/donor cards, and bus pass cards, to list only a few. The best example of this multi-use is Bracknell Forest Council's e+ card developed with SmartCitizen.<sup>2</sup> The tables in the appendix on page 26 give an indication of the wide number of uses and potential that these smart cards can have. With this data, there are limitless possibilities available to the council as secure data holder for its residents, allowing the council to know where to target our resources.

Integrated smart card schemes can take the form of a physical cards which could use both chip and contactless readers, as in Bracknell Forest, or an app linked to website or web portal which has been trialled in Richmond and Hillingdon.

### Scheme Costs

In Bracknell Forest, the cards are provided free on first issue but following loss there is a charge. The printing, encoding and posting of the cards to its residents costs Bracknell Forest £1. Bracknell Forest had analysed the existing cost of administration and separate issue of the various cards for the services; amalgamating the cards into a multi-service card also provided savings. The London Borough of Richmond found that an integrated card would save money and plastic, whilst also being more convenient.

We queried whether apps could achieve some of the results described by Bracknell Forest. The Bracknell Forest experience, supported by the experiences of other LAs like Hillingdon and Richmond, has been that a website or web portal, adaptable for various devices and operating systems, alongside the card, was more inclusive and easier to administer, with offers on the website being moderated to check that they are true.

## Westminster Context

The perception of Westminster is of a city of affluence, but there are five wards with levels of deprivation that are often ranked within the 10% most deprived in the UK, according to Index of Multiple Deprivation: the Queen's Park, Church Street, Westbourne, Harrow Road and Churchill wards.<sup>3</sup> These same wards have on average around 30% of school children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM). Extreme levels of income inequality threaten social cohesion and thriving neighbourhoods. Widening access also needs to include groups of residents facing other barriers, including learning difficulties, poor literacy and disabilities. As a city with a wide cultural offer, various tools and cultural vehicles are available to Westminster to increase access to culture for its residents. Commissioning the arts and culture is one means of doing this. West End LIVE is presented by Westminster City Council and the Society of London Theatre with support from the Mayor of London. Unusual amongst councils, Westminster, apart from West End LIVE, is not an arts commissioning authority, with no direct investment in culture. The show features live performances in Trafalgar Square from London's most celebrated West End musicals, with some 50 performances taking place over the course of a weekend. The event is free to the public. No tickets are required, with entry operated on a first come, first served basis. We discussed how many residents in our most deprived wards, such as Harrow Road, participate in West End LIVE.

Another tool in widening access to culture can be locally accessible arts venues. Physical design of a building can have an impact on accessibility, making it inviting and accessible or unfamiliar and intimidating.<sup>4</sup> It can also be about physical location. The Harrow Road ward does have a dedicated arts venue, unlike some of our deprived wards in south Westminster.<sup>5</sup> Paddington Arts is a Youth Arts organisation committed to developing talent and creativity in the community, encouraging young people to use the arts for self-expression and career development. Paddington Arts offers a series of 'stepping stones' for local young people, many of whom will use the project, its workshops and activities all the way through from six years old to 16 plus. For older users, Paddington Arts offers a high standard of training and support, careers advice

2 <https://www.smartcitizen.net/home.aspx>

3 Westminster City Council <https://www.westminster.gov.uk/sites/default/files/harrow-road-ward-profile.pdf> (2018).

4 Refurbishment of the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden in a £50.7m transformation was a significant step towards opera and ballet losing their elitist tags. Alex Beard, Chief Executive noted the huge importance of architectural symbols so that the Linbury is not merely a new theatre. For him, "it's also important for its visibility to be expressed in the architecture, with the window on Bow Street visible from the street". He also discusses perception as a barrier to access to culture: "Sometimes there's a perception – mostly held by people who haven't had the opportunity to engage with us – that we're a closed world. That window on to the street says: 'You're welcome, come in, it's part of your cultural fabric.'"

5 See the map on Deprivation and Cultural Venues in Westminster on page 27.

and guidance, including a network of referrals to potential employers, colleges and unique opportunities to work with professional artists, Choreographers, Theatre and Television Directors, Theatre Designers, Costume Designers – to create new and original work. Many users have gone on to work in the cultural industries, as performers, tutors and technicians, and to other arts and media courses and training.

There are also exceptional arts organisations within the city that could deliver high-quality and inspiring outreach activities within communities. For example, the Donmar Warehouse, located within the Seven Dials, Covent Garden Conservation Area, is interested in increasing their work in communities and may be interested in occupying community venues during their refurbishment.

There could be more initiatives to bring the arts into Westminster neighbourhoods at the ward level, initiatives such as the Clinton Foundation’s “Wash Time is Talk Time” which had the Too Small to Fail programme to increase literacy and improve literary culture for children in lower-income families in New York City by taking culture to places where parents and children go every week. Too Small to Fail partners the Coin Laundry Association to engage families through 5,000 laundromats (laundrettes) across the US to support children’s early brain and language development.<sup>6</sup> We discussed how this initiative could work in laundrettes as well as care homes across Westminster to assist with widening access to culture and reducing social isolation, and how our many community spaces, within libraries, academies, schools, even City Hall itself, could themselves be the vehicles for and sites of cultural engagement at the ward-level. Annual ward budgets in Westminster are £46,000 per ward and councillors could be encouraged to use these budgets to increase cultural activity whilst boosting access to culture. We concluded that, whilst West End LIVE is a fantastic vehicle for making theatre available at city level, more could be done at ward level.

We heard several times over the course of our work how expense is a barrier to accessing culture. Westminster City Save is a council-run card scheme which makes available cultural and retail offers to Westminster residents aged over 16. There are approximately 88,000 City Save cards in circulation, with 2,357 new sign ups since 1st January 2019. Registration is via the Westminster City Save website<sup>7</sup> which is promoted in Westminster’s e-newsletter and printed magazines. Residents can also register via the contact centre if they do not have access to a computer and the contact centre can complete an online registration on their behalf. The card is then a token which is shown to the retailer or theatre, for example, to trigger the discount. There is no way to measure the number of Westminster City Save cards which are active. Uptake cannot always be measured though some retailers or organisations do record how many discounts were taken up by Westminster City Save card holders.<sup>8</sup> Whilst there

6 The initiative includes the distribution of information and resources including posters for laundrettes, early literacy-themed colouring pages for children, and tip sheets for parents. The Coin Laundry Association distributes these resources to its members, and volunteers with the Laundry Project then distribute early learning resources through 50 “free laundry day” events in diverse communities across the US.

7 <https://citysave.westminster.gov.uk/>

8 Some schemes which have measured uptake with a direct link to Westminster City Save: 1,639 theatre tickets were sold through Encore Ticketing Agency, generating £73,000 in sales; the Society of London Theatre offers, giving 10% off theatre tokens, reported 447 orders last year; and the “How To” Academy received 344 orders in the past year.



have been improvements in the offer even during the life of this task group, we feel that this scheme could be further improved by becoming an even more useful conduit, particularly to culture, than it currently is, by developing the card as part of an integrated card scheme.

As a local authority, Westminster City Council is involved in regeneration projects that transform the fabric of neighbourhoods and communities. Apart from the transformative power of the arts in residents' lives, the arts can have a role in transforming neighbourhoods. Organisations such as London Community Foundation,<sup>9</sup> the Favela Painting Projects,<sup>10</sup> eL Seed and the Shubbak Festival and youth orchestras show that regeneration can be more than transformation of the built environment and regeneration of buildings. Waltham Forest, the London Borough of Culture in 2019, commissioned, "East Side Story", a new musical theatre production that encouraged young people to contribute their stories about living in East London. It benefitted youth offenders and other excluded young children, leading to positive outcomes such as taking up creative apprenticeships.<sup>11</sup> Arts engagement enables locals to think differently about the spaces they inhabit, their communities and their own lives and acquiring skills in the process. We considered again what role the city might play in commissioning or supporting art in the fabric of the lived environment of Westminster, while also increasing cultural capital.

Community spaces have the potential to bring cultural experience to the community. This could be cinema screenings of opera and ballet in community halls, libraries, academy or school halls, sports halls, for example. Communities will have their own ideas about other cultural experiences that could be staged, screened or experienced within such easily accessible spaces. There is such potential for using local community spaces for more cultural activity, especially in wards with no dedicated arts venue, like Paddington Arts. We favoured creative use of CIL monies to improve community space infrastructure or ward budgets to support ward-level arts engagement.<sup>12</sup> We considered too how more work with the voluntary sector could help us to deliver these ward-level cultural events.

At present, cultural work in Westminster is delivered by one Cultural Officer and the Cultural Partnerships team, which is equivalent to one Full-Time post.<sup>13</sup> There is a huge array of culture available in Westminster but more support of the cultural service we provide, including a dedicated culture budget with scope for use for commissioning and boosting cultural capital, would demonstrate our cultural intent and improve access to culture. We heard from the Cultural Partnerships team within Westminster City Council's Libraries Team about their role to facilitate ways for residents (especially those who would otherwise miss out) to take part in arts and cultural opportunities, sometimes in libraries themselves. These opportunities develop individual wellbeing, improve social cohesion, build skills and reduce social isolation. The service works cross-departmentally to ensure that the cultural opportunities on offer in the city are accessible to local people.



We were particularly interested in the work of this service as our remit was to make recommendations to improve access to culture for residents in the five most deprived Westminster wards. The service primarily exists for vulnerable or isolated Westminster residents, specifically older people living on their own, or disabled people and residents living in areas with low arts engagement. These areas with low arts engagement also correspond to Westminster's wards of high deprivation: Queen's Park, Church Street, Westbourne, Harrow Road and Churchill.

9 The London Community Foundation <https://londoncf.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are>

10 Favela Painting Projects: Boy With Kite <https://favelapainting.com/BOY-WITH-KITE-FP> and Rio Cruzeiro <https://favelapainting.com/RIO-CRUZEIRO-FP>  
Local residents painted murals and created mosaics in their favela neighbourhoods, improving the area, creating art and acquiring skills in the process.

11 Waltham Forest(2019). [ONLINE] Available at: <https://wfculture19.co.uk/eastside-story>. See also the tv documentary, reviewed by the Financial Times, 27 September 2019, Imagine: EastSide Story – London Youth Feel the Transformative Power of Theatre [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.ft.com/content/08342c80-df7e-11e9-9743-db5a370481bc> [Accessed 28 September 2019].

12 This might include installing projection equipment in community spaces to facilitate screenings, for example.

13 The Cultural Officer position is a temporary post, funded via a project.

The main projects in 2018-19 delivered by this service include:

- **Out and About – a scheme providing free tickets (donated by Westminster cultural organisations) to cultural events for older people aged 65 and above. This usually takes place in the autumn/winter seasons only.**
- **Create Church Street - a grants fund of £200,000 for cultural projects for residents living in the Church Street ward. The fund has now closed.**
- **Fun Palaces - a free, local event using arts and science to celebrate the skills and interests of those who live in the community. Five Westminster libraries participated in 2018 and over 200 local people took part during the October weekend.**

The Cultural Partnerships officers also run a bi-annual networking event called 'Culture Network Westminster'. Members of the network include representatives from arts and cultural organisations, museums and heritage professionals, community groups, and colleagues from other council services. The January 2019 event was hosted by the Royal Albert Hall and had the theme of Arts and Young People. But we particularly noticed that the main challenge mentioned by the Cultural Partnerships team was having the offers from organisations, but not having the uptake from residents.

### **Queen's Park Primary School**

Queen's Park Primary School (QPPS), located in north Westminster off the Harrow Road, is in the top decile for deprivation, with 49.5% in receipt of the pupil premium. The school encourages and facilitates access to culture through the Children's University model, both for its own students and for eight other participating schools.<sup>14</sup> This is a national scheme for which QPPS acts as the 'home' school here in Westminster, administering the associated accreditation of different venues and the Children's University passport scheme. QPPS as facilitator had contacted the university and local businesses so that the usual costs of the scheme have been absorbed and everything is free to participants. By participating in 30 hours of activity, a child is entitled to a graduation ceremony at the University of Westminster. The scheme this year saw 550 children graduating.

A major part of the scheme is for staff members to "hand hold" the parents to help them out of their comfort zones when engaging with the scheme. This was interesting to us as task group members, with our understanding that one of the barriers to culture and brakes on cultural capital can be a lack of family experience of that cultural activity. The WYC told us that the Children's University had been useful for encouraging young people to go out of their comfort zones and broaden their horizons.

QPPS also includes a workshop in the Westminster Children's University scheme about "Learning Through London" and links with the local library and leisure/sports services, which stamp the passport. The Westminster Children's University is now in its third year and has provided 35,000 hours of activities and engagement. At present, only schools in the north of the city participate. Whilst the scheme could be opened out further, for example, to include schools in south Westminster, this would require further funding.

### **Westminster City Lions**

Westminster City Lions is an enrichment scheme for young people in Westminster aged between 13 and 16 years old which is aimed at broadening horizons and raising awareness of what opportunities Westminster has to offer through partnerships with the most high-profile companies and iconic institutions in Westminster. Since September 2018, Westminster City Lions has engaged 800 young people via creative classroom sessions, interactive workshops and visits. 80% of participants feel that they are now able to identify their creative potential as a result of the programme; 70% of participants feel that they can now identify creative places and spaces in Westminster; and 75% of participants feel more empowered to go and visit creative spaces and places in Westminster.

The scheme tries to target young people in the five most deprived wards in Westminster. At present, 50% of participants come from target wards; over 70% of participants are non-white, 10% white; and 5% are referred from Children's Services. The wards most represented are Church Street, Westbourne Park and Queen's Park. Activities were offered on certain dates to Looked After Children within Westminster. To date, seven Westminster secondary schools have engaged with the programme. Institutions offering workshops, visits and placements include Somerset House, the Society of London Theatre (SoLT), English National Opera, the Royal Institute of

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.queensparkprimaryschool.co.uk/>. For information about the Westminster Children's University, which is partnered with the University of Westminster, please see <http://www.westminsterchildrensuniversity.co.uk/>.



British Architects, the London Transport Museum, Wigmore Hall and the Royal Albert Hall. We would like to see this unique scheme embedded and more support to enable schools, already under substantial pressures on many fronts, to participate more.

### Westminster Youth Council

We were keen to hear from Westminster Youth Council on culture and how to increase access to cultural opportunities. WYC was consulted on the definition of culture and invited to describe their experiences of access to culture. When WYC members defined culture, their non-exhaustive definition included: food, dance, music, language, clothes, tattoos, art (including photography, drawing, painting and sculpture), drama, theatre, museums, libraries, sport, computers, film and all forms of self-expression. We were interested to hear this, as it matched our own broad working definition of culture.

Westminster Youth Council also defined culture as the ideas, customs, food and social behaviours of a particular group. One WYC member observed that culture can also be negative, such as for example, the culture of a gang, again illustrating to us as task group members how the term culture is used in so many ways and how more arts culture must be accessible to our young people, so that gang culture is not one of their points of reference for the term. WYC members observed that London, including Westminster, is so diverse, with the result that the definition of culture might

be more abstract. This diversity leads to several different cultures co-existing or overlapping, and this in turn results in more culture being available overall, adapting traditions to make new things, and that diversity gives access to other things.

Schemes used or being considered by other local authorities, such as in Bracknell Forest, Cambridge or Richmond (all discussed below), were outlined to WYC members, who unanimously thought that the smart card scheme described “would be great in Westminster”. WYC members raised the fact that not all young people have easy access to technology and suggested that a smart card scheme would work in addition to a website or newsletter as a way for the scheme to be inclusive with subsidised opportunities to remove barriers to culture.

WYC members stated that they would like to see more reduced theatre ticket prices; have opportunities to go backstage, meet the cast and do workshops; subsidised travel expenses for some young people; and cultural work experience opportunities. Some WYC members had participated in the Westminster City Lions SoLT scheme.

Discussion returned to the “big barrier” of price, especially for theatre. The young people also liked the idea of a “culture shopping list” provided by the smart card to inspire engagement in different activities. WYC members suggested using schools more and described how some schools have “raise aspirations” officers. They

also suggested using teachers to speak to pupils about cultural activities and assemblies.

The WYC told us that their schools like students to take the initiative and suggested that each school could have pupil cultural ambassadors. We particularly liked this idea of young Westminster students as advocates for culture, from the grass roots up, within their schools. We would suggest developing this idea further, with these Culture Ambassadors also having an external facing role, to also act as a critical friend to cultural institutions, to help them improve access to culture.<sup>15</sup>

## Improved Services

A useful by-product of our research into integrated smart cards as a vehicle for improved and wider access to culture is the opportunity the smart card system offers to unify a number of council services in Westminster, including Libraries, Leisure, City Save, Free School Meals and Adult Social Care (ASC). This would enable residents to have one multi-purpose council account. A single smart card scheme opens up the potential for further promotion of council services across the offer to residents. This leads to improved services for residents and efficiencies for the council. In Adult Social Care, for example, the council uses a Pre-Paid Card to deliver services and meet needs. An integrated smart card would fit with strategic priorities of prevention and integration within ASC and would mean that residents with care needs, from an ASC perspective, would be able to access care and support opportunities that may prevent needs developing or from escalating. For those that do have care, they would be able to have some of their care outcomes delivered by accessing universal opportunities, thus saving budget. The range of services incorporated into card schemes is shown in the appendix on page 26.

An integrated scheme would also allow the council to tailor services more effectively to residents. We would be able to target older residents to communicate information about Silver Sunday or younger residents with offers of cultural engagement experiences, Westminster City Lions or West End LIVE. This has not been done before in the cultural sector, where targeted offers are usually based on previous attendance. The Cambridgeshire scheme also incorporated a points scheme, where points are redeemable at any of the locations, and an algorithm to take preferences

into account. Bracknell Forest highlighted the broader benefit of what the smart card scheme achieves: a positive view of the council, positive word of mouth about council initiatives.

In **Bracknell Forest**, the council holds the core data and is able to tailor services and target residents. A single point of enrolment and updates to any connected services saves both customer and officer time and council resources delivering savings for the council. Bracknell Forest's e+ card has also led to a reduction in fraud as it used as photo ID in a variety of circumstances, like proof of age for young people, or as a photo ID card for the council's housing list. Bracknell Forest has nine libraries and three leisure centres (managed by EveryoneActive, also the leisure provider in Westminster).

The introduction of the smart card into the BF community transport system meant more responsive monitoring of the service for users, management of credits and cost effectiveness. Following introduction of the SmartConnect data system, the community transport system converted to electronic trip management and gathered as much money within five months as it had previously gathered in a year.

We were interested in similarities to the Westminster City Save scheme in the e+ card offer and how it could deliver other local improvements. Bracknell Forest used to have a significant focus on local retailer offers and, as a result, an online retailer directory had been developed. Whilst BF is not a cultural destination in the way that the City of Westminster is, the BF e+ card also incorporates recycling incentives, including 14,000 households in BF which registered via the smart card scheme to recycle "correctly". This has potential in Westminster, where recycling rates could be improved. Using data captured via the cards, BF was able to communicate more effectively with residents and undertake a follow up survey: 80% of recipients opened the mail. In **Bracknell Forest**, rewards for points were introduced balancing the cost of leisure and library rewards against benefits from less landfill.

National press reported the problems of a struggling theatreland in the West End<sup>16</sup> and as a task group we discussed how this could be ameliorated by improved offer, and communication of offer, via the Westminster City Save card or by encouraging and driving local demand for theatre tickets by Westminster residents. Any such scheme would

<sup>15</sup> C.f. The Wallace Collection Youth Panel or Young Curators schemes.

<sup>16</sup> The Times, Is it curtains for the West End? Overpriced and outdated – the future of London theatre, 2 August 2019.



have to be branded following consultation research, evidence and insight. We looked at Newham Council's "Every Child a Theatre Goer" Programme which provides opportunities for young people in Newham aged between 11 and 15 to experience high quality theatre productions.<sup>17</sup> Under this programme, these young people enjoy a range of performances from renowned theatre companies including The Royal Shakespeare Company at the Barbican and Shakespeare's Globe as well as contemporary performances at The National Theatre. More than 5,000 10 and 11-year-olds will see a live contemporary performance at their local theatre, Theatre Royal Stratford East. Incorporating these in an integrated smart card scheme could help drive up demand for theatre tickets.

## Skills

Poor access to culture and the arts can result in impoverished or limited skill sets. The **Cambridgeshire Culture Card** aims to help the user to build a creative CV of skills acquired. Under the Cambridgeshire scheme, if the children did not have access to the app, they received sticker codes which users found more inclusive, as it did not depend upon having a mobile phone. The Cambridgeshire Culture Card used the Royal Society

of Arts Cities of Learning model, with a focus on the links between extra-curricular experience and unlocking experience with work opportunities. It linked to the Digital Academy, where badges acquired can be communicated to prospective employers and can contribute to validation proof for apprenticeships. Westminster City Council could consider bidding to the Cities of Learning, including a creative skills element, like the Cambridge scheme.

This link to the skills builder has importance in the new context of schools having responsibility for careers, having to evidence how they are helping young people to progress and Ofsted requirements of cultural capital. Cambridge sees that this platform can help young people to articulate their skills. The platform also suggests activities to the young person and provides a link to learning both in and out of school, with the information available to the school.

This aspect particularly appealed to us and to the **Westminster Youth Council** who welcomed the idea of building a creative CV from cultural participation. WYC members also commented how useful it would be to have a smart card functioning as a reminder of activities and/or cultural engagement. WYC members considered that this could also be used for targeted events that might expose young people to other things

<sup>17</sup> Newham Council (2019). Every Child a Theatre Goer | Every Child Achieving Their Potential. [ONLINE] Available at: <http://www.everychild.com/home/every-child-theatre-goer> [Accessed: 28 September 2019].

once they are through the door, citing the recent Manga exhibition at the British Museum.

In a City for All, we would like to see continued improvement in and maintenance of literacy skills in our adult population as well as our schools, and libraries can act as an early, free gateway to culture in the city as well as other council services. Early automatic library enrolment, as has been done successfully in both Scotland and Wales, would assist with this.<sup>18</sup>

## Social Mobility

We were especially interested to explore any mechanisms which enabled targeting and tailoring to increase the offer available to particular groups, such as children who receive Free School Meals (FSM). Free school meals are an important indicator of poverty and schools with a higher rate than 35% for FSM are considered in a high band in the official school statistics.

When **Bracknell Forest** introduced its smart card, it began with a roll-out in schools introducing a multi-application smart card for library use, cashless school meals and Connexions registration, a scheme which was aimed at incentivising young people to achieve in education from 16 – 19, using a reward system amongst other pilot services. Using smart cards in Bracknell Forest for the school meals resulted in equality and removal of social stigma for young people in receipt of FSM. The FSM entitlement could be coded into the smart card, but all the cards used by students to pay for school meals looked the same.

Some integrated card schemes, such as the **Cambridgeshire Culture Card** Scheme, have been introduced specifically to address social mobility gap.<sup>19</sup> Cambridge City Council saw the potential of the library card as a social mobility tool as the library card is free and, despite the card being underutilised, a third of Cambridgeshire's 90,000 young people (0-19), use their library card every year. More than half of those young library card users live in areas of high deprivation.

The Cambridgeshire Culture Card pilot involved 66 different locations. 339 participants engaged, of whom 36% were recipients of FSM. Of non-FSM participants, 29% went on to engage. Of FSM participants, 40% went on to engage. The scheme used a coalition approach to engagement, with 36 cultural providers covering a wide range of venues, such as village halls, leisure centres, open door festivals as well as more traditional venues. This provided a rich data set and the ability to understand supply and demand and map the cultural offer.

To further increase the take up of such schemes, library card enrolment could be made automatic. In Wales, library enrolment is automatic for Year 4 children to increase use of library services but also in line with research on improved literacy and life outcomes, which shows that children who join and use their library regularly and read for pleasure become more confident and skilled readers and learners.<sup>20</sup>

## What Is Culture?

The definition of culture has long been controversial, and this is further complicated because the term is used in a variety of ways. We looked to the words used by John Maynard Keynes when the Arts Council was founded in July 1945, a definition that, at that time in the post-war United Kingdom, included a visit to a museum, art gallery or theatre, the opera at Covent Garden, a cricket match at Lords, or a regatta at Henley. As Keynes stated in July 1945, this understanding allowed for "culture" to be an expansive term that would "[l]et every part of Merry England be merry in its own way."<sup>21</sup>

We were also influenced by the founding principles of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) in 1945, which stated that, "culture is at the heart of contemporary debates about identity, social cohesion, and the development of a knowledge-based economy". This statement is as true in 2019 as in 1945. According to the Constitution of UNESCO, culture should be regarded as "the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of

18 <https://www.glasgowlife.org.uk/news/glasgow-s-baby-library-card-scheme-turns-two>. <https://libraries.wales/staff-toolkit/every-child-a-library-member/>

19 [Assets.publishing.service.gov.uk](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811304/2019_CID_progress_report.pdf). (2019). [ONLINE] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/811304/2019\\_CID\\_progress\\_report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811304/2019_CID_progress_report.pdf) [Accessed 28 Sep. 2019] at page 15. Cambridge News, (2019). [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/cambridge-news/worst-places-grow-up-cambridgeshire-13975254> [Accessed 28 September 2019].

20 Libraries Wales. (2019). Automatic library card for every child in Wales - Libraries Wales. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://libraries.wales/2015/01/16/automatic-library-card-for-every-child-in-wales-3/> [Accessed 28 Sep. 2019].

21 Arts Council of Great Britain (1945-6). The Arts Council of Great Britain - 1st Annual Report 1945-6 | Arts Council England. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/arts-council-great-britain-1st-annual-report-1945> [Accessed 28 Sep. 2019].



society or a social group, and... encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs".<sup>22</sup>

In our discussions and subsequent investigations, we considered culture to mean:

1. the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement; and
2. the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.

We were especially interested when Westminster Youth Council independently used both these aspects of the word when explaining their nuanced understanding of culture.

With all these in mind, we arrived at this inclusive definition to use in our investigations. Task group members agreed that a broad definition and understanding of the term was required, in order not to be prescriptive, limiting or exclusive about what constitutes culture.

## Cultural Capital

Having looked to Keynes at the founding of the Arts Council England, we looked to more recent work by this organisation about why culture matters to provide a framework for our affirmation of the importance of accessible arts in Westminster.<sup>23</sup> In our discussions of why culture matters, we also discussed the importance of cultural capital. Whilst forming part of our initial discussion, this was of increased relevance to our work because from September 2019, cultural capital features in the new Ofsted framework. This new Ofsted requirement constitutes an opportunity for schools and local authorities to define the cultural capital that their children need and to think more widely than existing 'legitimate culture'.

We considered the work on cultural capital by Professor Mike Savage, Martin White Professor of the London School of Economics and Political Science. Professor Savage describes cultural capital as leisure interests, the things we read or enjoy, and states how, whilst these interests are private, they are also public and social. He also explains how these personal interests can be of personal advantage in other areas of life. Skills from

<sup>22</sup> This definition is in line with the conclusions of the World Conference on Cultural Policies (MONDIACULT, Mexico City, 1982), of the World Commission on Culture and Development: *Our Creative Diversity* (1995), and of the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development (Stockholm, 1998)

<sup>23</sup> Arts Council England (2019). *Why art and culture matters* | Arts Council England. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/make-case-art-and-culture/why-art-and-culture-matters> [Accessed 28 September 2019].

enjoyment of theatre, for example, can be translated into skills useful in an English exam or speaking in a meeting. Westminster is home to London theatreland so we found his involvement with the BBC in the Great British Class Survey (GBCS) in 2013 relevant to the Westminster context. We noted how, in the week after the GBCS launched, demand for London theatre tickets increased by 191 per cent as viewers of the BBC programme also understood the relevance of cultural capital to success in life and access to work.<sup>24</sup>



Another way of building cultural capital is to embed reading as a habit at an early age. This is crucial for ensuring both access to culture and literacy skills. Lacking vital literacy skills can hold a person back at every stage of their life and so we looked to the work of the National Literacy Trust, amongst others. More positively, reading provides access to culture and ensures greater earnings, better health, including psychological benefits, and lower crime.

Low levels of literacy undermine the UK's economic competitiveness, with functional illiteracy costing the UK economy £36 billion a year.<sup>25</sup> Many businesses are not satisfied with young people's literacy skills when they enter the workforce and have organised remedial training for young recruits to improve their basic skills, including literacy and communication.<sup>26</sup>

We also considered the new Ofsted Inspection handbook published in July 2019, and the new requirement for schools to consider how they develop their children's cultural capital to help them to succeed in life.

### Defining cultural capital today

A resident of any age in Westminster without cultural capital is shut out from much more than, say, the museum they cannot afford to visit. Cultural capital is not limited to consumption of classical or mainstream arts as cultural consumption and notions of 'high art' have changed over time. Contemporary work on the idea of cultural capital by a range of academics has expanded the list of definitions from the 1970s,<sup>27</sup> adding technical, emotional, national and subcultural forms of cultural capital.<sup>28</sup> More recently, academic researchers have coined the term 'cultural omnivore', meaning someone who mixes interests in a wide range of forms of culture, both those seen as historically traditional or 'legitimate' by society (opera, theatre, fine arts) and emerging forms – such as Grime music.

'Cultural capital' in this new sense is embodied by an individual who is knowledgeable about a wide range of culture and is comfortable discussing its value and merits. It is characterised by the experience and skill to be able to deploy the appropriate knowledge in any given situation: a job interview, a conversation with a neighbour, building a work network, and so on. This cultural capital is what we should be able to offer Westminster residents of all ages. As a task group, we are committed to delivering wider

24 Savage, M. et al (2015). *Social Class in the 21st Century*. 1st ed. Penguin, pp.6, 8, 93-126. Elliot Major, L. and Machin, S. (2018). *Social Mobility and Its Enemies*. 1st ed. Penguin, pp. 13-15.

25 TES (2018). Illiteracy costs the UK £36 billion a year. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.tes.com/news/illiteracy-costs-uk-ps36-billion-year> [Accessed 28 September 2019]. See also Connecting Libraries, a report by the Westminster Libraries Advisory Board: [https://www.westminster.gov.uk/sites/default/files/20190328\\_final\\_independent\\_libraries\\_review\\_report\\_1.pdf](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/sites/default/files/20190328_final_independent_libraries_review_report_1.pdf)

26 A study by the National Literacy Trust and Experian in 2016 for the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Literacy examined the greatest literacy needs in the 533 constituencies in England. The study placed Westminster North 113th out of 533, with Cities of London and Westminster placed 261st: [ONLINE] Available at: <https://literacytrust.org.uk/policy-and-campaigns/all-party-parliamentary-group-literacy/literacy-score-mapping-literacy-need-across-england/> [Accessed 15 September 2019].

27 In the 1970s, Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist, had identified three sources of cultural capital: objective (cultural goods, books, works of art); embodied (language, mannerisms, preferences); and institutionalised (qualifications, education credentials).

28 These are: Technical: marketable skills (e.g. IT); Emotional: empathy, sympathy (things businesses might look for in employees in management positions); National: this has been defined operating on the assumption of the existence of traditions, in both high and popular culture, which generate and justify a sense of belonging and an occupancy of a governing national position. In operation, to lack it acts as a handicap, rather more than its possession supplying a route to profit and preferment; and Subcultural: groups built around cultural specifics, where individuals need particular cultural knowledge and behaviours to belong to the sub-set.

access to culture, both for reasons of “art for art’s sake” but also for the stimulus it provides to the life course professionally, socially and in well-being.

### The benefits of cultural capital

Evidence suggests that the cultural capital passed on through families helps children to do better in school.<sup>29</sup> The education system values the knowledge and ways of thinking developed by acquiring cultural capital, both abstract and formal. As adults, cultural capital helps individuals to network with other adults who have a similar body of knowledge and experiences, which helps them to gain access to high-paying professions and prestigious leadership roles, for example in law, medicine and government. This means that those parents equipped with cultural capital are able to drill their children in the cultural forms that predispose them to perform well in the educational system through their ability to handle “abstract” and “formal” categories. These children are then able to turn their cultural capital into credentials, which can later be used to acquire advantaged positions themselves.

### Evidence of the power of cultural capital

Studies by organisations such as the Sutton Trust have shown how types of education and family background confer advantages on some children. In 2013, the report, “[Parent Power?](#)”<sup>30</sup> showed how wealthy parents buy in extra schooling (including in arts subjects) to push their children ahead of their peers in exams and to secure entry to more prestigious schools and universities. Middle class parents were significantly more likely to have provided their children with enrichment activities, such as attending plays and concerts, museum and gallery visits, and regular out of school classes (including sports, music and drama). However, the differences across social groups were greater for activities that cost money and smaller for activities that are free.

In September 2018, the Sutton Trust revisited this earlier work with an updated report.<sup>31</sup> Parents were again asked about their child’s participation in some of the activities which can help to build cultural capital. The authors found that young people from professional households were

much more likely to take part in extracurricular activities. 84% of those in social group A reported participation in at least one after school activity or class, compared to 45% in group D. This reflects cultural capital, but also financial and other resources in the home. Furthermore, those in lower social groups were more likely to take part in activities that did not need to be paid for, 25% of those in group D, compared to 20% in group A.

Research, including by the London School of Economics and Social Sciences and Social Mobility Commission, has also shown how recruitment into top professions, including banking and law, is made easier by the level of cultural capital of the applicants.<sup>32</sup>

### The paradox of cultural capital and schools

*“Engagement in music, art, drama and other arts is an essential part of the way our imagination develops. It is not the only route... but it offers a very particular way to appreciate the fullness of the human condition... art helps create more rounded, rooted people who are able truly to see the world around them. Ironically, they are likely to be more effective in a globalized market place than those who have been fed on a simple diet of STEM.”*

Tony Little, former Head Master of Eton<sup>33</sup>

In a time of transformation, we are aware of the need to work with residents, schools, colleges, and businesses, so that our residents are prepared for longer working lives and many different jobs

29 House of Commons DCMS Select Committee (May 2019). Changing Lives: the social impact of participation in culture and sport. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcmuceds/734/734.pdf> [Accessed 30 May 2019].

30 “Parent Power?” by Professors Becky Francis and Meryn Hutchings (2013). [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/1parentpower-final.pdf> [Accessed 3 November 2018].

31 Rebecca Montacute and Carl Cullinane, “Parent Power 2018: How parents use financial and cultural resources to boost their children’s chances of success.” [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Parent-Power-2018.pdf> [Accessed 3 November 2018] at page 44.

32 The Class Ceiling (2019) <https://www.classceiling.org/>, Social Mobility Commission

33 Little, T., 2016. An Intelligent Person’s Guide to Education. 2nd ed. London: Bloomsbury at page 124.

in the fourth industrial revolution, with creativity as a future-proof and future-essential skill.<sup>34</sup> In 2017, the creative industries were worth £92 billion<sup>35</sup> to the UK economy and for every £1 invested in arts and culture subsidies, the government obtained £5 returned in taxes. Yet, paradoxically, between 2010 and 2019, there was a 38% drop in the number of UK students taking creative GCSEs, with a corresponding drop in the number of specialist arts teachers being trained.<sup>36</sup>

In Westminster, where the creative economy accounts for £411m<sup>37</sup> of our GDP and where we are home to creative venues like the Abbey Road Studios,<sup>38</sup> the numbers of Westminster students taking creative GCSEs and A levels are low and decreasing. In 2018, 617 (5.2%) Westminster pupils took a GCSE in art, music or drama. This compares with 687 Westminster pupils (5.8%) in 2013. At A Level, the landscape is similar. In 2018, only 161 Westminster pupils (6%) took an A level in art, music or drama. This compares with 145 pupils (8.1%) in 2013.

### The English Baccalaureate

As Westminster entrants for GCSE and A Level arts subjects declined, in 2018, 759 pupils (50.8%) Westminster pupils took the English Baccalaureate (EBACC). According to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance, research shows that a pupil's socio-economic background has an impact on the subjects that they choose at GCSE, and that this determines opportunities beyond school. The government's ambition is to see 75% of pupils studying the EBACC subject combination at GCSE by 2022, and 90% by 2025. The English Baccalaureate consists of a core basket of subjects. These are:

- English language and literature;
- Maths;
- the sciences;
- geography or history; and
- a language.

Where are the arts in the EBACC? The impact of the EBACC on creative subjects has been criticised, with some 217 organisations including the Design Council, the Westminster-based Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM),<sup>39</sup> Aardman and

34 How Do Our Kids Beat the Robots? <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0b9z4ng>

35 DCMS (2017). A press release stated that the creative industries' record contribution to UK economy was £92bn, with the sector growing at twice the rate of the economy. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/creative-industries-record-contribution-to-uk-economy> [Accessed 22 February 2019].

36 See <https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/further-drop-in-arts-gcse-and-a-level-entries-for-2019/>. The Cultural Learning Alliance had previously reported a 28% drop in the number of children taking creative GCSEs in 2018: <https://culturallearningalliance.org.uk/gcse-results-announced-today-see-a-continuing-free-fall-in-arts-subject-entries/>.

37 DCMS (2016). Creative Industries Economic Estimates, January 2016. [ONLINE] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/523024/Creative\\_Industries\\_Economic\\_Estimates\\_January\\_2016\\_Updated\\_201605.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523024/Creative_Industries_Economic_Estimates_January_2016_Updated_201605.pdf) [Accessed 15 September 2019].

38 Revenue of Abbey Road Studios £35M, with 207 employees. <https://www.abbeyroad.com/>.

39 The Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM) is the UK's professional body for musicians and a nationally recognised subject association for music, co-founded in 1882 by Edward Elgar. The ISM is dedicated to promoting the importance of music, music education and protecting the rights of those working in the music profession. See also <https://baccforthefuture.com/news/2019/gcse-results-day-2019>



the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Music Education.<sup>40</sup> These organisations protest that the EBACC excludes creative, artistic and technical subjects from counting in league tables, contributing to a decline in the study and pursuit of those subjects.<sup>41</sup>

In 2016, the Rt Hon Lord Baker of Dorking published a report for the Edge Foundation arguing for greater inclusion of technical skills in the English Baccalaureate. Artists including Tracey Emin, Anish Kapoor and Antony Gormley signed a letter<sup>42</sup> calling on the government to rethink a key secondary school policy. The Edge Foundation's report in October 2018 found that the government's focus on the narrow EBACC is not only having an impact on the creative industries, but on scientific study as well, with reports of surgeons needing to be taught sewing skills.<sup>43</sup>

There is compelling evidence that the study of creative and technical subjects is in decline in state schools and that entries to arts subjects have fallen to their lowest level in a decade.<sup>44</sup> This decline is visible in Westminster.<sup>45</sup> Research indicates that 85% of private schools have a school orchestra; only 32% of state schools can say the same. Music hubs, which have replaced peripatetic music teaching in many state schools, including here in Westminster, have no financial settlement assured beyond March 2020.<sup>46</sup> Apart from accessing culture as an audience member, young people are being deprived of opportunities for personal development in the fields of self-expression, sociability, imagination and creativity by not having access to create culture.

As schools pursue league table positions, the trend is that creative subjects are side-lined

Parents may perceive arts subjects as riskier and less readily convertible in career terms, advising their children instead to pursue more traditional subjects. However, some schools have shown

that creative subjects have a crucial part to play in the academic success of a school as well as its community and cultural life. We looked at the remarkable turnaround of a Bradford primary school. In 2010, Feversham Primary Academy in Bradford was a failing school in special measures. 98% of its students arrive at school with English as an additional language. 50% of its students arrive at school with no English. The area outside the school gates, Bradford Moor, is one of the city's most deprived and densely populated neighbourhoods.

In May 2019, Feversham Primary Academy was rated as outstanding by Ofsted. What changed? The difference was, according to a headline in national press, "not extra maths but music, loads of it".<sup>47</sup> The headteacher ensured that children at the school are offered between six and seven hours of music a week. Singing is a powerful tool in assisting pupils with their language, social and other skills. The Ofsted comments refer to the cultural emphasis in the life of the school:

*"The creative and well-thought-out curriculum, with music and drama at its core, makes a significant contribution to developing pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and outcomes... Pupils' superb spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured from the outset."*<sup>48</sup>

Camden Council's STEAM initiative has increased creativity across the school curriculum through

40 All-Party Parliamentary Group for Music Education <https://allpartymusicgroup.org.uk/>

41 A list of BaccfortheFuture supporters is available online at <https://baccforthefuture.com/key-information/supporters> [Accessed 23 August 2019].

42 <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2018/may/08/british-artists-ebacc-will-damage-creativity-and-self-expression>

43 <https://www.edge.co.uk/news/edge-news/towards-a-twenty-first-century-education-system-edge-future-learning>

44 Research by the Education Policy Institute in 2017 indicated that schools in England have cut number of pupils taking subjects such as dance and fine art after cuts and policy changes (<https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/entries-arts-subjects-key-stage-4/>). See also reporting in The Guardian, 21 September 2017. [ONLINE] Available at: <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/sep/21/proportion-of-students-taking-arts-subjects-falls-to-lowest-level-in-decade> [Accessed 3 November 2018].

45 Please see the tables on pages 25 and 26

46 See for example a letter to The Times, 20 September 2019, signed by signatories such as Sir Simon Rattle (<https://www.ism.org/news/music-education-hub-funding-letter-to-the-times>) or <https://www.musicmark.org.uk/news/risk-to-teachers-jobs-and-access-to-music-education-as-hub-funding-not-confirmed/> [Accessed 28 September 2019].

47 <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2017/oct/03/school-results-music-bradford>

48 <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/provider/21/138867>

its STEAM Hub approach and innovative school development programme, led by headteachers or senior leaders from five Camden schools. The STEAM Hub trains leaders from 20 primary and secondary schools to develop a STEAM approach at a curriculum- and whole-school-level, and the STEAM Hub facilitates close collaboration and innovation between schools, businesses, and cultural institutions. Westminster City Council's Business Unit has adapted this model for their first STEAM week.



### Ofsted and cultural capital

As referenced above in the Ofsted rating of Feversham, there is recognition within Ofsted of the importance of culture and cultural capital. We considered this in the context of delivering improved access to culture and widening life opportunities for our excellent Westminster schools, so we were mindful of the new Ofsted focus on cultural capital. The new Ofsted framework requires schools to consider how they develop their children's cultural capital to help them succeed in life, including the extent to which schools are equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.<sup>49</sup>

The Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA) suggests that Ofsted has introduced this new duty because Ofsted believes that it will level the playing field, ensuring that background plays less of a role in determining social mobility, educational success and long-term outcomes. However, as the CLA observes, there is a risk that the new Ofsted requirement will instead drive entrenchment of one type of culture. The Ofsted definition is intrinsically linked to teaching children 'the best that has been thought and said.'

According to the CLA, this definition is troubling when taken in a modern context for several reasons including that it is passive and does not adequately cover all cultural forms or expressions. Like the CLA, we believe that children should be enabled to stand on the shoulders of those that have gone before and create new and exciting forms of culture;<sup>50</sup> things which may well help them fuel solutions to society's problems and build our creative industries.

However, this new Ofsted requirement constitutes an opportunity for schools to define the cultural capital that their children need and to think more widely than existing 'legitimate culture'. This will ensure that their pupils are confident creators, able to be the 'cultural omnivores' that can make informed decisions about what culture they consume and participate in and can articulate why it has value. Arguably, this opportunity extends to local authorities and we considered the new Ofsted requirement when weighing our recommendations on improving cultural engagement and participation by all Westminster residents, but especially the younger cohort. We would aspire for our residents to be confident creators, as well as consumers of the arts.

<sup>49</sup> Ofsted School Inspection Handbook (May 2019; updated September 2019). [ONLINE] Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/828469/School\\_inspection\\_handbook\\_-\\_section\\_5.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/828469/School_inspection_handbook_-_section_5.pdf) [Accessed 15 September 2019].

<sup>50</sup> Westminster Youth Council held a similar view about cross-fertilisation of cultures creating new hybrids.



## Barriers To Culture

When examining barriers to culture, we were influenced by the 2012 report of the Working Group of EU Member States' Experts on Better Access to and Wider Participation in Culture (the EU Working Group 2012 Report).<sup>51</sup> This report demonstrated that we were not alone in debating how to access culture, which continues to be a highly topical issue across Europe. A significant part of the populations across Europe still does not participate in mainstream cultural activities.

There is a spectrum of barriers to accessing culture, including a lack of free time and fixed opening hours; difficulties in understanding some cultural offers, such as contemporary arts, or obtaining information about what is on offer; and wider cultural, social, financial and physical barriers to accessing culture.

Barriers mentioned by witnesses to the task group included:

- **money, including unaffordable ticket prices and the expense of travel to events and cultural venues;**
- **not knowing where things are and what is on;**

- **some communities are very self-contained;**
- **loneliness and social isolation;**
- **mental health;**
- **distance;**
- **time; and**
- **unwillingness/hesitancy to try out new things (some people are unwilling to leave their comfort zone).**

One WYC member discussed going to the theatre with their school, highlighting the important role schools play as gateways to cultural capital, and commented how they would "love" to go to the theatre more often but explained that it is too expensive and, as a consequence, they cannot simply "go on a whim" to the theatre. We as task group members commented on this, agreeing and discussing how prohibitively expensive entry fees remove the potential to explore the arts and take risks. It was evident to us that, apart from barriers such as money and distance, another equally great barrier is perception. For example, residents from Westminster's most deprived wards have not visited the West End due to perceptions about the cultural spaces there. These include the perceptions that these spaces and the arts

<sup>51</sup> Open Method of Coordination (OMC) Working Group of EU Member States' Experts on Better Access to and Wider Participation in Culture

activities that they host are “not for them”. Levers exist for the council to encourage diversification of cultural offer so that programming is more diverse and relevant to our residents’ lives. We feel that art is for all and reduced ticket offers do exist, but communication of the offer is lacking.

## Widening Access To Culture – Schemes

There are schemes which have the objective of widening access to culture beyond those delivered by local authorities. We received evidence from a Westminster primary school pupil about the Rolls-Royce outreach programme, the STE-A-M<sup>52</sup> Evolution Project in partnership with The Royal Albert Hall. 14 primary schools in London participated in the 2019 project, which ran as a Design and Technology project in the classroom over three months. 500 eight to 11-year-old students started by seeing Cirque du Soleil’s Totem show at The Royal Albert Hall, which then provided inspiration for them to design and build a working model which recreates the movement in the show, such as rotating unicycles or aerial acts.



A team of ten STEM Ambassadors from Rolls-Royce support the project, by working with teachers, helping them to explore some basic engineering principles and introducing them to the project kit used by the children, which includes gears, pulleys and levers.

The Rolls-Royce team visits each participating school twice over the next couple of months to help the children develop their designs and

build articulating models. The schools then returned to The Royal Albert Hall to share their models, talk about their designs and what they have learned through this project.

For some of the children, this will be the very first time they try to build a model and/or visit The Royal Albert Hall. For most, it will also be their first opportunity to explore what engineering is and talk to the Rolls-Royce STEM Ambassadors about what engineers do. The project offers the chance to work in a project team – again, often for the first time – and to think about how ideas are developed into concepts and, eventually, prototypes. The scheme teaches engineering principles and provides access to culture.



The Black Ticket Project is a project to give Black people, particularly young Black people, the opportunity to experience the theatre for free or at a discounted rate, in the hope of widening the artistic palette of Black young people and exposing them to new forms of expression that truly represent them. The project was inspired after the 2016 debut of Inua Ellams’ ‘Barber Shop Chronicles’ at the National Theatre, when Tobi Kyeremateng paid for 30 Black young people to see the show, outreaching via social media. In early 2018, she officially partnered with the National Theatre to fundraise for over 250 Black young people to see ‘Nine Night’. Altogether, across both shows, over 300 Black young people visited the National Theatre and for many of them, it would have been the first time that they were going to the theatre.

The project also has the ambition to open the doors to the theatre-world on a more consistent and long-term basis by starting the process to make this official. Providing access to theatre

<sup>52</sup> STE-A-M is where STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) meets the Arts.



for the Black Ticket Project is not only about providing access to see theatre but to change the experience for this group once inside the venue.

The Wallace Collection (TWC) runs several programmes which focus on widening access to culture, including the Wallace Youth Panel, the Young Curators programme, and Community and Access programmes. The Access programme provides a series of events for visitors who are D/deaf and hard of hearing including BSL-led talks and workshops, and audio-described tours and drawing classes for visitors who are blind and partially sighted. The Community programme facilitates access for visitors who are living with dementia and their families and carers through special themed tours and workshops, using object handling and relaxed art activities to offer an enjoyable shared experience.

The Wallace Collection's Young Curators Programme was developed in collaboration with educators and families from a Westminster primary school, St Vincent's Catholic Primary School, in 2009. For their inaugural event, the participating children selected works of art from the collection and organised a public exhibition entitled, "Shhh...it's a Secret!", the first of its kind in a UK national museum.

The programme continues to prosper and every year, The Young Curators give three public tours or, from this year, two public tours and a special project, presenting a new perspective of the collection through fresh, young eyes. The 12 Young Curators enter the programme in Year 4 and complete it in Year 6, which enables them to develop close relationships with TWC staff and the collection itself over three years. The programme aims to foster a love for the arts in children whilst building their research skills and self-confidence. It also gives them an active way to engage meaningfully with their local cultural institution as well as changing the perception of both museum personnel and the public about the capabilities of young people. The programme also involves the parents, thus widening the reach of the cultural experience. This year will see the Young Curators and their classmates take over The Wallace Collection in November as part of Takeover Day, an initiative by Kids in Museums.

There are currently no plans to expand the programme as this would require additional funding and resources to deliver the same high level of impact. The Wallace Collection is conscious that the school audience is a very unique audience in that the students are brought by their schools, rather than choosing to come to the museum as other visitors do.

# Recommendations

## We recommend that the council:

1. Introduce an integrated smartcard which unifies a number of council services (Libraries, Leisure, Westminster City Save, Free School Meals, Adult Social Care) and enables residents to have one multi-purpose council account
2. Review and improve the Westminster City Save scheme and website
3. Encourage, support and facilitate opportunities in schools to increase/improve access to culture for young residents. This could include the roll out of the Westminster Children's University beyond the current nine participating schools. This could also include improving awareness of the offer and encouraging increased collaboration between schools and other institutions, such as the Rolls-Royce STE-A-M Evolution Project or The Wallace Collection Young Curators
4. Champion cultural opportunities by instigating and supporting a Culture Ambassadors scheme within Westminster schools
5. Embed Westminster City Lions as the primary conduit by which to increase cultural experiences and enrichment for younger residents aged between 13 and 16
6. Work more closely with cultural partners and stakeholders in Westminster to create opportunities and experiences for Westminster families, school children, Westminster City Lions and older residents as part of a more holistic cultural offer
7. Every child born in Westminster to have a Library card, through automatic enrolment, via the birth registration process. Every Westminster child starting school to have a Library card as part of the schools admissions/induction process
8. Encourage, support and facilitate culture in the local community by continuing to support and facilitate cultural events at neighbourhood/ward level, especially in areas of the city that do not have dedicated cultural venues. This should include enabling and supporting local communities to use community spaces (e.g. libraries, community halls/school halls/academy spaces, sports centres) for cultural purposes
9. Establish a dedicated council budget for culture, including scope for commissioning, to increase cultural capital for Westminster residents. This would also allow the council to include public art as part of any regeneration scheme and public realm project. Public art should be a key part of the council's approach to place shaping

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## Conclusion

Given that arts and culture increasingly contribute to the UK economy, it is important that the city should find a way to harness the local arts and culture in Westminster, some of which have national and international dimensions, to help residents with their well-being and to develop resilient careers. We would like to see even more of a **culture of culture** in Westminster, with so many experiences more available to more of our residents of all ages, a more holistic cultural offer for families, young people, older people and those on lower incomes. There is cultural offer which is free or available at concessionary rates, but there is a need to overcome perceptions, as well as the social and economic barriers, so that culture, expansively defined, is part of the Westminster environment for all, open not hidden. We feel that we are coming to this with perfect timing as we can learn from the work done by others, such as Bracknell Forest and Cambridge City Council, as we endeavour to increase cultural capital and to build thriving communities in our City for All.

# Appendices

## GCSE

	2018	2018	2013	2013
GCSE Subject	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
GCSE (9-1) Art & Des(Graphics)	41	0.3%	29	0.2%
GCSE (9-1) Art & Des(Photo.)	15	0.1%	21	0.2%
GCSE (9-1) Art & Des(Textiles)	8	0.1%	24	0.2%
GCSE (9-1) Art & Design	69	0.6%	221	1.8%
GCSE (9-1) Art&Des : Fine Art	202	1.7%	60	0.5%
<b>Art TOTAL</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>3.0%</b>
GCSE (9-1) Drama & Theat.Stds	156	1.3%	181	1.5%
GCSE (9-1) Music	123	1.0%	151	1.3%
GradeEx Music Perf (Group)	3	0.0%		
<b>Music TOTAL</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>1.1%</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>1.3%</b>
<b>Art, Music &amp; Drama TOTAL</b>	<b>617</b>	<b>5.2%</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>5.8%</b>
<b>All GCSEs Total</b>	<b>11,870</b>		<b>11,947</b>	

## A-Level

	2018	2018	2013	2013
A-Level subject	Numbers	%	Numbers	%
GCE A Art & Des(Graphics) (AA)	10	0.4%		
GCE A Art & Des(Photo.) (AA)	14	0.5%	8	0.4%
GCE A Art & Des(Textiles) (AA)	6	0.2%	6	0.3%
GCE A Art & Design (AA)	3	0.1%	25	1.4%
GCE A Art&Des : Fine Art (AA)	73	2.7%	36	2.0%
<b>Art TOTAL</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
GCE A Drama & Theat.Stds (AA)	33	1.2%	42	2.4%
GCE A Music (AA)	14	0.5%	14	0.8%
GCE A Music Technology (AA)	8	0.3%	14	0.8%
<b>Music TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>0.8%</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1.6%</b>
<b>Art, Music &amp; Drama TOTAL</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>6.0%</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>8.1%</b>
<b>All A-Levels Total</b>	<b>2,676</b>		<b>1,787</b>	



# Deprivation and Cultural Venues in Westminster

Westminster's City Council slogan is 'City for All,' an incentive to create a city that is accessible and beneficial to all residents, whether that be relating to opportunity, business, or economic prosperity. Located in inner London, Westminster is a major cultural centre to Greater London and the country. These cultural venues, however, may

elude Westminster's residents; with prices many consider unaffordable or due to other barriers, it can be difficult for residents to benefit from these venues. To help bridge this gap, this map identifies wards in Westminster that may have the greatest barriers to entry when visiting these venues and identifies the city's cultural venue locations.



