

Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee

Oral evidence: The social impact of participation in culture and sport, HC 734

Tuesday 19 June 2018

Ordered by the House of Commons to be published on 19 June 2018.

Watch the meeting

Members present: Damian Collins (Chair); Julie Elliott; Simon Hart; Ian C. Lucas; Christian Matheson; Rebecca Pow; Jo Stevens; Giles Watling.

Questions 1 – 61

Witnesses

I: Darren Henley, Chief Executive, Arts Council England, John Herriman, Chief Executive, Greenhouse Sports, and Deborah Williams, Executive Director, Creative Diversity Network

Written evidence from witnesses:

- [Arts Council England](#)
- [Greenhouse Sports](#)

Examination of witnesses

Witnesses: Darren Henley, John Herriman and Deborah Williams.

Q1 Chair: I welcome the witnesses for the first oral evidence session of the Committee's inquiry into the social impact of culture and sport. My apologies for keeping you waiting and for being slightly late starting. We had quite a few issues to discuss in our private session relating to other inquiries that the Committee is looking at.

One of the reasons we have initiated this inquiry is to understand more the power of culture and sport to address often deep-seated social problems and issues, and to question whether the role that culture and sport plays is undervalued and should play a bigger part in the strategies of local and central Government, and other agencies, in seeking to address some of these long-standing social issues.

What I would like to do is to start by asking the witnesses a fairly open first question. In your experience, do you believe that the work that is done through arts and cultural organisations, and through sport in communities, would have the potential to achieve a lot more if the work that is already done was more widely understood and recognised and if it received more support? Perhaps Deborah Williams could start us off.

Deborah Williams: Obviously I am going to say yes. I would be lying otherwise, and I don't want to do that. Quite fundamentally, having come from a performing background and moving to a management background, it is interesting to see the things that have been going on for quite some time but no one knows about. As I now have another position that I am sitting in, where I am gathering information and I am reviewing work that has been undertaken, it is clear to me that there is a much bigger, fundamental story that could be told and should be told.

Q2 Chair: There seems to be a certain irony in the way that culture and sport is something that has been created by people for their own pleasure, yet we are discussing how we give it back to them. You said that you agree with the premise of the question, but at the beginning of this inquiry what do you think the solution is?

Deborah Williams: I think more listening needs to be done to people who are actually doing and participating and taking part. It is about better understanding around what culture is in its broadest sense, so not just participation but representation, portrayal, on-screen and off-screen—so behind and in front—coaching and just the breadth and depth and the complexity of what is on offer, which offers more people ways in than is anticipated.

It is often presumed that culture in particular is an elite space and it actually isn't an elite space, and the more you tell the fuller story the more opportunities there will be for people who don't necessarily think it



HOUSE OF COMMONS

is for them. It offers them ways in and an opportunity to go, "Ah, I recognise that" or "I am interested in that", and then think about how they can develop it.

I do think there is an issue with education. I am not talking about anything specific, but if you continue to think of education in one way, you are losing the notion of the whole child and full participation by every individual, whether that is in school, peer environments or sibling environments. The fundamental point is how we engage with each other and how we relate to each other, and I think culture, in particular, has a way of doing that no one really understands fully.

Q3 Chair: Darren Henley, normally when we ask you to come and give evidence, when we are discussing the Arts Council, we are talking about the public support of art as an intrinsic good in its own right and supporting art for its own sake, but I suppose in this inquiry we are looking at the broader social benefits and impacts that arts and culture have. Do you think these are widely enough recognised and do you think, alongside funding arts creativity for its own sake, we should also think about how we fund arts as a measure of social impact?

Darren Henley: Absolutely. The first thing I would say is that, for us, great art should be for everybody, so not just for those people who have experienced it and feel they have a right to it. But the quality of artistic provision should be excellent, whatever we are talking about in the country or whoever we are talking to.

I am very passionate about us being England's Arts Council, and I spend half of the week not in London, and so I have been to all of your constituencies at different times—I am going up to Solihull later—and I have seen all the work that happens there. It is important that we talk to people and understand what they want as well. We have to show them what they can have because, if you have never experienced these things before, how would you know what to ask for? We want people to be more demanding of us and we want to make sure that we represent the arts and culture that has been created in communities.

We have these centres of production excellence around the country. That is what I want to see. Sunderland is a good example with the National Glass Centre and the work we do there. Alongside that, we see the work of the Cultural Spring there as well, which is taking arts and culture to the people, showing them what they can have and encouraging them to be challenging back in each of those special programmes.

We have another one, which is the New Vic in Newcastle-under-Lyme, where we have Appetite—the organisation is called Appetite. Again, that is about looking at what people want. They are similar from the top but when you get to the ground they are very, very different, and that is important. We are saying to people, "Co-curate with us. We are not going to sit behind a desk and tell you what you ought to have". When we do that we see some interesting results.



Those programmes are part of our Creative People and Places programme. 1 million people have gone through those programmes and 75% of them are people who would not usually engage in arts and culture, so we are starting to take it to people in a different way.

Q4 Chair: Thank you. John Herriman, I read an interview with Usain Bolt—I think it was the week before last—and he was asked, “What would you do to solve the problem of knife crime across London?” and he just said, “More sport”. Do you think he is right?

John Herriman: It is certainly one of the solutions. In particular, the challenge with knife crime and gang-related violence is: is there an alternative to go to? Part of the challenge is that in many instances there isn’t, and there has been a particular challenge there with some of the decline in youth services, for example. There are fewer opportunities for young people of that particular age to get involved with, and they will find other things to get involved with or they will get dragged into those types of things. Therefore I think, yes, sport is definitely a solution.

We are talking to another charity at the moment about something that we might be supporting on that. We have schools in the programmes that we run. The headteachers want our programmes because they know it will mean that their young people are not on the street at the end of the day, therefore, they cannot get into trouble. Therefore, just by virtue of doing that, it improves their life chances.

Q5 Chair: Do you think that culture and sport programmes are more than just diversionary tactics? That there is a way in which young people can engage with them because of their intrinsic interest in them, which can then give them a new direction?

John Herriman: Yes. Fundamentally, I completely agree with that statement. The work that we do is not a diversionary tactic. It is not just about young people doing sport because it keeps them off the streets. What we believe in is the model we work with. It is intensive coaching and mentoring through sport, and young people are engaging anywhere between two or three hours, maybe up to 15 to 20 hours a week. What they are able to do through that is get the additional developmental opportunities that go with sport, so it is not just about the physical literacy.

Coming back to your original question—is the value of sport recognised enough? I don’t think it is, and that is possibly because it has such a narrow definition in many people’s minds, or the natural perception of sport is just about physical literacy. It is not. There are a whole load of benefits that go with sport around individual development, mental wellbeing and social cohesion. All of those things come through sport when it is done well. What we see with our young people is that sport becomes something they engage with. It is fun to start with and, if you put some good coaching and mentoring around it, they learn new behaviours. They learn to think differently through that. It is by doing



HOUSE OF COMMONS

that that it creates new opportunities for them, and essentially that can change their life chances.

- Q6 **Chair:** Obviously you are in a very different position from Darren Henley, because he gets given an amount of money by the Government. There is always a big debate about whether that is enough or not. Greenhouse is a charity that has to go out and raise funds.

John Herriman: Yes.

Chair: Do you also bid for public money to support projects that you are doing and, if you do, how do you find that process?

John Herriman: Yes, we have bid for public money, and we have also received public money from Sport England. We have had money over the last three years that supported our school programmes, and then we have also had some capital funding that also supported the sports centre that we just opened in Marylebone.

What I would say, though, is that as a charity we are quite unique: 90% of our funding comes through private sources—trust grants, foundations or corporates—and only 10% of our funding has come through the statutory side. That is because we found it easier to access funding through corporates and private sources, rather than through Sport England.

Interestingly—we have been having these internal conversations—if we wanted to grow as a charity we think we would need to be able to access more statutory funding, but with all of the other challenges that go with Sport England around, let's say, falling National Lottery ticket sales, that funding is not as accessible as it probably was in the past.

- Q7 **Chair:** A final question from me before bringing the other members in. Matthew Syed has been very critical of Sport England. I don't want to jeopardise your future funding opportunities with Sport England, but his criticism seems to be that it is not outcomes-focused enough as an organisation, that it distributes funding but there is not enough focus on what the effect of that funding is. I would be interested if you want to make a comment on that. Is one of the reasons why you have had a relatively small amount of your income from funding bodies like Sport England that your programmes don't comfortably sit with the sort of work that they fund?

John Herriman: If I can take that last question first, one of the challenges that we have found historically—and we have only had three years of funding from Sport England to date—was that our focus is a very intensive intervention. We tend to work with lower volumes of young people, but the intervention itself is life changing for them. We know from research with Loughborough University that a young person on our programme is likely to spend eight days less truant a year and will get better grades, progress and attainment in maths and English, and also there will be better behaviours. Therefore, we are lower-volume, and I



think historically Sport England has probably been more focused on high levels of participation that for us is quite light-touch and is therefore not making the sort of life-changing intervention that sport could make. That is probably one of the things that Matthew was commenting on within that article.

Also, maybe one of the challenges he focused on was that Sport England has now changed its focus. It has become much more focused on mass participation and broader outcomes and looking at the social benefits of sport rather than just the physical activity or elite sport. There has been some diversion of funding so that it is not going into elite sport but is made more accessible to others, albeit that it is a smaller funding pot overall.

There have been changes within Sport England that may have started to address some of the points that Matthew has made. He was looking at a long-term piece in terms of how Sport England had a strategic effect in getting more people more active more often, and we are just seeing that having plateaued at the moment.

Q8 Jo Stevens: You said that you get 90% of your funding from private and corporate donors. What incentives are there for them to make those donations?

John Herriman: There are a range of things. If we look at trust grant foundations, it will be very much tied in with the core mission of whatever that sort of foundation trust might be. What they are looking for is that we do something in terms of defined outcomes and that we are able to prove those and, therefore, they will support us with funding. That is quite straightforward. You are just looking there to see that you have an alignment in terms of what our core mission is and what their core purpose is.

Then you move on to corporates. I think corporates are changing in the way that they are looking to fund or the reasons for funding. Historically—and we have benefited from this—there were a large number of corporates that would just give donations and they just wanted to see that you were doing something with the money. Now with the way the corporates are working, it becomes much more strategic in terms of the way that they are thinking. It becomes about maybe their customer groups. They will want to fund projects that are maybe linked to their core market.

I also think there is a third dimension, which is that they are now starting to see working with charities and CSR as something that is important to their employee engagement strategies. It is becoming harder to work with corporates for that reason, because we have to do more, essentially. We have to create more volunteering opportunities for them to get involved with charity, which is not a bad thing because that creates the capacity for us to then work with our young people or to help with our



HOUSE OF COMMONS

centre and to work with challenge events and those types of things, so the position is changing.

- Q9 **Jo Stevens:** Do you think there are any other incentives that the Government could provide for corporate donations, which don't operate at the moment, around maybe tax advantages or anything else?

John Herriman: I would have thought something around some tax advantages would definitely help, in terms of corporates wanting to support those types of areas. Again, when it comes to corporates you have to have an alignment, I suppose, with what it is that they are looking to have an impact on. That is probably going to relate to their core market, but things like tax breaks would undoubtedly make it a lot easier.

- Q10 **Jo Stevens:** Yes. In your experience, is there a noticeable difference in the quality of sporting programmes that are funded by public money and those funded by private money?

John Herriman: I have seen no distinction between the two, because what you tend to see is that the charities or the organisations that are running the programmes will run a programme of a particular quality and then they are able to tap into different funding sources. I cannot say that I have seen a particular distinction.

- Q11 **Jo Stevens:** Going back to public funding, you mentioned National Lottery ticket sales falling and the difficulties around public funding. What is your feeling about the legacy from the 2012 Olympics, in terms of what we thought the legacy might be and how it has turned out to be?

John Herriman: That is an interesting question. Our personal take on it at Greenhouse Sports is that we felt that there was a bit of a pregnant pause and it lost momentum immediately post 2012. I think that was because the Government strategy and then the Sport England strategy did not come out until after the Olympics. Therefore, there was just a delay, and there was a focus on club-level sport and NGBs, and I think people were waiting for the moment to come on the back of the gold rush effect, shall we say.

It isn't just about the gold rush effect. It is about community sport—yes, Olympic athletes are inspirational and, yes, you see an increased uptake in sports like cycling and hockey, but you have to make it work at the grassroots level. If you don't make it work at the grassroots level and you don't put in the infrastructure, you don't have the frameworks and you don't have the outcomes, so you have not created that enabling environment. I don't think we created that enabling environment quickly enough, basically.

Now, with the new Sport England strategy and now the focus on social outcomes, we are getting the focus back in the right place, but it has taken us a while.



- Q12 Jo Stevens:** Do you think that gap that you have described means that it will ultimately be less successful than it would have been had it been done straight on the back of the Olympics and there had not been that delay?

John Herriman: I don't necessarily think it will be less successful. It may just take longer to get to the end point, so it becomes more incremental. We have to recognise where we didn't quite get it right and it is important to learn from that. Then you can basically put the investment in the right places or change the strategies or the policies to make sure that things start to join up.

Another particular point—I am not sure this has been addressed yet—is there has been a lack of joined-up thinking across different Government Departments about the wider social benefits of sport, for example. I am sure my two colleagues would say exactly the same thing. What we see is some very siloed thinking within different Departments, for example within Education. Sport is dropping off the agenda to a degree within Education rather than increasing. You get an increased focus within DCMS, which is great, but the two should align, and they don't. There are lots of opportunities, I think, to create more joined-up thinking around policy and strategy to make sure that those start to come together.

- Q13 Jo Stevens:** My final question: obviously you are London-based and our two other witnesses are English-based, and we have a couple of Welsh MPs on this Committee. How much work, if any, is done across nations in the UK? Do you work with anybody in Wales or are they all operating in silos?

John Herriman: We work with a range of charities, and we don't work outside London. The reason for that is that we particularly focus on a very intensive coaching and mentoring model. We work with about 7,500 children a year, so we work with a lot of young people. Other charities might be national at that sort of scale, but our focus is very high-quality, very intensive and multiple outcomes, so—

- Q14 Jo Stevens:** All those children will be from London?

John Herriman: All those children will be from London, and from disadvantaged communities as well. We only work in areas of community disadvantage, but what we are able to do—and something we are doing more of—is to start sharing best practice with other charities. We are talking with lots of other charities about the stuff that they are doing and the work that we are doing, sharing our local research. We are just about to do another phase of our Loughborough research, to start looking at the links between sport and employability skills. We are talking to two or three different organisations about how we might work in partnership to do that piece of research, and also talking to Sport England, because it can play an important role within this, which is about sharing that best practice across the sector.

- Q15 Rebecca Pow:** I have a question picking up on some of the points about



HOUSE OF COMMONS

the strategy and the changed formula for sporting policy. How important do you think it is—and I know that wellbeing is one of the five key outcomes—to get tackling obesity for young children into that, and how could we do that? Do you think it is important that we should make that a priority? Surely people doing the sort of work that you do could help.

John Herriman: Yes. I am definitely going to agree with you. It is an important issue and we should be tackling it. We are working with local primary schools around the Marylebone area, where some of the schools have a particular challenge around childhood obesity. It is something that, yes, should be an absolute focus. One of the key things to be able to do with sport is to get engagement early, because you want the behaviour change very early, so working with young people, children at primary school level, and getting them into the habit of sport and physical activity is the most important thing.

There have been some good initiatives that have come on the back of that. We have had the sugar tax levy and the physical education sports grant for primary schools. That is helping young people to stay more active, particularly at the primary school level, and that will help to tackle—

Q16 **Rebecca Pow:** Are you actually seeing that? Because we are told one in every seven children or something is obese by the time they even get to school. Correct me—that is not quite the correct statistic, but it is a horrifying statistic.

John Herriman: Yes.

Q17 **Rebecca Pow:** In fact, I think it is higher than that—I suppose seven out of 10 or something. It is a horrifying statistic. It is not working yet, whatever we are doing. It is urgent; are you making it an urgent priority? We have already tried all these other things, like talking about doing some more sport at school. We need to have a set plan for it in the way that the sporting policy works. Are the Government helping?

John Herriman: It is something we are trying to tackle by working with primary schools, because we know it is important and the primary schools know it is important. The issue when it comes to Government policy and the Department for Education is that, yes, there has been an increased focus by putting more money into primary schools through the sugar tax levy, but it is quite a short-term intervention. We are seeing sport within schools drop down the priority agenda, and the focus is very much on the academics.

The way that we view the child, as you will have heard mentioned earlier, it that is the whole child. We are looking at the wider development of the whole child, and sport becomes a part of that. Because sport has effectively been sidelined slightly, albeit that more money has gone into it, it just becomes a discrete part of what is being delivered and there are no real hard outcomes from the schools' perspective that they are held accountable for, around things like tackling childhood obesity.



HOUSE OF COMMONS

There is a challenge there, and that is why I talk about joined-up Government thinking. Could that be something that somebody like Ofsted has to take much more interest in when it is looking at schools: what are the schools' strategies around tackling that sort of thing?

I also think we need to look at the long term, because the sugar tax levy is a short-term intervention, and not all schools but many primary schools will be using part-time sports coaches who will come into the schools so, effectively, they subcontract the delivery. My concern there is that over about two to three years, as they subcontract that delivery because it is the most effective way to deliver it at low cost, they are going to lose the capacity to deliver it themselves when maybe this grant or this additional funding starts to go. That is when you will have the real problem.

Q18 Ian C. Lucas: I live in Wrexham, which is in Wales. I want to talk about the lottery, which we have touched on to a certain extent. I was interested that John said that that wasn't a major source of funding. What I am finding in my area is that we have lots of initiatives in both cultural and sporting areas, but many of the organisations find the application process for lottery funding a barrier. Is that something that you encounter?

Darren Henley: We hope to make all of our application processes as open as possible. There is a real challenge in terms of National Lottery income. We have seen a lessening of National Lottery income, and that is an issue.

We do our best to work to get as many people as possible able to come to our grant-making systems. It is worth saying that all of our work around the Creative People and Places programme, which I talked about, is funded through the National Lottery, so a lot of our strategic funders are going in and seeing areas of need around groups of people who are not participating in arts and culture who we feel could benefit from that.

Some of the work that we are doing around developing the workforce, and the work we do around broadening diversity, is National Lottery-funded. The really crucial thing for us is for the value of the National Lottery to be understood.

Q19 Ian C. Lucas: Can I pick you up on one point, on openness? For years and years and years, I have pressed either Camelot or the National Lottery to disclose the information about how much is spent in individual constituencies on lottery tickets and how much is invested by the lottery. Disclosing that information is resisted like Horatius on the bridge. My suspicion is that this is a regressive system, in that most of the money is going to the well-off communities and it is being extracted from the poorer communities. Do you think there is any basis for that, and wouldn't it be best to just disclose the information if we are going to be open?



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Darren Henley: I cannot speak for Camelot; obviously we are a National Lottery distributor.

Q20 **Ian C. Lucas:** You speak for Arts Council England.

Darren Henley: From the Arts Council England's point of view, we now spend 75% of our National Lottery expenditure outside of London. Historically, that has gone from being 60:40, so we are very, very committed to investing the moneys in communities right across the country, and not just in major conurbations either. We want to make sure that we are there in smaller towns and rural communities as well.

Q21 **Ian C. Lucas:** It is just my frustration. I have seen excellent bids—in my personal judgment—rejected for local organisations that are doing a lot of good. It is incredibly frustrating. I have done the events, promoted to local charities, I have begged people to apply. I have been an MP for 17 years now, and I am very frustrated that the good organisations don't access as much funding as we would like.

You must hear that. I take your commitment to the regions. You have already talked about that, and obviously we like that—well, we do anyway—but I am still very frustrated.

Darren Henley: That data isn't available to us either.

Q22 **Ian C. Lucas:** Do you think it ought to be? I do—I'll support you.

Darren Henley: The interesting thing is what we would then do with that data.

Q23 **Ian C. Lucas:** This is a really important revenue stream and nobody will tell us the figures, and that makes me really suspicious.

Darren Henley: I don't know what they are either.

Q24 **Simon Hart:** Back in 2010 I was involved in an all-party group loosely entitled "learning outside the classroom", and one of the interesting things about that was discovering the huge number of charities all engaged with similar ambitions around sport and culture. It was open to everything—the Field Studies Council, the RSPB. Everybody had a little bit of a stake in this process, and the one thing that seemed to be frustrating them hugely was that there was a wealth of anecdotal evidence about the health benefits, the social benefits and the educational benefits that their particular niche was delivering, yet apparently no collective evidence. Nobody had sat down and collected everybody's anecdotal—and in some cases more than anecdotal—evidence into some kind of document that could then be put to Government. Is that still the case, eight years on? Is there still this sort of arms race between cultural and sporting charities?

John Herriman: Is it an arms race between charities? I don't think it necessarily is an arms race but, looking at the quality of outcomes, it has been one of the key challenges. It is one of the things that we have particularly focused in on. When you look back—and I am new to sports



in the last couple of years—there has been a lot of talk about the social benefits and the social outcomes that sport can deliver. But one of the challenges has been a set of hard evidence or a hard evidence base that has been able to justify, let's say, evidence-based practice and expenditure.

I think that is because there has been a lot of focus on internal monitoring and internal evaluation of programmes by charities, which I am not saying isn't good, but what you also need to have alongside that is external validation, because you need to be able to get some hard data around the outcomes in the sector in which you are working to prove what it is that you do.

Talking particularly from a sports perspective, and this is a personal perspective, one of the reasons why sport for the development sector and sport for social outcomes has found it hard to justify some of the things that it wants to do is that it has not always had those hard outcomes or that evidence. It is probably beholden on the sport sector itself to prove the wider social outcomes.

Q25 Simon Hart: But isn't the problem exactly that? There are literally hundreds, probably thousands of charities often delivering fantastic outcomes for relatively small numbers of people, and they have some brilliant evidence, but nobody has actually collected it. There is no collective endeavour that enables the sector to do that—and I think it is about much more than sport, by the way. To my mind, it is anything that gets people out of the traditional confines of a classroom and opens up new horizons. I don't think we should be too restricted by that. But how do we embrace this collective endeavour in a way that leaves Government with no option but to take note of it?

John Herriman: Part of it is from a policy perspective, and I think this is where Sport England does good work, because it has looked at the outcomes and has now created a generic set of outcomes around physical, individual wellbeing, mental wellbeing, social community and economic development, so that is a good framework. It gives a framework for charities to measure themselves against.

It is then down to individual charities and organisations to do some of their own research to prove the outcomes that they are delivering at the coalface. By way of an example, within Greenhouse Sports we focus in on schools. Therefore, it is about sport and it is about physical literacy. But one of the things that we needed to be able to demonstrate was the hard outcomes that are valuable to headteachers in schools, which are educational outcomes. We needed to be able to make the link between sport and educational outcomes, which we did through the Loughborough research and the improvements in progress, attainment and behaviours and lower levels of truancy.

Q26 Simon Hart: Before I come back to that, is this the same in the non-sporting arena?



HOUSE OF COMMONS

Darren Henley: I recognise what you are talking about, because you can have a plethora of initiatives, and it is about understanding how they come together. One of the things we have done is that we now have a series of cultural education partnerships up and down the country.

What we discovered was that there were a lot of organisations that were delivering, as you say, very, very good work, but maybe they weren't talking to each other—maybe they were over-delivering in one school but under-delivering in another. By bringing them together and getting them to talk to each other, and developing a strategy for that place, we are able to bring that together in a much more sensible way so they can then talk to us as a potential funder. They can talk to Government. They can also talk to local authorities, who remain a key player in this as well.

Deborah Williams: From our perspective, that is exactly what the Creative Diversity Network does. The core broadcasters in the UK, alongside the production community, all sit under the same banner. That is sharing their learning and their experience, and it is my job to figure out how to turn that into an industry response and how to make sure that, as an industry, we are best representing everything we need to represent. That is about diversity, but in its broadest sense.

One of the things I would suggest is that sectors need to do it for themselves. There needs to be a sense of generosity around coming together and saying, "Actually, this is the big picture and these are the things that we want to fundamentally achieve. We can do that together and everyone will contribute as they need to". That does not remove the idea of competition, because I think that is really important, but the end outcome is something that we are agreed on and that we need to work towards.

Q27 **Simon Hart:** There was a suggestion—I remember when we were looking at this—that because so many of these charities are primarily dependent on private money rather than public money, there were an awful lot of applications going in from similar sounding charities with similar looking objectives to quite cynical funders. Therefore, the ability to get people to talk to each other and share best practice was tempered by the economic realities of where the money was coming from. Is that a problem?

Deborah Williams: The Creative Diversity Network is mainly private investment, so it is a membership organisation and the members pay a membership fee. I do recognise that that is something that historically, particularly around culture, has been an issue. But a lot of the work the Arts Council has been doing over the last five to 10 years around communities coming together in different strands, beginning to get an understanding and then working collectively—whether that is on funding or investment or a seat at the table—is new, but I think it has become something that people are getting used to the idea and concept of and are beginning to run with. Creative People and Places is great example of that.



Q28 Simon Hart: My final element of this is the frustration, from where I am sat—I think you have partially answered this—that just in the course of this conversation we have talked about areas that impact on the Department for Education, on devolved regions, on the Home Office when it comes to crime reduction, on DCMS, and suddenly almost every Government Department has a stake in this. I remember the problem that we encountered eight or nine years ago was the fact that every Government Department said, “It is a really good idea. We are fully behind you, but it is not our problem” and here we are having the same conversation again.

Deborah Williams: I don’t work in Government. I am not a civil servant. I never have been, so I could not possibly comment, but I do think that is reasonably—

Simon Hart: You could be a civil servant.

Deborah Williams: The way that we are working, and what I have begun to understand over the past 15 years, is that approaching Government Departments with micro issues is not helpful. You are passionate about something, but the person you are talking to may not have any idea about it, so the question is, how do you take that into something bigger and into fundamental understanding and begin to understand what their priorities are within their Departments? With the work that I am doing, BEIS and DCMS work incredibly well together, and they are incredibly supportive. There are other Departments that are not so much.

Therefore I am navigating how we begin to have a conversation about diversity in skills, diversity in education and diversity in higher education, and so beginning to think about how we can roll up some of the big issues that have been brought to our attention and have conversations within Government.

Darren Henley: We do have examples of where Government Departments work together, so BEIS and DCMS do work very well together on creative industries, and that is owned by the Secretaries of State in a very positive way. A good example of where DfE and DCMS work together is in music education, which is owned by Ministers in each Department.

A layer of complexity within the arts and cultural world that I would add in is that obviously local authorities remain very big investors in their locality. One of the challenges for us is that each of those local authorities has a separate set of challenges now, and they are very bespoke to their particular areas. Some of them may be asset-rich but revenue-poor. Some of them may have arts and culture at the heart of their economic regeneration but others may not, so we are now having to develop a very bespoke relationship with each one of those. Again, that puts in an extra layer of complexity whereby each of your constituencies will be different.



Chair: I want to bring in Rebecca Pow and then Giles Watling. Just to let everybody know, at midday there will be a minute's silence to mark the Finsbury Park mosque attack 12 months ago. The Division Bell will go at 12 noon. I would ask people to stand for a minute's silence, and then the Division Bell will go after a minute and we will resume at that point, so that will be in about half an hour's time.

Q29 **Rebecca Pow:** I want to talk specifically about the cultural sectors and to look at the role that you think local authorities play in providing culture. Is this high enough up their agenda, and what do you think their restrictions are now? Because I am seeing—well, let's hear what you have to say and then I have some examples from my own constituency.

Darren Henley: Sure. I think local authorities are an important partner. When you add up all the money they are, even in these times of austerity, still making significant contributions to art and culture, for instance through museums and libraries in their localities.

My observation, having now met a lot of local authorities up and down the country, is that they are able to make choices. There are some leaderships in local authorities who see arts and culture as being absolutely central to how they are defining their places. For example, if you go to Plymouth and talk to the leader of the council there he will tell you that the future narrative there is all about arts and culture. I mentioned Sunderland earlier, and Sunderland has now absolutely seen arts and culture as a way of redefining the place, and that is very, very positive.

There are other local authorities who do not see it as important, and that could be for a number of reasons. First, they may not traditionally have had the cultural infrastructure in that place, so they may not see that as being important, and, secondly, they may feel there are other issues and they just put it down the pecking order.

My view is that arts and culture are absolutely vital in redefining places around this country, whether they be rural communities or post-industrial communities. I think there is a sense of creativity—actually recognising people's creativity in a place, but also taking it and telling that story. In the Chair's constituency, Folkestone has redefined itself completely around arts and culture and we have a new national portfolio organisation there that is doing great work and changing a place that needed that infusion.

What I would say is that arts and culture are not just about making it a great place to live and work—that is really important, but there is an economic argument as well, and that is—

Q30 **Rebecca Pow:** Yes, is it important to say to the local authorities that do not have it yet that you have to make an economic argument?

Darren Henley: Absolutely, and I always caveat it by saying that we are about investing in great arts and culture, but we have to make



HOUSE OF COMMONS

arguments to people to enable us to have that money to make those investments. What I am seeing in some very enlightened places is that the leader of the council quite often has the economic brief and the cultural brief. In those sorts of places that is aligned very, very effectively, because they realise that it is not just about getting a company to come and move into a place.

I was talking to the chief executive of Exeter Council. His title is actually chief executive and director of growth, and he says, "Everything I see is through a growth lens". What he does is, when an incoming company wants to invest in that area and goes into Exeter, is he takes them first to the museum and he says, "This is a museum with internationally important collections. We are very proud of it. The Arts Council has invested in it and it is actually our place, so I could imagine you coming and bringing your workers here and they would want to live in this place". We have to create places where people want to live and be a proper community.

Q31 Rebecca Pow: Yes, we have a museum in Taunton that would be an example of that. They would be very pleased if it got mentioned here, Mr Chairman.

Darren Henley: The Museum of Somerset.

Rebecca Pow: The Museum of Somerset got a significant grant, but it has grown its visitor numbers from something like 30,000 to over 100,000, so that is really helping Taunton. My experience is that you are also relying on an awful lot of local voluntary bodies to try to get all these things off the ground. The theatre in Taunton, for example, would like to expand but there are a lot of volunteers having to get behind it in order to even get it the attention it needs for them to think about the huge expansion projects that might work.

Darren Henley: I think the Brewhouse is very well led as an organisation.

Rebecca Pow: It is now, yes.

Darren Henley: Yes, I know it had a troubled time at one stage, but it has really good chairing and a very good chief executive. She has driven the revenue there, which I think is exciting. Again, there is a very supportive district council as well, which has been very, very important.

What I observe right across everything we do in the arts and culture sector, whether it be a music education hub, a library or an arts organisation, is that it is about leadership. The quality of the leadership is important in places, and also the quality within organisations. One of the things we want to do more is to invest to develop that cadre of leadership within the arts and cultural world, so we have more leaders coming through who are even better at running our organisations.

Q32 Rebecca Pow: How can you do that, though? How would you actually do



that?

Darren Henley: We will have programmes where we invest in leadership training. We will do management development for them. We will work with them to develop skills in that area. One of the things that has historically happened is that you might have a leadership that was good at a particular art form, and then they are promoted and we have not given them that support. Coming from a business background, I saw people in businesses given training all the way through, so that if they come to lead the company they wouldn't just be head of production but would have a fuller picture. We want to do that much more. Part of having a sustainable and resilient arts and culture sector is having high-quality leadership.

Q1 **Rebecca Pow:** Another aspect of it is that when local organisations get a project off the ground they are quite often very much controlled, or the future of what happens is controlled, by the planning system. Do you see that as a problem? If you don't have an enlightened council and planning committee—and it happens in Taunton regularly—it could hamper the development if you do not have the vision.

Darren Henley: One of the things that we are quite often doing, working in local areas—we have nine offices across the country, so we have a national perspective but we have local teams working around the country—is working with the local authority to help them, and we often put the seed funding in to help them develop a cultural strategy for their place. That is the first thing, because when you have that cultural strategy, exactly as you say, other departments within a local authority that might not be interested in it then have to respond to that in terms of planning, long-term economic growth or environmental issues. Those things can actually become part of the cultural strategy, and where we see that happen, the question I often ask people is: what do you want to be famous for in this place as a funder? How can we invest? Everybody cannot have everything all the time in every place, so how can we drill down to what will make your place special, where we can go on a journey, where we can co-invest and grow? When we understand that, some of the other things then tend to fall away and come good.

Q33 **Rebecca Pow:** Do you ever see yourself linking up with sport?

Darren Henley: Yes, absolutely, I am—

Rebecca Pow: For example, we have Somerset County Cricket Club in the heart of Taunton. One could possibly say that there is a lot of space there not being used for part of the year. Could you link art and sport more closely?

Darren Henley: Definitely. For me, the arts do not sit in some sort of silo over here. I am interested in arts and sport, in arts and science, in arts and tech, in arts and engineering. I want all of those sorts of things. They are all possible because art is a part of everyday life. There is a lot we can learn as well, and that is really interesting. In terms of what John



has been describing about the school world and sport, I think there are a lot of similarities there with the arts in education role as well.

Q34 Rebecca Pow: Thank you. I should just register my interest with my husband being the Chairman of Somerset County Cricket Club, in case anybody picks me up on that.

One more question, just touching on rural issues: are we making sure that the rural sectors don't miss out with our arts and culture, especially, for example, in Somerset, with an ageing population, many of whom cannot travel to the big centres?

Darren Henley: There are two points you raise there. 17% of people live in rural communities and about 15% of our investment goes into rural communities, so it is not quite there, but there is still a sizeable amount.

The interesting thing I hear more and more is about travel as a challenge. One of the barriers to participating in anything—and that includes arts and culture—is for rural communities where a bus service does not exist in the evenings or there is no train service. That is a real challenge.

This is one of the areas we are trying to look at. We spend a lot of time thinking about the talent pipeline and talking about younger people, but we do have ageing populations. There are a lot of things that we can do around arts and culture, wellbeing and social prescribing. There is some work we are doing with UCL on prescribing museums, which is really interesting. In London and Kent they are looking at a research project there. We are seeing some strong evidence around lower body strength in dancing for over 75s; one of the big challenges for the NHS is that people fall and they break bones, so getting them to dance regularly—we have really good data on this—changes their lives. These are things that happen in all sorts of communities.

Specifically in rural communities, I am very keen that we use technology to link people up as well. There are great opportunities there. One of the things we have seen with things like MT Live is that you can have the National Theatre or the Royal Opera House in village halls now, and I think that is really exciting. We are funding more of the things that enable us to take those sorts of projects out around the place. Rural communities are very important to us—it cannot all be about big cities.

Q35 Giles Watling: I should also declare an interest, inasmuch as I appeared at the Brewhouse Theatre with Kate O'Mara many years ago and played Hercules, but I used to work out in those days.

Darren Henley: I had a backstage tour. That was all I managed.

Giles Watling: I have just recently been working with an excellent chap called Chris Turner, who has the London Bus Theatre Company. He has been trying to engage with local kids who are at the age when they need help. He was doing some filming and we were doing some filming in a

school the weekend before last. He had great difficulty, then he raised I think it was £250,000 through the Big Lottery Fund.

Are you proactive in seeking people, or do you wait for people to come to you?

Darren Henley: It is a mixture of both. Clearly, we are an open access programme, so anybody can come to us, but we do see a role for the Arts Council as not just being a grant-making body. We see ourselves very much as a development agency, and that is something I believe quite passionately in. As I say, we have teams across the country that will go into areas and communities with expertise and will bring people together and develop opportunities for people. They then have to come into the funding system and make an application alongside everybody else, but we are very, very keen to develop possibilities.

One of the things I think we have is a convening power to bring people together and have those initial conversations. The other thing that we have is—using rural communities as an example—if you are in Northumberland or if you are in Cornwall some of the challenges you are going to face are very similar, but you don't get any opportunities to talk to each other. However, we can say that the wheel does not have to be reinvented simultaneously in each of these places. We can start to bring people together, so that we have networks of people who come together.

We are interested in where we can do new things. One of the challenges is that I always want to make sure we are not just super-serving one set of people. We need to always be challenging ourselves to go out and work with different sets of people. One of the examples—we mentioned sport just now—would be our programme called Heart of Glass, which is one of our national portfolio organisations in St Helens. It is based at the rugby club in St Helens, which is a big cultural icon in the centre of the town. We decided we would have the most effect by talking to people who may not have considered cultural activities, by going and working with the rugby club.

Q36 Giles Watling: You don't impose your idea of culture on to an area. For instance, if you were to come to Clacton you would find a couple of great theatres, the Princes and the West Cliff Theatre, but between Ipswich and Colchester, and anything to the right, is the Tendring district. We don't have that much in the cultural offer there, but there are some very enthusiastic groups there—the Theatre of Lemmings, London Bus Theatre Company—who are all trying to pull something together. As I mentioned earlier, it forever seems like a patchwork.

One of the problems with funding—as I know having been involved with commercial theatre all my life—is that it often comes with strings attached, particularly with commercial funding, because he who pays the piper calls the tune to a certain extent. How do you guarantee artistic freedom?

Darren Henley: Artistic freedom is important for us, and we don't limit artistic freedom. There are strings attached to our funding. There are objectives that we set out to do—working with children and young



people, for example. We ask our organisations and 80% of our national portfolio organisations to do that. We make that requirement. Having a diversity action programme is a requirement. We want to make sure that we are working with organisations that have a workforce that is reflective of the way England looks and feels in the 21st century, but are also producing a breadth of work that reflects that.

There are those sorts of funding restrictions we have in place but, in terms of creating the arts, we are an enabler. We are a facilitator. That is what we are. Therefore, in our DNA is all of that: artistic freedom of expression, but also innovation. One of the things we have to say is that when you are creating great art, whatever the art form is, you have to be able to have a go and see if it works, so innovation—

Q37 **Giles Watling:** You would say you listen to what people say on the ground?

Darren Henley: Yes, absolutely.

Q38 **Giles Watling:** So people are allowed to hold up that mirror, because with a lot of the problems that we have these days, one of the issues has been the closing of all those pubs—the 50 pubs a week or something that we were closing some years ago. Those were centres of community, where people no longer come together. I see the arts as a way of getting back in there and bringing people together again and supporting communities to start talking to each other again, and talking over the garden wall because there is a production going on. How do you get out and into those communities? Do you send people there physically?

Darren Henley: Yes, we do. I have mentioned our Creative People and Places programme. We are very proud of this programme because it is a different way of us working with people. It is about this idea of co-curation.

This programme looks at places of quite high deprivation, quite often, but also really low engagement in arts and culture. What we do is have that conversation with people and say, “What do you want?” It takes time, because people don’t have a habit of engaging with the arts and they say, “It’s not for me”. We say, “We think it is for you, but you just haven’t found the right bit for you yet”.

The other thing that is very interesting, and I am very passionate about, is our library network. I think libraries are a great source—a network of buildings across the country in very good locations. They are staffed by very knowledgeable individuals who want to share. They are digitally connected, and they are very egalitarian. They are very open. Often, people who may find a theatre or an art gallery quite an imposing or scary place to start with are very comfortable with a library, so we are now funding libraries to put on networks of cultural activities, which again are speaking to different communities who might not otherwise feel that arts and culture are for them.



Q39 **Giles Watling:** Yes, I have your book “The Arts Dividend” on my desk, which I regularly dip into—and excellent it is too—and you say that you are after a sustained, strategic approach to cultural investment, which pays big dividends. How do you hope to achieve that?

Darren Henley: I think we need to always make the case for the value of it first, so a lot of my time is making that argument about economic value. We are increasingly thinking about places, so it is not just about the whole country but understanding how we have a relationship in different places. Also, looking at those other areas, it is interesting that there are now good benefits around arts connected with health and wellbeing—we understand those benefits—criminal justice and particularly education. I am very passionate about making sure we have a talent pipeline in this country that enables us to still be a world leader in the creative industries, and that is something that is very important.

Q40 **Giles Watling:** Are you looking at public-private investment?

Darren Henley: Absolutely. One of the things we are thinking about now is that although we have traditionally been a grant-based body, we are starting to dip our toe into the water of understanding how we might co-invest with other people. We have something called the Arts Impact Fund, which we work with Bank of America Merrill Lynch on, which is a complete funding model, and we have tested that. I am very interested to see how there may be other co-investment models that we can develop over time as well. It is not to say we won’t do grants. It is about saying, “How can we take the money we have and make it go as far as possible to benefit as many people as possible?”

Giles Watling: Good. Thank you very much.

Q41 **Julie Elliott:** Thank you for those things you said about my city of Sunderland. I want to talk about participation in cultural activities, particularly in poorer communities. Do you think there is a difference between the level of participation in urban areas and rural areas and, if there is, why is it?

Deborah Williams: I would say it is about the opportunities that are available to people fundamentally, first of all. In an urban space you are more than likely to have a selection, a variety of ways for you to engage, which is less likely in an urban environment. Having said that, technology, once we get broadband sorted, is going to be our fundamental friend in how people consume content, how they make content and how they distribute it among themselves.

That is something that we are seeing much more of in broadcasting, and it changes representation. It changes how people see themselves, see their experiences and then find ways to engage. That is a fundamental of what television and broadcasting is about, and, as we begin to stretch across and broaden definitions of viewers and viewing and consumers, it is becoming clear to me that that is something we need to think about much more and get a better understanding of. It is about how we can



support people to know that the opportunities exist to try to find ways for them to engage on their own terms.

Q42 Julie Elliott: You mentioned transport earlier, Darren, but transport is an issue in urban areas as well as rural areas. Are there any other issues that could be addressed to help participation in rural areas?

Darren Henley: I think that I would echo what Deborah said about opportunity. There is a challenge, because it is more expensive to put infrastructure into where there are a smaller number of people than where there are a large number of people, so I think that is absolutely right. That does not mean we should not do it, and it does not mean we should not try to do it.

One of the things that I am quite interested in is those rural areas—in the north-east, for example, I have been spending a lot of time up in Ashington, Bedlington and Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, where we have a programme called BAIT. It is interesting, because you have towns there that were mining towns and the mines aren't there, so the level of employment opportunity is quite low. What I worry is that people then don't have the disposable income to do these things and to engage. It strikes me that we are run by a group of people with a shared cultural language—there is a set of cultural insiders in this country, and if we are going to give opportunity to absolutely everybody then we need everybody to be able to be a cultural insider. They need to be able to share cultural experiences, and they ought to have that conversation with each other so that, when they get to their 20s, they can have a conversation about a job and they are not disadvantaged. Therefore, one thing that is very important is that we give young people a set of experiences and learning that is common everywhere.

It is fascinating; if you look at the website of Prince George's school, on the homepage it says, "Every child from the age of three can do drama and dance and art and design and music and learn a foreign language, all taught by specialist teachers". If it is good enough for the future King of England it should be good enough for every child in every school in this country, whatever their background. We do not have enough money to make that happen ourselves, but we will always go on talking about it and we will always go on making the interventions where we can.

When you see a parent who is culturally literate with a little bit of money, what they are actually are doing is making a series of interventions in their young person's life: "Do you want to play the piano? If you don't like the piano try the trumpet. We will take you to a museum. We will read you a story at night, and you can go and join the library", all of those sorts of things, and we need to make sure those things are available to absolutely everybody. That is how we will make the biggest difference, whether they live in a rural community or an urban community.



Deborah Williams: I think it is about enterprise as well. There is an issue around encouraging entrepreneurialism, which this industry thrives on, and that is important. It comes back to the local authority question: what can people do as they are planning and thinking about their business centres? Their creative and cultural offer should be a part of that conversation as well in any space, whether that is urban or rural. For the people who are going to run the future libraries, museums and theatres, their brains are alive and they want to be doing things. They will be starting businesses, and they will be trying stuff out on their own terms very locally. I think that is something that needs to be thought about much more—enterprise as a way for the cultural industry to continue to thrive, especially for people who ordinarily may not be able to go into further or higher education, if they are not educationally literate in that respect, but who have masses of ideas and potential to develop business and to grow business in that way.

Darren Henley: We need to see that talent pipeline. I think the creative industries are very clear in what they need. We need to make sure that BEIS and DCMS are talking to DfE to ensure that the young people who are coming out of our schools have the skills that are necessary for us to be a world-beating 21st-century technology-driven country.

Q43 **Julie Elliott:** Do you think then, following on from that, that the education system in the country is doing enough to provide all these opportunities for our young people? Is it getting worse? Is it getting better?

Deborah Williams: I think you can never do enough, because you do not know. I have a five year-old nephew, for example, and one week he is interested in astronomy and the next he is interested in Lego, so you are trying to keep up with everything that he is interested in and trying to entertain him. It is incredibly difficult, and I am not a teacher. Having said that, I do not have a degree, I do not have an A-level, I do not have an O-level, and I started a very long time ago in a part of the country that no one knows. So it works both ways. It comes back to what we were saying at the beginning: education is a whole child-thing and a whole-person thing. If we set ourselves up for education being a very narrow understanding, then we are heading for a fall.

Q44 **Julie Elliott:** Just in recent times I have certainly seen a lot of the musical things that are available to people in schools, and extra dance classes and all of those things, become things people pay for rather than just things that are in the curriculum. Have you any thoughts on that?

Deborah Williams: As Darren was saying earlier, it is about the leadership, and it is about how people prioritise. Some people will always prioritise numbers and figures over a cultural offer. It is about finding the people who do the cultural offers best and understand that as a priority. There is fantastic specialist school in Tower Hamlets that I have a long-standing relationship with. It is a Muslim girls' school, and they do culture all the time—that is just what they do. They were heavily involved with



the all-female trilogy with the Donmar Warehouse, and for them that was important, as opposed to a school maybe in Urmston or in Salford, where statistics are quite important to them. It is about the leadership and it is about understanding what culture is and how it can play a role in the long-term lives and careers of our next generations. It is also about understanding that it does not stop. Education does not stop when you hit 16 or 18 or 21, it continues, and we have to have a better understanding of how we continue to learn. I am still learning at my age, which I am not going to disclose, but I am still learning at my age.

Julie Elliott: I wouldn't, it's on the public record.

Deborah Williams: No, trust me, you don't want to know, but it is very important that we understand that it is a continuation, that things do not come to a stop.

Darren Henley: We would be unambiguous in saying that art, design, dance, drama and music should be part of every child's education, exactly the same as sport. It is part of creating a rounded human being. One of the things we are very passionate about is early years provision, and I think that is very important. We have a new project where we are going to create a 25-year talent plan. We are working in Leicester with De Montfort University on this, and one of the things we noticed was that Government funding is in cycles—three, four, five years—but obviously people do not live their lives in Government budget cycles. They live their lives as lives. What we are doing there is taking a large group of children every year and working to make these interventions in their lives all the way through. We are going to evaluate it all the way through and look at the differences that it has made in those young people's lives, because we believe in it very passionately but, as we heard earlier, some of the data has not been there.

One of the challenges to our sector is that we are good at telling stories—we are great on narrative—but sometimes we are not so hot on data. So we are trying to get that long-form piece of research, because funding for research tends to be in short-term governmental cycles, so we want to have that piece of generational research. It is going to take a long time, but we believe it is the right thing to do.

- Q45 **Ian C. Lucas:** I think we all agree around the table about the cultural importance of keeping these activities going, and my sense is that there are certain places where there is a good working relationship, for example between local government and local community organisations, cultural organisations and sporting organisations, but that is not always the case. That is certainly my perception. At the moment I see, for example, the music service that we have in my constituency being withdrawn, which, to me, appears to be a very short-term measure that does not build a long-term, sustainable answer to economic decline in my communities. Could you provide some examples of places that do this well, where the local authority and the cultural organisations are able to create the capacity to deal with the difficult economic situation that we



HOUSE OF COMMONS

have at the moment?

Darren Henley: I can. One other group who are absolutely vital, which I will just add to the ones that you used as an example, is the university sector.

Ian C. Lucas: Yes. I was just going to ask you about that.

Darren Henley: I do not speak for the university sector. I am not part of it and we do not directly fund it, but we have an incredibly amazing network of universities across this country that are real custodians of their places. I often see them being the people who step in when local authorities are under particular financial pressure. They can provide strategic leadership. In quite a lot of cases now they are running national portfolio organisations for us. I think they are very important.

In terms of places around the country that I get excited about—I will miss some out, so I apologise in advance—one of the bigger places, Manchester, has done this for a long time. I think if you are looking at the narrative of Manchester over the last 20 years, art and culture activity has been at the heart of it. There has been infrastructure support. There is funding support on a revenue basis, and a lot of local authority time and effort goes into it, but interestingly that is in partnership with the Arts Council.

If you take the physical leadership in Manchester, they will say they do not want to do it all themselves. They want to work with a national body, because that means their decision making is better, more cost-effective and easier. I should declare our interest—we are based in Manchester. We have 200 people in our headquarters.

There are other places—I know I have mentioned them before. Sunderland is interesting, because you have a university there that is absolutely central to what we do and I think the University of Sunderland is a real positive there.

St Helens is very interesting. I mentioned it earlier. We have the library service there, which is of a very high standard. Also, the local authority recognises the importance of the library in delivering a lot of its core programmes. It means that we have been able to invest in that library service, and I think it is quite interesting that the library service has said, “What can we do to see activities that we can do artistically and creatively?” It has brought artists in to do that, which has been interesting.

I mentioned Plymouth earlier. It is an exciting place. I think there are some interesting things going on in the west midlands at the moment as well, and it feels like there is a really positive move there. Coventry, as UK City of Culture, is a great example. Hull was 2017. It was such a success that I almost feel we have taken it for granted. I declare an interest—I went to university in Hull, so I lived there for three years. We have had some conversations in Hull in the last 12 months, and there are



HOUSE OF COMMONS

things that I never thought 25 years ago people would be doing and saying in Hull. It is a real change for the people who live there, and I think that is what is exciting—it is not just people like us from outside who are talking about it. It has to be meaningful, because it has to be the people who live there who feel that there is a positive change. 95% of people in Hull engaged in a cultural activity during the City of Culture year. That is an amazing statistic.

- Q46 **Giles Watling:** Just one quick question. Not what you can do but what can we do as Government, as Parliament, to make cultural programmes more accessible? Have you any suggestions?

Darren Henley: Celebrate them and talk about them. I do not say that in a flippant way, but sometimes we take for granted all the amazing things that have happened in different places until the moment when it is in jeopardy, and then suddenly everyone cares about it. I think people do care about it, but they forget sometimes to say how amazing it is in their lives.

- Q47 **Giles Watling:** So we need to keep the debate going.

Darren Henley: Absolutely.

- Q48 **Chair:** Could I just ask the panel their views on measuring social impact? What should we look to measure and record that will be the best communicator of the benefits that sports and cultural programmes are generating? Perhaps, John Herriman, I will ask you first. What do you think the most important measurements are that you seek to gather around the projects that Greenhouse is involved with?

John Herriman: You have to look at it across a number of different metrics, and it is not just a simple metric of participation. The number of people being involved in sport is important, but that is just a very narrow metric or lens to look through. What you have to be able to do is then look across a range of different outcomes, because that is what we know sport can deliver.

A one-minute silence was observed.

On resuming—

Chair: Thank you. You were discussing a possible solution.

John Herriman: The outcomes have to measure all of the benefits, because if they do not then you obviously lack the evidence base, and then you have nothing to fund and support. The critical thing is that you have to go across a range of different outcomes. We now have those headline outcomes that have come through from the Sport England



frameworks that we are now using. You have to look at physical wellbeing, which is obvious within sport, but then you have to look at individual wellbeing. It is about looking at the deeper aspects of the development of the sport as well as mental wellbeing. Mental health is a particular challenge, particularly among young people but also in older generations. Sport is great at both ends, in terms of supporting young people in schools with the stresses of exams and so on, but also at the other end in supporting older generations with things like dementia.

On social community development, there are some fantastic things, for example, that sport can do around social cohesion. It breaks down all of those boundaries. There are not many things that break down all the barriers that exist within some elements of our society. Again, social cohesion can come as a result of it, and you can measure that sort of thing.

Finally, you have the economic development benefits of sport, because that can support a local community. Ultimately, these initiatives have to be self-sustaining at some point.

Q49 Chair: Do you think in your experience, say looking at sport in schools, that enough schools enter into a project where they say, "What we are going to do is try to use this project as a study to see whether this intervention is going to improve attainment in class", or "If we are talking about obesity, is it going to improve the physical health of the children taking part"?

John Herriman: I don't think so, no. There are some good projects that are going on out there. For example, in primary school you will have probably all heard of the daily mile, and they can measure the benefits of that. At a wider level, the wider benefits of sport are not recognised. It seems a very traditional element of the curriculum has been all about physical literacy and physical education—running around a sports field, keeping the young people active, and almost exhausting them before they get back in the classroom. That is not what sport is about.

You get all the additional benefits of sport around teamwork and leadership, problem solving, creativity and communication skills, and you see all those benefits in good sports programmes. It is one of the things that we are looking to measure, because we know those benefits exist. You can make a direct comparison between a state school that does not do some of those things—maybe it does not have the funding, maybe it does not have the focus, maybe it is not within the curriculum, maybe it is not measured by Ofsted—and a private school or an independent school, where they will do all of those things automatically and they will be integrated into the education of a young person. That is ultimately what we have to try to do to make sure that all those opportunities are available to our young people in our state schools.

Q50 Chair: For this inquiry that is one of the fundamental questions, because if that data is not being gathered it is very hard to make the case from it.



What you are relying on is the will of the people involved who believe this works and therefore want to support it, but there is no database that sits underneath it that proves that it is making a positive difference.

John Herriman: I completely agree with you, and that evidence base is lacking. One of the things we have not been able to make yet, I do not think—and I do not think there is a complete consensus on this—is the case for sport for social outcomes even in an educational setting. We were one of the first to do the research with Loughborough University to be able to demonstrate that a young person on a Greenhouse programme, relative to their non-Greenhouse peer in the same school, spent eight days less truant a year and had increased a third of a grade in English, and it was a 40% increase in maths. We can measure that, but nobody has gone into the sufficient level of detail to be able to do it, and that is very difficult to do at a meta level. You have to do it at a micro level within a school and it is then, I think, reliant on charities and organisations to get in and try to measure that sort of impact. When you have that case study, that pilot that is externally validated, other schools will then start to look at our research—and that is what we are seeing—and go, “There is a wider benefit of sport other than just physical that is going to be as part of a school improvement initiative”.

Q51 **Chair:** Certainly, thinking of education, the whole switch in educational strategy after 2010 to using phonics as the basis for teaching English in schools was based on pilots and studies and what was believed to be a very strong evidential base for making that switch, but I do not get any sense of similar pilots or studies being commissioned around sport in schools to inform future policymaking.

John Herriman: I completely agree with you there as well, yes. There is a lack of research into evidence looking at the benefits of sport, both within wider society but also particularly in schools. There is an all-party parliamentary group that is looking at children and healthy childhood, and that has identified, going back 20 or 30 years, the demise of school physical education. It has become very siloed.

You talk about physical education in schools and people have this very traditional perception of what it is, which is running around the sports field. I think the general sense within education is they have to change the perception of sport so it is about the whole child. It therefore becomes part of the wider development of the whole child within the whole school in the same way as an arts programme or a music programme. At the moment we do not have that evidence base, which is one of the reasons why we are looking to do some work with Loughborough again.

We want to get underneath the wider skills that schools know children need when they leave school to get into employability or to get into university or get into college. We know that sport can help develop some of those skills. It is just that we cannot find that research base out there, so there needs to be much more of that sort of lower-level, very focused



research. You can only do it on a relatively small scale, because what we are doing as a charity is comparing data for, let's say, 150 to 200 children within a school, which is our data. We then have to crash that data with the school's data, so there is a lot of analysis that needs to go into that and it is quite labour-intensive. There are reasons it has not been done before, but we have to do it.

- Q52 **Chair:** Do you think that can be applied as well to looking at issues like—not just in schools—dealing with anti-social behaviour and gang violence in communities? I know there have been studies based on the work rugby has done in looking at rehabilitating young offenders.

John Herriman: Yes, and I completely agree. I will give you a certain example of one of our young people. Basically, seven or eight years ago, and he will not mind me telling you this—Nathan is the chap—he was just about to be expelled from school because of poor behaviours, his family were into gang-related crime, drugs, guns, and he was right on the edge. That day he just stabbed another young person in the leg with a pencil, so the school were ready to get rid of him, as in they did not have any real way that they thought they could get him back on track.

What we were then able to do, through sports coaching and mentoring, was engage that young person, Nathan, back into sport, and then what he was able to learn through sport gave him an alternative to the other life that he was starting to get involved in, but it also taught him about confidence and respect and all those sorts of behaviours. He learned that basically in the sports hall and by playing basketball. Then through that he was able to take those behaviours that he learned, and he made that link between behaviour and performance and his performance and his behaviour. Then he took that outside the sports hall, into the corridor, into the classroom, outside the school gates into home, and he ended up getting a fully sponsored basketball scholarship to America. He comes back later this year having completely turned his life around because he had the alternative and he had the intensive sport coaching and mentoring. It is just one of those fantastic stories of where we know sports can make that difference.

- Q53 **Chair:** Deborah and Darren, I will ask you a similar question as well. First, do you feel there is a lack of an evidential base in arts interventions and cultural interventions because, again similar to sport, the data is just not collected in that way?

Deborah Williams: We are collecting data intelligence. Project Diamond is the first of its kind in the world and is about two years old this summer. We have published the first set of data from that, which is looking at diversity and the make-up of people who are on television, and what people think they see on television. This year we are literally about to start conversations with Leicester again—not De Montford, but with the CAMEo team at the University of Leicester—looking at how we can then start interpreting our data and looking at what impact diversity has or does not have in terms of particular characteristics on the quality,



content and representation on television and within broadcasting. That is important; we need to get to the bottom of collecting data—you collect data for many different reasons, and I think we need to be much clearer about why we are collecting it, what we are collecting, what we are going to do with it and the implications of it.

I do think that the implications, how you interpret what you collect is and who you work with are important. Validation, in particular outside of your own industry, whether that is from academics or from peer industries, I think is important. That is the road we are on at the moment. We are looking at our second publication and what the implications are for that. We are putting together a data insight group, bringing people together to help us interpret what the data says and how we can dig underneath it at an industry level.

Each broadcaster has their own set of data as well that they look to see what their supply chain looks like, what their commissioning processes look like and seniority. We look at job role. We look at genres as well as looking at on and off-screen. It is not mandatory; it is voluntary, but people are engaging and beginning to engage much more now than they have for quite some time.

Q54 Chair: If you were to summarise the story you want to tell through the data you are gathering and your thinking about your future reports, is it true to say, for example, that as diversity on-screen improves it encourages improved diversity of people seeking to enter the industry?

Deborah Williams: What I want to tell is a different story from what the data says, and I will always wait for the data and the data will lead me. In the first report in particular the obvious gaps were around disabled people on and off-screen and people over 50. Our next big project will be work around disability, to start thinking about and exploring what needs to happen to make the percentages change, because the percentage of disabled people working on and off-screen is the lowest percentage in terms of national average. Just percentage-wise, the gap is so huge.

The next set of data we will have will be a fuller set of data, so then we will be able to have a conversation about what that means. I do think there is a link between representation and who people see on screen, and it is more than stories. "Save Me", the show that was on Sky earlier this year written by Lennie James, was phenomenal. Everybody just sort of went, "Oh my God". It was written by a black male actor and was the first time a piece around working class and understanding working-class stories of a different perspective broke through. Fundamentally what that then meant was that Lennie was folded into the conversation about social mobility—there had sort of been a very narrow understanding of what social mobility meant prior to that. Now black working-class people get a better understanding and feel that they can have a conversation about what it means to be black and working-class in this country and see themselves represented. That is just one that I could talk to you about. I



do think there is a connection, and we are hoping that the data will tell us that later this year.

Q55 **Chair:** Darren, I was talking to a headmaster of a large academy school in Hackney, and the school funds all year 7 students to play a musical instrument. They have access to a musical instrument, and as part of that they have to take part in a certain number of post-school sessions as well as playing that musical instrument. They said that they believe it is the right thing to do, but they cannot prove what it is achieving. Do you feel that there is the same problem in the arts as there is if you are thinking of interventions around sport, which is that on the whole educational institutions, in particular, do not seem to gather the data that measures what the impacts of that intervention are?

Darren Henley: We have to be better at gathering data and being able to tell the stories with a databased approach. Very quickly, there are five quick big areas we work on. First, we are going to hire an economist for the first time at the Arts Council. Even though we were started by an economist, John Maynard Keynes, we never employed one. We will have an economist so again we can start to make economic arguments that are very powerful and make them in economist's terms.

I think one of the things we have to do is be prepared to present data in the way that the recipient audience that we want to convince need to have it. On the work we are doing in clinical commissioning, it is no good us saying from the Arts Council's point of view, "This is what we would like to see". We have to work with the clinical commissioners and say, "If a piece of arts-based health and wellbeing intervention is going to happen, is it going to stop you from getting sick in the first place or get you better quicker or be cheaper than a pill?" These are the sorts of measures that a clinical commissioner will look at. We have to be prepared to do that.

The work we are doing in Leicester will look at educational attainment. That is the key measure. When we take young people through from the age of zero to 25, by having artist and cultural intervention, how are we affecting their lives positively, and will their educational attainment improve? That has to be a key measure we have there for that 25-year period.

We do some work around summer schools for people who have been involved in the youth justice programme. Already we are seeing data from that that reoffending levels are lower than if they had not been on the programme. Again, in each of these areas we are trying to find measures to use that justify them being there. Also, with our Creative People and Places programme it is not just about how many people are coming through the door, it has to always be about ensuring that we have the quality of provision for everybody as well, and I think that is very important. So quality art and culture has to be there for absolutely everybody, then we need to know what journey of involvement they go



on that they would not otherwise. If we give substandard art and culture to people then we are shooting ourselves in the foot.

Q56 Chair: This is a final question from me. Do you think this is too siloed within Government? Arts and sport is what DCMS does, and the Department for Justice deals with young offenders—they may be aware of some programmes that work better than others, but this is just not core to what they do, and therefore you have a series of disjointed interventions and no sense of how we measure and resource this across the whole of the Government.

Darren Henley: It always works better when Government Departments work together. All my experience of when they do work together is that we get more done. Having said that, within DCMS there is a very strong push to talk to other Departments, and we have not mentioned the international work. That is an important part of this. We are working across Government in those ways.

Chair: I can see both Deborah and John nodding there.

John Herriman: Yes, I would wholeheartedly agree. There is a lot of silo thinking, basically, and we think that gets in the way of progress and there are natural crossovers. For example, IC schools play an incredible role within their local community in terms of living education. They also have probably some of the best sports facilities in the country, particularly some of those within London. There were a lot of opportunities to basically try to break down some of the boundaries. We have just started this new community sports centre project at Marylebone and we are trying to do some of this local working, so we want to work with the Department for Work and Pensions on employability, and maybe with the local authority, and do the same thing with Public Health England. We want to allow all of these different outcomes in one place, so that we can deliver them through that one place. It is only joining up at that level, and what we would like to see is the same level of joining up at Government policy level.

Deborah Williams: Absolutely, and I think more than anything, now that we have the sector deal we need to start thinking about that collaboratively and drilling down into that and making it work. We are also looking at how the DIT can support skills, internationally as well as culturally, at the heart of DCMS. Fundamentally, we need Government to start thinking collectively in a joined-up way and get a better understanding of what we are trying to achieve.

Q57 Rebecca Pow: Just to encapsulate all these things, would you say—this is something that I have been particularly working on since I have been here—that we should have a much more holistic approach to our policy? I talk specifically about the environment, but that touches on art and sport. Do you think that would be the line that summarises what the Chair said—to call it holistic thinking?



Deborah Williams: Yes, and joined-up, and that is about understanding the wider impact. We are talking about impact, and the impact is not just local. It is national and global as well, and it would be interesting to hear Government speaking about arts, culture and sport within that context.

Darren Henley: We talk about a holistic case for culture. We see it as not being siloed. There are some great examples in Cumbria, for example, of where artists and environmental agencies are working together very closely.

Q58 **Rebecca Pow:** Just on that note, you were talking about gathering data and evidence, and social prescribing is becoming more popular, especially for mental health issues. I am holding an event at 4 pm on social prescribing, bringing together practitioners and commissioners in health to talk more widely about the problems and about how we can use it more. At the moment a lot of social prescribing is things like outdoor work—work in gardening and tree planting—but do you think you could prescribe a session going down to the choir?

Darren Henley: Yes, and we are already doing that. It is important, and one of the things we need to do is to get more conversations going with GP surgeries and practices to show them that they can do this. Interestingly, a lot of libraries now have books on prescription, so that is one of the things that works.

Museums on prescription are making interventions in people's lives, particularly in areas like Alzheimer's—memory boxes in museums can work amazingly well, but it is about going and taking part. One of the things we maybe have not talked about is about going and having experiences in a post-industrial world. In a lot of places that were famous for making things, one of the things everybody can still make is an art and cultural activity, even if it is going and having a singalong or taking part in a production or creating a piece of visual art. Everybody can do something about making things, and I think that there is an interesting set of work that we are starting to now get more and more involved in around how, in particular, people's mental health and wellbeing could be improved by their sense of community.

Q59 **Rebecca Pow:** Just on the social prescribing aspect, say you wanted to involve arts organisations, with the prescription being that the sick person is recommended to do something in the art world. Do you have any suggestions about whether that would be funded or voluntary? One of the issues now being tackled for social prescribing is two organisations coming together—health and the arts, or health and sport, or health and the environment—and making it function, because I think this will become more used.

Darren Henley: Yes. I think probably a lot of it will need to be funded to ensure the quality is good enough, but that does not preclude good voluntary organisations or charity organisations working in this area. One of the things we would need to do is to make sure that the quality of the



HOUSE OF COMMONS

intervention is high enough, because a negative quality intervention could do more harm than good.

Q60 **Rebecca Pow:** So that comes down to your data as well, doesn't it?

Darren Henley: It does.

Q61 **Rebecca Pow:** You are being able to prove that this results in that.

Darren Henley: In Gloucestershire a GP's practice has been working on it. They were very strong on this. It has been very impressive.

Rebecca Pow: You should come to my event later.

Chair: Thank you very much. That concludes our questions. It has been an excellent start to this inquiry and thank you for your evidence.