

BUILDING COMMUNITIES THROUGH CULTURE & SPORT

Where we live!

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Cultural agencies launch joint initiative showing why culture and sport are essential to the Sustainable Communities agenda

where we live! - a new collaboration between the national Government agencies responsible for sport, arts, heritage, the built environment, and museums, libraries and archives - was launched today at the LGA Delivering Sustainable Communities conference in Birmingham.

A new programme of joint working that will deliver creative, cultural and sporting opportunity in all communities, *where we live!* builds on the success of the joint document produced two years ago: *Bringing Communities Together Through Culture and Sport*.

Arts Council England, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, the Department for Culture Media and Sport, English Heritage, the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and Sport England comprise a partnership dedicated to helping local authorities and planners to maximise the amazing potential of culture in building sustainable communities.

Over the next year, the partnership will be working with key Government bodies like the ODPM

and local authorities to articulate the value of culture to sustainable community planning and to provide a full range of cultural benefits for as many communities as possible over the long term.

Particular priority will be given to the designated Growth Areas and Housing Market Renewal Areas but the partnership aims to see its vision of culturally vibrant communities realised throughout the country.

Culture Secretary **Tessa Jowell** said:

"where we live! is an exciting new collaborative way of working, for the Department and its agencies, that promises to offer more than the sum of our individual strengths. Research consistently shows that people, especially young people, value opportunities for participation in culture, sport and leisure very highly.

Cultural opportunities should be available to all parts of the community. As well as being valuable in themselves they can also offer ways to engage with people that other local services find hard to reach.

This is particularly true of young people for whom culture is a natural part of life - whether it is playing sport, dancing, reading, or using local places and heritage to help with school work."

James Purnell, Minister for Creative Industries and Tourism, who will be sending a video message for the summit added:

"Providing places and resources for study and life-long learning, securing affordable workspace for creative businesses, and supporting economic growth by contributing to the development of

skills are all essential ingredients for the prosperity of local economies. The creative industries are a high growth sector and experience shows that developing a cultural infrastructure can stimulate investment and job creation more generally."

Ends

Notes for Editors

1. *where we live!* is a partnership between

- **Arts Council England**
The National Development Agency for the arts in England distributing public money from the Government and the National Lottery
- **The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)**
The Government's advisor on architecture, urban design and public space
- **The Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS)**
Responsible for government policy on all aspects of culture, media and sport
- **English Heritage**
The Government's statutory advisor on the historic environment, protecting England's historic environment by promoting awareness, understanding and enjoyment of it
- **The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)**
Museums, Libraries and Archives connect people to knowledge and information, creativity and inspiration. MLA is leading the drive to unlock this wealth for everyone.
- **Sport England**
Responsible for promoting and investing in sport, helping the Government meet its sporting objectives in this country and distributing Lottery and Exchequer funds to community and elite sport

2. *where we live*, is the start of our programme of joint working that will help deliver creative, cultural and sporting opportunity in all communities. Over the next year we will be working with key partners like the ODPM and local government to articulate the value of culture to sustainable community planning and devise strategies to provide the full range of cultural benefits for as many communities as possible over the long term.

3. The cultural agencies work with a wide range of partners, including local authorities, planners and developers, providing and supporting cultural provision that changes lives and communities for the better. If you would like more information on the way that we can help, please go to www.wherewelive.org.uk where you will find contact details for all the cultural agencies all over the country.

Cultural services

Cultural services include sport and leisure, theatre, the visual and performing arts, museums and galleries, archives, libraries, the built environment, architecture and design, public spaces and places of heritage, tourism, media, film and television.

Sustainable communities

The provision of new homes has failed to keep pace with the numbers of new households. In 2003, ODPM launched the Sustainable Communities Plan which recognises that to develop communities in which people wish to live, housing policy needs to be linked to improving economies, public services, transport and the environment at a local level.

Housing Growth Areas

Many of the additional homes - to be provided under the Sustainable Communities Plan - are to be contained in the four growth areas:

- Thames Gateway (a national priority for regeneration and growth - the first and biggest of the four growth areas)
- London Stansted Cambridge Peterborough
- Milton Keynes and the South Midlands
- Ashford

Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders

In addition to the Housing Growth Areas one of the key elements forming the basis for the Sustainable Communities programme is the tackling of low housing demand and housing abandonment: sustained action to turn round areas where housing markets have failed. Over the next three years, £500 million is being made available for nine of the worst affected areas, known as Pathfinder market renewal areas, with the intention of reversing low demand by 2010:

- Birmingham and Sandwell
- East Lancashire
- Humberside
- Manchester and Salford
- Merseyside
- Newcastle and Gateshead
- North Staffordshire

- Oldham and Rochdale
- South Yorkshire

Bringing Communities Together Through Sport and Culture

In 2004 DCMS, and its cultural agencies published the booklet, *Bringing Communities Together Through Sport and Culture* inspired by a seminar held in Oldham in March 2004, to discuss ways in which culture and sport can create a sense of local pride and belonging.

Sustainable Communities Case Studies

Culture brings us together - *the Building Exploratory*

The Building Exploratory is an independent charity that receives core funding from English Heritage and Arts Council England amongst others. It is a local built heritage centre and unique cultural resource in one of the UK's most deprived boroughs, the London Borough of Hackney. The Exploratory provides a programme of workshops for community groups that offer opportunities to think creatively about the history and development of their area, particularly its heritage, architecture and public spaces. The Exploratory's approach is designed to identify events, people, buildings and places of significance for communities that define local character, so building sense of place and community identity as a result. Over 10,000 people access the Exploratory's resources every year.

Culture makes places loved - *Peckham Library, London*

Peckham Library reinvents what is expected of a public library building. It is a building of unusual boldness, with a distinctive, striking exterior that has become a symbol of the area. The idea was to produce a dynamic building that was to be attractive to all age groups, and to make a major contribution to the regeneration of Peckham.

The five-storey building houses a range of new public community facilities: a branch library, a "One Stop Shop" Southwark Council advice unit, and the council's Education and Training Advice Centre for Adults on the first floor.

The designers, Alsop Architects, have succeeded in creating a civic space where a range of different groups meet. The use of the building has exceeded expectations, with over 500,000 visits per year, and it is filled with school age users after school. The designers have shown

that original, high quality design can take a central role in regenerating a very deprived area while providing improved services and an attractive, practical building.

Culture makes us healthy and happy - The Quays Swimming and diving complex in Southampton

The centre, which received £6.6 million in Lottery funding from Sport England, is a regional centre of excellence for swimming and diving. It is used for training by a number of leading athletes, including local resident and Olympic Silver Medallist Pete Waterfield.

A range of additional services is also available at the site, which is using an innovative approach to deliver health improvement through the location of a health clinic at the popular complex. This enables the local primary care trust (in partnership with the city council) to promote general health issues to the community and to encourage and promote advice on physical activity.

A GP referral scheme with over 800 members is in place and referred participants are encouraged to regularly participate in sport at the complex. The provision of a health clinic at the complex also provides the community with discreet access to specific health services including sexual health, counselling and therapy for women, and exercise and health education for people with learning disabilities.

Culture, creativity, skills and prospects - Folkestone, Kent

Folkestone has seen a regeneration of its historic heart over the past five years. The small seaside town suffered from a spiral of decline as the ferry was discontinued, the fishing fleet was depleted and the local tourism industry collapsed. The town was left with some of the worst education and poverty rankings in the country. Two agencies, in partnership with private and local authority investment have used culture to change the look and atmosphere of the town centre, and by extension the town itself. Investment of around £25 million has secured the redevelopment of the old town into a cultural quarter, with 90 sq ft of protected property in which artists can live and work and 1000 jobs planned by 2009. This cultural quarter includes a fine arts facility, including specialist facilities such as a foundry and the old glassworks which will house the town's university level arts courses. There are also some major developments outside the cultural quarter such as the Norman Foster designed city academy specialising in art and European culture, an international sculpture park, major public

artworks and an annual literary festival.

**Cultural opportunity is essential for everyone,
especially young people (1) *Phoenix centre***

The Phoenix Centre on the Roundshaw estate in Sutton is providing essential services and provision to the community in this area of deprivation. A modern, accessible and well-designed building is offering opportunities for young people to lead healthier lifestyles and take up learning. Residents were drawn in to plan the replacement for Roundshaw's half-underground and poorly used library, its dingy and smoky community centre, run-down sports hall and off-estate youth centre.

The new centre is shared by the whole community, as well as integrating the estate with people who live outside it, as young people join the centre. Following £6.1 million investment from local partners and the Lottery via Sport England, this groundbreaking centre now offers a wide mix of sport, social and cultural opportunities.

Facilities include a sports hall, health and dance studio, library, IT centre, youth zone and radio studios, community halls, sensory room, café, crèche and community police office.

As a result of this cultural investment, crime rates have decreased, and healthier living and educational achievements on the estate are on the up.

**Cultural opportunity is essential for everyone,
especially young people (2) *Positive futures***

Positive Futures is a nationwide scheme that aims to use sport to reduce anti-social behaviour, crime and drug misuse among children and young people in 100 of the most deprived areas of England and Wales. A successful partnership between the Home Office, Sport England, the Football Foundation and the Youth Justice Board, Positive Futures is now run by crime reduction charity Crime Concern.

Programmes are delivered locally by a range of partners, including local authorities and sports clubs. Young people are often referred on to the programme by local statutory and voluntary agencies, i.e. youth offending teams, police, social services and schools. More than 80,000 young people have been involved with the programme since 2003, with some former participants now involved as mentors or volunteers for today's youngsters.

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