



# CULTURE

for Cities and Regions

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## Study visit report

Study Visit  
Birmingham, 8-10.02.2016

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## 1. Executive Summary

The sixth visit of the Culture for Cities and Regions project took place in Birmingham on 8-10 February 2016. Selected participants came from Aarhus, Antwerp, Barcelona, Brussels, Espoo, Helsinki, Kuopio, Lublin, Manchester, Seine Maritime, Tampere, and Turin. In their application form to attend the visit in Birmingham participants felt the need improve knowledge on:

- Bringing culture to neighbourhoods, giving local inhabitants the opportunity to experiment rich and diverse aesthetic expressions in geographical areas where the cultural offer is very limited or absent;
- Developing cooperation between major local cultural institutions and independent cultural organisations in neighbourhoods;
- Co-designing cultural programmes, including the self-expression of amateurs, social and ethnic groups and local communities;
- Fostering interfaith and intercultural dialogue.

With more than 1,000,000 inhabitants Birmingham is the second largest city in the UK. Birmingham is the youngest major city in Europe and the second most diverse, throwing up significant and specific challenges for cultural provision. It is one of the fastest growing cities in the UK but retains pockets of severe deprivation and high levels of youth unemployment. Birmingham is a super-diverse city, with 40% of residents from a non-white background, with more school children from Muslim family backgrounds than Christian family backgrounds, and with a growing population of young people (in sharp contrast to the ageing population nationally).

Cultural strategies explained in practice during the visit are responding to this challenge of increasing diversity, while still developing the existing programmes further. Birmingham has to find new ways to engage its residents in cultural activities that reach out to them, and contribute to social integration. Today 53% of the project funding is dedicated to cultural diversity.

Birmingham's major cultural institutions - including the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Birmingham Royal Ballet, the Birmingham Repertory Theatre, the Library of Birmingham and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts - enjoy international reputations, and the city has vibrant and influential art, music, literary and culinary scenes. Legacies of Birmingham's industrial heritage include its Jewellery Quarter, Cadbury manufacturing plant and a former custard factory that's been transformed into a cutting-edge creative hub.

However, cultural assets remain almost exclusively in the city centre, and the major cultural companies and venues receive the majority of the city council's revenue support for cultural activities, as this is often the case in large European cities. In order to improve access to cultural activities for all inhabitants, the city puts special attention in supporting facilities

suitable for cultural activities outside city centre and is supporting programmes planned together with local actors and local communities.

The visit focused on how Birmingham implements 'Culture on your doorstep', a programme made of three components that aim to provide and promote good quality cultural activities, relevant for residents and accessible in local neighbourhoods, in order to increase participation.

Initiatives visited and engaged with in Birmingham included: the new Birmingham library, the Repertory theatre, the Symphony Orchestra, the Ikon gallery, the Hippodrome theatre, the Cathedral, Birmingham museum and art gallery, Town Hall (concert venue) and various other places such as community centres.

The title of Birmingham's brand new Cultural Strategy for 2016-19 is 'Imagination, Creativity and Enterprise'; it aims to profile Birmingham as a non-stop city of culture with local roots and international reach - a capital of imagination, creativity and enterprise. Cultural Strategy themes include:

- Culture on Our Doorstep, the umbrella programme for locals to come together to co-create, commission, lead and participate in a wide range of locally relevant, pluralistic and community driven cultural ventures (see full description on page 14)
- A Creative Future: Ensuring that all children and young people have opportunities to engage in the arts
- A Creative City: Supporting and enabling the growth of creative and cultural businesses and individuals through business support, skills and talent development and access to finance
- Our Cultural Capital: Cementing Birmingham's role and reputation as a centre of imagination, innovation and enterprise, with local roots and international reach
- Our Cultural Future: Adapting business models to ensure they are capable of sustaining and growing the sector into the future through collaboration, diversification, rebalancing and devolution

This Strategy will be overseen by the Birmingham Partnership for Culture, a new partnership body which will bring together the public and private sector stakeholders with an interest in delivering the vision. This Partnership will seek to co-ordinate contributions from across the city towards the objectives of the strategy, and will commission activities to support the delivery of the actions.

### *Conclusions*

The study visit in Birmingham brought a range of outcomes for participating cities. These included:

- A detailed presentation of the Culture on your doorstep programme and its different components (Arts champion, Local Arts Forum and Culture co-design programme), both theoretical and practical as the study visit included various meetings with stakeholders

implementing and benefiting from the programme as well as with citizens engaged in the programme.

- An honest appraisal of the issues linked to the implementation of the programme, including drastic financial cuts and reduction of human resources at the city government level.
- A unique opportunity for participants to share local concerns and to develop practical recommendations for cities willing to implement programmes similar to Culture on your doorstep.

## 2. Programme

Date & Time	ACTIVITY	PERSONNEL
7 <sup>th</sup> February	Informal dinner with delegates	
8 <sup>th</sup> February DAY ONE	Background & Arts Champions scheme	
From 9am  9.30 - 9.45am	<p>Welcome Coffee</p> <p>Who are we - ice breaker</p> <p>Delegates can be introduced to each other by dialogue / questions about 3 descriptors e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speciality dish from city/region</li> <li>• Unique building/ icon/ artefact that can be found in their city as a cultural visitor attraction!</li> </ul>	
9.45-11am	<p>Introductions to 3 day visit:</p> <p>Introduction to Team / EU Experts and BCC Team</p> <p>Outline Plan: VB/ Eurocities Expert (Julie)</p> <p>Housekeeping: Catering/ Travel</p> <p>How can cultural services engage with residents in Neighbourhood and Community contexts in times of reducing public service resources?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify any specific questions which delegates have and their expectations.</li> <li>• Question identified for delegates to research and contribute towards problem solving with BCC study visit over 3 days</li> </ul>	<p>Val Birchall Assistant Director Culture and Visitor Economy</p> <p>Symon Easton Head of Culture Commissioning</p> <p>Experts Julie Hervé &amp; Marianna Kajantie</p>
11-11.15	Coffee	

11.30am - 1pm	<p>Presentation:</p> <p>Birmingham City Context - brief overview</p> <p>Birmingham Cultural Strategy Context</p> <p>Overview of Culture on Your Doorstep</p> <p>Arts Champions programme development - principles, delivery, impact</p> <p>Q &amp; A session facilitated by Experts</p>	<p>Val Birchall &amp; Symon Easton with Ginnie Wollaston (Culture Officer)</p> <p>Experts Julie Hervé &amp; Marianna Kajantie</p>
1pm - 2pm	Lunch in Marmalade Café - Birmingham Repertory Theatre	
2.30pm - 4pm  4pm- 4.30pm	<p>Arts Champions programme visits :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birmingham Rep (Steve Ball Associate Director Birmingham Rep) - learn about the theatre's Arts Champions work</li> <li>• City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO) - learn about the Arts Champions work of CBSO and Sampad - South Asian Arts (Katie Lucas CBSO, Lucy Galliard CBSO and Sampad Programme Manager Urmala Jassall)</li> <li>• Ikon Gallery - gallery's Arts Champions work in Yardley (Debbie Kermode General Manager IKON Gallery &amp; Nicola Toms Arts in the Yard - Yardley Local Arts Forum)</li> <li>• Cerebral Palsy Midlands - experience the Culture Co-design programme produced by Tom Jones and Eva Benett from Edgbaston Arts Contact Group. Artist Ray Jacob to lead the session, discussion with participants</li> </ul> <p>Walk or taxi to Birmingham Hippodrome</p>	<p>Symon Easton</p> <p>Ginnie Wollaston</p> <p>Val Birchall</p>
4.30pm - 5.15pm	<p>Tea at Birmingham Hippodrome - UK's busiest theatre, not funded but part of the Champions programme, with Liz Leck Creative Learning Manager and Graham Callister Director of Creative Programmes at the theatre to discuss the approach the Hippodrome Champions programme</p> <p>International Dance Festival Birmingham - David Massingham/ Linda Saunders Strategic Director, DanceXchange &amp; IDFB &amp; Anita Kaushik Projects manager describe their community engagement programmes as Arts Champion &amp; the links to the International Dance Festival IDFB 2016</p>	<p>Val Birchall and Symon Easton</p> <p>Experts Julie Hervé &amp; Marianna Kajantie</p>
5.15-6pm	Q&A and with participants & learning from the day	Experts Julie Hervé & Marianna Kajantie with Val Birchall

7.30PM	Dinner in the Jewellery Quarter	
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DAY TWO: 9 <sup>th</sup> Feb	Culture Co-Design	
9.30am - 10.30am	<p>Birmingham Cathedral visit</p> <p>Short film &amp; presentations - Case study on engagement with diverse and multi faith communities for 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Birmingham Cathedral Rev Catherine Ogle (Dean of Birmingham Cathedral) and project team with artist Mandy Ross &amp; Jake Lever</p> <p>Q&amp;A facilitated by Cathedral team re levels and depth of multi-faith; multi layered participation</p>	<p>Val Birchall</p> <p>Experts Julie Hervé &amp; Marianna Kajantie</p>
10.30am - 11.30am	<p>AV Room Birmingham Museums - coffee</p> <p>Birmingham Museum Trust - presented by Andrew Fowles (BMAG Learning Manager), Oliver Buckley (Heritage Site Manager) and Lynsey Rutter (Community engagement Team Leader) - this session included a visit to the Faith Gallery and an introduction to how Birmingham Museums Trust have approached community engagement through a range of projects involving residents</p> <p>Q&amp;A</p>	<p>Val Birchall</p> <p>Experts Julie Hervé &amp; Marianna Kajantie</p>
11.30-1pm	<p>Introduction to Culture Co-Design</p> <p>With Tom Jones, Chair of Edgbaston Arts Forum</p> <p>Discussion regarding models and learning with Expert</p> <p>Examples/input from participants</p>	<p>Val Birchall</p> <p>Symon Easton</p> <p>Ginnie Wollaston</p> <p>Experts Julie Hervé &amp; Marianna Kajantie with Val Birchall</p>
1pm - 2pm	Lunch and view Enchanted Dreams exhibition in Gas Hall	
2-2.20pm	<p>Culture Co-Design programme visits</p> <p>Travel to different sites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Birmingham Royal Ballet at Ladywood Health Centre - dance presentation of Spring to Life by High Hope Community Ballet created by BRB with local residents</li> </ul>	<p>Ginnie Wollaston</p> <p>Val Birchall</p>
2.30pm - 4pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Custard Factory - Mockingbird Theatre - Hall Green Communities programme working with Arts Champions: mac Birmingham, local artists and producers. Presented by</li> </ul>	<p>Symon/culture officer tbc</p>



4-4.30pm	<p>Claire Marshall (Creative and Partnerships director at mac), Rachel Green (Artistic Director Community Vibe) and Catriona Heatherington (Producer, Arts Works Hall Green) - discussion with participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ward End Library, Hodge Hill area of Birmingham - meet Saleem Ayub, Senior Librarian for Ward End Library and Erdington Library who has been involved with the Hodge Hill Local Arts Forum since it began. Experiences of leading Cultural Co-design programmes will be presented by Becky Hemmings CCC Producer leading theatre and story gathering programme in Nechells, Ladywood</li> </ul> <p>Return to Council House, Victoria Square</p>	
4.30	Afternoon Tea with Lord Mayor, Councillor Ray Hassall	Val Birchall
4.30-6pm	EU Expert to lead Q & A session and reflections on day Discussion with Expert	Symon Easton Ginnie Wollaston Experts Julie Hervé & Marianna Kajantie
7pm	Dinner	
7.30pm	<p>Option of attending shows:</p> <p>Broken by Motionhouse - mac: <a href="http://www.motionhouse.co.uk/productions/venue-touring/broken.shtm">http://www.motionhouse.co.uk/productions/venue-touring/broken.shtm</a></p> <p>Of Mice &amp; Men - Birmingham Rep: <a href="http://www.birmingham-rep.co.uk/event/of-mice-and-men-2016">http://www.birmingham-rep.co.uk/event/of-mice-and-men-2016</a></p> <p>Sleeping Beauty - Matthew Bourne at Birmingham Hippodrome: <a href="http://www.birminghamhippodrome.com/calendar/matthew-bournes-sleeping-beauty/">http://www.birminghamhippodrome.com/calendar/matthew-bournes-sleeping-beauty/</a></p>	

<b>DAY THREE: 10<sup>TH</sup> Feb</b>	<b>Workshop and feedback</b>	
9.30-11.am Workshop facilitated by Expert	<p>Welcome coffee at Town Hall and opportunity to view the hall</p> <p>Observations and practice sharing with Experts</p>	Val Birchall Experts Julie Hervé & Marianna Kajantie
11am -	Coffee Break	

11.20		
11.20am - 1pm  Final Session	Feedback & strategies for how to sustain these programmes discussion with Experts	Experts Julie Hervé & Marianna Kajantie
1pm - 2pm	Final lunch in Digbeth	

### **3. Methodology and tools used**

#### **Webinar**

An interactive webinar took place the week before the visit. This enabled participants to formulate their questions and expectations, as well as the organisers and the hosts to provide some preliminary introduction on the aims of the study tour and to fine-tune the programme.

#### **Written sources**

Before the study visit participants received documents on relevant aspects of the city as well as on the local cultural policies; these are downloadable from the project website:

<http://www.cultureforcitiesandregions.eu/culture/resources/Study-visit-6-Birmingham-8-10-February-2016-WSWE-A6MDMT>

#### **Presentations**

PowerPoint supported presentations provided articulated and in parts statistically expressed information on topical subjects. These complemented the welcoming speeches that also offered orientating insights on the theme of the study tour. Oral presentations were followed by questions and answers sessions to properly exhaust the issues. Presentations are downloadable from the project website (see above link).

#### **Site visits**

The main body of the study tour consisted of visits to sites that are either direct beneficiaries or partners of the Culture on your doorstep programme. Participants were split in parallel groups, in a view to meet specific learning needs.

#### **Workshops**

Rapporteurs were appointed to report from parallel visits and to share the main learning points in plenary session. This allowed for lively discussion sessions at the end of days 1 and 2.

## 4. Key topics presented and learning points

The main lessons drawn from the Culture on your doorstep programme during the Birmingham study visit can be clustered in six sub-themes. For each sub-theme participants have developed specific learning points and recommendations to be implemented at local level.

### VISION AND SCALE

- Need of a strong vision and implementation structure
- Projects should be people-centred; take the individual into account
- Think small first: try to implement a similar programme with one organisation first, then enlarge it
- When developing the programme, choose a wide territorial approach
- It takes time to build trust with residents
- Host activities in venues that feel safe and accessible

### CONTENT OF THE PROGRAMME

- Never compromise on the artistic quality of the projects
- Sometimes less is more: less programming, focus on quality
- Get to know the local context in the different districts
- Arts champions (institutions work with specific districts for 3 years, then change): prepare clear handover between them each time they work in a new district
- Shape programmes with the community: talk, share and meet people, ask them what they want

### PARTNERSHIPS AND CROSS SECTORAL WORK

- Key importance of partnerships: work with as many partners as possible, share budgets, raise awareness together on culture and on specific programmes
- Empower all stakeholders involved in the programme: take time to understand respective needs
- Develop trust with all partners
- It is not about figures, it is about the experience you give!
- Build bridges between art and social work (social inclusion, health, education, sport etc.)
- Make the most of specific competencies from the various stakeholders involved

### REACHING CITIZENS - COMMUNICATING ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

- Less paper, more qualitative information
- Use cross-sectoral cooperation to communicate about cultural programmes

- Think global, act local: target the right places to spread information such as doctors, health centres, schools, markets etc.
- Antwerp's 'Tupperware parties' in individual homes to discuss local cultural seasons
- Celebrate good works (awards)

#### MEASURING IMPACTS

- We mainly collect quantitative impacts, whereas we should think of qualitative impacts
- We mainly collect: figures, statistics and case studies
- We should collect more: personal stories (short videos), experiences, visible artistic results, impacts on the local cultural ecology and on cross-cutting values
- Start collecting evidence from the very beginning of the project

#### LEGACY OF THE PROGRAMME - LOW BUDGETS, SMART ACTIONS

- Find a common language between cultural actors and politicians
- Make the most of existing facilities/cultural places and facilitate cooperation between them (i.e. lending technical material)
- Develop EU funded projects share experience and learn from other cities/stakeholders

## 5. Initiatives presented

Title	Birmingham Cultural Strategy
Description	<p>The title of Birmingham's brand new Cultural Strategy for 2016-19 is 'Imagination, Creativity and enterprise'; it aims to profile Birmingham as a non-stop city of culture with local roots and international reach - a capital of imagination, creativity and enterprise. Cultural Strategy themes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Culture on Our Doorstep, the umbrella programme for locals to come together to co-create, commission, lead and participate in a wide range of locally relevant, pluralistic and community driven cultural ventures</li> <li>- A Creative Future: Ensuring that all children and young people have opportunities to engage in the arts</li> <li>- A Creative City: Supporting and enabling the growth of creative and cultural businesses and individuals through business support, skills and talent development and access to finance</li> <li>- Our Cultural Capital: Cementing Birmingham's role and reputation as a centre of imagination, innovation and enterprise, with local roots and international reach</li> <li>- Our Cultural Future: Adapting business models to ensure they are capable of sustaining and growing the sector into the future through collaboration, diversification, rebalancing and devolution</li> </ul> <p>This Strategy will be overseen by the Birmingham Partnership for Culture, a new partnership body which will bring together the public and private sector stakeholders with an interest in delivering the vision. This Partnership will seek to co-ordinate contributions from across the city towards the objectives of the strategy, and will commission activities to support the delivery of the actions.</p> <p>See PPT on <a href="http://www.cultureforcitiesandregions.eu">www.cultureforcitiesandregions.eu</a></p>

Title	Culture on Your Doorstep
Description, including	<p>CULTURE ON YOUR DOORSTEP is a programme with three components, some of which have been delivered over several years while others are relatively new. All are constantly evolving in their delivery and effectiveness. The challenge is to provide an infrastructure for culture beyond the city centre, including making best use of central resources and giving people in neighbourhoods more influence over what cultural activities are provided, including by linking them to other locally derived priorities, such as health, literacy and integration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. 'Arts Champions'</li> <li>2. A Local Arts Forum</li> <li>3. The 'Culture Co-design Programme'</li> </ol> <p>The principles and aims of 'Culture on Your Doorstep' are likely to be</p>

	<p>universal. Birmingham has developed these relatively low-cost initiatives (about £4000 per year per large cultural institution) to improve engagement and participation outcomes across the city and to ensure value is driven from the major investments made in large institutions, to deliver for a wider range of residents. The Local Arts Fora are becoming increasingly important resources as capacity to deliver within the local authority is reducing at a rapid rate. The Arts Champions scheme is fully established and supported by the organisations and locally based politicians alike. It assists in developing audiences and raising the profile and reputation of the organisations, as well as embedding them in communities across the city in a long lasting relationship.</p> <p>Next steps: from 2017 on there will be no separate funding for large institutions to go on with the Arts champions programme - the programme will be mainstreamed and organisations will use all the resource at their disposal, including their main grant from BCC, to implement the Champions initiatives.</p>
More info	<p><a href="http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/artscommissioning">http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/artscommissioning</a>  <a href="http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/arts">www.birmingham.gov.uk/arts</a></p>

Title	<b>Arts Champions scheme</b>
Description	Arts Champions is a scheme designed to ensure that 11 funded major arts organisations (producing companies and venues) based in Birmingham's city centre deliver audience development initiatives in outlying Districts across the city. Birmingham is divided into ten administrative districts and each art organisation (Arts Champion) is paired with a new district every three years.
Results	<p>Audiences have increased from 8,872 in 20011-12 to 18,166 in 2012-13 (51% increases). Participation has almost doubled from 1,103 in 2011-12 to 2,297 in 2012-13.</p> <p>Benefits from participating in the Arts champions programme for large organisations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be more creative through new partnerships</li> <li>- Allow for networking and cooperation with other organisations</li> <li>- Put together different disciplines</li> </ul>

Title	<b>Local arts forum</b>
Description	A local art forum has been established in each district. The city council provides some seed funding to enable a local arts professional/group to manage the forum which is otherwise run by local residents including local arts organisations, artists and residents with an interest in arts.

Results	<p>Arts Fora provide a much improved understanding and coordination of cultural activity provision at local neighbourhood level and their success / membership is increasing year after year. Several Fora have since become constituted as not-for-profit organisations in their own right.</p> <p>The fora have organised themselves into an umbrella organisation - No11 Arts, which will enable them to work together more closely, including in developing citywide or cross-district border activities.</p>
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Title	Culture Co-design programme
Description	It is a joint funded initiative with central government's Department of Communities and Local Government. It is designed to enable a wide variety of residents, who have previously had no or minimal engagement in cultural activity, to become involved in cultural activities in their local neighbourhood. The stages of co-design are gathering of information about available activities, identifying those not currently participating, encouraging dialogue about the relevance of provision and barriers to engagement, then providing support for residents to commission cultural activities which speak more directly to them.
Results	<p>The Co-design programme is a useful tool to shape cultural content and make sure programming responds to local demand. It illustrates a clear shift from 'culture provided to people' to 'culture generated by people'.</p> <p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Understand the local context of the districts</li> <li>- Getting in contact with residents</li> <li>- Heavy management (because of the number of districts involved)</li> </ul> <p>Lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It takes time to build trust with residents</li> <li>- Host activities in venues that feel safe and accessible</li> <li>- Select coordinators and artists who also act as facilitators/who are able to talk the language of the locals</li> <li>- The local arts forum really helped in setting up the culture co-design programme</li> </ul>

Title	Birmingham Hippodrome and DanceXchange (Arts champions partner)
Description	The Birmingham Hippodrome is a theatre situated in the Chinese Quarter of Birmingham. It is an independent, not-for-profit registered charity, established in 1979. Although best known as the home stage of the Birmingham Royal Ballet, it also hosts a wide variety of other performances including visiting opera and ballet companies. Between 2013/2014, Birmingham Hippodrome presented 404 performances attended by 625,732



	<p>patrons, retaining its position as the highest attended single theatre in the UK, and the busiest venue for dance outside London.</p> <p>Birmingham Hippodrome does not receive revenue grants from Arts Council England or Birmingham City Council. However, they regularly work closely together for support towards eligible projects, such as Hippodrome Creative.</p>
Results	<p>The Hippodrome is a partner of the Arts Champions programme. Fruitful cooperation was developed with DanceXchange (organiser of the Birmingham international dance festival) through the programme.</p>

Title	<b>Birmingham Cathedral work with multi-faith communities</b>
Description	<p>The Birmingham Cathedral developed the Soul boats art project to celebrate its tercentenary (200 paper boats were created by locals and installed by an artist (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEU-TJfdPJY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEU-TJfdPJY</a>)). Individuals and communities of all faiths across Birmingham were invited to take part in this and other arts activities. The priority of this art project was to warmly welcome the public of all faiths, while involving them in the creation of a work of art.</p>
Results	<p>30,000 encountered the art installation, which remains in the cathedral. Interfaith dialogue was fostered.</p>

## 6. Lessons learnt

This part was prepared on the basis of 18 evaluation forms received after the visit from 13 participating cities and regions.

### *Visiting Cities\Regions:*

Participant	Lessons learnt in Birmingham	How will you use the new ideas and knowledge gained to improve your working and organisational methods?
Aarhus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The importance of building up competences and engagement in the Arts Champions institutions.</li> <li>- The importance of mapping the needs in the different local communities before starting programmes.</li> <li>- The need for a counterpart organisational unit (Arts Forum) in the communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We will use it in developing a new cultural strategy and in working with bringing arts and culture into deprived neighbourhoods.</li> </ul>
Antwerp	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We are all dealing with the same challenges: budget cuts, governments that want statistical proof of their investments in arts and culture, proof that is often hard to produce in the field of qualitative projects in deprived city areas.</li> <li>- The cases in Birmingham show that the social-cultural work in British cities is very much evolved and run with a lot of expertise, respect and love, even when finances are decreasing. My heart goes out to Tom Jones and the Cerebral Palsy Centre, to the Cathedral of Birmingham and their inclusive approach to the 300 year celebrations of the Cathedral (both in artistic disciplines and an endless</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Filip Baeyens and myself will organise a major debriefing for all colleagues working (+50 people) in the local cultural field, to go over the full Birmingham programme and the conclusions we drew the last day of the visit and afterwards.</li> <li>- Second, we are initiators and members of a new project group around evaluation methodology and the creation of new sets of indicators (both quantitative and qualitative). The outcome must be ready by autumn 2016, when we are making a new annual action plan for 2017.</li> </ul>

	<p>amount of groups, religious and non-religious) and to the director in the Custard Factory working with actors with mental problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The last morning on the problem and the challenges of indicators and evaluation is an overall felt challenge. Exchanging several experiences just helped to deal with it at home, in a fresh way.</li> </ul>	
Barcelona	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One of the important lessons taken from the Birmingham visit and the <i>Culture on Your Doorstep</i> programme is to recognize the importance of developing cultural projects thinking from the beginning of the communities and their needs. In these kinds of projects, it is interesting that Cultural institutions act as a partner and work to establish trust relationships with residents focusing on local needs and priorities.</li> <li>- Secondly, and this is related to the prior point, it is very important to do a long term development to create effective cultural co-designed projects with the residents. Developing cultural projects with residents who have minimal engagement in cultural activities requires time to build trust, confidence and tranquillity, to facilitate communication and dialogue so as to become involved in cultural activities in their local neighbourhood.</li> <li>- And thirdly, another important lesson is to choose the right people with skills as facilitators who can enable and encourage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For us it has been very interesting to know Birmingham's cultural experience and especially its programme of co-designing activities among major cultural institutions, artists and residents. Currently, at the Barcelona Community Centers Network we are working to create links and foster different projects between major cultural institutions of the city and the neighbourhoods so the key lessons taken from the <i>Culture of your Doorstep</i> programme could be very useful for us.</li> </ul>

	<p>groups to work together in a cultural project and understand the major importance of resident's ownership over cultural projects in neighbourhoods.</p>	
<b>Brussels</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement a cooperation projects between French and Flemish speaking governments in Brussels.</li> <li>- The practice over faith could be transferred in Brussels.</li> <li>- 5 keys questions to discuss with colleagues.</li> <li>- Every country has its own approach to social problems, but talking about different and complex approaches are enriching when we meet at EU level.</li> <li>- Audience development is a job per se. Diversification of the public should be a more professionalised function in cultural institutions.</li> <li>- All the fragile public should have normal access to cultural institutions as much as possible, if we consider culture to be a capital gained to live in a better society, so that each person can find his/her place and be an integral part of society.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The visit was a moment of reflection over the work done by the Flemish speaking government in Brussels and an opportunity to connect with colleagues from European cities and regions. It was very useful and I will use it to grow in my job.</li> <li>- It is going to be difficult to use the presented projects and implement them as they are, as the institutions and the way of working are not the same in Brussels, but the projects are an important information source and can be exemplify and used as arguments for ongoing or future projects.</li> </ul>
<b>Espoo</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This study visit showed me and confirmed many views on how to approach the challenges of the cultural services in various areas and working with different groups. I managed to get information and examples which are important to develop concepts and structures in a</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I am now in the process of modifying the way district area services work. I am going through and evaluating all the functions from view of resources and aims of the future. The study trip gave me certainty that I am making right decisions and drawing right out lines.</li> </ul>

	<p>sustainable way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Time: developing work takes time. You have to set reasonable aims and tolerate that time is needed. Collaboration between artists, community, individuals must be based on trust. Also time will show how successful and productive new experiment has been and if the format should be repeated. It also takes time for residents in their communities to build an active organ and start to independently enliven their own surroundings.</li> <li>- Unsolved equation: before the study trip somehow I hoped that my colleagues have solved our common question: how one can make those passive cultural users to participate in an easily and quickly way? On the other hand it was a huge relief to notice that we all struggle with the same challenges and together we can further solutions to change.</li> <li>- Context: the meaning of context must be remembered extremely clearly in our mind to create and plan strategies, services and activities. People are tied to their local context which affects their personal interests and the choices they make. From this point of view I will pay more attention when residents with immigrant background arrive.</li> <li>- The importance of supporting processes of creation, the dynamic work with participants from communities, the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In the future we will use more artists as a tool in districts, and with their help we will find key persons in the communities. Our aim is to build strong networks in five areas of Espoo. We have to activate more people by being present. We decided to name a team of two persons in each area. Those duos will act as a direct contact in their own areas. Also we will make an area plan in which annual measures and aims are registered. I also noticed that I use a few tools which are totally useless.</li> <li>- Our team and selected partners will launch a few new communal projects. E.g. we are planning a new circus project for immigrant children and mini-pop-up culture out spaces and "Light castle" - project in the suburbs.</li> </ul>
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	integration of different religious communities in the cultural programme	
Helsinki	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The focus is on individuals, not that much on community networks.</li> <li>- Helsinki has better resources than most of the other cities having similar approaches.</li> <li>- Multi-year funding agreement is the basis of all work like the one presented in Birmingham.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discuss all the ideas internally and see which of them are suitable for our work in Helsinki.</li> </ul>
Turin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The experiences and methods described during the visit in Birmingham have shown how cultural co-designed actions can be a personal empowerment chance, as well as a socialization opportunity and an innovative space where democracy can be practiced "learning by doing".</li> <li>- (Local) best practices have to be supported by a strong methodology approach, a clear strategic vision and an effective monitoring and evaluation system, with qualitative and quantitative indicators. The central and local actions model has to be managed by a strong and efficient city organization.</li> <li>- These policies and actions have to be supported also by adequate resources: a) motivated human resources with proper professional skills; b) sufficient economic resources planned in a mid and long term programme, in a strategic vision that consider the culture and creativity enhancement as main urban re-generation drivers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Unfortunately, the Birmingham positive approaches is neither practiced nor foreseen in Turin's culture department. Torino is at the end of the current administration period and there is a strong debate about the future of the city, including its cultural policies. We are working to put in the next agenda the cultural co-design approach and the relationship between culture and well-being of residents and communities.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Kuopio</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Audience work and cultural education work should be regarded as community engagement rather than activation or education because the concept is wider and more inclusive.</li> <li>- Make residents participate and engage in planning and implementing cultural activities, engage the cultural institutions of the city to work more closely to the residents, especially those who are not active in cultural activities.</li> <li>- Small scale activities are crucial and important, no need to always reach for the masses.</li> <li>- The knowledge of the demography in one's city is important before starting such a programme.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop the cultural work done in the districts and in different areas of the city, but at first gather information from these areas (the needs, demography structure, existing activities etc.).</li> <li>- Create and develop the sustainability of the activities and practices. The cultural activities must be more systemic, organised and equal.</li> <li>- Try to engage the cultural and arts organisations of the city in community engagement work.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lublin</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is a good idea for cultural institutions to not only invite representatives of local community to attend shows and exhibitions, but also to go outside of their usual sphere of influence and organise activities in districts for local community and with them.</li> <li>- Involving people who are not used to art activities works more efficiently and has better social impact if it shown as something ordinary. It is even better to avoid certain words ("arts") not to frighten people away.</li> <li>- Developing cultural and arts programmes in districts is more effective when the local cultural department has an</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Due to slightly different models of managing and funding cultural projects in the UK and in Poland, not all the presented initiatives could be implemented as such, but principles and mechanisms are worth implementing, such as the attitude towards socially marginalised population.</li> <li>- Present new experiences gained from colleagues and suggest some changes to the programmes that are already in place and for future projects.</li> <li>- Present the our superiors and colleagues the Culture on Your Doorstep programme as well as the lessons learnt during the visit, in the hope that together we can discuss which solutions are suitable to our actions.</li> </ul>

	<p>important influence on the programmes' shape and the way the municipal cultural institutions execute them. However it should not mean that decisions are made unilaterally and without contributions from the representatives of local authority. The programmes must be co-created.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not to impose cultural offer to potential participants. Local community should be given a chance to speak about individual's passions, dreams and needs. Before starting a project you should know the structure of the local community (age, gender, economic status, and ethnicity).</li> <li>- To establish a permanent and intense bond with local community and local institutions such as schools. The relationship should be firm and based on mutual trust.</li> <li>- Evaluation on each phase of the project should be undertaken, it helps to quickly catch and correct mistakes.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Manchester</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was fascinating hearing about the local cultural champions and forums that Birmingham had instigated. I felt that, although it might be difficult for them to sustain the structures in the same way, it was obvious, whatever happened, that a good legacy would be left. I felt the programme was very bold and that has given me more confidence in my own ideas in this area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I will work with my colleagues in libraries and our Area (neighbourhood) Teams to explore how we might stimulate / inspire / support local cultural fora in Manchester.</li> <li>- I have already begun to change my language around quality and to bring this discussion to other forums I have been in since (I have found it is a hot topic across the country). I will build this into our neighbourhood programmes going</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I found the discussions around quality of provision really interesting - moved the conversation on for me to thinking beyond just 'good art' and 'good artists' as defined by professional / establishment ideals.</li> <li>- In some of the partner cities they already have a tradition of cultural programming in neighbourhoods and in libraries, which is maybe a fact rather than a lesson learned, but, more broadly I was interested to learn that we had much in common across our cities in exploring ideas of access &amp; cultural democracy.</li> </ul>	<p>forward so we have a shared understanding of what we mean by quality (e.g. that which is fit for the situation/purpose) and that we can articulate that well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I will do some more research around the local programming in partner cities - e.g. Barcelona &amp; Antwerp - to see if there is some of their practice is applicable or even if we can share any programming!</li> </ul>
Seine-Maritime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It is possible to lead cultural actions mixing communities of all faith based on a long-term upstream approach and trust (meeting, sharing and understanding people's need) before undertaking common artistic projects (rather than imposing).</li> <li>- With a very low funding for arts, the success in taking part in artistic activities is more based on artists' empowerment than on actual financial means.</li> <li>- The power of arts is what you share and how you bring people to share together, no matter how big and expensive the project is.</li> <li>- The study visit allowed to improve several ideas: there is a European movement putting the inhabitant at the centre of a territory's cultural development; many concrete</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For European cooperation programmes, I will have more assets to explain the real social benefits of culture on people in times of budget cuts, and why it is important to work in a collaborative manner, to clearly determine realistic indicators to evaluate this type of socio-cultural projects.</li> <li>- The visit helped identify which innovative actions can be undertaken in the social field via culture, which could open up on a future cooperation project.</li> <li>- The study visit was very relevant for the work of a French <i>département</i>, as this entity is responsible for social actions, solidarity and cultural rights.</li> <li>- Reaffirm the central place of residents in cultural policies</li> <li>- Help elected representatives understand the issues and build a</li> </ul>

	actions do exist but the way to present them is determinant; the main collective work to build and share now is about the evaluation of cultural projects and policies, in order to present the strengths and usefulness of a new way of implementing cultural projects.	statement - Work specifically on evaluation for the <i>département</i> and other territories and continue the work done on cultural rights
Tampere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Birmingham regional culture model is brilliant and I am positive it can be implemented also to Tampere.</li> <li>- Introducing such a programme takes time, patience and hard work.</li> <li>- It's better to pilot the programme first and then make it bigger through trials and errors.</li> <li>- Every region and organisation are different, and different methods need to be practiced. We have to have a lot of discussions with local communities before starting a programme like this.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I will try to introduce the Birmingham model as such to our own city.</li> <li>- If the resources enable it, I would try to make the art fora or champions reach more people in the areas. Small focus groups are important, but could they somehow do more and reach bigger groups?</li> </ul>

**Suggestions to improve organisation and logistics of the study visits:**

- Perhaps planning a study visit on three days instead of two, to have more time to fully understand the presented initiatives. The schedule was so intense that at the end of the day we could not focus on the subject of the meeting.
- Smaller group discussions and sharing of good practices. Participative workshops missed a little.
- With such a heavy and focused planning of visits on site, we may have lacked time to debrief and participate in a collaborative and constructive way.
- Have a collaborative platform where delegates could download or upload documents of common interest about culture, in order to develop individual skills and knowledge but also strengthen the lobby for culture.
- It was very useful to have a webinar beforehand and to ask experts to prepare some precise questions. Even if we had not the time to work on these questions, we had them in minds.

- It was very important to receive prior materials before the visit, because the amount of information onsite was huge. Thanks to the preparatory documents, it was easier to understand and absorb information during the study visit.
- It may be interesting to focus on two or three precise questions and determine a calendar of personal and collective works to share the reflections and progresses.
- The balance between theory and practice was acceptable, although I would recommend focusing more on practical examples. Documents such as city's strategies and other theoretical information can usually be found through various sources of information, practical experience is more memorable.
- Do not hesitate to ask for more inputs from participants. It would have been nice to get just short information how each participative city deals with challenges similar to the ones in Birmingham.
- Provide more specific documentation of the impacts of the programme. Which effects do you see - what is working and what is not working so well?
- It would have been nice to actually visit one neighbourhood, see how it feels and how it is like. This would have given more depth to the experience of Birmingham.
- It would be interesting to hear or read afterwards how plans and things have progressed in Birmingham and what results have they achieved during this time (6 months to one year). Also regards from participant cities would be nice: it would be interested to know if new ideas or working methods have been created, inspired by the visit.

### *Comments from Host City (Birmingham):*

It was extremely helpful to host the study visit. Firstly, it enabled us to really focus on the progress of our programme over the period of its operation, and to be able to review the thinking behind it and what we had achieved, and then to start to reflect on the questions we have for ourselves to sustain and develop the model in the future.

This reflection was really enhanced by the pertinent questions raised by colleagues on the visit - their insight into the issues and the comparators which they described in terms of models in their own cities, and information from their own knowledge of models used elsewhere.

On the final day, we were able to consider their consideration of the key questions that were raised by our work and to discuss in an informed, professional environment, some of our common challenges including evaluating the impact of our work, the critical success factors, the possible future models in a climate of ever-reducing resources.

We found the visit really stimulating. At the last session, colleagues were inspired to think whether a shared project could enable us to continue to build on this practice together, which is another exciting prospect. Thank you!

## 7. Conclusions

The content of the study visit was extremely rich and intense and participants learnt a lot, in a friendly atmosphere.

The content of the visit gave the participants a very intense and rich insight of the work of the city aiming to improve the citizen's possibilities to meaningful experiences in partnerships with art institutions, artists and local groups and individuals.

The programmes presented focused mainly on the ways bringing culture and arts to the neighbourhoods and stressed its instrumental role in the work for social inclusion, in a way the focus was in what the arts does rather than what it is.

The visit tackled a wide variety of issues such as the new roles of city administrations for culture; developing cooperation with other sectors; and finding new sources of finances for the cultural sector.

To be able to reach wanted results, cultural workers (from administration to artists and volunteers in the field) must find new partnerships, work in collaboration with unexpected organisations, public and private, NGOs and individuals, national and international.

Conclusions from the participants highlight the need for strong and long term visions, strong partnerships and new models of evaluation putting people and experiences at the heart of future evidence-based approaches. Another key idea was: never compromise on the artistic quality of project implemented in neighbourhoods with local residents.

## Annex 1: List of participants

Name	Surname	City/Region	Position
Ib	Christensen	Aarhus	Head of cultural department
Rabih	Azad-Ahmad	Aarhus	Deputy Mayor for culture and citizens service
Heleen	Vanden Bergh	Antwerp	Cultural policy maker
Filip	Baeyens	Antwerp	Cultural policy maker
Modesta	Roda	Barcelona	Cultural Manager, Barcelona City Council
Bel Alicia	Jaume	Barcelona	Project Manager at Barcelona Community Centres Network
Anne	Chaponan	Brussels	Cabinet of Fadila Laanan, Minister-President of the French speaking Government of Brussels
Suzy	Bleys	Brussels	Policy Advisor Minister Pascal Smet
Johanna	Vepsä	Espoo	Production Manager
Stuba	Nikula	Helsinki	City of Helsinki Cultural Office, Cultural Director
Alberto	Lalli	Turin	Visual arts, cinema, theatre officer
Francesco	Maltese	Turin	Visual arts, cinema, theatre officer
Jonna	Forsman	Kuopio	Culture Designer
Tomasz	Kowal	Lublin	Officer in division cultural development
Anna	Lewicka	Lublin	Officer in division cultural development
Zoe	Williams	Manchester	Culture Lead (People and Place)
Sonia	Leplat	Seine Maritime	Head of cultural action service
Virginie	Monnié	Seine Maritime	European Officer
Jaakko	Laurila	Tampere	Cultural Affairs coordinator
Naomi	Doak	Belfast - Observer	Tourism, Culture, Heritage & Arts Development Officer

## The team in Birmingham

**Val Birchall**, Assistant Director, Birmingham City Council

Val Birchall is Birmingham City Council's lead officer responsible for Culture & Visitor Economy (arts, museums, heritage, film, the Library of Birmingham, major events and support for the hospitality industry). Originally trained as a musician, Val worked as a performer and teacher, before focusing on management within the music sector in the fields of marketing and education, working for orchestras, festivals and opera companies. She moved to Birmingham to take up a role with the national arts funding system where she worked for seven years as the lead for music policy, following which she delivered large-scale community arts projects in the city and worked as a trainer and facilitator for artists' professional development. While at Birmingham City Council, she has managed a range of services including community development, play, press and communications, digital and environmental sustainability. Val is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and is on the executive of the national Chief Leisure Officers Association.

**Symon Easton**, Head of Culture commissioning, Birmingham City Council

Symon Easton is Head of Culture Commissioning for Birmingham City Council. The service is primarily responsible for commissioning the council's circa £9m annual investment in support to museums and the arts in the city including internationally renowned arts organisations and arts projects targeted at specific groups and communities across the city. Symon joined Birmingham in 2010 from his post as Cultural Investment Manager for a local district authority in the South of England. He originally trained in theatre and production at the London Academy of Music & Dramatic Art (LAMDA) from 1981-83 before going on to work for a variety of theatres and touring companies at home and abroad, including as Chief Executive of Northampton Theatres and Managing Director of Sunderland Empire Theatre.

**Ginnie Wollaston**, Culture officer

(Ginnie Wollaston has now left the authority).

## Experts

**Julie Hervé (EUROCITIES, Policy Officer Culture)**

Julie Hervé has worked as a policy advisor at EUROCITIES since 2006. She manages the activities of the EUROCITIES Culture forum, gathering representatives from more than 130 European cities and of specialised working groups (resourcing culture; cultural and creative industries; young people and culture; access to culture; mobility of artists). She develops policy positions and publications on various aspects of culture in cities and represents the interest of member cities towards the European institutions. Julie also manages EUROCITIES activities on entrepreneurship and SMEs and on branding and city attractiveness.

Prior to joining EUROCITIES, Julie worked at the coordination office of the European Heritage Days in Lisbon. She also worked at the French agency for export promotions in Paris, where she was in charge of the tourism and architecture sectors. She also worked in Brussels for several small business organisations and for the European technical assistance office of the Euro Info Centre network (now Enterprise Europe network). Julie holds a master engineer degree ('ingénieur maître') in cultural heritage and a master degree in European Relations.

*Role during the visit: Lead expert*

**Marianna Kajantie**

Marianna Kajantie graduated from the Faculty of Education, Helsinki University 1982. After receiving a master's degree in Education she started working in the cultural office of the city of Helsinki. Her first assignment was to plan the Art education programme for the Annantalo Arts Centre for children and youth. She was the director of the Centre until 1992, until she was appointed director of the Alexander Theatre as well as deputy cultural director. Then she became head of the division for cultural policies. She has been involved in several EU-funded projects, such as Lasipalatsi Film and Media Centre (of which she is the current managing director), Arts and Diversity, promoting immigrant artist, Urban Culture, cultural actions in suburban areas of the city etc.

*Role during the visit: External expert*

### **Support**

**Cécile Houpert (EUROCITIES)**

Project support officer - Culture for cities and regions

## Annex 2: Presentations (from local actors and/or experts)

Presentations and supporting documents can be found here:

<http://www.cultureforcitiesandregions.eu/culture/resources/Study-visit-6-Birmingham-8-10-February-2016-WSWE-A6MDMT>

Further exchanges between participants have been made on the Culture for cities and regions online forum.